AFRO-PERUVIAN SOCIAL ACTIVISTS: AN INTER-GENERATIONAL STUDY

By

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To Mom, Daddy, Liz and Aziza
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This map of Peru depicts the provinces, cities and towns that have a noted Afro-descendant presence. (Cimarrones: Comunicación Interétnica Global website 2012).
## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACEJUNEP</td>
<td>Asociación Cultural para la Juventud Negra Peruana</td>
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<td>CEDET</td>
<td>Centro de Desarrollo Étnico</td>
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<tr>
<td>INAPE</td>
<td>Instituto de Investigaciones Afroperuanas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Makungu</td>
<td>Makungu para el Desarrollo</td>
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<td>MNAFC</td>
<td>Movimiento Nacional Afroperuano Francisco Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>MNFC</td>
<td>Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPDHN</td>
<td>Movimiento Pro Derechos Humanos del Negro</td>
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Activists have already placed an emphasis on the importance of youth in the process of continuing the work they have begun, and in facilitating the creation of a national movement. This work explores the inter-generational relationship between one youth and one veteran organization of Afro-Peruvian social activists in Lima, Peru. The analysis draws upon ethnographic data collected over seven weeks during May and June of 2011, including twenty-three semi-structured interviews, archival research, and participant observation. The work attempts to determine whether or not there are similarities and differences between the views of the youth and veteran activists in question, and to assess the relationship between them. The findings show that both generations agree on what the major obstacles that face the Afro-Peruvian community are. They also show that the inter-generational relationship is currently sporadic and weak. Concluding remarks touch on suggestions for improving this relationship, and for future research.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION: SITUATING AFRO-DESCENDANTS AND ACTIVISM IN LIMA

In early January 2010, I was sitting bleary-eyed in the dank basement editing suite at the University of Toronto going on what must have been hour three of editing footage of two social activists for my documentary on Afro-Peruvians when the question that triggered my interest in inter-generational activism popped into my head. What about the youth? I scrolled back through the interview segments and looked at the face of musicians, artists, singers and seasoned activists I had interviewed in the spring of 2009 during my first trip to Peru on an undergraduate grant. Sure enough, aside from one of the interviewees, everyone else I had spoken with was at least forty years old. Of everyone I had spoken to, the words of two activists from el Centro de Desarrollo Étnico (the Center for Ethnic Development, or CEDET) resonated with me most. I had become increasingly interested in activism among Afro-Peruvians, especially because it remains far less visible than music and dance, but young Afro-Peruvians seemed to me to be completely removed from this much smaller sphere.

Four months later on a surprisingly warm fall afternoon in Lima, Peru I wandered into the auditorium at the Centro Cultural de España (the Spanish Cultural Center). Hoping to secure a good seat for the film that was about to be shown as part of the annual Cajón Festival where I would later screen my own documentary, I had arrived early and was scoping the room when I made eye contact with a young Afro-Peruvian woman. Ten minutes later we were sitting together and chatting when she mentioned that she was part of an activist group for Afro-Peruvian youth. Though we were unable to meet again before I returned to Toronto, our correspondence over the next year continued to peak my interest such that I decided to focus my master’s thesis on Afro-
descendant youth activism in Lima. I returned to Lima for two months – May and June – in the summer of 2011 to conduct a series of interviews with members of her group Makungu Para el Desarrollo (Makungu for Development, or Makungu). Early on in my stay as I reconnected with CEDET members and talked to young people from Makungu, I became fixated on two pieces of information that form the basis of this body of work. First, that Makungu had been formed by CEDET, and second, that the relationship between the two groups is complex; it is sporadic, and it lacks cohesion. I wanted to learn about where the opinions of these youth and veteran activists converged and diverged on important issues that face the Afro-Peruvian community, especially since these are some of the themes that will have to be agreed upon if Afro-descendants in Peru want to create a national movement eventually, something that the nation has yet to see. I also wanted to learn more about the relationship between different generations of activists, and how it could be improved. This thesis is a result of these questions.

**The Condition of Afro-descendants in Latin America**

In her article on Afro-Latin Americans, Judith Morrison (2008) notes that race is one of the most persistent predictors of poverty in the Americas. According to 2007 World Bank reports Afro-Latinos are the largest marginalized group in the region, since the population is larger than that of the Indigenous peoples (Morrison 2008). Research on the Afro-Peruvian community reports racial discrimination, extreme rates of poverty and illiteracy, and limited access to education, health care, and public services (Valdiviezo 2000; CEDET 2005; CEDET 2008; Telles 2007). There is pressure from world organizations such as the UN to collect data based on race. In view of the approaching 2015 deadline for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Telles’ report on Latin America notes that most countries should have no problem
reaching goals such as reducing by half the percentage of people living on less than one dollar a day, providing every child with a primary education and reducing child mortality by two-thirds. He nonetheless cautions that it is likely that Afro-descendants and Indigenous peoples will continue to be neglected (2007: 1).

Although the data at hand leave little doubt that being an Afro-descendant or a member of an Indigenous community increases the likelihood of living in poverty, being illiterate, residing in substandard housing and suffering police abuse, the lack of availability of race-based information for many Latin American countries, aside from Brazil, has made these problems more difficult to right (Telles 2007).

**Conceptualizing Race and Ethnicity in Peru**

Contemporary research on ethnicity and race describes race and ethnicity as social constructs, while also recognizing that they affect everyday social interactions and realities. Many scholars state that they are intimately linked and cannot be studied separately, nor can they be understood without considering the political and social contexts in which they exist at any point in time (e.g., Wade 1997; de la Cadena 2001; Harrison 1995). Scientists have shown that from a biological standpoint, races do not exist. Psychologists have also shown that humans share the same mental capacities, and that there no correlation along the lines of racial categories (Wade 1997:13). For these reasons, most scientists and social scientists today conclude that race is a social construct. They situate ideas about racial categories that can be defined by physical characteristics, and the notion that some races are superior to others historically, more specifically in the era of European colonization (Wade 1997).

While most approaches acknowledge that racial categories do not exist biologically, they still identify so-called racial distinctions by phenotype. Wade (1997)
posits that the specific phenotypic distinctions used to determine an individual’s race are also rooted in historic European ideas of difference that date back to colonization, thus tying constructions of race to historical processes that are not objective, but rather mutable (1997: 15). De la Cadena (2001) illustrates the mutability of popular perceptions of race when she describes understandings of race in Latin America. In contrast to more biological ideologies that rely not only on phenotype but on ancestry to determine one’s race, Latin America approaches race from more of a cultural perspective. Race in this context can refer to biology, but can also encompass “the soul of a people, their culture, their spirit, and their language” (2001: 17). Thus, race takes on a nuanced definition that fuses biology, phenotype, and culture.

The term “ethnicity” has been employed by scholars to address issues of difference and sameness, at times because it is not as charged as the term “race.” Like race, ethnicity indicates ancestry and origin, but it also refers to cultural difference in the context of space, that is, it situates culture geographically (Wade 1997; de la Cadena 2001; Hale 2006). Ethnicity is conceptualized as a “nested” form of identity in that most people have multiple ethnic identities according to whom they interact with and where a particular interaction takes place (Wade 1997: 18). Popular views on ethnicity in many instances align with those of social scientists; they revolve around ideas of cultural geography, where the culture of a place is acquired from previous generations in the spaces themselves. Race and ethnicity do at times comingle on a conventional level when physical characteristics associated with a particular racial group are associated with cultural spaces. An example of this is in Colombia where certain regions of the country are deemed “black” (Wade 1993). Thus it is possible to have both racial and
ethnic identities. The overlapping scholarly and popular definitions of race and ethnicity reinforce the above noted notion that these two concepts should be studied together. These definitions and the work of the above-mentioned scholars also serve to provide a better understanding of how ideas about race and racism can be perpetuated through the racialization of culture and ideas about ethnicity.

In the context of this work, when I employ the term “race,” or talk about “Afro-descendants” or “Afro-Peruvians,” I take Wade’s (1997) notion of race with respect to genealogy, and refer to Peruvians who because of this ancestry are subjected to the legacies of African enslavement: racial marginalization. Likewise, I conceptualize ethnicity in accordance with Wade (1997), Hale (2006), and de la Cadena (2001) – as a notion of culture and space.

**A Brief Look at Race Relations and Ideology in Peru**

The widespread racial miscegenation of Spanish, Indigenous and enslaved African populations that began in the colonial period created more or less distinct castes that were largely determined by skin tone (Cuche, 1975; De la Cadena, 2001). The freedom, power and wealth of the small group of Spanish-descended elite distinguished it from the larger, mixed population and the other distinct groups. The abolition of African enslavement prompted the white aristocracy to find other ways to ensure control over their wealth; they used race to define and solidify class lines that relegated *mestizos* – people of Spanish and Indigenous descent – to the middle class, and Andean peoples and Afro-descendants to the lower class (Stubbs and Sarduy 1995; Cuche, 1975). Along with the legacy of this shift in social interactions, the lingering discourses and practices of *blanqueamiento*, the drive to better the nation by whitening it through miscegenation, and *Indigenismo*, a nationalist project that sought to acculturate
indigenous peoples through education, but excluded Afro-descendants, continue to shape contemporary Peruvian society. They show how class and culture are unquestionably related to race, which undermines claims that the latter is irrelevant. The above-mentioned themes and discourses will be revisited later in the thesis, but I introduce them here in order to provide an overview of the important factors that play into regional and national identity politics as they pertain to race and ethnicity.

The national government now refers to Afro-descendants as “Afro-Peruvians” and recognizes them as a distinct racial and cultural group, but they continue to be excluded from politics and subjected to the systemic racism that has oppressed them for centuries (CEDET 2008).

**The Legacy of Afro-descendants in Lima**

In contrast to other countries in Latin America, particularly in the Atlantic countries, African enslavement in Peru was unique in that a large portion of the enslaved labor force was concentrated in the coastal cities, especially in Lima, while the rest was generally confined to plantations in rural coastal areas to the south of the capital (Cuche 1975). The result of prominent urban enslavement was close physical and cultural contact between *criollos*, the descendants of the Spanish, and the multi-ethnic mix of Africans. In this setting, distinct African ethnic and racial identities largely disappeared. Some elements of African cultures were appropriated by the dominant class, and Africans and their descendants identified themselves and their culture as *criollo*.

During the 1950s, what is now recognized as Afro-Peruvian culture was revitalized in the context of a musical renaissance, which began in Lima. The revival of cultural practices that had largely remained out of the public eye in urban settings, and
in rural areas, mainly in the south, were showcased and fostered a sense of racial identity and pride among many Afro-Peruvians. However, as other sources continue to show, the newly defined Afro-descendant culture and identity were and are not representative of all African Peruvians and their various communities (e.g., Golash-Boza 2011).

The central coastal region of Peru, including the province of Lima, is home to the majority of the country’s Afro-descendants, who make up approximately 6 to 10% of the national population (CEDET 2008; CHIRIPAQ 2003). Afro-Peruvians are dispersed throughout the city itself but many continue to reside in neighborhoods recognized as areas in which Afro-descendants historically have inhabited. These include: La Victoria, San Martín de Porres, Comás, San Juan de Lurigancho, Villa El Salvador, Surquillo, El Rimac, and Breña (Thomas 2008). Consistent with reports on Afro-descendant communities in other parts of the country, Afro-Peruvians in Lima, or Afro-Limeños, and the neighborhoods in which they are concentrated, are generally reported to be impoverished, to lack access to basic social and public services, to lack sufficient housing, to be overcrowded, and to have higher rates of crime and drug abuse (Thomas 2008; CEDET 2008).

**Afro-Peruvian Social Activism in Lima**

Authors that address Afro-Peruvian social activism and resistance in Peru tend to focus on one of two moments in time. The first moment is associated with the colonial and slavery eras when Afro-descendants resisted the degradation and de-humanization inflicted upon them through cultural preservation, *marronage*, and legal means (e.g., Cuche 1975; Luciano and Pastor 1995; Andrews 2004); and, second, the 1950s and onwards, with a generally stronger focus on the Afro-Peruvian music and dance
renaissance that gave way to more visibility for Afro-descendants in the spheres of song and dance, and is recognized as the starting point for the creation of a distinct racial and, some argue, ethnic identity (Feldman 2006; Luciano and Pastor 1995; Golash-Boza 2011).

Though there is a significant amount of literature about Afro-Peruvian music, dance, and culinary practices, and increasing historical accounts and records of the contributions of Afro-descendants to the Peruvian nation, few publications address social activism in Peru, as it specifically relates to this segment of the national population. Golash-Boza (2011) and Thomas (2008) both address activism, and Thomas (2008) provides a substantial resume of activist organizations. CEDET publications also denote activities carried out throughout the country, to some degree, though their work focuses largely on their own projects. They also note collaborative efforts.

**The Call for Afro-descendant Youth Activists**

More recent publications and articles written by other Afro-Peruvian activists note the importance of youth involvement in activism if the work of past generations is to be sustained and furthered, and in order to create a national Afro-descendant movement (e.g., Buenaño 2005; Carrillo 2005; CEDET 2005). Five years after the UN-facilitated 2000 Regional Conference of the Americas in Santiago, Chile⁠¹ where Afro-descendants spoke out about the inequality that plagues their communities, Afro-Peruvian social organizations collectively demanded that the national government implement fifteen

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¹ At this meeting the category "Afro-descendant" was coined to describe people of African descent in a way that supercedes the limits of long-standing social classifications that make distinctions between shades of brown and black.
major acts that would ensure better conditions for their community (CEDET 2005). While some of these requests acknowledge the needs of young people by focusing on more inclusive school curricula and equal access to social resources, there is no indication whether the youth themselves contributed to this assessment of their needs, or whether the mandate encompassed the youths’ own priorities.

The Importance of Age and Generation in Social Relations and in Society

Scholars increasingly recognize age and inter-generational relationships as useful lenses through which to understand social reproduction and change, as well as political and economic processes (Cole and Durham 2007; Edmunds and Turner 2002; Williams and Nussbaum 2001). They assert that while frameworks such as race, class and gender have been central to sociological and anthropological examinations of social reproduction, as mediators of relationships from the level of individual households to wider society, age and inter-generational interactions should be incorporated into discussions of human relationships and change. Relationships among different generations play an essential role in society with respect to knowledge transfer and socialization, and they allow individuals and collectives to negotiate their identities, navigate the present, and conceptualize the future.

Defining Generation

Discussions about generations and attempts to define this term generally make mention of Karl Manheim’s classic essay, “The Problem of Generations” (1952). Noted as a monumental work that shifted away from traditional sociological and anthropological views of generations that primarily focused on their roles in social replacement and in maintaining cultural continuity that suggested fixed social relations over time, Manheim proposed an understanding of generations that considers the way
social, economic and political pressures allow them to mediate social change (Pilcher 1994; Cole and Durham 2007). He defines a generation as a group of individuals who come of age at roughly the same time and are all impacted by unique historical events (Manheim 1952). The collective experience of these events helps them to generate an identity and outlook different from those of the prior generation. Age, then, cannot solely define a generation; social experiences are key factors to their existence.

The Ambiguity of “Youth”

As I previously noted, the concept of generation is related to age, but it is also constructed by collective experiences. Defining the parameters of the term ‘youth’ can be somewhat more daunting, particularly given the fact that the concept of youth is very much a social construct that has distinct connotations in different cultural and historical contexts. The United Nations currently defines youth as individuals between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four (Social and Human Sciences site 2011), but scholars are quick to note that because of societal changes, youth can be denoted as a time that may start during teenage years, but that can continue into the forties and beyond (Durham 2007). Durham notes that like the construct of childhood that can continue into the early twenties and in some cultures and societies is understood as a time when a person is unable to make informed decisions, youth is at times understood as a time when individuals are no longer children but do not yet have the same abilities or assume the same roles as full-fledged adults (2007: 106). During my fieldwork, I was forced to consider and re-consider where the boundaries of youth lie, and I was aware that the activists – particularly the veteran activists whom I interviewed – were also struggling to define this term and its implications for the relationship between youth and other generations. They also queried how these relationships will affect future
interactions in light of the inevitable shifts in power and positions that will take place over time. In this work, I refer to the members of CEDET as one generation on the basis of age and experiences. I will expand on the details of these variables in other chapters. I have also chosen to speak about Makungu as another generation and as youth for two main reasons. First, although the age of the members of the younger organization ranged from nineteen to thirty-three, including that of the director at the time I carried out my research, the majority are in their twenties and roughly in the range that is recognized by international organizations such as the United Nations as the youth bracket. Second, because the Makungu defines itself officially as a group of Afro-descendant youth in its mission statement, I will consider the organization and its members as such.

**Research Questions**

This thesis is guided by the following principal questions. First, I wanted to find out if youth perspectives differed greatly from those of seasoned activists. Within this question, I wanted to know whether Afro-Peruvian youth and veteran activists shared similar outlooks on basic issues concerning the advancement of Afro-descendants in their country. What do both groups understand to be the most immediate obstacles that they face? Second, I wanted to learn more about the relationship between youth and veteran activists. What is the nature of their relationship? Is there consistent communication and collaboration? I wanted to develop an understanding of this inter-generational relationship with two goals in mind: to contribute to the ethnographic record on Afro-Peruvian activist groups, and to recommend what might be done to help strengthen ties and communication between these groups – a crucial step in the gradual process of creating a national movement.
Methods

I employed qualitative ethnographic methods in order to find the answers to these questions. I also drew upon grounded theory, a research method that sociologists formalized to develop explanations of social phenomena in ethnographic studies (Corbin and Strauss 1990: 5). In this method, the ethnographer engages informants in open-ended interviews, and continuously searches for patterns and codes them during the process of data collection. Based on these patterns the researcher creates a preliminary theory and then tests it against new data acquired from each subsequent interview. Any relevant themes or topics are included in later interviews in order to create a final theory reflecting the collected information. All notes made during interviews, and recorded observations made in the field also help to support or oppose the emerging theories. The final theory is, therefore, a synthesis of all the data and field notes and is "grounded" in the data (Corbin and Strauss, 1990:6). I believe that applying the grounded theory method helps to come to an accurate and nuanced theory that is specific to the collected data.

In-Depth Interviews

I conducted one-on-one interviews with Makungu and CEDET members. I felt this was important, as I was able to gain insights into their personal opinions and thoughts about their individual organization and its relationship with the other one in question. This thesis has been generated from these opinions and does not reflect those of other Afro-Peruvian activists as individuals or organizations.

In total, I conducted twenty-three one-on-one interviews with all but two core members of Makungu, and five out of the seven members of the CEDET board of directors. These interviews took place for the most part in the CEDET headquarters
during regular hours of operation, in the apartment I resided in for the duration of my stay in Lima, or at the houses of Makungu members. The interviews were very informal. I had developed a rapport with two of the CEDET members I interviewed during my first trip to Peru two years before and had maintained contact through email. I was quickly introduced to the other members when I returned to the office during my first week in town and chatted with all of them over lunch before coming back periodically to speak with them individually.

I spent around a week meeting Makungu members either at social events, meetings or due to house visits before I began my interviews with everyone aside from the friend with whom I stayed. At the first meeting I attended I introduced myself as the friend of one of the members, and as a Canadian master’s student conducting thesis work, and explained my interests. The secretary sent an email to members not in attendance about my work and I set up interviews with them accordingly. To supplement the actual interviews, I frequently engaged in conversation with members during outings, meetings and parties, or overheard comments that added insight and new dimensions to the data I had gathered. These varied observations and interactions enriched my knowledge about activism, politics, race, and interactions between the youth and older generations, and specifically between Makungu and CEDET. I transcribed and translated the interview segments that appear throughout this work from Spanish to English, but I include the original statements as footnotes for reference.

**Archival Analysis**

In efforts to understand the official mandates of CEDET, Makungu and the Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo (The Black Francisco Congo Movement, or the MNFC), the organization that CEDET broke away from, I reviewed archival publications,
pamphlets and booklets about the groups, as well as the websites of CEDET and Makungu, and Makungu’s blog. I spent time after CEDET interviews browsing the small library in the center that contains documents pertaining to the MNFC, as well as their other publications, and got permission to photocopy, and in some cases, keep articles and handouts. I also obtained pamphlets from past Makungu award ceremonies in order to get a better idea of the structure of their biggest event, and kept newspaper articles about recent events that both organizations had been involved in along with other activist groups in the city.

Ethical Dilemmas

The most salient ethical dilemma manifested itself most clearly during the process of writing this thesis, and revolves around the task of concealing identities. Makungu and CEDET are two tight-knit groups made up of individuals who work together, but especially in the case of the former group, are also friends, relatives, and are actively involved in each other’s lives – that is to say, they know one another well. Furthermore, both organizations are, as will become clear in later chapters, inextricably tied to one another, both through the fact that Makungu was formed by youth that had been part of a CEDET leadership program, and because some are also related by kinship to veteran group directors. All of this is to say that I quickly became aware that I would have to take extra care to ensure that the quotations that I included and descriptions I gave allowed their voices and opinions to be heard without revealing their identities lest the research results cause friction among the organizations’ members. At times, I debated how and even whether or not to broach some of the themes that we discussed for this same reason. My decisions to include or exclude information were ultimately made in order to comply with my obligation to protect those who kindly sat and talked with me;
however, these discrepancies will need to be addressed and resolved by these two
groups if they want to develop a better relationship, which made it all the more difficult
at times to resist presenting them here.

I would not have been able to write this thesis without the cooperation and
generosity of Makungu and CEDET, and as this work is a reflection of their
organizations and interactions, I intend to return copies of this document to each group
in hopes that it will be of some use to them.

**Chapter Overviews**

In Chapter 2, I begin by outlining the emergence of racial and cultural identity
formation among Afro-Peruvians in Lima through music and dance. I introduce the
beginning of social activism in response to the lack of attention that theatrical
productions brought to the deep-seated issues of racial, social, political and economic
inequality. I also examine current shifts in theoretical perspectives on social
movements, and focus on new social movement theory and its application in Latin
America. I finally introduce Makungu and CEDET, their visions and activities, and their
unique relationship through the ethnographic data I collected.

Chapter 3 draws parallels between youth and veteran activist opinions about major
problems that face Afro-descendants in Peru. Here, I show that these actors agree
upon four major problems that must be addressed. They are: the lack of visibility, the
inability to access education, covert racism, and a lack of an ethnic identity that
incorporates a social and political consciousness. I intersperse interview segments with
my reflections on the literature about historical constructions of race and ethnicity, along
with a discussion on multi-cultural politics in Peru, the systemic facilitation of inequality,
and the daily perpetuation of racist discourses in effort to provide a nuanced description of Peru, and of Lima as seen by these activists and as depicted by scholarly texts.

In Chapter 4, I focus in on the sporadic relationship between Makungu and CEDET, and also note the fact that members express a desire to increase their interactions and to learn from one another. I then consider some of the concerns that CEDET members raise, including their skepticism about Makungu’s event content and means of recruiting new members. I revisit Manheim’s essay about generations and his concept of fresh contact (1952), and work the concepts of active and passive generations into this discussion in order to provide a theoretical framework through which to understand these differences. I round out the chapter by trying to assess the current Makungu-CEDET relationship and suggest some potential steps that could be used to improve it. I do this by introducing key factors that help to strengthen intergenerational relationships, and others that hinder this progress. I then reference ethnographic data to gauge which criteria this relationship meets. The results of this comparison show that the relationship meets one of four of criteria that facilitate strong relationships, and two out of three that inhibit them. In Chapter 5, I restate my research questions and the major trends I have delineated before considering the limitations of my thesis findings. I finish by suggesting future avenues for research that could be undertaken.
CHAPTER 2
FRAMING AFRO-LIMEÑO SOCIAL ACTIVISM

In this chapter, I introduce the two organizations on which this thesis is focused: the Centro de Desarrollo Étnico (the Center for Ethnic Development, or CEDET), and Makungu para el Desarrollo (Makungu for Development, or Makungu). In order to contextualize these activist groups, I begin with a brief overview of the emergence of Afro-Peruvian social organizations and movements beginning with the cultural renaissance of the 1950s up until the 1990s. I then introduce the Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo (the Black Francisco Congo Movement, or MNFC), the short-lived Afro-Peruvian social movement that created CEDET as a technical offshoot. I introduce CEDET, and outline its vision, organizational structure, and projects, outlining the environment in which youth integration became an important part of the organization, and Makungu was subsequently created. I conclude with an ethnography of Makungu in preparation for the analysis that I present in the third and fourth chapters.

Theorizing Social Movements

In the introduction to their edited edition The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy, Escobar and Alvarez (1992) reference sociologist Elizabeth Jelin’s definition of social movements as collectives “engaged in a significant ‘political struggle in terms of access to the mechanisms of power but also [a] cultural [struggle] in the search for different identities” (1990: 206 in Escobar and Alvarez 1992: 4). They do, conversely, provide a detailed and convincing explanation as to why they and other scholars hesitate to try to find a single definition that can adequately encompass an array of movements that are extremely diverse and complex.
While some scholars deny that it is possible to find a sufficient definition (Touraine 1988: 63 in Escobar and Alvarez 1992: 6), others question whether social movements share common features or if the supposed similarities noted by some of their colleagues only exist because social scientists have sought them out (Cardoso 1987: 32 in Escobar and Alvarez 1992: 6). Others still forego a definition and instead have created frameworks for analyzing collective action (Laclau and Mouffe 1985 in Escobar and Alvarez 1992: 7).

Although there is uncertainty about how to best go about conceptualizing social movements, this same uncertainty seems to stem from the fact that academics agree that these movements are extremely diverse. Movements consist of a variety of different kinds of organizations with different outlooks, and can be fleeting or can last for extended periods of time operating under a continuous or a shifting vision. With regards to Latin America, shifts in theoretical approaches to social movements, resistance, and social change away from the classical Marxist and Durkheimian paradigms began in the 1980s as scholars noted the rise of collective action in the 1960s and 1970s that defied these traditional frameworks (Laclau 1987). In their article “Social Movements: Actors, Theories, Expectations,” Calderón, Piscitelli and Reyna (1992) explain these deviations as a reflection of the drastic changes and increasing complexity of Latin American societies since the end of the Second World War. This multiplicity gave way to a plethora of new demands that the institutional systems continue to be unable to respond to sufficiently, which in turn gave way to the tensions from which social movements arose. A key difference that the authors note is that in the context of these changes, the state has ceased to be the focal point for social movements, and that Latin American
society is in the midst of a state of inflexion. This has led to movements based on ethics, environmental consciousness, and the concept of identity and autonomy, instead of on the relationship between movement members and the state, and the search for more political power within the same immutable system as seen in earlier movements that lobbied for labor unions, agrarian reform, etc. (1992: 19). These new movements seek to bring about a fundamental change in the very nature of political discourse and practice (1992: 3).

New conceptualizations include three main approaches that contemporary scholars use. These were highlighted in Jean Cohen’s article (1985) “Strategy or identity: New theoretical paradigms and contemporary social movements.” They are the resource mobilization approach, the identity-oriented approach, and the political process approach.

The resource mobilization approach focuses on the tactics, resources and strategies needed for creating and sustaining social movements. Within this approach, theorists consider factors such as management and financial resources, as well as opportunity and group structure and their importance in the mobilization and sustenance of movements.

The identity-oriented paradigm posits that understanding the identity of the collective group that forms the movement is essential to understanding what its course of action should be. However, this approach tends to ignore the contributions of the resource-mobilization paradigm, particularly the role of organization and resources in determining the actions of a particular movement.
Finally, the political process model focuses on the political context in which the movements occur as a way to understand how they affect the political environment. These theorists oppose the resource mobilization model’s lack of consideration of the relationship between collective action and the external political climate that affects its actions. They assume that these external political institutions will oppose social movements and attempt to prevent solidarity among under-represented groups to maintain their control. The issue becomes the relationship between the members of these groups and the larger political body they want to change. Theorists try to understand how this affects the strategies these groups take to achieve their goals.

Scholars such as Monique Marks (1991) are critical of these paradigms, arguing that they do not need to be exclusive and that it is in fact, unproductive to use only one to try to understand the complexity of social movements. A more holistic approach would be better suited and more effective.

**Shifting to New Social Movement Theory**

Disputes over the above-mentioned paradigms continue within the realm of New Social Movement theory, a trend that Laclau (1987) explains in his article “New Social Movements and the Plurality of the Social.” Laclau discusses New Social Movement theory as one that emerged as a way to explain social movements that defied Marxist and Durkheimian theories in the 1960s and 70s and that encompasses the three paradigms that Cohen presented.

To demonstrate the difference between New Social Movement theory and classical theories Laclau points to three key factors that were thought to be interrelated in classical theory but are not in New Social Movement: identity, conflict type and political space (1987: 27).
Identity in classical theory is associated with social structure, specifically with class and conflict that gave way to social movements is understood in accordance with historical transitions, for example, the shift from feudalism to capitalism or from traditional to mass society. Lastly, political involvement is influenced by the former two categories and is conceptualized as a “level” of society where social agents identified by class and conflict period only represent the interests of their class groups in response to the specific conflict era (1985: 27).

Laclau reasons that in the 19th century low wage workers’ social and political participation was determined by their work hours, and thus political identity was determined by class (1985: 28). In contrast, in the 20th century these ties weaken as social agents’ positions became more autonomous and they could not be automatically defined politically by their work (1985: 28). New Social Movement theory allows social movements to be understood as the mobilization of individuals who share common beliefs but retain their differences instead of a reaction to uncontrollable changes in surroundings.

Laclau defends New Social Movement theory as a viable paradigm for understanding social movements in Latin America in the face of those who say that this theory is not suitable for analysis in Latin America among other developing regions and that class analysis is still a valid method because they are not yet fully developed (1985: 29). Laclau argues that in the case of Latin America, class analysis has never been a method that could fully explain human interaction or how society functions and as such deems it a useful method by which only to begin to understand social movements in the region (Laclau 1985: 29). Laclau’s defense is supported by other scholars of the politics
of race and ethnicity in Latin America, such as Marisol de la Cadena (2000), Susan Eckstein (2001), João Costa Vargas (2004) and Peter Wade (2010, 2009), and, as such, is a plausible paradigm for race-focused social movements in Latin America, among other regional contexts.

The Afro-Peruvian Cultural Renaissance: the Creation of Identity and the Beginnings of Social Activism

There is an increasing number of sources outside of activist group documents that recalls the history of Afro-Peruvian social activism and organizations (Golash-Boza 2011; Thomas 2011; Feldman 2006). To situate Afro-descendant activism in Peru and, more importantly, in Lima properly, I must first consider the cultural renaissance that began in the 1930s in which an Afro-Peruvian identity was created. The birth of this new identity eventually led some Afro-Peruvians to question the racial hierarchy that oppressed them, and to demand recognition outside of the musical arena and rights for their communities.

Much of the literature about Afro-Peruvians focuses on music and culture, which in the Peruvian context is inherently tied to identity formation and, in more recent phases of community development, to activism. Feldman (2006) posits that the context within which a musical renaissance arose can be understood by examining one important difference between the Pacific and Atlantic African Diaspora, that being the physical and cultural relationship between Europeans and Africans during the slavery and colonial eras throughout the country. She explains that unlike in other Latin American countries like Brazil and Colombia, in Peru the number of enslaved Africans who worked in urban settings and lived in close contact with the New World-born descendants of Spanish conquerors, or criollo (creole) populations, was comparatively higher than those who
lived in rural areas and were separated from the plantation holding population. As a result the majority of enslaved Africans and their descendants were culturally assimilated into *criollo* culture; their cultural practices were absorbed into this elite culture, and both Afro-Peruvians and the resulting culture came to be referred to as *criollo*. This prompted the general disappearance of a distinct African or Afro-descendant ethnic group, and the restriction of the remaining practices of African-derived music, dance and culture to private home settings largely in rural areas where Afro-Peruvians and the white elite were not in as close proximity (e.g., Feldman, 2006).

The Afro-Peruvian musical renaissance began in the context of the mass influx of Andean peoples into Lima in search of work beginning at the start of the 1900s. By the 1930s, faced with a sudden and drastic demographic shift, the white elite had become nostalgic for an idealized version of the colonial era in which they and their black slaves dominated Lima society (Feldman 2006). The influx of Andean peoples was simultaneously mirrored by emigration of Afro-descendants from the rural provinces, as in response to democratization and the increase in social services in Lima, they also made their way to the capital in search of upward social and financial mobility, and brought with them black rural music and dance traditions that were unheard of in the city (Luciano and Rodriguez Pastor 1995). The sudden boom in the urban Andean population and the mixing of rural and urban Afro-descended traditions created the necessary conditions for the white upper class to focus on Afro-descendants and their culture as an escapist preoccupation from the menace of the shifting demographics as this culture was more familiar and represented a population that was much smaller and less threatening.
In the 1950s and 1960s Afro-Peruvian dance and theatre groups appeared in Lima. The first was the Pancho Fierro Company, followed by Grupo Cumananá, a watershed group that integrated cultural revival with black activism, founded by siblings Victoria and Nicomedes Santa Cruz. Both Santa Cruzes are still revered as cultural pioneers for creating and re-creating what is now recognized as Afro-Peruvian dance and music. They drew inspiration from the watercolor paintings of Pancho Fierro, the memories of the family members of the company, and their imaginations, as well as Afro-Cuban and Brazilian song and dance. In the 1970s another group called Perú Negro emerged and further contributed to the work of several musical families, key among them the Santa Cruces. Music and dance came to define Afro-Peruvian identity.

While undertones of social justice and anti-racism were embedded in some music in the early era of the renaissance, by the 1970s and early 1980s Perú Negro began to receive funding from the military government in its effort to support national art forms. As the group began performing in tourist restaurants, it omitted commentary about race relations and did not address social invisibility and inequality. Instead it further perpetuated a widespread stereotype about the black community – that its purpose was solely to entertain.

With the waning public discussion about the deplorable socio-economic condition of Afro-Peruvians and the rise of the Civil Rights movement and radical Black American activism in the United States, concerned Afro-Peruvians began to form social groups in order to define their identity outside of dance and music, and to oppose the racist and classist hierarchy that continued to oppress them.
**A Note on Collective Action Groups**

Before proceeding with a more descriptive discussion on Afro-descendant organizations in Lima, I would like to provide some definitions of various kinds of collective action groups that will be introduced, including both Makungu and CEDET. These groups include three different kinds of nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs: operational NGOs and community-based organizations, or CBOs.

According to the World Bank, an NGO is a "private organization that pursues activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development" (World Bank website, 2001). Generally speaking, the Bank applies this term to non-profit organizations that are separate from the government, and that at least to some extent depend on donations and volunteer work. Given the above definition, the acronym ‘NGO’ can be applied to institutions that include churches, lobby groups, and research institutes; however the World Bank divides NGOs into two categories – advocacy or operational – based on their primary mandates, and it further categorizes organizational NGOs according to the level of society at which they function – community based, national or international (World Bank website, 2001). Operational NGOs design and implement development or development related projects, while advocacy NGOs are primarily concerned with defending or promoting a specific cause, although the Bank has noted an increase in NGOs that do both advocacy and operational work in recent years (World Bank website 2001).

Also called grassroots or people’s organizations, CBOs are not created in order to help others, rather their members are part of the actual community that the organization serves and they are therefore working to benefit their own interests. The
organizations that are introduced below and that are central to this thesis are a mix of both advocacy and operational, and they can all be classified as CBOs as they all focus on a specific demographic in a sub-national region.

This short review of a sub-sector of collective action organizations hints at the heterogeneous nature of social movements as they can consist of any combination of these groupings and more. The variation in specialization, in funding, in possible time constraints, and in mandate speaks to the complex nature of movements, and the importance of negotiation among these kinds of collectives in defining and re-defining the parameters of a movement.

**Early Afro-Peruvian Activist Groups**

The first organized groups of Afro-Peruvians were short-lived, and included groups such as the *Grupo de los Melamodernos* and the *Grupo Harlem*. They first appeared in the 1960s, inspired by the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, and they were identity-based, focused on African genealogy and racial pride (Luciano and Rodriguez Pastor, 1995).

In 1972 the *Asociación Cultural para la Juventud Negra Peruana* (the Cultural Association of Black Peruvian Youth, or ACEJUNEP) was formed in 1983 and with international funding, it executed several rural community projects in Afro-descendant regions (Golash-Boza 2011). Its goal was to improve life standards for Afro-descendants. The youth who formed the group had a strong influence on their peers in Lima and the surrounding districts as they continued to develop an identity and question the inequalities that they faced (Luciano and Rodriguez, 1995: 281-282; Thomas 2011). Unfortunately the group quickly dispersed due to lack of funding; and lack of support from the Afro-Peruvian community and the society at large. Fortunately, many of the members of ACEJUNEP would continue their work in future organizations.
The *Instituto de Investigaciones Afroperuanas* (Institute for Afro-Peruvian Studies, or INAPE) was founded in 1983 and with international funding, executed several rural community projects in Afro-descendant regions (Golash-Boza 2011). Again, the lack of sustained funding forced the group to separate soon after it began, but some former members came together again in 1986 to form the *Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo* (The Black Francisco Congo Movement, or MNFC), the only Afro-descendant social movement that Peru has ever seen.

**A Resumé of the MNFC**

The MNFC was officially formed on November 30th, 1986 in Lima, Peru by a multi-racial group of Peruvians, all of whom were concerned for the well being of their nation’s Afro-descendant population (Thomas 2011). The movement bears the name Francisco Congo in memory of the notorious 17th century maroon leader whose image represents resistance, liberty and the necessity for Afro-Peruvians to present a unified front in order to defend their culture and autonomy. Created in response to the sub-standard living conditions, restricted access to public services, racism and invisibility faced by the Afro-descendant population, the MNFC sought to serve as a representative of this community in order to offset its economic, social and cultural marginalization, and to fight against racism in Peru (*Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo* profile booklet 1996).

The MNFC made a series of important political demands to the regional and national governments on behalf of Afro-Peruvians as a whole. These included an outline of the obligations that the Peruvian state had to ethnic minority groups; clear legislation against racism, discrimination and segregation; the recognition of specific provinces and regions with significant Afro-descended populations as historic sites and priority regions for development; the integration of Afro-Peruvian history and
contributions to the nation into all levels of the education system; and execution of an African descendent census (*Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo* profile booklet 1996). Some of their demands were met. For instance, there are now two Afro-Peruvian museums – one in Lima and another in Zaña, a northern town recognized for its African presence. Also, June 4th has been recognized officially as el *Día de la Cultura Afroperuana* (Day of Afro-Peruvian Culture) in honor of Nicomedes Santa Cruz. The MNFC was also heavily involved in education and awareness programs that drew attention to the disproportionately low socioeconomic status of the African descendant population (Thomas 2011).

**The Geography of the MNFC**

One of the MNFC’s primary goals was to create a nation-wide Afro-descendant movement. It attempted to achieve this goal by implementing MNFC bases throughout the country in areas with a larger Afro-descendant presence, mainly in the coastal region. The home base in Lima was instrumental in facilitating regional and national meetings with members of the various bases and other activists, an exhaustive effort and a reminder of one of the many obstacles that hinder unity – the fact that Afro-Peruvian communities are widely dispersed along the coast and throughout the country (*Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo* profile booklet 1996). Although the MNFC was short-lived, the organization is recognized as one of the oldest Afro-descendant organizations in Latin America, and as the only Afro-Peruvian national movement the nation has seen (Thomas 2011). Its legacy continues in the activist work of those former members who continue to work for Afro-Peruvians. After the rupture in the late 1990s, the group weakened and now exists as the current movement does – in name more so than in any tangible form.
Fractures in the MNFC

In the early and late 1990s as the movement was building momentum two internal ruptures took place, resulting in the establishment of three autonomous groups. The first split, in the early 1990s, occurred along generational lines. According to MNFC official documents (*Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo* profile booklet 1996), though the organization had begun to fracture earlier, the decisive moment was in 1991. These documents state that fractures had occurred, dividing the youth from the older members on the subject of development plans and the future of the organization. When someone proposed a new group dedicated to the defense of Afro-Peruvian human rights, el *Movimiento Pro Derechos Humanos del Negro* (the Pro-Black Human Rights Movement, or MPDHN) at a national meeting in 1991, the youth members congregated around this new branch, and were accused of disrupting attempts to foster unity. The MPDHN, which managed to obtain funding, further distanced itself from the MNFC and began to function as an independent organization. It now provides free legal assistance to those who cannot afford the charges and encourages Afro-descendants to exercise their civil and political rights (Luciano and Rodriguez Pastor 1995). The second rupture resulted in the birth of CEDET.

The Emergence of CEDET

Prior to the creation of CEDET, the MNFC served two functions: to create a national social movement for Afro-Peruvians which was done by creating regional bases in Afro-descendant communities; and to develop and execute community development projects in said communities. In 1996, with funding from the World Bank and Diakonia,¹

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¹ Diakonia is a Swedish international development co-operation organization that supports partner organizations around the world. The christian organization works to achieve fair and sustainable
and a greater initiative to increase productivity in both areas, the MNFC decided to create a distinct collective that would dedicate itself to development projects while the main body continued to focus on national mobilization (CEDET profile booklet). Three years later on July 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1999, CEDET was officially recognized as the technical branch of the MNFC. It was composed of MNFC members and its intent was to focus solely on community development projects.

CEDET severed ties with the MNFC during this reorganization period, just prior to the pending federal elections in which the current president, Alberto Fujimori, sought to re-instate himself (Thomas 2011). In the pre-election period a number of MNFC members proposed that the organization support a Congress candidate whose political views aligned with those of Fujimori, a highly controversial figure in modern Peruvian history who is accredited by some for ending the civil war, but scrutinized by others for being implicated in numerous human rights violations, which the MNFC had previously denounced (CEDET profile booklet: 4). The controversy deepened as the candidate was accused of having used the MNFC as a vehicle to promote Fujimorismo among the Afro-Peruvian communities it served (CEDET profile booklet: 4).

These two facts catalyzed an internal rupture, dividing MNFC members according to their support for or opposition to Fujimori’s politics, or Fujimorismo, and past actions in relation to the civil war against Sendero Luminoso, the Shining Path. CEDET founders – all of whom strongly opposed Fujimori – resolved to separate from the MNFC and became the independent NGO that it remains to be (CEDET profile development, and promotes democracy, respect for human rights, and gender equality. Diakonia is funded by donations made by individuals and congregations, as well as Sida, the Swedish international development agency, and occasionally by the European Union and other international organizations. (Diakonia website 2011).
booklet: 4). The former MNFC continues today as the *Movimiento Nacional Afroperuano Francisco Congo* (the National Afro-Peruvian Francisco Congo Movement, or the -). Unfortunately, the movement has dissipated; its vision and aims are unclear, and national activity has ceased (Thomas 2011).

As a legacy of the MNFC, CEDET’s mission statement positions the group as a body that continues the work of the prior organization. “...Using the knowledge and experience acquired since the 1980s from on-site development and social awareness promotion to promote the participation of Afro-Peruvians in state politics that will permit us as a collective to contribute to the betterment of our society.” (CEDET website, 2011).² The NGO develops and executes projects in Afro-Peruvian communities with financial support from national and international institutions and is sustained by community support and volunteer efforts.

CEDET emphasizes community activism and encourages self and communal advocacy as an important factor in social change. It takes a holistic approach to community development by viewing community members as active agents in control of their own advancement (CEDET profile booklet). The organization also places high value on community engagement and unity in the process of collective development and works with communities to develop unique processes of development that best suit the collectives (CEDET profile booklet). CEDET’s three major goals are to raise general awareness about the problems that Afro-Peruvian communities face, to contribute to development in Afro-descendant communities, and to improve the quality of life for their

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² “Potenciar el accionar político del Movimiento Afroperuano proporcionando los conocimientos y experiencias adquiridas, desde la década de los ochenta, en el campo del desarrollo y promoción social, con el fin de promover la participación afroperuana en la incidencia de las políticas de Estado que nos permitan como Pueblo contribuir a la mejora de nuestra sociedad.”
members through integrated projects with residents and in conjunction with local and regional governments (CEDET profile booklet). In addition to efforts to strengthen an Afro-Peruvian ethno-cultural identity, the group occasionally helps to mediate and reconcile disputes between Afro-Peruvian communities and varying levels of government.

CEDET currently runs ongoing programs on human rights and citizenship, anti-racism education, and communication in four regions with noted Afro-descendant populations: Piura, Lambayeque, Ica and Lima (CEDET website 2011). In addition, the NGO edits and releases books and other literature about the Afro-Peruvian community as well as on the results of its completed projects and important regional and national meetings (CEDET website, 2011). It also facilitates workshops, conferences and public events pertaining to activism, awareness and anti-racism.

CEDET has eight base members who hold the positions of executive director, administrator, project director, publications director, education director, history and culture director, training directory, and secretary. The executive director, Jaime, is the most-well known member in the public sphere but the other members are recognized by the Afro-Peruvian activist community for their individual and collective work. Members are largely university educated and had prior experience with activism in other groups before creating or joining this NGO. Below I introduce the core founders and current members of CEDET, their educational backgrounds and their involvement in activism, as well as my initial correspondence with each member and where I conducted their interview.
Jaime. Jaime is a fifty-one year old Afro-descendant. He studied at the Universidad Particular Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, and has been the executive director of CEDET since its inception in 1999. I first met Jaime in 2009 when I interviewed him and another CEDET member for my documentary film and have stayed in touch since. In the summer of 2011, I met Jaime in his office one morning for a little over an hour to discuss his views on the state of current Afro-Peruvian social activism. I was particularly interested in his opinions about the inter-generational relationship between CEDET and Makungu, as well as his recountal of the process of the CEDET’s split from the MNFC.

Alba. Alba is from Northern littoral Peru (Figure 2-1). She and I also remained in touch after my first visit to Lima in 2009. Alba became involved in the Afro-Peruvian social rights struggle in 1995 as a member of the MNFC and went with CEDET as it branched off to form the technical wing of the group. After I had spent a few days in the office chatting with her and flipping through old MNFC journals, she met with me after lunch one day to talk about her involvement and outlook. Alba graduated from the Universidad Particular San Martín de Porres and is the Communications Director. She is also part of the editorial team that prepares and publishes works through the organization.

Lidia. Lidia is a middle-aged Afro-Peruvian woman from Lima. She received an accounting degree from the Instituto Nacional de Comercio Argentina and is the accountant for CEDET. Lidia has been involved in social activism in Peru for approximately thirty years and began because of her brother who, eager to fight for the rights of Afro-descendants in Peru, became a founding member of the MNFC. While he eventually left the country to work with Afro-descendants in Argentina, Lidia continues to
work with CEDET as she has since the technical branch was created. She spoke to me fondly about the beginnings of the MNFC as well as her hopes for stronger future relations between CEDET and Makungu when we met mid-way through my trip.

**Laura.** Laura met with me in the common area of the CEDET office a few days after I spoke with Lidia. Born in Aucallama (Figure 2-1), a town located on the Peruvian coast just north of Lima. Laura described the extensive work she had done in the past with youth in high-risk areas of Lima and the surrounding districts. Laura was one of the two initial founders of the school of leaders and an advisor of Makungu. She attended the *Instituto Técnico Superior Lucie Antunez de Mayolo* and continues to work with youth as an outreach educator in CEDET.

**Mariana.** Mariana is a forty-six year old teacher who became involved with Afro-descendant issues at eighteen years old as a student at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru. She first became a member of INAPE but after it dissolved she aligned with CEDET and has worked both with the organization and as a teacher since. Mariana and I met in the house of the friend with whom I was staying one Sunday morning after she finished a class. As the other CEDET member directly involved with Makungu as a former supervisor and current honorary advisor, as well as the mother of one of the youth group members, Mariana provided great insight into the inter-generational relationship between the two groups.

**CEDET Activities**

**Publications**

Another important focus of CEDET is the production of books and reports that concern the Afro-Peruvian population. These publications are authored by scholars, activists, teachers and the NGO itself, and address issues of pedagogy for teaching,
Afro-descendant history, culture and contributions, children’s stories from the older generations of Afro-Peruvians, slavery and more recently, books about gender and women’s struggles. These publications are important sources for the community and the nation, as the information they offer is rarely available through other publishing houses.

The publications that CEDET has produced include studies that the NGO has undertaken in attempts to survey the Afro-Peruvian community at large, analyze the major problems it faces and the claims they have constructed in response to their results that they believe will begin to resolve these problems. CEDET has collaborated with other organizations and NGOs to realize some of these studies. These collaborators include Makungu, *El Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo* (The United Nations Program for Development, or PNUD), the *Centro Cultural de España* (Spanish Cultural Center), and the Ford Foundation.

**Activity in Lima**

In Lima, CEDET partakes in cultural and social events organized by other organizations and groups in the city that encourage human rights and anti-racism work. Members frequent conferences organized by universities, such as the *Encuentro de Derechos Humanos* (Conference for Human Rights), table at the Anti-discrimination fair, march in parades for women’s rights, and attend cultural festivals such as the *Festival Internacional del Cajón Peruano* (International Peruvian Cajón Festival).

CEDET also hosts its own workshops, book launches and information sessions that focus on a wide range of pertinent topics such as education, identity and politics at which guest speakers share their knowledge and attendees are free to ask questions and buy books.
New projects that focus on women, such as the *Coalición de Mujeres Afroperuanas* (Coalition of Afro-Peruvian women), include activists from other groups in the city like Makungu and Perú Afro, a women’s group. With regards to collaborative efforts, CEDET has also spoken out about blatant acts of racism. Most recently, they were part of a large campaign to remove the character *El Negro Mama*\(^3\), a grotesque blackface character played by mestizo actor Jorge Benavides who hosts the national comedy special that airs at prime time on Saturday nights. In early 2011 CEDET joined forces with other prominent organizations in efforts to have the character removed, citing it as one of many examples of the rampant, largely covert racism that can be seen throughout the country. The NGO played a central role in this campaign alongside Lundu, another Afro-Peruvian organization that focuses on gender and media. This effort resulted in frustration for CEDET members as they disagreed with Lundu staff about the framing of their complaints and felt that their efforts were eclipsed by Lundu, driving a rift between the two groups and bringing about their resolve to decline future offers to work with this organization. The results of this campaign were not what had been hoped for by any of the organizations, as the character has not been removed from the show; however the surge of opposition to *El Negro Mama* as a racist figure has had serious impact on the nation as everyone from Jorge Benavides to human rights lawyers voiced their opinions as the nation looked on.

**Introducing Youth to Social Activism**

One of CEDET’s earliest goals was to facilitate the development of young Afro-descendant leaders and youth awareness in general (CEDET profile booklet). In 2003

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\(^3\) The Spanish word, ‘mama’ differs from ‘mamá,’ meaning mother. Mama without the accent as it appears here means stupid, or dumb. Therefore, El Negro Mama translates as ‘the stupid black man.’
CEDET implemented the Escuela de Formación de Líderes Afroperuanos José ‘Pepe’ Luciano (The José ‘Pepe’ Luciano Training School for Afro-Peruvian Leaders). Funded by Tierra de Hombres de Alemania, and the Ford Foundation, the school set up various centers in Lima, Piura, Lambayeque and Ica with the intention to provide leadership training to Afro-descendant youth in Afro-Peruvian organizations (CEDET profile booklet). The curriculum focuses on ethnic, political, and human relations in order to foster better coordination among these organizations and national youth networks. This effort was aided by the Sociedad Política (Political Society), an initiative that provides support for various organizations that facilitate youth leadership programs in the attempt to provide attendees with a political foundation that reflects the ethnic and social diversity of Peru (CEDET profile booklet).

During my interview with Jaime he explains the objective behind the creation of an institute for leadership training:

CEDET began to develop a series of themes without resources but thanks to a few organizations we were able to realize them. And in the school for Afro-Peruvian leaders we were able to plant them clearly. The objective was to prepare the youth so that they would continue to develop themselves and become involved in social mobilization, etc.  

The Formation of Makungu

In Lima, CEDET members Laura and Mariana assumed responsibility for a small group of youth who enrolled in the school for leaders and had approached the organization heads to express a desire to create their own youth group. Although other youth were recruited by the students from the leadership program, and by Laura and

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4 “CEDET comienza a desarrollar una serie de cuestiones sin recursos pero gracias a algunas organizaciones pudimos. Y hace la escuela de líderes afroperuanos cosecharlos lucidas. El objetivo era preparar a jóvenes para que vayan desarrollándose y entrar a la dinámica de movilización social, etcétera.”

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Mariana, this collective of young people who would eventually become Makungu in 2004 was composed in its majority of students of the school. Alba made the connection between the two groups very clear: "Makungu came out of CEDET. They were trained here, we educated them on all sorts of principles: organization, identity, self-esteem, development, and finally history and politics." From her comments, I deducted that the first wave of makungueros, or Makungu members, were like-minded individuals who shared the basic ideas about activism and awareness that CEDET’s school had fostered and, therefore, probably mirrored some of the organization’s outlooks.

Curious to find out why Makungu separated from CEDET, I ask Jaime who responds:

The Makungu youth wanted to become part of CEDET but CEDET was a closed organization, an NGO. It wasn’t a social movement. Because of this they couldn’t enter into the group and so they opted to create Makungu. And Makungu was inside of CEDET, that is, it became a sort of youth Afro-Peruvian movement...and they took Makungu to other spaces, which I like because that space is much more open, and that was the point of Makungu: to bring a lot of youth into this space.

Jaime’s explanation points to the need felt by the organization to attract and indoctrinate Afro-Peruvian youth; it was a necessary initiative, he tells me, because youth play an integral role in maintaining an organization and, in this case, developing a potential future movement. It also points to the need for youth to obtain a certain level of autonomy as a collective in order to voice their opinions and attract their peers.

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5 “Makungu sale de CEDET. Ellos se formaron aquí, nosotros capacitamos en todos los temas de organización, de identidad, de auto-estima, de desarrollo, en fin, historia, política.”

6 “Los chicos de Makungu querían formar parte de CEDET pero CEDET ‘era una organización cerrada, una ONG, no era un movimiento social. Por lo tanto ellos no podían entrar a la estructura de CEDET entonces CEDET es como que ellos no podían entrar y ellos optaron por establecer Makungu. Y Makungu estaba al interior de CEDET. O sea, se replicó y entró como el movimiento juvenil afroperuano. …Y se llevan Makungu a otros espacio que me parece bien porque es un espacio mucho mas abierto, porque eso era la idea de Makungu – congregar mucho mas jóvenes a este espacio.”
My conversation with Mariana presents another perspective on the separation from CEDET and youth independence. As one of the members who worked closely with the youth group and the original members of Makungu, she shares her opinion on Makungu’s separation and independence:

When Laura and I were assembling Makungu and inviting the members, they began to mature and it became clear to me that Makungu would always need to be an independent institution. Makungu needed to walk and fly. And well. And they have done it, I think they’ve done it well. So, I am not surprised by Makungu, I love Makungu. They need to go through their own learning process, they need to make their mistakes, bleed, clean themselves up and continue to advance. That’s it. Just like any other organization has the right to do, for me it seems necessary...So I don’t know why chose the name they did because they chose it themselves. They made their choice and their proposal and set up their meetings and decided on a name and chose a logo, and that’s how it went, that’s how Makungu was born. So it is an organization because they have their dynamic and we have our dynamic, and they have their theme that has to do with working with youth, and we have ours that has to do with organizational processes and that’s it, isn’t it?

Susana’s testimony expresses her recognition of the need for youth autonomy, the importance of a collective that, as Alba said, “speaks the same language.”

I question Susana further about the first group of Makungueros – who were they and how did they come together? She informs me, as did the other CEDET members, that the first wave was made up of students from the school. However, she also tells me a crucial piece of

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7 “Cuando estábamos en tal con Laura gestando Makungu y invitando a los muchachos así que ellos comenzaran a emplumarse y todo lo demás, a mí me quedó claro que Makungu tenía que ser institución independiente siempre. ... Makungu tenía que caminar y volar. Y bien. Y lo han hecho, creo que lo han hecho bien. Entonces a mi no me sorprende Makungu, me encanta Makungu. Ellos tienen que hacer su propio proceso de aprendizaje, tienen que cometer sus errores, derramar su sangrecita, limpiarse y sigue avanzando. Y ya pues. Como todo la organización tiene derecho a esto, me parece que para eso necesario. ... Entonces no se como se llamara porque el nombre se lo pusieron ellos. Ellos hicieron su selección y su propuesta y hicieron su reunión y proclamaron su nombre y buscar su logo y así fue, así fue. Makungu nació así. Entonces es una organización porque ellos siguen su dinámica y nosotros tenemos nuestra dinámica, y ellos tienen su asunto que tiene que ver con trabajar con jóvenes y nosotros tenemos nuestro asunto que tiene que ver con procesos organizativos y ya, eso es, no?”

8 “Tiene el mismo lenguaje.”
information that is key to understanding what would reveal itself to be the complex bond between the youth group and the NGO: some of the members were children of the founders and current staff of CEDET. Thus the two separate entities are joined not only by basic approach, but also by kinship and “blood.” Susana confirms this fact when I ask her if the two now separate organizations remain in contact. She replies: “All the time. All the time because the nephews and nieces, the children of CEDET, the genetic children are also in Makungu, so there is no other way.” Along with non-related members of the school, these young people are both the figurative and the literal second generation of Afro-Peruvian activists within this sphere.

Potential for CEDET-Makungu collaborations

CEDET directors see great potential for Makungu to recruit other youth and to increase involvement in social and political awareness and activism in a way that CEDET members cannot because of their age differences and their specialization foci that are neither solely nor directly turned towards young people. The directors express their interest in working with Makungu and developing a stronger relationship that would extend beyond the general support that both groups provide to each other. This would include meetings, opportunities to learn from one another and potentially to collaborate on future projects as they had to some extent in the past.

Shifting Focus: The Workings of Makungu

Upon the 2003 inauguration of the José ‘Pepe’ Luciano Training School for Afro-Peruvian Leaders, CEDET directors Laura Muñoz and Mariana Quiroga began the process of recruiting youth from various neighborhoods in Lima with the intent to

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9 “Todo el tiempo. Todo el tiempo porque los sobrinos, los hijos de CEDET, los genéticos, están también en Makungu entonces no hay otra.”
increase youth activism in Lima, the capital. One of the main hopes of this effort was to develop a new group of political and social leaders who could become involved at various levels of government and bring a voice to the needs of Peru’s Afro-descendants in their various communities. From among these recruits a smaller collective formed, one that would eventually become autonomous. Many of these individuals had recently graduated from high school and were working in blue-collar positions in Lima proper and the surrounding areas. After going through CEDET’s School of Leaders program, the group decided to separate, forming its own organization, and incorporating an African worldview, “Makungu,” meaning soul of the ancestors in a Bantu language, into their full name: Makungu Para el Desarrollo. The new collective quickly determined its mandate: to make visible, to vindicate and to valorize Afro-Peruvian culture, and to fight against the racism that oppresses the Afro-Peruvian population and restricts its access to necessary political and social resources, and a better quality of life. The not-for-profit organization, now in its seventh year, has a special focus on education, which it believes is crucial to the advancement of individuals, the community, and social change.

The Membership Demographic

Makungu’s original members varied in socio-economic background, education levels, gender and age; however, the educational demographic has since shifted, and the majority of members now hold or are working towards university degrees. Original members who have witnessed this change give varying reasons for this shift, though few seem to converge. Some state that the discourse of the organization has changed and a more academic perspective has been employed, which discouraged members who did not have the scholastic background to engage equally in discussions, causing them to leave the group, and simultaneously attracting new individuals who were able to
engage comfortably in the new environment. However, other members claim that those
who left did so because of other obligations and that the demographic shift happened
naturally and unintentionally.

Currently, Makungu puts emphasis on recruiting youth with specific skills or
specializations that can enhance the dynamic and development of the organization.
These skills generally fit into categories such as campaigning, publicity, finance,
activism and event planning. New recruits trickle in throughout the year, and show
interest in the group for various reasons, from wanting to learn more about Afro-
Peruvian history and participate in activism to simple curiosity. Over all, recruitment
rates remain low, but select original members continue to be actively involved. There
are approximately twenty regular members and about ten others who are less involved
but still considered active participants, resulting in the maintenance of a stable
organization with a low turnover rate. These frequent members vary in age from
nineteen to thirty-three, many of whom are university students or working as lawyers,
police personnel, veterinarians, bellhops, and teachers.

Administration

Makungu currently operates under one main director, Ronaldo, a thirty-three year
old political science master’s degree student who was invited to join Makungu as a
director in 2007. Another director currently resides abroad though he remains abreast
on the goings-on of the group and is included in their administrative decisions. The
organization has four major administrative divisions: the scholarship program that
Ronaldo runs; group finances over which Martín, who makes his living as an
accountant, presides; education and culture, which Verónica oversees; and
communications, the largest section, of which Lulu, Miguel and Luz are in charge.
These positions are awarded based on professional skills, or interests, and the latter two divisions are most active in community outreach work that the group undertakes throughout the year.

**Group Meetings**

Makungu meetings take place every other Saturday evening either at Ronaldo’s house or in the home of another member who lives in a central location. After the majority of members arrive leisurely, conversations turn to the bi-monthly agenda. Topics usually include planning for future events, reports on conferences or other events that members attended in the city, the country or abroad, and a briefing on upcoming events that either Makungu or another Afro-Peruvian group will be holding. Discussions about organizational planning and administration are interspersed with good-natured ribbing and laughter and tea, and at times the host or another member provides light snacks. Once all agenda topics have been discussed members revert to chatting and banter, or a debate about where to go dancing later before heading back out into the night.

These interactions are telling of the nature of the core members who are also close friends and in some cases, blood relatives. Makungu members, who fondly refer to themselves as *makungueros*, are actively involved in each other’s lives; they take trips together during the holidays and attend social functions at times as ambassadors of their organization. They celebrate birthdays, and spend time together on a regular basis outside of their volunteer setting. Most members talk about Makungu as a second family of sorts, referring to the organization as an important part of their lives that continues to encourage their awareness about their identity as Afro-Peruvians, support
their growth, and give them the opportunity to be around like-minded Afro-descendant youth.

**Community Work**

Makungu has become increasingly active in the community over the seven years since its creation, and the group is recognized as one of the most active youth organizations in the country. Given the organization’s mandate that emphasizes increasing social awareness among Afro-Peruvians, Makungu members state that they are committed to creating spaces of consciousness in their community. Annually the group hosts three main events in Lima that have become increasingly popular among circles of Afro-Peruvian activists, youth and other well-known members of the Afro-descendant community, and media recognition at some of these events has increased significantly.

**The afro-Peruvian identity awards**

The biggest event is an award ceremony held on December 3rd every year, the date of the abolition of slavery in Peru. It takes place at the Centro Cultural de España, a well-known locale in the middle of the city where other community events that feature Afro-Peruvian art, dance and music are also held throughout the year and are free and open to the public. This annual event, the Premiación Identidad Afroperuana (the Afro-Peruvian Identity Awards), began four years ago in 2008, in the interest of recognizing and celebrating the contributions of Afro-Peruvians to various sectors of Peruvian society. The program’s aim was to present Afro-descendant youth with new role models since until that point the vast majority of Afro-Peruvian icons were figures from the 1950s and 60s music revival. Makungu members nominate individuals from the community – the majority of who reside in Lima – and defend their choices throughout
the year. Makungu members nominate various individuals from the community, and later the organization democratically votes in order to determine which of the nominees will receive an award. Those selected are informed by the group soon after and are asked to attend.

This event requires external funding, which for Afro-Peruvian organizations is a constant worry, but in this case the bulk of the funds are obtained by soliciting the Mesa de Trabajo Afroperuana del Congreso de la República (Afro-Peruvian Work Table), a congressional labor group that the state recognizes. Although members from the communications branch are often in charge of event planning, other interested members are given the opportunity to orchestrate the ceremony. These coordinators are required to see to preparations, organize the recipients, find performance acts, solicit the media and secure the venue. At times, these activities require a large time commitment and occasionally the use of the coordinators’ own funds to pay upfront for various aspects, for which they are reimbursed by the funding.

In efforts to diversify the awards and recognize Afro-Peruvians from areas outside of the generally overrepresented sectors of music, dance and culinary arts, Makungu’s award ceremony features other categories, such as community leadership, athletics, professionalism and cultural preservation. Makungu has recognized politicians, educators, artists and cultural bearers throughout the community. The distribution of awards is interspersed with performances from prominent artists and groups, singers, and more recently, youth artists who perform conscious rap and reggae. Many of the performers are friends and family of group members, a reflection of the tight-knit relationship between activism and music in this small but prominent community of Afro-
Peruvians. It is the most well attended event, and it continues to grow every year and to receive greater recognition from the wider limeño society.

Other important events include a lunch in July and a White Party during the summer vacations in March, both of which are fundraisers. Tickets are sold at an affordable price for admission to the family-oriented luncheon that generally features a traditional criollo or Afro-Peruvian dish. This event is generally held on a Sunday, which encourages higher attendance and contributes to the familial atmosphere. Music and dancing follow the meal and members sell Makungu shirts that are redesigned every year.

The White Party

The other fundraiser, the White Party, is more of a youth-focused event. Every year around March – summer in Peru – attendees wear white to this night party that also features music, dancing and food, and lasts until dawn at the chosen location. Ticket sales from both the White Party and the lunch go towards the funds for scholarships that Makungu awards to one or two students every year so they may pursue a technical career. Originally named the José Manuel Valdez Program for Educational Support, the name was changed in 2010 to the Juan Manuel Garrido Pozú Award in honor of a veteran member and director who unfortunately passed away from cancer, an incident that continues to resonate deeply with and inspire many of the group members to continue their work in his memory.

The Chocolatada

The final fixed event is the Chocolatada, a street party for children that is held in lower class, historically black neighborhoods throughout Lima proper and the wider province of Lima. Makungu solicits family members, associates and at times
businesses for gift donations in order to provide the young attendees with toys, hot chocolate and *panetón* (Christmas bread), as they partake in activities with family and friends. The lunch, the scholarship fund, and the Chocolatada are promoted by the education and culture, and communications areas of the organization.

**Other community events**

Apart from these occurrences, Makungu hosts special workshops, discussions and other events for Afro-Peruvian awareness in the community, and supports other activist groups and their events by posting event listings on their blog and facebook page. Though not as active as before, the Makungu blog is a space for members to share their thoughts on world events like Barak Obama’s election and inauguration, but also to draw attention to events, summits and conferences pertaining to the international Afro-descendant community that members have attended. Facebook, and more recently Twitter have become main modes of communication and advertising for events in Lima and for group activities. These conduits for mass communication serve as important sites for publicity and as contact locales for current members and potential recruits.

**Collaborative work**

Aside from promoting other activism and identity events in the community, Makungu prides itself on reaching out to and working with other organizations and institutions that support Afro-Peruvians and carry out anti-discrimination work. Members have attended meetings of the *Mesa de Trabajo Afroperuana del Congreso de la República*, often as the only youth attendants. They have also taken part in protests against racism in Lima that directly affects Afro-Peruvians, the most recent of which was the campaign against the Jorge Benavides Saturday night comedy special character, *El Negro Mama* that took place in early 2011 (see p. 45-6).
Recruitment

Recruitment takes place through social networks like Facebook and Twitter, and through word of mouth – through friends, colleagues and family members, though Ronaldo mentions that there is no structured way of recruiting youth. Communications members say that Facebook has made it easier to spread the word about events and information about the group to a wider array of people than before, and some interested youth have used it as a means to get in touch with the group to attend meetings. At one meeting, a few members propose to create and disseminate a virtual newsletter that would include summaries and images from events that the organization and other activist groups hold that pertain to Afro-descendants in the city. The proposed e-newsletter would attract more attention to the group and stir up more interest. Youth from different parts of the city attend events such as the White Party and the awards ceremony, and interest builds in these environments but though a number of youth attend a few meetings, most ultimately decide not to commit. At various points throughout the year, interested recruits are asked to join, a process that requires verbal commitment and is free of charge; however, as mentioned previously, recruitment levels are not high, and current members are constantly faced with the challenge of finding new ways to attract youth. There are a reasonable amount of involvement fluctuations among the core group members with select members balancing outside commitments, living in other areas of the country and abroad, and taking leaves of absences. Though some of the less frequent members resurface for the major events, a smaller core group remains.
Perspectives on the Afro-Peruvian Movement

*Makunguero* opinions vary on the subject of whether or not an Afro-Peruvian movement exists and what state it is in. Most members believe that at this time there is no movement; some reference the Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo as the most recent Afro-descendant movement in the country that has ceased to be productive. The few that do believe that there is a movement say that it is weak and consistently note a lack of unity among the different groups in Lima. They say that while these groups do come together to support campaigns and other large events, continual communication is not a factor in their relationship, although members do believe that they share the same or complimentary goals and outlooks, and simply differ in their direct focuses or their methods of arriving at the same ends. These foci include community development, the acquisition of human rights for Afro-Peruvians, recognition of past and present contributions, access to adequate healthcare and education, and gender equity.

Chapter Summary

The Afro-Peruvian Cultural Renaissance carved out an important space on the national stage for Afro-descendants to begin to define themselves as a distinct racial and ethnic group. However, the eventual perpetuation of a stereotypical image of Afro-Peruvians that portrayed them as entertainers prompted some individuals to unite to fight for social justice for their communities whose marginalization had remained outside of public consciousness. These initial attempts quickly dissipated largely due to a lack of funding, and so the inception of the MNFC, one of the oldest organizations of its kind in Latin America, and a national Afro-descendant movement continues to be regarded as a very important achievement. New Social Movement theory helps to frame this movement as one of many that shifted away from class concerns, and attempts sought
to vie for power, and towards an agenda that rallied around issues of racial inequality, and human rights, and demanded that the state recognize and address these problems.

CEDET's independence initiated a new part of the legacy of the MNFC, and the activists who constitute the NGO have remained actively involved in struggle they were part of in the movement through multiple projects at the local, regional and national levels. The awareness of the need for youth involvement prompted the creation of the Training School for Afro-Peruvian Leaders, and the creation of Makungu. This youth organization has made a name for itself through major events, community work and some collaborative efforts with other activist groups in the city, also around issues of racial inequality and human rights.

Though these two organizations are connected by familial ties and friendship, and at times collaborate on common causes, but there is no indication as to whether or not opinions converge on major issues faced by the community along generational lines. The following chapter examines more ethnographic data in order to answer this question.
Figure 2-1. This map of Peru depicts the provinces, cities and towns that have a noted Afro-descendant presence. (Cimarrones: Comunicación Interétnica Global website 2012).
CHAPTER 3
CONVERGING VISIONS: OUTLINING MAJOR OBSTACLES THAT HINDER SOCIAL JUSTICE

In the interest of finding out where Makungu and CEDET converge and diverge along inter-generational lines with regards to their visions and plans of action, I decided to ask members to identify the most immediate obstacles that they believe Afro-Peruvians face that inhibit the process of creating a movement and making bigger strides towards social justice. Interview responses show that the members of both the youth and veteran organizations agree on what these obstacles are. All but one of the informants regardless of age agree that the lack of visibility, the inability to access education, covert racism, and a lack of a racial identity that incorporates a social and political consciousness must be addressed. These activists understand these issues to be largely intertwined, and in many cases make reference to one or more of the other three while talking about one particular issue. Below I intersperse literature and ethnographic data to contextualize these obstacles socially and historically, and to understand how the members themselves explain them.

Invisibility

The relative invisibility of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America is facilitated by racial ideologies such as blanqueamiento (whitening) and mestizaje (race mixture), which date back to the nation-building era in Latin America. Also culpable are these ideologies’ structural effects, which remain in place today (Andrews 2004; De la Cadena 2001, 2000; Whitten and Torres 1998). The increasing body of literature about the current situation of Afro-Latin Americans recognizes both the historical and present-day processes that enable their nations to assume distorted national identities that exclude their presence. Phillips (1995) attributes the glaring lack of research and data
on Afro-descendant communities in the region and the erroneous state justifications for
the absence of these data to governmental desires to avoid discussions about historical
marginalization. As such, it is understandable that Afro-Latin American advocates, and
organizations – CEDET and Makungu included – widely recognize and are concerned
about overcoming this regional phenomenon.

Some of the informants that identify invisibility as the biggest obstacle state that
Afro-Peruvians are overlooked because the Andean and Amazonian indigenous
peoples are more readily recognized as marginalized collectives within Peru. Verónica,
a veteran Makungu member, explains this to me over peaches and tea one Saturday
afternoon:

The main issue that we face is invisibility. I say that because normally
when we talk about social problems in Peru we talk about the indigenous
peoples, the Andean communities; we even include the isolated indigenous
groups in the Amazon, but we rarely talk about Afro-Peruvian problems.
Firstly because they think that there are not many of us, and secondly
because they think that our problems have already been resolved because
we are camouflaged in this society, therefore this exact lack of visibility of
the problem is what makes this fight more difficult.¹

**Racial Ideologies:** Verónica’s claim reflects two realities of Peruvian racial
politics. First, while the Andean peoples of the nation are not the racial or ethnic
majority as they are in the neighboring countries of Ecuador and Bolivia, they constitute
a significantly larger portion of the national demographic than do Afro-Peruvians.²

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¹ “El principal trata que tenemos es la invisibilización. Me parece la invisibilización porque normalmente
cuando hablamos de los problemas sociales en el Perú, hablamos de los indígenas, de los pueblos
Andinos, incluso hasta acerca de los no contactados en la Amazonía pero muy poco se habla acerca de
los problemas de los afroperuanos. Porque primero se considera que somos muy pocos, segundo que
se considera que nuestros problemas ya están resueltos porque no hacemos camuflaje en la sociedad,
entonces justamente esta falta de visibilización del problema es lo que hace que la lucha sea más difícil.”

² The largest ethnic group is *mestizo*, followed by the Andean population which is the minority-majority
(Feldman, 2006).
Nevertheless, ideas about the latter population being too small to be of importance have been perpetuated since the onset of the post-independence era and remain deeply engrained in the nation’s psyche. Whitten and Torres (1998) argue that it is essential for any nation-state to retain total sovereignty and territoriality, and identify nationalism as a powerful cultural tool that protects and retains this control. They also note that in the ex-Spanish colonies *mestizaje* and *Indigenismo* were two central nationalist race ideologies that supported this effort. *Indigenismo*, the nationalist vision that generated a romanticized idea of this nation as one with a glorious pre-Hispanic Incan past, surged in Peru in the mid-19th century. This new vision developed as a way to address the vast indigenous population that for the most part had not integrated into *criollo* culture and posed a threat to national unity from the perspective of the elite. *Indigenismo* redefined race as a cultural phenomenon that could be attained; through education, synonymous with the acceptance of Hispanic culture, and rejection of one’s Indigenous culture, one could cease to be Indigenous and become *mestizo* – a Peruvian citizen (de la Cadena 2001, 2000). However, Golash-Boza (2011) argues that although this process of achieving citizenship through education is relevant to the native populations, it was not true for the Afro-descendant population. As I mentioned earlier, Afro-Peruvians and the *criollos* in urban settings already shared a culture due to the high concentrations of Afro-descendants in urban areas during the enslavement and colonial periods, but *Indigenismo* marked the beginning of a new era of race relations in which Indigenous people were to be culturally assimilated to increase citizenship and Afro-Peruvians, as a distinct social group, were to be actively phased out of the national consciousness. *Criollo* culture represented the present, the Incan empire was the pre-colonial past, and
Afro-descendants were left behind; they became a memory associated with the colonial past (Golash-Boza 2011). In modern times, Indigenous peoples have widely shown a stronger sense of collective identity and political mobilization, which Ribando (2007) wagers might be attributed to their spatial distance from mainstream culture found in the larger cities, as well as to national ideologies that recognize their ethnic and linguistic distinctions, neither of which have been part of the Afro-Peruvian reality. Therefore, the on-going invisibility of the Afro-Peruvian population has its roots in the successful national initiative and the general lack of cultural distinctions that are more likely to warrant state attention.

Lidia’s comments highlight government tendencies to omit Afro-Peruvian contributions to society as a way of negating their presence:

I think the first step is raising the government’s awareness, all of the different governments. Because we have many worries but the people in the government minimize our contribution, I think, the contribution that we can make and that we have made. They don’t want to consider how we are different and that that is wonderful, and how that can contribute to social change. So one of the obstacles would be the government.3

Lidia’s statement reflects on the politics of difference in Peru, which is an extremely complex issue. While Peru, along with other countries in the region, has recently implemented a multi-culturalist policy, mestizaje, an ideology that co-exists with racism, is still ingrained in racial and ethnic discourse. Portocarrero (2007) defines mestizaje as a philosophy that assumes that because all people are the product of racial mixing, distinctions based on race do not exist. This in turn allows racism to

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3 “Yo creo que en primer lugar es sensibilizar al propio gobierno, no, los gobiernos. Porque de nuestra parte tenemos mucha inquietudes pero la gente que pasa por el gobierno, yo creo minimiza un poco ese aporte, no? Si, el aporte que podemos dar y que hemos dado como que ellos no quieren considerar las diferencias que tenemos y que son ricas y pueden contribuir mucho con el cambio social entonces unas de las cosas sería el gobierno de turno.”
continue outside of overt social consciousness. *Mestizaje* perpetuates racism on both an individual level and collective level. On the independent level, superiority and inferiority are comparative. In this context, person may be defined as superior if they are whiter than the person they are being compared to, but in another instance may be inferior when compared to another individual with lighter skin, but the underlying fact remains that one should strive to whiten themself (Whitten and Torres 1998). In regards to specific racial and ethnic groups, *mestizaje* pressures Afro-descendants and Indigenous peoples to deprecate themselves, and to use racial mixing as a means to better the nation (Whitten and Torres 1998). What is particularly damaging about this ideology is that it denies discrimination under the guise that all Peruvians are racially mixed, or that sexual intimacy is equivalent to equality and justice, and in doing so it discredits complaints about the racial inequality it perpetuates (Portocarrero 2007).

However, multi-culturalism also plays an important role in this discourse. In his article about Indigenous-Afro-Peruvian relations in the realm of multi-cultural activism at the state level, Shane Greene (2007) outlines what he calls the “holy trinity” necessary characteristics used to identify an ethnic group: language, culture and territory. He notes as other scholars have that historically indigenous groups’ complaints have been received with more attentiveness than those of Afro-descendants. They are generally viewed as racial minorities but denied status as an ethnic group because they supposedly lack the three crucial factors. Since it is far easier to be recognized as a collective on the basis of culture than race, indigenous groups generally have an easier time meeting the criteria and access important resources allotted to ethnic groups with
greater ease, while Afro-Peruvians remain without these resources and recognition as a distinct group because they have much greater difficulty (Greene 2007).

Activist strategies for acquiring monetary funds: Although they rarely use the terms “race” and “ethnicity” explicitly to refer to themselves and to other Afro-descendants, Makungu and CEDET members alike employ both ideas when speaking about identity and how they frame themselves when lobbying the government. The activists use ideas about African ascendance as a means to connect themselves to the diaspora. They invoke images of slavery, of the continent, and of a struggle shared by people of this ancestry against historically based injustices. This becomes problematic when these groups solicit the government for funds given that the national approach to defining difference and providing attention and funding to distinct groups relies on Greene’s (2007) “holy trinity.” Since the most visible and largest portion of Afro-Peruvians have lived in Lima since the slavery era, they lack these three qualities, and as such, are often excluded on this basis. In response to this problem activists have begun to shift their stance and to define Afro-Peruvians as a racial and ethnic group in attempts to be more readily recognized by their government and to attain much needed monetary funds. They reference books that call attention to “Africanisms,” or African-influenced words and phrases that characterize Peruvian Spanish; they point to the Afro-Peruvian renaissance as an example of distinctly Afro-Peruvian culture; and they highlight the many historically Afro-descendant regions, cities and towns along the coast (Figure 2-1). In this way they use widely recognized ethnicity markers to legitimize their case. These efforts aside, Greene (2007) shows that although Afro-Peruvians have made some headway with this approach, their struggle to be recognized as an ethnic
group continues to be scrutinized not only by the white elite but also by indigenous populations that lobby the government. For example, he points out that Afro-descendants have been excluded in some cases from important gatherings attended by other minority groups on this basis (Greene 2007). Nonetheless, this shift in lobbying strategy illustrates activists’ understanding of this important aspect of their society, and of the ways in which they appeal to this ideology of ethnicity in an attempt to acquire the recognition—and funding—that their community needs.

**Education**

In regards to the issue of education, my informants identify two issues: first, that lack of visibility is perpetuated through lack of education about Afro-Peruvians, and secondly, they make a connection between the lack of education that is available to Afro-Peruvians and the perpetuation of stereotypes about their supposed inferiority. The other informants who identify invisibility as the biggest obstacle refer to the failure to acknowledge Afro-Peruvian contributions to the country as a whole.

With regards to the first problem, informants like Maritza address the fact that Afro-Peruvian historic and current contributions are not included in schools, nor are they present in the public consciousness. Maritza, a schoolteacher well acquainted with the elementary curriculum, tells me:

> It’s about a lack of inclusion, you know? Even in education, they need to include information that explicitly pertains to Afro-descendant contributions. They need to include the individuals who were Afro-descendants and who have contributed, who have also fought for the evolution of the country. But you don’t see that, or the people know about it but they disregard them.\(^4\)

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\(^4\) “Falta es la inclusión, no? desde la educación, de que realmente pongan información que vaya explícito en cuestión al aporte afro, no? Porque reconozcan a las personalidades que han sido afro que han aportado, que han luchado también para la evolución del país. Pero eso no se ve, o se conoce y se desconoce.”
Alba echoes Maritza’s thoughts, claiming that the widespread belief that Afro-Peruvians have not contributed to the nation is directly fueled by the lack of public education about the community. Alba also points out that human rights are not taught in school, which she takes issue with because it denies children the tools to be able to recognize discrimination and injustice and to speak out against it, especially when these injustices directly affect them.

Similar complaints about the education system tie into the overarching issue of the educational barrier that group members also recognize as a pressing dilemma that hinders Afro-Peruvian advancement. It should be noted that these types of structural problems are faced by Afro-descendants throughout Latin America, and have repeatedly been called to attention by activists, international and local human rights organizations, and UN officials who note that Afro and Indigenous Latin Americans are trailing behind the rest of their counterparts of other racial and ethnic backgrounds (e.g. Telles 2007; Morrison 2008).

The dilemma of the inability to have direct access to education is widely noted by informants. When I ask Lulu about the biggest obstacle she is quick to respond:

Education. It is difficult because according to the statistics very few people succeed in graduating from university or in completing their education – and not just in completing their education, but in attaining a quality education. There are those who are isolated because of their socio-political or socio-cultural context and do not receive the same education… So this is the first problem: (lack of) education for Afro-descendants and about Afro-descendants.  

5 “Es difícil porque según las estadísticas hay muy poca gente que logra graduarse de la universidad o que logra completar la educación entonces y además no solo es que completen la educación sino que tengan calidad de educación. Hay gente esta abandonada que por su contexto socio-político o socio-cultural no recibe la misma educación y además la educación no solamente que se recibe sino que se le da a la gente afro que de ninguna manera, me parece, que puede motivar que tu puedas reforzar la identidad cultura que tienes porque no te enseñan nada bueno. Entonces el principal problema: la educación para los afros y también la educación de los afros.”
Alba agrees that education is a major problem. Her response adds new dimensions to the inaccessibility that Lulu mentions:

We are considered third-class citizens. We don’t have adequate educations, we don’t have the resources to attend university because our parents are mainly farmers and in this country farmers are not supported by the state. So there are various elements, and when you come from the rural areas to Lima, you encounter an educational barrier. The rural education is inferior in comparison to what you find in Lima and so it is much more difficult to enroll in a university because of your education. Some people—like me, I was lucky that my parents were able to provide me with a university degree, but when I came to Lima, to the university, there were only three black people. In the entire college, not in my class, not in my cycle, in the entire college there were three of us. So that gives you an idea of how many black professionals there were.

Alba’s statement calls attention to other dire problems, such as poverty and rural isolation. However, in describing her experience in the university in reference to the miniscule amount of Afro-descendants in attendance she also mentions an aspect that is a result of the educational barrier: the inability of Afro-Peruvians to acquire professional positions. Studies of the Afro-Peruvian community reinforce her claim: the lack of access to education confines Afro-descendants to menial labor positions and blue-collar work (CHIRAPAQ 2003).

Makungu member Miguel gives me some more perspective on this issue when he stops by for tea after work one day. While he identifies education as an obstacle, he

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6 “Estamos considerados como ciudadanos de tercera categoría, que no tenemos una educación adecuada o que no tenemos los recursos para ir a las universidades, que nuestros padres son por la mayoría agricultores, y el agricultor aquí en este país el estado no apuesta. Entonces son varios elementos y cuando tu vienes de provincia a Lima te encuentras con una baria de que la educación de la provincia es muy pobre en comparación a Lima, entonces el acceso que tu tienes a las universidades va ser mas difícil, no, porque te encuentras con una baria primero por cuestión de educación, de formación. ... Algunas personas como yo, tuve la suerte de que mis padres pudieran darme una carrera universitaria, pero cuando vine acá a Lima, en la universidad, los únicos negros que éramos, que podía contar, éramos tres. En toda la facultad, no en mi salón ni en mi ciclo, en toda la facultad éramos tres negros, solamente. Entonces eso te da el nivel, la idea de cuantos profesionales negros salimos.”
describes it as a problem that supports Afro-descendant invisibility in the public sphere, and hinders upward financial and social mobility:

There are various obstacles, like the problem of adequate education. For youth who hold labor positions, this impedes personal development, because if they had the same quality education (as others), they would be able to access higher levels of subsistence. People would have better views of Afro-descendants, and they would have other positions, not only in the workplace, but also in public office. Afro-descendants would have greater representation in politics as well as in social settings in Peru.\(^7\)

Invisibility is thus understood to be a result of diminished access to higher levels of educational attainment among the majority of Afro-Peruvians rather than the complete lack or absence of education. This inhibits Afro-Peruvians’ ability to move into public positions of power. Furthermore, informants believe that this lack of visibility allows racist notions about Afro-descendants and their economic and social ‘place’ in Peruvian society.

It should be noted that racism should not be conflated with classism as it frequently is in Peru and throughout Latin America in attempts to deny the existence of the racial discrimination (Zavala and Zariquiey 2007). Scholars have noted that Afro-descendants from varying classes face racial discrimination. In her article “Out of Place: The Experience of the Black Middle Class,” Angela Figueiredo (2010) recounts the experiences of members of the new Afro-Brazilian middle class that experience prejudice and discrimination as they begin to access spaces that were previously only accessible by the white middle class. Figueiredo’s (2010) study dispels notions that

\(^7\) “Ahora hay varios obstáculos, no? Como es el tema de tener una educación adecuada, los Jóvenes, en cual cubrir puestos laborales, eso empece el desarrollo personal de las personas, no? Porque si tuviesen, pues es la misma calidad en los estudios, en el trabajo tendrían mayores niveles de substancia, no? Serían mejores vistos los afrodescendientes, ocuparían otros puestos no solo en trabajo, cargos públicos, sería mayor la representatividad que tuviesen los afrodescendientes tanto en la política como en la vida social en Perú.”
discrimination happens solely on the basis of class and maintains that classism and racism can operate interactively. Although my data do not show any examples of this same phenomenon, my research informants readily acknowledge racism in their society and do not give me reason to believe that they view achieving a higher economic or social status as a way to escape racial discrimination.

Racism

CEDET and Makungu members strongly believe that racism is an overwhelming barrier that they face as individuals and as a community. In fact, it is an underlying factor in all four of the mentioned obstacles. The members of CEDET and Makungu acknowledge racism in the context of systemic racism with respect to government structure and representation, daily manifestations, and internalized racism.

Systemic racism: Systemic racism was generally the first of the three types to be discussed during interviews. Mariana enlightens me on recent events involving the state, including the anti-climatic state apology for African enslavement:

The only thing that (President) Alan García has done (for us) is officially apologize for slavery. But this apology hasn’t resulted in any public resources, so what have we gained from it? It was a literal apology, it was very public to show that the state apologized to the Afro-Peruvians for the slavery they endured, and that’s it. But how does that benefit us? Have any public resources been created as a result for Afro-Peruvians? Not one. Do we have scholarships to increase university entrance like in other countries, a kind of affirmative action or something similar? No, there’s nothing like that.\(^8\)

\(^8\) “Lo único que se ha logrado con Alan García es que del perdón histórico por la esclavitud. Pero este perdón histórico no ha generado ninguna política publica, entonces en que nos quedamos con solo el perdona? Una cosa literal, una cosa muy publica que si, que el estado pide perdón a los afroperuanos en este país por la esclavización que sufrieron, que fueron objetos, punto. Pero en que nos beneficia nosotros? Acá se ha generado alguna política publica para los afroperuanos? Ninguna. Tenemos acceso a las universidades con unas becas como hacen en otros países, la discriminación positiva o una cosa así de esta manera? No hay, no hay nada de este tipo.”
Here, Mariana refers to the 2009 public apology offered by the Peruvian state for Afro-Peruvian enslavement. Peru is the only country in the Americas to have issued a statement of this kind; however Mariana is one of many activists who have been skeptical of this motion. She describes it as lip service and points out that there have been no concrete motions put forward by the government to address the current problems that Afro-Peruvians face as a result of slavery. As in some other countries in Latin America, Afro-descendants in Peru have been successful in obtaining some collective rights; in this case, they have officially acquired group recognition, and, as a result of collaborative efforts, have had anti-racial discriminatory legislation implemented, and have the right to equal access to public establishments (Hooker 2007). Nevertheless, organizations like CEDET argue that these political advances have yet to manifest themselves in society in a way that will yield tangible change (CEDET mandate booklet), and that anti-discrimination legislature continues to focus on indigenous populations and not on Afro-descendants. The state apology is one such advance that at once recognized this historic injustice and linked it to subsequent marginalization, but has not resulted in tangible positive change.

Laura also shows her disapproval of the current relation between the state and Afro-Peruvians and points, as Mariana does, to the lack of necessary infrastructure and the ongoing struggle that groups such as CEDET face as they try to improve life for Afro-Peruvians:

This state is a racist state... It does nothing for the community... We know that there is racism in the state and also in the financial institutions. Do you know what one has to do to get support from them? You practically have to knock on one hundred doors so that they give you funds, and what do they give you? Money for small projects. So how do we improve this situation? Those who give you support have one hundred things to do and you are left
to see to your workshop while trying to ensure that the people in your house can continue to eat. I have to pay Joe, I have to go all over to buy what I need, to buy this, that and the other. So how can you give up your free time to dedicate yourself to this? You can’t because what they give you isn’t sufficient. We will have to pay for the office, for the lights and the water. And when you go to the financial office they put a thousand obstacles in your way.⁹

**Everyday Racism**

Apart from structural racism, throughout their interviews the informants describe the racial discrimination that occurs every day, which indicates how deeply it is embedded in their society. They emphasize the difficulties they experience as a result of the fact that national ideologies and institutions allow and in some cases encourage racist rhetoric to continue even as Peruvians deny its existence. Maritza construes this phenomenon in the following quote:

But on the other hand the media, it’s as if... when they speak about blacks or make prejudiced comments about blacks, they ridicule you. “It’s just a joke, there’s no reason to take it to heart,” and they don’t pay attention to what they’re really saying, you know? ... It even happens when you’re walking in the street – the insults, you feel attacked, self-conscious. So I think that the media... they still don’t understand what they’re doing.¹⁰

Afro-Peruvian activists have long fought against the ever-present racist images and representations of Afro-descendants in their country. Denigrating portrayals of

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⁹ “El estado es un estado racista... Y no hace nada, no hace nada por la comunidad... sabemos que si hay racismo aquí en el estado peruano también hay racismo en las mismas financieras. Tu sabes todo lo que se hace para que te den apoyo? Prácticamente tienes que tocar cien puertas para que un le de, y que te den? Proyectos así, así, así. Entonces como nosotros podemos mejorar esta intervención? Los que te apoyan tienen que hacer cien cosas y tu estas con media tu en taller y media en tu casa que sigan comiendo, que si tengo que pagar a Fulano, que tengo que buscar me la por otro lado para comprar esto, para comprar lo otro. Entonces como pueden entregarte tu a tiempo completo, tus horas completas y dedicarte a esto? No. Porque con lo que se saca no, no alcanza. Que si tendremos que pagar la oficina esta mes, si pagar luz, si tenemos para el agua de la misma oficina. Y cuando vienes a la financiera te ponen mil de obstáculos.”

¹⁰ “Luego del otro lado de los medios es como no...el hablar de los negros o afirmar perjuicios de los negros, se toma como una mofa, 'es un chiste, es una broma, no tiene por que tomarse el pecho,' y no esta mirando todo lo que hay detrás de eso, no? ...Que hace que caminas por la calle y los insultos y te sientes atacado, violentado hasta tu persona, entonces yo creo que los medios...no hay todavía un entendimiento de lo que generan así.”
Afro-descendants can be traced by the colonial period where both the state and popular culture recognized “black” or “brownness” as indicators of impure, undesirable African ancestry (Andrews 2004). In Peru there is no shortage of vulgar imagery that media produce. These images reinforce stereotypes of Afro-Peruvians as lazy, ignorant, grotesque, hyper-sexualized laughingstocks who are portrayed as thieves and delinquents, and who excel at dance, music, culinary arts and sports. Afro-descendant activists and anti-racism groups frequently protest these images and are faced with the difficult task of explaining what makes these depictions racist to a public that rejects the assertion that racism exists in its country. A recent example of this dilemma is the resurgence of the character Negro Mama in April 2011 on the Especial del Humor (The Comedy Special), a prime-time comedy show on a popular Peruvian television network (Mendoza 2010). Various Afro-Peruvian groups, including Makungu and CEDET, joined the campaign to have the character removed with support from human rights lawyers; however, there was a strong and eventually successful opposition to the removal of the character. Consequently, Negro Mama continues to make appearances on the show (Mendoza 2010). The work of activists who fight to eliminate racist portrayals and parodies is made more challenging by the lack of necessary educational resources to combat these stereotypes in schools and in society at large. As a result, racist comments and jokes continue to be commonplace occurrences (CHIRAPAQ 2003).

Catalina and Lulu, two newer Makungu members, list more examples of the comments they hear on a daily basis, as well as the apparent oblivion on the part of the general public about the racist undertones of their remarks:

C: ...They say: “a white person running is an athlete; a black person running is a robber. What else? There are many.”
L: “A white person driving a car has money; a black person driving is a chauffeur.”

C: There are lots of them.

E: And if someone says those things and you say “hey, that’s racist, that’s a racist comment,” how do they respond?

C: “’No! That’s not racist, everyone says it!’”

L: Racism is inherent.11

I hear many similar remarks during other interviews. Alba gives one of the best explanations about racism in Peru and the effects of deeply ingrained stereotypes:

Here people partake in evasive racism. No one tells you directly “I won’t spend time with you” or “I don’t want to be near you because you are black,” no one says that. But if you get on a bus and you are a (black) man, the first thing people will do is grab their wallets and move away. Because they have that stereotype in their minds, they think that all blacks are thieves. Here they tell you: “blacks are good for sports, for food, for the kitchen, for culture, music, dance, and nothing else.”12

The word solapado, which I translate as “evasive,” is used by almost every informant when I ask them about the nature of the discrimination they face. As Alba’s quote shows, the connections between race and specific activities are firmly planted in

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L: ‘Un blanco manejando un carro tiene plata; un negro manejando un carro es chofer.’

C: Hay varias cosas...

E: Y si una persona dice estas cosas y tu vuelvas a decir que ‘oye, esta cosa, esta es racismo, es un comentario racista,’ como responden?

C: ‘¡No! pero no es racismo, ¡todo el mundo lo hace!’

L: El racismo es inherente.

12 “Aquí la gente te genera un racismo solapado. Nadie te dice directamente o ‘yo no me junto contigo,’ o ‘no me acerco a ti porque eres negro,’ nadie lo dice. Pero si tu subes a un micro, a los buses de transporte y es hombre, lo primero que hace la gente es agarrar sus carteras y separarse. Porque tienen en el imaginario el estereotipo que se ha creado que todos los negros son delincuentes. Aquí te dicen ‘los negros son buenos para el deporte, para la comida, para la cocina, para la cultura, la música, el baile, pero lo otro queda fuera.’”
society, although as the word evasive suggests, addressing racism can be quite difficult as it continues to be normalized.

**Endo-racism:** Another aspect of racism that is frequently mentioned in interviews is endo-racism, or internalized racism, described by Bolívar et al. (2007) as “a psychosocial process that began in the colonial era and that persists today through the attitude of rejecting one’s origins” (2007: 294). Informants regularly talk about this issue as an additional layer to an already complex problem. They note that endo-racism makes addressing racial inequality more challenging, since activists are discriminated against by members of Afro-Peruvian community as well as those outside of it. Stubbs and Sarduy (1995) note a widespread hardening of racial lines and increase in racial prejudices after plantation slavery came to an end in Spanish and Portuguese America. This, they say, was heavily influenced by European ideas of eugenics. As a result, the concept of *mestizaje* began to blend with *blanqueamiento* or whitening, such as to at once revere racial mixing while viewing it as a means to whiten, or better the nation. In some nations like Argentina and Chile, *blanqueamiento* was facilitated through immigration; European immigration changed the demographic of these countries even as indigenous people and Afro-descendants were written out of history and encouraged to mix with other races in order to increase assimilation (Davis 2007). Peru, in contrast, was not a choice destination for these immigrants, and therefore the elite resolved to better society by encouraging racial mixing (Cuche 1975). The denigration and poverty associated with blackness or African ancestry accompanied by the opportunity to “improve” oneself by marrying and having children with lighter complexions were great
incentives for Afro-descendants to distance themselves from blackness through this method (Cuche 1975; Andrews 2004).

Many of the youth I interview tell me that these exact ideas continue to be perpetuated by older relatives or friends of the family who still see whitening as a way to avoid being ostracized. Makungu members Ximena and Arturo recall childhood lessons of this sort:

X: since I can remember my grandmother was always telling me “don’t ever marry a black man, don’t ever marry a black man. You have to better the race.” And that phrase is still so clear in my head because she was always saying it. So I started saying, “Grandma, how can you say that when your husband is black, your children are black? Your children work and fight for visibility, to change the reality of Afro-Peruvians and you want to tell me not to marry a black man? You are being racist against your own ethnic group.

A: endo-racism.

X: of course, endo-racism. But when I started to really talk to her, I realized it was an issue that was...

A: psychological.

X: much deeper. That is, my grandmother experienced extreme discrimination and so people her age, people who are ninety, one hundred years old, were strongly discriminated against.

A: of course, much more than we are.

X: it was much more direct. And so that was a way to escape; by telling everyone “don’t marry blacks because your children will be discriminated against.”

13 X: Mi abuelita desde chiquitita, desde que yo tengo un once de razón, me decía siempre ‘nunca te cases con un negro.’ ... ‘nunca te cases con un negro. Tu tienes que mejorar la raza.’ Y esa frase la tengo pero bien marcada porque siempre me la decía entonces yo le decía ‘abuela, como tu me puedes decir eso cuando tu esposo es negro, tus hijos son negros? Tus hijos trabajan y luchan por visibilizar y cambiar la realidad de los afroperuanos y tu me vienes a decir que no me case con un negro? Tu esta haciendo racismo y con tu propia etnia.’

A: Endo-racismo.

X: Claro, un endo-racismo. Pero cuando me puse a conversar con ella era un tema con un transfondo...

A: Psicológico.
Ximena’s comments are echoed by her fellow group members, all of who see the same desire that her grandmother’s generation had to diminish its blackness continued by many other Afro-Peruvians today. Though this issue is outside of the scope of this thesis, it remains a long-standing practice and belief in Peru and in other parts of Latin America. The reality of endo- and covert racism is key to understanding the final obstacle that was repeatedly mentioned: the lack of self-identification and social consciousness among Afro Peruvians and particularly among youth.

**Lack of Identity**

When I ask Verónica why Afro-descendants continue to shy away from their heritage she does not hesitate before responding:

It isn’t beneficial to identify oneself as Afro-Peruvian in Peru. Because once you say that you are Afro-Peruvian you have to accept all of the social stigmas that we have forgotten about. So, if you say “I am Afro-Peruvian,” you also have to accept that they’re going to say, “so you are poor, you have little education, you could be a criminal, you are from Chincha, you know how to dance, you know how to cook, you play sports, of course you **zapatea** and you play the **cajón**, and you speak in a particular manner.” ... So in sum, it isn’t beneficial. There are a lot of young people who prefer to deny that they are black than to admit that they are, and if they are going to deny it then they also are not going to see racism as an issue that affects them.  

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X: Mucho mas fuerte, o sea, mi abuela experimentó la discriminación muy, muy, muy de cerca entonces es como que las personas de su edad, o sea, las personas de noventa, cien anos sufrieron el racismo muy de cerca.

A: Claro, mas que nosotros de hecho.

X: Era mucho marcado. Entonces por eso fue un medio de escaparte, decir a todos ‘no te metas con un negros y por ende ellos van a ser discriminados.’

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14 “No es beneficioso identificarse o proclamarse afroperuano en el Perú. En tanto si tu asumes que eres afroperuano tienes que asumir también toda las estigmatizaciones sociales que hemos olvidado. Entonces si tu dices ‘yo soy afroperuano’ o ‘yo soy negro,’ también tienes que asumir que te digan ‘entonces eres pobre, tienes poco educación, puede que seas un criminal, y eres de Chincha, sabes bailar, saber cocinar, juegos un deporte, seguro zapateas y tocas cajón, y hablas de determinada manera,’ ... Entonces en tanto no es beneficioso, hay muchos jóvenes que prefieren decir y negar que son negros al que realmente reconocerse, y en tanto no se reconozcan no van a tomar tampoco el problema de racismo como el suyo.”

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Veronica reaffirms that racist stereotypes play a central role in deterring auto-identification, as they are so rooted in social interactions. This issue is highly contested among Makungu members as they identify this lack of consciousness as one of the primary reasons why they have difficulty recruiting new members. Makungu is constantly faced with the challenge of finding new ways to attract recruits. They recognize that it is difficult to get youth involved outside of social events, such as the parties that they host, attributing this disinterest to a lack of identity consciousness. Because Makungu members attend other events offered by institutions such as the Afro-Peruvian museum that are more intellectually focused and centered around community building, activism, history or even book launches, they note on numerous occasions the comparatively low level of participation on the part of their counterparts. They consistently make references in meetings and in informal conversations to the fact that the majority of the attendees at these kinds of events are not Afro-descendants, but rather Peruvians of other ethnic and racial backgrounds or foreigners who visit and are interested in these subjects. The activists attribute this lack of interest in these matters to the low recruitment rate among their peers. Some members call for their organization to hold more conscious and consciousness-raising activities, noting an imbalance in the kinds of major events they host and recognizing the need for deviation from these three main events in order to do so; however, the aforementioned perceived disinterest of other youth makes it difficult to determine whether or not these events would be worth the effort if they should fail to draw sufficient attention.

Many Makungu members or makungueros wager that finding a youth leader who could bridge the gap between the large numbers of young Afro-Peruvians who frequent
their parties and other well-known dance events at notorious clubs like Don Porfirio’s, a *peña* or nightclub that features traditional Afro-Peruvian and *criollo* music and dance, might be a viable solution to this dilemma. Don Porfirio’s was opened by the late Don Porfirio Vasquez, a renowned pioneer and ambassador of Afro-Peruvian music. Once a month his son hosts a dance featuring a mix of timba, a form of Cuban salsa, American rap, and traditional Afro-Peruvian dance genres. On these nights the *peña* is frequently filled to capacity, mainly with Afro-descendant and *mestizo* youth who drink and dance with friends from ten o’clock at night until daybreak the following morning. Many Makungu members claim that on these nights Don Porfirio’s likely hosts the largest congregation of Afro-descendant youth in the city. There is great debate about why these young people do not attend more intellectual events. Above all, Makungu members recognize spaces such as Don Porfirio’s as ones that attract a substantial group of individuals who could be potential recruits if the conscious organizations could find an attractive way to convince them to get involved. Some members agree that finding a leader to bridge the gap would be helpful; however, there has been no consensus about who this person could be, nor how that person could facilitate that kind of collaboration between recreational music and, on the other hand, sociopolitical involvement and identity politics.

Makungu members are not the only ones who have noticed the interest in self-identifying as Afro-descendants almost exclusively when music and dance are involved. Jaime shares the sentiments Verónica and other youth activists express:

The truth is that it also has to do with how much we have questioned our understanding of identity. So here (in parties) we are black and that’s it. Get everyone who goes to Don Porfirio’s together and ask them, “are you black?” “No, not black.” “Afro-descendant?” “Who is an
Afro-descendant in Peru?” So every time you bring people to this level, to construction, to analysis, to critique, they get bored, it’s boring. And the truth is that we aren’t raised with this construction of identity. Our pigmentation is as it is “it’s normal, it’s natural.” What does it mean? What does it hold? What is behind it? No, no, no, those aren’t common questions. And we don’t come together around them.15

As I listen to the shockingly similar responses I begin to wonder why it is that there is such aversion to joining these groups. A lack of consciousness is one matter, but a disinterest in learning seems to be quite another. Coincidentally, my next informant, Caridad, answers my question before I even propose it. Her response initially resembles Verónica’s, but she quickly hones in on why, in her opinion, the disinterest persists. She pauses for a moment mid-way through a chocolate truffle before providing a succinct response:

The discrimination [here] is so strong that black people, the last thing that they want is to make themselves visible. A black person working to gain rights for blacks is as visible as he could possibly be, and the last thing that they want is to call attention to themselves for being black.16

In conjunction with Caridad, Jaime, and Veronica’s comments, Andrews (2004) writes that aside from the difficulties of defining what it means to be an Afro-descendant, the hesitation on the part of Afro-descendants to identify themselves as such is the result of the desire to distance themselves from the pejorative qualities that have been associated with African ancestry. He states that blackness is also a visible marker of

15 “La verdad es que tiene también que ver con cuanto nos hemos cuestionado nuestro proceso de identidad. Entonces acá somos negros y ya. Agarra a todos que van a Don Porfirio y pregúntales, ‘tu eres negro? Te sientes negro?’ No, ya, negro, no. Afrodescendiente? Quien es el afrodescendiente en el Perú? Entonces cada vez que tu llevas a las personas del plano, de la construcción, del análisis, de la crítica, ya se ha aburrido pues, eso es aburrido. Y la verdad es que no nos criamos en esta construcción de tu identidad … Ya la pigmentación esta así ‘ya pues, es normal. Es natural.’ Que significa? Que contiene? Que hay detrás de eso? No, no, no, son cuestionamiento común. Y no es el asunto al que nos convoque pues.”

16 “La discriminación es tan fuerte que la gente negra, la ultima cosa que quieren hacer es visibilizarse. Entonces un negro chambeando por los derechos de los negros es lo mas visible que pueda ver, y lo ultimo que ellos quieren es llamarse atencion por ser negros.”
marginalization and a reminder of a heritage that is generally only associated with enslavement (2004: 4). Low levels of self-esteem among youth are the result of constant exposure to negative imagery, and since educational institutions do not provide alternative images of Afro-Peruvians for Afro-descendant students, the desire to disassociate themselves from African heritage is still widespread (Carrillo 2005). Other CEDET and Makungu members agree with Veronica, Jaime, and Caridad’s comments, as well as the literature. They say that that black or Afro-Peruvian identities are generally only assumed, respected and celebrated in the context of artistic and musical events such as concerts and parties, and culinary expositions, as prowess in these areas are recognized and revered by Peruvian society as positive Afro-descendant attributes. Mariana explains:

Music still unites us because it uninhibits us, because it frees us, because it doesn’t question us… But if you or I begin to examine, if you start to add dimension, if you start to categorize, if you force me to question myself, if you force me to be critical of myself, I feel bad, and I don’t go [to conscious events]. There it is. I won’t go.17

While discussing identity, I notice that informants have a specific definition of the word; when they use it in relation to this issue they refer to a socially and politically conscious Afro-Peruvian identity that would encourage more participation in groups such as their own. When I ask Mireya about her opinion on the biggest obstacles her community faces she tells me:

There are no obstacles, we make ourselves the obstacle because ... of our lack of identity. We don’t identify ourselves as what we are, that is, we know we are black – “oh yes, I am black” – that’s it. But we don’t identify ourselves with “wow, I’m black, and as a black person, as I would if I were

17 “Todavía nos convoca mas la música porque nos desinhibe, porque nos libera, porque no nos cuestiona… Pero si yo o tu empiezas a poner taxonomía, me comienzas a poner niveles, me empiezas a poner categoría, me obligas a cuestionarme, me obligas a autocríticarme, me siento mal, no voy. Ya, así sencillo. No voy.”
anything else – white, Chinese or Andean or mestizo – I’m going to get involved. I’m going to develop myself, educate myself,” no, no. We ourselves have to work for what we want. I think that there aren’t any obstacles, that we ourselves are the problem.18

Mireya marks the differences between Afro-Peruvians and other racial and ethnic groups, noting that the former may acknowledge themselves as such, but she says that this recognition does not inspire a deeper interest in the implications of that identity as it might in Peruvians of other backgrounds. For this reason the activists I interview recognize themselves as part of a small sect of the wider population that holds a different view of what it means to be Afro-Peruvian. Paulo tells me:

“There are few of us that have developed a consciousness to the point where we can say “we have to organize ourselves and do something for the Afro-Peruvians who have not been as lucky as we have.”19

Caridad also adds:

They are culturally castrated in the sense that there are few opportunities offered by the state that allow them to develop a sense of self through the educational system. It is obvious that there are no tools that encourage them to reflect, nothing that would help them develop the ability to reflect on who they are. So as long as you don’t know your history you won’t bother to think about it. If you don’t learn about it in high school, if you don’t go on to university, if you don’t open a book, if no one tells you it isn’t likely that you will start to think about this by yourself. If the whole world around you is only concerned with survival, in making money in order to eat, how are you going to start thinking about that?20

18 “No hay obstáculos, el obstáculo lo hacemos nosotros mismos por ... falta de identificación. No nos identificamos como somos, o sea, nosotros sabemos que somos negros – “ah, ya, yo soy negro” en punto. Pero no nos identificamos con “puchá, soy negro, y como negro que soy, o como si fuera otro – gringo, chino o serrano o mestizo – me pongo entre las cosas, no? Me cultivo, me educo,” no, no. Nosotros mismos le ponemos trabajar a lo que queremos. Yo pienso que no hay obstáculos, que nosotros somos el problema.”

19 “Entonces somos pocos los que tenemos esa conciencia desarrollada de ese nivel para decir ‘hay que organizarnos y hacer algo por esos afroperuanos que no han tenido la suerte que nosotros hemos tenido.'”

20 “Están culturalmente castrada en el sentido que hay pocas oportunidades desde el estado para que se desarrollen al nivel de la educación que evidentemente no hay herramientas para que reflexiones, para que la gente tenga el chip de poder reflexionarse. Entonces desde que no conoces tu historia no te pones a pensar en ella. Si no te la hace en el colegio, si luego no vas a la universidad, si luego no abres
Paulo’s observation and the continuation of Caridad’s prior explanation reveal a conscious distinction between those who do not have the social and political awareness - the ‘they’ and ‘them’ – and others like them, who do. Members of both groups agree that their organizations share a general vision but that they work towards a shared goal from different angles, something that they believe is also concurrent among other Afro-Peruvian organizations. Paulo’s words summarize other responses:

Well, the goal we all have in common is the development of the Afro-Peruvian community. From this perspective, every organization has a different focus. CEDET in theory is a technical organization that releases publications, studies, that investigates ... and Makungu has always focused a bit more on the theme of education, as I explained before, from the beginning up to the present. We focus on the issue of identity but from a perspective that has a bit more impact, you know? ... We are all on the same path.21

Chapter Summary

In order begin the process of determining how activist perspectives relate to one another along generational lines I asked my informants to list the major obstacles that they feel Afro-descendants face. Interview data show that CEDET and Makungu members agree on four themes: relative invisibility, lack of access to education, racism, and a lack of a politicized racial identity. The activists understand that these issues are interrelated; they show how they are situated in historical processes, and continue to be facilitated by modern institutions, and popular ideologies and attitudes. The members of these two organizations identify themselves as part of a small group of conscious

21 “Bueno el tema que tenemos en común es el tema del desarrollo del pueblo afroperuano. Desde esta perspectiva, cada organización tiene una perspectiva distinta. CEDET en teoría es una organización técnica que hace publicaciones, estudios, que investiga ... y Makungu siempre se concentró un poco más en el tema educativo, como te expliqué desde el inicio hasta ahora. En el tema de la identidad pero desde una perspectiva un poco más impactante, no? ... Todos quedan en el camino.”
individuals that share a vision, and that constantly struggles to increase social and political awareness among others in their environment.

Having established that CEDET and Makungu share the same outlook on these major issues, Chapter 4 focuses in on the inter-generational relationship between the two organizations. I assess their current relationship and compare my ethnographic data to literature in order to determine its strengths and weaknesses, which indicate the kinds of steps that can be taken to improve their bond.
CHAPTER 4
ASSESSING THE INTER-GENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

This chapter begins with an outline of the relationship between Makungu and CEDET, tracing the shift in interactions from the beginning of Makungu’s independence to the present. Then I consider some of the concerns that the veteran activists have in regards to the youth group and situate their perceptions in generational theory and literature in order to contextualize the relationship. Finally, I draw on literature about inter-generational relationships and highlight factors that facilitate and inhibit generational connections. I reference ethnographic data in order to determine which of those factors are present in Makungu-CEDET relationship in an attempt to assess the state of the current relationship and what steps can be taken to work towards improving it.

Current Patterns

In the formative years of the youth group veteran members recall more frequent instances of collaborations between the two organizations. The majority were CEDET events or initiatives that Makungu supported in various ways that included verbal support, as well as taking on smaller projects that contributed to the larger effort. For instance, in 2007 Makungu went into Lima neighborhoods that have high concentrations of Afro-Peruvians to carry out surveys among residents. These surveys were some of the 1,500 that were carried out throughout the country, the findings of which were integrated into CEDET’s 2008 publication about human rights and the Afro-Peruvian community (Makungu Awards Ceremony pamphlet 2009). However, none of the Makungu members recall any events in which they and CEDET personnel shared equal organizational or production responsibilities.
Group members acknowledge that their relationship is sporadic with the majority of collaboration taking place due to specific events – for example, the previously noted Negro Mama campaign – and not on a continuous basis. Most describe the relationship as one that consists largely of moral support instead of active involvement. As Mariana puts it:

We get together, you understand? But we don’t coexist, there it is. Let’s say it that way, that’s it... The younger ones are over there and we are over here. When we come together it is because we have something to do.¹

Caridad echoes this idea: “We don’t work with CEDET, it’s more of a symbolic support.”²

While other informants respond with comments that reinforce these descriptions of inconsistent correspondence, I am simultaneously told that communication between them continues in spite of this fact. Curious to find out more about how this is facilitated, I make a point to ask later informants to share what they know. Their answers reveal that older and founding members of Makungu are largely responsible for maintaining the link between the two organizations. These members are former students of the School of Leaders who still maintain contact with the CEDET members. The CEDET directors support these claims and do not hesitate to list the older and executive Makungu members who continue to frequent the CEDET office at times simply to chat, but in other moments to ask for advice. Ronaldo, the director of Makungu, also serves as a liason between Makungu and CEDET; however, this relationship has not resulted in a discussion of the concerns that CEDET has about

¹ “Nos juntamos, ya? Pero no convivimos, ahí esta. Ya, vamos a decirlo así, sencillito... Los muchachos están ahí y nosotros aquí. Cuando nos juntamos tenemos que hacer algo.”

² “No es que trabajamos con CEDET sino que hay un apoyo simbólico...”
Makungu. While seasoned Makungu members and the youth group director sometimes seek advice from the older organization the conflict has not been addressed despite this on-going close connection. Ronaldo also appears on panels with CEDET members and maintains the lines of communication with the NGO, but, as previously mentioned, these collaborative efforts have dwindled and become sporadic. Few original Makungu members remain involved in CEDET projects such as the recently initiated women’s collective that focuses on gender issues within the Afro-Peruvian community. This new organization includes members from other groups in the city. This fact aside, in regards to interactions at the organizational level, these two groups do not maintain an on-going connection and unite only when there is an event or a problem to be rallied around. This information suggests a relationship in which CEDET as a defined group interacts with a specific sub-group of Makungu that is tied to the veteran members in a way that other youth members are not, but generally there is a lack of on-going communication between the two organizations. Because alliances and coalitions tend to emulate this pattern of connecting when a specific issue arises and refocusing their attention on individual group projects at other moments, the absence of a continual relationship is not particularly worrisome. Instead, the call for more on-going contact comes from the activists themselves who recognize the benefits of sustained communication and express the desire to change this aspect of their relationship.

Reflections on Working Together

At the end of each interview I asked all informants what they thought they could learn from youth or CEDET members. The most frequent response from the youth was that they want to learn more about the experiences of the older generation so that they in turn could make wiser decisions within their group and in their interactions with other
such organizations and governing bodies. Humberto talks about his hopes to learn from past experiences with me in the living room one evening:

I want Makungu to go to them so that they can tell us what happened in their time, what was good and when it ended. Because Makungu is a youth organization. When the youth are no longer youth, how will we know what to do? So it’s good to hear about previous experiences in order to know how to manage, you know?³

Given that the Makungu members who are best acquainted with CEDET personnel are older members who have a longer relationship with them or are in some cases related, it is logical that these are the youth who are most familiar with the previous generation’s experiences. More experienced Makungu members readily credit the veteran organization for its contributions and on-going though albeit sporadic support. They also acknowledge the difficulties that the older generation faced that distinguishes it from their own, and recognize the wealth of knowledge that they possess:

I think that the process for the older people – that’s so ugly! – older people had a different experience from the one we are having now. That is, they fought against a social reality that was much harsher than what we face. In that time there was strong discrimination against ideologies, races and religion. If you believed something different they would put you in jail and that’s where you’d stay ... so I think that what they faced was a lot more intense. Obviously we can salvage and take many things from that process that could help us to think about different issues or aspects that we currently do not consider ... they could help us to solve problems.⁴

³ “Quiero que venga a Makungu cualquier de ellos para que nos digan que pasó en ese tiempo, como le fue bien y en que momento se terminó. Porque Makungu es una organización de jóvenes. Cuando los que son jóvenes ya no sean jóvenes como agarran entre los pasos, no? Entonces es bueno escuchar experiencias anteriores para poder pasarlo, no?”

⁴ “Creo que el proceso de las personas mayores – que feo! – las personas mayores tuvieron un proceso totalmente diferente a nosotros. O sea, ellos lucharon en una realidad social mucha mas fuerte que la de nosotros. La realidad de esa entonces era una discriminación total tanto por la ideología, por raza, por religión, era fuerte. Si tenías un pensamiento te metían a la cárcel y ahí te quedaba. ... entonces creo que la realidad de ellos era mucha mas intensa. Obviamente nosotros podemos rescatar y sacar un montón de cosas de este proceso que de repente nosotros ahora comparando lo de ahora nos pueda ayudar a
CEDET members also express interest in nurturing a more fluid relationship with Makungu. During our discussion about the current state of the relationship Lidia comments:

We come together in our own spaces. I don’t know if it has occurred to us to make the connection. At least once or twice a month would be fabulous. We haven’t done it. It would be wonderful, it really would. It’s a good idea. But we don’t do it.5

Other members list the knowledge and the skills that both organizations could benefit from learning from one another; they recognize that the youth are more technologically savvy than they are, but they also realize the useful lessons that they can pass on to younger generations having been involved in activism for so many years.

**Veteran Concerns**

A number of concerns were brought to light by members of both organizations in discussing the other group during interview sessions. CEDET members raised more concerns specifically in regards to Makungu’s vision, member demographic, and the kinds of events the group hosts. A recurrent theme among CEDET informants is their uncertainty about Makungu’s vision. Members state that they are willing to work with Makungu on other projects but that until they understand the youth group’s major focus and goals this will be difficult to achieve. When talking about Makungu activities and membership, some members express their belief that Makungu is now largely made up of “elitists” - university-educated individuals. As youth organization events are generally

5 “Nos reunimos en nuestros propios espacio, y no se si nos ha ocurrido hacer esa interrelación, no? Por lo menos, una o dos veces al mes sería fabuloso eso. No lo hemos hecho. Y eso sería rico, de verdad. Es un buen idea. Pero no lo hacemos.”
frequented by others in the same social circles as the members, veterans question what the organization is doing to reach out to youth from other parts of the city that perhaps do not have the same educational background or financial stability.

Other CEDET members are skeptical about the activities that Makungu hosts with regards to recruitment as well as content. One member states that while she credits the youth group for hosting parties as a valid way to advertise their group and attract peers, this kind of event should be complemented by other kinds of more informative programming. Overall, there is a general preoccupation with the future of the group. All CEDET members agree that they see potential for collaborative efforts and for the group as an independent entity; however, with a number of older Makungu members pursuing other agendas and the recognized need for youth to be a part of future activism, veteran activists have queries about the kind of youth they would work with and those who will succeed them in the near future.

**Theorizing veteran concerns: active and passive generation theory:** These concerns – particularly the skepticism about Makungu event programming that is seemingly more focused on parties and social events that some CEDET members see as less productive – can be understood from a generational perspective when discussed in the context of passive and active generations. In the process of explaining how generations become politically and/or socially active, Edmunds and Turner (2005) draw from the theories of sociologists Pierre Bourdieu and Karl Manheim. Bourdieu states that inter-generational struggles for resources, especially in the cultural sphere, results in social change (2005: 562), while Manheim’s groundbreaking article about generations “The Problem of Generations” (1955), emphasizes one of the defining
characteristics of a generation is the shared experience of specific historical events. Edmunds and Turner (2005) use the example of the generation of the 1960s to show that when a generation is impacted by and able to rally around an event, in this case the Vietnam War, and is also able to exploit opportunities and resources, and obtain strategic leadership positions, it changes from a passive generation to one that is active. They conceptualize a pattern of inter-generational relationships that alternates between passive and active, where an active generation alters social and cultural life, and the one that follows comes into this altered environment and inherits these changes but does not create major impact (2005: 562).

Considering CEDET and Makungu, two organizations with members from succeeding generations, CEDET can be classified as the active generation, and Makungu as the passive. CEDET’s independence is inextricably tied to the Fujimori era; the founding members were all in opposition to the president’s policies and their decision to break away from the MNFC was catalyzed by the dispute over the support of a political candidate that supported him. All of the members whom I interviewed still strongly denounce the ex-president, and this event defines their generation. The continued access to the funding that was used to create CEDET allowed them to continue as an independent organization, and other funds allow them to carry out studies, events, and projects, such as the School for Leaders. Both during their time in the MNFC and as directors of CEDET, veteran members have been involved in important and at times successful efforts, on local and national fronts. The implementation of the Day for Afro-Peruvian Culture would be one example, and the use of the term “Afro-Peruvian” by the government another.
Makungu, the next generation, is comparatively passive. Unlike CEDET, there is no defining moment that ties them together, and following Edmunds and Turner’s (2005) theory, they enjoy the achievements of the older, active generation – they recognize themselves as Afro-Peruvians, they have a marked cultural awareness, and they share similar ideas with CEDET members about major obstacles that face their community. Since some Makungu members, especially veteran members are blood relatives or have on-going ties to CEDET because of their involvement with the School of Leaders, certain aspects of their understandings about cultural heritage and ideology about race and identity have likely been disseminated by CEDET members instead of being determined by personal life experiences. Finally, Makungu lacks the funding that the NGO has access to; while the Awards Ceremony is funded, other events are hosted with funds from fundraising events, which limits their budget.

The combination of this cultural inheritance with Manheim’s (1952) fresh contact theory, which states that each generation develops a new outlook by mediating between knowledge passed down from the previous generation(s), and the world around them, is also helpful when trying to understand why some members believe that Makungu is not as active as it could be. This could be understood as both an instance of different approaches because of unique generational experiences, and a lack of available resources.

**Moving beyond constructs:** It is important, however, to move beyond the dichotomous active/passive construct in order to fully understand the nuances of CEDET and Makungu as distinct activist groups in their own right. While this generational approach is a useful starting point from which to compare the two
organizations, it does not account for the fact that some of the above-mentioned discrepancies stem from the fact that CEDET and Makungu are unique organizations with distinct modes of operation, and not because Makungu is less active than CEDET. As the ethnographic group sketches show, both activist groups are active participants in civil society; they contribute on an on-going basis to efforts to help the Afro-descendant community. That said, Makungu is a not-for-profit organization, while CEDET is an NGO funded by national and international development organizations. The structural differences that result from this fact characterize these groups differently and are responsible for some important differences that affect the way they operate. For instance, Makungu members are volunteers who conduct their work free of charge. Aside from the awards ceremony, the organization raises its own funds through other events. On the other hand, CEDET directors are salaried workers, and the vast majority of their projects are contingent upon external funding. As a result, makungueros view their involvement with the group as extra-curricular, and therefore budget their time for meetings and events in accordance with other obligations. Conversely, as paid workers, CEDET members approach their work as a job and have a different temporal relationship to their involvement in activism. The youth organization is also more financially independent than its veteran counterpart. While Makungu may not receive as much funding as the NGO, the not-for-profit does not have to comply with the stipulations or function within specific parameters in order to retain external funding as CEDET does. These facts, added to unique generational experiences, contribute to differing organizational perspectives in this case, but also to different attitudes towards
productivity, and the kinds of events or practices that are understood to be appropriate manifestations of activism.

**Considering the Potential for a Better Relationship**

Many scholars have discussed the benefits of a strong inter-generational relationship in communities, organizations, and society, as they promote knowledge transfer, and empower youth to serve as a strong foundation from which they can develop themselves, their communities, and civil society (Zeldin et al. 2005). These relationships are beneficial to all involved as they help older generations meet their development needs and ultimately results in more awareness, competence and confidence about working for community improvement (Camino 2005; Ginwright 2005). The quality of an inter-generational relationship indicates the collective development of both the younger and older generation.

A number of community psychologists have written about key factors that facilitate and inhibit the development of inter-generational relationships (e.g., Ginwright 2005; Zeldin et al. 2005; Larson et al. 2005; Camino 2005). CEDET and Makungu collectively agree that their organizations are not collaborating in ways that they had in the past, and that they currently lack a sustained connection. There is also skepticism from some veteran activists about the younger group’s initiatives and viewpoint. However, these groups also want to develop a better relationship because they see how it can be beneficial to both organizations.

In the following section I present some of the key factors that scholars identify as components that support and hinder inter-generational relationships before determining which of these factors are present in Makungu and CEDET commentaries about their relationship. In doing so, I try to assess the potential for creating a better inter-
generational bond and point out some of the areas that may require extra attention in order to develop stronger ties. If a future goal for both of these groups is to aid in the formation of a national Afro-descendant movement then these factors may be helpful in solidifying inter-generational ties at a regional and national level as well.

The four basic factors that I attend to in this section are: developing a joint project that pertains to both groups and to community development; defining clear roles for both generations while recognizing the importance of the inter-generational collaboration; addressing the issues of power imbalances between the generations; and developing an inter-generational socio-political vision. The three major hindrances are: placing all focus on youth; perpetuating negative ideas about older generations, specifically that they need to step down or surrender their power; and the inability to overcome the ‘power paradox.’

Joint Projects

In his article about African-American inter-generational relationships, Ginwright (2005) shows how the implementation of a project that affects both generations, in his case, a community project can be an appropriate event around which younger and older cohorts can rally. His research points to collaborative efforts as a way to eke out spaces and times that can be dedicated to bonding, teaching and learning, and the passing of skills and practices.

Makungu and CEDET have worked together in the past, but these efforts, as previously mentioned, were not regular and have since ceased to be a feature of their relationship. Fortunately, members of both organizations have expressed a desire to change this aspect of their relationship, and recognize that better communication would
likely result in obtaining the benefits Ginwright (2005) outlines. The next step would be making the effort to begin this process.

**Defining Generational Roles**

A clear, concise understanding of what the expectations and roles are for each generational party, and of the importance of the inter-generational collaboration has proven to be extremely helpful in diminishing tension among participants and developing good rapport (Zeldin et al. 2005). Larson et al. (2005) and Camino (2005) speak to the importance of addressing the issue of power since in most cases the older generation will hold fiscal and administrative positions that youth are not able to access, but also because at times cohorts – youth, in particular – believe that in order for them to gain space and power, and to have their voices heard, older generations must give up their power. These scholars claim that the solution to this problem is not excluding older generations, but instead coming to a collective agreement about what will happen, accepting certain power imbalances and finding adequate ways to accommodate all involved.

In the case of CEDET and Makungu this second factor seems to be somewhat lacking as well. Apart from the fact that the groups do not work together on projects or have frequent exchanges of other kinds, some CEDET members claim not to have a clear understanding of what Makungu’s vision is. This issue will need to be addressed and clarified if the two groups are to work together.

**Addressing Power Imbalances**

Some Makungu members have made comments that demonstrate their belief that the older generation is hindering progress towards the creation of a social movement by occupying positions of power. Ariel recognizes the value of the knowledge that the
older generation has to share with youth activists, but he is also adamant about ensuring that the older generation does not obstruct the process of allowing power to change hands:

There are people who shouldn’t be in the movement anymore ... this is another problem: there is no generational turn-over, and that is something that should be in place, something that should be given to people like me, like Ronaldo who are not so young anymore, who should be developing more of a general vision instead of one of the youth ... In many cases we have more professional training than they do and we could bring another view, another vision ... other ideas ... the Afro-Peruvian movement is not going to change over night, but it also won’t be sustained if there is no generational change. This isn’t just because there aren’t many youth in the movement, but also because many youth who tried to become a part of it became bored because they realized that there was no exchange.  

Jorge also agrees that the youth should take center stage:

It’s the youths’ turn now. The generation before ours has completed their turn even though they are still working, but the times have changed. The way of dealing with things has changed.

Those in favor of bringing the youth to the forefront also say that older community members are already set in their ways and as such it is very difficult to change their opinion, whereas younger people are better able to change their thought processes to adapt to the times, and as such they will be better able to make substantial progress.

The dilemma of the generational disconnect and power imbalance also extend to the political sphere. Some Makungu members who have been involved in the youth group

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6 “Y hay gente que ya no debería estar en el movimiento también por el tema de...que realmente esto es otro problema: que no hay un recambio generacional, que es algo que se debería dar y ya dejar de gente como yo, como Ronaldo que ya no somos tan jóvenes, ya no deberíamos estar rolando de una visión joven sino la visión general ... en muchos casos tenemos mas preparación profesional que ellos y que podríamos aportar con otra mirada, con otra visión...con otras ideas ... El movimiento afro no se va a dar de la lucha de la mañana ni se va a tener una sostenibilidad y es que no hay un cambio generacional no solo porque no hay muchos jóvenes afros en el movimiento sino que muchos jóvenes que trataron de ser en el movimiento se aburrieron porque se dieron cuenta de que no algo de intercambio.”

7 “Eso les tocan los jóvenes ya. La generación anterior a la nuestra cumplió su proceso aún lo vienen haciendo pero el tiempo ya cambió. La forma de tratarse ya cambió.”
since it was formed state that some veteran CEDET members should resign from their positions to make space for other generations because they on the basis that these members are staunch leftists due in part to their opposition to the Fujimori regime, while Makungu youth represent a variety of political inclinations. These makungueros believe that this results in an over-representation of one political position in the public sphere when it should reflect those of other Afro-Peruvian activists. This issue of political differences can also be understood through the fresh contact approach, where leftist positions may well be a result of the specific impact of the Fujimori regime on CEDET directors and not on the younger generation, and thus has had a hand in shaping generational opinions accordingly. Though it is not necessary for Makungu and CEDET to see eye to eye on politics to be able to communicate more frequently, this is one of various topics that will need to be addressed if these two groups are to work together, as well as with other groups in the city or the country.

**Developing an Inter-generational Socio-political Vision**

Ginwright’s (2005) observations show that when generations share a socio-political vision their relationship becomes more cohesive and they are better able to work harmoniously on the task at hand. Although Makungu and CEDET may not share a common socio-political vision, the previous chapter is proof of the fact that they do at least share the same overall perspectives on what the major problems are in their community. This in turn demonstrates that there is a starting place from which the groups can go about establishing goals, and discussing other aspirations. It may also be true that these groups do not need to see eye to eye completely on all issues. This is likely impossible and would probably be more of a set up for failure than for making progress in their relationship and activities. Developing a better and clearer
understanding of each other’s goals, and actively playing a part in defining the vision for a specific project would be more realistic, effective and pertinent to this relationship, as these are two independent groups that do not need to be fully united by a single vision.

**Inhibiting Factors to Inter-Generational Relationship Building**

**Excluding the Older Generation**

Camino (2005) articulates that although the desire to exclude the older generation and let others take over is usually well meant, as they generally stem from an interest in allowing youth to gain experience, it can be harmful. She states that these attitudes devalue adult skills and potential contributions, and can lead to older generations feeling unappreciated, which in turn affects its ability to be attentive to youth.

CEDET members confess that they feel that the younger generation is not interested in learning from them. Some members say that while they were willing to work with youth in order to form a stronger united front, they feel that youth are not interested in learning from them. Alba tells me:

I think that youth have a way of thinking that they are the rulers of the world and they think that they can change things on their own. So as long as they don’t understand that the experience of the youth needs to be joined with that of others to form a strong base they aren’t going to achieve much. Because it is true that they have a very different way of thinking, they have a very different way of doing things, but we are going to have to come to a point between the adults and the youth and from that point we will move forward. But as long as they say ‘no, they aren’t ... time is up for the adults’

E: Do you think they don’t want to learn from you?

A: Yes.  

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8 “Yo siento que los jóvenes tienen una forma de pensar que son dueños del mundo y que piensan que ellos pueden cambiar solos. Entonces en la medida que ellos no entiendan que la experiencia de la juventud se tiene que juntar para llegar a un buen puerto, no se van a lograr mucho. Porque si bien es
Those who share her feelings claim that there is ample space for both generations to contribute to the process and resist the idea that the decision need be in favor of one or the other. Among the members who share this opinion some of the veteran activists express some slight animosity and hurt when they respond to my questions about leadership:

When they speak out ‘okay, they should leave it to the youth, the adults should retire.’ No, the process belongs to everyone. ‘The process should only be taken on by the youth’ and so on with the language they are using now, so what can you say against that?\(^9\)

Laura shares the feelings of some of the other members who also explain that they feel as though they face some hostility from the younger generation who she believes want to see her and other activists from her generation removed.

This particular problem seems to be felt more by the veteran activists than by Makungu members, and the creation of a strong relationship will depend in part on CEDET members feeling confident that their feelings are taken into consideration, that they are valued by Makungu, and that they are viewed as an equally important part of any collaborative effort. Defining their role prior to entering into any future projects will likely also help to ensure that they feel that they are valued.

cierto que ellos tienen una manera muy diferente de nosotros de pensar, tienen una forma diferente de ejecutar las cosas, pero de repente vamos a encontrar un punto entre los jóvenes y los adultos encontramos un punto y de este punto marchamos. Pero en la medida que digan ‘no, estos son... ya los mayores ya fueron’ –

E: Piensas que no quieren aprender de ustedes?
A: Sí.”

\(^9\) “Cuando ellos salen al espacio ‘ya deben dejarlo a los jóvenes, los mayores deben de retirarse.’ Eso no, es el proceso es pertenece a todos. ‘El proceso solo debe ser tomado por los jóvenes’ y ahí con ese lenguaje que están utilizando ahora, entonces que puedes decir frente a eso?”
Overcoming the Power Paradox

In discussing aspects of inter-generational power struggles, Linda Camino (2005) presents a complex facet of this issue that must be overcome in order to create a healthier, more productive atmosphere for this kind of relationship-- a sort of power paradox. She explains that when they feel that their opinions are respected, youth generally come to terms with some of the inevitable power inequalities that exist between them and the older generation. However, older generations are less likely to concede power to youth until they have seen what the youth are capable of, which is not possible if older generations do not afford youth the opportunity to prove themselves.

Some CEDET members express this reluctance. During our discussion about making space for youth Jaime freely states:

For an older person, a young person who has finished university and is twenty-two years old, who is doing their master’s [degree] is competition! Because we have to compete for work … they can take my job and work in my position as a professional. I would like to know – the youth often want to take power, what are they proposing to do? It shouldn’t be the same thing that I would propose, because if you’re going to do the same thing that I would, I’m not going to give you any space … We can argue over these things and I will realize that you are right. What are you suggesting? Without a proposal I’m not going to make space for you at my side to do the same thing that CEDET does. If you say ‘look, in one year I’m going to go to fifty communities, I’m going to execute three projects, I’m going to execute ten projects, I’m going to rally people, I’m going to go to congress, I’m going to make a proposal,’ well then that’s fine.

10 “Para una persona mayor, un joven que terminó la universidad con veintidós años que esté estudiando la maestría es competencia! Porque tenemos que competir laboralmente … puede agarrar mi trabajo y puede desarrollar mi trabajo como profesional. Yo quisiera saber – los jóvenes quieren tomar el poder muchas veces, cuál es la propuesta de los jóvenes? Que no sea la misma propuesta que yo tengo, porque si vas a hacer lo mismo que yo, yo no te voy a dar el espacio … Cosas así, lo discutimos y yo me doy cuenta que tienes razón. Cuál es tu propuesta? Pero sin propuesta, no voy que dar espacio a mi costado para hacer lo mismo que como te digo, ya hace CEDET. Si me dices ‘mira, en un ano voy a ir a cincuenta comunidades, voy a hacer tres proyectos, yo voy a hacer diez proyectos, voy a congregar gente, voy a pararme en el congreso, voy a hacer una propuesta...’ o sea, todo lo que se puede imaginar y que no lo mismo como lo que yo he hecho, bien, pues.”
Jaime is protective of his position and makes it clear that he is unwilling to give his space up to youth if they cannot show that they have plans. However, in order for the next wave of activists to comply with his requirements, they would need access to resources that are currently unavailable to them but that Jaime and other NGOs would have an easier time acquiring. This resistance – rather, this paradox – interferes with the ability of the two organizations to connect; since it is much more difficult for youth to come by the necessary resources to be able to reach their potential, the older generation remains reluctant to accept them into what they recognize as their space. Furthermore, this ultimatum, especially in this case, is especially difficult because the statement implies that Makungu members must have their proposals approved by CEDET members (or at least, by Jaime) if they want to be able to move into different spaces. This is problematic because there is no guarantee that these youth will propose projects or initiatives of which CEDET will approve.

The question of resources is also important in this case. Unlike the community projects that scholars like Ginwright (2005), Zeldin et al. (2005), and Camino (2005) have written about, this struggle over resources is distinct from the American cases that they present in that the Peruvian veteran activists make their living off of their work at the NGO. This fact, as Jaime’s statement shows, may be a factor that is hindering relationship building among activists from different generations.

Chapter Summary

CEDET and Makungu members are cognizant of the current sporadic nature of their relationship. While the Makungu director and the youth organizations’ veteran members continue to maintain a connection with CEDET members as a result of the relationships they built through the School of Leaders, the organization as a whole does
not have an established, on-going rapport with the veteran group. Fortunately, members from both groups state that they want to improve this relationship, and so the analysis I present in this chapter is intended to identify ways in which this can be achieved.

I present some major concerns of the veteran organization about Makungu: that the group has become elitist due to the high level of youth with university degrees, and therefore it largely represents one demographic of Afro-Peruvian youth; and that Makungu events are mainly parties and they are not specifically consciousness-raising events. I employ active and passive generation theory, and fresh contact theory in order to understand these concerns. Active and passive generation theory frames CEDET as an active generation and Makungu as a more passive generation, and I use fresh contact to account for the youth group’s different approach to recruitment and event planning.

I look to literature about developing inter-generational relationships and select four factors that facilitate and three that inhibit these kinds of relationships. I analyze ethnographic data in order to determine which factors are exhibited in the Makungu-CEDET relationship. The results of the assessment show that this connection lacks three of the four facilitating factors, and exhibits all of the three inhibiting factors, which indicates that there is much work to be done in order to create a stronger bond. Fortunately, this relationship does exhibit some characteristics that can be used as important building blocks for a better relationship. These include: the recognition of the importance of an inter-generational relationship; the explicit interest in developing a better connection; and as previously demonstrated in Chapter 2, the fact that youth and
veteran members agree upon which major obstacles their community faces. Building upon this base, the factors I use above to determine the state of this relationship can be incorporated into future plans to improve this connection.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

This body of work has attempted to comprehend better the relationship between Afro-descendant youth and veteran activists in Lima, Peru. I presented and analyzed the relationship between two organizations that partake in social activism. My intention was to find out whether or not different generations of activists see eye to eye on important issues such as the dilemmas their community faces, in order to gauge how the agenda of the next generation of activists aligns with those currently in power. I also attempted to understand the current state of their relationship and identify aspects of this relationship that can help facilitate better interactions, as well as areas in which improvements can be made to strengthen the bond between these activists.

Key Findings of This Study

The findings illustrated in this body of work show that Makungu and CEDET members agree upon basic issues, but that they have a discontinuous, weak relationship, generally speaking. That said, there is potential for improvement, which would enrich both organizations and introduce new possibilities for cohesion on a larger scale. In Chapter 2, I traced the history of identity formation for Afro-Peruvians in Lima through music and dance in the 1950s, and the emergence of social activism in response to unresolved problems of social, political and economic inequality. I presented some current trajectories on new social movement theory in Latin America, and introduced Makungu and CEDET, their visions and activities, and their unique relationship.

In Chapter 3, I underscored the fact that youth and veteran activists alike agree that there are four major problems that face their community. These are: the lack of
visibility, the inability to access education, covert racism, and a lack of an ethnic identity that incorporates a social and political consciousness. I interspersed literature about historic constructions of race and ethnicity, along with multi-cultural politics in Peru, the systemic facilitation of inequality, and the daily perpetuation of racist discourses in an effort to provide a nuanced portrayal of the landscape of Lima, and how and why these activists understand and articulate these categories as interspersed, complex themes that are difficult to address.

In Chapter 4, I began by using ethnographic data to demonstrate that Makungu and CEDET members acknowledge the erratic nature of their relationship, and their desire to change this fact. I then focused on some of the concerns that CEDET members expressed during their interviews about youth, including their belief that youth are uninterested in learning from them, and the uncertainty that some expressed about Makungu’s events and approaches for recruitment. I employed Manheim’s Fresh Contact Theory, as well as the concepts of active and passive generations in order to propose an explanation for this skepticism, and to account for the differences in opinions and tactics. I ended the chapter by attempting to assess the current state of the current CEDET-Makungu relationship, and to suggest what steps can be taken to improve it. I reference literature about inter-generational relationships and determine some key factors that facilitate and inhibit these connections before referencing the ethnographic data I collected in order to determine which criteria these two organizations meet. The results of these comparisons show that these groups currently meet one out of four of the factors that encourage strong relationships, and all three that inhibit them. I conclude that regardless of this outcome, these factors can be used to
improve this relationship, and that there is potential for improvement especially given the desire from members of both groups to ameliorate their connection, and their collective recognition of the knowledge that the other generation possesses.

Caveats and Limitations

Sample size

The trends that I have highlighted here and the viewpoints of the activists that this thesis is based upon represent the two organizations that I interacted with, and are a limited basis for extrapolation. They do not reflect the dynamics or standpoints of the other Afro-descendant groups and individuals involved in activism in Lima or the rest of the nation. Much more in-depth research would be required in order to begin to generate an understanding of inter-generational relationships throughout the city, and at the regional or national level. Therefore, this research is simply a starting point for future projects.

Gender

One of the themes that this thesis does not explore is gender and gender relations. Though it is outside of the scope of the discussions presented here, there were a few instances in which I became aware of the ways in which gender plays into the inner workings of each of the organizations, and how those structural issues may inhibit inter-group interactions. Both Makungu and CEDET have male directors, and CEDET has been under the same male leader since its founding. This aspect of the relationship has gone unaddressed here, but I do recognize it as an issue that should be introduced into this discussion of fostering better relationships, and the articulation of gender and leadership in youth, veteran and inter-generational organizations.
Class

The dilemma of class in this context has been mentioned in passing, but it deserves more attention than it has been awarded in this thesis. Informants have different ideas about what constitutes a class, what class they belong to as individuals and as a group, and the implications of class in activism among Afro-Peruvians in Lima. The question of why some first-wave Makungu members left the group remains to be answered. Makungu went from being an organization whose members represented a variety of different educational backgrounds to one in which members are largely university educated, which reflects a change in internal dynamics, that is to say, internal class dynamics. Some veteran youth say that shift happened because of a change in the discourse that attracted more university-educated youth and simultaneously made it difficult for those without a stronger educational background to feel comfortable. Others say that members who left did so because of new commitments that demanded more of their time, or for other external reasons. Delving further into this issue and speaking to ex-members in order to understand their perspectives on the group would provide a more complete picture about the evolution of Makungu, but it could also introduce a new dimension to the discussion about recruitment and the kind of youth the organization may unconsciously be geared toward.

Uninterested youth

The members of both groups are vocal and for the most part, firmly grounded in their explanations of why the majority of Afro-Peruvian youth are uninterested in activism, social justice and developing a deeper understanding of their heritage as Afro-descendants. However, there may well be other reasons for this lack of interest of which these activists and I are not aware. The data presented in the previous chapters
are based solely upon the interviews I conducted with the activists with whom I was in contact, and my social interactions were also limited to Makungu members and their acquaintances, most of whom I did not engage in discussions about their involvement in activism. In sum, I spent the majority of my time around like-minded people who were either directly involved in activism or supported the efforts of activists for the betterment of the Afro-Peruvian community. The voices of the youth who do not, for whatever reason, choose to join Makungu or other groups like it do not appear here. Their statements will undoubtedly contribute to this discussion about the crisis of recruitment, and introduce other reasons for their disinterest. They will also help activist groups understand their target audience and perhaps to restructure their tactics for attracting a higher volume of their peers.

**Looking to the Future: The Broader Context**

This work is based on research data collected from two Afro-descendant organizations in Lima, a sprawling metropolis, in Peru, an extremely diverse and expansive country. The Afro-Peruvian population reflects this diversity, and their communities span from the northernmost Peruvian state bordering the Republic of Ecuador, down the coastline, and further inland as well. The separation by distance and by culture is under many circumstances great, as are the difficulties of initiating and maintaining communication in general. More extensive research would need to be conducted in order to understand the broader context in which these organizations exist and interact along generational lines, and to understand the larger patterns of communication that have yet to be analyzed. These kinds of projects would likely give some idea about whether or not the lack of communication seen between the two groups in this thesis is customary in the dynamics of other groups and, if so, how to
begin addressing this lack of communication in order to better facilitate and conserve the flow of knowledge between generations.

Future research could also focus more on what implications these relationships have for the creation of a nation-wide social movement, but they could also explore what these activists understand to be the parameters of a social movement and the process of defining themselves as such, as they will be fundamental to the development of a platform.

Finally, there are many ways that this research could be continued in order to better understand and help improve the inter-generational relationship between CEDET and Makungu, but also between these groups and other organizations in Lim and the country. As noted by scholars like Pierre Bourdieu (in Edmunds and Turner 2005), the conflict that characterizes the relationship between generations in general and in the case study I have presented here should be particularly worrisome; not only are inter-generational problems commonplace, this struggle is actually necessary for social change to take place. Moving forward, the challenge will be to develop a rapport that will allow these generations to change and solidify their relationships as allies, and facilitate communication, learning and on-going support while maintaining their respective differences and outlooks. While the information I have presented in this thesis may be unfamiliar for some readers, I predict that for the most part, the members of CEDET and Makungu will not be reading anything that they do not already know. I do hope, however, that they take note of and reflect upon the patterns, the words, and the feelings expressed by their fellow activists, and that this work can serve both as an ethnographic portrait of this moment in their history, and introduce some new ideas that
may influence future relations. I am eager to continue my work with both of CEDET and Makungu, as well as to broaden my scope to include other organizations to produce more substantial research that will be a useful tool for a wider pool of activists.


Thomas J. 2011. Diagnóstico del Contexto de las Organizaciones Afrodescendientes en el Perú. Lima, Peru

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Eshe Lewis was born and raised in Toronto, Canada. She attended a high school for the arts before beginning her undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto. By chance she noticed a course listing for an introduction to Latin American Studies that peaked her interest and decided to enroll. Through the course she became increasingly interested in Latin America and changed her major to Latin American Studies. In May 2007, Eshe went to Ecuador for a field research course. She became curious about Afro-Ecuadorians and Afro-descendants throughout the region. She began to do more research on Afro-Latinos, and during her senior year, applied for and won an undergraduate research grant to travel to Peru and direct a documentary about Afro-Peruvians. It was during that trip, the process of directing the documentary, and a return trip a year later that she decided to learn more about Afro-Peruvian activism. Eshe graduated from the University of Florida with a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies in May 2012 and plans to enter a doctoral program in anthropology in the fall of 2012 to continue her work with Afro-Latin Americans.