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Market Places, Social Spaces In Cuzco, Peru

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ABSTRACT: The author argues that spatial relations are critical to explaining the nature of economic, social, and political dynamics of the urban markets of Cuzco, Peru. The article briefly covers the history of how Cuzco's urban markets, located in the Andean highlands of southern Peru, were constituted and the reasons for the conflicts that emerged over where they should be located. It then examines how spatial considerations intervene in the kinds of practices that vendors, who are primarily women, have deployed in their everyday economic activities. Vendors' household and ecological models are drawn in part from Andean notions of vertical ecology and socioeconomic diversification, which entail strategic scheduling, migration, and a complex sexual and household division of labor. In turn, these practices contribute substantially to the particular designs and functions of marketplace activities. The article finally turns to the bitter political contestations among residents, vendors and municipal authorities over market spaces. The diverse tactics that vendors have developed to defend themselves incorporate their knowledge of urban spatial relations, gender and racial ideologies, the physical body itself, and legal measures.

Money and commodities...were destined to bring with them not only a 'culture' but also a space. The uniqueness of the marketplace, doubtless on account of the splendor of religious and politi-

cal structures, has tended to be overlooked. We should therefore remind ourselves that antiquity looked upon trade and tradespeople as external to the city, as outside its political system, and so relegated them to the outskirts. The basis of wealth was still real property, ownership of the land. The medieval revolution brought commerce inside the town and lodged it at the center of a transformed urban space. The marketplace differed from the forum as from the agora: access to it was free, and it opened up on every side onto the surrounding territory...and into the countryside's network of roads and lanes. [The market hall's] function was to shelter the transaction of business while permitting the authorities to control it. The cathedral church was certainly not far away, but its tower no longer bore the symbols of knowledge and power; instead the freestanding campanile now dominated space, and would soon, as clock-tower, come to dominate time too... By the fourteenth century this space, known and recognized now, and hence representable, was able to generate purely symbolic towns, founded for the purposes of commerce in regions which were still exclusively agropastoral, and where consequently no commercial activity was as yet taking place (Lefebvre 1991: 265).

In Cuzco's markets, as in many others around the world, space serves as a critical resource and factor of organization, and as a significant code of communication for urban residents. Walking through the markets of Cuzco, one finds oneself in the core of the city, surrounded by agitated movement, a cacophony of sounds, smells and stinks, human beasts of burden bearing hundreds of pounds on their backs, tricyclists carrying large women and their produce on wheeled platforms before them, huge rumbling lorries, beckoning and wheedling vendors, and the lurking presence of pickpockets. It is almost impossible not to delight in the remarkable variety of merchandise for sale, ranging from fresh bread, vegetables and fruit, and dry goods (the essentials for one's daily bread basket), to new-fangled hair baubles and porcelain teapots in the shape of dachshunds from China, to practical items such as luggage, underwear, and stockings, to exotic amulets, incense, and herbs

that Quechua people use to prepare ritual offerings. Traditional open-air markets that date from colonial times meet with visions of modernity and postmodern mass media images in odd ways here. Women sit on the sidewalks before their woven cloths on which medicinal herbs are heaped, at the same time that young girls at their permanent market stalls don white nurse's uniforms and stand behind shiny stainless steel containers of the very same herbs. Rap and *chicha*¹ music blare out from alleyways. It is easy to get caught up in the movement and rhythm of market life.

Setha Low has elucidated that to "theorize space and spatialize human experience" we must carefully distinguish between the "physical creation of the material setting" which "is useful in defining the historical emergence and political and economic formation of urban space" and the "social construction" of space which refers to "the phenomenological and symbolic experience of space as mediated by social processes such as exchange, conflict, and control" (1996: 861-862). In the case of markets, then, the latter refers to how the market as an established physical space with a particular history carries meaning and is transformed by the ways that people perceive and use it for a multitude of purposes, some of which may be economic, others of which may be religious or political, all of which are social in nature. This is not necessarily a self-conscious transformation of the space of the market into symbolically charged codes but rather may emerge from people's everyday practices as a matter of course.

Scholars have written extensively on markets and market vendors from a number of angles. They have addressed the ways that gender and ethnic relations and political struggles intervene in the dynamics of informal markets, and how cultural considerations shape the economic operations of vendors.² Life histories and theoretical studies of market women also offer insight into the domains that market women straddle and how they may operate as mediators or brokers.³ Most re-

cently, scholars have demonstrated that, in part, consumption drives the way such markets work and how vendors present themselves.⁴ The concept of the market as a place with a unique spatial configuration has also received some attention in research on markets, especially in terms of how spatial relations become the focus of political contestation between the state and traders in the unofficial economy. In particular, the contributors to Gracia Clark's (1988) edited volume address the tensions and conflicts between the state and traders as they are played out in relocation struggles (see especially Josephine Smart 1988; Alan Smart 1988; and Lessinger 1988).

Scholars have not theorized more generally about the social construction of space in Andean markets, partly because they have tended to focus their research more narrowly on economic circuits, rural-urban relationships and the dynamics between so-called formal and informal economies. Furthermore, in the case of the Andes, the general consensus from ethnohistorical research was that, at least in the highlands, until the arrival of the Spanish *conquistadores*, there were almost no markets. Instead, the Inca economy was primarily characterized as one that depended on redistribution and reciprocity to function.

Yet it would be unfair to claim that the social construction of market space has been wholly ignored. Early social geographical theorizing about markets ranged from Von Thünen (1966) to Smith's (1976) and Appleby's (1978) hypotheses about the relationship between central place theory and the organization of urban development in agrarian and wool-exporting societies, particularly in terms of the development of markets. Larson, Harris and Tandeter's 1995 edited volume on the history of markets and migration in the Andes addresses spatial dimensions of markets, expanding on work by Sempat Assadourian (1982) and Glave (1989), which was confined primarily to understanding Andean spatial organization in terms of economic circuits in the colonial period. Larson and León

(1995: 225) emphasize the importance of spatial relations in understanding market dynamics in the Andes, observing that “constant movement has long been part of Andean life in which intricate webs of exchange and communication are woven across the countryside,” and Murra (1995: 64), one of the earliest scholars of Andean spatial relations, notes that “to understand the movement of goods in the Andes we need an awareness that such traffic was inseparable from the continuous physical mobility of households and populations.” This, in fact, is part of what makes studying space and place in the Andes such a challenge. We must pay attention at one and the same time to place as a material locus where activities unfold, and as a site constituted out of spatial relations that move across multiple places and contribute to how the site itself and the activities that occur in it are socially constructed.

With the growing interest in transnationalism, physical space where a particular set of activities occurs and which people inhabit has been of particular interest to scholars. In the course of tracing the ways that space can be traveled by people, commodities, and information, scholars have found that these flows reveal surprising connections, fragmentation, and impacts. Scholars have also contested whether or not the contraction of space as part of a process of globalization enhances the resistance alternatives of subalterns or not. Though not an exhaustive list, scholars who have debated the impact of transnationalism on spatial relationships and Marxian models within the context of postmodernism include Gupta and Ferguson (1997), Harvey (1990), Laclau (1990), Lefebvre (1991), Massey (1994), and Soja (1989). Transnationalism and globalization are of great significance in shaping contemporary social, political and economic processes. These conditions, rather than “erasing” the significance of space, have caused space to be of at least equal or greater importance than ever before. Space is a critical factor in making sense of the form that globalization takes and its impact on different regions and econo-

mies. Nevertheless, it is not the case that the greater the concentration of power in a single entity, the greater spatial control it can exert, an argument that Harvey, for example, makes. Although intuitively this might appear to be the case, space operates at different scales. Regardless of the ease with which corporations can rove the globe or information can travel the internet, the reach of power itself is embedded in cultural relations, practices, and knowledge and never flows unmediated or unimpeded across this terrain. John Allen, in a thoughtful essay theorizing "power in play within economic geography and...the difference that space makes to our understanding of power relations" argues that:

As a general observation, the power of an organization or perhaps even a bloc of capital may be enlarged by its extension over space. The more extensive its reach, the greater its geographical spread, the more comprehensive may its power appear before us. As with the almost seamless circulation of money, information or knowledge, the flow of power is likewise frequently portrayed as a straightforward, unremarkable process. However, while distance may enhance power, it also problematizes its effectiveness.

....[N]o matter how sophisticated its manoeuvrings [sic]....power as a centralized, marshalled force has a limited spatial reach. Domination, in the sense of command over space by virtue of the capitalist relations of production and circulation, is therefore not a particularly effective mode of power when stretched across space. More significantly, there is nothing in the social relations of capital which, in itself, automatically secures certain sets of power relations. Such relations presuppose the capacity of power over space, but little else (Allen1997: 65-66).

Although I may state this in a somewhat oversimplified manner, the point is that the spatial relations of markets are constituted simultaneously out of global forces at work, local understandings of geopolitics (and their history), and culturally grounded spatial organization. Here again Allen is instruc-

tive in making the point that “the pace at which information is shared is dependent not upon the speed of transmission, but upon how it is *decoded* and *interpreted*” (1997: 8). An analysis of the urban markets of Cuzco reveals that space very much matters as a place with a history, where people live, work, interact with one another, have memories, and engage in conflicts over place as a resource, and as a site laden with social values. I focus on how the space of the market is made through how it is used, perceived, celebrated, and manipulated.

Stoller (1996) has noted that spatial mechanisms are exceedingly important in how West African market vendors from different parts of the region organize their operations when they are transplanted to New York City. Gupta and Ferguson (1977) state that the interesting aspect of place-making is not whether rooted localities create essentialist group identities or whether the sovereign individual instrumentally creates her own place (as has been proclaimed too often by those favoring identity politics). Rather, in their words, “identity neither ‘grows out’ of rooted communities nor is a thing that can be possessed or owned by individual or collective social actors. It is, instead, a mobile, often unstable relation of difference” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 13). Boyarin, who views memories as substantive landmarks with political implications, observes that “[t]he best ethnography, of course, does not rigidly choose either a spatialist or chronological analysis, but keeps aware of the politics of dimensionality” (1994: 8).

In this article, I primarily consider the social construction of markets and how space is used, manipulated, and struggled over, materially and representationally, in one of Cuzco’s primary market sites. The site is by no means bounded but rather is comprised of distinctive flows that constitute the established central market of San Pedro Cascaparo, the rings of informal outside vendors who surround the central market, and the vendors under the bridges, alongside the railroad tracks, who work in the most informal market of all, Avenida Ejército. This

outermost market is a combination of vendors with wooden stalls and ramshackle shelters, wholesalers working from their trucks and warehouses, and marketers selling luxury contraband goods locked behind glass cases in a rabbit warren of covered alleys.

Research Methods

The research on which this article is based has an implicit longitudinal dimension. I began field research in the Cuzco region in 1974 and have returned frequently over the last 25 years to the region, with a four year break from 1994 to 1997. Although my formal research projects were initially rural-based, the necessities of daily life required that I go to market and I rapidly became familiar with different kinds of markets and their organization. I often traveled with women vendors to and from the countryside in the 1970s and early 1980s. In addition, migration turned out to be a critical dimension of life in the countryside and was central to explaining the cultural, political and economic impacts of flows of goods, information and values in the Andes. Eventually, I began urban research in which I mapped out markets, sifted through archival materials, spent hours wandering the markets, conversing with the women who worked there, and visiting their homes. I also formally interviewed vendors, municipal agents, politicians, and storekeepers in a systematic fashion in 1989, 1991, 1993, and again in 1998.

This longitudinal dimension has assisted me in gaining a sense of the effects on vendors of different economic policies and political regimes. Of special import in this respect have been the changes that the neoliberal economic policies and structural adjustment programs of the late 1980s and early 1990s have wrought in Peru's markets and on its highland populations, in general. Interestingly, even as the flows of

people and commodities between the countryside and cities have increased, and interesting and exotic goods from afar become more easily available in the markets, fewer vendors at the retail level travel regularly between their (or their parents or grandparents) home communities in the countryside and their urban marketing bases. This is partly a consequence of generational changes but is also due to the inability of vendors to afford the time or expense of this kind of travel. These economic policies bring with them ideological stances that unfold through a very specific geometry of power that is visible in the markets. I will discuss these impacts at greater length below.

The Creation of the Market

Although state power is delineated by laws, codes, and institutions, it is also articulated spatially by way of its stately buildings; its resplendent plazas; its orderly, gridlike streets; and, most saliently, the strict uniformity of its military garrisons and bases. These ordered spaces and monumental buildings exist, to some extent, so that we may know where the state begins and where it ends (Schirmer 1994: 186).

The history of the construction and location of Cuzco's markets is a story in itself and I offer here the briefest of summaries because that history plays an important role in understanding exactly how Cuzco's residents make sense of, channel, challenge, and incorporate the market as place into their practices. I will then discuss how the market as a place and the knowledge that it provides affect the activities that transpire in it.

A locus of contention and social conviviality, Cuzco's Central Market originally was located in the heart of the city, the Plaza de Armas, itself a palimpsest revealing the skeletal traces of the original ceremonial ritual center of the Inca empire.

There, images of deities from distant ethnic territories migrated to receive the blessings of the Incas and demonstrate their obedience to these new rulers. Many imperial rites began and ended at the Plaza. While doubts remain whether or not large regular markets were a part of the Inca economy, there is enough evidence to argue that markets (called *qhata* in Quechua) in Cuzco, the capital of the Incas, tended to coincide with ceremonial imperial rites and smaller local markets periodically took place in different valleys.

Peru's geography is structured by multiple vertical axes that permit cultivation of or access to particular resources at altitudes that range from the coast to over 14,000 feet above sea level. Within the Andean highlands alone, one finds deep jungle and high barren plateaus where llamas and alpacas are raised and only one or two kinds of potatoes can be cultivated. In addition, Peru itself is often described as "three nations" (the coast, jungle, and highlands), thus creating yet another vertical gradient. Although the Inca economy was a redistributive economy in which all goods from different zones were gathered together by the Inca bureaucracy as tribute from local populations and then redivided according to the needs of different polities, at least from the colonial period onward and probably even before, trade was a subsidiary, and more local, activity.⁵

After the arrival of the Spaniards, informal markets began to spring up in Cuzco, primarily coinciding with Catholic saint days. The contemporary structure of the Plaza de Armas reveals the centrality of marketing from the very earliest days of colonial society. The portals that surround the Plaza retain the names they were given according to the goods and services that were traded or sold there: bread, flour, sweets, fodder, ironworks, used clothes, and meat. The Plaza was cobbled with stone and in its center was a great stone fountain.

The llamas, burros, and horses that transported goods from villages, and the stockyards were also concentrated in or nearby

the Plaza. Complaints about the filth of the central Plaza abounded. They give us a glimmering of how place was conflated with a social hierarchy, grounded in assumptions about race. In turn, these assumptions became part of a circuit that was manifested in an ideal hierarchy of spatial relations. The animals that brought agricultural products from the countryside to the city and the women seated on the ground selling their wares were repeatedly the targets of disparaging remarks and criticism. The women were described as indecent, lacking proper culture, lascivious, and insolent. Lack of proper hygiene was correlated with the market as a site populated by animals, Indian vendors who were women and had not remained confined in their villages, and the unfortunate who had to purchase goods under these conditions.⁶

Smaller markets developed in adjacent plazas (Limaq Pampa, Pampa del Castillo, Santa Teresa); vendors lined one of Cuzco's principal streets, Mutuchaca; and on Saturdays, an open-air market was held in the plaza of San Francisco called *Sábado baratillo* (the Saturday flea market), which attracted a number of itinerant vendors (De Castro 1795: 73-74). Nevertheless, some conditions worked against the growth of markets. Cuzco's colonial population remained small yet powerful, and local ethnic groups and populations were prohibited from traveling far from their place of origin, thus inhibiting the development of regional markets. The emphasis on subsistence rather than surplus production, the lack of coin, the continuing use of barter in exchange for forced labor in the surrounding agrarian hinterland, and the challenging terrain together with the lack of adequate transport stifled the growth of markets. What markets there were received little attention from Spanish chroniclers, perhaps because they did not seem to be out of the ordinary or perhaps because they were so few in number. On the other hand, travelers who later made their way to Lima and Cuzco almost always included commentaries about the markets in their travelogues, dwelling sometimes

on the exoticism of the women vendors who predominated in them. For example, in 1903, Peck, in her description of La Paz, mentions the market and market vendors:

The market and adjacent streets greatly interest the stranger, especially on Sundays when there is the largest assortment of goods and the most purchasers. Almost anything may be found here... Women, old and young, many with small children or babies, sell most of the goods, though men serve in a few departments. There is a motley crowd in motley raiment, indians and cholos in great numbers, with a sprinkling of ladies and gentlemen. The regular marketing is ordinarily done by the cook (1911: 67).

Squier's account of Lima's market was a little less diplomatic than that of Peck:

[The Central Market of Lima]... covers an entire square, being part of the Convent of the Conception, which was, I believe, in 1851, forcibly appropriated by the Government, at the risk of an outbreak... There are stalls for the principal dealers; but the mass of vendors, who are women, squat on the pavement at the edge of the galleries or in the open spaces, with their fruits, or fish, or vegetables heaped up in flat baskets, or on mats before them in little piles, called *montones*, each *monton* having a certain price. Like their congeners in all parts of the world, they chatter and "chaff" with each other and their customers, nursing children perhaps or performing some other less pleasing maternal duty, at the same time. These children, when they have attained the requisite strength, tumble and sprawl about in a very promiscuous way, not at all appetizing to purchasers. People keeping establishments in Lima had better leave their marketing to a confidential major-domo possessed of a strong stomach (1877: 54-55).

It was not until the end of the 19th century that Cuzco's urban residents began to clamor for an official market. The growth in population and Peruvians' desire to represent them-

selves as a modern nation (Peru gained its independence in 1821) were driving forces in their demand for a permanent market. For Cuzqueños, their desire to be modern held even more urgency, because in the eyes of sophisticated Limeños, Cuzqueños were marginal provincial rubes. Cuzqueños admired the parks and plazas of Lima that had been inspired by "French models."⁷ Cuzqueño society was rigidly divided according to status and race. Even the elite were stratified into estate owners, well-established foreign and national businessmen, and local merchants, respectively. Old aristocratic families did not hesitate to express their shame and embarrassment in the face of the visible presence of Indians who were dirty and of women hawkers who were stepping outside of ideal Spanish female roles. They were also sensitive to the serious problems of sickness caused by the lack of potable water and a sewage system, and they expressed their desire for "a decent market" (Garmendia 1977). The word *decente* in Spanish does not convey the sense of "adequate," but rather of "appropriate" to a society aspiring to European ideals, and a powerful correlation existed between acceptable "descent" and "decency." But "decency" went beyond the ability to trace one's blood to a proper family. It encompassed ways of dressing, speaking, and behaving. Cuzco's colonial society considered it uncivilizing and unhygienic to have such an infectious environment in the center of the city. Cuzco's provincial elite associated markets with low status and filth, and they assumed that contagious sickness was caused by the vendors who inhabited this site. They determined that it was best to hide this uncivilized side of Cuzco from potential foreign industrialists and investors.⁸ One of many contradictions that imbued the sentiments of urban residents was their simultaneous discomfort with the presence of the vendors and their heavy dependence on them. They could not immediately build the infrastructure for a modern market but in the meantime urban residents urged that not only the market but also beer bars

(*chicherías*) and gambling joints be moved away from the center.⁹ More than one Cuzqueño proclaimed that if the proper measures were followed, Cuzco would become the "Rome of America."¹⁰

From the Market of Miracles to the Market of Modernity

"...[T]he 29th of May should be designated as a holiday, the day on which the Santa Clara market will be inaugurated, a project that will fill an immense void in the progressive evolution of the capital...it is an exceedingly important work of decoration and local hygiene."¹¹

The construction of the southern railroad in the late 1800s and the arrival of the first locomotive to Cuzco in 1908 led to heated discussion among Cuzco's politicians about how to deal with Cuzco's eyesore, the central market. Hydroelectric power also finally provided electricity to Cuzco in 1914. Driven by the vision of a dynamic mayor, Manuel Silvestre Frisancho, Cuzco's first official market was completed in 1925 at no small cost. The manager and engineer responsible for the construction received gold medals.¹² The municipality bought the land from the Santa Clara Monastery. The religious orders, in fact, owned an astonishing amount of Cuzco's real estate and, consequently, politicians had to make alliances with the church, whether or not they wanted to. In turn, the church reaped the rewards of rents and exemptions from a multitude of tariffs.

Initially called the "Mercado de Santa Clara" and occasionally the "Mercado Central Frisancho," eventually its name changed to the "San Pedro Cascaparo Market," located as it was across from the Church of San Pedro. (Today, it is usually referred to in abbreviated form simply as "Mercado Central.") In the words of one historian who documented this transformation:

The dirty and fetid city of the 19th century gradually began disappearing between 1912 and 1930. The Plaza de Armas, primitive and repugnant market with llamas and mules surrounding its fountain, a popular image of colonial Cuzco, was transformed by the prefect Juan José Núñez, who with the help of "The Ornate Cuzco Society," and a public movement (*colecta*), the plaza acquired its actual form as a French park. The work was inaugurated Jan. 1, 1912 and thus ended that folkloric "Market of miracles," ancient market in which hot peppers were still used as fractions of coin...Thanks to the work and vision of Frisancho, the open air markets of Mutuchaca and San Francisco disappeared (Tamayo 1981: 131).

The slaughterhouse (or *camal*), which had also been located just off the central plaza, was moved to San Sebastian, about 12 miles outside the city in what is now considered a suburb of Cuzco. Cuzco's population is now over 300,000 yet its industrial infrastructure has changed little since its reconstruction in the 1950s following a major earthquake. It boasts a brewery, a Coca Cola factory, a fertilizer operation outside the city, and several textile factories. Its biggest industry is tourism which, since the end of the civil war, is bringing in at least four times Cuzco's population per year, all of whom must eat. As economic conditions have worsened and urban congestion has increased, vendors have come to flood the streets surrounding the indoor San Pedro market. Some work at semi-permanent stalls; others squat on the ground in a greater state of impermanence. The official market has exploded its walls and sprawls down the streets, into the plazas it once abandoned, out to the suburbs where new middle-class residential settlements have sprung up, under the railroad tracks, and up the sides of the hills where peasants who have migrated from the countryside and many of the vendors who work in the markets live. Wholesalers with their huge Volvo lorries have replaced the llamas and mules that once stationed themselves outside the San Pedro market.

Because of the urban congestion, most wholesalers have been pushed down below to Avenida Ejército, down along the railroad tracks. Known simply as "Ejército," this is an immense city of informal vendors, ranging from the poorest of the poor to the wealthy operators of the startling, fantastic contraband market who have planted themselves on both sides of the railroad tracks. The flood of vendors has always been the lightning rod for contentious battles raging over municipal control of the markets, the proper image that Cuzco should present to itself and to outsiders, and over the economic behavior of intermediaries who supply Cuzco's residents and its growing number of hotels with most of their food and merchandise.

The Social Construction of the Market

One of my first field note entries describes how I felt when I first went to Ejército:

I have started working now in Avda. Ejército. To get there, I walked down the General Buendía market from San Pedro Cascaparo. It was as if I had entered yet another world. All along Buendía were *ambulantes* (itinerant vendors), some with tents, but basically it's a makeshift scenario, a dizzying variety of goods, all being sold in fairly unpleasant hygienic conditions. And if it rains, as it has started to very early in the season, the ground turns to a sea of mud. One passes *carne foránea* and *pejerrey* (foreign meat and fish), all unrefrigerated. And suddenly, I seemed to enter a different polity, with its own social relations, rules, and regulations, organization of space, politics, and mores. I would argue that there are at least five different polities, perhaps more, that constitute "the market" in Cuzco, and each has its own history, often one that is extremely volatile. Avda. Ejército: city state of the low, the cheap, the dangerous, the desperate. Solid structures where people eat and sleep and drink and sell and store their

goods; vendors huddled on the ground with plastic mats before them; one group of vendors comprises a union now because the police tried to oust them and they decided to take a stand and move from the ground to "*tarimas*," stalls built of wooden planks. Those are harder to remove. It reminds me of land invasions in the countryside. "La tierra es para quien la trabaja." (The land is for those who till it.) The vendors, most of whom are women, occupy their space strategically, using every subterfuge they can think of. Dotted the bleak and extremely muddy and smelly landscape where the dogs have no trouble finding garbage to eat, are huge lorries, those of the wholesalers who provide goods to the retail vendors "from above." And at the far end of the railway avenue is a tangle of rusty metal objects, a space in which all manner of used metal things are thrown together and from which other objects are made anew. I suppose you could call it "the junkyard." And much of the junk is stolen.

I quote from my notes here because my physical description of this market of modernity is not so very different from the market of miracles that Tamayo describes or from the remarks prepared by a group of nuns, businessmen, and property owners in a letter to Cuzco's mayor in 1935. However, I do not condemn the temperament or culture of the vendors, as do the property owners, and I do ruminate about the market women's politics of resistance.¹³ Below is the property owners' letter to the mayor:

The street adjacent to us is packed from end to end with market women of dried goods, household products, itinerant vendors, and all kinds of hawkers of every class who converge on the market with their products, filling the entire sidewalk and street so that it is impossible to reach the doorways to houses or stores, which is where they position themselves by preference, making themselves totally immobile. Given the scarcity and total lack of culture of these people, whenever we ask them to disoccupy the street or to allow us room to get through, we receive

insolent reproaches and never achieve our objective. Given the megalomania that reigns among them, they steal whatever is at hand...anything that we can't effectively secure; ...given the antihygienic state that exists among them, by temperament,...they create a detestable and nauseating sight....The only person who benefits from this state of affairs, which we conceive of as abnormal, totally contrary to the culture which we appreciate in Cuzco, is the landlord of the market who, with great exigency, exacts charges from all the market women who do their business outside the market, bothering and hurting us....For the sake of culture, hygiene and liberty, we ask that you dictate orders to avoid having the street become transformed into the Market...¹⁴

Hygiene, theft, congestion, spatial relations and their association with a lack of orderliness and control, and garbage are commonalities in our characterizations of "the market."

Space is a critical resource and factor of organization for those who sell in the retail markets, most of whom are women. It is just as important, though for different reasons, to Cuzco's highly stratified society that still prefers to think that race can be separated from culture. The ways in which space is mapped through Cuzco's markets (the location of markets, products within markets, and how markets are occupied) also serve as codes of communication that are meaningful to Peruvians.

For the women of the market, spatial relations are vibrant, critical to their ability to sell well, struggle to gain an edge in the marketplace, and to fight back against what they consider to be unjust repression on the part of municipal authorities. We do not usually think about space as an active dimension. Instead, we think of time (the creation of history and of movement) as active, whereas space consists of coordinates that constitute a physical locus. But as social geographer Doreen Massey tells us so clearly, we are making a mistake by unlinking space and time, something physicists these days would think unwise as well. We would do better by recognizing two

aspects of spatial relations: spatial relations are “socially constructed” and what we consider social is spatially constructed. In Massey’s words:

...society is necessarily constructed spatially, and that fact—the spatial organization of society—makes a difference to how it works....If spatial organization makes a difference to how society works and how it changes, then far from being the realm of stasis, space and the spatial are also implicated...in the production of history—and thus, potentially in politics (1992: 70).

Massey, in making this point, argues that even though space and time are different dimensions, they are inextricably linked at multiple levels:

‘Space’ is created out of the vast intricacies, the incredible complexities, of the interlocking and the non-interlocking, and the networks of relations at every scale from local to global. What makes a particular view of these social relations specifically spatial is their simultaneity. It is a simultaneity, also, which has extension and configuration. But simultaneity is absolutely not stasis. Seeing space as a moment in the intersection of configured social relations (rather than as an absolute dimension) means that it cannot be seen as static. There is no choice between flow (time) and a flat surface of instantaneous relations (space). Space is not a ‘flat’ surface in that sense because the social relations which create it are themselves dynamic by their very nature. It is a question of a manner of thinking. It is not the ‘slice through time’ which should be dominant thought but the simultaneous coexistence of social relations that cannot be conceptualized as other than dynamic. Moreover, and again as a result of the fact that it is conceptualized as created out of social relations, space is by its very nature full of power and symbolism, a complex web of relations of domination and subordination, of solidarity and cooperation. This aspect of space has been referred to elsewhere as a kind of ‘power geometry’ (1992: 81).

Below, I first discuss some of the models that structure the spatial organization of Cuzco's markets. I then move to an explanation of why the social construction of the market incites heightened political struggles among Cuzco's inhabitants. Representationally, spatial relations do not together amount to an even flat surface. It is precisely the simultaneity of these relations that form a topography that is uneven, full of ruts, mountain peaks, and chasms. Explaining why this is so and what it means in the context of Cuzco's open air markets is part of the purpose of this article.

Spatial and Temporal Compression?

The ability of corporations to compete in the global marketplace hinges to a large extent on how economy and geography interact. While distance and storage no longer contribute substantially to the cost of producing goods, labor remains a critical variable. The availability of cheap labor in "peripheral" regions of the world permits clothes to be sewn, shoes to be made, and natural resources to be extracted that then command a competitive price in the world market. The engine of the center's economic health greatly depends on its ability to take advantage of world spaces that allow for ease of extraction and cheap production. And most of those spaces are located in peripheral regions. Hence, geography continues to matter to center and peripheral regions.

In the Andes, spatial relations stand out as perhaps the most important single variable that influences the general dynamics of regional marketing. The forms that spatial relations take in regional highland markets reveal the debilitation of an economy unable to crawl out from under the weight of offering primarily raw materials to the rest of the world. Peru's economy is not characterized by diversified production. This is a key macroeconomic variable that has an impact on all of

its informal markets. Generally, when social scientists and economists discuss “the market,” they are speaking of the market writ large, that is, trade between nations rather than trade within a single nation. Yet many of the same kinds of forces are at work within regional markets in Peru. The lack of a diversified productive economy, the prevalence of cheap labor that can be tapped into informally for purposes of generating revenues for formal enterprises, and the wealth of Peru’s natural resources have contributed directly to the explosion of marketing as one way for Peruvians to try to survive. Carlos Vilas (1999), reporting on labor conditions in Latin America, tells us that the Economic Commission on Latin American and the Caribbean (1997) found that nine out of every ten new jobs created in the 1990s was in the informal sector, concentrated in low-productivity unstable activities (1999: 15).

Yet the ability of the grand powers to suck on the cheap labor and raw materials of Peru is not all that defines spatial relations in Peru’s markets. We have to look from above, below, and within to grasp the intersection of qualitatively different practices that allow us to understand the role that spatial relations play in marketing structures and dynamics. It is this *combination* of perspectives that has often been ignored in analyses of regional markets. The differing abilities of Cuzco’s vendors to read the code of spatial relations in the existing markets and to manipulate or challenge them may alternately enhance their chances of success or of failure and desperation. Below, I confine myself to a discussion of two general spatial models that have a bearing on market structure and dynamics in Cuzco: ecological models and household models. A third and very important model (ritual circuits as they are elaborated in urban fiesta complexes in which vendors predominate as participants) requires a separate article for elaboration.

The Spatial Ecology of Cuzco's Markets

Spatial relations have “*both* an element of order *and* an element of chaos,” as Massey has observed (1992: 81). The process of learning to read these codes constitutes a stage in the informal apprenticeship of vendors, many of whom start out as little girls accompanying their mothers to market or wending their way alone in search of a helpful stranger after having been orphaned or abandoned in the countryside. Some of these codes become like second nature to many highland dwellers.¹⁵ While the dizzying network of social relations across space in which vendors are involved operates with minor daily adjustments and regulations, vendors’ daily uses of space and the ways that these spatial relations are shaped by social processes create the conditions for innovation (change) as well as upheaval and dramatic reorderings of these relationships.¹⁶

Andean peoples have a long tradition of learning to use space as an advantage rather than a constraint and are even able to find ways to work within the obstacles that their natural topography presents. The spatial models in which vendors work and which they also sometimes revise partially replicate ecological and agricultural models that have endured for so long in the Andes and that, ironically, were built out of Quechua highlanders *not* having used central markets as a primary means of creating their subsistence base. Instead, Quechua peasants relied on vertical ecological control, making the most of altitudinal differences.¹⁷ To make such a system work effectively, highlanders have had to intensively cultivate social relations *and* agricultural knowledge. It is not surprising, then, that Quechua highlanders often correlate location (above and below, inside and outside), together with the products grown in that location, with social relations to which they attributed higher or lower value or status. How does this transfer to the world of urban market vendors?

Rugged Terrain

There are many kinds of markets in Cuzco. In addition to the fifteen street markets that range in size, kind and permanence, Cuzco also has two kinds of supermarkets and grocery stores. The supermarket, *El Chinito*, is used by middle- and upper middle-class residents, but the small grocery stores that sell gourmet items (such as special chocolate, cereals, trail mix, cheeses, and wines) are frequented by the thousands of tourists who flock to Peru for its outdoor camping, hiking, and rafting trips. Most of these stores are concentrated in Cuzco's center. A third kind of market is the periodical open-air and/or festival market in Cuzco's suburbs, such as those held in San Jerónimo or Qalqa. These are specifically called Indian markets. The periodical open-air markets usually take place once a week and attract many more peasants from the surrounding region than do the established permanent markets. More barter takes place in these markets and an abundance of different kinds of agricultural products and animals sold directly by producers can be found in them. In addition, many central market vendors will shut down their stalls and travel to one or more of these markets. The festival markets are similar but take place only once a year. Some permanent vendors, again, will shut down, and travel to a festival market in the hopes of doing good business. At festival markets, vendors often offer special foods, clothing, or religious paraphernalia that are only found at that time of year: stuffed peppers, roasted guinea pig, or candles and relics for particular saints, for example. Finally, the tourist circuits have generated market activities at particular archaeological sites and some vendors follow the tourist tracks, especially on weekends. At the tourist markets, a dizzying array of textiles, vests, ponchos, gourds, belts, ceramicware, and such greets the strolling tourists.

What I refer to as "permanent markets" are strategically located where there is a sufficient concentration of population

and proximity to wholesalers. The main permanent markets of Cuzco are located "inside," "above," occasionally "outside," but never in the "center": San Pedro, San Blas, Rosaspata, Wanchaq, and Ttio. San Blas caters to a Bohemian and intellectual artist neighborhood; Rosaspata and Ttio to middle-class professionals; and Wanchaq to workers and middle-class customers. Many more people flock to the San Pedro market, partly because it is the oldest and most familiar market. It has a wide range of products and the informal markets surrounding it give customers more options. Finally, there is the megalopolis below the bridges of Cuzco, Avenida Ejército, which includes informal markets, a small livestock market, wholesalers, and the black market. As vendors move outside and below, with the exception of the black marketeers, they are viewed in more and more negative social terms by Cuzco's urban residents.

Residential patterns are perceived in a similar, but not identical, fashion. Suburban residents are accorded high status, and the lowest status is attributed to the densely populated migrant *pueblos jóvenes* and cooperatives that spread densely up the hillsides surrounding Cuzco. The oldest parts of the city where, during the colonial period, *chicha* bars were located and prostitutes strolled, are also negatively viewed. Today, of course, these functions cannot be compartmentalized and many tourist boutiques have sprung up in the same neighborhoods. Nevertheless, old time residents, "true" Cuzqueños, still speak pejoratively of them. However, as we will discover in the course of this labyrinthine journey, those views are not necessarily shared by the vendors themselves.

Early in my field work, I made this assessment: "When I close my eyes, what I see is flows of people, flows everywhere, but not exactly chaos. I feel as if I'm being seduced by the flow and am awed by its complexity. These flows are not a 'stage' in any kind of modernization process." The elasticity and flexibility of spatial models vary but even the language that people use to describe the markets as a system replicates vertical eco-

logical models, the interpellation of agricultural and market schedules, and the strategies that *campesinos* have used to avert risk through diversification.

Markets are located “above” and “inside” or “below” and “outside,” and their location is linked to “higher” or “lower” status, respectively. In addition, the actual arrangement of vendors and their produce within markets replicates this pattern. In the large established market of San Pedro Cascaparo, the outer ring is comprised of urban commodities, many of which are imported, followed by clusters of vendors selling lowland products, and at the heart of the market are vendors of valley and highlands products. This pattern intersects with another that accords products (and those who sell them) differing status ranks. Economists would not consider the circuits that vendors follow and the locus of markets as most appropriate for making a profit in abstract terms. However, those who rely on markets are embedded in a long historical tradition of organizing themselves in space and time in ways that allow them to maintain access to goods, clients, and information that they deem important.

Rather than resisting markets, peasants (*campesinos*) strategize about how to integrate them with their other economic and ritual activities. Tristan Platt (1995) found that in the 19th century, the rationale for peasants of one *ayllu* in Bolivia to engage in market activities only made sense if one considered that religious praxis was just as important as economic production and consumption, and required inputs at particular times. Farmers looked for the greater part of their cash needs in July and August, salt traders and freight transporters needed cash in January and June, and low valley dwellers were hard pressed for cash between December and February.

These periods did not always correspond to the moments of greatest urban and mining demand, and a seasonal dislocation might easily be interpreted by the min-

ing authorities as resistance to the market itself. But if it is incorrect to talk of the "subordination" of these peasant economies to the overwhelming forces of the market, neither does it make sense to talk about "Indian resistance" to market participation, so long as this participation did not unbalance the ensemble of ayllu reproductive strategies" (Platt 1995: 285).

The dovetailing of agricultural, ritual and pastoral calendars of market provisioners continues to this day, with intermediaries and consumers who aspire to a seamless and abundant stream of goods bemoaning that peasants are by nature lazy. At the same time, intermediaries are acutely aware that their livelihoods depend on a sophisticated understanding of these rhythms of production and celebration, and intermediaries and consumers alike are unable to forget that the space and time encapsulated in the market continue to matter dramatically in the tempo of urban life, a tempo that is far removed from the hygienic perfection of the Miami supermarket.

The Space of Home Work and Market Work

The social construction of the space of the market does not occur within a bounded site. Agricultural rhythms, ritual cycles, vertical ecological models, social networks, ferocious competition, control over capital, and internationally imposed structural adjustment policies (SAP) and neoliberal economic measures have a great deal to do with how Cuzco's markets are organized. The household strategies that vendors develop to work in the market also involve spatial considerations. To make sense of these strategies requires us to take account simultaneously of macroeconomic and microsocial forces at work.

Women strategize about where to locate their marketing operations in the light of what their relatives, in an impres-

sively far-flung extended family, are contributing to the household economy. Both the migratory movements that their households engage in and the economic activities they cobble together constitute survival mechanisms, although perhaps not in a *functional* sense. These practices allow them to diversify and thereby avoid devastating risks. I say that their strategies are not necessarily functional because they might not stretch their energy and resources if it were not for the dysfunctional nature of the dismal national economy and the gender ideologies that often prevent women from occupying higher tier formal sector positions. The strictures on economic dynamism are such that more men are joining women in the informal sector. After the late 1980s and the introduction of SAP and privatization, many men who had held positions in the government bureaucracy or state-owned industries became unemployed and had few options, given Peru's weak industrial base, but to find a niche in the service sector. In the words of one man in 1998 who was helping his wife run her business:

The government is very strict. It promised us work...but it hasn't done what it promised. In fact, it's thrown out all the workers into the street. Instead of improving the situation of workers, the pueblo is hungry. There are more and more vendors because of this, especially since there is no industry. It doesn't matter how many hours we work, even though an eight hour day was won by the world. We don't care about working more but our salary should be equivalent to the amount that we work. This is the exploitation of men on earth (Field notes, 1998).

How do families cobble together an income under these conditions? In my interviews, I found that families resorted to a range of strategies. In one case, Donata sells the famous fresh baked bread of Oropesa in the Central Market. Her daughter Celia helps her by going to the train stations or truck stops at the crack of dawn to sell bread before she goes to school.

Donata's husband has no steady work and mostly stays at home with the children, though he does help bake the bread at night. In another case, two sisters began their business with a juice stand inside the market. They made enough money so that now one runs a roasted chicken operation while the other sells dried goods in Puquín, one of the main entry points to the city from the countryside. They have now turned over the juice stand to Doris, their youngest sister. In yet another case, Baudelia makes breakfast in the market. Her mother-in-law takes care of the children. Her brother continues to live in the countryside and facilitates the transport of products for her sister to process for the breakfasts. A final example is that of Eva, Lucrecia and their mother, Laura. They are all crammed together outside the main market. Laura sells vegetables, while Eva and Lucrecia sell spices. Laura lives with her youngest son and daughter-in-law. Eva's daughter of 22 sells pork rind down the street and Eva tries to turn over a little of what she makes so that her daughter can continue attending teacher's college. Her son of 10 also comes to help in the afternoons after school. Eva and Lucrecia share a house. Rarely is a husband or partner physically present in the picture.¹⁸ In all these cases, the household members have to carefully consider where they locate their economic activities, the timing of those activities, and in what ways their work can take advantage of the contacts, skills, or resources that other household members control.

Women rise at 3 or 4 a.m. every day and do not return home until 8 or 9 p.m. After doing housework and preparing their younger children for school or to accompany them to the market, many of them have to obtain their goods from larger retailers or wholesalers, often located at a great distance. To haul those goods to their stall, they either have to take a cab, hire a tricyclist, or a human cargo carrier. Both time (distance) and money (time) intervene in whether or not they use an expensive cab or a slower and cheaper *cargador* (strapper). They care-

fully consider where the wholesale depôt is located, the economic activities of other household members and the flow of traffic, that is, potential consumer demand. I met one woman who was very excited about working in the Rosaspata market because it was so close to where she lived. But she resigned herself to becoming a vendor in the San Pedro area because it was just too far to the wholesalers and the flow of potential clients was so much greater in San Pedro.

Vendors spend a lot of time talking among themselves about flows of traffic and observing these flows, not only as they sit at their stalls, but also as they wend their way to the wholesalers, back to their homes, usually located on the slopes rising above the city, or if they go to special festivals. They are constantly calculating how to organize their vending in accordance with new possibilities of capturing more clients or windfall profits. As I will discuss further below, stall control (the occupation of a space) is one of the most controversial and politicized aspects of marketing. Vendors try to operate stalls in markets or stores within their houses on the periphery of cities where urban migrants reside and truck traffic is heavy. They do not want to work at a site where the flow of people or transport is light or which is too far from wholesale gathering-up points. Many women strategize by having family members control stalls inside and outside the central market. Legally, the unions prohibit this but a lively traffic in stall rights is normative.

People love to hide their stall secrets. In one case, a highly respected market union leader had a large stall outside but was gradually planning to vacate it and set up a permanent store. When he did, he told no one where it was. People rapidly got wind of its location, but only after business at the new store had begun to boom. Other vendors kept informal stall operations outside the market and then set up stores inside their homes because most of their homes were near truck routes. This was so because originally many of the vendors

established themselves through land invasions in makeshift neighborhoods (*pueblos jóvenes*) high above the city when they migrated from their rural home communities to the city. One woman's husband and children ran the store in the house while she sold spices outside the central market.

Even though conditions were horrendous for the women down by the railroad tracks, several of them told me that they preferred being there because it was so much closer to the wholesalers and saved them a lot of trouble. They also paid far less, if anything, for the right to occupy their space, and they were a little farther away from the arm of the municipal authorities. After a major confrontation with municipal police, who forced the informal vendors outside San Pedro to cut back the size of their wooden planks (*tarimas*) on which they displayed their goods, the vendors began thinking about where they could make up their losses since they were now forced to carry a much smaller inventory. They had heard about a Saturday open-air market that was not too expensive to get to and that seemed to be doing very well. Some of them decided to experiment and include a trip to Huancarani in their weekly marketing schedule. In another case, a woman inherited her stall from her mother and her husband assisted in the apple operation by riding a tricycle and selling apples all over the city.

Seeing the burden placed on informal vendors who are often in danger of losing their space, I pondered the advantages and disadvantages of stalls and stores. Stall vendors dream of clean environments with running water, light, quiet, protection from thieves, and freedom from harassment by the authorities. But they have at least one advantage: flexibility. They can decide, obviously not without serious calculation and forethought, to switch to a different product or to carry more apples and fewer grapes. Store owners remain stuck with their inventory for a much longer time. While this is not a huge advantage, it is one that many informal vendors take carefully

into account. And that flexibility, writ small, interestingly matches the flexibility of the global economy, writ large.

Even though stalls are supposedly available for rent to anyone, kin relations weigh heavily in who controls stalls. Stall rights, like entrepreneurial knowledge, often pass from mother to daughter with multiple female relatives ranging from sisters to cousins to aunts occupying adjacent stalls. The traffic in stalls involves kin ties, barter, and reciprocity, rather than a simple payment of rent.

Another not insignificant consideration in where market women work is with whom they work. Market women work to make a living, but they also work to socialize and escape the dismal conditions at home. Many women explained to me that they would rather be in the market where they can see their companions. They dreaded staying at home where they might be subjected, on the one hand, to domestic abuse or, on the other, to suicidal depression because they had time to consider their bleak economic and domestic state. In the words of one articulate young vendor selling in the Ejército market in 1998:

Even though I earn just a little, I prefer to come here. Otherwise, one stays in the house crying, desperate that a husband bring home money. My husband is a little bad, I don't want to explain, he drinks a lot, doesn't obey, gets bitter, I have five children who need clothes, food. He says, don't get involved in my life, pay attention to your own (Field notes, 1998).

More generally, women were compelled to work because of their husband's drinking, the lack of money for household expenses, and their fear of abuse, as these narratives make clear:

My mother takes care of my children and therefore I take care of my mother. The children stay with my mother when I travel. My prior husband went off with another

woman and there's no lack of problems with my second husband....He doesn't provide anything. He drinks, he spends. For my children, I have to kill myself. I have three children from my prior husband and he doesn't provide me with any assistance.

In the following case, the vendor's mother (also a vendor of fruit) convinced her father to stop working because whenever he worked, he drank. The mother and daughter are now the principal bread earners:

My father used to help my mother but he's left off working. Many failures. His friends would take him drinking. The problem with fathers and even more so with men, I would say, is drinking, spending money on beer. They invite their friends. It's a vice they're accustomed to. Drinking has possessed them. My mother made him leave off. Now he stays with her and she does the work....He used to be a cattle dealer. He would take the money and spend it. He provided for us when we were little but not as we grew up....He still beats us, up to this day. Whatever little mistake, he beats us. My father is very brusque; he is violent.

A well-established vendor of breakfasts also sought refuge in the market among her companions:

I wanted to escape. I have four little children. I suffered with my first child. My husband didn't treat me well. He took advantage of me....I was alone, without my family. He beat me. Now, for almost two years, he hasn't beaten me. One day, I beat him, with a big spoon. His kin also attacked me, until blood flowed. I put up with it, because of my children.¹⁹

Sociability has a pragmatic economic side to it as well. Much of the competition among market women takes place, not with their companions, but rather with those selling similar products elsewhere. Government controls on prices are often ig-

nored if all the vendors of a particular product decide to raise or lower the price. Hence, it is important for vendors to feel solidarity with their companions, who will help them out if they need to go do an errand or are ill, and share important information with them about prices, possible incursions by the authorities, or the presence of unwanted creditors.

Space and time come together in Cuzco's marketplaces, creating the dynamic knowledge that market vendors rely on to try to make a living. Their knowledge of the layout of the city, where people work and live, the gathering-up points of produce on the outskirts of the city, the location of wholesalers, the social ties vendors cultivate with wholesalers and *campesino* producers, and the rhythms of agricultural and religious calendars contribute to the remarkably creative ways in which market vendors and their household members knit together flexible economic activities for survival purposes.

Memorializing Respect: Race, Gender, and Market Spaces

In Andean rural society, negotiations over ethnic self-representations have been the stuff of everyday peasant politics since colonial times...resurgent "Indianness" (that is, the juridical and discursive struggle to reclaim one's communal or indigenous identity in order to recover lost colonial rights) was a weapon of the weak in the postindependence period. Less understood, however, are the changing social bases and politics of popular self-other distinctions in everyday social practice—in the quotidian battlefields of rural markets, city streets, government chambers, and peasant communities....We still have much to study about the social sinews of Andean regional economies: the swollen, overlapping sectors of intermediaries who emanated from, and tenuously connected, the disparate cultural and economic fragments of Andean society (Larson 1995: 36-37).

The kinds of spatial considerations that intervene in structuring market sites are not readily visible. They are subtle, dis-

appearing in the jumble of market life. Having worked in the countryside for many years helped me to discern some of these patterns. In Tony Bui's haunting film *THREE SEASONS*, similar kinds of concerns structure the lives of cyclo drivers, prostitutes, street children, and water lily vendors in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, creating a complex code built out of their understanding of social geography that is neither linear nor cyclical but rather assembled from whatever works in conditions that are not particularly favorable to them. The final part of this paper addresses the more visible measures that Cuzco's residents are willing to take in their efforts to control space that means very different things to different people. The exercise of such control involves political conflicts over the organization of physical space. The way that the physical space is organized results, in turn, in different representations of social order and different geometries of power.

The politics of the market unfold quietly most of the time, a subterranean river of discontent not immediately evident to the wayward stranger. Small signs appear that signal conflict. Political rhetoric often wins out in the heat of electoral campaigns when subtlety is abandoned. To understand the politics of the market requires that we understand the fullness of the lives of market women and the history of the sometimes tempestuous battles they have fought, mustering the courage and will-power to risk their livelihoods.

When I first started working with Cuzco's market vendors in the early 1970s, Peru's social and economic topography was such that it was still relatively easy to single out *campesinos*, *cholos*, and *mestizos*.²⁰ Although some scholars writing in the 1990s think that these divisions were crude impositions of social scientists, in fact, most *campesinos* were labeled as Quechua "Indians," and they lived in the countryside without much land in feudal-like conditions under the control of estate owners. *Cholos* were considered "mixed," having neither the blood, education, nor culture to qualify for admittance to the ranks of

true Cuzqueños. They were relatively few in number, worked in the cities in service occupations generally, and often called themselves and their companions *mestizos*. Cuzco's elite stretched over a range of professional occupations in the cities and dominated as landed estate owners in the countryside.²¹ Social scientists did err in attributing these distinctions to cultural practices and values, tending to reify the categories, and they often failed to recognize that the distinctions were the result of the layering of a long history of racist ideologies and intellectual and political processes. They also failed to realize that the use of labels only drew greater attention to the fact that the process of labeling itself was intersubjective, could be self-consciously manipulated, and that, on the ground, the reality of "mixing" entailed evermore hopeless efforts to keep people in their place through the proliferation of new caste labels.²² Finally, because these labels were in wide use in Peruvian society, many scholars did not appreciate that despite the caste-like nature of Peruvian society, migration was a long-standing phenomenon in the Andes (not only across imagined territorial divides but also across social and political ones) and that these hierarchical and racial divisions have partially been built out of the efforts of Peru's Hispanicized population to ensure its distinctiveness.

Nevertheless, Peru's racist ideology runs very deep and, unlike both Bolivia and Ecuador where indigenous movements have gathered impressive momentum, Peru has no indigenous movement.²³ Only during the 1920s in the heyday of *indigenismo* did intellectuals and politicians rhetorically consider the positive dimensions of Peru's Indian heritage.²⁴ Those positive dimensions were hedged in by notions of purity: an acceptance of "Indians," so long as they stayed in their place and did not "mix" with other races. *Cholos*, the quintessential product, culturally, racially, and politically, of mixing, challenges the rhetoric of *indigenismo* as well as the provincial elite's aspirations to maintain its superiority. De la Cadena (1996: 33)

drives home this point in her study of *indigenismo* in the province of Cuzco:

A key indigenista cultural concern of the intellectual insurgents...was the premise that culture could transform race. They inverted reigning beliefs whereby race determined culture. Expanding upon its original premise, indigenismo was a political movement that had as its goal "the revindication of the Indian." Despite the renovation implied by the indigenista premise, however, the "revindication of the Indian" accepted the prevailing assumption that the indigenous race needed improvement in order to be included as part of the nation.... Although the Peruvian and Mexican indigenistas were centrally concerned with the "inferior races," their nationalist solutions did not include a continuing process of bleaching through biological mixing with ostensibly "superior" races.

Four things have gradually transformed this topography: the passage of Peru's 1969 agrarian reform; the near collapse of Peru's economy in the 1980s, followed by its restructuring and the implementation of neoliberal economic measures; the belief that education is a critical arm of upward mobility; and the ravages of the civil war between the Peruvian state and the Shining Path guerrilla movement, which displaced hundreds of thousands of *campesinos* fleeing the civil war from the countryside to urban shanty towns. This last process was far more pronounced in Lima and the central highlands than in the Cuzco region, although its effects were felt there as well. These transformations have had dramatic consequences.²⁵ The distinctions between these caste-like categories have dissolved into the muddiness of urban culture. The confusion of complex movement has had both salutary and deleterious effects on the ways that market vendors organize politically. The huge number of "in-between" people flooding the streets of the cities, lumped under the rubric of the "popular classes," is often perceived by Cuzqueños as constituting a potential threat to

the status quo, but the actual composition of the popular classes is segmented and fragmented by distinctive relations of production and exchange, and by gender ideologies at work and in the home. The tectonics of constantly shifting economic and political alliances among the popular classes can nevertheless be counterpoised to the common cultural flows that they share in the form of musical genres, religious festivities, spatial knowledge, food, language exchanges, and survival tactics.

If one looks far back in the municipal records of Cuzco, it is apparent that market women, in particular, have been singled out as unlady-like, dirty-mouthed, untrustworthy, usurious, and lascivious, even during times of relative peace among vendors, their clients, and local government officials. And in times of intense altercation, they are repeatedly described as “insolent, ill-bred, delinquents, unpredictable, and vulgar women.” Yet if one strolls among the market stalls, this characterization seems a bit off the mark. While market women want to make sales and will engage in creative subterfuges for that purpose, most market women also wish to have courteous and smooth relationships with their clients. Many of them are dejected and depressed enough by the weight of life’s burdens and the last thing they want is to be harassed further. Yet one fact remains. No matter how many vendors flood the city, creating endless choices for the guerrilla shopper, the shoppers have neither the ties nor the time to buy directly from peasants in the countryside or from wholesalers. Hence, as is true of any economic chain that involves intermediaries, shoppers know that market women are the immediate reflection of the inefficient, clanking economy and they constitute the grease that makes it possible for urban consumers to get what they need. Both market women and their clients are aware that a degree of dependency characterizes their relationship to both *campesinos* and wholesalers, just as *campesinos* who work with wholesalers also sense a similar infuriating dependency. Local government officials

are also well aware that their political future depends in part on making the economy run smoothly.

Still, this does not sufficiently explain the harassment that so many market women experience. So from whence does it come? Market women occupy and live in public space. Their behavior in these public spaces is not considered ideal for women to exhibit—their children run around; they rig their scales; they lie to municipal agents and unpredictably feign humility or demonstrate acerbic wit or aggression if they are accused of some infraction; they don't seem to pay enough attention to industrial time, instead gossiping with their companions or leaving their stalls temporarily to do errands; they sell unstandardized products; they constantly circulate information that is not available to others; they do favors for some people and not others; and, simply put, they are uncontrollable. No matter how frequently the municipal police herd them into confined areas, they bleed into the corners, the doorways, the streets, and the public plazas. They also cluster in their neighborhoods and cooperatives where they can continue strategizing and sharing information long after the work day is over. They refuse to remain the hidden side of the real Peru, but rather they remind Cuzco's staid establishment that the *cholos* of Peru seem to have taken over the city, that despite the best efforts of this establishment, Peru's economy and Cuzco's design have not conformed to the progressive evolution that characterizes modernity and the wonder of development. This is true despite the circulation of wealth and western values that tourism brings.²⁶

The daily practices of market women and their periodic political struggles also reveal partially the machismo that dominates gendered relations to a great extent in Peru. Neither virgin nor whore, market women create discomfort. When they challenge state authorities, the latter respond by portraying them as irresponsible, intransigent and transgressors of their proper role as mothers of families. They view them as women

in public spaces whose behavior is not submissive and dependent. This seesawing perception that both men and women have of ideal gender relations can lead to heightened danger for market women, as well as for a great many other women who risk participating in politics and challenge established institutions, especially in public. Once state authorities become comfortable with the idea that market women (and others) are equivalent to whores, then they feel little compulsion about harassing them sexually or even raping them.²⁷

One of the interesting questions that has been asked about market women is whether they mobilize politically solely to defend their own self-interest, or whether they have a political consciousness that is deeper and motivates them to coordinate with other sectors of the popular classes such as workers and peasants, thereby permitting them to mobilize in a more sustained fashion.²⁸ Political consciousness and mobilization constitute praxis, born of reflection and action together. Market women mobilize politically on the basis of what Donna Haraway (1988: 575-600) calls "situated knowledge."²⁹ What this implies is that they do not share a collective ideology that emerges out of the same life experiences or class consciousness. Rather, because their relations of production and life experiences are extremely heterogeneous, their identities are multifaceted and contradictory. Living in a society where machismo is pervasive means that many women consider machismo appropriate and they are proud of their sacrifices and submissiveness in one context at the same time that they may feel compelled to abandon such a role when confronted with the reality of harassment, oppression, and even desperation. Market women, because they do not share the same relations of production, are often in intense economic competition with one another, making it very difficult for them to achieve political solidarity. Finally, racism itself is internalized such that some market women consider themselves superior in education and "culture" to other market women as well as to peasants.

Nonetheless, through political processes they may come to unite in their actions and some of their perspectives. However, it would be wrong to then assume that collective solidarity necessitates homogeneity. In fact, as Stephen (1997) concludes from her research with women in different kinds of social movements across Latin America:

The cases of women's organizing...suggest that, rather than assuming the natural existence of collective identities, we have to look contextually at how mobilization arises and how its meaning and interpretation may vary between individuals and over time. Groups of women who act together are often quite heterogeneous, and their ability to act comes from respecting difference while also forging a common argument through a shared set of questions.... Theories of collective action cannot be abstracted from the context within which they appear.... The blending of personal identity with political activism underscores how different and conflicting pieces of individual identity interact with structural conditions to influence the evolution of political commitment and strategy (Stephen 1997: 21, 22-23).

Almost all of Cuzco's vendors are organized into unions, and most of the unions operate in a manner similar to guilds, representing particular products. The unions of the itinerant vendors (*ambulantes*) are federated into one umbrella organization; the same is true of vendors in permanent markets who are organized into sections that are then federated as a single unit representing each market. Particular sections (such as the vegetable, fruit, potato, and bread sections) are considered the most powerful. On many occasions, such as religious festivals, sellers of the same product, whether they are *ambulantes* or *permanentes*, coordinate their activities.

Many market women begin, naturally enough, by reacting to threats to their own self-interest. These threats, that are frequently acted on, may include imposition of price controls by

the municipality, sexual harassment, seizure of goods, issuance of fines, the cutting off of basic hygienic services, such as electricity and water, and most common of all, the threat of being thrown out by force from their workplaces. Market vendors are eminently practical and often strive to form alliances with other labor unions. However many in number the vendors are, labor unions do not always welcome their participation because of the very labor conditions of the vendors. Market vendors are difficult to organize because they do not necessarily stay in one place, they do not constitute a unified body, and because they are overwhelmingly mothers with children. In addition, gender relations intervene dramatically in that women vendors' schedules demand that they care for their children at home and support them through their work in the market. It is difficult for them to attend the strategic planning meetings of their unions and they are frequently silenced and demeaned by men in the union leadership. Women are concerned about hygiene, the safety of their children, the difficulties they have obtaining credit, and the sexual abuse they may suffer from municipal agents. The male leadership often scoffs at these concerns, considering them less important than more traditional political maneuvering. Often, union meetings are conducted in Spanish and the women speak Quechua. The vendors must come with their children and they are usually forced out of the room if their babies begin to cry.

Even as men criticize the behavior and concerns of women union members, they believe that they will be able to make the women do what they want them to and this does not necessarily turn out to be the case. Finally, women are also ambivalent about their participation in the unions. In 1993, a number of women I interviewed told me they preferred not to take on leadership roles because they were not "educated" (Seligmann 1998: 65-82). On the other hand, in 1998, more women were part of the leadership and women seemed to be

bolder about voicing their displeasure with male leadership. One woman, a butcher, explained:

I belong to the market union. It defends us more or less. There are women and men in the leadership of the union. The women, at least in Cuzco, are more responsible. The men are hardly responsible. If a man goes to the mayor, he just lands up drinking. It's better to have women in the leadership. There's more trust talking between women and almost everyone who works in the market are women.

The Battles for Spatial Order

The organization of the social space of the marketplace pits market woman against market woman; market women against municipal authorities; and market women against urban residents. The struggles between market women primarily occur between itinerant vendors outside established markets and permanent vendors inside markets. The itinerant vendors, in order to compete with permanent vendors, consistently use rigged scales, switching them if they receive word from their companions that the municipal inspectors are due on the scene or if one of their *caseras* (regular clients) appears. The *ambulantes* claim to sell better quality products than they really do, hence receiving a few centavos more than they should from naïve customers. And there are plenty of naïve and harried customers.

The structure and rhythm of the permanent markets also permit itinerant vendors an edge, even though conditions inside are cleaner and more peaceful. The permanent market officially closes at 5 p.m. whereas the itinerant vendors remain at their stalls until early evening. Finally, as the economy declines, even middle-class customers seek out cheaper products and they assume, sometimes wrongly, that goods outside the

market are cheaper than those inside. When I was doing my field research in 1998, the permanent vendors complained repeatedly that the market was *vacío* (empty), and that everyone was leaving, because they couldn't compete with the itinerant vendors. Indeed, many stalls were vacant by 3 p.m. Itinerant vendors also move through space, seeking better locations all the time. Permanent vendors attempt to combat the advantages of itinerant vendors by engaging in an underground economy of stall commerce, using their relatives and friends as a way to establish control over strategic stall sites, renting and even selling them, but always wary of being discovered by the municipal authorities.

Every year, market vendors are either expelled from their work sites or threatened with expulsion. It is almost a tradition. Each year, some of the women who have had past experience in these struggles share their knowledge with the other vendors and this knowledge is of some help in assisting them in preparing for the next confrontation. And few of them doubt that there will be a next time. Each time the market women confront the possibility of not being able to pursue their livelihood, they acquire more knowledge of how to fight back. Rarely are they entirely defeated, but theirs is a Sisyphean struggle.

Since the physical sites that market women occupy are, in a sense, "erased" when they are thrown out permanently from a particular area, memory becomes very important in reconstructing the history of the struggles of market women and the broken promises of the government. Furthermore, the vendors can develop innovative tactics with which the police are unfamiliar drawing on the history of past struggles. Women share this knowledge informally and are particularly quick to draw upon it when yet another expulsion looms on the horizon. However, their ability to make effective use of their knowledge is hindered by two major obstacles. First, the women *are* sometimes permanently forced out of a particular region and

therefore are not around to offer their advice or share their memories. Second, women continue to struggle with the dynamics of the union leadership. Leaders have repeatedly sold out for reasons of opportunism and even when the union membership is aware of this, they do not know how to stop it.

As we noted earlier, space is a critical political resource in the conflicts that involve market women. Most market vendors have an astute understanding of how spatial relations operate. They also have a good grasp of the organization of social space and who is responsible for its design. They themselves contribute to how social space is organized or, more accurately, the disruption of that existing organization. The citation from Henri Lefebvre at the beginning of this article describes the transformation of religiopolitical centers into commercial hubs in Europe in the 14th century. With some irony, he traces the ways that transformations in production compelled the transformation of spatial organization and social functions, hand in hand with notions of temporality. These changes took place quite a bit later in the New World in the 19th century, yet their impact was similar. Even as the marketplace was peripheralized, it came to dominate the center, thus causing discomfort and displeasure to the authorities that desired to control it. The authorities desired to control the form and functions of the marketplace for several purposes: to obtain revenues from vendors, to assert their status as patrons, and to keep the marketplace in order, in accordance with their ideas about modernity and appropriate behavior. The authorities also needed to keep the city's residents satisfied by keeping the price of commodities low.

These concerns have only become greater as the years have passed. Peru's economy cannot keep pace with the vision of modernity that its urban residents struggle to uphold. The market is neither in the center nor at the margins of the imagined, well-ordered center of Cuzco. Instead, it is everywhere, making it impossible to easily control any of the above aspects.

The vendors who inhabit this space on a daily basis also find it uncomfortable and unsatisfying, but it constitutes their livelihood. They have learned how to use it and take advantage of the contradictions that lie within it in order to defend themselves. The very chaos of the market can allow them to create order at those moments when they are assaulted by authorities seeking to clean up the streets.

Rotting Olives

The ability of people to confound the established spatial orders, either through physical movement, or through their own conceptual and political acts of reimagination, means that space and place can never be given (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 17).

Especially when presidential and mayoral campaigns are underway, market women become a central focus of politicians' platforms.³⁰ Aspiring and incumbent mayors promise residents that the itinerant vendors will be swept off the streets. They simultaneously promise itinerant vendors that they will build them a "modern" market. In 1995, the municipal police ousted the 182 *ambulantes* who belong to the union of San Pedro Cascaparo from the street and forced them inside the market. After six months of surveillance and bad business, one of the union's most respected leaders became enraged and threw five vats of his olives out onto the street in front of the municipal agents. He challenged the other vendors to go back outside, protesting that there was no way he was going to continue working inside with all his goods rotting because of the lack of sales. The union members held *asambleas* (meetings) at night, to decide what to do. Eventually, 120 of them risked going outside again. They occupied the street, and established a new union. The mayor called them pimps and prostitutes (*majaderos*), and the struggle began anew.

The litigation lasted a year but this did not prevent the police from continually trying to push them off the streets. While the litigation was ongoing, the vendors slept in their stalls (*tarimas*) every night. One day, the municipality told them that they had reached a settlement with the union. They decided that they could finally return to their homes, sleep in their beds instead of the freezing cold, and try to put their houses in order again. That same night, an army battalion, accompanied by the municipal police, began burning down their stalls. The vendors, once they heard what was happening, frantically tried to get to their stalls but they were blocked by the army and police. After this debacle, they decided they had "to study to get back our space." They met at night in small groups. Arming themselves with sticks, stones, and flags, they furtively reentered the street early one morning and reconstructed their makeshift stalls, using *tarimas* they had borrowed from other vendors. According to one leader, at that point, the mayor decided it was too much trouble to harass them further, noting that they were *bien pleitos, tinterillos* (always litigating, little lawyers). When I pressed the union leader further, she added that to keep the peace, the vendors had to buy off each of the council members with millions of *intis* (Peruvian currency at the time) and a basket of their best fruit.³¹

The story that the women tell of this confrontation is interesting because of the very different kinds of tactics that the women used. Their bodies were an exceedingly important weapon in these battles and resemble the irritating and effective pacifist actions taken by women in many grassroots movements, such as the "Mothers of the Disappeared" in Argentina (see Schirmer 1994). For a long time the vendors staved off attack by sleeping in their stalls with some of their children. They also relied on knowledge gained from having participated in, witnessed, or heard stories about land invasions in the countryside. Many have firsthand experience having occupied urban space for residential settlements when they came as peas-

ant migrants and staked out the hills surrounding cities. Over the years, they learned a great deal about community organizing and gradually transformed their makeshift shelters into permanent housing. They also drew on the law with the help of their legal advisor, invoking the right to work and due process. Finally, they acquiesced to the usual *modus operandi* of using bribes to keep the peace.

Breaking Windshields, Pulling Hair, Making Space

The creation of an “orderly public space” not only has been seen as necessary for the control of the masses, but also has been directly identified with a particularly masculinist image of stable order and authority. Coupled with this image of the state of masculinist proportions is the assumption that an unrestrained “feminine” presence in the public order represents disorder and corruption, which threatens the very foundation of the “natural gendered order” of the state....It is precisely this identification of women with flesh and bodiliness that lends consequence to women’s public bodily actions....The ways in which the Madres and Greenham Common women utilize their “social skin” as sites of their resistance to the national-security state and their adamant refusal to be “disappearing” bodies attest to our need to reformulate our visions of the political usages of “the body in protest” in public space, in particular, and in politics, in general (Schirmer 1994: 187, 189, 196).

In 1997, the vendors again received notification in writing that they would be thrown out. As one woman described the events to me:

At 4 a.m., the municipal police arrived, accompanied by national police and bulldozers. We were all sleeping in our stalls so the police were prevented from tearing the stalls down. Three days later, during the day, at around 8 a.m., 150 well-armed police arrived and formed two columns on either side of the street. They destroyed one stall.

It belonged to the president of the union so she was furious and grabbed one of the police. The rest of us pelted the police with sticks and stones. The leader, *una madre de familia mestiza* (a mother of a mestiza family), grabbed the mayor, shaking him by the shoulders and saying in Quechua, "Is this what you want? To make me die here? Is this what you want for our children?"³² The MPs surrounded her, but we, her companions, broke through the circle. Then the national police arrived. Their job is to maintain public order. They tried to break up the fray. They accused the mayor of causing a scandal and they asked him to avoid violence.³³

The second week, the municipal police again tried to oust us. For 15 days, we slept on our *tarimas*. This time, we had inside information that the MPs were going to try to throw us out. The word spread from "base" to "base" so we were prepared when the invasion took place. The MPs came in tanks, trucks, bulldozers, and shields (*tirapalos*). They destroyed ten *tarimas*. Our bases whistled to communicate to each other. Using sticks and stones, we began smashing the windshields of the column of trucks. There were about 200 MPs. The drivers of the trucks became extremely flustered because they had no maneuverability in the narrow street.

The layout of the street, which the authorities were so desperately seeking to transform, was what the vendors used to their advantage as a weapon. The national police observed but did not intervene. In addition to using their knowledge of the structure of urban space, the vendors also drew on the fears that so many urban residents secretly harbor that these traders are uncontrollable harpies, using their bodies and gendered identities as weapons. They surrounded ten MPs and the municipal director who at that time was a woman. One vendor screamed at her in Quechua, "Don't you have a mother? Where were you born to have to commit this abuse against us? Now, you'll see what happens when we strike you, pull your hair, trample you, so that you won't do this to us again. You may kill us but we'll go down together."³⁴

In many parts of the world, women deliberately occupy the front lines because they want to protect the men who are present, fearing that the latter, who are often the principal bread-winners, will be more quickly seized as political agitators. In this case, many of the women are heads of household and their husbands are unemployed or working with them, but their fury reached new heights when four MPs captured two of their male comrades, one of whom was elderly. The women attacked the MPs, tearing off their clothes and leaving them practically naked. The MPs, frustrated with the national police, surrounded them and accused them of not doing their job. The national police reiterated that there was no reason for them to intervene unless there were deaths. Furthermore, they reminded the MPs that the vendors were *madres de familia* (mothers). As the windshields began shattering, the trucks tried to back up but in so doing, they began smashing into each other. Once again, the market vendors succeeded in hanging onto their space but their peace of mind was not to last for long.

Two-Way Streets

Despite the Intransigence of the Vendors, Intervention in Qasqaparo Street Is Immanent—One of the works of great transcendence programmed by the Cuzco Municipality before its term expires is the total intervention in Qasqaparo Street [*sic*], to connect it with the remodeled Tres Cruces de Oro artery and optimize automobile transit in the Monumental Center of the city. Completion of studies and projects by the office of Public Works demonstrate that it is possible to make this work despite the intransigence of the ambulantes who have taken ownership of this space for the last twenty years, and despite the recommendations of the authorities that they move elsewhere to conduct their commercial transactions.... The eternal opposition and enemies of progress and development of this capital have reared their heads again...A commission composed of these troublemakers visited the Municipal

Palace, seeking to have a dialogue with Mayor Raúl Salizar Saico.... In the face of their complaint, the mayor has been clear and adamant that the project is already a given and that it will take place no matter what... (El Comercio, Sept. 3, 1998).

The latest incident of this nature took place in late 1998. It involved the vendors lining both sides of San Pedro, the major one-way artery that extends from one of the principal side roads down to Ejército and then eventually passes by the San Pedro station where tourists catch the train to Machu Picchu and the Central Market. The unfolding of these events follows upon similar actions that took place in Lima and Arequipa, with far more successful outcomes for politicians than in Cuzco. In both of those booming commercial centers, the vendors were ousted and relocated, clearing thoroughfares and pleasing many pedestrians and drivers.³⁵ But in Cuzco, the mayor's project met with mixed results. The story is a long and unfinished one, but I synthesize it below.

The battle between the mayor and vendors "to take back" the street led to multiple altercations between the vendors, municipal agents, director of the market, and mayor. The authorities agreed that the vendors had to be "evacuated" because of traffic congestion, competition, and the "messiness" they constituted. In fact, a huge banner was hoisted by the municipality in collaboration with neighborhood residents over San Pedro Street, announcing "Yes, to a Monumental Zone, No, to Itinerant Vendors." The vendors used their growing knowledge of the law to stall action. Late one night, the municipal police painted a bright yellow line down what they envisioned as the middle of San Pedro which, at the time, was a one-way street. The line symbolically and literally meant that the vendors would be thrown out to make room for two-way traffic. The women did not give up. They harassed the painters, shaking their paint buckets and pushing and shoving them to such an extent that they could not finish the job.

Subsequently, about 400 *ambulantes* who had been ousted from Tres Cruces de Oro, the extension of San Pedro Street, but never relocated, raised their voices in protest against the mayor, whom they said was making fun of them, not fulfilling his promises to them, and that they would have to take matters into their own hands by adopting forceful measures. "We have been without work for four months, our children no longer have anything to eat, and this doesn't interest the mayor, but it makes us desperate." Meetings went on day and night in an effort to resolve internal conflicts among the vendors and arrive at a united front and a coherent set of strategies. One morning, news circulated that they would be ousted that evening and that the municipal director would supervise the expulsion. The action was planned for 9 p.m. in the hope that many of the vendors would have left for the day. The vendors instead slept in their stalls, made banners and flags, and painted over the yellow line dividing the street with difficult-to-remove black paint.

At 9 p.m., when I arrived, a huge crowd had formed. In the middle was the municipal director of the market, surrounded by a ring of MPs. Surrounding them were several rings of market vendors, mostly women. They were surrounded by yet another circle of MPs, then several rings of vendors, then another ring of MPs. It was a volatile situation. The vendors demanded that they be left alone. They accused the director of having sold them out. Intermittently, there were shrieks and whistles and people shouting. The director announced that he would not oust the vendors but simply wanted to measure their stalls. Gradually, the whole crowd moved to the other side of the street, the site of the vendors of the powerful San Pedro union. Things got even more heated. The crowd of about 300 vendors surged and roared. The press of strategically ringed bodies (what is more commonly called a riot, but one that was intelligently organized) was sufficiently intimidating that the director decided not to pursue the mayor's mandate.

Nevertheless, the confrontation lasted long into the night and much of it concerned who had the right to a stall and the distinctions that needed to be drawn between stalls "above," which were wider and more established, and those "below," which deserved a different treatment because the street funnels and becomes narrower. The municipal director demanded that the vendors "regulate themselves." Aidé, one so-called "political agitator," assured the director that the vendors were "respectful" and "*bien educadas*" (well-educated), but would fight for their rights.

The next day the mayor and municipal director gave an ultimatum to the vendors: if they did not agree to arrange themselves in two lines on either side of the street with each *tarima* measuring 1.5 meters by 1.2 meters, then the mayor would "call out his trucks, his tractors, the military and the police and wipe them out because society was demanding that he eradicate them." The *ambulantes* pleaded for "a Salomonic solution," but it was not forthcoming. The mayor retorted that he "no longer had any time for them." He didn't care about garnering their support for the upcoming election. He was "the only *pachacutec*" (one who catalyzes a cataclysmic upheaval of space-time) and wanted "to satisfy the *vecinos*" (urban elite).

Mayor Raúl Salizar Saico's efforts to use the cleanup of the market as a part of his reelection campaign backfired. His political party, the "Pachacutec Movement," had been named after the ninth Inca, Pachacutec, who was responsible for transforming the nascent Inca state into a booming and vast empire, building roadways, storehouses, bridges, and temples, and institutionalizing Inca imperial deities. Salizar Saico was a sorry contrast to Inca Pachacutec, and political jokes abounded about this mayor who had torn down one plaza after another, cut down the leafy trees that surrounded Cuzco's central plaza, and dug up sidewalks and cobblestone streets. His more common moniker was "The Destroyer of Cuzco."

When Salizar Saico was first voted into office, he had met with the vendors and discussed moving them to a new location, a piece of land that had been owned by Petro Peru (the national petroleum company). The budget for a new market for itinerant vendors was hammered out and the architectural design for the new market, commissioned and completed. The new market would be light and airy, comprised of three floors, running water, and bathrooms, and all the *ambulantes* agreed that the location was suitable, just across from the permanent market of Wanchaq, which has benefited from Cuzco's expansion south of the city. However, shortly after, perhaps because the municipality needed revenues to pay its debts or in the spirit of privatization, the mayor sold the piece of land to a private company and claimed that no such agreement had ever been established. I myself was able to obtain a copy of the proposal, the budget, and the architectural plans.

The women of the market packed their merchandise in crates, measured their *tarimas*, and apprehensively awaited the arrival of the municipal workers. When they finally arrived, the workers took out a long sliding ladder, raised it and hoisted a two-way street sign. They posted one on each side of the street. Garbage burned. Familiar cabbies slowly went by, commenting to the vendors with black humor: "The next place we'll see you is Huancaro." (Huancaro is a nascent market on the outskirts of the city.) One of the market women retorted: "Not even in San Jerónimo." (San Jerónimo is a large open air regional market about 20 miles outside of Cuzco.)

Discussion and Conclusion

When I left Peru, everything was eerily peaceful along San Pedro. All the *tarimas* were properly aligned within white painted stripes. Some of the stalls were still longer than specified, a problem for the women further down as the street nar-

rows. San Pedro is now a two-way street though traffic flows less than smoothly and pedestrians are at a greater risk than ever before of being run over or crushed between a *tarima* and a bus. The market vendors are still staking out their space. Although they have temporarily acceded to the white striped lines, no doubt they will gradually expand, inciting yet another incursion by the authorities down the road.

The incidents above cannot be defined as victories or defeats and they have different meanings for the women who participated in them. Spatial considerations intervene considerably in marketplace economics and politics designed to produce particular kinds of social geographies. The everyday kinds of resistance that vendors use are peculiar to the position in which they are situated and which, in many cases, they have been forced to occupy. They resort to using space and spatial relations as weapons and resources with which they can challenge authoritative discourse and urban designs. Their knowledge of spatial relations is not limited to urban environments and therefore is not easily accessible to all urban residents. Many of the tactics they use are replicated in the countryside in land invasions and in the establishment of the *pueblos jóvenes*, the urban squatter settlements that ring the cities, where so many of them live. They know how to occupy space. They also take advantage of socially acceptable strategies (the vote, the law, and the media) to make their case.

These everyday kinds of resistance are not distinct from more massive kinds of mobilizations. Rather the tactics culled from market women's knowledge of how space is organized, their manipulation of weights and measures, their use of language, their deployment of the physical body itself and of their gendered identities become critical when, organized into their unions, they confront en masse the armed authorities. Hence, economic relations of production alone do not satisfactorily explain how or why market women are able to muster considerable resistance to sustain their struggles against state agents

and urban residents who find their presence a constant reminder of the failure of modernity. The culturally grounded knowledge that circulates among market women of how to read and decode spatial relations assists them greatly in their political actions as well as in their ability to make a living.

At the same time, skillful as they are in manipulating spatial codes and occupying space, the vendors cannot surmount their ambivalent position. Their struggles are hemmed in as they warily assess how much social standing they want to risk and whose wrath they can afford to incite (whether it is the wholesalers, *campesinos*, their clients, or other market women who are differently situated). Yet they are hardly naïve. Most of them do not hold one or another sector of market women ultimately responsible for the fractiousness among them. They know it comes from afar, from the "dictatorship," as many call the current government of Alberto Fujimori, which has overseen neoliberalism, floods of imports, narrowly channeled economic growth, and soaring unemployment. These economic policies are accompanied by particular social attitudes and a kind of social engineering that is linked to spatial design. Despite the awareness among many Peruvians that there is growing income disparity among rich and poor and greater desperation among lower class urban residents and peasants in the countryside about how they and their children will survive, many better off Peruvians and politicians discount the validity of such despair. The age-old tenets of modernization theory, together with deeply rooted racism, have been internalized to such an extent that the assumption among politicians and better off urban residents is that if people are experiencing economic failure, it is their fault and they are not following the proper model of development.

Vendors recognize that these attitudes permeate Peruvian society. They also know that the divisiveness among them and the violence they experience cannot be easily remedied by the surging yet factitious populism of local political parties that

have proliferated with names like "Let's Go Neighbor," "We Are Peru," "My Peru," or "Peru, the Possible," attempting to persuade the popular classes that they can be a single harmonious entity all together. One of the first acts of the new mayor, Carlos Valencia, elected at the end of 1998, was to address the National Congress of *Ambulantes* in Cuzco, promising the itinerant vendors once again that he would build them a new market.

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NOTES

- 1 *Chicha* music, a mixture of African, traditional Quechua highland, and *criollo* coastal rhythms, is associated with markets and urban migrants in Peru. José Matos Mar, a long-time researcher of urban life in Peru, dates its inception from 1968 and describes it "as a musical fusion of Colombian cumbias, Cuban guarachas, and Andean highland *huaynos* in which traditional Andean music becomes "tropicalized" and is played with electric guitars, organs, and drums. It is an urban creation...that has gone beyond Andean regional traditions and achieved a national homogeneity...One band alone has succeeded in selling more than one million records of "Aguajal" in three years..." (1988: 85-86).
- 2 See Florence Babb's (1998) pioneering study of market women's economic and political lives in 1989, *BETWEEN FIELD AND COOKING POT*, and Stuart Plattner's (1989) discussion of the economic rationale behind informal marketing ventures. De la Cadena (1996), Kapchan (1996), Seligmann (1993), Stephenson (1999) and Weismantel (1995) explore the ways in which interethnic relations,

- language exchanges, and the dynamics of sartorial display contribute to the construction of vendors' identities.
- 3 Behar (1993), Buechler and Buechler (1996), Seligmann (in press), and Valderrama and Escalante (1996) have worked together with market vendors to transcribe and translate their life histories. Mintz (1971) and Seligmann (1989) address the concept of mediation and brokerage among vendors.
- 4 Works that consider the importance of consumption in market behavior include the edited volumes of Arjun Appadurai (1996), Roy Dilley (1992), Orlove (1997), and Lynn Sikkink (in press).
- 5 Among the many excellent works on how Andean precolombian economies functioned are Murra (1980) and Rostworowski de Diez Canseco (1999),
- 6 For example, three entries from just one ledger of municipal records describe the women who sold in the markets as: "unscrupulous," "exploitative," and "a plague" (Archivo Histórico Municipal, Leg. 84, Sept. 10, 1924; Oct. 16, 1924; Oct. 18, 1924).
- 7 See, for example, Tamayo 1981: 131.
- 8 One market inspector complained, for example, that they had tried to remove two stalls located along the lower part of the San Francisco plaza for ten years without success and that they were "de-basing the aesthetic aspect of the plaza and adjacent streets" (Archivo Histórico Municipal, Leg. 124, May 29, 1945). In the same document, the inspector places a great emphasis on what he calls an "urban aesthetic."
- 9 Generally speaking, the same kind of women who worked as vendors in the markets also owned and ran the bars (*chicherías*). Their establishments, which were frequented primarily by working and middle-class men and served foods that were associated with an indigenous cuisine, not surprisingly were the site of gossip, but they were considered particularly dangerous because the *chicheras* were observant witnesses and listened well to the men with loose tongues, and they had no qualms about defending their businesses from attack. These attacks generally were directed at the *chicheras* themselves and were grounded in notions of scientific racism and proper ladylike behavior.
- 10 Archivo Histórico Municipal, Leg. 91, March 14, 1930.
- 11 Archivo Histórico Municipal, Leg. 85, May 26, 1925
- 12 Archivo Histórico Municipal, Leg. 85, June 4, 1925.
- 13 Marcia Stephenson (1999), in her exegesis of literature in which vendors and, more generally, *cholas*, are featured, elaborates extensively on the ways in which market women have contributed

importantly to forging gender and racial relations, and nationhood in the Andes. In one chapter, she examines how, in a 1948 Bolivian novel, *LA NIÑA DE SUS OJOS*, the very spatial configuration of vendors' bodies squatting on the ground to make their sales is perceived as "more monster than woman" and she explains how "the lower half of her body is reduced to a vegetable by her *pollera* [a homespun full skirt that is often a distinguishing feature of vendors' dress]" (1999: 44). The subject of perception of the body itself in Andean culture and how space intervenes is an important topic for further research. Here, I would note that the descriptions of markets and vendors that I have offered in this article resonate partly with Stephenson's analysis but I would also argue that this is not the whole story and that vendors are perceived more ambiguously such that their failure to be proper women does not simply reduce them to passive beings but rather to threatening beings who are capable of acting in ways that are not predictable.

14 Archivo Histórico Municipal, Leg. 98, April 17, 1935. For many years, the market was considered a municipal rental property, turned over to the landlord who offered the highest bid at an annual auction. The landlord paid the municipality for the right to rent market stalls to vendors and was responsible for collecting those rents and maintaining the infrastructure of the market. The debate about whether the market should be municipally controlled or privatized continues to this day. Residents, including vendors and consumers, have changed their positions back and forth. Consumers want prices kept low and a clean environment. Vendors also would like for the money they pay in licenses to ensure them of a clean environment, and protection from theft and abuse. Municipal agents and landlords have both committed abuse against vendors. The municipality relies heavily on revenues from the market but it is finding it harder and harder to manage it. See Archivo Histórico Municipal, Leg.90, 1929-30 where numerous entries concern rental of the market and where vendors themselves argue that the municipality should take over direct control of the market because of the "bitter experience" of the landlord's "exploitation of us, the market vendors, but also his absolute carelessness in maintaining the hygiene and security of the locale."

15 Steinhilber and Huber (1996) did a study among artisans from San Pedro de Monsefú along the north coast of Peru. They found what they call an "ethnic model" at work in explaining the travel patterns of the artisans to markets throughout Peru and sometimes even to Ecuador and Bolivia to sell their beautifully carved wooden

implements. The artisans learned at a very young age the networks, knowledge and secrets of commerce that "implied the exchange of information, labor, transactions of material resources, support in times of crisis, mutual aid, and the exercise of power." They argue that these networks permitted the artisans to compete successfully in the market. The Monsefunos have been able to monopolize commerce through the use of these networks. Rather than leading to economic stagnation these non-individualistic relationships and considerations have become preconditions for economic dynamism, and have been inherited by subsequent generations (1996: 271, 277).

- 16 The narrative structure of text ironically makes it difficult to convey this simultaneous dynamism of spatial relations yet it is important that the reader have a starting point from which to understand the Cuzco markets. Hence, this initial description of spatial relations of the market may unfortunately give the impression of flatness rather than of chaos and order clashing and mixing together in sometimes unexpected ways.
- 17 They attempted to control strips of land that extended from the valley bottoms to the high windy slopes and plains. In each range of altitude, they could grow and control different kinds of crops and livestock: from low altitude fruit trees, peppers, tea, and sometimes coca leaves, to valley maize and early potatoes, to a staggering variety of potatoes, barley, introduced by the Spaniards, broad beans, lupines, and high protein grains, to potatoes that could be freeze-dried and alpacas and llamas. Another way they asserted vertical ecological control was indirectly, either through trade with other communities or through establishing colonies of settlers in different ecological zones, some of which could be located at great distances from their home communities.
- 18 Most vendors are women who head their own households. Rather than seeing this as some kind of aberration of the nuclear household, it might be better to consider that Andean people have moved among multiple labor sites for centuries. Although there are some exceptions, it is generally men rather than women who have migrated to mines, lowland plantations, or textile sweatshops, or more recently, to construction sites in cities, for long periods of time. Women's history of movement is somewhat different. Many have remained in the countryside, responsible for organizing agricultural activities and caring for their families. However, after the Spanish invasion, many Spaniards took indigenous women as concubines and brought them to the city. These women and their chil-

dren had to seek a living in the cities once they were abandoned. And they turned to two occupations: domestic servitude and marketing, often in a step-pattern. Over the years, this pattern has experienced changes as men migrate for greater amounts of time over longer distances with decreasing remuneration, while women settle permanently in cities, marry, and have children. What has remained relatively constant, nonetheless, is that men are often absent for long periods of time; many of them abandon their wives for mistresses; some die, leaving their wives as widows; and many women seek escape from their domestic situation because of physical abuse they experience from their husbands. Even when their husbands do work, their jobs are often less stable. Women's marketing is more steady.

19 A systematic study would be in order to assess whether or not domestic abuse has increased as a consequence of men's sense of loss of masculine identity due to the unemployment they have suffered in the last decade and a half. Repeatedly, women referred to the unemployment of their husband or spouse and domestic abuse in the same conversation. It may be, however, that this kind of abuse has a much longer history with other root causes.

20 External markers did not place someone in one category rather than another but there was a greater correlation between speaking Quechua, working the land in the countryside, wearing indigenous dress and being (and self-identifying as) a *campesino* or *indígena*, for example.

21 The use of these labels in Peruvian society is not to be confused with the overriding tendency of many researchers to create false boundaries that hermetically sealed off flows of cultural knowledge, economic resources, and political ties between city and countryside, and ignored the impact that national and international forces had on events that often occurred in distant locations. However, in the effort to redress this tendency to create reified categories in the past, researchers have now gone overboard in the opposite direction, failing to consider that, indeed, racism in Peru was far more explicit at that time creating the semblance of castes; that first generation *cholos* did have far closer ties to their home communities than they do now; and that most trappings of Quechua lifeways were acceptable only so long as they were properly folklorized or lauded as the heroic heritage of the intellectual currents of the 1920s, *indigenismo*. Genuine citizenship rights of Quechua *campesinos* or respect for the hardworking aspirations of

- upwardly mobile *cholos* were considered frightening and fairly easy to repress.
- 22 De la Cadena (1996) offers a detailed analysis of this history as it unfolded in Cuzco. See also Seligmann (1989) for a discussion of the processes of labeling among *campesinos*, *cholos* and *mestizos*, and how class, race, and gender intervene in the ways that social and economic relationships are structured and labels are used in Cuzco, particularly when they involve market vendors.
- 23 Peru does have a history of peasant organizing in formal political parties and federations, well-documented by Poole and Rénique (1992). The agrarian reform and the promise it held, as well as the violence of Peru's civil war, contributed to defusing the formation of a pan-Indian movement like those which have evolved in Bolivia and Ecuador. Indigenous peoples attempt to combat racist ideologies by making economic demands for land and citizen rights, but these demands are rarely couched in terms of a recognition of indigenous culture or values and they are rarely explicit condemnations of Peru's racist heritage.
- 24 Mirko Lauer (1997) has written a series of insightful essays discussing the history of the concept of *indigenismo* in Peru between the 1920s and 1950s, distinguishing between a nativism that directly entailed returning to Peru's native "Indian" roots and what he calls "*indigenismo-2*" in which "Indians" are used, manipulated, represented and coopted by different sectors of Peru's criollo society. He also explores the gap that exists between how *indigenismo* has been constructed politically and culturally. De la Cadena (1998: 143-68) addresses the political and regional cultural movement of *indigenismo* from 1910 to 1980, painting a detailed picture of its proponents and its evolution in Cuzco itself.
- 25 The 1969 reform, while not entirely successful, returned some economic resources to *campesinos* and, perhaps most important, in the course of reform proceedings, many *campesinos* became more sophisticated in their use of law and legal discourse, and in lobbying and fighting hard to defend their citizenship rights. The goal of educating their children that so many *campesinos* and *cholos* hold dear, also increased the flow of people to the cities. The economic and politics events of the 1980s and early 1990s has meant, however, that *campesinos* have flooded urban areas and unemployment has forced all sorts of Peruvians, including those who once considered themselves middle-class, into informal service occupations in the streets, especially as taxi drivers and vendors.

- 26 While not the subject of this article, the impact that tourism has had upon the character of Cuzco would make for a fascinating discussion and would rupture many commonly held assumptions about how residents of underdeveloped cities variously perceive tourists and how they have incorporated these perceptions and understandings into their daily practices. To give some idea of the importance of tourism to Cuzco, in June of 1999, the Lima newspaper, EL COMERCIO reported that 1500 tourists per day were traveling to Machu Picchu. Most of them begin their journey from Cuzco (El Comercio, internet version, June 2, 1999).
- 27 Several market women, with anger but little embarrassment, described to me the sexual abuses they had suffered from municipal agents. Lynn Stephen (1997: 35-26) elaborates on the "links between Catholic images of femininity and their use by repressive states to control women." In her words:

Images of the Virgin Mary portray an idealized woman who is an obedient, self-sacrificing mother, subordinating her needs to those of her children... The counterpart... is that of the Whore, as manifested in the story of Mary Magdalene, the prostitute who is counseled by Christ. As a Virgin Mary opposite, the Whore is seen as aggressive, impure, disconnected from motherhood, and a male sexual object. Her sexuality is constructed to service men, and her personhood (if she is granted any) is focused through this role.

Women as citizens are projected as being under the care and supervision of the state.... In this extension of Catholic imagery, the various offices of the state (whether they are heads of state, generals, or police authorities) are extensions of male family members. Women who deviate from the characteristics associated with the Virgin Mary by disobeying state authority and assuming an active role in society can be cast into the opposite role of symbolic whore.

- 28 See discussions of this question in Albro 1998b and Babb 1998, for example. Albro (1998b: 339-340) argues that market women in Bolivia have no "corporate" political identity even if they take adversarial stances in particular situations and he suggests that

one must look to popular culture, much of it conveyed by the forces of neoliberalism, to find the emergence of an autonomous and hybrid *chola* identity. Babb (1998: 176), in contrast, finds that the marginalization that contributes to the fragmentation among market women has not "prevented these women from developing a consciousness of their collective contribution as marketers and of the political potential they represent."

29 Haraway uses the concept to argue that facts are organized within particular historical contexts and ideological assumptions, and that a feminist approach to primatology requires situating it within a complex array of intellectual developments.

30 The strife between permanent and itinerant vendors is complicated considerably by the political stratagems of enterprising politicians. Robert Albro (1998a: 133-164) has written extensively on the ways that politicians across the spectrum in Bolivia use the metaphor of *cholaje* in their quest to represent themselves as men (and sometimes women) of the people. Posters of proud *cholas*, many of whom are typed as market women (in their white stove pipe hats or bowler hats, multiple *polleras* (skirts), and glittering rhinestone earrings) plaster the walls of La Paz. Barbecues take place with *chicha* music blaring. Politicians make a point of showing up and lavishly spending at traditional *cholo* festivals. Interestingly, this kind of populist wielding of the *vox populi* has not been embraced by Peru's politicians. Rather, the attitude toward *cholos* and the representations of *cholos* remain generally negative in Peru, partly because *cholos* themselves, and in particular, market women, have not bought into this kind of rhetoric. They have already been sufficiently disenchanting by the numerous broken promises of politicians.

31 Field notes, August 25, 1998.

32 Original Quechua: "*Kaypi wañuchiway munaspaykiywa. Qan kaniwanki wawaykunata.*"

33 According to what I heard, the national police are more supportive of the vendors than the municipal police. I find this division has more to do with the rivalry that has long existed between the different police forces than it has to do with a sympathy for the plight of the vendors.

34 Original Quechua: *Manachu mamaykiqan. Maymanta naciramunki qan kay abusuta ruwaranaykikupaq. Kunanmi rik' unki takaykimanta hap'ispa allinta sarusaykitu huk kutinpi mana kayta ruwawanaykikupaq. Wañuchinakusunpas piru kuskamanta.!*"

35 A news report from one of Lima's principal papers, EL COMERCIO, November 6, 1998, described the successful relocation of vendors in a central highland city:

Itinerant vendors abandon the central streets of Cañete. More than a thousand informal vendors were relocated to the new "Model Market," constructed by the municipality and with the support of one sector of the itinerant vendors. The vendors began their relocation at 3 a.m. opening the principal arteries of the city to the circulation of pedestrians and vehicles. The beauty of this district and the circulation of pedestrians and vehicles has improved. The new center in Ramos Larrea urbanization, was constructed with the support of the municipal district and with quotas that were levied on all of the vendors. After relocating the vendors, about 50 police maintained strict control in the streets to prevent the return of vendors who were not included in the plan given that they had not paid their monthly quotas or their enrollment fees.

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