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PERUVIAN WORKING GIRLS MAKING MOVEMENT

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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In this dissertation I show how Peruvian girls who work and are organized as members of MANTHOC in Lima and Cajamarca are well equipped to navigate power structures. I do this by first talking about how girls in MANTHOC, or MANTHOCas, define their identity as dignified workers and how this classification teaches them how to traverse often negative conceptualizations of them. I then talk about how in becoming part of this organization, girls have a space where they can learn how to participate politically inside and outside their child-led social movement. By transposing their worker identity into different ways that they identify, more experienced girls begin to embody the movement's values and as such maintain its purpose. In doing so, these girls are capable of gaining access to a differential mode of consciousness they can use to navigate adult power. As this process is always shifting and evolving, not one girl's lived experience is the same as another's, but they are able to use Sandoval's five technologies of resistance to create positive change locally and globally.

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List of Abbreviations

AARLE: Asociación de Alcaldes Regidores y Líderes Estudiantiles de Ayacucho

(Association of Mayoral Alderman and Student Leaders in Ayacucho)

CCONNA: Consejo Consultivo de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (Advisory Council for Boys, Girls, and Adolescents)

CDI: Comité sobre Derechos en Infancia (Committee on Rights in Childhood)

CONNATs: Coordinación Nacional de Niñas, Niños, y Adolescentes Trabajadores (National Coordination of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents)

CONNAO: Coordinadora de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Organizados de Ica (Coordination of Organized Boys, Girls, and Adolescents in Ica)

DEMUNA: Defensoría Municipal del Niño y Adolescente (Municipal Advocacy for Children and Adolescents)

DEMUS: Estudio para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (Study and Defense of Women's Rights)

DGNNA: Dirección General de Niñas, Niños, y Adolescentes (General Directorate of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents)

GRUFIDES: Grupo de Formación e Intervención para el Desarrollo Sostenible (Training and Intervention Group for Sustainable Development)

IFEJANT: Instituto de Formación para Educadores de Jóvenes, Adolescentes y Niños Trabajadores (Training Institute for Educators of Child, Adolescent, and Youth Workers)

ILO: International Labour Organization

INDECI: Instituto Nacional de Defensa Civil (National Institute of Civil Defense)

INEI: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Informática (National Institute of Statistics and Informatics)

IREWOC: International Research on Working Children

JOC: Juventud Obrera Christiana (Youth Christian Laborers)

MANTHOC: Movimiento de Adolescentes y Niños Trabajadores Hijos de Obreros Cristianos (Movement of Working Adolescents and Children, Children of Christian Laborers)

MIMP: Ministerio de la Mujer y Poblaciones Vulnerables (Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations)

MNNATSOP: Movimiento Nacional de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores Organizados del Perú (Peruvian National Movement of Organized Working Boys, Girls, and Adolescents)

MOLACNATs: Movimiento Lationamericano y del Caribe de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes Trabajadores (Latin American and Caribbean Movement of Working Girls, Boys and Adolescents)

MRTA: Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement)

NGO: Nongovernmental organization

NNAT: Niña, Niño, y Adolescente Trabajador (Girl, Boy, and Adolescent Worker)

ODW: Operasjon Dagsverk (Operation Day's Work)

PRATEC: Proyecto Andino para las Tecnologías Campesinas (Andean Project of Peasant Technologies)

PCP-SL: Partido Comunista del Perú–Sendero Luminoso (Communist Party of Peru–Shining Path)

UNATSBO: Unión de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores de Bolivia (Bolivian Union of Working Boys, Girls, and Adolescents)

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

YWLP: Young Women Leaders Program

VES: Villa El Salvador

CHAPTER 1: INTERCONNECTED CONTEXTS

This dissertation deals with the politicization of rural and urban Peruvian working girls, as members of a working-child-led collective social movement, Movimiento de Adolescentes y Niños Trabajadores Hijos de Obreros Cristianos (Movement of Working Adolescents and Children, Children of Christian Laborers, MANTHOC). My central concerns revolve around how the girls come to imagine themselves as dignified workers through their involvement in the everyday campaigns of this organization. As this dissertation details, the struggle for dignified work is not separate from wider struggles against sexual violence and for environmental justice and improved living conditions.

Rr and Jhoselyn, two teenage members of MANTHOC, stood at the front of a room of about forty children, holding dry erase markers at the ready to write down postulants' names for their roles. "Just three?" many children murmured, concerned that some groups would not be represented. This group was not solely made up of working children; it also included youths who sought to speak for their various schools and organizations in the new Comité sobre Derechos en Infancia (Committee on the Rights in Childhood, CDI). The formation of the CDI for 2018 was framed as a serious and necessary matter, not just because the group would work to fulfill a grant requirement for Operation Day's Work (Operasjon Dagsverk, ODW) and Amnesty International, but also because the organizing of many children and youth in Cajamarca was a strategic way to disseminate sexual and reproductive rights in the region. MANTHOC had been tackling the rising femicide and sexual violence in the nation through small-scale campaigning and lobbying; now with Amnesty and ODW's support, the movement continued on a broader scale with nonmovement children and youth.

Luchita, an adult collaborator in the movement, had just explained that when the original group had formed a year ago, the municipality required a president, a secretary, and a treasurer to communicate with the bureaucrats of Cajamarca. Rr looked at Jhoselyn and, noting the rising tension in the room, asked loudly, "What about a vice president too?" A boy in the corner of the space shouted, "Last year the vice president did not assist in any of their role's tasks!" Rr shrugged her shoulders and continued, "OK, *chicos* [kids], we are not going to pick you; no, this will be voluntary. Those who feel that they can be *presidente* or *presidenta*, raise your hand."

At this, five or six hands shot up. Cajacho, a fourteen-year-old MANTHOC_o, exclaimed, “Wait a minute, we must be fair!”¹ He whispered to Rr and Jhoselyn, and they proceeded to write down the names of individuals who had raised their hands. On the board, there were the names of seven candidates running for president of the CDI. Rr again turned to Jhoselyn and Cajacho and said, “So many . . .” A voice from the side of the room shouted out, “Democracy!” Rr said, almost to herself, “I don’t think so, maybe of these we pick three.” The room erupted around her. Shouts of “the first two!” “the first three!” “the first one!” coalesced into a great din. The MANTHOC_xs conferred again, this time including a few teen boys who were arranged around the periphery of the school groups, and suggested they hold this candidacy again. Jhoselyn erased all the names and Rr declared, “Those who believe that they have some time at their disposal to speak with authorities and who will do all that a president must, then stand at the front!”



Figure 1.1. CDI members electing one another for the role of president.

¹ I refer to the members of MANTHOC with the gender-neutral plural MANTHOC_xs; when I refer to the girls I use MANTHOC_{as}, and in referring to the boys, I use MANTHOC_{os}.

Nine candidates made their way to the front of the room. Rr made it known that “the meetings are every fifteen days, so you can’t say, ‘Oh, no, my mom is making me do the wash.’ No. You have to meet every fifteen days.” Sizing up the number of candidates, Rr asked all the children gathered in the room if they would consider the formation of a board of directors who would share in the responsibilities of power that were currently the responsibility of the president. Looking interested in the rule change, Luchita stepped in again and answered someone’s question of “whether or not there should be a vote” and another, “Why should ‘we’ elect if this is a voluntary service that they are assuming?” At this another boy stood up, bringing the total of kids who made up the executive team to ten, two girls and eight boys. Luchita continued, “It’s OK that there are many of you. More than the ‘president, secretary, and treasurer,’ what we need is a team that can manage; if they are willing to assume the work as volunteers, then they can manage all of the actions.”

After the last candidate publicly stated the commitment to work as a cohesive group, Cajacho stood up again and with an air of mistrust added, “Well, we can all say today that ‘I can, I can,’ but all of these promises will be thrown on the floor. So, there are people here, who are present, that have that will; last year was like this. They were like, ‘I would like this charge,’ in the end, they didn’t even come near the meetings. So, let us observe that this is what we here are analyzing. There are many here, and I am not sure you will all keep your promise.” He gestured at Rr for her turn to speak. Nodding, Rr stood up and said, “OK, I want to express my opinion for a sec. OK, let’s see, it’s true, we have reflected and all that, but I don’t know, they could be calling each other out, and

they could elect each other and in any case, we have a new executive team!”² The room burst into cheers and laughter as the tension about the new cohort’s worth was eased.

Having MANTHOCas at the forefront of finding this leadership was critical to ensuring that the CDI’s endeavors would succeed. As I experienced, Rr’s femaleness in this space felt respected. Her gender may have served in this particular campaign as a form of authority in dealing with increased sexual violence in the region. What I found striking when I first began fieldwork was the confidence that was plain among children in questioning typically age- and gender-based hierarchies. MANTHOC is a place that contains many different genders, and some organizations reproduce the inequalities associated with life outside their movement. The way that the MANTHOCxs and school groups negotiated the change in rules, and meant to hold the new committee accountable, diminished the presumptive hierarchy of age or experience, while also reminding the executive team members of their responsibility to the whole. To that end, a girl—Rr—was seen as an authority figure in a space where nonmovement children might be more accustomed to reproducing gendered hierarchies. She was also able to communicate the concerns of the movement, while relieving the apprehension in the room.

This show of adaptation and coalition-building is at the heart of the movement and might aid in the promulgation and dissemination of sexual and reproductive rights in the region. In this introductory chapter, I hope to render how the daily and momentous events in the lives of girls whom I identify as MANTHOCas allow them to confront and negotiate the complex social and economic hierarchies that exist in Peru. It is the constant interactions with children of all ages, the solidaristic politicization through cultural

² To “call someone out” is to make him or her accountable for an issue. In the video I use from this day, Rr says in Spanish, “Ya ellos se pueden llamar interno, ellos ya que se elijan.”

training workshops, and the application of what children gain in the movement that benefit all member children, yet for girls, these experiences contribute to the ways in which they ultimately navigate power in the greater society. In this dissertation, I will demonstrate how the movement's goals of pushing for working children's rights particularly opens a space where girls can take a lead in their self-advocacy. This impetus to participate in movement processes over time politicizes girls, allowing them to sustain MANTHOC. As girls preserve the movement as a system, their capacities to identify and navigate power structures permits them to transpose their learned knowledges into fields outside the shelter of their groups and bases.

In the following sections, I discuss the Peruvian political context that led to MANTHOC's origins, the influence of activist priests at the time, and the ways in which these factors prompted the guiding principles of working children's concerns for the movement. I will also describe the liberatory principle of *protagonismo* (protagonism), which MANTHOCxs deploy to be active participants. Additionally, I will talk about how the children are conceptualized in Peru, vis-à-vis the influence of the Andes, and the ways in which these conceptualizations come up against normative childhoods of the Global North.³ Next, I will discuss the movement's origins and the pertinent Peruvian history that acts as a backdrop to current constructions of Andean childhoods. I will then

³ In this dissertation I will be using the distinction of Global North and Global South to denote the difference between countries of high global wealth that have Western cultural values (the former) and countries that have relatively low global wealth with non-Western cultural values (the latter). Although this is not a direct line between Northern contexts and Southern contexts, as there are Southern aspects in wealthy Northern nations, and Northern conditions within the vastness of Southern nations, when I describe "Global South," it should be interpreted as a previously considered "Third World" demarcation with Eastern or Indigenous influence, and Global North, a prior "First" or "Second" World nation with Western influence.

speak to the constructions of Peruvian girls and the ways in which Peruvian working girls are theorized. Last, I will motion toward the upcoming chapters, indicating their content.

Who or What Is MANTHOC?

As mentioned in the preceding story, MANTHOC is the Movement of Working Adolescents and Children, Children of Christian Laborers. It is a child-led organization that was formed after the Belaúnde government put in place the Decree of Law N° 011-74-TR, which dissolved labor contracts and the pension guarantees of the poorest laborers. In 1976, after implementation of the law, a state of economic emergency and the suspension of pensions led to massive layoffs and instigated a national workers strike in 1977.⁴ At the time, the movement was part of the larger Juventud Obrera Christiana (Youth Christian Laborers, JOC), who wanted to establish “a type of action and organization of children and adolescents working in poor neighborhoods, so that when they are young they have the opportunity to organize themselves as workers.”⁵ At the same time, the JOC could not address all the concerns of smaller children within their organization and thus, in 1979, MANTHOC amicably broke apart from its umbrella organization. Although the project of MANTHOC had been under way at the JOC, the strike and collaboration with clergy began to solidify the movement. According to Cecilia Ramirez, a NNAT (*niña, niño, o adolescente trabajador* [girl, boy, or adolescent worker]) herself when the organization first began, said that MANTHOC came together with the participation of Catholic priests and nuns who, because of their dedication to liberation theology, felt compelled to support the children and youth.

⁴ For more information about the national strike of 1977, see historian Manuel Valladares’s *El Paro Nacional del 1977 de Julio* (2013).

⁵ <https://www.manthoc.org.pe/nuestra-historia/>.

As the socioeconomic reality of exploitation in Peru produced what liberation theologians termed a “situation of sin” (Gutiérrez Merino 1970, 252), whereby institutionalized violence created a system of dependence that is more complicated than an individual’s will. The movement children felt similarly motivated to achieve justice and restoration by liberating themselves and others from degrading working conditions.⁶ This urge for freedom also stemmed from indignation about a constrictive and unrealistic childhood imposed by social norms that do not represent the Andean⁷ condition. And so their main adult helper or collaborator, Father Alejandro Cussianovich, has continually mentored MANTHOCxs and has written numerous essays and volumes about the movement’s knowledge. These texts not only outline the proposed concrete regulations and changes for recognizing working children; they also show that the movement’s guiding tenets lead to a more intangible paradigm-shifting notion of plural and participatory childhoods. The founding members call their tenets “intuitions” because they are meant to capture the point of view of the working child with experiences that only they could intuit as young domestic workers, laborers, and temporarily unemployed children and youth. For this reason, MANTHOCxs believe that no members should be

⁶ In 1972, theologian Gutiérrez Merino published *Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas* (in English, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* [1980]). Representing the Peruvian contingent of the liberation theology movement in Latin America, Father Gustavo and his cohort put forward seven principles, one of which refers to the tenet above. Pedro Casadaliga and Jose Maria Vigil further explore this principle, writing, “Behind this taking on of a social setting lies the ethical indignation we feel at the situation: the feeling that the reality of the injustice unleashed on the oppressed is so serious that it merits our unavoidable attention, our perception that life itself would lose its meaning if we were to live with our backs turned on the poor, the irreversible decision to consecrate our own lives in one way or another to the service of the people, in order to eradicate the injustice of which they are the victims” (1992, 38).

⁷ There is a tendency in the academy to turn away from essentializing concepts and terms (and it is no wonder, considering anthropology’s crisis of representation and the field’s following attempts to ‘do no harm’). Yet, in most organizations, the use of strategic essentialisms (Spivak, 2012) is a way to circumvent oppressions by rallying behind a value or message. In MANTHOC’s case, positive aspects of Andeanism are brought together to act as a goal for children’s liberation.

“considered [the] victims of poverty, [but instead] strategists over survival, hunger and social insignificance; that is, as social actors, as co-protagonists of their collective and personal evolution” (Cussianovich 2006, 107, 158–59).

MANTHOCxs conceptually developed and elaborated foundational tenets within the movement, such that each member could express and narrate the movement’s purpose in the way that was most comfortable to that member until multiple experiences became a dense discourse to inspire organization and action. The guidance provided by the intuitions harkens back to the language of liberation theology, which was meant to provide dignified salvation, by giving preferential treatment to the poor and fostering economic, political, social, and ideological liberation.⁸ In their practicing “living in faith,” the exercise of liberation acts by MANTHOCxs solidify ties between working children around the world who experience similar trials and tribulations. As with the activities of some theologians in the 1970s who were predominantly interested in liberatory consciousness, the formation of MANTHOC was part of a larger movement toward dignity and faith. Facing the difficulties of economic situations has for a long time been part of MANTHOCxs’ preoccupations, as scarcity and insecurity has increased through the promulgation of ethnic and racial disparities. These guiding principles, as I briefly explain below, evolved over time to better reflect the political moments and shifts in movement leadership.

MANTHOCxs learn movement principles throughout their cultural trainings on the organization’s founding. The intuitions are also represented in the work that children perform both to gain income and to maintain the movement’s purpose in the long term.

⁸ According to Taft (2017) Alejandro Cussianovich co-constructed the liberation theology movement in Peru, along with Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino.

The first principle is the belief that organized children are not the apprentices of any organization, adults, or other young people and that MANTHOCxs have their own voice and thoughts. The following intuitions guide the movement to this day. Reflecting the tensions that marked the origin of the organization, the second foundational tenet notes that MANTHOCxs' organizational vision and approach are meant to raise their own self-esteem as dignified laborers with the right to work (Cussianovich Villaran 2006, 185–86). A third intuition holds that working children are to be seen as social, economic, cultural, ethical, and political subjects; in this way, they are subjects of rights.

This goes to how Cussianovich relays movement knowledge, explaining that this kind of conception of childhood begins by discussing the child as a subject of rights. In doing this first, “MANTHOC maintained that every discourse on the subject [of childhood] is a political discourse in opposition to the privatizing discourse of childhood, typical of bourgeois cultures of past centuries, but that is still present. An ethical discourse was thus emphasized in the face of a moralistic and pietistic conception about poor childhoods and children in general” (185). Although strongly ingrained in Peruvian society, piety and morality should not figure into the goal of this principle. Instead, MANTHOCxs prefer to view the rights of children through the lens of their experiences of need; this in turn places them under their own control as the most proficient in understanding the realities of their lives.

In a similar vein, the fourth intuition advocates that working children's *protagonismo* be paired with a sense of autonomy, which could ensure that NNATs stay responsible; it acts as a kind of policing of themselves and one another in the form of direction through solidaristic participation. In the following section, as well as in

subsequent chapters, I will further detail the complicated nature of *protagonismo*. As Cussianovich notes, in shifting a paradigm of childhood, it is necessary to redefine other social subjects as well, so it makes sense that the next intuition deals with the *protagonismo* of the adults who work with MANTHOC (186).

In the fifth intuition, to affirm that working children and adolescents have autonomy and social *protagonismo*, adults who work alongside them should be defined as *collaborators*. This title does not just refer to their “participatory action, but gives them their own space where they can exercise their own *protagonismo* through learning and contributing, promoting and being promoted” (186). Adults are, then, seen only as collaborators and never as directors or representatives of working children, but they are also meant to be protagonists advancing the movement’s children-expressed interests. Additionally, a sixth intuition recognizes the need for daily life in the movement to consider the local and global position of all working children and their similar problems, to stand in solidarity with them. Last, a seventh intuition recognizes that because *protagonismo* in the organization and at work has taught working children in particular to overcome difficulties, they have a unique view of childhood. This perspective acknowledges the similar needs and interests that working children have with one another, despite their differences, and as such should be seen as contributing to a new culture of childhood. This is to say that their expression of *protagonismo* permits them to manipulate their own manner of education, or *formación* (187).

Protagonismo as a Core Value of MANTHOC’s Communitarian Politics

As Jessica Taft clarifies in her 2017 article, there was a three-pronged shift in the rhetoric of movement and its use of *protagonismo*. First, there was the move from class-

based language of liberation to a toned-down language of rights due to the violence of the terrorism years. Though the movement's branching from the JOC was explicitly meant to bestow upon younger children a strong class consciousness with foundation in the language of liberation theology, a Marxist association would have been dangerous and unsafe. And yet, shifts in the way class-based rhetoric was perceived by the state made grassroots groups of all kinds hesitate their use of the language of liberation, in order to avoid being associated with groups like Sendero Luminoso. The State regularly blended any class-based rhetoric with that of terrorism. As an instance of this, Shane Greene (2016) talks about how young adults who were in the punk rock scene were classified as terrorist for having anti-government sentiments. The founding MANTHOC group wanted to privilege class-consciousness in children over age categories, because this would mean that the struggle was intergenerational and not temporary.

Additionally, the ratification of both the UN CRC (1989) and the Code of the Child and Adolescent (1992) gave MANTHOC the legal language to argue for or against their 'rights'. A language of rights at once made the movements more legible molding them to more damaging age-based conceptualizations, while having the capacity to counter the ILO's conventions. This political shift from class to age consciousness in many ways forced MANTHOC's hand and led to their opportunistic attachment to a language of rights. But there is something to be said about how *protagonismo* survived the ordeal of terrorism and a human rights language in their movement. To the extent that MANTHOC had to struggle to defend their right to work, and negotiate the language that would make them appear the most respectable, while gaining ground on their most

pressing issues, there was also the encroachment of neoliberal economics and their individualistic language.

Though some may perceive a blurring of *protagonismo* and neoliberal individualism, in actuality, the use of *protagonismo* is meant as a fight for horizontalism. As Taft (2017:15) further delineates, the movement began producing antineoliberal texts to promote a collective assertiveness that comes from the use of *protagonismo*. Dismissing notions of leadership and self-serving individualism, the movement began more consciously employing notions of Andean collectivities to strengthen the identity of the movement. Instead of falling in line with the ways in which the North had reinforced children's emotional pricelessness without considering their economic usefulness, the movement positioned the pedagogy of tenderness to represent how children are to be treated with respect as equals and full human beings. These notions of respect and responsibility are typical to the ways in which Andeans live and often survive their sociopolitical contexts. The notion that to be a 'protagonist of one's own life', is to raise others with you. Such that the use of *protagonismo* is part of the collective agency of the movement and part and parcel of a continuing class struggle, albeit mutated and adapted to the current political moment.

MANTHOCxs' founding tenets are both localized and common practices in other collective-action organizations. In a study of young men and women's feminist activism in Peru and Ecuador, Anne-Britt Coe finds that for individuals to engage in fundamental change, social advocacy was deployed through cultural trainings (like *formación*) and battling stereotypes (2015, 898–902). It is important to note, therefore, how *protagonismo* is taught and perceived by the children and youth of the movement to

better understand why it became the cornerstone of how MANTHOC operates. Often the sense of what *protagonismo* is does not match one particular message but instead is an open interpretation of how to practice the most good for the whole, a kind of collective agency.

For some MANTHOCas, *protagonismo* is an ever-evolving understanding of personal and organizational practice for growth. According to sixteen-year-old Rr, from the opening story, *protagonismo* is understood in the following ways:

At a personal level, it is to be heard, but to also listen to others. To grow, but not just you, but like siblings, always in line and without anyone falling behind. And at an organizational level, being a protagonist means growing so that the authorities can hear us. And being able to make decisions from a young age. And yet, like that, to grow along with our collaborators or volunteers. Because it's not so much about being a "child," it's also about receiving teachings from our collaborators, and [learning] from their experiences. So for me, *protagonismo* is "everyone growing together," and listening, and being listened to, either in the personal or political when facing the authorities (MANTHOC Cajamarca Facebook 2019).

In addition to being a working girl herself, Rr wants us to comprehend how her *protagonismo* at once acts to integrate her participation with the movement for the benefit of the whole and facilitates her rising up against the known oppressor, namely, powerful decision makers. For Rr's best friend, fourteen-year-old Ke Muin Ha, her version of *protagonismo* includes "giving my opinions freely on issues that concern me. At an organizational level, it's to respect my fellow mates' opinions and to grow together so we

can advocate to the authorities. But, it's not just the authorities, it's also society, making campaigns and taking on an initiative. I felt like a protagonist when I participated in the NiUnaMenos campaign, watching this problem. The many deaths, mistreatment, femicides. [I participated] to be able to struggle, to be able to struggle for change (MANTHOC Cajamarca Facebook 2019).

Protagonismo here can be inferred to mean working toward collaborations and personal growth in the name of the collective movement. The sense that movement-building in MANTHOC at a foundational level is based on a communitarian sense of self sets itself apart conceptually from Northern individualist thinking. These MANTHOCas explain their version of protagonism and thus we can witness how this part of their identity is enmeshed in their acting as change makers working in different ways toward the collective purpose of the whole—a collective agency.

As an example of this, at a later CDI meeting, a transitional delegate named Ricardo led the group by showing a video by Lead India called *The Tree*, about a traffic jam caused by a felled tree. In the video, a small child drops what he's doing to try to push the tree out of the way. Because of his small size, he is not capable of moving the tree alone, but many other children join him. Eventually, many people get out of their cars and the tree is moved. Although an argument could be made concerning children's naïveté for not understanding the difficulty of task, Ricardo's message to the Cajamarca group was different: this is *protagonismo*. Rr, present at this meeting, explained to the group, "This is about an obstacle, and not waiting to act." Referring to how children acted first, a boy named Esteban stated strongly, "Sometimes us children do what grownups cannot do." More children chimed in, saying that this video showed how you cannot wait

for the authorities to do what is needed and that the authorities often tell them that they are unable to help.

Also at this meeting, Cajacho mentioned how “the children unified” and did not depend on the authorities. Additionally, Ricardo pointed out, “It started with one person,” and *protagonismo* is to have the necessary attitude backed with the initiative to make a “concrete decision” about what must occur to make a change. This example of *protagonismo* acts as a moral tale about how to properly exercise this kind of agency, that it is to be used to better the lives of the many, instead of just a few.⁹ Jessica Taft’s studies with various working children’s movements in Lima show that “*protagonismo* as a critical concept, is not synonymous with individualized agency and ‘empowerment,’ although this is one of its features” (2019, 66). Later on in the dissertation I note how the vision of what *protagonismo* is and how it is exercised may vary from member to member, group to group, and region to region. Yet the core principle continues to be that if there is a problem that afflicts you or someone you know, do not wait—act. But act smartly, because getting to the goal involves lifting everyone up with you, and not just yourself. As this principle is taught and retaught, the cohesive whole of MANTHOC and its members fall into what can be considered a collective agency.

This notion of protagonic action by MANTHOCas should be recognized for being purposefully distinct and continuously capable of shifting its collective assemblages to complement the needs of the group and self. *Protagonismo* functions within the

⁹ The discussion that followed Cajacho’s comments involved social and political advocacy and how the latter is particularly difficult because large businesses and other influential sectors of society try to trick children and youth by offering resources or money. These warnings on how to properly exercise *protagonismo* are not meant to produce paranoia as much as to establish that tokenizing youth is often intentional and difficult to distinguish from authentic advocacy on the part of adults.

movement because it reminds the MANTHOCxs of their legacy, that which is wrought in the violence that does not appear to cease. To better understand the importance of this continual negotiation of racialized, gendered, and classed hierarchies of power for girls in the movement, it is important to highlight the knowledges that MANTHOC draws on, as well as the place in history where all these activities are encapsulated.

MANTHOCxs in a Shifting Political Landscape

MANTHOC meetings further reinforce Indigenous Andean ethos and culture and these affect processes of the formation of subjectivities within the MANTHOCas. Some of these embed a sense of ecological and spiritual connectivity while also reinforcing certain gendered hierarchies of power that do not reflect the movement's egalitarian purposes. MANTHOC draws on Indigenous regional and local knowledges to dignify children's work and situate working subjecthood within a more critical political economy analysis. In exploring Spivak's strategic essentialism (2012) to unpack why MANTHOC clings to positive notions of Andeanism for their movement values, it is important to turn the meaning of an identity typically held in a state of colonial erasure. Spivak notes how, problematic as it is, people consider essences to be normative, so as to subsume an idea into a mobilizable package (neat and ideologically contained). It is not that groups generalize for the sake of generalizing, erasing individual characteristics, but to lay a foundation to direct against their oppression. To wholly capture the movement's imaginary, the history of pained Indigenous bodies should be recognized as seeming to be a repeated fixture in MANTHOC meetings and is key to understanding why its movement processes produce this kind of subjectivity within its members.

The Peru of 2020 reflects the creation of the country's republican state (1824 onward), enabling the subjugation of its Indigenous and African descendants today. Many scholars talk at length about how this state formation in many ways was worse than sovereignty to the Spanish Hapsburg-style colonialism of Pizarro's time (Merino 2018; Thurner 1995). Heraclio Bonilla and Karen Spalding suggest that the bankruptcy that resulted in Peru's dependence on a foreign authority was caused by the increased power of the republican army:

The military recruited many elements of local banditry, of small commerce, of the provincial middle groups, . . . whose previous attempts at uprising were stopped by colonial society. In the military organization they found a rapid path of social ascent, since it constituted a kind of medium institutionalized banditism. For their support they imposed strong quotas on the affluent sectors of the provincial society, in exchange for the protection of their lives, their homes and part of their fortune. Thus they affected the process of economic distribution, reorienting part of the wealth produced to other sectors of society. . . . But the presence of this new group, the Republican army, did not alter the nature of the production, which remained colonial. (1972, 60)

Where some nations were freed from colonization through a common purpose or propaganda, Peru became independent while maintaining the strong racism, classism, and sexism that permits economic discrimination to continue today (Berrios 2017; Cypher and Dietz 2008; Franko 2018). Although the influence of Catholicism on the Spanish vanguard was very strong in the racialization of the Andes, scaffolding injuries over time in classifying a variety of people into different race classes, post-independence has served

to exacerbate the discrimination of empire. Post-independence Peru attempted to lay the groundwork necessary for competing in the modern world by augmenting preexisting racial and geographic hierarchies (Merino 2018; Ríos Burga 2019; Scarritt 2011; Thurner 1995). Modernization processes struggled to align Indigenous peoples' "unreasonable" cosmologies with those of Western thinking, to assimilate them into one nation of "Peruvians." Despite attempts at "reeducating" natives (Blas and Museo 1930; Bonilla 1982) and integrating everyone under the banner of *mestizaje* (de la Cadena 2004; Thurner 2015), in the majority of rural areas, there were clear indications that Andean communities adapted to changing circumstances while maintaining their cultural patterns, social organization, and sense of collective ownership (Matos Mar 1977).

And though officials in power fought for modernization to take hold throughout the nation, what they gained was a more centralized state at the capital and a growing distrust of the government by its everyday citizens. Groups of poor Indigenous sharecroppers would try to dethrone the hacienda system to live dignified lives and come up against racism and the figurations of its power (de la Cadena 2015). This is why, though the government of Peru looked toward facilitating foreign investment in the nation's development (Drinot 2010; Dulanto-Rishing 2017), its incompetence in bringing about social cohesion would see the outbreak of many violent episodes. Development, like modernization, for most rural Peruvians meant that lands that held spiritual meaning would be modified or extracted from, to favor the interests of Lima (Gudynas 2017; Nuijten, Lorenzo, and De Vries 2006).¹⁰ But more than that, the dispossession and

¹⁰ Even as the most recent census data show how a larger population in the capital means many fewer resources diverted to rural areas, the concentration of wealth in the city also engenders a larger wage gap than that in the provinces (INEI 2018, 344–52, 382–97).

poverty generated by development and modernization meant that more and more Indigenous people in rural areas migrated to cities and the capital for a better life (Altamirano 1988; Gölte 2019; Górska 2016; Matos Mar 1984).

To understand why development is perceived as a veiled version of colonization in the Andes, it is important to recognize the conceptualization of personhood that is brought forth in the ayllu. The ayllu is more than a consanguineous relation between the space and time that is occupied by Indigenous people in the Andes; it is a flow of conversations that connect all as relatives. As Grimaldo Rengifo Vásquez describes, a “relative is someone close to us with whom we live in harmony and whom we protect and who protects us; someone with whom a life-giving conversation flows that brings about health and makes life fruitful” (1998, 92). Therefore, the ayllu is a community of people and things, with no fixed borders, with no linear notion of time. The flow of conversations that connects beings in the ayllu is linked by affection and solidarity. There is no animate or inanimate, no separate reality between the living and the supernatural, everything is *Pacha*, a community of interconnected beings.

These are not “romanticized” notions for most Peruvians, and as such are worth elucidating to better analyze MANTHOCas’ *formación* and navigation of power. Imaginaries of global development have always had strong reactions in the Andes, because of how it is tied to colonialism and changing traditional ways of being to fit the mold of the dominant. Many Andean postcolonialists have expressed deep indignation at the West’s attempts at evaluating itself as the pinnacle of “humanity” and leaving in its wake colonial structures of control. Grillo Fernández claims, “We Andeans do not concede any ‘cognitive authority’ to the West. It is an authority that the West gives itself.

. . . It has invented the comparative method in order to justify itself. Since the West declares himself to be the paradigm if there is something that we do not have and it possesses we are assessed as being deficient or lacking” (1998, 125). As Western notions of “development” come from a colonial history of bond, attempts at governmentality feel like a symptom of a plague that is on its last legs.

Like healing the collective from the plague of colonial bond, Grillo Fernández suggests, colonized peoples have subsumed the Catholic traditions to treat them as their own *huacas*,¹¹ a syncretism that continues various traditions of the ayllu. Development, in his words, is seen as a carryover from earlier, harsher imperialist crown rule, in that “we must stop being what we are, that we must develop, that is what we must change, that we must exert ourselves” and thus become similar to the Northern subject of rights in the model of a “developed” country (137–38). It is not just development discourse that has been present in Peru but also reeducation campaigns that seek to convert Indigenous thought and customs to those of Western nations and be in line with a dominant disciplined body.

Although the prevailing notions of development espoused by elites in the capital refer to its “modernizing” and “advancing” of national interests, what it mostly does is replicate inequity through liberal notions of economic policy and racism (Degregori and Sandoval 2008; Quijano 2000; Thurner 2015).¹² For some, development is seen as an

¹¹ Translated from Quechua to English as “shrine.”

¹² Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano notes that the colonality of power should be acknowledged and defeated along with Eurocentric capitalism, which reproduces the exclusions of postcolonial economies like that of Peru. He writes, “Today, the fight against exploitation / domination undoubtedly implies, in the first place, the struggle for the destruction of the colonality of power, not only to end racism, but also for its condition as the articulating axis of the universal pattern of eurocentric capitalism. That struggle is part of the destruction of capitalist power, as it is today the living plot of all historical forms of exploitation, domination, discrimination, materials and intersubjectives. The central place of ‘corporeity’ in this plane,

enactment of cultural acculturation, which brings with it both structural and physical violence. *Development* has become a dirty word, because of the ways it seeks to benefit those who already have significant wealth and at once reinforces notions of people who are and are not modern. It is therefore not surprising that in underlining this binary between premodern as “backward” and modern as “progress,” notions of development are considered suspect in rural areas.

With the incorporation of modernizing economic policies, development “justifies the presence and action of the police, the army, the magistrates and the rest of officialdom. For this reason, violence gives sustenance to the oppressive system and thus legitimates it” (Grillo Fernández 1998, 232). Along with the violence brought by internal armed conflict, the state’s legitimization of development homogenized Peruvians and erased their Indigenous identities (213). This vision of early twentieth-century development is well encapsulated in the posters by the artist known as Camillo Blas (Blas and Museo 1930) for the Ministry of Indigenous Instruction. One in particular, a rendering of Indigenous people wearing traditional clothes and walking with their animals appearing exhausted, reads in Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara: “If we don’t make highways, we have to carry our agricultural products ourselves, like donkeys and llamas.” This rendering is then contrasted with one below it, where a group of men, women, and children in mostly Western clothing travel around the mountain in a truck looking happy. This one reads: “Let us make highways! Let us save our money and buy a truck for the Ayllu—Let us meet the Road Policy with joy!” The poster designs for the Ministry of Indigenous Instruction highlight the disarmingly racist images used to shame cultural

leads to the need to think, to rethink, specific ways for their liberation, that is, for the liberation of people, individually and in society, of power, of all power” (2011, 32).

ways of knowing in the name of modernist progress. These reeducation-campaign posters streamline Indigenous identities into “modern” subjects, and moreover attempt to discipline the bodies of people deemed as “savage” by the Western-influenced state (Foucault 1991).¹³

Although far from the post–World War II Single World utopia that was created by “developed” countries at the behest of “underdeveloped” countries, the realization of development has over time had deleterious effects for the poorest and most marginal in Peruvian society. This may inspire those affected by the wealth gap to assert what power they have through more accommodating ideologies of political organization. Peru’s internal armed conflict reached its apogee during the 1980s and 1990s, producing 69,280 deaths and disappearances. The violence of this time was fed by the influence of a Marxist philosophy professor from the University of Huamanga, Abimael Guzmán. His goal was first to shift the way Mestizo and Indigenous people thought about their socioeconomic positioning, being influenced by Mao Zedong’s Shining Path and Jose Carlos Mariategui, who formed the communist party of Peru. His amassed support from both students and faculty led to the formation of the Peruvian Communist Party–Shining Path (PCP-SL) (Greene 2007, 2016). Although the PCP-SL later came to be known as a terrorist organization during the conflict, the seeds of resentment had already been sown between the masses of Indigenous and Mestizo working poor and the minority in power (Theidon 2004). Incensed by the abandonment of the state and the normative status of the peasantry, Guzmán became an ardent proponent of bringing about revolution in Peru. Although the Shining Path Movement began in an unmilitarized way, with student

¹³ The poster can be found, along with similar information brochures, at <http://www.archi.pe/index.php/foto/index/1250>.

discussion groups spreading party messaging and little violence, the police would still arrest and question some of these *senderista* students (Asencios 2017).¹⁴

Peru 1980–2000: Estimates and Limits of Confidence Intervals in the total number of fatal victims caused by the internal armed conflict, by who was responsible (level of confidence: 95 percent).				
Estimates	Responsible Parties			TOTAL (*)
	PCP- SL	State	Others	
Lower Limit	24,823	17,023	11,858	61,007
Estimate	31,331	20,458	15,967	69,280
Upper Limit	37,840	23,893	20,076	77,552
(*) The results of the “TOTAL” column were directly calculated with Multiple Systems Estimation, they are not the sum of the estimated individuals				

Table 1.1. Translation of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation’s figures on the estimated death and disappearances from the internal armed conflict (TRC, vol. 9, appendix 1, 2003, 17)

The majority (45 percent) of the violence inflicted during the conflict resulted from the militarization of the PCP-SL.¹⁵ Groups like the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, MRTA), along with other leftist groups, were responsible for approximately 23 percent of the deaths and disappearances. Although MRTA was not responsible for the most violence during the conflict, their push for retribution for actions of the state and the Westernization of society led to the

¹⁴ In the militarization of the Shining Path, members noticed that there was less philosophy and more guerrilla tactics. As the party coalesced around Marxist and Maoist philosophies of work and wealth, those original members of SL-PCP were forced to reckon with the change to large-scale violence, rather than discussion.

¹⁵ This percentage is based on the estimated total of 69,280 deaths and disappearances.

terrorizing of sexual minorities in urban centers and the kidnapping of officials. All the remaining deaths and disappearances, 30 percent or so, are attributable to state actors—the military, the police, and other security forces.¹⁶ To defend against both the insurgents and counterinsurgents ravaging the country, towns and villages gathered *rondas campesinas*¹⁷ to defend their communities and maintain the health of their ayllus.¹⁸

Those living outside ayllu might simply reside in physical communities where families and neighbors exist in reciprocity with the land. Yet the ayllu is more than just material and spiritual energy. It is also the place where four forces—matter, energy, time, and space—come together to constitute life (Yampara 2011, 17). Bolivian sociologist Simón Yampara notes how “one wonders what life is, because we are worried about life, and life had been nothing more than the handling of the double type of energy: material energy with spiritual energy, and how you use and enjoy them: in a private and a communitarian way. That is what is done in the Andes. In the ayllu organization, families use energy interactively, reconcile the material with the spiritual, try to equip them as if it were a marriage, use the energy privately but also in a communitarian way (which is not the same as collective)” (2011, 8). These systems are not solely pre-Inca but have evolved to shift with the myriad politics. Such communities require special protection,

¹⁶ Quechua women formed the National Association of Relatives of the Kidnapped, Detained and Disappeared of Peru (Asociación Nacional de Familiares de Secuestrados, Detenidos y Desaparecidos del Perú, ANFASEP) in 1983. ANFASEP was created as a group of people who were drastically affected by the political violence. They not only sought out their family members but also continue to stand as a testament to the war’s violence, agitating for exhumations to this day (Rojas-Perez 2017). Many of the burdens of war have continued to fall onto the shoulders of women who are left behind to tell their story.

¹⁷ Translated from Spanish to English, literally means “peasant rounds.” These refer to the rural patrols.

¹⁸ The mothers of the MANTHOCxs were asked by an Amnesty worker during the worker’s interim visit, “How do you negotiate violence?” Margarita, in her sixties, stood up and said, “The *rondas*,” while most shouted out, “*Serenazgo!*” (“Police!”) or kept silent. When Margarita was chosen to speak, she explained, “When there is violence in the home you call the police or the *serenazgo*”; the other mothers interjected, “And the *rondas*?” Margarita went on, “But more than that, the peasant and urban *rondas* have the most respect of any authority” (Stiglich 2018). This response and fervent belief in the power of the *rondas* is at once a slap in the face of the centralized state and a powerful declaration of Indigenous ways of knowing.

and ayllu members became their own militarized entities, the *rondas campesinas*. *Rondas* are still employed in rural areas and in many ways have more authority than the local police in doling out punishment.

Figure 1.2. Deaths and disappearances occurring between 1980 and 2000, reported to the CVR by province (TRC, vol. 9, appendix 1, 2003, 31).

Peru's internal armed conflict was a sure sign of the social instability that had been produced by economic inequality over centuries (Greene 2007, 2016; Degregori and Sandoval 2008; de la Cadena 2008; Starn 1995; Theidon 2004). The social strain of colonialism, modernization, and development have placed limits on poor nonwhite peoples in Peru, making upward mobility all but impossible under the best of circumstances. These historical particularities in the lives of all Peruvians have in elite eyes recast Indigenous rights and resolutions as aligned with violence—making all attempts at reparations difficult because of successive right-wing governments. Working children also live in this context and are often subject to the most precarious of conditions as a result of these tensions. To better situate these tensions, the following section elaborates on the literature about Indigenous Peruvian childhoods.

Conceptualizing Peruvian Children

Scholarship focused on rural Peru but not necessarily centered on children helps elucidate the everyday realities of these communities (Allen 1985). Anthropologist Rodrigo Montoya described in his 1995 essay in *America indigena* how the notion of childhood as perceived by the West does not reflect Andean ways of raising children. He notes how particular communities of Indigenous children, here Quechua speaking, do not have an autonomous distinction of a childhood but are instead regarded as members of

the society who can contribute through appropriate work and play (74–79). Montoya further comments, “Children do not have an institutionalized space for themselves, and are—in this way—students of the adults who believe that children will mature more and better alongside them” (69).

Likewise, Inge Bolin in *Growing Up in a Culture of Respect* notes that Andean Peruvian children are raised alongside their family members in a way that fosters mutual veneration. She talks about how the permissive manner in which the children of Andean shepherds are raised in Chillihuani adds to their overall happy childhood (2006, 52–81).¹⁹ Despite the hardships of poverty and lack of what would be considered necessary to produce successful “modern” subjects, the children in Bolin’s ethnography enact the ways in which their communal activities make them more than capable mathematicians. Additionally, the lifeways of the adult Chillihuani villagers are not kept separate from those of the children, as the latter are expected to contribute to their society by participating alongside extended family and friends. What is clear from Bolin’s description of Chillihuani childhoods is that social exclusions are less prevalent than in Northern childhoods. This is to say that because the society is based on relations of respect, hierarchies of age typical in the North are not present for this village. But this does not mean that children are the same as adults either. Rather, the acquisition of rites and responsibilities demonstrates that transitions in age are very real and important to the well-being of an infant, child, adolescent, and young adult.

Similarly, in her article concerning Andean childhood, Patricia Ames (2013) endeavors to show how children at once are social actors and live in a way that would

¹⁹ Chillihuani is a community located in the Quispicanchis area of Cuzco in southeast Peru.

challenge the notion that *childhood* is a static category. She argues that Andean children are integrated into their communities, attaining autonomy by internalizing local wisdom and social and cultural distress, via their passage through age rites. Jeanine Anderson (2013) found that analyzing the children from Yauyos whom she studied required discarding “old” adult-centric models of knowing the world. She finds that from the time they are very small, Yauyos children move in groups throughout a very large area, making their idea of geography more elastic, and this, as Bolin (2006) also points out, makes them spatial thinkers (Anderson 2013).

More mainstream research that privileges assumptions of normative childhoods typically categorize working children as “at risk.” Gina Crivello and Jo Boyden, two prominent researchers in a Young Lives study, provide needed longitudinal surveys on Peruvian children during the postconflict years (between 2002 and 2009).²⁰ Their findings suggest that individualized approaches to risk management did not work because children’s own priorities were tied to their perceptions and experiences of life in their communities. Crivello and Boyden found that poor Peruvian children experienced “risk” as an ordinary part of their daily lives and that this taught them to negotiate multiple and interacting challenges (2011, 5, 7). They also found that intergenerational interdependence between children was necessary to reduce household risks. What is most pertinent here is that their study found that adversity acted to enhance moral and social

²⁰ Young Lives was an initiative to address the UN Millennium Goals in reducing children’s poverty worldwide. This international study, conducted by the University of Oxford, followed twelve thousand children in Peru, India, Vietnam, and Ethiopia, splitting children into two age groups. One group was born in 1994 and 1995 and the other in 2001 and 2002. In Peru, children in twenty sites were selected for random sampling; these areas contained varying levels of poverty. The poverty characteristics include language, area of residence (both urban and rural), ethnic and religious makeup, and geographic location. Four of the twenty were selected for qualitative research: rural Rioja and Andahuaylas and urban San Roman and Lima.

learning. That is, the struggles that children faced could affect their feelings of self-reliance and were thus viewed by peers and elders as making children more capable of contributing to the household (11).

These studies show that even in examining the positivistic aspects of poor children's lives, the data yield a more complicated picture of dignity through struggle. Even as large studies like that of Young Lives seek to nuance the experiences of poor children, and children who work, Leigh Campoamor (2016) discusses how Indigenous mothers were denigrated as a way to discipline the family unit. She argues that mothers of working children anticipate and respond to the criminalizing of their daily lives through teaching their children the value of hard work. She conceptualizes this as "defensive motherhood." The hard work is not meant to limit the children. It is intended instead to place in the children's minds their future and how to achieve survival. It is also a way for mothers to rest a little easier if something untoward occurs and their child is left orphaned. In chapter 3, I will explore how the concept of the working child is manipulated by MANTHOCxs to assert their pride in dignified labor. For now, the persistence of working children in Peru should be understood as portraying a complicated social history of community contribution and social welfare that has often been misunderstood by processes of modernization.

Viewing youth outside the category of *risk* and across race and class indicators, educators Laura Valdiviezo and Dina López present a comprehensive view of how the educational development of young people could be modified to encourage more qualitative (and positive) conceptualizations of youth. Their analysis indicates that diverse subjectivities produce different opportunities for youth to actualize their personal

and professional development. They suggest that the “likelihood of Peruvian youth reaching their full potential decreases substantially if they are poor, female, or of Indigenous and Afroperuvian descent” (2018, 21). This is attributable to extraordinarily high levels of racism and sexism, which, when coupled with poverty conditions, reveal little sense of “belonging.” As they explain, “As educators in these institutions are realizing, support to Indigenous students is not strictly academic but involves encouragement and understanding from mentors and an environment that fosters community and a sense of belonging” (20).

Similarly, through Michael Hill’s (2013) intimate ethnography of Gina Maldonado, a Quechua teacher in Cusco, it is possible to draw the conclusion that migrating as a form of child circulation for educational opportunities reinforced ethnic discrimination while enhancing Maldonado’s social mobility. Hill asserts that through Maldonado’s recollections it is possible to see how educational and religious institutions in Peru both provide a way out of poverty and aid in the reproduction of race and class hierarchies. Maldonado recalls being afraid of teachers’ knowing that she was a monolingual Quechua speaker, to the extent that she would hide behind tall girls in her class and then seek small spaces during recess, so as to not attract attention, attention she thought would lead to her dismissal from school for not speaking Spanish (7–10). Hill argues that it took the reverberations of a lifetime for Maldonado to make sense of these childhood memories of ethnic discrimination and distinguish how these moments shaped and disciplined her body as an adult.

It is also worth noting that Peruvian children’s history of child circulation, related to Hill’s conclusions about social mobility, were a way to make aspirations a reality

(Crivello 2015). As can be deduced from Jessaca Leinaweaver's (2008a) seminal text on child circulation, there is a need that is being fulfilled in placing children in different social contexts. Even if children's lives are more difficult than if they had stayed with their families, each child is thought to be more capable after having *superado*, or overcome, their then-present situation. Typically, girls are moved from one household to another or from a more impoverished rural household to a wealthier urban one as a catalyst for opportunity (Leinaweaver 2008a; Weismantel 1995). Once ensconced in a new area or place, the children can gain access to new educational or social networks, allowing them to attempt "progress," "become somebody," and "establish" or "improve" themselves (Benavides, Olivera, and Mena 2006; Crivello 2011; Leinaweaver 2008b; Lobo 1982). Crivello (2015) notes that children's aspirations in the Andes are "rarely about the goals of individuals, nor are they simply reflections of the future" (15). My particular context, the urban and rural Andes, challenges Northern conceptualizations of the "child": in these areas children are capable, contributing members of their differing ecological units (whether the family, the neighborhood, or their community) through participating in MANTHOC. Some scholars have noted how children living at Peru's margins hold power in the decisions they make by migrating and shifting their networks accordingly (Crivello 2015; Leinaweaver 2007).

Although the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is meant to give explicit rights to decision-making and participation in the exercising of rights, there is also an undercurrent of protectionist language that continues to favor normative understandings of childhood (UN General Assembly 1989; Ben-Arieh 2008). Agency has become a productive but also a contentious concept about how children are

“actors in their own right,” despite the structures of power that keep them marginalized as dependent minors (James, Jenks, and Prout 1998, 210). The push for children to be viewed as “social actors” and agentic beings continues to be debated, but there is a consensus that children deserve to be centered as subjects with considerable intersecting oppressions (Betz 2013; Fattore, Mason, and Watson 2012; Oswell 2013). While the field continues to problematize children’s agency in mostly Northern contexts, for the purpose of this dissertation, I argue that these constituent positions on children’s agency must be complicated to capture the multiple expressions of children’s participation and nonparticipation as “beings” who navigate the adult-centered world in Peru.

Constructions of Peruvian Girls

Besides being very aware that they are gendered female, the girls I collaborated with are urban and rural, Indigenous, Mestizo, Afro-Peruvian, Quechua-speaking, Spanish-speaking, and political. They are more and more cognizant of how girls and women are being treated negatively, often victims of femicides throughout the country. Because half its membership is female, MANTHOC stands and fights against all forms of violence, especially sexual violence, against children. With their movement’s support, MANTHOCas make visible the uncomfortable lived reality experienced by most working children. Since the surge of gendered violence in Peruvian society in particular and in Latin America more generally, the movement enables girls to denounce, shame, and stand up against rhetoric that seeks to blame victims.

In the racialization of Peruvian girls and women, there is an explicit colonial origin, which is perpetuated today: being Indigenous or African meant experiencing that the will of the male Spanish or criollo colonizers dominated the hacienda, or plantation

estate (Mannarelli 1994, 24; Valvidia del Río and de Fátima 2008, 258–59).

Anthropologist Deborah Poole's (1997) post-independence imagery of three dominant female figures shows how racial dimensions shaped the conceptualizations of women in post-independence Peru. The *criolla* (European-descended woman), the *mulata* (black woman), and the *india* (native Andean woman) were each forged to represent embodied physical differences that would constitute "race" in Peru. The symbol of Peruvian womanhood idealized at the time was that of the *criolla*, who was not seen as sexually driven, making the sexualities of the *mulata* and *india* seem inappropriate because of notions of the "savage." As a result of Marian and Catholic cultures in Lima, the *criolla*'s sexuality became derived from her "others," such that there was an acceptance of stereotypes concerning black women's physical sexuality and native women's perceived chastity as natural (Poole 1997).

This is important because in post-independence Peru, male members of the *hacienda* household could abuse Indigenous girls because of the latter's status as "property," especially if they appeared to be the object of special attention and care for their "peasant" parents (Gutiérrez Callisaya and Fernández Osco 2011). Scholars Gutiérrez Callisaya and Fernández Osco remind us to "not forget that for centuries this region was dominated by the authoritarian culture of the *patron* and, naturally, a product of this colonial and neocolonial habitus, [is that] communities act as a kind of soundboard for the [concept of the] *machista* protector of women, especially girls" (149). Colonization's heteropatriarchal grip on society enhanced the Catholic Church's view of girls as objects, keeping them at the mercy of the republican *patron*.

As Gutiérrez Callisaya and Fernández Osco note, “This overprotection has social and psychological consequences in the definition of girls’ expectations” (149). Additional conceptualizations of vulnerability and weakness are ascribed to girls, and these do more damage over time, as boys can cross the threshold from “inferior” child to “respected” adult male. For girls, such male domination produces symbolic, as well as physical, violence through the reinforcing of gendered divisions of labor and girls’ inability to reach their full potential as people (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Kraus 1993). Following Mary Douglas it might be said that girls’ expectations are deeply entrenched in a history of socially conservative traditions of what is considered “pure” and what society thinks could contaminate them (Douglas 1970).

Because girls outside MANTHOC are often steered toward domestic work by other child-centered nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the perception of street work as morally polluting reproduces a gendered sense of risk (Lin, Minca, and Ormond 2018, 895–96).²¹ This sense of risk is often expressed through constraining girls through “safety” but in actuality is tied to a politics of patriarchal control that extends beyond Peru and into other Southern and Northern contexts. What ties Southern girls to Northern girls is a shared sense of bodily and state control. In the field of girlhood studies, there has been a need to represent girls in their own right, without conflating their experiences with their positions as “future women” (Driscoll 2008; Kearney 2009).

²¹ The particular NGO, Runachay, that Lin, Minca, and Ormond discuss, is influenced by Northern funding to combat human trafficking. They push domestic work as a “safe, supervised vehicle for learning and growth” (894), as opposed to possible exploitation in informal work in the street. Although exploitation and street work are not mutually exclusive, Lin, Minca and Ormond suggest that the NGO’s affect-informed interventions (which exist in a matrix of competing ideologies concerning child labor and gendered work) complicate the way girls negotiate “getting ahead” in the context of their rurality.

This is revealed through the building of binaries of the “good” and “bad” examples of girls, a duality that Anita Harris (2004) expresses in terms of the “can-do” and “at-risk” girl. In her analysis of how and why girls are the focus of global attention and the ways in which they are perceived, the can-do girl is seen as a successful neoliberal subject and the at-risk girl as the failed subject. These categorizations, with their consequences, provide a framework for girlhood that is unrealistic at best and damning at worst. Often, because studies on girlhood have yielded ever more complicated representations of girls, the space dividing the binary of the can-do and the at-risk girl is limited.

Race and class privileges tend to mediate the ways girls are perceived in the popular imagination. Scholars in girl’s studies and gender studies have found that the humanitarian drive for embracing postfeminist neoliberal ideals was damaging girls considerably all over the world, especially those in the Global South (Koffman, Orgad, and Gill 2015; Switzer, Bent, and Endsley 2016). As an example of this, the contemporary “turn to the girl” brought about by international agencies is meant to counter the devastating effects of global and local policy that affect the ways in which girls are valued in society. Although this strategy is only a Band-Aid to perpetuate neoliberal reason, it has very real consequences, allowing for the change in the political character of the Southern states to mirror colonial imperialism. Political theorist Wendy Brown notes how “neoliberalism is the rationality through which capitalism finally swallows humanity—not only with its machinery of compulsory commodification, but by its form of valuation” (2015, 44). Brown further explains how neoliberal reason ultimately undoes democracy by economically privatizing liberties and producing global

insecurity. These same mechanisms reproduce governmentality that shifts girls into caged positions within the guise of girl power to encapsulate them into disciplined bodies. As it happens, girls are particularly difficult to “save” or “manage,” because of their diverse and shifting oppositional ways of performing their gender identity (Bent, Switzer and Endsley 2016).

Complicating the Peruvian girls’ overarching conceptualizations of raced gender and gendered class, there is also the local history of terrorist violence, particularly around the sterilization of Indigenous women. Pascha Bueno-Hansen’s work on the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report on sexual violence against women, and her feminist analysis of the state response to sexual violence from the Manta and Vilca (military bases) legal case, expose how the state can act “coherent and singular by reinforcing gender and racial hierarchies” while opening up avenues for rethinking its parameters by using international frameworks of human rights law (2015, 105). From her analysis and the case, the binary of coercion and consent in human rights language does not appear to have relevance in the Andes, as consent looks mutually exclusive and requires the possibility of individual free will, which is questionable during military and terrorist occupation (110). Additionally, this violence is exacerbated by heteropatriarchal norms that undermine transitional justice (111) and thus have not been resolved in favor of women and girls who must come face to face with violation and femicide. In addition to the already difficult circumstances of war, authoritarian president Alberto Fujimori forced sterilization on approximately 294,000 women and girls (Blofield, Ewig, and Piscopo 2017).

For the MANTHOCas born between 2002 and 2013, the violence of Peru's internal armed conflict is a family story that is repeated from time to time. Girls see groups like DEMUS (Estudio para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer [Study and Defense of Women's Rights]) sponsor movements of activists called Somos 2074, y Muchas Mas (We Are 2074 and Many More)²² to call on the state to actually adjudicate the reproductive injustices done during the internal armed conflict. Although the #NiUnaMenos movement is more transnational than it is tied to a particular event in Peru's history, the call for an end to gendered violence can be partly linked to sexual violence during the internal armed conflict. This is because it can be tied back to the coloniality of gender (Bueno-Hansen 2015, 144–45) that persists in the imaginaries of the girls and women and constructions of citizenship (de la Cadena 1995; Lugones 2008). Just as the white colonizer obtained the bodies of girls as “property,” so too is there sexual violence and power over girls that continues today (Lucich Rivera 2011). The current femicidal battle is then reinforced by a history of maintaining girls' and women's silence through the privileging of heteropatriarchal norms.

The forced sterilizations that occurred during the violence, and the ways in which the state today flip-flops on gendered issues from parity in Congress to sexual and reproductive education, make it time to theorize feminisms that reflect the lived experiences of girls and women. Cabrera and Vargas Monroy (2014) find that to proceed with decolonizing feminisms, we must contend with how the prominent discussions on decoloniality have been done by men and have often left the female gendered subject out. According to María Lugones (2011), Aníbal Quijano, author of *Coloniality of Power*,

²² This refers to the children of women who were sterilized during the Fujimori government.

accepted a capitalist and Eurocentric vision of gender, which, Espinosa-Miñoso (2009) notes, reproduces the construction of otherness that portrays female subjects as useful in the status quo. This otherness, Cabrera and Vargas Monroy further note, can include African-descended or Indigenous women, lesbians, female workers, sex workers, and peasant women, as well as poor women (2014, 32). And these perspectives of adult women are overlapped onto girls, as strains of colonial power continue their proliferation. Appropriately enough, MANTHOCas occupy at least two of the categories that are meant to *other* female subjects.

The Legacies of Working Peruvian Girls

The status of Peruvian working girls as organized workers makes them fall within the typical adult category of *laborer*, which makes many Peruvians uncomfortable. The discomfort comes from notions of development and modernism, as well as of children's innocence. Although these perceptions of working children and girls exist in the minds of many average Peruvians, many elites and child-centered NGO workers I spoke with explained that "child labor" is seen as a "necessary evil," with such levels of rampant poverty in the country. But as we have previously noted, Andean notions of labor are not generally exploitative, and this is why MANTHOC's purpose is to keep their members' work dignified.

More than this, girls who worked—like the MANTHOCas of today—have actively contributed to their family and society, by extension. Their imaginary in the context of Peru existed before the intrusion of development discourses on child labor, as demonstrated in images by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala from 1615 (fig. 1.3). Working children were a necessary part of maintaining and personifying the *ayllu*, as they existed

to fit into a conception of Andean wholeness. In this way, children existed in five age categories that were flexible and exhibited their capacity for certain kinds of work. As an example, shown in figure 1.3, in the “First New Chronicle and Good Government” (1615), at least three illustrations of working girls appear: a playful five-year-old carrying a water jug for her mother, a nine-year-old picking flowers for noblewomen, and a twelve-year-old herding llamas.

Figure 1.3. Images of girls in Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala’s “First New Chronicle and Good Government” (1615). *Left*, five-year-old girl carrying jug of water; *center*, nine-year-old girl picking flowers; *right*, twelve-year-old girl herding camelids.

On the left in figure 1.3 is one of the *warmi wamra*, girls between the ages of five and nine years who worked as pages to royal women and girls. Some girls at this time began working, learning how to find firewood and hay and how to spin silk thread, and those who could picked weeds from tillage and helped take care of younger siblings. These girls learned from an early age to get water, like the five-year-old at left, and learned “the occupation of women” (Guaman Poma de Ayala 1615, 232). The center image shows one of the *pauau pallac*, girls who pursued flower picking for dyes and herbs for prominent ladies. Guaman Poma de Ayala also notes that girls between eight and twelve years old had certain jobs in society, as shown by the girl on the right, who is taking llamas or alpacas out to graze.

They may have learned how to spin thread and sew delicate patterns, but as Guaman Poma de Ayala writes, these girls had many occupations, including sowing seeds, harvesting, making *chicha*, collecting firewood and hay, and cooking and cleaning

for their family (1615, 228).²³ These images of girls in professions who range across socioeconomic classes and age categories show just how entrenched work has been in the Andean imaginary. For instance, renowned Peruvian historian Maria Rostworowski de Diez Canseco explains how “from early childhood both boys and girls began to work. In addition to taking care of the younger siblings, they performed light tasks, the girls collected various medicinal plants, [and] foodstuffs used for dyes” (1988, 7). Historically, girls have worked, though perhaps their perception of work has ranged from helpfulness to autonomous employment.

As previously noted, this kind of participation in labor allows girls to feel a sense of privilege for being able to provide for themselves and, in some cases, their family. This contribution complicates the category of *dependent* and shifts some power to children who work. The ways girls participate in their lives partly through the influence of MANTHOC, the roles they ascribe to themselves and each other in their organization, and the means by which they navigate age-based power are some reasons why MANTHOCas are so well equipped to handle Peruvian society. In the following section, I outline the remaining chapters of my dissertation, which intertwine theories of decoloniality and childhood studies with the research I have done with MANTHOCas in Lima and Cajamarca.

Chapter Progression

As this study was done with the help and collaboration of not only the working children of MANTHOC but also adult facilitators and fixers, I will be describing the people and places where my research took place. The research methods used during

²³ *Chicha* is a corn gruel drink flavored with cinnamon and lime.

fieldwork will be detailed in chapter 2. In chapter 3, I explore how working girls configure their worker identity and how international pressures have very real consequences for the well-being of girl workers. I do so by pointing to how agencies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), by conflating the categories of *child labor* and *working children*, end up marginalizing the struggles of these children for dignified labor.

In chapter 4, I examine the various conceptualizations of children's participation and talk about how working girls become politicized in the movement and how this leads them to become active participants in society, even if they don't seek the rank of delegate in their own organization. In chapter 5, working with Chela Sandoval's concept of differential consciousness in her *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000), I discuss how girl workers consistently challenge adults in their lives to achieve a more equitable way of living, despite the constraints of age-based power.

CHAPTER 2: APPLYING DECOLONIZING METHODOLOGIES

In this chapter, I emphasize the research methods I chose to employ to engage with the children of MANTHOC, especially the girls who belonged to more remote Indigenous groups. I discuss why I used ethnography, in particular, to research the movement girls and how I recruited them to participate in interviews. As fieldwork is not isolated from larger political events in Peru, I examine changes in this landscape during my time in the field. The bulk of this chapter, however, is focused on study site selection, the organizational differences between the two regions (Lima and Cajamarca), and my negotiations around my methods and my role. I am extraordinarily aware of the ways in which anthropological fieldwork is mired in hierarchies of power and can be viewed as extractive by local populations; during my time in the field I engaged in several different activities that allowed me to reciprocate and contribute to the working goals of the movement.

I reflect consistently on my positioning as a Western-educated, white, Peruvian researcher and how this shapes the ways in which the children and adults in the movement perceived my presence. I believe a reflexive style allowed me to critically encounter the ways my multiple identities complexly situated me within MANTHOC. In this chapter I discuss how I navigated some problematic or uncomfortable ethical dilemmas. First, I talk about why I chose to do this project and the kind of feminist methodologies I used to inform my field experiences. Second, I speak on the data saturations I have identified and what these mean in the scheme of the ethnography. Last, I reflect back on my methodologies to see what could have shifted and what I could have done differently.

Why MANTHOCas?

I became interested in collaborating with MANTHOC as a movement three years before I started my fieldwork. I had previously worked on female domestic workers in Lima for my master's thesis, and I was interested in extending this work by continuing to collaborate with girls who are domestic workers. During my master's fieldwork I had constructed these girls as "in need of saving," and I had plans to highlight their plight as "child laborers." The coursework in the interdisciplinary field of childhood studies productively challenged some of my earlier, shortsighted constructions of normative childhood and its embeddedness in the assumed innocence of the child. Additionally, the more information I found about MANTHOC, the more I was convinced that there was something unique occurring in the movement, a sense of citizenship that appeared to be less prevalent in Peru.

I looked broadly through the literature and read about the movement in Manfred Liebel's *A Will of Their Own* (2004). From there, I worked diligently to discover as much as I could about how the child-led social movement had established itself and what its structure is. In forming a picture of MANTHOC's orientations, I drew on Alejandro Cussianovich, who wrote heavily on the movement, going as far as describing the shape of the movement in a doctrine.²⁴ *Ensayos sobre infancia*, parts 1 and 2 (2006, 2009), contains many of the ideals of the movement and its intuitions, as well as case studies concerning working children's perceived role in their organization. This kind of background was important because this instance of children's active participation in a child-led movement that has lasted over forty years is most uncommon. To better acquaint myself with the movement, I used Facebook to casually befriend various

²⁴ Despite drawing my own conclusions on how popular Cussianovich was with MANTHOC, I also noticed early on how much respect members had for "Chito" on social media posts.

branches of the organization. MANTHOC's public page advertises upcoming campaigns, marches, and rallies. They also post about the fun they have at their meetings and events and they share interesting political news and how it can and will affect children's rights. On their private page, there are more pictures and sometimes a meaningful farewell to a volunteer or facilitator, yet most of the content is focused on persistently spreading the themes of their campaigns. I found myself connecting with and supporting neighboring nations' NNATs²⁵ in groups such as UNATSBO (Unión de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores de Bolivia [Bolivian Union of Working Boys, Girls, and Adolescents]) and CONNATs (Coordinación Nacional de Niñas, Niños, y Adolescentes Trabajadores [National Coordination of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents]) in Paraguay, as well as the regional MANTHOC, MNNATSOP (Movimiento Nacional de NNATs Organizados del Perú [National Movement of Organized Working Boys, Girls, and Adolescents of Peru]), and MOLACNATs (Movimiento Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes Trabajadores [Latin American and Caribbean Movement of Working Girls, Boys, and Adolescents]). I got a sense of the different ways child-led movements ran their social media accounts and how their activities were politically aligned. Most of them were concerned with the rising violence against women and girls. Originating in a Mexican border town, the #NiUnaMas movement became a popular hashtag to call out governments and for these distinct groups of working children to raise awareness around the gendered violence they experienced or witnessed.

²⁵This typically connotes working children as politically organized as well. It is important to note that the Spanish word for children, *niños*, is not used necessarily. Some organizations do use it and refer to working children as "NATs." The reason why *boys* and *girls* are separated is because the plural *niños* refers to boys or to all children, subsuming girls into boys, denying the former without their own identity. Thus many groups use "NNAs" or "NNATs," to refer to all parties and not just boys. Also, the term *adolescent*, in Spanish, *adolescente*, is gender neutral and so remains unchanged in the acronyms.

I wanted to work with girls, partly because of the lack of “authentic” girl voices in the literature (Driscoll 2008; Switzer 2013) but also because of the encroaching femicidal violence affecting the lives of girls throughout Peru. In reaction to this violence, on August 13, 2016, #NiUnaMenos marches took place all over the country under the hashtag #13A. Diverse groups of women and girls marched to protest the rampant femicides and the lack of state intervention. What was happening in MANTHOC was that both girls and boys in the movement were attending these events and had very thoughtful insights into what was happening, engendering a range of responses, from disavowing child abuse to demanding action from law enforcement and the state. MANTHOCxs were marching not only because half their membership are girls but also to stand in solidarity with their mothers and sisters²⁶.

Figure 2.1. MANTHOC marching alongside Amnesty International Peru at the #13A Ni Una Menos protest in downtown Lima.

I felt that working alongside MANTHOC would allow me to better understand how working girls in the movement identified themselves. Some of the themes I tried to focus on were participation, political and organizational positionality, and identity, to gauge what their lives were like in my limited time in the field. As mentioned previously,

²⁶ MANTHOC has been involved in thematic campaigns throughout their existence in Peru, shifting and adapting their movement according to social and political changes in the region and around the world. As an example, with mass migrations resulting from the internal armed conflict in the 1980s, MANTHOCxs at the time wanted to help the many children who had arrived from more rural areas in the Andes to the capital. According to then MANTHOCa, Cecilia Ramirez, she explained that there were many children who worked, and the schools were not responding in the way that the movement wanted, so they opened up a school at the top on a shantytown. She reminisced, “I remember that my first day of class was in a semi-built classroom, without a roof, my first desk was a brick with a piece of wood of this size [she shows with her hands] that I had obtained; And the moms had put up the roof with the sacks of rice they had sewed that very moment” (Interview by author 2018).

a reason to collaborate with working girls is their missing voices in the literature. I recognize that it would have useful to speak to boys as well; however, given my limited time in the field, I wanted to place a deep focus on girls and their perspectives on the movement.

Feminist Ethnographic Methods

Using ethnographic methods is a popular way of engaging in the lifeworlds of children in general. In particular, ethnography allows for rich data collection concerning people's meaning-making, but more than once in an interaction I caught myself, thinking, What is my place here? or, Why should they talk to me? Recognizing the ways in which working girls are consistently spoken about and spoken for in international discourses, I wanted to make a serious effort to recognize the privilege that I have, by centering the girls' theorizing on their own lives.

Thus, coming from a tradition of feminist thought through my participation in programs like YWLP (Young Women Leaders Program, at the University of Central Florida) throughout my undergraduate career and attempting to apply what I have learned of reflexivity and flexibility in the field, I employ a style of ethnography resembling that of feminist ethnographers such as Lila Abu-Lughod and Elizabeth Chin. I have been particularly influenced by Marisol de la Cadena and Samantha Punch. I believe that to do helpful research, one should be unsettled by one's own conceptions of the world to gain understanding. De la Cadena notes:

Rather obviously, lettered hierarchies conditioned my own practice of anthropology. Mariano's methodological shift to storytelling, together with my desire for co-labor, most specifically required altering the practice according to

which we anthropologists analyze “information” by explaining away its incongruities with rational sense—a sense that is assumed to be common and right. Underpinning the hierarchy (according to which we know and the other informs) is the assumption of onto-epistemic sameness; my agreement with the Turpos required me to disrupt it by asking what *was* (conceptually and materially) that which I was hearing, seeing, touching, and doing and how (through what practices) it *was*. (2015, 16)

Acknowledging disruption and working with it, instead of toward what is taught as rational, is necessary, as my goals in ethnography were to not offend but to be truthful about and aware of my position and use the training that I have to foreground these young girls’ voices.

There is of course my existence in their lives, which appeared more typical in Lima than in some Cajamarca groups, and I took this into account. I asked myself, How much of this is occurring because I am here? But I am content to have used ethnography as my main method, because in its very nature its goal was to not have reproducible results but rather, as holistically as possible, to take the girls themselves into account. This inability to generalize is important because as a critical ethnographer, I wanted to get a sense of the everyday experiences and especially the ordinary lives of working girls in the movement, whom they associated with, what they did in the movement, and why they decided to even be there instead of at a more child-welfare or service-centered NGO. Flexibility and reflexivity became central to how I would work alongside and interact with children and youth in this study.

Researching with/on Children

The methods that represent children's voices can be varied and should involve much reflexivity, as no one method can resolve the complexities and politics of representation (Kellett 2011). But as Punch (2002) notes, the methods used for adults also work with children if enough rapport is built with them during time in the field. Here, I aim to consider the power imbalances at play between myself and the young girls, as well as how research contexts shape children's voices (Spyrou 2011). And to better get at this trust and positionality, I used participant observation. Similar to William Corsaro (2003), I initially decided to act as a friendly helpful adult and pursue the "least adult role" by trying to fit in with their friend circle (Mandell 1988). Although I was friendly and approachable, I have no doubt that the MANTHOCxs read me as an adult. Every time I introduced myself to the groups, I made sure to explain my intention, which made their impression of me as an adult stick in their psyches. Unlike Thorne (1993), who felt that she had to switch between adult and child modes, to interact with school authorities in her ethnography, I found that it would be difficult and disadvantageous to do so, as the purpose of my presence was often to act as an arbiter and facilitator of meetings. Interacting with MANTHOCxs in contexts as equal as possible became my reality. Similar to Mayall (2000), where she placed herself in the position of an "adult who lacks the knowledge that children have about childhood," I tried to go with the flow, in learning from girls in the movement.

As I stand tall for a Peruvian, at five feet, seven inches, I may come off as intimidating to small children or as foreign because of my white skin, which I tried to be aware of. By sitting on the ground, by their side, or getting down to their level when talking, I worked to temporarily subvert the power structure between adults and children,

white and Mestizo. When MANTHOCxs appeared their most comfortable, they were just happy to treat me as a helpful adult. I noticed how children who were relatively new to the movement would defer to what collaborators or more experienced children had to say as a guide to the way they should respond to me. I would always seek consent before taking photographs and making videos, and sometimes the very act of my asking would allow them to disagree, which at times seemed like a game in itself. What is more important is that they were allowed to oppose me, permitting them to maintain a degree of power over me.

MANTHOC is a specialized space, and I recognize that institutional contexts produce different voices. For instance, at school there are “cultural and social norms that regulate social relations” within children’s voices, which do not represent the ways they live their lives outside the movement (Freeman and Mathison 2009). The anthropologist’s subjective perceptions are always situated through his or her unique identities and positionalities. In my case, I am aware that my tendency to miss certain social cues as a person outside the “friend” group of children, or my newness to spaces, is compounded by my neurodiversity as a person with attention deficit disorder.²⁷ As such I found myself deferring to both children and adults in all movement spaces, so not to appear as a visiting anthropologist but also try to be present at any given time.

Additionally, as Spyros Spyrou (2011) argues, adults will never be able to fully entrench themselves in the lifeworlds of children, and I hoped to instead relate to them at least as a fellow countryperson (though we definitely live in a racialized hierarchy) who happens to be a researcher and is also an adult who was available for their benefit. I did

²⁷ To do the best work possible, I contended with my own “limitations” in a neurotypical world. Additionally, as an introvert, feeling spent after so much stimulus, I had to retreat to recharge.

not think to appropriate their world by entering private discussions in the movement that are child-only, especially because MANTHOC prides itself on maintaining those spaces. It did not seem logical to cross that social line. For instance, though adult collaborators are allowed in delegate meetings, I would comment only after children could not resolve a problem. At that, I tried not to be verbose or use any jargon. Even then, most of the time, other NNATs asked me to step up my “obligation” as an adult, to provide support.

Semi-participant Observation

Borrowing a term from Stanford Taonatose Mahati (2015), I felt that in most of my time in the field I could only go as far as semi-participant observation. Given the kind of organization I was collaborating with, ethically I could not fully participant observe with MANTHOC. Additionally, many activities occur concurrently at a children’s social movement, school, or even mess hall, and I could not be everywhere at once; I had to work very hard to remember moments that struck me from each visit. For instance, when kids from the Yerbateros base decided to perform a flash mob to bring attention to World Water Day, there was so much tumult in getting the performance right that I forgot that something else had happened the same day—President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (PPK) had resigned.

Although I forgot this tidbit, a conversation with fourteen-year-old Edison, until later, it made me think. He was sitting at the dining table eating his lunch and asked me how to pronounce letters of the alphabet. I gave him different ways of remembering this, such as singing the ABC song using the melody of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” At some point I commented, “I just saw that PPK resigned.” I remember Edison looking up

at me, shaken, then with a disappointed tone saying rhetorically, “Why is it that presidents cannot stay? That this keeps happening?”

After the fact, when my mind was restful, I caught myself thinking of the sadness in his voice at that moment. I scrambled to find my field notebook and wrote about it in between the lines in a deep purple, so that it would stand out against the orange of the original writing. Moments like these, which began as difficult to remember, became easier to recall over the weeks and months that followed. I began memorizing the day as a series of scenes in a play, not because I wanted to stylistically but because so much was transpiring at once that I had to designate start and end points to different moments and ongoing interactions. In an ordinary day, I would also follow the routine that the kids expected of me, as a volunteer-type adult, one that went only so far to interfere in their lives, and sometimes asked questions.

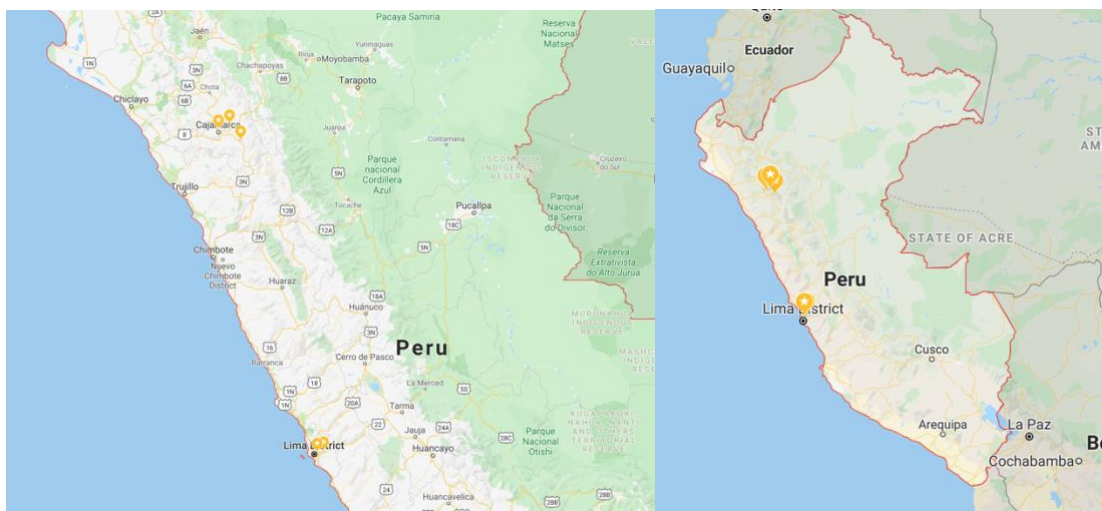


Figure 2.2 Google Maps of Peru showing marked field sites and an image of the nation.

The reason I chose to find field sites in the states of Lima and Cajamarca stems from the original proposal for this project, in which I wanted to compare and contrast the perceptions of girls who worked and wanted to do so versus those who were trying to

eradicate child labor. However, I noticed how MANTHOC had a particularly large presence throughout Peru and focused on the dignity of working children. While I had selected MANTHOC sites in Lima for the first part of my fieldwork, I had planned to visit the group Somos in Cajamarca because of its efforts to eliminate domestic service by girls. Somos (short for Somos el Presente y Queremos Cambiar el Futuro [We Are the Present and We Want to Change the Future]) was one group that I wanted to collaborate with, because the girls had adopted mainstream views of child labor abolition uncommon in the Andes—especially in Cajamarca.²⁸ I had been in contact with Somos for some time between late 2016 and early 2018, and in regular conversations I had not anticipated that anything was amiss, as funding was not discussed. Usually, for organizations that work heavily during the school year with children and youth, there is a blackout period between the end of December and early March for summer vacation from school.²⁹ However, two weeks before the end of my fieldwork in Lima, I found out about the dissolution of Somos.

I found myself learning about these circumstances two weeks before the end of my fieldwork in Lima.³⁰ At that point, having paid for my stay in Cajamarca, and wanting to do fieldwork in this area, I approached two cooperators from MANTHOC in Lima for help in connecting with the movement in Cajamarca.

²⁸ Somos functioned until December 2017. In Cajamarca, the neocolonial narrative of the capture of Atahualpa as a tourist attraction is the backdrop for an overabundance of Gothic-style churches but also statues of brave-looking Incas.

²⁹ MANTHOC in Lima has programming all year because young children need care and summer tutoring. I helped out where I could until MANTHOC started up in full force in March.

³⁰ My initial intention was to spend two months with Somos, and I had to find a way to proceed with the study by working with MANTHOC Cajamarca instead. I was still able to interview five ex-members of Somos while in Cajamarca.

Semistructured Interviews

Because I did want to ask particular questions, I sought to interview a population of fifteen girls in each region. In Lima, the Directiva who were in charge of letting in social scientists to study MANTHOCxs decided that I should try to work at Yerbateros and Amauta in Lima. Having heard about my project, they were interested in the gendered aspect because of the femicide crisis occurring throughout the country, but also to add their voices to the public conversation.³¹ I interviewed seven girls at Yerbateros in the front conference room, which proved to be very distracting, as kids knocked on the door, thinking the house collaborator was present to answer questions or break up arguments. The other spot where we interviewed was in a back room that was used for poster making and crafts. There was a little flip-up window on the door, and during some interviews, fellow MANTHOCxs would make faces at me or their friends through the window.

At Amauta, I interviewed eight girls either at the first-floor homework tables or upstairs on an unfinished second floor. We sat on a picnic bench, trying to deter other children from starting up checkers games while we sat watching day turn to dusk. As both spots (Amauta and Yerbateros) were close to main streets, many of the digital recordings have us pausing to wait for the sound of a bus or air horn to pass. Overall, the first few interviews I did were strange, because of the way I worded questions—I changed this and re-asked some questions. Also, once I did the first two interviews, other

³¹ As noted in the introduction, femicide is increasing year by year in countries around Latin America. In the year I did my fieldwork, 2018, the total number of cases totaled 150 girls and women. For more data on femicides from 2015 to 2018, see information from the Peruvian Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Informática (National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, INEI), https://www.inei.gob.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/publicaciones_digitales/Est/Lib1659/cap02.pdf.

girls were more willing to be interviewed, after their friends, who had already been interviewed, shared with them that it wasn't anything unusual.



Figure 2.3. Amauta base MANTHOCos vying for our interview space to play chess.

Each of these field sites had its own dynamics around these interviews, which also reflected local variations in space and cultures. Similarly, my first interview in Cajamarca, after I obtained approval for fifteen interviews from the coordinators, was actually in the San Marcos region. In San Marcos, I interviewed two girls in the front of their MANTHOC space and in the back room of the space itself. After one of the girls was interviewed, she coerced her friend to sit with me. I told her that she did not have to be interviewed if she did not want to; she was nervous and said no, indicating that she was not willing. I thought this was fine—it was her choice, anyhow—but she quickly looked at her friend with an expression that said her friend had betrayed her for suggesting she be interviewed. In the other more rural area that I observed, Encañada, I interviewed four girls, usually in the front of their MANTHOC space. In that group, only

one of the girls opted to be audio recorded, so I took as many notes as I could to catch up on each response.

In the more urban parts of Cajamarca, where the Fé y Amor group met up once a week, I interviewed three girls in the first-floor living room of the MANTHOC house. Also in the MANTHOC house, I interviewed Ke Muin Ha before the start of a retreat held by the CDI. She was part of the movement group in Bellavista, where I interviewed the majority of the girls for the region. There, in the back room with some chickens, on the steps while rain poured down, I interviewed six girls apart from Ke Muin Ha. On the same day I interviewed her, sitting on the steps outside the mess hall in the MANTHOCxs' garden, I interviewed Jhoselyn, who was from the group in Jesus. The interview was always offered to girls ten years old and above, to follow the Institutional Review Board's (IRB) decision, despite my having fought to lower this age restriction.

I mention this because to study the richness of MANTHOCas, I could not interview girls who were six and seven years old, who are a large group in the movement, especially in Encañada. There, little sisters of girls I interviewed were adamant about their worthiness for an interview. I made sure to let them know that my not interviewing them was not something I wanted but instead came from a decision from above me. I also told them that just because I couldn't formally interview them, this did not preclude them from being involved in the research. By the same token, boys from San Marcos were livid that they were excluded from interviews. I had to truly work out how to explain gender power and the limitations of time during fieldwork so that they would understand why they were excluded.

A Helpful Hand

I spent a month and a half in the earlier part of 2018 in Lima, where my lodgings were kindly covered by my godparents in Miraflores. Because I did not have living expenses in Lima, I hired a driver for the days when I would go to the bases. Traffic to San Luis and Ate became difficult during rush hour, when I had to head back, and my driver became a necessity in the process of my being punctual and at the bases for as long as possible. Sr. Rojas became a critical part of my fieldwork in 2012—when I visited a Jesus Maria district NGO, La Casa de Panchita, for my research with domestic workers. He knew the city like the back of his hand and made it seem effortless to get to these often far-off bases. In this recent trip, he helped me arrive punctually at the MANTHOC bases, which were far from my godparents' home—it was an hour's travel time instead of two hours on the bus, the latter trip further lengthened by any additional World Cup friendlies traffic.



Figure 2.4. Sr. Rojas posing for a picture.

Sr. Rojas was the kind of guy you could talk to over your entire trip. He and I had long conversations about state corruption and how his experiences as a law student in Ancash were shaped by the terrorism years. He is a Mestizo man who speaks some Quechua and speaks Spanish like a radio announcer. He is always aware of political goings-on and is interested in participating in local politics. During my time in Lima, he became more enmeshed in my fieldwork by becoming interconnected with MANTHOC Amauta. The girls from the base approached him to connect with his son, a famous graffiti artist whose tag is Chococar. As a service provider, he became as much a part of this ethnography, from the minute I began interacting with him, as any of my interview participants.

Study Sites

My fieldwork took place in two regions of Peru: Lima and Cajamarca. At each site, I visited MANTHOC meeting places and event spaces to perform my semi-participant observation of the movement. During times that I was not at MANTHOC I would perform administrative tasks such as uploading and labeling images and audio files, as well as writing up field notes. Additionally, as I am Peruvian and have my whole extended family living in Lima, I would spend some weekend days with my grandparents and other kin. When I was in Cajamarca, I spent time in much the same way, in the field and then at a desk in the space I rented for my stay. When I wasn't doing these two things, I was thinking up projects I could introduce to the MANTHOC groups for reciprocity.

To better frame my fieldwork for this dissertation, I would stress that it is important to understand the contested distinction in the movement between the words

base and *group*. Whereas MANTHOC in Lima has five bases—Villa El Salvador, Yerbateros, Surquillo, Amauta, and Rimac—MANTHOC Cajamarca has only one base in the city itself. Herein lies a bit of confusion, as there are many groups within and around Cajamarca that use the base of the city as a mooring point for larger events and meetings. Whereas Lima bases meet as a group, the groups in Cajamarca do not meet all together unless there is an assembly or a campaign. Going forward, unless otherwise noted, when bases are mentioned they are from Lima, and the indication of groups refers to Cajamarca.

Reciprocal Access to Knowledge

During my first physical visit to MANTHOC in San Luis district, I spoke with a national and an international cooperator, Neiser and Loïc, respectively.³² I had been in contact with Neiser through WhatsApp previously, during which time both interviewed me, questioned the relevance and interest of my project, and devised a plan to present to the Directiva (the MANTHOCxs in charge of the movement). Because, in their view, former researchers had come and gone without contributing their knowledge, they could not assure me of anything beyond observation and volunteering. I was to come back once they had connected with the Directiva. The next time I was summoned to MANTHOC, Neiser and Loïc explained that to gain entry into the movement spaces, I would have to make arrangements with two distinct groups of people: the executive board of MANTHOC and the adult collaborators for each base or group.

³² A cooperator is an adult helper who in the Lima bases does not necessarily work with children directly but handles external movement affairs. All adults who are in the movement are chosen by MANTHOC leadership, but not all adults are called the same things in different regions. More information appears in chapter 5.

For the Directiva, I was told to develop interview questions based on what MANTHOC wants to learn about their own movement. Neiser believed that for the movement to continue to efficiently function administratively, they needed to recruit more volunteers and convince current volunteers to become collaborators. So as part of my remuneration to them, I would be tasked with interviewing current volunteers and collaborators, both international and national, to see why they became interested in MANTHOC. For this portion, I interviewed two collaborators and four volunteers in each region. The questions for the collaborators were more in depth than those for the volunteers, and the questions for the international and national volunteers were also different. Neiser had explained that MANTHOC wanted to have more national volunteers but that without an incentive, the concept of free time or free labor made it difficult for locals. He noted that funding from NGOs or country governments to international volunteers made them in many ways more reliable because they could afford their stay. By the end of my fieldwork, I had interviewed thirteen adults in Cajamarca and Lima for the Directiva.³³

In the coding of this document, most names have been changed, through an aspect of participant protection. Some adult names have not been changed, because of the very nature of how public their lives are within the movement and because they asked that their names be used, to demonstrate the importance and privilege they have in working with the movement. All children's names have been changed to pseudonyms that they chose for themselves.

³³ Because this was a way to remunerate the movement for allowing me access to their members, I freely downloaded the adult interviews and any movement event pictures that I had taken to their base computers.

Fieldwork Profiles of MANTHOC Spaces						
Base/Group Name	Amauta (Lima)	Yerbateros (Lima)	Fe y Amor por un Mundo Mejor (Cajamarca)	Aventureros (Cajamarca)	JCM Niños y Adolescentes Emprendedores (Cajamarca)	Mensajeros del Saber (San Marcos)
Location	Ate Vitarte	San Luis	Cajamarca	Cajamarca	Encañada	San Marcos
Meetings	2x per week	5x per week	Once per week	Once per week	Once per week	2x per week
Collaborator	Susana	Janeth	Michael	Nila	Adela	Yovana
Volunteers	Petra, Chiara, Anja	Gustavo, Guillermo, Gabriel, Noelia, Bernadetta, Martje, Elena	Paulina & Samuel	Giorgio	Francesco	N/A
Age Range	~ 0-15	~ 2-17	~ 10-17	~ 0-16	~ 3-12;16	~ 7-15
Group Size	~ 30-40 children	~ 40-50 children	5-7 girls, 3-5 boys	~ 30 children	~ 25 children	~ 16 children
PI Observed/Participated Activities	Year's Work Plan, tutoring, tidying homework, computer games, chess, World Water Day tabling and presentation, Day of Petra, Graffiti Mural	Saturday Assembly, tutoring, lunch, Holy Week lesson, World Water Day flash mob, San Luis Health Forum, games	Year's Work Plan, Mother's Day crafts, International Worker's Day, Pentecost activities	Year's Work Plan, Safety follow-up, Mother's Day crafts, Learning Quechua songs, Pentecost activities	English lessons, Mother's Day crafts, International Worker's Day	Tutoring, English Lessons, Mother's Day crafts

Table 2.1 Fieldwork site profiles

House Permissions in Lima

The Lima coordination of MANTHOCs was run out of the second floor of the Yerbateros base, and I had been summoned to arrive at lunchtime and then wait for Neiser and Loïc to be ready for the eventual trip to the Amauta base. I was not the only one going to Amauta; a local political science graduate student, Sergio, was also interested in seeing the space in Ate. The way I obtained permission from the Yerbateros base was through my introduction to her on our way out to visit the Amauta base. As we were walking out the door, the coordinator of the Yerbateros base appeared from the first-floor side corridor. Neiser connected us, saying, “This is Janeth, if you want to make arrangements.” I asked her about interviewing girls, but she held my hand in hers, and though she was excited, she told me to come back and talk at a less hectic time. She then looked at Loïc and Neiser, then back at me, and exclaimed, “But if you want interviews,

you have to help us.” I looked at her and declared, “Whatever you need!” Janeth gave me a high five and we all laughed as we headed out to the bus stop.

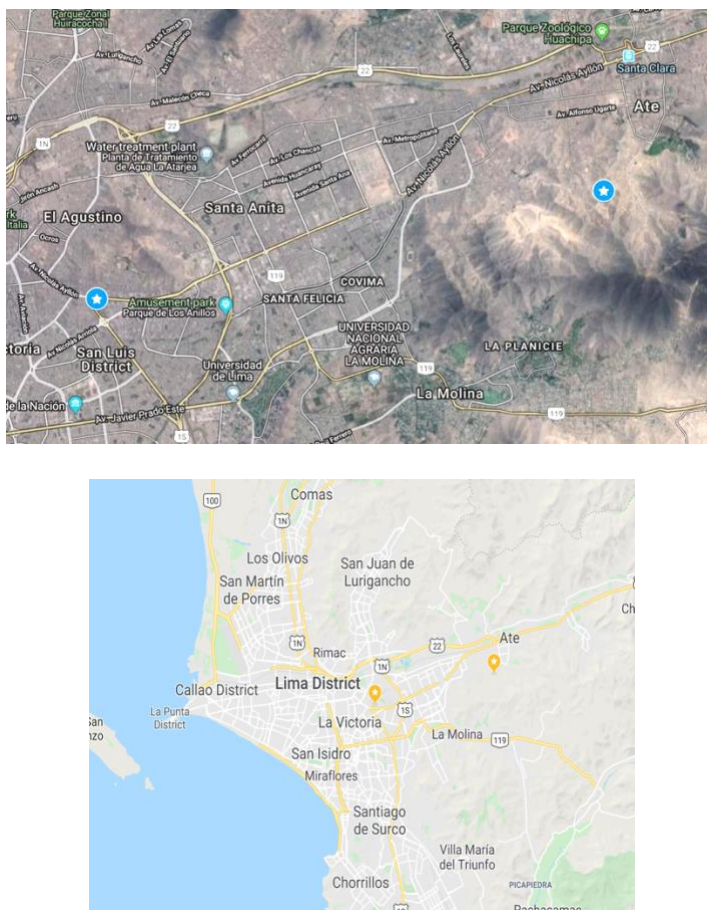


Figure 2.5. Google Maps showing Lima bases. *Top*, a satellite image zoomed in; *bottom*, a street map zoomed out.

Along the hour and a half trip, with transfers from one microbus to another, Sergio directed a barrage of questions at Loïc and Neiser. I listened and took notes as they took turns explaining the movement structure and how funds are allocated. Sergio was astounded that the organization was volunteer run and child led and that most of the funding came from international NGOs as well as certain contracts with government officials. After a quick ice cream when we arrived at the base of the hill in Santa Anita,

we scoured the area for a *combi* that could take us to Ate and the valley of Amauta.³⁴ As we got some relief from the summer heat, a microbus rolled up, with the *jaladór* yelling out locations, among them “Amauta! MANTHOC!”³⁵

Neiser asked the *jaladór* why he called out MANTHOC specifically; the reply was that he was helping the group out because of their fund-raiser. We stopped halfway up the hill, at a colorfully decorated and lively corner building. A few tables had been set up on the sidewalk, and girls stood behind the table leading to the front door. There were two adults sitting with money boxes, while girls called passersby over to participate in carnival games. They were advertising prizes and the sale of deliciously sweet *picarones*.³⁶ We all hopped out of the bus and made our way inside, looking for Susana, the collaborator.



Figure 2.6. *Picaronada* (slang for “*picarón* party”) at the Amauta base.

³⁴ *Combi* is slang for *Kombinationskraftwagen*, German for a Volkswagen 2 microbus.

³⁵ A *jaladór* is a person who stands at the doorway of a microbus and calls out the route the bus will be taking. Sometimes the *jaladór* also collects the fares.

³⁶ A *picarón* is an Afro-Peruvian dessert that is best described as a yam doughnut in a thin molasses sauce.

Inside, Sergio and I found Susana preparing *picarón* batter in the kitchen. Susana's mother was actively frying the yam donuts and handing them to an older girl, Alexandra, to be set on plates with a bag of molasses. The more time we spent there, talking, eating *picarones* and adding money to the raffle, the busier Susana appeared to us. At one point, she yelled out, "Remember, girls, we need S/.200 to buy a new computer!" As she went back inside, I approached her and probed: "I know you're busy, but do you have a number I could reach you at?" She smiled at me and started dictating. I handed her my business card, where I had marked my local number, and left with the group, going back down the hill.

Following the *picaronada*, I met with both Janeth and Susana individually to talk about my project's parameters, and they insisted that I volunteer at their respective bases by tutoring children and also by developing a workshop. Once at the Yerbateros base, for my formal presentation to the base members, I was introduced along with a psychology graduate student named Laura. After the details of the Saturday base meeting, I stood up after Laura and described my project to the group of thirty or so kids. With some children being more enthusiastic than others, I began to gauge who might be interested in this project. By the same measure, I also informed the MANTHOCxs about my role in interacting with their movement. I told them, and later the members at Amauta in a less formal way, that I would be acting like a volunteer, and with homework, but would also be taking interviews and plenty of pictures, when it seemed appropriate.

After being granted entry by Janeth and Susana, I went into Yerbateros and Amauta twice a week, making it so my workdays were from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. four days a week. Sometimes I would attend Saturday delegate meetings, or we would work

on a campaign; however, the rest of my time was devoted to interviewing the adults and writing up field notes. At these bases I acted as a tutor for the MANTHOCxs who came in before their workshop times and also served as a videographer and photographer for most of their events. At Yerbateros there were many adults present at any given time, but in Amauta, because of its distance from the city center, there were only a few adults present, at times making me fall in charge of the house's supervision. The kids would often correct me if other children tried to take advantage of my ignorance of house rules, but for the most part I just maintained and cleaned spaces as I was told.

By the time I began to be a more regular presence at MANTHOC, the kids had already established their own rhythm to afternoons at the bases and were aware if actions were awry or procedures were lacking, and so corrected me as an inexperienced adult. For instance, at Amauta, Susana and Chiara were required to run separate errands to provide enough materials for the MANTHOCxs' afternoon demonstrations for World Water Day. Therefore, as the last adult standing, I was tasked with supervising the children during the study hour. After seven-year-old Lisete finished her homework, she came up to me for permission to use the computer; I granted it. Maria, a normally quiet ten-year-old regular at the base, loudly proclaimed to me, "Susana checks notebooks." When Toño handed in schoolwork that was incorrect, I tried to help him through his work so he could go and play. These instances of my naïveté being rectified were not only moments when children checked my adult privilege but also ways in which MANTHOCxs deployed their house rules to impose the proper parameters of their power in the movement.

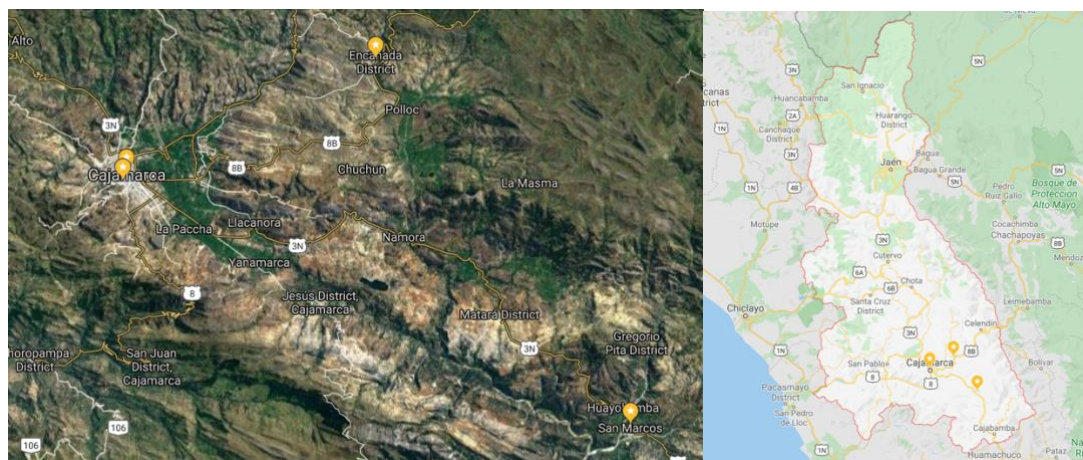


Figure 2.7. Google Maps, showing Cajamarca groups. *Left*, a satellite image zoomed in; *right*, a street map zoomed out.

House Permissions in Cajamarca

Toward the end of my stay in Lima, Loïc connected me with Adela and Luchita, collaborators at the Cajamarca base. I spoke briefly to Adela on the phone before seeing both of them upon my arrival in their the city. After settling into an Airbnb just outside the Plaza de Armas, I rushed over to the MANTHOC base a few blocks away. I was escorted up some stairs to a room with mountains of paperwork on two desks. Here, I met up with Adela and Luchita to go over my project’s guidelines and their conditions. I was thankful to them for allowing me to collaborate on such short notice. After a few moments discussing the project, they were interested in my work and Adela started assigning me to different groups. She suggested that I follow her to the Encañada group, Yovana to the San Marcos group, and Michael to the one that meets in “this very building.” As we walked out of the office, I ran into Yovana, who was quickly introduced, and we switched phones and entered each other’s numbers.

I initially volunteered and researched three groups in Cajamarca—Fé y Amor por un Mundo Mejor, Mensajeros del Saber San Marcos, and José Carlos Mariátegui Niños y Adolescentes Emprendedores Encañada—but then added one more, making the total four with Aventureros Bellavista. In this region, there is an expectation of solid volunteer work, of having international and national volunteers come for years at a time.³⁷ Their base has a set of lodgings, and the commitment to serve is facilitated by these on-site lodgings that allow the volunteers to come and go according to their daily routines and schedules with MANTHOC. Here, at the movement's request, I also interviewed adult collaborators and national and international volunteers, on top of my fieldwork.

The first group I visited, with Yovana, was the Mensajeros del Saber group, two hours away in San Marcos. We met each other in a rainstorm in the middle of the Plaza de Armas; after that time, she would either meet me at the group itself or at the base. The first time I arrived with Yovana, she and I walked around the town asking parents if their children were available to come by; we did this until we reached a light-blue two-story building at the end of a dirt road. A few boys ran out to hug Yovana and help her with

³⁷ In Cajamarca certain niceties of speech were very apparent to me, as a person from the “capital.” The way in which older people were addressed very much aligned with modes of respect. It was evident in not just the use of the formal *usted* rather than the informal *tú*—which is typical in Lima—but in addition, in Cajamarca women who were not deemed girl children were called *madre* (mother). Further, MANTHOCxs would call adults whom they trusted *profesora* (teacher), saying, “Diga” (a formal “Say it”), to one another when they were interrupted, giving priority in speech. Although the area is more conservative than Lima by far, there is also the sense that children's contribution to society is more visceral than in the capital. The labor of children is a more common life history for adults in the area, leading to more pride and less shame being associated with working children. I had to check my *tuteo* (my way of addressing people informally in Spanish) because I was more accustomed to Lima's dialect, but I quickly became part of the daily MANTHOC machinations in the region of Cajamarca. I attended regular and delegate meetings, along with the formation of the Committee on the Rights in Childhood (CDI). At the formation of this committee, I helped act as the videographer, documenting the coalescing of a group of MANTHOC and non-MANTHOC local youth who wanted to make changes in the way society talks about women and girls. I also helped by doing basic tasks such as serving the kids, suggesting activities when they were stuck, and facilitating like a collaborator, depending on the shyness of the group.

what she was carrying. The boys, who named themselves Spiderman Wacho and Apollo, went throughout the area looking for their fellow group members at Yovana's request.³⁸



Figure 2.8. Inside the San Marcos meeting space with Spiderman Watcho, Marco Diaz, Oliver, and Apollo.

Once we were inside, twelve-year-old Milagros and seven-year-old Elsitá arrived to see Yovana. Inside there were about ten kids, including the boys who had gone on the search. I introduced myself to the group. The boys were immediately dismayed at my exclusions. I explained then, and again over the coming months, that it was important that girls' voices be paid due attention. This group in particular were comfortable challenging me; later in this chapter I will speak a little bit about how they did so during my visits.

San Marcos is one of the most difficult groups to reach, and especially when we had to

³⁸ Before I took any pictures with my camera phone, I asked those gathered if I was permitted to do so. If they did not want their picture taken, I did not proceed. Those who wanted to be in the research and wanted their pictures in this report, which the kids knew I was writing, were told that it might or might not end up in the final project. I also told them who would be reading this study (mostly academics in school) and that I would be back to hand their group a copy. I don't have many photos from Yerbateros, as many children did not want their picture taken there.

bring supplies for Mother's Day crafts or soil and bottles for vertical gardens, the travel was compounded by the condition of the roads and gravity of the dangers along the way. In a similar vein, I would accompany Adela to one of the youngest groups, at Encañada,³⁹ and though the bus ride was not more than three to six soles (\$.90–1.80), the journey was immensely dangerous. With switchbacks, called horsekillers, on often one-lane highways around the mountains of the Andes, I would often make eye contact with Adela or Yovana when the driver was a bit too fast or when large charter buses would attempt to go down the mountain near us.⁴⁰

The first time I introduced myself and the project to Fé y Amor, three girls immediately jumped up and volunteered to be interviewed. I was pleased and surprised, until I realized that they were regulars in MANTHOC and wanted to help spread their story. Later on, I was asked to visit Bellavista's group on the outskirts of the city. I climbed the mountainside to meet Giorgio, an Italian volunteer who excitedly talked about anthropology as I wheezed after each breath. Once we reached the top of the street, Giorgio called out to boys playing in the street to let them know that they would be having a meeting today.

After walking to certain shops and homes, Giorgio had acquired a group of mostly girls to meet at the MANTHOC space. After a few more moments inside, Jhan Pier and Alexander showed up and sat as it began to pour. I told the six or so children who could make the meeting about my project, and one girl, Sofia, agreed to be interviewed right

³⁹ Adela explained that the older children had more homework and so the younger cohort was more consistent.

⁴⁰ Adela would often yell at the bus drivers for "taking all of our lives into folly" and Yovana would close her eyes in silent prayer. Both women were often so exhausted from their days that they would take that time to nap.

then. It was a small group, so at a later meeting, Nila, the group's collaborator, introduced me to a collection of approximately twenty children. She said that I was a collaborator who was doing a study on MANTHOC girls.



Figure 2.9. MANTHOCos Jhan Pier and Alexander playing marbles with their friends before the meeting.

As can be inferred from the differing ways of gaining house permissions, each base or group has an adult who is meant to support them. I would often take advantage of the rapport and trust that collaborators or volunteers already had with their respective groups, to just introduce myself and the project. For most groups and bases it took quite some time to build enough trust for an interview, but for some girls, the interview was just a way for them to gauge my purpose. One way I gained some rapport with MANTHOCxs was through my environmental science lessons and my time as a “volunteer cooperator.”

Reciprocity during Fieldwork

My training as an anthropologist, environmental science teacher, preschool aide, and childhood studies PhD candidate made my STEM abilities an interesting addition to

the MANTHOCxs workshops. I taught MANTHOCxs environmental science because besides working toward reproductive justice, they focus on efforts toward sustainable ecology. The way they chose a topic or why I would do an environmental or rights-consciousness lesson depended on my inclusion in their annual work plan. I happened to be present at most of these meetings. At Yerbateros and Amauta, I was designated to lead a workshop to celebrate Earth Day, which collaborators suggested I prepare for after I got back from Cajamarca and before I left for the United States. During the Fé y Amor work plan in Cajamarca, for a predominantly adolescent group, their eighteen-year-old German collaborator, Michael, expressed interest in having me talk to the group about rights consciousness after Mother's Day activities. The group agreed, planning what materials to buy and food to bring for the meetings. On the day of my training for the kids, I brought in copies of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Peruvian Code of the Child and Adolescent and had the children pick out of a bowl strips of paper on which different scenarios were described and had them explain how each document helped the particular case on their slip.

For the Encañada and San Marcos groups, both collaborators heard that children wanted more science projects. As Encañada and San Marcos are rather far from the city, I spent weeks in advance, on days off from my interactions, to collect materials, running a toilet roll drive, negotiating the price of magnifying glasses, finding seeds and duct tape, spray painting water bottles, going to plant nurseries, and taking *mototaxis* with bags of soil. These were all actions I had to take to obtain the right kinds of equipment for these two groups. The activities occurred toward the end of my time in Cajamarca, which made the time with each group feel like a kind of farewell. I am sad to not have had enough

time to lead a workshop for the Bellavista Aventureros but plan to follow up and do this when I return to the area to share my dissertation with them.

In each workshop, I tried to give members something physical they could take along with them and refer back to with ease. It may seem counterintuitive to print color pages and give handouts that invariably added to my carbon footprint; however, many MANTHOCxs truly appreciated having individual materials. For instance, at the Encañada group, their collaborator Adela pointed out that it was nearly impossible to keep any posters or drawings up in the space her group was using, so I designed a full-color, double-sided flier teaching the children about optics and how to make a telescope and spectrometer from everyday materials. I tried to come up with subjects of great interest or pertinence to each region and use materials that were accessible.

In San Marcos, I drew out poster boards concerning soil science and vertical gardening in advance of visiting the group. Because the group's space also included part of a field, the kids could use one side of the fencing to attach their gardens. At this space, the children could hang up art and make their room more personalized, so I brought duct tape to attach these posters to parts of the wall that were not brick. As the group was rather young, I made a few informational posters that scaffolded the topics to help them understand why vertical gardens would be taught. Posters with wording such as "What Is in the Soil?" were meant to explain the concept of soil composition and pH as well as the phosphorous biogeochemical cycle. Another poster, with the phrase "Soils of Cajamarca," specifically talked about the San Marcos region so that the children could make connections to why certain areas may have more fertile ground while others do not.

Although I taught them about a few more cycles and photosynthesis before we began building the bottle gardens, it was clear that their main interest was the posters that I had created. Their interest grew when I began handing out the materials; however, the boys resisted working with the girls. I was about to talk about the importance of working with someone you would not normally be paired with, when Yovana looked at the group and said, “This is MANTHOC; we always work together.” For one second, Marco Diaz made a face, then he asked Abril if she wanted to work with him.



Figure 2.10. A, La Encañada group with their telescopes; B, Apollo and Yovana looking at growth in the vertical garden; C, Fé y Amor group working on connecting rights; D, Amauta base working on bottle system; E, Yerbateros group getting ready for earthquake workshop.

Unlike the other groups, Fé y Amor, who met at the MANTHOC base in the city, suggested I teach the lesson on the UNCRC and the Peruvian Code of the Child and Adolescent. The workshop task was to pull out of a bowl decorated with decoupage a

strip of paper on which was written a scenario that violated either the UNCRC or the Peruvian Code.⁴¹ They were then asked to review the code and the articles of the UNCRC and draw out scenarios on how they would remedy these violations. The week before, I had developed a few scenarios that I brought up with Michael to see if these would be relatable, and he didn't think it would be a problem. I had brought snacks and was provided with posters and coloring implements by the base, which was helpful. Then the meeting began, and everyone seemed to be really involved in making the posters while they talked and laughed.

Two of the older boys got nervous talking about their respective scenarios, saying, "I just came out of the closet, and my parents kicked me out of the house," and "I have been sexually abused." I told them that these were real issues, and "even if you do not have this problem, it could be your neighbor and you have to see how these articles could protect them." After this, each MANTHOCx worked and talked until twenty minutes before the session ended, and we talked about how each violation that they had identified was protected by the UNCRC. They each received a Spanish version of a Save the Children UNCRC document. I would have loved to go into more detail on the Peruvian Code with them, especially about labor rights; however, this could be an area for further research.

In the Lima site of Amauta, at the suggestion of a twelve-year-old NNAT named Esperanza, I taught about ten MANTHOCxs on another pertinent topic, which had ravaged the coast during the last couple of El Niño years, the *huaycos* (flash floods). We talked about how 2017 felt like a dangerous and uncertain time when the floods pushed

⁴¹ Decoupage is an art form wherein glue is applied to objects to which paper cutouts are then affixed, producing a variety of effects.

through various districts in the area, bringing down whole neighborhoods. Although we talked about how structures had to be made to withstand such moments of calamity, the issues of overpopulation and ramshackle housing result from a lack of infrastructural change and investment in the area. We agreed that this was the purpose of organizational spaces such as the Consejo Consultivo de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (Advisory Council for Boys, Girls, and Adolescents, CCONNA) because these were children's issues too. To lighten the mood from uncertain natural disasters, the back side had instructions on the planting of vertical gardens that I had designed to look like the poster from San Marcos.

The Amauta space had something akin to a backyard area, and we set up the gardens against a concrete wall and wrote each child's name for those engaging in the vertical system. I had also gone to Sodimac (a hardware chain) in Surquillo and bought MANTHOCxs twenty individual planters to take home and plant with basil and spring onion seeds. We also played around with the idea of using different barrels to collect rainwater, until we collectively realized that Lima is in the Atacama desert. The kids really enjoyed the bottle gardens, so much so that when Janeth heard about how much fun the kids had had she wanted to see the materials so that Yerbateros could replicate such activities at a later date. I told them I could help lead it in August that year, when I would be coming back briefly for a family event.

Although earthquakes are felt throughout Peru, I chose Yerbateros to teach about natural disaster safety and tectonic plates. I purchased six packs of Rellenitas (Peruvian cookies similar to U.S. Oreos) to teach the MANTHOCxs about different types of plate boundaries and interactions. After explaining and eating the cookies, we talked about

personal experiences during different tremor and earthquake events. Some kids talked about their fear and others about feeling unmoored by destruction. This steered the conversation toward issues about earthquake safety as indicated by newspaper infographics that reflected the guidelines of the Instituto Nacional de Defensa Civil (National Institute of Civil Defense, INDECI). They seemed really interested in this workshop, or maybe they were just excited to be prioritized, because when the afternoon MANTHOCxs came by, some morning members bragged to them, saying, “You’re too late for the lesson!”⁴² The camaraderie between the MANTHOCxs I collaborated with is displayed throughout this dissertation.

Flex and Reflex: Internal Voices

My being aware of my status in society as a privileged adult researcher did not give me as much power in the structure of MANTHOC as it would have in any other child-centered NGO. In ordinary interactions MANTHOCxs would ignore my authority if I pushed them too hard, and they were more comfortable with my lack of movement knowledge than anyone trying to “adultsplain.” In these moments, my privileges were contrasted with their subjectivities, and I found my internal voice anxiously wondering what I should do or whether I should act any particular way. In the following sections, I will delineate some ethical dilemmas and show how these various instances challenged my power as a white queer adult.

“Check Your Adult Privilege”

Ten minutes into my helping fourteen-year-old Victor with his geography lesson, an adult knocked on the base door, a sound that reverberated in the quiet interior of the

⁴² The afternoon MANTHOCxs (those who attended school in the morning) were going to get the same lesson later that day.

space. It was a little past four o'clock, and most of the kids were done with their homework and had finished their lunch of rice, lentils, and salad. Noelia and Martje, volunteers who assisted the movement, led the majority of MANTHOCxs to the courtyard behind the space to begin the Holy Week workshop. Of course, not all children were done with their assignments from school, and some had already attended this same workshop, so they opted to stay in the confines of the base, helping tutor each other and keep the peace. As the volunteers were in the back facilitating activities, and the house's coordinator Janeth was in the back making up her team's schedule, ten-year-old Ladybug and I were in charge of the space.

Ladybug looked at me then ran to get something from the kitchen, so I got up to answer the door. A woman looking for Melaní, an eight-year-old MANTHOCa, was at the door. Unthinkingly, I hurriedly walked to the courtyard and called for Melaní. She quickly jumped up, apparently bored and wanting an excuse to leave the patio. She recognized her mother and picked up her backpack to head out the base's door. Immediately Ladybug was at the kitchen door and reprimanded me, shouting, "Janice, no! She has to do the workshop!" I calmly held her gaze and replied slowly, "Oh, OK." At that moment I was thinking, "Me llamó la atención" (Peruvian slang for "She called me out"). Anticipating a possible altercation, Melaní's mother quickly rushed out the door with Melaní, handing her daughter an ice pop in the process. I ran outside the base, calling out to Melaní and her mother, "Ma'am, wait! Come back, please!" At the end of the street, both turned around and reluctantly walked back to the space. Ladybug made eye contact with Melaní's mother and firmly said to her, "I am going to get Janeth so she can explain the rules." I awkwardly stood by the door as Victor grinned in the corner.

Of all of the MANTHOCxs I worked with at Yerbateros, Ladybug was among the group of girls who did not align with any of the MANTHOC leadership. Instead, she felt compelled to defend herself during various conflicts with other children in the movement, who bullied her because of her class or body image. She told me that she left when she got tired of bullies but then came back, because of the good friendships she maintains with girls like Melaní. At her return, Ladybug led Melaní back to the singing and dancing activity of the workshop. She then turned and escorted her friend's mother to a bench to await the house's most senior collaborator. I felt I should stay with the woman, but Victor looked at me for help and we continued working on his homework. Only when Janeth materialized from her work in the back did I notice Ladybug's surveillance of Melaní's mother slacken, and Ladybug shifted her focus back onto her schoolwork.

I myself also fell into a kind of adult trap. Although Ladybug asserted the rules of the house over my traditionally unchallenged authority as an adult, she still sought out another adult, such as Janeth, to impress the rules on an adult she could not dominate, in this case Melaní's mother. Moreover, in the movement children negotiate what kind of participation and authority to use to overcome adult domination, but racial hierarchies complicate these negotiations. In the following section, I discuss my whiteness and the privilege that it marks for movement members.

“Be Aware of Your Race/Class Privilege”

On the day of the San Luis Health Forum, I had texted Sr. Rojas to let him know where I was, because there was traffic, and he arrived as all of MANTHOC and I were leaving the event. Sr. Rojas pulled up in his Toyota and proceeded to get out of the car and open the door for me. I looked at him in disbelief, as he had chosen this moment, the

first ever, to open the car door for me in front of a group of twenty working children and their collaborators and volunteers. Just moments before, Ariana had asked me where I was staying, pointedly demanding to know if it was Miraflores (one of the wealthiest areas in Lima). Given this question, I felt even more ashamed that he had opened the door. I felt as though a cloud had come over me, but in my shock I still manifested enough composure to look back at Janeth and say, “I’ll see you Monday.” They all waved and I said to Sr. Rojas as we drove away, “I said you must not open the door for me; I have hands.” He apologized for having made me look wealthy and privileged; only the day before, he and I had had a long conversation on the way to Amauta, talking about wealthy folks’ reliance on and treatment of employees.

While not many people in my station would have flinched at having the door opened for them, I felt like a colonist and a liar for some reason. I did not want to feel that my class and race were tied to my behavior, but there are some actions that cannot be overlooked. For all intents and purposes, I am still a white woman who is wealthy enough to afford to pay for a Mestizo “family” driver to take me to the movement, instead of having to take public transport. Although I had been saving up, and the reason I could afford to pay for a driver was my obtaining a grant, the imaginary of privilege remains.

Sr. Rojas said consolingly, “They may forget”; however, they did not. Ariana, Ladybug, and many other children asked me about Sr. Rojas, if he, by chance, was my “uncle.” They again wondered, “Where do you live, Janice?” I again answered that I lived with my godmother, whose lodgings were in the Miraflores district. As the kids got to know me better, my liminality between a white Peruvian and a U.S. researcher became

of little importance to them, and their requests for help on certain projects and questions about my cats occupied our conversations.

But my whiteness was also something of a novelty throughout my fieldwork. I often visited areas that white people would normally not go to unless they were backpacking tourists. Throughout the countryside, people asked me if I was German or Italian or French; not once did they ask if I was Peruvian. I am Peruvian, with German, Italian, Spanish, and French ancestry, but the reason why Peruvian did not come up in their minds may have been largely that white Peruvians do not appear in rural areas except those in the capacity of real estate agents or development workers. My being continually asked if I was a foreign NGO worker points to the kinds of white people who exist in rural Peru.

“Should I Say Something?”

As a white Peruvian nonbinary-presenting woman, when people thought I was a male youth, for my safety I did not correct them. Often children were confused and did not ask until they were comfortable. The stranger moments were when men on the street would look at me threateningly, because my being nonbinary confused them and made me some kind of threat to their masculinity. Luckily, nothing happened to me, but enough LGBTQAI+ people are attacked in Peru that I tried not to appear queerer than I already am. Only once did I think my queerness was compromising my study. This occurred when I arrived in Cajamarca at the same time as visitors from Amnesty International and Operation Day’s Work (ODW).

Because I was getting to know everyone along with the NGO workers, kids did not know that I wasn’t part of ODW or Amnesty. Nila, the collaborator of fourteen-year-

old Ke Muin Ha, asked the latter if she would be singing in Quechua later. Ke Muin Ha smiled and nodded as we sat during breakfast. I asked Ke Muin Ha if she spoke Quechua; she said she did not. But she commented, “There are many places we travel to where no one speaks Spanish; it would be nice to communicate” (Stiglich 2018). When the Norwegian Amnesty staff worker asked us in Spanish why more children did not speak Quechua, Ke Muin Ha explained that “there are people that joke about speaking Quechua or wearing traditional clothes.” As it became more noisy, Ke Muin Ha continued to sip her chamomile tea and stated that her teacher had told them to be proud of who they were as Quechua people, to be “proud to be this way” (Stiglich 2018).

The table conversation shifted to the history of colonialism and the effects of the violence of Peru’s internal armed conflict in reproducing cultural erasure through the criminalization of Indigenous people. Quechua, being a marker of this indigeneity, serves as a proxy for this racism. The Dutch Amnesty worker talked about how Sami people were beaten for speaking their language. I relayed this back to Ke Muin Ha and she said, “It’s a problem of representation.” We talked about the Saga Falabella’s Mother’s Day campaign that featured only white faces but in Chile had presented Indigenous models for the same campaign.⁴³ She looked at me and said, “There should be more people in publicity that look like the majority.” In the same conversational thread, after a short silence, Ke Muin Ha asked me, “Do you believe in God?”

At that moment, everyone was in his or her own conversation and I said, “Yes, but in the way that God comes in many forms. To me everything is in atoms, in small and

⁴³ Saga Falabella is a department store that repeatedly has had issues with representing racially and ethnically diverse models in their ads. For more information, see https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2014/12/141204_peru_polemica_racismo_publicidad_saga_falabella_navidad_aw.

large moments; it doesn't have one form" (Interview by author 2018). Ke Muin Ha responded, "Because I know atheists who are part of MANTHOC, some volunteers, who don't believe in anything . . . Do you know agnostics or LGBT people?" With muscle memory, I have lived in my truth since I was her age, so I answered without skipping a beat, "Yes, I am one." When I look back at my field journal, I seem very distressed about having come out so quickly, but just as she is in this research, so am I, in my queerness, and whether I like it or not, this would have been part of my interactions.

The issue I had with my own reaction there was that I may have made Ke Muin Ha uncomfortable in front of important visitors from the Global North. It was not a feeling of child protection that I felt, it was a sense of anthropological protection of my subject—both feelings originating in colonial power. As I have a full reserve of white privilege, I felt that it was not my place to even accidentally surprise her into silence. But my feelings of woe were short-lived, because Ke Muin Ha stared at me, slowly sipped her tea, and then said, "Because in my church, they are considered a sin." I thought about the failed LaCour and Green study (2014), about changing someone's oppositional point of view through deep dialogue, because being closeted again was unnecessary.⁴⁴

As I sat there thinking about what I could say to not backtrack, but also to make Ke Muin Ha comfortable, she set her chamomile tea down, looked at me again, and said, "So, you have a partner?" Nervously, I told her I was married as she sat looking straight ahead blankly while sipping her tea. At that point, I was also surprised into silence,

⁴⁴ In the Green and Lacour study, canvassers with personal connection to issues went knocking on doors to see if their contact with typically opposed voters could change their minds. The initial findings suggested that voters' minds did change, yet on analysis of further data and trials, Green noticed irregularities and requested that the study not be published. LaCour appeared to have skewed the data. For more, see <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/26/science/maligned-study-on-gay-marriage-is-shaking-trust.html>.

thinking that this might actually play out as scandalous and affect my fieldwork. I thought about the *C* that stood for *Catholic* in the movement's name and how religious social conservatism might be stronger in Cajamarca than in Lima. At the end of what seemed an impenetrable silence, Ke Muin Ha turned to face me and asked about my "wife," and I told her with some apprehension, "What we were talking about earlier, about being proud, just like there are racists, there are also people that discriminate because I want to be with someone of the same sex." She jumped in and said, "You mean *gender*." I nodded and added that there were probably girls in her class who were queer but perhaps too afraid to come out because they might be murdered for living in their truth.

At last, Ke Muin Ha said, "It's just, I'm evangelical and what the church says at times conflicts with the reality." She smiled and kept drinking her tea. When she eventually put down her mug, she said, "There are probably LGBT girls that are suffering," and I nodded. She excitedly said, "I have never had a friend like you." What a nerve-wracking experience. For the kids, my queer identity did not seem to matter as much as my status as a white Peruvian. Gender fluidity was not something they saw often, but it soon became something they at least tolerated. Sometimes MANTHOCxs would mistake my gender without an intent to harm me; it was one identity that did not hold power over them.

The Fluidity of Interviewing

In each region, I collected fifteen interviews from girls between the ages of ten and seventeen years. When I thought about writing up the questions for future interviews with girls in the movement, I wanted to know how their personal position about wanting

to work was also affected by the rhetoric of #NiUnaMenos campaigns. My questions were neat but articulated in a manner that was probably too complicated for any participant to understand. I had assumed that the girls were aware of some of the political strife with the kidnappings and femicides that made the feminist campaigns stand out online. I tried my questions on two of the girls, Ladybug and Angelí, who were among the first girls I met (for the first and second round of questions, see appendix A). The constraints of most questions just needed to be relaxed a bit, but I had to remove the question “What do you feel is your level of safety in your community?” entirely, because it did not allow for open dialogue at all.

After I realized that my questions needed to be adjusted, the interview questions became much more accessible and allowed for interpretation. The interviews covered a few demographic questions such as age, school grade, and district or region. The questions then asked about what kinds of work the girls performed. Certain girls used the word *help* to explain how they classified their role in their family obligations. It was clear from the ways that the girls talked about their “help” that they felt it was a necessary contribution to the welfare of their families. Other girls explicitly used the word *work* to describe their activities. The girls would often lay out a chronological time line of a typical workday and include activities such as play and school.

Sometimes questions would merge, because the notion of their working came from their involvement in MANTHOC. So the question “How did you come to know MANTHOC?” would be answered by way of their explaining their work activity. Often when answering “How do you spend your time in MANTHOC?” the girls would smile broadly and talk about how different and nice the atmosphere was compared with that of

other organizations and institutions. For instance, even Ladybug, who said she despised some of the members for calling her names, insisted that she came back to MANTHOC because she had her own friends to see and she liked how adults treated her at Yerbateros. To learn how the girls presented the movement, I asked, “What would you tell a boy or girl who wants to be part of MANTHOC?” and this also turned into “What would you tell a NNAT who isn’t part of MANTHOC to convince him or her to join?”

In answering this question, most girls started to pitch the movement as “a nice place to be free,” “a place to learn crafts,” or a “place to feel like family.” By contrast, one ten-year-old girl, Estrellita Lunar, surprised me in her reply. She responded that if the NNAT is “not very excited about it, or feels discouraged, I could say to her, ‘Take your time and, and then you can come—make the decision for yourself; I will not obligate you to come.’ . . . I will not say to you, ‘Oh, come quickly,’ no. She must make her own decisions; if she wants to come, the doors are open for her. If she does not want to come, I don’t know, we won’t know” (Estrellita Lunar, interview by the author, 2018). Estrellita Lunar’s answer was different from the rest of the girls’ in that she was not adamant about convincing the possible future MANTHOCx; she weighed the options of this decision to join to see if it would suit the child or youth coming into the movement.

Often the previous question gave way to talking about the girls’ personal role in the movement. Often girls would explain that their take was “different” because they were a “delegate” in the organization, or were “new.” For girls who did not answer the question “Do you attend campaigns or marches?” because maybe that language was too formal, I would ask if they “went out to do a large event with their MANTHOC friends.” This usually yielded that the girls put up posters, went to speak somewhere, or attended

assemblies to represent the movement in some way. The first version of the question was too complicated and solipsistic: “Tell me your opinion of the campaigns of Ni Una Menos Peru, like #13A in 2016, or #12A in 2017.” These elements would come in the unstructured format of the second part of the new question: “Can you give me an example of what you did to organize for a protest or march?” Many girls mentioned the #NiUnaMenos marches and the International Working Women’s Day march called the #HuelgaFeminista (Feminist Strike, also called #8M on social media).

For this answer, many girls also gave a chronological explanation of how the day started and ended. Ten-year-old Ariana from the Yerbateros MANTHOC explained the process of attending the Women’s Day march: “So we organized ourselves, some grabbed the flag, others grabbed the bullhorn so that others could repeat. Instead, it was my turn to carry the flag and hold the banner; and in that moment I repeated what the mothers were saying, as though I was them, their chants” (Ariana, interview by the author, Yerbateros, 2018). Ariana was accustomed to the process of the march and positioned herself as one of the fellow marchers. A few girls remembered participating in the march so fondly that they recited favorite chants. Twelve-year-old Esperanza from Amauta remembered a very specific chant that I have since heard shouted in protest: “Aleeert! Aleeert! Alert! Alert! Alert to those who walk! Feminist women in the streets of Lima! And tremble! And tremble! And tremble, machistas! Because Latin America will be totally feminist!”⁴⁵ (Esperanza, interview by the author, Amauta, 2018). What is most interesting about Esperanza here is not that she remembers the chants but that she was hesitant to go because of the very fear that something might happen to her on the

⁴⁵ “¡Aleeerta! ¡Aleeerta! ¡Alerta! ¡Alerta! ¡Alerta que camina! ¡Mujeres feministas por las calles de Lima! ¡Y tiemblen! ¡Y tiemblen! ¡Y tiemblen los machistas! ¡Que América Latina va ser toda feminista!”

way to the march. With MANTHOCxs beside her, she felt comfortable enough to attend the event and stayed for the duration of the march. Thus the silences around safety came up in different instances throughout the interview process as well as throughout the broader ethnographic study.

Often to lighten up the mood of the interview and see what hopes the girls had for their futures, I would ask, “What would you like to do in your organization in the next five years?” This question changed over time to the more general “What would you like to do when you are no longer a girl in MANTHOC?” I made this change when I first realized that as a twelve-year-old, Angeli was thinking about her career as an interior designer and not about the movement at all. Ladybug similarly talked about her dreams of being on television, or being a teacher, or an aide, or a police officer. I changed the question to accommodate a belief that the movement would not necessarily be at the forefront of the girls’ minds during their last years of school. Interestingly, after I came back to Lima, Ladybug was already working toward her goals, having become a brigadier for her fifth-grade year, which gave her authority to police her classmates.⁴⁶

The work of building trust and having my actions and contributions as an adult count came by way of my efforts to make the lives of MANTHOCxs richer through my own diverse perspectives and knowledges. It is because of these multiple identities that I could assist with certain topics and not with others, just as I tried my best not to step into their child-specific discussions. In this way, I worked well with MANTHOC and

⁴⁶ In many Peruvian schools there is a police-style merit system for children who apply to be charged with maintaining order in school. Although there are levels of position within the school police, or safety patrol, the title that Ladybug had was most likely school police officer, the first rank, someone who helps younger children find their way to class and keeps order.

attempted to give back to the movement in the ways they asked and in any way that was necessary.

Reflecting on My Methodology

There are a few parts of my research that I will be changing in future. While I would have liked to stay alone in Lima, as I had in Cajamarca, my family would have considered it an affront for me to not stay with them in any capacity. As it is, my whole family lives in Lima, and they were a presence in the first part of my fieldwork. Because of them, I was not “permitted” to take public transportation, even though when living in Philadelphia all I did was take the train and bus. For the next time, I will be staying separately if my research brings me to Lima, though I will still visit with them. Next, because communication with MANTHOC Cajamarca had occurred by chance and toward the end of my time in Lima, I could not stay with the base and instead kept my partially paid Airbnb. Next time, I would stay with them and see the movement in a more emic way.

If I could go back in time and start the project over again, I probably would not change many aspects of my process, except the duration of the fieldwork. Because of my budget and the restrictions of my time away, as well as responsibilities at home, I could not stay longer in Peru. Other than this immediate change, many of the faux pas that occur in the field are teaching moments that instruct one in how to be more humanly empathetic. As a researcher, I can only try to be better than in my previous interactions. The ways in which new encounters produce meaning is part of why ethnography is such a critical method for exploring children’s lived experiences. It is rewarding to have created

the friends that I have during my fieldwork and to have met so many kids with interesting stories to tell.

In the following chapters, some of these stories are on display. Although the ethnography yielded many interesting moments, I have narrowed some events in order to make room for the diverse ways that MANTHOCas expressed themselves during my field experience. In chapter 3, girls of MANTHOC in Lima and Cajamarca show how their worker identity and movement purpose is important to them. In chapter 4, their entry, permanence, and roles in the movement are scrutinized to better understand how they participate and how this should be considered. In chapter 5, I show how girls' everydayness in the movement involves the navigation of adult power. These processes occur to equip MANTHOC girls to handle difficult realities that face them outside the movement's spaces.

CHAPTER 3: WORK AND ITS PERMUTATIONS

In the MANTHOC Cajamarca auditorium, during the first organizing meeting of the Committee on Rights in Childhood (CDI) in Cajamarca, leaders of various organizations and local secondary schools explained their expectations along with offering their names and affiliations. This group was formed to satisfy the Es Mi Cuerpo project's mandate for organizing one hundred student leaders, so as to radiate trust about reproductive rights among families and friends. One boy from a local private school stood up when it was his turn to profess his pledges to the group. He rationalized how his intention was to root out child labor, because "children should not work." Although Cajacho, a fourteen-year-old from the Warriors of Jesus MANTHOC group, reminded the assembled to be mindful of the "proud working children present," an eruption of applause came after Rr stepped forward to express herself on the matter:

We, all of us here, we all work, you know? And it's not just because we receive something. For instance, you make your bed, you sweep, you help your mom wash, [do] you help your mother cook? You are working. You may not receive anything, or maybe you do, maybe your mom sees that you made the bed, and you are given new sneakers. They are remunerating you for work. I just want to clear up that work will always dignify you, and that you have to value that; we have to always form ourselves with a critical valuation. If you have a good job, it is dignifying you—value it! Thank you very much.

This small speech to children who had yet to know the ways in which the movement operated was a path to bringing them into the fold of MANTHOCs' consciousness. Rr's assertion of her worker identity as dignifying was a kind of display of her pride, but it was also a call to the fellow youth in the room to think critically about

their position in life. It is a mode through which Rr and Cajacho endeavored to defend their position and make known how work was intrinsic in their daily lives but also a force to be appreciated. It was not required that CDI members follow Rr's words for their coalition to function, yet the invitation for further critical valuation was extended to nonmovement children. As the Es Mi Cuerpo funding was limited, CDI members were in a way made aware that further involvement with MANTHOC was still possible.

In this chapter, I open up the tension between *child labor* and *child work* by intertwining two separate though connected strands of enquiry. I begin with a more global framing that discusses how the ILO's construction of child labor, and the protectionist logic that it embeds, has been produced as the global standard with very real effects for working children. On the other hand, the MANTHOCas appear to reject this normative framing, and I find Sara Ahmed's (2014) theorizations around "willfulness" helpful in discussing how this international community reads these organized child workers. But the extent to which this theorization around willfulness is an accurate reading of these lives is something I ethnographically explore later in the chapter.

The Hegemony of "Child Labor": ILO Policies and International Campaigns

The conflation of *child labor* and *child work* produces both as negative and provokes a sense of taboo akin to Mary Douglas's (1970) discussion of "dirt." As anthropologist Michael Bourdillon and colleagues extrapolate, *child labor* as a term can mean "different things to different people," with some using it "to include all kinds of children's work in a neutral sense" (2010, 11). This is to say that there are many iterations of what could be called *labor*. At the same time, "others use the term specifically to apply to work that is in any way harmful" or done by individuals below the

legal age, whether or not it is harmful to children (11). On the other hand, sociologist Manfred Liebel notes that “child work is related to the forms of children’s work that are considered not harmful and that should be ‘tolerated’” (2004, 194–95). However, despite these differences in the construction of the categories of *child labor* and *child work*, research that is focused on experientially distinguishing between the two often ends up normalizing the protectionist stance of those who seek to end “child labor.”

A good example of this is research produced by International Research on Working Children (IREWOC), an organization that was established to research child work within different cultural contexts with the intent of categorizing occupations that are viewed as hazardous. However, in articulating its findings, the director of the center, G. K. Lieten, discusses child work as benign and neutral and child labor as any kind of work that allows “insufficient time to study and play” (2009, 31). However, he goes on to state that children’s participation in “work” can also include force or coercion, thereby insinuating a lack of agency among children who work. His argument on child labor as “bad policy” is framed around multiple reasons, including its keeping adult wages low, its precluding knowledge-based capacity building for economic development, its failure to shield children from exploitation, and its enabling their work within “unprotective environments.” Lieten’s conclusion that child labor is politically undesirable is anchored around its producing two classes of children: the first exemplifies the middle class and contains children who attend school and the second contains children who are marginal and working.

Several of Lieten’s conclusions are generalizations that fail to adequately preserve the separateness of child work and allows instead for the increased fuzziness of

boundaries between child labor and child work. The integrative theory of child labor that these conclusions propose employs a children's rights discourse that privileges a protectionist lens and states that "child labor has a combination of causes, a variety of impairing consequences, and solutions along different tracks, but, in the best interest of all children and on the grounds of justice and fairness, it ought to be eradicated" (31).

This conflation of child labor and child work is focused on the deleterious physical and psychological "damage" produced via children's extended engagement in labor-related activities. Convention 138 (1973) of the ILO, which lays out the minimum age at which children can work, sets this age at fifteen years, with the exception that children between thirteen and fifteen years may engage in nonharmful light work, and stipulates eighteen years as the age at which children can be employed in hazardous industries. Following this, Convention 182 (1999) further tightened these restrictions by prohibiting children from certain "worst forms of child labor"—including slavery and child prostitution—and requiring ratifying states to provide the necessary and direct action to remove children from these sectors. However, the UNCRC does not precisely articulate what it views as hazardous labor.

Instead its adoption of the ILO's understanding of hazardous work as that which, "by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children" (ILO 1999, article 3) produces an overarching value judgment that pays less attention to the appropriateness of work and the need to disaggregate this by age. This broad generalization that the concern with hazardous labor produces frames all children's work as undermining and not generating their developmental capacities. With strategies around the "best interest of the child"

foregrounding “protection” as the way forward, there is less attention paid to children’s “participation” in creating dignified working conditions (Cussianovich 2017).

This protectionist framing has often had international repercussions with the hegemony of child labor adversely affecting entire sectors of the economy that employ children in different countries of the world. Political scientist Shareen Hertel (2006) discusses how in the early 1990s multiple stakeholders were involved in negotiating the protectionist policies imposed by the Harkin Bill on the garment export sector in Bangladesh. Proposed by U.S. senator Tom Harkin, this bill represented the interests of the Child Labor Coalition (CLC) a group of activists and organizations that were working to end child labor in Bangladesh’s garment industry through proposing a ban on the export of these garments. Hertel states that this ban borrowed language around the “best interests of the child” from the then recently ratified UNCRC, language that allowed U.S. garment industry lobbyists to justify their “outside-in” campaign with its imperialist undertones and blatant disregard for the complex lives of garment industry working children in Bangladesh.

With the export sector making up more than 75 percent of the garment industry, Bangladeshi business owners hastily and haphazardly let go of children who were below fourteen years old from the factories. With no alternate social safety net having been set in place, the newspapers began to report on how children had taken up more exploitative jobs, including prostitution, because of this ban. This prompted several civil society organizations and human rights activists in Bangladesh to shift the debate on “protection” to include a broader framing around socioeconomic provisioning that was also required if protection was to be effective. These activists pointed out how the bill had used language

around children's best interests to obscure the interests of U.S. garment manufacturers, since the sanctions were aimed at children's work in one sector, rather than working to implement a widespread ban on child labor across the country. The campaign carried out by the activists worked to reduce the threat of these sanctions and is discussed by Hertel as a successful example of how children's "best interests" were expanded in this particular instance to include economic rights of children.

However, despite these local victories, the visibility and recognition that working children's organizations have received on the global stage has been marginal at best. Working children's organizations are often banned from attending ILO-run conferences that are focused on children's rights. As Edward van Daalen and Nicolas Mabillard (2017) note, though the ILO's primary child labor policy had involved humanizing the work of children, their 2025 objective to eliminate all forms of child labor continues to favor the interests and protections of multinational corporations. In addition, Manfred Liebel and Antonella Invernizzi (2019) have interrogated the legitimacy of the ILO, stating that its repeated exclusion of working children from policy-making conferences violates the 1989 UNCRC. These bans on working children have prompted working children's organizations to assemble counterconferences to speak back to the ILO and develop more appropriate rights consciousness (van Daalen and Mabillard 2017). Working children organizations and social movements (including MANTHOC) from around the world were invited by two supportive NGOs to a conference in Kundapur, India, in 1996. At this meeting working children from across the globe agreed on a set of guidelines often referred to as the Kundapur Declaration. The first tenet of this declaration, which states, "We want to be consulted for any decision that affects us,

whether local, national or international,” highlights the strong coalition these children strove to build around having a say in the decisions that affected their lives. The second major conference was organized in La Paz, Bolivia, a few weeks before the 2017 ILO conference IV Global Conference on Child Labor in Argentina. At the Bolivia meeting they discussed policies and programs that affect working children and spoke about their distrust of the ILO for not officially inviting them to voice their concerns.

One possible framing of these efforts of working children that helps counter the weight of the norm is to expand the understanding of *best interests* within the more robust framing of *living rights*. In their edited volume *Reconceptualizing Children's Rights in International Development*, Karl Hansen and Olga Nieuwenhuys frame living rights as those that children engage with and give meaning to, according to their own interpretations of social justice that best reflect their social world (2012, 2). This entails taking into consideration each child's sociocultural world and recognizing that universal rights as a blanket generalization of a law can often work out as an exercise of power against marginal populations of children (Balagopalan 2012). Despite scholars' attempts to call attention to the unfair and often marginalizing deployment of protectionism from policy makers, their efforts are thwarted by imaginaries of working children being cast as “willful.”

Making Working Children Willful Subjects

Children, as much as adults, are capable of standing up against stereotypes that paint them as *other* in society. Yet because of adults' notions of children's capacity for critical thought as being underdeveloped or a sense that their citizenship as “minors” is undeserving, those children who agitate for difference or who are content in a position

outside the perceived norm are termed as “willful.” In her text *Willful Subjects*, Sara Ahmed explains that “willfulness is a diagnosis of the failure to comply with those whose authority is given” (2014, 2). She asks, “What is willfulness doing and for what purposes?” to compile a willfulness archive and collect the varied ways in which people are categorized as willful. By genealogically tracing the “will,” or vulnerable group’s failure to comply, through language and history, Ahmed identifies and make clear how this “willful subject” is constituted and how and to what end this subject’s will is enacted. The application of this framework provides us with a thorough analysis of how and why the “willful child” is constructed.

Ahmed writes, “To eliminate willfulness is thus to eliminate not only the will defined as independence from what is willed by others, but to eliminate the very memory of this will or at least to aim for its elimination” (65). For Ahmed, this obliteration of a subject’s will is a way to discipline the body (in the way of Protestantism of the eighteenth century) to limit the straying of order that is perceived in society. The independence of will is associated with disorder and is thus a trait to be eliminated so to maintain a strict social contract (and unequal arrangement of power). To see childhood as a state of willfulness, where independence is meant to be obliterated, is at odds with Andean notions of child-rearing (Allen 1985; Bolin 2006). Yet, by way of colonialism and, by extension, of modernization and development, Northern nations’ socialization of children values a protectionist strategy, involving little independence of thought or participation. This is to say that children in the North are seen to have worth tied to their futurity (which can be perfected if they are rid of their will) and not necessarily their present. Working children in Peru, however, may be perceived in their societies as

presently valuable. If these metrics of “willfulness” were to be incorporated into the lived experiences of working children in communities where children’s dignified work is currently valued, willfulness, or divergence from the established social contract, would be seen as abandoning work and attempting to separate from the family structure.⁴⁷

Ahmed points out that “willing might be an experience of ‘being’ on the way to actualization” (2014, 39), and it could be deduced that a progression out of “willingness” could be associated with crossing the threshold from childhood to adulthood in the North. If the notion of the will is a state of transition, then children are in actuality willful from their birth until a demarcated sense of adulthood. Categorizing children as willful and categorizing will as a mark of immaturity and irrationality could be a convenient way for those in authority to obfuscate children’s sense of and right to citizenship. Another way to think of the willful subject is through viewing the act of willing as a way of forging paths. Yet depending on how those paths are constructed, for what purpose, and in what directions, a subject is perceived as developing an “ill will” or a “good will.” Children, and all people, who make choices and exert independence, or will, do so in a tangle of perceived “right” (good will) and “wrong” (ill will) ways of being, which can apply to all facets of life, including work. Hard choices (such as whether to participate in the family business) or difficult conditions (such as poverty that necessitates children’s work for survival) may lead to actions that appear to privileged eyes as willful and therefore threatening to the social order.

⁴⁷ It could further be argued that if the authority is a parent, and this person is or group of people are by extension considered “willful” by a discursively higher level of authorities, then children are, by the nature of willfulness, undeniably willful. This is because the use of *willfulness* in categorizing people in society is meant to adjust them back into a place that is not bothering the dominant power.

Along these lines, “strength and weakness of will” are interpreted using a moral vocabulary whereby the connotation that willfulness bestows is often that of ill will (61–62). Ill will, as Ahmed intuits, is tied to Western conceptualizations of the “wrong way of being.” The “wrong way of being” status can extend to working children who are categorized as child laborers by national and international agencies and governments. Organized children who refuse to act in accordance with laws that are set up to limit their labor or are incongruous with local conditions, are marked as *willful* in Ahmed’s definition. Although working children are not attempting to turn their “diagnosis into an act of self-description” (134) by purposefully identifying with behaviors perceived as subversive, they are still seen as standing out, disobeying the order, and in doing so, intentionally breaking norms.

As sociologist Lourdes Gaitán Muñoz notes, when children take their own initiative (or act as willful in Ahmed’s terms), “the truth is that most of the time, the role of children will be ignored, invisible, and even despised” (2016, 149). Children are sometimes expected to obey, “to give ear to,” adults and not give in to resistance. It can be inferred that in defying the social contract reestablished by the Peruvian Code and Northern conceptualizations of working childhoods, a contract by which children are implored to stay in spaces that are designed for them (school, park, playground) and stay out of unauthorized spaces (adult labor), working children are turning their ears away from the law, or as Ahmed might say, willfully ignoring the dominant order. Yet these binaries of adult and child are impossible to reinforce as the norm for working children in Peru shifts depending on the stability and waves of conservatism in the country.

The will has turned into a kind of universal metric for averaging globalized imaginaries of morality. However, just because Western and Northern nations apply the status of “willful subjects” to working children, this does not mean that these children fall into that category. There are two distinct kinds of consciousness at play in the context of Peruvian working children. The working poor’s notions of how child work preserves tradition through its sociocultural ties and independence of childhood butts up against the globally influential Northern notion of child labor abolition, which attempts to flatten cultures into reaching a state of “modernization.” This is not to say that hazardous labor is meant to maintain tradition. Instead, the ways in which working children are regarded in Peru respect and dignify their contribution to family members and Andean societies at large.

Near the beginning of her book, Ahmed writes that “willfulness is a diagnosis of the failure to comply with those whose authority is given” (2014, 2). If the prevailing norms are disregarded, then the subject is acting willful. Protocol for following societal norms is clear when most subjects have similar notions of what is willful. Yet if the norms are colored by the dominant group’s choking out or erasure of a less powerful set of norms, then what is willfulness doing in attempting to align its subjects? In this case, MANTHOCxs are not willful in their own consciousness, because they do not assign authority to international agencies that do not operate within their organization’s “culture of respect.”⁴⁸ Measures to “develop,” or make children more “modern,” can be seen as a form of neocolonialism—international governing bodies measure all children in the

⁴⁸ Inge Bolin (2006) considers the “culture of respect” a culture in which parents show children the ways of society without employing direct physical punishment, but instead children are held to account for their contributions to the ayllu or family unit.

world by the metrics of a privileged Global North. Not only that, but MANTHOCas, despite their complex sense of identity, also fit into all categories, such as age, gender, and cultural indigeneity, which patriarchal control and Northern domination would determine as willful or disruptive to the norm. Their pushback against hazardous work, but also continuation of advocacy for the rights of all unprotected working children, go against the global imaginary that endeavors to abolish child labor.

Ahmed talks about how “force” creates conditions that “make unbearable the consequences of not willing what someone ‘wants you to will’” (55). The threat of painful consequences makes it incredibly difficult for subjects to disobey what established networks of power forcibly demand. This is to say that if the ideal child subject in the international imaginary is one who does not work and is only contained within age-based designated institutions, then one who steps outside these boundaries will be dealt with forcefully to avoid any more breaches of the border. The border of will is not flexible or considerate of those who abide by nondominant sets of norms but is instead fixed, and punishment is administered regardless of context. The effect is a moratorium on the child subject’s freedom.

As a girl subject, a female working child may choose to act or think in a way that does not align with her own desire or benefit, to avoid discomfort. In the subject’s rejection of the authority’s will, “discomfort” becomes a technique of power. It could then be argued that discomfort resulting from abandoning one’s will preserves one’s own dignity and pride, lest dignity be damaged by one’s being seen as defiant and willful. This does not mean, though, that the working girl is weak or will-less for choosing to act against her own will; rather, she is negotiating power for survival and choosing when to

turn in perseverance. Suspending one's will in one instance can also be understood as the labor required to reach a more powerful no (Ahmed 2014, 141), one in which the act of standing against creates a stronger impression of resistance. For instance, MANTHOC often converges with Northern NGOs and governing bodies when their beliefs align, but also holds out on larger positions that would give credence to Andean conceptions of dignified work for children.

As Ahmed proclaims, "Willfulness might be required to act when you do not have the right to act" (141). That is, if the consciousness that a person has is made marginal, then perhaps a way to gain a level of liberation is through acting willfully. It is the act of appearing willful, despite their own convictions and separatist consciousness, that allows MANTHOCas to continue to defend against tokenism and stigmatization from local and global powers. The normativity of the child labor imaginary as only harmful, foment a taboo that places working children in a category that is perceived as "wrong." Referring to Ahmed's willfulness archive, the taboo of work for children contains them in the conceptualization of the willful subject.

By viewing the imaginary of working children as wrongness, child labor abolitionists take away children's capacity for agency, by denaturing their status as social actors. In the global imaginary of activism to eradicate child labor, those who even associate with positive conceptions of working children are seen as being as morally corrupt as the children themselves, making support for working children's capacity for dignified labor unpopular and taboo.⁴⁹ We can thus consult Ahmed to understand how the

⁴⁹ It wasn't until recently that I would attend conferences to talk about dignified work and be challenged as supporting the victimization of children. There would also be a lot of silence when it came to questions after paper panels where finding common ground was too taboo for scholars in larger professional organizations like the American Anthropological Association. One has only to look at the credibility gained

silencing of working children is seen as a kind of “straightening device,” to bend them to the will of influential Northern actors (7). This will, which does not include a future for the continuation of children’s work, attempts to erase the identity of children as workers and their subsequent societal contributions.

However, working girls exist and have done so in the Andean record for unquantifiable ages. The first recorded glimpses of them were in Guaman Poma de Ayala’s “First New Chronicle and Good Government” of 1615. Children as young as five years old helped parents carry water, twelve-year-olds herded llamas, and children even worked for the Inca nobility picking flowers (see fig. 1.3). Many of the same kinds of employment can still be found around the Andes today. From my ethnography of Peruvian working girls, it was clear that children in and around Cajamarca and Lima strive to establish not only their material survival, as vendors and caregivers on their own or with family, but also made significant headway in their working children’s social movement, MANTHOC.

And still, there is an intellectual silencing that occurs with respect to children in economic activities in Southern contexts, as if their struggle to survive materially were not as pertinent as their involvement in school or at home. Their multiple roles in identity as at once gendered female or male, classed, raced, and aged, belie their status of citizenship. Often these working children are overlooked except to mark an exclusion of their worth or as a subject of adults’ “best interests,” which do not typically encapsulate the expressed interests of children (Gordon 2008). In particular, working children are

by large-scale NGOs like Amnesty International or scholars like Balagopalan, Bourdillon, Hanson, Liebel, Nieuwenhuys, Taft, White, van Daalen, etc. to see how much more willing scholars are to interpret the complexity of working children’s livelihoods.

especially avoided in Northern centers of power, where privilege of place interprets labor law to incriminate the activities of the most vulnerable children, and often without recourse (as with ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182).⁵⁰ This trend to eliminate the participation of populations that are affected by overarching law is a way to strong-arm the already marginal or vulnerable into silence.

Like those who attempted to erase the lived experiences of Haitian revolutionaries in 1791 (Trouillot 1995), Northern subjects tend to dictate the mainstream conceptualizations of groups with little to no voice or demean their participation as impossible. The impossibility is laced with improper perceptions of these groups' rationality and capacity to revolt, advocate for themselves, or even work in a dignified way. To better explore this line of "reasoning," Marisol de la Cadena, in her 2015 work *Earth Beings: Ecologies of Practice across Andean Worlds*, makes sense of the role that *tirakuna* play in dismantling the hacienda system. It was necessary for de la Cadena to shut off her sense of the historical as her dominant register, to attempt to see how Quechua people perceived the earth beings, or *tirakuna*. *Tirakuna* can be anything in the physical environment that has power over and in the *runakuna*, the Quechua people. The *tirakuna* that de la Cadena tries to understand or intuit in the book is principally the mountain known as Ausungate.

She notes that "when more than one world cohabits a nation-state, not only official and unofficial events, but also historically plausible and implausible ones, occur. However, historical implausibility does not cancel their eventfulness, which—though radically from and thus excessive to history—coexists with it and even makes it possible"

⁵⁰ ILO No. 138, Minimum Age (1973), and ILO No. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999), respectively.

(57). In trying to work through how these mountains and physical landscapes could be the source of Peru's agricultural reform, she turns to tales that "immanent to their telling, are without the requirement of proof" (57). By taking seriously the importance of *tirakuna* in bringing about the land reform in Peru, it is possible to see the land struggle as the Quechua people might. In the similar vein, children have been obscured in the enactment of history, even if there are expressed interests to the contrary. Both have been forgotten or made irrelevant; though they are at once excess in the current historical register, the ahistorical shows their presence and possibility as critical. They are often ignored by powerful authorities who make events historical and thus seen and remembered.

Even if these nonevents or unseen people are ignored, they are no less pertinent to the struggle that authorities choose to disregard. What is happening in the ILO's adultist and sometimes childist (in Young-Bruehl's [2012] definition) positions is what Dipesh Chakrabarty (1992) coins as an asymmetric ignorance. This subjectivity-based (age, gender, race, class, etc.) disinterest on the part of the privileged to acknowledge the importance or worthiness of the less powerful silences the considered *other*, here, the working children. This goes to the root of studies on rationality and reason. When children are not viewed as worth listening to, because of preconceived notions of place and capacity, they are treated as though they could not possibly interact with complex "adult" interpretations of law. Why are they are not worth listening to? Or seen as fully human? Why are they not deserving of respect like the privileged ILO? In other words, why should we listen to Andean working children's concerns? They have a false consciousness. Or more likely, that's all well and good, but I have adult matters to attend

to. De la Cadena notes, and I agree, that the concept of reason, which legitimizes modern history, is replicated through discriminating between the real and unreal, such that “the social entity which does not provide reasonable evidence is unreal” (2015, 147).

But as we see with van Daalen and Mabillard’s work on working children’s invisibilization, just because an event or a being is ahistorical and cannot be found through lack of evidence, does not mean that it did not or could not exist. And because events are occurring, though powerful adults do not seem to notice (or want to witness), whistleblower scholars like Manfred Liebel (2004) and Jessica Taft (2019) note how working children are quite comfortable operating within and outside power structures that typically denote their inferiority. It is not that they would like to be considered worse off so they can scheme, it is that even with MANTHOC’s more than forty years of existence in Peru, many people still do not know what the organization is, or why it matters. Because of this, the child-led social movement’s evolution, from good to better practices, dealing with adults, as well as short and long-term labor goals, has continued to accumulate over time to boost their recognition. It’s because adults, in their very age and experience, can never truly understand the subject-position that determines that MANTHOC is run by children, and so the movement must remain in the hands of children, for the goals of dignity to be met in time (Cussianovich 2009). Because very few adults are paying attention, and because working children in Peru work to survive materially, MANTHOC has expanded regionally all over Peru and has created partnerships that have made even Amnesty International collaborate with the organization.

MANTHOC's work, making working children conscious of their rights, co-constructing a notion called *protagonismo*, has led to the strengthening of their movement.⁵¹ Yet their informalization and ahistoricity are also major obstacles to their goals for well-being. For instance, according to Peruvian postcolonial agronomist Grillo Fernandez, the Andean concepts of nurturance, equivalence, protection, and harmony lead to decolonization, yet among the main barriers to this pinnacle are Peru's own politicians, intellectuals, and technicians. In striving for formalism, such as that of allowing the ILO's conventions to stand in the Andean nation of Peru, there is a blockade on ways of knowing that do not involve the ahistorical or the decolonial. With this, sadly, the movement's edicts alone are not enough to stabilize their global subject-position.

Children's participation in both labor and activism may yet become formalized, with more writings on their experiences by scholars like me or through the widespread use of social media. Their historicity may serve to improve their status in the eyes of the public, turning the conceptualization of the working child. Yet because historical texts continue to be primarily written by adults with greater race and class influence, working children appear appropriated or all together ahistorical or, even worst, less than human. This is why in referring back to de la Cadena's notions of the ahistorical and uneventful

⁵¹ Lourdes Gaitán Muñoz breaks apart the definition of childhood protagonismo in various ways. One way could refer to "the condition attributed to the person who plays the main role in a work or event" (2016, 148). What she hopes is understood as childhood protagonismo is something more akin to children's agency, but a little more complicated and transmutable: "The role of children or adolescents based on the demonstration of their own values, in their own effort, not so much to stand out, but for being, doing and counting on their own merits, is received from the predominant adult society in different ways. The most common is that it is appreciated, yes, but as an extraordinary fact. This will happen even more when the skills by which they stand out are rare among adults themselves. The way to integrate this prominence in normality will be to qualify such behaviors as precocious. Saving these disappointments, the truth is that most of the time, the role of children will be ignored, invisible, and even despised" (149; my translation). While its meaning is far more complex, it can also be used as a shorthand for decolonial agency or assertiveness in the face of adult inaction.

as archive, children's agentic participation should not be discounted because of its lack of official record and its past occurrence. Their lifeworlds as working children have always existed, even if we cannot continually find them in texts. The issue, I hope, is more clear, that working children's ahistoricity can be helpful in subverting large and often powerful organizations through the maintenance of children's culture in working children's social movements; however, their ahistorical erasure also delegitimizes their global subject-position through the enacting of labor laws with very real consequences.

Working children should not be the only ones generating an identity for themselves among such loud and piercing conceptualizations of their personhood. It should be the work of international governing bodies that do the work of reflexivity and make coalitions with groups who have much less power. It is the dominant register of the historical that makes working children's ahistoricity a form of erasure and provokes contrary ideologies that create stigma for any MANTHOCx or see them as willful.

Everyday Stories of Working Girls in Lima and Cajamarca

Not all girls who attend MANTHOC meetings work or think what they do is considered work. I have found that movement girls often say that they "help" their parents with domestic work or with the child care of younger siblings. As my analysis of working girls deals with more than just their economic identity, it may be useful to think of working girls' stories in the context of independent researcher Antonella Invernizzi's "stages of career." Invernizzi notes how children's work acts as part of the socialization process in their development. She explains how "socialization embraces the internalization of standards, the learning of roles and the gradual continuous building of identity," which leads children as actors to evolve their understanding of work over time

(2003, 320). Her scholarship focuses on children's street work, particularly their selling sweets and shining shoes in the Plaza de Armas area of Cuzco in 1995. By spending time with working girls and boys, and sometimes parents, she found that children's notions of work shifted, affecting their identity over time. Invernizzi argues that these children defined their work as part of a street-working career, in which there are five typological stages that are based on motivation or goals to be pursued (331). In the first three stages, children are adapting to the process of what work means, and in the fourth stage they begin to develop a worker identity until they decide to find a route into different employment.

In the first stage, a child's "introduction to street work," this introduction can occur in one of three ways. Children can enter work (1) alone, to solve urgent financial needs; (2) with a parent or an experienced child; or (3) to make use of their time (332). The second stage is "subsistence work," whereby children work to survive and may be in short apprenticeships to learn how to sell or to manage money. If they are newer to work, they may feel that work requires exertion, but if they are accustomed to the milieu in which they work, they will know more people and be comfortable getting support from friends or adults (333). The third stage is "work as a game," when children are working to gain greater economic resources for their parents but also "contain enough of a grasp to guarantee economic activity" and so play with friends while also earning money (334). As children begin their adolescence, playing while working is not seen as so "cute" to parents or employers, and so this might be a transitioning point to the fourth stage, "work for identity." To show their usefulness or responsibility to themselves and their family, in this stage working children seek "status and recognition" for their labor (335–36).

Although at this moment in her research Invernizzi did not know of many children from her previous study who had grown up in the time it took to publish the article, she took on a gendered analysis of the fifth and last stage, “ways out of street work.” She observes that when children seek to diversify their work as teenagers and young adults, their options are limited to low-level labor with fixed salaries, but also by their gendered position in the workforce. At the time of her revisiting (1997), she found that for boys the concern was to avoid feminizing work and to reproduce structural machismo in the sense that males should have enough economic means to be the heads of households. For the girls she spoke with, the idea of working off the street relieved them of the stigma they felt, even if their job in paid or unpaid domestic work was coded female (337). In her study, Invernizzi’s probe into children’s work through the lens of socialization shows the complexity of children’s lives and demonstrates that to analyze these children further and to see the fullness of their lives, it is important to proceed with a “recognition of social and political contexts” (338).

Invernizzi’s stages of “help,” “work as a game,” and “work for identity” are useful in thinking about how MANTHOC girls inhabit all these stages.⁵² “Help” that working girls offer to parents or other kin involves various degrees of involvement that mix work, play, and apprenticeship and can be compared with Invernizzi’s first stage (332). When asked, “What do you work in?” or “Do you work?” Milagros, a MANTHOCa in the provincial town of San Marcos, said she helped her mother do the

⁵² The stage of subsistence work is surely involved to some extent for working girls and boys in MANTHOC, as historically, the organization has tended to exist at the service of the poorest children, but in my sample, not one girl was forced to work from one day to another. There are girls who were not part of MANTHOC who had to drop out of school to work; however, they form a passing anecdote that requires further study.

wash on the weekends. She elaborated: “My mom washes, I rinse. Or else, it may be that I [wash], my brother rinses . . . my mom rubs and I dry” (Milagros, interview by the author, 2018). In the same MANTHOC group, called Mensajeros del Saber (Messengers of Knowledge), Abril waited on and bused tables at her mother’s braised-chicken restaurant. Helping is a form of labor that MANTHOC values, as it sees this kind of work as contributing to the overall health of the family economy.

Luisa, like Milagros, did domestic work in her home. As she elucidated, “Saturdays I . . . do my work sometimes, or else in the morning I help [my mom] with the wash, or sometimes I don’t, because sometimes we do not have many things to do. But I do cook” (Luisa, interview by the author, 2018). She explained that she, along with her sister, helped make *arroz verde* and other local dishes. Catalina, a member of Bellavista’s Aventureros, watched her little brother on Saturdays, which also happened to be the day of their MANTHOC meetings; she brought him along so she would not miss out. Many of the girls I spoke with were like Catalina, taking care of younger siblings and sometimes bringing them to the meetings. These younger kids who are brought along, for the most part, end up continuing on in the movement as the next generation of MANTHOCxs.

Likewise, in the valley of Amauta in the district of Ate in Lima, Alexandra brought her baby sister Lara along, and their cousin Maria also watched over her younger sister Silvia. This work of caring for family members was only part of their work; Alexandra and Maria both separately did domestic work in their homes. Although they were mostly unpaid for “helping” their family, because of their organized involvement in MANTHOC, both they and their families saw the value of their contribution. Maria often

helped her mother at a store where she worked selling ice cream; she organized the product while others sold it. Maria explained that she was glad to leave her house because it was at the top of a mountain, far from many of her friends and activity in general. She told me that her “work is almost [like], well, I like to do [it], organizing . . . I also like to serve. But when I’m at home like that, doing nothing, it’s not fun at all, as I told you. Nothing” (Maria, interview by the author, 2018). Maria would most likely fall under Invernizzi’s stage of “work as a game” as she played with and against peers; this stage involves “a constant search for diversion, amusement and exploration within work itself or alongside it” (2003, 334). While she was not competing for work, her escape from boredom facilitated her contribution to the family’s economy.

Many working girls who attend MANTHOC may consider what they do work or labor only after spending more time in the movement. Mariana realized after being more involved with MANTHOC that she was a working child at the guidance of her mother: “When I was a girl and I was seven years old, I did not know what work was yet; my mother is part of the organization, and when . . . I hadn’t even noticed. I brought stickers to my school, and I sold them” (Mariana, interview by the author, 2018). Mariana explains that her teacher put an end to her selling stickers in class. But after being told she was not allowed to sell things at school, she collected discarded pins after a carnival event and had the idea to make pinwheels out of them. Mariana would consciously pull out her pinwheels in front of her friends, blow on them, and advertise her wares.

At this point, Mariana was aware that she was engaging in labor and that this, in turn, was part of her identity. In Invernizzi’s “work for identity” stage, the sense that labor becomes part of children’s identity takes a bit of time, and even as MANTHOCxs

would celebrate their worker identity on particular days that either embraced or challenged their existence, their expression was not homogeneous. As reflected in signs that read “Working wakes up my imagination” or “To work is motivation for learning,” labor in the MANTHOC imagination looks a lot like giving children and youth tools for growth in personal development.⁵³ To reinforce the goals of the movement, at once normalizing dignified work and seeking to change policies that hinder the well-being of working children and all children generally, MANTHOC holds cultural trainings for members called *formación*.

From these trainings, girls’ worker identities emerge, as do lessons on how they can maintain their businesses. As an example, friends Ariana, Mariana, and Cindi had a small business near their neighborhood north of San Juan de Lurigancho. At first they sold lollipops; they later changed their inventory to include school supplies. Mariana explained that they wanted to open up their business to serve their community because it would keep kids from going far from home if they needed something. “We do not sell like that in a big way, just a little supply store, nothing more. If not, not only for the street, but also for the children. For the children, instead of going out on the street. [We say,] ‘Knowing that something can happen to you, just buy it here’”(Mariana, interview with the author, 2018). Ariana adds separately, “We stand sometimes [and] we shout, ‘*Libreria!*’; I mean, ‘We sell notebooks,’ right?’” (Ariana, interview with the author, 2018). They each employed interesting tactics. Mariana played on children’s fears of being snatched to discourage her clientele from wandering far, and Ariana made out as though their shop was very large, to draw more people.

⁵³ See appendix D for images of MANTHOCxs protesting on “a day to end child labor” and other protests for dignified work.

Ariana explained that they made their posters and wrote up customer information on order slips, saying, “We treat clients, well, I mean, we say, ‘What would you like, madam, or miss,’ whatever, right?” (Ariana, interview with the author, 2018). Working is a normalizing and validating point of pride for MANTHOCas. Ariana was happy to hone her skills as a small-business owner. She acknowledged work as a constant in her life, explaining that she worked on and off while she was going to school. Having a clear idea about what work is and what it means “to labor” is something that each girl began to understand differently. Both Ariana and Mariana took pride in their business, working to give everyone good service and produce revenue.

Although appropriate for street-working children generally, Invernizzi’s categorizations do not encompass typical careers for girls in the movement, which most often involve some kind of domestic work. A family business or cooperation is an important aspect of socialization. Different tasks ensured that girls’ work was safe and productive, as with sisters Mariposa and SoyLuna, from the Cajamarca city group *Fé y Amor por un Mundo Mejor* (Faith and Love for a Better World), whose job consisted of selling *chochos*, *paltas*, and *gelatina* (tarwi beans, avocados, and gelatin) with their mother during the summer. Although both told me that this was their job, Mariposa introduced herself as a vendor at our first meeting. I do not doubt that SoyLuna perceived her identity as tied to her labor, even as her sister was more vocal about being a proud laborer. This matters because it means that even if one working girl saw her labor as different from that of another, their experiences and conceptions of work did not diverge from the social movement’s agenda; instead, they added richness to the cause.

Overlooking the colonial architecture at the edge of town, similar familial work took place between MANTHOCas in the neighborhood of Bellavista. Sisters Rr and Melisa worked with their parents to run a bus company, taking on different aspects of the business. Always wearing a pink fleece, eleven-year-old Melisa told me nonchalantly about how she sold water, *manjar blanco*, and other items with her mother at a store they had in the bus station.⁵⁴ When I asked her if she liked her job, Melisa explained that she was cool with her customers and it was “because I’m there, I’m not so afraid to sell to you; some are afraid to sell, I know how” (Melisa, interview with the author, 2018). Melisa’s confidence, shaped by her work, was bolstered not only by her older sister Rr’s involvement in the family business but also by MANTHOC as a movement.

Rr worked as a secretary selling tickets. She talked about a typical day at work: “You start at four o’clock in the afternoon, if I’m the late shift, and sit there, in a chair waiting for people to come and encourage them to buy a ticket and go on a trip . . . waiting, making the list, seeing all the names, seeing if there are parcels, what would be the packages. But there are other days that we sometimes close that office and I accompany my dad to collect tickets at the exit. This means calling people for travel . . . [it’s] more fun because there you go like, screaming, calling people, and it’s more amusing” (Rr, interview with the author, 2018). As MANTHOCas talked about their work, some noted that they did not always feel like they were working or that their work was part of their identity. Besides through *formación* sessions, which may occur monthly, MANTHOCas’ worker identity is taught via their involvement in less intentional weekly

⁵⁴ *Manjar blanco* is a thick milk-based caramel cream that is known throughout Peru; it is believed to have originated in Cajamarca.

meetings. The experiences of work and movement for girls was bolstered by Andean thought that MANTHOC deployed to raise consciousness in its members.

Peruvian Working Children

Andean people and scholars affirm that work is part of the fabric of respectability required for children to be conscious and caring contributors to society. Working girls like those in the previous section actively supply their family with labor. To this end, Peruvian children have a legacy of work in Peru that is tied to socialization and indigeneity. Their motivations for work in rural or urban spaces are as much strategies for survival as apprenticeship to family trades and traditions. In his ethnography concerning Aymara migrants living in Lima, Peruvian anthropologist Teofilo Altamirano verifies how “the family is the base for the mobilization of economic resources,” having children from the age of eight years enter “the labor market as street vendors, shoeshiners, bus fare collectors, etc. They are also tasked to take care of younger children when the poor [adults] go out to work” (1988, 87).

The norms for children during the time of Altamirano’s study constituted “obedience of children to parents and older siblings; performance of different functions or duties, and enjoyment of the rights which correspond to home, in reciprocity for the duties fulfilled” (87). He explains that for Aymara migrants to the city, belonging and identification with a specific family entailed security and protection. This is an important consideration in the context of an urban environment characterized by individualism, competition, envy, cultural aggression, marginalization, and to some extent racism. Attention to this difference in values holds weight, not only because Altamirano is a revered scholar in Peru but also because at the time that this text was written, 1988,

terrorism was beginning to reach the capital. For Aymara migrants, the larger the kinship network, perhaps the greater possibility of “security and trust” (87). However, speaking your language or appearing rural was regarded as suspect and posed a danger of racist and classist aggression from nonmigrant locals in the city.

While the added layer of oppression of Aymaras in Lima is unfortunate, the ways in which the ayllu is transposed onto the urban landscape show how attempts to maintain ways of life (such as having children work) were important to new migrants in the capital. Similarly, writing during these years of internal armed conflict, Peruvian sociologist Rodrigo Montoya (1995) offers an interesting analysis of Indigenous children. He gestures at the lack of children’s songs in Quechua to point out that there is no separate stage of childhood recognized in Indigenous Peruvian culture. Montoya notes how the role of cantor in the community can be bestowed on a child because that child is part of a singing family. This child is not an exceptional *child cantor* but will just serve as a *cantor* at different stages of learning. Montoya further explains that children coexist with adults simply as a way to mitigate their introduction to being part of their community. He motions toward what he considers an “ethnic citizenship” that would allow for Indigenous lifeways to have a “right to difference” in the face of faulty democracies and violence (73–74). He notes that among the reparations that Indigenous people want so they can maintain their ways of being is being shown “respect and dignity,” which is vital to counter discriminatory practices.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ There are multiple reparations that Indigenous Peruvians seek. The following are five that Montoya notes: (1) territory, not parcels, but a large area; (2) defense of cultural identity with bilingual schools that value Indigenous culture; (3) respect and dignity against discriminatory practices; (4) respect for nature; and (5) access to good market conditions and better channels of communication (74). See also Montoya 1992.

In describing a similar Andean context decades later, anthropologist Jessaca Leinaweaver notes that children's place in the family economic unit is crucial to the functioning of the family, so that "even the smallest children are also valued as economic beings, contributing members of the household, whether through unpaid labor that offsets the needs of adults to remain at home (going to the store, washing clothes, carrying heavy loads, watching other siblings) or through paid labor as a maid (*muchacha* literally 'girl') or a *cobrador* child who takes fares and calls out the route on the buses" (2008a, 85).

For instance, the circulation of children in Leinaweaver's work (2008b, 62) shows the difficult position of parents who loosen their "hold on a child" by allowing work outside the home. She writes that it is the kind of reciprocal nature and faults in kinship that have over time produced extrafilial relations to cope with changes in social and economic support. What also occurs at the moment of child circulation is that neocolonizing imaginaries of backwardness are reproduced as a "gendered morality of parenthood, a sense of maternal love [that] should have some bearing on whether a child is sent away" (2008a, 87–88). This moralizing comes from discourses on family units as microcosms of the state, but this imaginary falls short in the Andes, because of kinship relations that sit in opposition to counteract neocolonizing projects of governmentality (Foucault 1991). It is for this reason that there is distrust concerning interventionist actions involving children: so much cultural erasure has already occurred at the hands of Northern intentions.

Reflecting this, anthropologist Inge Bolin in a study concerning child-rearing in a town outside Cusco, states, "Work ethics are shaped by respect and by the ever present necessity to make a living in a marginal environment" (2006, 62). This is to implore that

the manner in which children are raised go hand in hand with the ways in which childhood is viewed as part of daily life and should not to be slighted because of age-based power. In the Andean region, part of being human is to engage in activities without having to necessarily divide tasks by age categories; instead, capacity is determined by five relatively open-ended definitions of *maturity* that indicate particular kinds of work (Portocarrero Grados 1998; Rostworowski 1988).

The cultural notion that children are economic beings does not take away from their parent's love; on the contrary, in the Andean context, it garners respect (Bolin 2006). As an empirical study from Harry Anthony Patrinos and George Psacharopoulos reports, the relationship between work and school in the lives of laboring Peruvian children suggests that their indigeneity and cultural history should be taken into account when considering how their economic activity is a process in family specialization (1997, 402). Indeed, many Peruvian working children come from households where “children grow up within this atmosphere of proud work ethics. At an early age they start to help their parents and are complimented for work well done, even if it is not perfect” (Bolin 2006, 72–73).

This signals that children's work is not only necessary but also purposeful. The feeling of contributing and being useful to the family has Andean origins in rural herding and farming communities and then expanded to urban spaces where relationships of reciprocity are necessary for survival in the dismal economic conditions of cities. The Andean framing of reciprocity inhabits the “pleasure of giving and nurturing with affection” and is not a constraining “obligation” (Rengifo Vásquez 1998, 92). However, Leigh Campoamor's (2016) research highlights that Andean mothers and children in

Lima are often criminalized because of their ordinary worker's status. She explores how the differences in cultural conceptions of labor have often prompted mothers to engage in what she characterizes as "defensive motherhood."

By this, Campoamor refers to a process whereby mothers teach their children about the value of work in the face of governmental tactics adopted by the state that frames working children as victims of adult abandonment (Campoamor 2016). This sentimental view of children is something that is upheld by the Peruvian Code of the Child and the Adolescent (Law N. 26102), which serves to regulate the labor of children in the country. As discussed below this code does not accommodate Andean socialization processes and its working out once again tends to conflate all children's work within the hegemonic imaginary of *child labor*.

The Code of the Child and Adolescent

Slightly after the UNCRC was ratified by the nation of Peru (1990), the state developed the national Code of the Child and Adolescent (1992), which repealed the Code of Minors and was modified to cope with the violence and displacement of the country's internal armed conflict. The code is currently under the control of the Ministerio de la Mujer y Poblaciones Vulnerables (Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, MIMP) and defines children as individuals between zero to eleven years and adolescents as between twelve and seventeen.⁵⁶ Although children are allocated the protections and rhetoric of the UNCRC, there is a strong emphasis on "best interests," reflecting an orientation that authorizes parental influence and frames children as subjects

⁵⁶ Alanen (1994) talks about how women and children are often packaged together despite their differing generations and experiences. Gaitan Muñoz concludes that in this way women are infantilized to lessen their capacity for self-judgment and decision-making in general (2016, 154).

of dependency. This presumed dependency reifies a notion of children as inevitably willful and in need of guidance. The obligation to adhere to parental wishes and parents' responsibility for maintaining their children within the parameters of the code negate children's participation and agency, with this overemphasis on parental or guardian control. Such an emphasis may cause children's freedom of expression, thought, and association in matters that concern them to be tokenized or to appear as mere exceptions to the rule.⁵⁷

The code also delineates the labor of working adolescents, in Book 1, Article 19, titled "Modalities and Schedules for Work." Here, the state guarantees special school schedules that allow children and adolescents who work to attend their study centers on a regular basis. Directors of educational centers take these mandates seriously and pay attention so that labor does not affect working children's attendance or school performance. This article stipulates that directors should inform working children that labor is not legal until the age of fourteen years, making it a kind of bridge between the reality of work for children below the age of fourteen. Along with Article 19 in Book 1, Article 40 in Book 2 is meant to protect working children and homeless children by creating programs aimed at ensuring their educational success and their physical and psychological development.

Following the ILO minimum-age convention, Article 51 of Book 2 states the minimum age of work as fourteen with parental permission, unless otherwise noted.⁵⁸ The idea that children younger than fourteen are not legally authorized by the state to

⁵⁷ Article 12-15 of UNCRC and Article 9-11; 13 in Book 1 of the Peruvian Code of the Child and Adolescent.

⁵⁸ The working age is set at fifteen for agriculture, sixteen for the commercial or mining industry, and seventeen for the fishing industry.

work is contradicted by Article 56, which means to regulate hours of work by age; children aged twelve to fourteen years cannot exceed twenty-four hours of work in one week and teens fifteen to seventeen years old cannot exceed thirty-six hours in a week. It could be assumed that these confusions and contradictions in the text are a way of atoning for the reality of the Peruvian context, in which children under fourteen work, and at once attempting to act in accordance with the UNCRC and the ILO.

While the remaining articles dealing with the laboring adolescent (Articles 47–68 of Book 2) are consistent with the language of the ILO, Article 19 appears to be a kind of deregulatory loophole for working children to be part of the social fabric through programs called Basic Alternative Education, whereby school schedules are after lunch instead of after breakfast. Many children at both MANTHOC Lima and Cajamarca attended either morning school (Basic Regular Education) or afternoon school (Basic Alternative Education, EBA). While EBA was fashioned to accept working children who labor early, Cussianovich (2012) has found that many programs in Lima do not allow children into their programs, as privatization of EBA has permitted the market to appropriate the niche of night schooling for adults. This leaves those most vulnerable to self-advocate for EBA access, which is not generally granted.

The code seems to hold the working child in a kind of tenuous balance between a regulatory and deregulatory matrix, but Article 63, “Domestic Work or Nonremunerated Familial Work,” appears to favor unpaid family work, which can, in some circumstances, result in cases of slavery in dealing with failed child circulation. “Adolescents who work in the domestic service or who perform unpaid family work are entitled to a rest period of twelve continuous hours per day. Employers, parents or relatives are obliged to provide

all the facilities to guarantee their regular attendance at school. It is the responsibility of the specialized judge to know the compliance of the dispositions referring to the work of adolescents that is carried out in homes” (Nº 27337-Article 63 2000). The work may occur within the family; however, this does not necessarily make it morally neutral (Nieuwenhuys 1994). In practice, this law may act as a justification in the defense of humanitarian protectionism characterized by “best interests” rhetoric, but this does not take into account children’s expressed interest if and when abuse is occurring. There is a lack of regulation when “employers, parents, or relatives,” instead of children themselves, are the ones who are made accountable, which may allow abuse from said adults to be hidden from the judge.

As is often the case in Peru and other countries of the South, there is a large wealth gap that begets a service industry that informalizes labor and creates a demand for domestic workers in homes and businesses and in poor neighborhoods that aspire to upward social mobility. In my own research in 2013, campaigns by the grassroots NGO La Casa de Panchita, which is continually calling attention to unpaid child domestic work, is at once attempting in its own way to eradicate all forms of child labor using a radio program called *No Somos Invisibles* (We are not invisible). The domestic working women in my study maintained that it was important that they halt the “terrible experiences of young girls” in domestic work, to break this cycle of oppression (Stiglich 2013). The subject of domestic work provokes tensions, as it is seen as a historically contentious institution dating from the time of colonial slavery that can still involve slavelike conditions in the workplace (Rivoldi Nicolini 2002).

Often the wages of girls who did not have contracts were given to their families and then the girls were not enrolled in school, contradicting the terms of their labor agreement (Stiglich 2013). Work like this can be exploitative if it is not regulated, such that in 2016, the Domestic Worker's Law (#27986) was modified to include "abolition of child labor" (1A-d). Private-sector domestic work that can become exploitative for girls can be blurred by familial work, like in that of child circulation. In describing an aspect of the importance of children's labor, Jessaca Leinaweaver describes the concept of *acompañar* as "a role somewhere between child of the family and household employee," whereby a young person goes to live with an older person as a form of emotional labor that has long been part of Andean tradition (2008a, 83). This arrangement may go awry, with abuse, or not favor the child involved, yet for some the custom may allow for the child to relocate for personal reasons of instability or loss. The practice is meant to offset the solitude of the elder, allowing for co-residence and companionship.

Some intertwined traditions of child circulation can be exploitative because of power imbalances in age between adult employers and child domestic workers; these moments to some organizations can be case studies for the abolition of child labor in all its forms and not just those most hazardous types of work. More than this, the code has Article 63 as a loophole that will only reproduce unregulated domestic work, which is most certainly a girl's responsibility (Bourdillon 2000; Morrow and Boyden 2018). This means that familial domestic work, like the nondomestic work of girls, should be regulated in accordance with the realities and necessities of the family, with clear indications of what is and is not exploitative because of the complexity of working children's lives (Morrow and Boyden 2018, 6, 11, 21–22). Given the complexity of how

child work permutates in different parts of the world, working children may, for those who are socially separated from its ubiquity, be conflated with negatively connoted *child laborers*, forging them into one object, despite some distinctions.

Are Working Children Really “Willful”?

MANTHOC’s view of their movement’s persistence is key to being part and parcel of a whole that would be incomplete without them, but they recognize how adult conceptualizations of “ideal” childhoods do not represent their condition. Although organized working children may see themselves as living a “normal” life, widespread Northern conceptualizations of nonplural childhoods continue to deem their consciousness false. The position MANTHOC holds from their movement’s foundations (1976) to the Kundapur Declaration (1996) is cast as willful by influential Northern actors, yet MANTHOC members’ pronouncements are calls to their legitimacy as citizen-subjects. For MANTHOC, the First International Meeting of Working Children in Kundapur, Karnataka, India, solidified their movement’s guiding intuitions. As a child-led movement, MANTHOC had already established that they have the right to labor and that this work should be dignifying. As a nod to the Harkin Bill’s deleterious effects on the lives of working children, the declaration states, “We are against the boycott of products made by children” (“The Kundapur Declaration,” n.d.).

Figure 3.1. MANTHOCxs filmed attending Kundapur during a planning session.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ In this scene from the documentary *Time to Listen* by the Concerned for Working Children, organized working children from Paraguay talk about how their government’s congressmembers ceded their seats to them, something never done before. At this MANTHOCxs laugh and respond, “We did that too in Peru!”

Kundapur set particular economic conditions on the success of their document, explaining that children should also have access to good health care, education, and training suited for their context. Additionally, this meeting allowed MANTHOC to expand their intuition that recognizes that because of their experience as laborers, which fostered their protagonism, they are knowledgeable about overcoming difficulties. In the proclamation, the first line reads “We want recognition for our initiatives, suggestions and organization processes” (“The Kundapur Declaration,” n.d.). In MANTHOC’s view, the children of the meeting, with their similar needs and interests, should be considered contributors to a new culture of childhood—having a perspective that is unique and necessary for the betterment of the most marginal children. So this “willfulness” that is cast on organized working children by Northern actors is a superficial sham. Instead, the lived experiences of MANTHOCxs maintains the movement’s struggle to make their position normative in the context of Peru.

Laboring does not make Peruvian working children willful; their status as workers makes them capable of feeling pride in contributing, instead of despair in powerlessness. The imaginaries that continue to place working children into the category of *victim* makes the organizing of MANTHOCxs that much more important and impressive in light of seemingly insurmountable resistance from international governing bodies. In the final section of this chapter, I show how MANTHOCas’ notion of their worker identity functions to enable the perpetuation of the movement.

“If It Does Not Dignify You, It Is Not Work”

Waiting for the microbus driver to finish his ice cream, Adela introduced me to Ivan, who would be speaking to the group at Encañada, about an hour outside Cajamarca.

Sixteen-year-old Ivan's purpose that day was to talk about his own experience as a working child to connect with the group about the importance of International Worker's Day. In this particular lesson, Adela introduced Ivan, as a regional delegate who had come to talk about his experiences as a working child, to her relatively inexperienced MANTHOC group. MANTHOCxs with more movement knowledge such as Ivan are often encouraged to reach out to more inexperienced groups to politicize them on the process followed by MANTHOC members.

Figure 3.2. Example of Ivan's job, renting ladders to visitors for the cemetery.⁶⁰

Ivan talked to the group of three-to-twelve-year-olds about how he began working in a cemetery when he was nine years old. His job consisted of lending out and holding ladders required to reach different niches and allow people to visit the tombs of ancestors. He told the members, who were sitting on stools with clipboards in hand, how he started getting more and more clients on the weekend and worked arduously, until one day, "Adelita, our collaborator of the group La Esperanza [the Hope], showed up" and introduced him to MANTHOC. At this, Adela stopped the group to ask them follow-up questions and make sure everyone was listening to Ivan. There was a lot of fidgeting and some conversation; then four-year-old Claudia raised her hand to answer that Ivan had worked at the cemetery. Two other children, Estrellita Lunar and Tronks, chimed in as well. When it seemed that the group was listening again, Adela explained that "first you need to be knowledgeable so you can have *formación*" (Adela, interview with the author, 2018). On a small whiteboard hanging off the wall, she started writing "If you value your

⁶⁰ <https://rpp.pe/peru/actualidad/ninos-arrasan-con-alquiler-de-escaleras-en-cementerios-de-cajamarca-noticia-644625>

job . . . it must be dignifying.” She then stepped aside to give the floor back to Ivan, for him to continue his lesson about International Worker’s Day.

Despite younger children’s getting distracted by Estrellita Lunar’s family moving their cooking implements around them through the front door, many members listened to Ivan talk about the Chicago Strike and the Haymarket Affair.⁶¹ Adela looked at him then stepped in to facilitate, as Ivan felt discouraged, losing the interest of the younger members. Talking about the eight-hour workday, she asked the group, “How many hours are there in a day?” Almost everyone screamed, “Twenty-four!” Adela repeated Ivan’s words, about how the strikes in Chicago granted them “eight hours of sleep, eight hours in work, and eight hours outside of work” (Stiglich 2018).

Ivan, giving an appreciative nod to Adela, started telling the group about when he was eleven or twelve years old. At that time, adults who competed with the children for clients would try to intimidate kids, assuming that since they were young, they were unaware of their rights. Ivan stressed to the group that because of MANTHOC, he and his friends did not budge from their work site and continued laboring, saying, “We knew our rights” (Ivan, interview with the author, 2018). Ivan’s story is important to the development of this newer MANTHOC group: by exploring his personal experience he shows how participating in the movement helped him overcome a real threat to his livelihood. He thereby invoked one of the key principles of both Kundapur and MANTHOC’s foundations, to be consulted on matters that concern them, by being considered subjects of rights.

⁶¹ Also known as the Haymarket Riot, this was the aftermath of a bombing that took place at a labor demonstration on May 4, 1886, in Chicago. The protest was peaceful until “anarchists” threw a bomb at police in response to the murders by police of peaceful protesters earlier that week. This event is considered the origin of International Workers’ Day, or May Day.

In keeping their attention on Ivan's momentary fervor, Adela tested the MANTHOCxs from Encañada on what kind of jobs are dignifying. She observed a sudden silence and mentioned how "stealing is not working," that "it is not dignifying." Adela went on to say, "If it does not dignify you, it is not work." She explained that the Peruvian Code of the Child and Adolescent would be raising the minimum age to fifteen with parental consent. The groups followed Adela with their eyes as she lowered her head, saying, "But here is the reality," going on to state that work is a necessity for some children and, for most, a part of their traditional ways. She continued to describe how MANTHOC as a movement is against child prostitution as a form of work. Ivan looked at her pleadingly, and Adela questioned the group to see if anyone knew what she meant by *prostitution*. Some kids smiled shyly and she proceeded, "It's OK, you have to learn." Quickly Belen raised her hand and blurted out, "It's when women sleep with men." Nodding, Adela said, "There are also men that sleep with many women." A hard conversation for sure, but these topics were important, to rule out what occupations were not regarded as dignifying in the eyes of MANTHOC.

Adela lingered on the topic. She illuminated the group on how the key thing was that MANTHOC was against the "selling of one's body." More explicitly, she repeated, "For MANTHOC, this is not work, because it does not dignify."⁶² In general, MANTHOC's definition of *dignified work* consists of labor that adds to the well-being and development of children with an adequate but not overbearing amount of challenges. MANTHOC's definition of *hazardous work* could mostly fall in line with Convention 182 if it were not for the opening of "best interests," which gives the convention leeway

⁶² This momentary definition of *work* could come from the Catholic origins of the movement and their view on sex work may be different for adults than for children.

to be misused in determining what *exploitative work* is. Adela then looked at Ivan, who referred back to the date of the Worker's Day ratification, 1886. Belen asked if she could do the math, subtracting 1886 from 2018. Belen shouted out, "A hundred and thirty-two!" Then Adela gave her another subtraction sum, 2018 minus 1976—the year of MANTHOC's founding.

Adela pronounced to the group, "A hundred and thirty-two and forty-two years of struggle; no one can take that away from us . . . we have to do advocacy to make a CCONNA," and explained how MANTHOC's vision of work was often met with the state's dismissal of their existence. Adela's fervor about the formation of a CCONNA (Consejo Consultivo de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes [Advisory Council for Boys, Girls, and Adolescents]) came from not only the movement's tendency toward child participation but also the lack of social services and functioning government agencies meant to look after the interests of children and youth. Agencies like the DEMUNA (Defensoria Municipal del Niño y Adolescente [Municipal Advocacy for Children and Adolescents]), whose job it is to mind the needs of the poorest groups of children, are often too underfunded by their regional government to take on the issues that concern working children.



Figure 3.3. MANTHOCxs from Encañada making drawings of their jobs.

Ivan and Adela used the moment to suggest to the gathered MANTHOCxs that they should draw or write a story about how their job dignified them. Most children drew, because Adela had brought irresistibly sharpened colored pencils. They grabbed a clipboard each and used their plastic stools as desks. Some kids drew themselves in a field with a hoe in hand; others drew themselves inside a house. Bending over a stool, ten-year-old Celín drew herself in the middle of a field holding a shovel, with a house in the foreground. During our interview, she spoke about how she worked only during summer vacation, helping her uncle take care of his cows. Celín quietly described her tasks—getting up early to milk the cows then feeding them and giving them water. She told me that she ate breakfast, took them out to pasture, ate lunch, and headed back to collect them again before nightfall.



Figure 3.4. Celín drawing herself working on her uncle's land.

Ten year-old Estrellita Lunar drew herself in the middle of a kitchen standing in front of a work station. Her picture refers to her prepping before going out with her family to help sell *patita* (a dish of chicken feet and necks grilled over coals and served with potatoes and a side of rocoto sauce). During the school year, Estrellita Lunar washed dishes; put coals on the grill for the chicken feet and necks; and helped boil the water for her mom's potatoes, which she then peeled when they had cooled. During summer vacation, she accompanied her mom to help waitress at a restaurant in the city of Cajamarca. At some meetings, she and her sister Belen would follow their grandmother and mother out to the corner of the street with stools and a table sell grilled meat. Estrellita Lunar's labor was the kind that is nonremunerated in the sense of receiving physical currency but was integral to her family's success and therefore important to her current protection from difficult conditions. She enjoyed her family's provisions, gained by her participation and inclusion in their work.

As with Estrellita Lunar and Celín, the labor that each MANTHOCa performs contributes to her family or her own situation. As noted in the introduction, Andean conceptions of work are carved into children's minds as part of their responsibilities and sense of respect for their family. Being part of MANTHOC allowed these children to realign this cultural ethos of familial responsibility and respect in a more politicized framing of dignified work. It appeared to give them a safe space in which these struggles could be articulated within a more nurturing and inclusive environment that both was grounded in this cultural ethos and admitted the harsh realities that working children faced outside MANTHOC.

To get a better sense of how this organization made them feel in their lives, I asked the girls a more pointed question, "What would you tell a working child [a NNAT] who was not in the movement about joining MANTHOC?" In response, all the girls had only positive things to say, though their answers were seldom the same. Their answers fell into a few categories at once. One was a "logic of rights consciousness," which ranged from girls explaining how an organization for child workers' rights should automatically place working children in the movement to convince them of the benefits of rights consciousness. Of the girls I interviewed, only six had answers that led with worker's rights. Angeli from Yerbateros noted, "They should go to MANTHOC because it is for working children, and if they like it, to contact Janeth" (Angeli, interview with the author, 2018).

Her response was categorical, pointing to the NNAT's identity as a worker and suggesting that the working child speak to the collaborator present. SoyLuna's conscription strategy was also a logical argument: "They should come because we are all

working boys and girls in MANTHOC. This movement is for children and adolescents who work” (SoyLuna, interview with the author, 2018). The MANTHOCas who were the most adamant in using the logic of rights consciousness for their recruitment were Rr and Ke Muin Ha from Bellavista and Jhosselyn from Warriors of Jesus group. Jhosselyn suggested that “they should come because, um, here we are a family and we will welcome them well because we do different things, and at the same time, we get to know and gain experience to enable us to defend our rights as working children and adolescents” (Jhosselyn, interview with the author, 2018). Another category that girls (five or so) fell into was to use the moralizing argument of “bettering oneself,” to engage NNATs. Ladybug notes that it made you “good” to be in MANTHOC. In a related fashion, Brigitte from the same base led with a trial period and ended with “Here, you can do homework, and um, you can become politically involved or you can learn, and in the end, it is for your own good” (Brigitte, interview with the author, 2018). Sometimes being a better person also is combined with treating others and the environment with respect.

Sherejade from Bellavista perceived how “in MANTHOC, we know how not to contaminate the environment, we must be citizens, and we must plant seeds to keep the environment healthy” (Sherejade, interview with the author, 2018). This treatment of person and environment is crucial, as many complaints from MANTHOCxs concern their play spaces and nearby trash-filled environments. So to be in MANTHOC is to be capable of defending the defenseless in more ways than one. It could be noted from the girls’ responses that there is more to MANTHOC than labor organizing, though this is the purpose of the social movement. A different approach was to let go of someone who was

not motivated to be involved with the movement. Girls like Estrellita Lunar rationalized, “If they are not excited, [or] feel discouraged from coming, I would say, ‘Take your time and, and then you could come—make your own decision; I will not obligate you to come’” (Estrellita Lunar, interview with the author, 2018).

Similarly, though Sofia from Bellavista used resources to lead any recruitment effort, if the NNAT in question seemed uninterested, she would let it go, saying, “Not anymore, it doesn’t matter” (Sofia, interview with the author, 2018). Some girls suggested that NNATs come for a trial period, explaining that if they liked what they saw, and felt that they could gain something, they could stay. Aynoa said that she started off explaining to children that “here you will find affection, outside of your [relationship to your] parents.” She could relate to these kids, and she stressed, “I used to think that it was a waste of an afternoon, and well, as my mindset and my thought process started to change, I would go to meetings and make friends, right? So I saw that, and thought that ‘a waste of time’ it was not” (Aynoa, interview with the author, 2018).

Unlike Aynoa and some MANTHOCas who brought up how boredom for some children could be a deterrent, Mia from Amauta noted that some children may not have time because of work. She would beseech them to “recover some time so you can come down to MANTHOC, here there’s tutoring, here they help you, here they cheer you up, here they treat you well. This is a nice place” (Mia, interview with the author, 2018). As with Aynoa and Mia, another category that came up with many girls involved how MANTHOC’s atmosphere was pleasant and loving. Catalina from Amauta elucidated that when talking to NNATs who were not part of MANTHOC, it was important to mention that “here we will welcome them with happiness, and with love, and to not be

fearful, if they think that people will hurt them. Because in MANTHOC there is a lot of fun and they teach you to be, hmmm, a good person, to be better” (Catalina, interview with the author, 2018).

This “to not be fearful” may refer to coaxing a child who has experienced ill treatment from adults or other children. In MANTHOC a previous campaign (which still recurs sometimes) was a push to end child abuse. This meant no physical or humiliating punishment at all, a practice of all MANTHOCs. Likewise, Maria, from the same base, justified to a future organized NNAT how in the movement “there is good treatment, we are all mates, nobody is unequal, and sometimes we do a collection to go on trips, and they help us with tutoring for free” (Maria, interview with the author, 2018). The “they” in all these examples are at once collaborators, volunteers, and experienced MANTHOCxs. Most girls (twelve, to be exact) mentioned the “resources” as a reason to become involved in the movement.

Esperanza, from Amauta, preliminarily noted that “firstly, if they have time, um, they should come to MANTHOC because it will help them, it will make good use of their time, their free time. Um, I would tell them to come, it’s really fun here, because besides the very amusing workshops, they are practical too; like the *zampoña* [Andean panpipe] workshop, soccer, and all that” (Esperanza, interview with the author, 2018). Similarly, Abril from San Marcos group pitched to NNATs uninformed of MANTHOC, “‘Why do you want to participate in MANTHOC? We do, learn, make handicrafts, reinforce [homework], and they come and do workshops,’ and I’d say, ‘Why do you want to join?’” (Abril, interview with the author, 2018). Abril’s claim of resources is partly true; as seen in chapter 4, a reason that working girls are drawn to the movement is the

seemingly abundant benefits that MANTHOC has to offer them. In evaluating the reasons why MANTHOCas even get recruited or why they remain, I end this chapter with Valeria's strategies for gaining, and keeping, members, which will give insight into chapter 4, on the politicizing processes that occur within the movement:

What I have always done, is, um, go to the markets to summon more boys, girls, and adolescents, so that they can participate a little bit. And what we do is talk with them and tell them that there are workshops on *formación*, and trainings, so that they can be formed.⁶³ So that they can be the kind of children, the kind of children, like, that, like, if they are shy, they can loosen up in public. And also, um, we support them, like, new ones, we support them, we give them our time, because they don't feel comfortable. Because they're new, they don't know so much, so what we do is support them, orient them, play with them, and accompany them." (Valeria, interview with the author, 2018)

This support, this giving them time and letting them become comfortable, is what sustains the MANTHOCxs. Chapter 4 will further detail these recruitment strategies and members' reasons for their participation and how MANTHOCas attempt to reconfigure their relationships and motivations to be part of the movement, which they consider valuable. It will build on the groundwork that this chapter has laid out in terms of the challenges these young people face around dominant understandings of child labor and its investments in a normative childhood. This norm, which underlies ILO efforts as well as the UNCRC, reads these girls' work within a discourse of willfulness, as a negativity that requires correction. What members of MANTHOC challenge in their struggle for

⁶³ Often movement children and adults who work with them will use the word *formarse*, to mean "to shape" or "to mold" oneself.

dignified work is not only this dominant representation but also continual erasure of cultural knowledge in local contexts.

CHAPTER 4: POLITICIZING PROCESSES

At a standing-room-only health forum in San Luis focused on preventing drug addiction and violence against the family, a MANTHOCa named Aynoa was the third speaker of four. As she was the only one representing the voice of children and youth, the movement children had come along from the Yerbateros base to support her speech—filling the first two rows of the packed hall. In their “Promoters of Equality”—labeled blue vests, they sat anxiously waiting for the speaker series to begin. While there were some locals who attended the talks, the majority of the attendees included different officials from the Ministries of Health (MINSA) as well as MIMP and law enforcement (PNP).



Figure 4.1. MANTHOCxs waiting for the San Luis Health Forum to begin.

With their collaborators and volunteers at the edges of the room, the MANTHOCxs sat patiently as the first speaker, a male representative of the health commissioner from the mayor’s office, spoke exclusively for thirty minutes in a rallying cry about the importance of reducing family violence. Next, a male psychologist from the

police department spoke for what felt like an hour and a half in a monotone, with block text on PowerPoint, about the necessary treatment reforms for victims. During the lecture from the police psychologist, MANTHOCxs were starting to reach the limits of their attention span, fidgeting and silently poking one another. At the end of the police psychologist's presentation the applause was uproarious, perhaps signaling relief at his talk's termination.

As if to refresh the audience before continuing with the last two speakers, the health clinic provided small plastic cups full of soda. Some MANTHOCxs eagerly helped distribute the soda in an attempt to move around the room before Aynoa's speech. Near the conclusion of the intermission, Aynoa positioned herself on one side of the projector screen. Guillermo and I, two adult volunteers for the movement, connected the cables and adjusted the laptop for Aynoa's presentation. Once everything was functioning, Aynoa began her speech: "Well, good afternoon, everyone. My name is Aynoa. I am a sixteen-year-old with the organization of working boys, girls, and adolescent workers, children of Christian laborers—MANTHOC—which is a national movement in Peru. We are in twelve regions, and here in Lima, we are in seven districts, which consists of fifty kids in San Luis. Currently, these are children from the age of six. I work as a dancer at children's birthday parties. And I come bearing the voice of all of the children from my organization."

Introducing herself and the basics of the movement, Aynoa delineated MANTHOC's purpose in attending the forum. Noting how "authorities often isolate children, saying that they 'neither have a voice nor a vote,' but that is not true . . . just as I come here to speak with all of you, to make the [child's] voice be heard." Behind her, the

slide transitioned to one that read “LISTEN TO MY VOICE.” Aynoa continued, pushing the adult audience to take children’s voices seriously. Positioning her members as critical to the representation of children more generally, she asked rhetorically, “And where are children left [in all of this]? I also see many children here. So we must recognize that there are many children taking time out to be sitting here, present, and that they are making the voices of other children reach you.” Since this meeting consisted of mostly ministry officials, this acknowledgment of children’s participation was important for Aynoa to make clear to authorities. MANTHOCxs’ engagement with society was not just physical in the space they were taking up in the forum’s hall, but with Aynoa’s direction, it became palpable that at least for this moment, children have the floor to be heard.

This was explicit in her next slide, which read “STOP niñophobia” (stop childphobia). Here, Aynoa looked at the audience and proceeded to say, “Many of the politicians or older people sometimes say that ‘children are . . . ’ that they ‘can’t have an opinion [on a matter],’ or that we ‘don’t have a greater vision,’ right? But mainly, we the children, live these realities, [we] are the ones who live through the problems of our district.” Signaling Guillermo to change the slide, she remarked on how children live through many kinds of violence, including sexual and physical abuse, humiliating punishment, child neglect, and child trafficking. Aynoa elucidated how “many of us live through sexual violence, which nowadays can be seen in the news, that younger girls are abused sexually. Why? When we go to the police station, they don’t listen to us because ‘we’re minors.’” She paused intensely to search the audience for recognition then continued on to her next points.



Figure 4.2. Aynoa speaking at the San Luis Health Forum.

To further emphasize how authorities do not have trust in the capacity of young people, Aynoa pointed out that “they tell us to come in with an adult person.” She mentioned how children and youth experience humiliation and forms of physical punishment, as well as neglect from working parents—these all being adults who can “come in” with abused children. She talks adamantly about how “children who are abandoned by their families become involved in trafficking because they have nowhere to go, because they are already living in the street and so participate in child trafficking.” These experiences indicate the need for children to be seen by authorities in their own right, as adults in their lives may be at fault for much of the children’s suffering.

In particular, Aynoa attempted to build consciousness about the prevalence of sexual violence. She mentioned “worrying statistics” about femicides committed in Peru in recent years, relating that “66.4 percent of women and girls reported mental or verbal abuse, and almost seven out of ten women have suffered episodes of violence from a

partner or boyfriend;⁶⁴ and 32.4 percent report physical violence, where they have been battered; 6.8 percent have reported sexual violence. And in 2016, 124 feminicides were committed, which put us in second place for the most femicides at the Latin American level.” This mention of femicide disturbed the quiet in the room; more people began speaking to one another. Aynoa described the path of cases moving through the criminal justice system, running through the “route to justice,” outlining each stop a case must make before justice is served. She fixed her gaze on the audience and argued, “But the most important piece is what the psychologist said earlier: it is the ‘warm’ treatment. We must be in an environment with good treatment.” Aynoa’s voice became louder and more passionate as she tried to make clear to officials in the room how children’s experiences in the police setting are difficult, affirming that police officers are dismissive of “us children.”

She repeated, “What do we do? We go, sit down, and then they say, ‘Stay there’—they put us in a corner, or at times do not even attend to us, because we are minors.” Elucidating a situation in which police will often tell children to “come with an older person,” Aynoa smiles knowingly as she asks the audience, “What if that older person is the one who is the abuser who hurts me? Would I tell my dad or my mom, who hits me, ‘Come with me so I can report you?’” The audience laughed a little at this, and Aynoa pressed on: “They will not want to come with me. How can I file a report if I am a minor? This is what us children are demanding [of authorities].” She described how children were revictimized in the space of the commissary, making them relive their pain.

⁶⁴ It is difficult to ascertain where Aynoa searched for these statistics. I found them in an article published as a redaction on March 7, 2017, on the website of the trusted newspaper *Perú21*: <https://peru21.pe/lima/ministerio-salud-presento-guia-atencion-salud-mental-mujeres-situacion-violencia-68272-noticia/>

In an emotional plea, Aynoa looked at the audience of authorities and bureaucrats and said, “Sometimes it hurts us kids to remember the violence we have lived through; and for us, it’s not nice to remember the violence that has happened to us. This is what mainly affects us.” Aynoa noted that she was passing on the knowledge and voice of her entire movement in her words.

Shuffling her papers, Aynoa reminded the audience of whom she was representing, making her point explicit: “I have brought with me all of the voices of my organization. We have spoken on this topic, and they asked me to make these points heard, all of their expectations, right?” She listed the expectations of MANTHOCxs for law enforcement and public institutions. For instance, children and youth wanted to be recognized as victims of violence and their efforts to be valued when they reported a crime. She went back to her previous statement about how adults viewed children as not having “a voice or a vote” as citizens, reiterating that at the police station the police did not want to listen to them unless they brought an adult with them to make a report, and that cases never got resolved in a timely fashion.

In addition to Aynoa’s messaging that only hinted at children’s participation in decisions that concerned them, she made an argument for more efficient structural processes that would prevent further reproduction of violence, beseeching the police officials in the room to consider that “we may not know how to report; we would like to be oriented through the process; we will not come to you after the report.” With a proud yet supplicatory tone, she declared, “This has been the voice of all children and adolescents, and I hope our authorities will heed our words.” To conclude, her last slide read “We Count on You!” and Aynoa referred back to the speeches given earlier by the

ministry official and police psychologist. She ventured, “Many of you say that we are ‘the present and the future of the country.’ But if we are not paid attention to, and if our rights aren’t valued, how can we be the country’s future? Where will the children be left [in all of this]?!” She scrutinized the audience then sat down morosely next to the past MANTHOC coordinator as the applause began.

At the health forum, Aynoa engaged in a skillfully crafted performance that was both her own and a powerful rendition of MANTHOC’s position. She claimed to speak as a representative of many movement voices, and she effectively took up space in the very adult-dominated room. Her tight, ten-minute presentation at the forum was the pinnacle of her public speaking in the movement, each part rehearsed and delivered to evoke compassion and instigate action from the audience. Aynoa engaged in the taboo topics of femicide and sexual violence against girls and did so using a logical, ethical, and emotional argument. The speech captured and kept the attention of the adults and children in the room. Aynoa’s presentation was the culmination of years of cultural trainings that resulted in her attaining her identity as an organized working child. Not only was her speech engaging and important as a call to authorities but also it revealed one way in which Aynoa was trained to carry out movement knowledges.

MANTHOCas develop a sense of their politicized identity through their dedication to the movement’s struggle. They might not join the movement from the outset with political motivations in mind, but over time, their identity formation as dignified workers becomes transposed onto other portions of traditionally subjugated identities such as being young, Indigenous, and female.⁶⁵ This is perhaps why

⁶⁵ By *transpose* I mean that MANTHOCas may substitute the way they learned to identify the issues associated with their worker identity to become politicized over time on issues that concern them most, like

MANTHOCas appear capable of organizing themselves to execute public demonstrations on the condition of working girlhoods. It is not just that working girls in the movement are striving to press forward in terms of labor recognition and rights; it is also that their transposed activism (from labor organizing to issues of gendered violence) is a tool for politicizing other parts of their identity. Although not all girls come to the movement expecting political advocacy training, their involvement in MANTHOC enmeshes them in what it means to participate in a male-dominated adult world. This is to say that what the movement has to offer working girls is much more than just consciousness-raising concerning the labor rights of children; it is also a space where members gain awareness of the plurality of their lives.⁶⁶

In this chapter, I engage in a critical exploration of participation, drawing on frameworks from Western and Southern authors to propose a conception of MANTHOCas' participation as the exercise of citizenship. After introducing this critical frame, I next explore the question, How do organized working girls' participation politicize them over time? To show this, I explore how girls in the movement join, learn at, and take part in MANTHOC. Through their everyday interactions, how do the girls become enmeshed in their movement? How do they come to know MANTHOC? And why do they decide to stay in their group or base? Engaging with this subset of questions, I present how the current articulations of political identity in the field of childhood

sexual violence. MANTHOCxs in the movement seek out experienced facilitators and advisers so that all members (not just girls) can make changes that could lessen discrimination against girls. Girls' struggles in being female and young are compounded by gendered violence outside the movement's confines. The safe space of somewhat egalitarian relations between girls, boys, adolescents, and adults makes the work of organizing for change easier than in organizations that do not employ a critical consciousness.

⁶⁶ To be clear, I am not saying that MANTHOC is the only place where working girls gain awareness of multiple issues concerning childhood—there are many institutions in the lives of children that could serve this purpose, for instance, the family, school, a religious space, or the media. Rather, I am saying that MANTHOC stands among these institutions.

studies often align under Northern participatory frameworks and may not consider the plural identities and politicization processes gained through the notion of children's *protagonismo* from the South. I argue that though all organized working girls in this movement may not have the same conceptions of participation and political identity, they maintain the values of MANTHOC through collective agency. The notion of collective agency that MANTHOCs produce is not unitary but instead a diverse assemblage of positions; however, it works to maintain the social movement. This means that though there are individual politicizing processes at work for each girl, all together, these various experiences of what it means to be a working child form the voice of the movement.

The Collective Agency of MANTHOCxs

While the term *collective agency* has not been formally defined, it has been evoked by Darrel Enck-Wanzer to describe how an initiative by the Young Lords Organization (YLO), their Trash Offensive of 1969, worked to stand against New York City's lack of sanitation and trash services in Puerto Rican neighborhoods. In attempting to clean up what the government was clearly ignoring, YLO members began picking up trash, gaining help over time from community members. Eventually they placed collection bins on busy intersections in the city, attracting the attention of local bureaucracies. Enck-Wanzer states that because the YLO internally resisted the tendency for leaders to emerge, and the notion that they saw themselves as a collective first, they encouraged "diverse discursive forms to intersect to produce a movement rhetoric qualitatively different from others at the time," constructing a collective agency that challenged the status quo (2006, 176).

Conceptualizations of collective agency come from Alberto Melucci's work on collective identity as a process of constructing systems in the realms of cognition, action, and emotion. He explains how collective action occurs *cognitively* when language is shared by some or most of the group then is given cultural significance through ritual and practice and is "framed in different ways [that] always allow some kind of calculation between ends and means, investments and rewards" (1995, 44). Melucci also specifies that for collective identity to gain traction, there must be *interaction* between the actors involved. Finally, as Serge Moscovici notes, participation in collective action is endowed with meaning, making it difficult to acknowledge the collective in quantitative terms, because a collective identity mobilizes people's *emotions*, making it difficult to negotiate an individual's overarching identity in the group (1981). For MANTHOCxs, there is certainly a collective identity that begets a collective agency, but the term agency has at times been measured in such a way that promotion of the group is secondary to that of the individual in children.

Agency as a measure of children's capacities has become a mainstream notion of cognitive development discourses on childhood participation (Mühlbacher and Sutterlüty 2019). Even as Gonick et al. motioned toward scholars exploring agency through "an analysis of the interrelated and asymmetrical relations of power in the movement of people, information, cultural productions, and capital" (2009, 3), the struggle to rework notions of agency as not inherently or inevitably positive has been difficult (Tisdall and Punch 2012). In tracing their discipline's current conceptual understanding of agency, Geographies of Children, Youth and Families (GCYF) start with the premise that children are competent social actors. They follow how GCYF's conceptualizations have

come from a place where questioning capacity romanticized youth, tokenizing their agency, to an understanding that children's agency may (re)produce or challenge inequalities. Learning to see how subjectivities are interconnected, porous, unbounded, and tied to a host of interdependence to people and things, they now discern that embodied human agency emerges within power, that children's agency should be seen as human agency, whereby it is mutable, enduring, and emergent (Holloway, Holt, and Mills 2019, 472).

Gallagher (2019) claims that if we look at how power flows through subjects, agency appears as, not a positive potential that can be attained, but an ambivalent current. It can be "routine" or "inventive," meaning that it may reproduce patterns or disrupt them, and both can serve all kinds of ethno-political functions. Gallagher also plays with Bergson's notion of the inorganic and organic to view how agency is not to be categorized as pertaining to exclusive groups but, rather, seen as in a "productive tension with each other," meaning that disparate forces may act alongside one another to achieve an outcome. Attributing individual agency to children does not take into account interactions with heterogeneous assemblages. According to Gallagher, these smaller interactions may act as forces that either contribute to or emerge from larger assemblages of power. In reworking the notion of children's agency, Mühlbacher and Sutterlüty (2019) consider the worth of replacing it completely with autonomy.

Because agency cannot be considered independent in light of multiple interacting forces in children's lives, autonomy should be observed as interdependent with multiple groupings of people, places, and things. Mühlbacher and Sutterlüty develop a concept of children's autonomy built on the practical lives of children that is reinforced by an equal

appreciation of differences in children's experiences. This is meant to dispel essentializing or generalizing the lives of children. As mentioned in Gallagher (2019), assemblages influence the arising of agentic flows; in looking at Mühlbacher and Sutterlüty (2019), this autonomous action should be enough to note how *agency* is not a term that can encompass how children are capable of participation.

MANTHOCas' Participation as a Politicizing Process

In discussing MANTHOCas, it is critical that we define what the term *participation* means to the movement and how this element plays out in everyday interactions. There are many possible ways to define children's participation. For instance, it may be seen as a "process of sharing decisions which affect one's life and the life of the community in which one lives. It is the means by which a democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured" (Hart 1992, 5). It may also be described as "a process in which children and youth engage with other people around issues that concern their individual and collective life conditions" (Chawla 2001). These definitions show, for the most part, a conceptualizing of children and youth's participation as a means to citizenship. And it can be discerned that children who participate in society are in effect exerting their subjecthood.

Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation has been an influential barometer for conceptualizing children's participation. Hart meant for this ladder to be read as a way to theorize children's participation; however, his model has been inappropriately used as a measurement or classification system. Here, I want to return to the theoretical roots of the ladder and add to it more recent and nuanced critiques to better explain the multiplicity of children's participation. In figure 4.3, the ladder describes eight rungs of participation

that are either nonparticipatory (manipulation, decoration, tokenism) or “degrees” of participation (assigned and informed, adult-initiated shared decisions with children, child-initiated and directed, or child-initiated shared decisions with adults) (1992, 41). As a starting point for understanding children’s involvement in a Northern framework, Hart’s ladder does well to delineate several adult-controlled and linearly theorized forms of participation.

The goal in this theorization is to avoid using children as objects or as a means to an end in participation. Hart suggests that adults will often design projects and programs that employ tactics of manipulation through deception or will delegate actions to children who are not seen as contributors to projects but as a kind of decoration. Tokenism is also nonparticipation, as children’s actions are viewed as playing a role in representing the child’s perspective but are not taken seriously in a kind of minstrelism of childhood.

Figure 4.3. Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation.

These are not forms of participation but are common ways that children are typically disrespected in society.⁶⁷ In Hart's ladder the last four rungs point to levels of children's participation, which are by no means hierarchical and which explain adult-child interactions as a basis for children's participation (Malone and Hartung 2009, 27–28).⁶⁸ When one views the ladder as a tool for theorization, MANTHOCas' actions and inactions can be read as embodying the movement's values through collective agency. Learning to make space for other girls by diminishing their own role, or marching against sexual violence, MANTHOCas are politicized.

Whether or not they become politically involved in their own lives, they are made aware of one another's experiences and presence to hold themselves accountable as a group to make changes. To better understand the concept of collective agency in the Andean context, I must lay out current formulations of children's participation and how MANTHOCas work within and outside these molds using their altered notions of childhood, to justify their citizenship⁶⁹.

⁶⁷ The notions of disrespect are fostered by principles of so-called best interests whereby adults often ignore the expressed interests of children.

⁶⁸ Rung 4: Assigned but informed. In this rung, children are assigned a specific role and told about how and why they are participating. Ex. Youth boards. Rung 5: Consulted and informed. Here, children and youth give advice input on projects or programs designed and run by adults. Adults are meant to inform these participants of how their advice figures in the outcomes. Ex. Child and youth advisory councils. Rung 6: Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people. In this rung, projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making power is shared with children and youth. Ex. Participatory action research. Rung 7: Young people-initiated and directed. Here, children and youth initiate and direct a project or program. Adults are involved only in a supportive capacity. Ex. Child or youth-led activism. Rung 8: Young people-initiated, shared decisions with adults. In this rung, projects or programs are initiated by children and decision-making is shared between them and adults. Ex. Child and youth-adult partnerships. All of these definitions are come from (Fletcher 2008)'s interpretation of Hart (1992).

⁶⁹ Though I am aware that more can be said about complicating the narrative that I am presenting here on underlying tensions in movement-making, my research focus is more concerned with the formation of

Perhaps Hart's ladder could be recontextualized to absorb the complexity of children's participation, and instead of employing a ladder, the visual theorization could be expressed as a "web of involvement" or a shifting "cycle of input." What is certain in reviewing the literature is that any conception of children's participation should not ignore the unequal power dynamics between children and adults but also should open up a space for nonlinear and nonchronological forms of participation. In this vein, E. Kay M. Tisdall writes on "transformative participation," which would extend skills and experiences to young people and children, allowing them to create a network with one another. This transformative participation would change the relationships between children, young people, and adults, such that the accumulated combination of these networks would lead to broad societal transformation (2013, 190).⁷⁰

What other scholars have noted is that there is complexity in defining and knowing the authenticity of children's participation because it is so often wrapped up in projects constructed by adults for children. Gerison Lansdown has suggested that the creation of indicators to measure participation would be a sufficient start in evaluating how children effectively engage in decisions that affect them, as in Article 12 of the 1989 UNCRC, "as individuals, as groups, and as a constituency" (Lansdown 2009, 19–20). Lansdown recommends that world governments set benchmarks to enable children to have access to their rights. Some of these include legal entitlements, information on rights for all ages and abilities, and mechanisms for remedy and redress (14, 20). These benchmarks, once met, could then "measure" the child's extent of engagement as

MANTHOCas' worker identities and how material, emotional, and ideological structures frame their participation and collective agency.

⁷⁰ Interestingly, changes in status of age hierarchy have been explored in Taft's (2019) work on intergenerational movement-building and will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

participants. Lansdown puts forward three levels of engagement: consultative participation, collaborative participation, and child-led participation.

All these, he remarks, “are appropriate in different contexts, and initiatives which begin at a consultative level and evolve to enable children to take more control as they acquire confidence and skills” (21). These categories, not theorizations, continue to entail a view of participation as levels or stages. In conjunction with Lansdown, Karen Malone and Catherine Hartung (2009) explore how children practice their participation in everyday cultural practices. They propose that for children to have the opportunity to participate in society, adults must reflect on the processes through which “authentic” participation is inhibited by formal processes (2009, 24). Malone and Hartung posit that the narrow definitions of children’s participation have also led to contestations over child-initiated projects. They point to how participation does not need to be defined by adult-imposed frameworks that tend to focus on educational outcomes instead of children’s increased membership in civil society.

This is important, because many initiatives are under adults’ control and do not consider children’s capacities for transformative change. Tisdall (2013) observes that transformation may create “discomfort,” but perhaps “unsettling” is necessary to influence change in attitudes, practice, or policy. Likewise, Cussianovich’s (2016) concept of *protagonismo* carries risks, as active children can shift what is comfortable. This becomes exacerbated and multidimensional when the children of Southern contexts are involved in projects that contain Northern frameworks. Sarah White and Shyamol Choudhury (2009) explore how agency-driven models that seek to embody children’s authenticity and distinctive autonomy do not capture the hybridity of children’s

participation. They explore how boys from a Bangladeshi children's organization, Amra, held a trial of sorts (called a *bichur*) to determine how much culpability should be placed on an older child who beat a younger child. In this story, Choudhury is a facilitator who observed the children organizing to contend with the older child and found that the beaten child did not fault his abuser, acknowledging the violence his abuser also experienced at home. White and Choudhury explore how children form "liberated zones," outside the structural violence, to make sense of their daily exploitation.

The Amra children found their way through what had happened in the beating and did not present traditional forms of participation to resolve their issue. White and Choudhury display vis-à-vis the Amra members how moments of interpersonal resolve between children can be viewed as participation but find that it does not fall into a neat traditional, international trajectory of efficiency, efficacy, justice, self-realization, empowerment, and transformation. The everydayness of such interpersonal conflict resolution would not have been noticed had it not been for Choudhury's presence, and it would not have counted as a form of participation; the authors note that there were many formal participatory activities occurring simultaneously. This is a limit to how the field of childhood studies views participation. White and Choudhury stress that children's participation is not a challenge to power, because children's status is still considered inferior, but is not neutral either, considering their nuanced understanding of webbed structures that constrain them.

For children and youth who have a role to play in their communities, outside international or national civil society projects, Caraveo, Pérez, and Hernández's (2009) case concerning Tepoztlán youth shows how participation may appear tangled within

cultural practices and Indigenous identity in communitarian societies. As they describe, civil associations from outside the community worked with the Indigenous community to create environmental projects. Children, youth, and adults would work on projects together, but Corona Caraveo, Pérez, and Hernández indicate that the organization working in Tepoztlán appeared more interested in training youths for the projects than in developing their communication and organizational skills. Often these same organizations would assume that youth could not be relied on to follow through with projects because of interpersonal conflicts and “laziness,” but according to Corona Caraveo, Pérez, and Hernández this was not true, because the reason youth felt closed off from proposing changes was because of working within hierarchies they were meant to respect (144).

Corona Caraveo, Pérez, and Hernández remind us that citizenship is built historically. It would have to be redefined to encompass what the youths of Tepoztlán embody: “They belong to their hometown and are representatives of its culture and therefore respond zealously to their roles and duties toward their community” (142). Here, cultural logic continues to guide social life, making it so that children and youth’s participation is wrapped up in forms of citizenship that attempt to include their heritage. In their keeping to who they are, their identity as Indigenous youth, their community, and a sense of belonging have both personal and collective influences (142). This notion of how cultural identity and personal involvement figure in projects is very similar to how MANTHOCxs participate in society.

Citizenship and Protagonic Action

In using these conceptualizations of participation to reflect on MANTHOCas, we must acknowledge that notions of citizenship are built up in ways that the organization's members deploy to justify their participation as protagonic action. In observing the ways in which Hart's ladder or Lansdown's categories of participation might help us to understand MANTHOCas, I can immediately discern that several moments and situations call for differing levels of participation. If participation were to be viewed as a set of gears working together, rather than a ladder, movement members' use of *protagonismo* would allow them to occupy more than one category at once.

In avoiding drawing lines that would inevitably rigidify the ways in which MANTHOCas participate in their organization, I want to elucidate the point that Aynoa was making concerning children's curtailed citizenship. In her presentation to the room of city officials, she kept repeating that adults perceive children to have neither a "voice [nor] a vote." Her concerns were encompassed in serious claims of not being able to do something as fundamental as file a police report. Because authorities did not view children as capable or did not want to deal with children's inexperience of procedural situations, Aynoa found herself asking police to orient minors who were unfamiliar with such processes. And this demand, which was loud and emotional, was followed by an assurance that children would not need to depend on these adults any further. Recall how Aynoa offered, "We will not come after the police report." This kind of sad plea, which at once appears to call attention to powerful adults' negligence and essentially apologizes for existing as young people, exemplifies how children, even politically aware MANTHOCas, have to negotiate their citizen-subjecthood.

In his *Ensayos sobre la infancia* (2006), Cussianovich Villaran interprets the position of MANTHOCxs as exerting citizen-subjecthood despite the position of children as traditionally being denied citizenship and being incorrectly placed outside a Western paradigm of subjecthood. He explains that because children cannot be taxpayers and are not eligible to be elected, history has deferred citizenship for children in a variety of ways (140). Such is Aynoa's reference to "not having a vote"; despite her being a working child, her voice as a laborer is overshadowed by the "invisibilization and economic insignificance attributed to the work of minors by the prevailing economic and statistical culture" (140).⁷¹ Cussianovich also notes that children are regarded as "ignorant and dependent on adults" through their "condition of vulnerability because of their lack of knowledge [and] experience" (140), which Aynoa woefully counteracts in telling officials that children will not bother the police after a report is filed.

Even Cussianovich's last point concerning how citizenship has traditionally been denied to children, because of what he calls "positive discrimination" or "child-saving" disguised as protectionism (141), rings as very relevant to Aynoa's arguments. In her closing statement to the crowd, she poses a rhetorical question: "Where are the children left [in all of this]?" This question was meant to make sure adults in the room understood the hypocrisy of protectionist politics, when it seems that more children come out of police procedures in a state of revictimization or possible femicide. The moment when Aynoa sat down, the suspended animation of bureaucracy was lifted and things continued once more as usual. I am not sure if the adults sitting in the room were fully listening or

⁷¹ This economic and statistical culture Cussianovich alludes to is the quantitative nature of civil society. This is to say that neoliberal processes of economics tend to rationalize formal economies and deregulate informal systems like those where children work. For more information, see Cussianovich's (2012) work on Basic Alternative Education.

were taking Aynoa's words seriously. I do know that while Aynoa took up space in an ordinarily adult room, she was able to at least concretely spell out MANTHOC's concerns about the rising rate of femicide and asserted her subjecthood.

For MANTHOCas, the concepts of subjecthood and citizenship as expressed in Northern frameworks do not fully capture the intertwined character of their personhoods. As Cussianovich is quick to point out, in the Andean worldview, "everything is in reciprocity and therefore the drastic 'axiological' opposition between subject and object has another meaning and other consequences in everyday life" (2006, 141), such that the notion of subjecthood and what it means to be a citizen are not fully autonomous, are not individualistic, and do not have a collective independence. This is to say that the opposite may be true, where communitarian notions are the cause and effect of the Andean purpose; one's subjecthood is not independent of others—all are connected in a cooperative purpose. In this way, what MANTHOCxs of all genders employ in their daily lives and at varying degrees is *protagonismo*.

Scholars whose work follows participation in the form of childhood *protagonismo* explore its links to Southern worldviews, particularly those in Latin American contexts. Gordillo Pineda and Zhañay Guzhñay's (2018) psychological study looked to measure the resilience of working children in a shantytown in Cuenca, Ecuador. Using quantitative sociological methods, the Inventory of Personal Resilience Factors,⁷² with forty-five working girls and boys between the ages of seven and twelve years, they found

⁷²This is an instrument that evaluates self-esteem, empathy, autonomy, humor, creativity, and resilience in general through five levels (Salgado Lévano 2005).

the children to have high levels of resilience attributable to their participation in a program that taught protagonic action.⁷³

Gordillo Pineda and Zhañay Guzhñay point out that the process of constructing childhood *protagonismo* for working children is an “emblematic portion of the whole of childhood” (17). In this way, working children and adolescents “aspire to have a childhood, not only as a beneficiary of rights, but as an active childhood with the capacity to contribute to the improvement of their situation,” without exclusion or considering themselves “future” citizens. Instead, at “present, the childhood of working children is not a stage of preparation for life, but life itself, in which work becomes an integral part of their work daily” (17–18). This notion of “being” in the present and taking on the challenges of today is found not only in the resiliency studies of Gordillo Pineda and Zhañay Guzhñay. As the effort of a prior working child himself, Candia Zamora’s (2014) psychology master’s thesis explores solidaristic activities of *protagonismo* at a program called the Colonias Urbanas (Urban Colonies) in the Vista Hermosa neighborhood of Santiago, Chile.

Candia Zamora uses qualitative rather than quantitative methods, to better understand the social processes that facilitate the protagonism that children and youth experience in these various Urban Colonies. In this way he makes visible the conditions that favor the transformation of communities using children as social actors and protagonic participation. What Zamora found through a mix of interviews and participation observation in his ethnography was that the sense of hopelessness that gives

⁷³ Gordillo Pineda and Zhañay Guzhñay’s research indicates very high levels of resilience in the working children who came to the Salesian PACES foundation. They show that working children have the capacity to face adversity and overcome obstacles as well as be transformed by them. Their study also shows that child labor is not a determining factor in low resilience in their participants.

way to determinism in the character of poor sectors could be overcome using a sense of *protagonismo*. Zamora reflects on the words of one of his participants, a twelve-year-old girl: “What I have learned the most is that one can be the protagonist of their own history . . . and also that we can be protagonists of our own history, this is the best thing” (118). Zamora explains that to reverse some of the determinisms that have been ingrained in marginal children and youth, “it is necessary to continue reflecting, self-educating, raising consciousness and unlearning practices that stagnate us as individuals and as a collective” (118). He finds that to use *protagonismo* to overcome such obstacles, it is necessary to see the dignity in all humanity, to critically reflect on what reproduces hierarchy and adultcentrism (119–20).

Zamora finds that *protagonismo* is not only a way of mentally reversing situations of hopelessness but also a way of subverting colonialist institutions (schools, government, etc.) that attempt to limit intergenerational dialogue and community transformation. From his findings, though interesting and stimulating to children and youth, *protagonismo* remains in a bubble, only effecting change for the participants and not stretching to the rest of the Urban Colonies. Zamora suggests opening up more spaces where intergenerational *protagonismo* could be reproduced with limited adultcentrisms (123). Despite this, Zamora shows that these kinds of solidarity networks build up an alternative citizenship in urban children and youth. Although the concept of *protagonismo* can be extrapolated as a kind of participation, its reproduction in subjugated populations like that of working children acts as a building block to notions of citizenship.

For instance, in Maria Espinosa Spínola's (2018) ethnographic update, her interviews with various children and youth from disparate Peruvian working children's organizations show how movement practices inform the exercising of citizenship. In her interviews with some working children and their collaborator, a former member of Instituto de Formación de Adolescentes y Niños Trabajadores (Institute for the Training of Adolescents and Children Workers, INFANT) in Iquitos discussed how actions initiated by working children had led to community participation.⁷⁴ For instance, a project took root from the discomfort INFANT members felt with the deaths of young children who drowned during river floods. Aware that local government was not going to intervene, they decided to organize themselves to set up a monitoring committee, called Niños y Niñas al Rescate (Boys and Girls to the Rescue) to take care of the young ones and avoid more losses by involving the community (111–12). These older children, who knew how to swim, would set up colored flags in each house where there were small children and begin to monitor the community. Over time, the community took this protagonic action as the norm and became further involved.

Espinosa Spínola's work substantiates the ways in which organized NNATs produce what is considered "active and inclusive" citizenship. This active and inclusive citizenship at once speaks of rights and the way to make them "effective through actions aimed at vindicating them, expanding them and making visible those that are violated," but also works to incorporate the participation of all social groups, including subalterns (111), those who, like them, are excluded or placed at the margins. Additionally,

⁷⁴ Iquitos is a relatively poor area of the region of Loreto, in northeast Peru. It is surrounded by three rivers, the Amazon, the Nanay, and the Itaya. In 2012, there was major flooding, which opened up tributaries, flooding two hundred thousand hectares of farmland and increasing the incidence of dengue and malaria.

Espinosa Spínola explains how the experiences of organized working children like those of INFANT in Iquitos led to some members' deciding to become collaborators. An ex-NNAT noted that after training on collective processes and children's rights carried out during their movement years, as a girl she felt that she would never be mistreated or suffer exploitation again (113). For some ex-working girls interviewed in Espinosa Spínola's study, the moment the movement became real to them was when they were informed of their rights as children, as women, and as workers, which implied a liberation from situations of inequality, discrimination, and violence (113).

In looking at Espinosa Spínola's example, along with Zamora's psychological autoethnography, it can be inferred that working children's use of *protagonismo* is a kind of participation that enables a belief in an alternative citizenship, a kind of citizenship that is not prescribed by a Northern framework but instead originates from patterns of communitarian resiliency (Gordillo Pineda and Zhañay Guzhñay 2018). Going back to Aynoa, what MANTHOCas have developed is not just a sense of active and inclusive participation but also a way of creating a system of connection where access to concrete and abstract resources helps build their community.

Intertwined Concrete and Abstract Support

Some girls know what MANTHOC is politically about; they are excited to be made aware of their rights and work hard to show working children who are not organized why furthering their rights consciousness is the reason to enroll. Yet for most girls, they believe MANTHOC is such a good organization because of a combination of "good treatment" and material resources. These incentives draw many children to MANTHOC in Lima for the very chance to have a healthy and inexpensive meal at

Yerbateros or to come by Encañada's meeting in Cajamarca for temporary diversions away from work and school. Concrete resources can include access to the material processes that increase the politicization of girls, such as classes in *formación*, protests, rallies, and marches. The MANTHOC school's annual women's health fair gives free vaccinations for mothers and infants, and the environmental campaigns at Encañada led to their river's cleanup. But other services may not operate to increase politicization and instead are effective at supporting basic needs, as with Yerbateros's food hall or free school tutoring provided. And some resources are not meant to politicize but to fulfill children's requirements for play, such as dancing *dinámicas* at meetings in Bellavista or Amauta's volleyball workshops.⁷⁵



Figure 4.4. A, Ariana helping wash a younger girl's hands before lunch at Yerbateros; B, eating lunch after school at Yerbateros; C, local volunteer Gustavo playing chess at Amauta; D, doing homework after school at Amauta.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ *Dinámicas* are icebreakers. In MANTHOC Cajamarca, they are heavily relied on to keep members engaged in some of the more difficult or boring topics of activism.

⁷⁶ All images were taken with my phone in March 2018.

Support networks provide MANTHOCas with tangible and intangible benefits. For the tangible parts, there are physical spaces and places that are available to members and these contain the possibility of meals, free tutoring, workshops, an organizing space, and people who can help with political or school projects. These are tangible benefits because they provide working children and youth with a material good or service and are a space for positive community-building. As a way of adapting the movement to provide for the concrete and abstract needs of their members, each site votes at the beginning of the school year for the projects and workshops that members would like to attend and participate in. Projects are chosen by each group or base and are voted on by representatives in the national assembly. Groups and bases then get together and form a time line of events and workshops concerning topics they want to mobilize toward.

MANTHOC spaces in Lima play a cohesive role in providing concrete and political support for its members. Since Lima's public schools are more numerous, quality education in traditional tracks (morning classes) are easier to find there than in rural areas. So the physical space of Yerbateros and Amauta where I visited are used mostly to accommodate MANTHOCxs' educational needs and personal development. Collaborators and delegates form relationships with local volunteers who are willing to provide free weekly workshops and free tutoring for movement members. Every day at Yerbateros, kids can eat at a reduced rate, and every day at Amauta they get a snack before workshops begin. Most of the movement-building processes occur at each location before *lonche*, or snack time. On most Saturdays, MANTHOCxs in Lima hold events or

base meetings where they discuss campaign strategies and then have a nice lunch marking the end of the day's movement-building.

As mentioned earlier, the structures of groups and bases differ regionally from Lima and Cajamarca, such that Lima is more service oriented, and Cajamarca is service oriented at the MANTHOC school.⁷⁷ Thus Lima's MANTHOC bases act largely as service providers and centers for organizing, whereas Cajamarca's organizing takes precedence in the group meetings, but services are provided in bulk at their primary school. Here, MANTHOC's Jesus Worker School is dedicated to teaching an alternative viewpoint of dignified work and education and at once discursively maintains the movement but also provides students with intangible benefits. The school provides traditional and technical educational support in addition to meeting the needs of their students with meals, doctor's appointments, and soccer tournaments.

The effects of receiving concrete and abstract support results in the formation of a collective that benefits the members and society more broadly. The primary school infrastructurally values children's worker identity and builds up rights consciousness through observing legislation that concern their freedoms. Their *formación* is written on the wall and practiced in examples that teachers and children set for each other.

⁷⁷ The MANTHOC school in Cajamarca provides a space where child and adult community members can gather to find resources that local government agencies do not provide to the area. While the school acts as one of many MANTHOC spaces that provide resources, the majority of the movement-building that occurs in Cajamarca takes place in the city lodgings at the base's headquarters. This base is where events occur and where delegates meet to discuss and work through larger issues to bring back to their local groups.



Figure 4.5. *A*, International Women's Health Day, supplying free vaccinations to community mothers; *B*, presenting regional dishes and dances in the auditorium of a local school; *C*, supporting the cognitive development of children with alternative education and a physical space; *D*, organizing at the MANTHOC primary school space to enact a citizen consultation concerning a National Educative Project for 2036.⁷⁸

¿Cómo Llegaste a Conocer al MANTHOC? (How Did You Come to Know MANTHOC)?

Although Aynoa appeared to embody MANTHOC's values, she did not join the movement with political motivations. Her journey with the movement began when she was six years old; a schoolmate told her about the organization. In an interview, she explained how she originally attended to take part in fun activities and crafts. Then over time, she became more comfortable with other movement children. Aynoa gradually spent more time at the Yerbateros house, doing homework and eating lunch in

⁷⁸ *A* was taken with my phone, May 2018; *B* is from a collaborator's Facebook page, August 2018; *C* is from May 2018; *D* is from MANTHOC's Facebook page, June 2019.

MANTHOC's dining room. She felt like she wanted to help where she could, mediating members' issues, resolving arguments, and tutoring younger members. She came to understand the movement's purpose through becoming more involved in leadership roles alongside her required attendance at *formación*.⁷⁹ She noted how her politicization increased on the day her collaborator Rosario requested that she fill in for Yomaira, a child leader, which led her to gain access to an even broader child-led space of the CCONNA. About this experience at CCONNA, Aynoa told me:

So, when I started, well, I didn't know about all the issues that were being discussed. It was a while before I took them on, because I had no experience like other kids, who had taken training workshops. Because well, Rosario put her, all trust in me, right? To be able to represent them, because she told me, "Aynoa you have to go," that "Yomaira is not here, she will not go anymore" and I was telling her, "But no, I am not qualified to go, I'm afraid, I don't know how, I have never been to a meeting," and she said, "No, you are going to go with Reynerio, and you will gain experience," and everything. She told me, "I know you can," [so] I told her, "All right."

Despite her nervousness, and never having occupied the position of delegate, Aynoa made the effort to attend and truly appreciated the inclusivity of CCONNA. She noted how she attended and liked seeing "other kids who already had experiences there, seeing them, what they talked about, [how they] participated . . . so, for me it was like, I

⁷⁹ *Formación* are cultural trainings that MANTHOCxs attend to get to know the movement's principles, but they are also workshops that elevate children's capacity to navigate power in terms of their worker identity and the issues that concern working children. Some examples are trainings in public speaking, consciousness-raising about laws and codes both local and international, and many other lessons that could benefit movement members outside the confines of their groups and bases.

fell deeper in love with MANTHOC, I wanted to come more frequently; I wanted to go to the meetings more often. Um, to form myself, like any kid from here” (Aynoa, interview with the author, 2018). Even as she came into the movement with little to no political ties to MANTHOC’s message, over time, she became enamored of the movement’s rhetoric and practices. Her trajectory to becoming an arbiter of MANTHOC’s values is not an uncommon story.

The more Aynoa attended the movement for concrete resources like food, shelter, and homework help, the more she sought abstract support for her personal development. In time, she became aware of the importance of the movement’s political message and sought to assert her own rights, rather than have them dictated. Aynoa’s politicizing processes were possible because of the concrete and abstract supports that MANTHOC offered her as member.

Like Aynoa, the girls in the following stories demonstrate a gradual politicization, as girls begin to occupy movement spaces. Girls often enter MANTHOC without having formulated an association with their worker identity and the movement’s politics. By word of mouth, and out of curiosity for what the space holds, working and nonworking girls enter the movement because of their personal aims or the motivations of a parent or older sibling. Although there are regional differences between Lima and Cajamarca in how MANTHOC operates, I found that girls came to know MANTHOC without necessarily knowing the movement’s purpose or having political leanings. The following are accounts of MANTHOCas and the different ways they came to know the movement.

As Jhoselyn, a tall fourteen-year-old from Jesus, a town outside Cajamarca city, told me on the steps of the lodgings at the Cajamarca base, she came to know the

movement through studying at the Jesus Worker School, a MANTHOC-run school.⁸⁰ Sitting outside the lunchroom before a workshop began, she explained, “I started to organize there in the groups that are in the school. Uh, I was made delegate of my school group . . . I participated in the meetings that were here [at the MANTHOC Cajamarca house]. Then I was elected as a regional delegate. I have also been here, and for right now, the charge that I am assuming [is that] I am a national delegate” (Jhoselyn, interview by the author, 2018). Jhoselyn’s progression into the movement was supported by her attendance at the MANTHOC school.

Like Jhoselyn, sisters SoyLuna and Mariposa, ten and seventeen years old, respectively, came to know the movement from their initial attendance at the MANTHOC school. SoyLuna commented, “It’s because of my sister, she had studied there, and I wanted to know more about MANTHOC, and I would gather here to form part of her group. So, then I got to know the meaning of MANTHOC, about everything . . . it’s nice” (SoyLuna, interview with the author, 2018). In her case, the influence of her big sister made SoyLuna want to join the group, *Fé y Amor por un Mundo Mejor* (Faith and Love for a Better World). There she dived deeper into her politicization and how her worker identity was dignifying. For these three girls, their worker identity was instituted by their participation in their immersive school environment and then later the individual groups. SoyLuna started school because of her sister’s enrollment and then wanted to be part of her sister’s group, out of curiosity. Mariposa and Jhoselyn joined the school,

⁸⁰ The Jesus Worker School is so named because it emphasizes the dignity of the working child Jesus of Nazareth. It offers the municipal and national educational standards of a public primary school institution while also teaching technical skills that dignify children as workers.

which taught them to perceive their everyday work as dignifying labor, and then they chose to separately join movement-building groups.

For groups that form outside the MANTHOC school in Cajamarca, such as the Bellavista neighborhood's group, on the outskirts of the city, an introduction to the movement for girls like thirteen-year-old Xiomara came by way of a collaborator's persistence. Xiomara elucidated how her mom "took me out for a stroll, we were almost at the edge of our house [when] Nilita showed up, and we have been [at MANTHOC] since we were little, since we were five or six years old." Affectionately calling her "Nilita," Xiomara describes how her collaborator Nila would come by every day to talk to the working children and their parents about joining MANTHOC. This persistence paid off when eventually, as Xiomara remarked, "my mom slowly began to trust Nilita, and like that, slowly we began coming [to the meetings]. I love Nilita a lot, she's like my third mother" (Xiomara, interview with the author, 2018). The care Nila demonstrated for Xiomara and her mother provided the grounding through which Xiomara came to be a founding member of a MANTHOC group from a young age.

Like Xiomara, fourteen-year-old Ke Muin Ha recalls her experience of getting to know the movement through meeting Nila: "So, when we were all small, she arrived. So, she began to get us together . . . she talked to us about MANTHOC, and talked about the importance that it had, what occurred there. So, I was pleased and said, 'OK,' because I like to participate, I like to be active" (Ke Muin Ha, interview with the author, 2018). In Ke Muin Ha's retelling of meeting Nila, it seems that she needed convincing to join the group. Once the movement's purpose was explained to her, Ke Muin Ha became an avid

contributor to the organization; her political motivation arose from learning the purpose of the movement.

In another example, adult collaborator Adela was at the root of what brought working children into the movement in Encañada. Ten-year-old Estrellita Lunar and Estrellita Marina both heard about Adela from Estrellita Lunar's eight-year-old sister, Belen. Estrellita Lunar described what happened: "I went to public speaking class one day, [and] I didn't know [that] my little sister stayed here, [where] we used to do our MANTHOC house. Belen . . . said [to me], 'A teacher has come.' 'What?' I said. 'Yes, she will come every Wednesday.' [I responded,] 'Oh, OK, I want to meet her.' [Belen] said [to me,] surprised. I met [Adela] there. She made me very happy" (Estrellita Lunar, interview with the author, 2018).⁸¹

Out of curiosity and with the novelty of Adela's visit, the girls began attending meetings. Although Adela came as an adult representative of the movement, the children in the town labeled her as a teacher, and that label almost instantly made her appear approachable and trustworthy. In the same way that Adela captivated the attention of local children in Encañada, Yovana started a group an hour and a half away from Cajamarca in San Marcos.

The San Marcos girls whom I interviewed joined the movement by chance, as Yovana asked one of their parents to borrow a space to convene local children. Soon, Yovana too was being called a teacher. Eleven-year-old Abril remembers that "one day, the teacher came up to a friend of mine and her sister and asked if she could borrow a

⁸¹ The reason it looks like I inserted so many contextual words in this quote is because the way Estrellita Lunar, and many other small Cajamarcan children, speak is by reenacting conversations to get at what occurred. So in telling me this story, she is repeating an experience.

house, we could, so we lent Yovanita space to teach the kids.” Abril invited her best friend, twelve-year-old Milagros, and both girls joined the movement from that point. Because the space where the meetings would be held was her family’s property, Abril willingly spread the word about MANTHOC to her friends and schoolmates to have more people to share in the fun and participate in activities.

Milagros described the fun they had during meetings: “At times we do crafts, sometimes the teacher will say, ‘Go to recess,’ [there] we thrash about on turf and play” (Milagros, interview with the author, 2018). Girls joining the movement began by chance, but their joy at having a place to be free and enjoyably pass the time led to the growth of their group. The distance to San Marcos and Encañada from Cajamarca meant that both Yovana and Adela sought to establish the groups in such a way that they could be largely self-sufficient and locally run. Once the groups are established in an area, they as collaborators rely on the elected delegates and the groups to run themselves. As the adults who facilitate the activities, they still bring healthy *refrigerios* (snacks, usually a banana and a small round of bread) but begin stepping back to enable the groups to act as the living child-led movement.

For the MANTHOCas like Esperanza at the Amauta base in Lima, a large draw to the movement was the concrete advantage of a study space to work on a school project. Esperanza commented, “I got here by way of a friend . . . since we had to work on a [school] project, at my house we couldn’t, in hers neither. She told me, ‘I know a place where we can do our homework,’ and she brought me to MANTHOC” (Esperanza, interview with the author, 2018). This free space to do work with complimentary tutoring was considered a significant attraction among many MANTHOCas.

Similarly, fourteen-year-old Brigitte was working selling cleaning supplies alongside her grandmother at a market stall when a group of MANTHOCxs and their collaborators recruited her from her workplace. She explained, “Well, what I know is that there was a call for kids in MANTHOC, and I was already in the market [working] at that time, and since it was in the market, um, kids from MANTHOC came here with the same collaborators who were there at that time [in MANTHOC] and they came closer to the market. And they went about looking for kids, and that’s when they found me” (Brigitte, interview with the author, 2018). Brigitte waited for the MANTHOCxs to find her in the market, but she laughingly added that she “had friends that were already in MANTHOC” and that they had previously talked lovingly about their “MANTHOC” and told her they would be coming to the market. Brigitte came to know her movement base through her friend’s dedication to recruit her as a member. She had already heard about MANTHOC previously, but was finally convinced to join so that she could have fun and hang out with her friends.

Networks of support work in concert to maintain the movement and to do so by integrating different groups of children who might not come from the same geographical area. For instance, before heading to the 2018 #8M International Working Women’s Day march, members from Villa El Salvador, Surquillo, and Ate gathered at Yerbateros to prepare for the march. They all ate dinner at Yerbateros together while some members finished up protest posters. They worked on *lemas* (marching chants) and tried to remember the ones they had picked up from 13A and 12A marches.⁸² Once fed and holding their posters, the MANTHOCxs left as a group for downtown Lima to march.

⁸² The 13A march was the NiUnaMenos march on August 13, 2016; 12A was the NiUnaMenos march on August 12, 2017. See appendix D for protest posters from each event.

Girls come into the movement for myriad reasons, but the reason why the movement continues to exist is because of the maintainers—the children and youth who stay to lead and drive MANTHOC in co-determined directions.

¿Por Qué Te Quedaste? (Why Did You Stay?)

Girls at varying levels of involvement in the movement had differing opinions about why they decided to stay after their initial contact with MANTHOC. Celeste, a twelve-year-old from the Amauta base, said that at first, being a three-year-old among older children, she felt “embarrassed because I did not know anyone,” but then “little by little I began developing [myself] and I met many people” (Celeste, interview with the author, 2018). To “develop” oneself means to grow up in the movement and to share in the services that MANTHOC provides. By being present, forming relationship in the movement, and following the base’s expectations (set for children by children), Celeste felt comfortable making friends and being in the community more broadly. Some girls stay in MANTHOC because they want to be close to their friends and family. At times this means that support for working children’s advocacy comes second to holding on to community ties that give them “services.” As the principles of the movement become embodied through group interactions, many MANTHOCas begin to express a political disposition.

For instance, even as Celeste was busy with schoolwork and domestic work in her home, as well as being the flag carrier for her school’s guard, she made time for MANTHOC in the balance of her responsibilities. Through organizing their many obligations, MANTHOCas demonstrate a capacity to prioritize what they find most pertinent to their growth as people. Celeste’s reality in staying in the movement was to

incorporate herself as part of the group and, over time, *desarrollandose* until she eventually became an ardent MANTHOCa through her connection to kids in her base.⁸³ She came to the movement for access to concrete resources and protection, because of meeting the needs of an older relative, and she stayed in the group because she came to appreciate a broader benefit around access to power and solidarity.⁸⁴ Staying to be trained in MANTHOC's values speaks to how girls understand the movement's benefit in their lives in more abstract ways, like their futurity.

In cementing their bonds as members by forming friendships, they become enamored with the movement's goals and how these pertain to their individual and collective futures. Even as girls may not come into the movement with political ambitions or firmly held ideologies, they begin to take the movement and its people seriously. Girls' political interest in the organization grows out of the projects that the movement pushes forward, which makes the girls feel a sense of solidarity with children experiencing similar forms of subordination.

Participating in these activities is often the reason why girls stay in MANTHOC. For Aynoa, knowledge of the movement came from her two friends who would lovingly talk about their "MANTHOC" to her at school. But she decided to stay and assist younger kids with homework or help out in the kitchen and liked engaging in these acts of kindness. For her part, Aynoa's active role got her elected as house delegate for Yerbateros. She commented, "As we see, there are not many volunteers in the house, and

⁸³ In Peruvian Spanish, *desarrollandose* literally means "developing oneself," but it refers to both developing cognitively and ageing into maturity.

⁸⁴ If the older relative with needs to be met is also a child, this incorporation into a child-led movement such as MANTHOC can seem even more special, as authority does not fall into the hands of adults necessarily. In chapter 5, I will discuss this navigating of adult power by MANTHOCas.

we are a lot of kids, around fifty kids, then, it is not enough to be attending one by one and all” (Aynoa, interview with the author, 2018). Aynoa’s eagerness to support other members created a routine that made her reliable in the structure of the organization. Over time, this active participation in the daily actions of the organization by her and a few other girls made her responsible for the movement’s growth and enabled her to develop the skills necessary to becoming elected as a delegate. While seemingly routine, the habit of helping out becomes comforting to MANTHOCas who begin to develop relationships with their peers as their interest in the movement’s processes blossom.

The resources that Esperanza sought were concrete when she joined; subsequently her involvement led to the political consciousness that she, like other girls, developed over time through participation. She elucidated how her interest in MANTHOC grew: “I went every day, when I worked on Tuesdays and Thursdays, whenever it was happening. I went all the time; then it was like, I think, a little less than half a year and [when] Susana started taking me to meetings. So, I knew more about that, so I wanted to go more and more and more. That’s how I was, almost a year and then I think [around] December, I became a delegate” (Esperanza, interview with the author, 2018). This feeling of wanting “more and more and more” involvement in the movement activities came through when Esperanza described the atmosphere of the base: “It’s really fun here, because besides being very fun, [there are] practical workshops for everyone, like the *zampoña* [panpipe] workshop, soccer, and all that.”

Despite having to attend to further responsibilities and obligations, Xiomara illuminated how seeing her fellow members getting elected house delegates inspired her to set her aspirations higher. She no longer wanted to be a regular member in the

movement. “I always wanted to be a delegate, I loved it, I loved it, I loved it! Because I saw how Rr and Ke Muin Ha left and I wanted it to be me [too], until they became regional delegates for their effort. And well, so little by little I made myself noticeable to everyone . . . I attended twice a day” (Xiomara, interview with the author, 2018). In her effort to be elected delegate, Xiomara participated in many events that her group collaborated on with the larger Cajamarca base. One of these was the national #NiUnaMenos rally, where she and her group joined other MANTHOCxs to march through the streets singing protest songs to stand against gendered violence and machismo.

Xiomara’s political interest grew out of her participation in these accountability campaigns. She explained why she attended: “We wanted to defend the rights of women, because we are seeing our country, about its women, the men who beat the women, the women who are being attacked by men. And that’s why we all got together and went to that march and attended, and we started singing some songs to defend the women, and it was very nice” (Xiomara, interview with the author, 2018). Marching to halt male violence and doing *réplicas* (staged presentations) in schools are ways in which girls most visibly represent the message of their movement. The problem of battered women and beaten girls, the outcome often being femicide, is close to MANTHOCas’ hearts, as the threat of being subjected to sexual and physical abuse is ever present in Peru. The nationwide cry of agony for murdered girls and women, among them Jimena Villeneda Ruiz and Eyvi Ágrede, has become a weekly reminder to raise MANTHOCas’ consciousness of the constant threat of violence.⁸⁵ To reduce the amount of sexual

⁸⁵ Information in Spanish about the marches that took place in response to the deaths of Jimena Villeneda Ruiz and Eyvi Ágrede is available at <https://rpp.pe/lima/actualidad/hoy-se-realiza-la-marcha-por-la->

violence and femicide, MANTHOCas lobby and rally against social conservatives attempting to block the incorporation of integrative sexual health education in the national curriculum.⁸⁶ As one movement in a sea of many, MANTHOC seeks to build solidaristic bridges in addressing the taboo of sexual violence against girls with other groups of activists, among them parents and feminists. Through sometimes daily interactions with movement members and adult collaborators, MANTHOCas' participation in these kinds of overtly political movement activities steep them in societal issues that affect them and women and girls outside their organization.

Girls like Xiomara participate in the marches because they are fun or “nice” to do; however, when they participate in a political march and stand up for themselves and other girls they are also forming their political outlooks. Political mobilization becomes an ordinary, normalized part of the MANTHOC community. In being involved in the daily ruminations of the movement, Xiomara set her sights on taking on more responsibilities as a delegate of her group. To be a delegate did not mean that she had to be politically motivated. She did need to be willing to be accountable for her group, her base, her region, or the nation, to become further enmeshed in the movement.

Unlike Xiomara, Brigitte already had friends in the movement before she joined, but similarly, the reasons she stayed were political. “Bit by bit I began to like [MANTHOC]. Well, the way it is, you could say that they’re . . . because it deals with political things, and for children . . . I at that time was nine years old and, and well, you

memoria-de-la-nina-violada-y-asesinada-noticia-1104031 (Villeneda Ruiz) and <https://rpp.pe/lima/actualidad/eyvi-agreda-agrupaciones-feministas-convocan-marcha-ante-el-poder-judicial-noticia-1126571> (Eyvi Ágreda).

⁸⁶ For information in English on the efforts of social conservatives to block sexual and reproductive health education in the national curriculum, see <https://www.peruviantimes.com/16/conservatives-make-new-efforts-to-remove-gender-focus-from-government-education-program/31056/>.

could say that it was not what I usually dealt with, right? And well, but, bit by bit I adapted to it. And I liked it, because here I played with the kids that came, and I ate lunch, and I did my homework, there were collaborators who supported me; and I also felt happy being here” (Brigitte, interview with the author, 2018). Brigitte’s participation in the movement involved experiences of receiving encouragement through having basic and more complex needs met by MANTHOC. Like Esperanza, once Brigitte recognized the movement’s benefits, she “became interested much more about, about what [MANTHOC] was about, ‘how is this going to help me?’ so, that’s how I began to get close to MANTHOC and that’s when I became a delegate” (Esperanza, interview with the author, 2018). Some of the girls I interviewed grew to be even more enmeshed in the movement by running for the position of delegate. Delegates and nondelegates alike are meant to push forward the case of dignified work through direct action campaigns.

While the ultimate purpose of the movement is to advocate for working children’s right to dignified work, the functioning of systems of support and provision⁸⁷ is important to the overall maintenance of the organization and the well-being of its members. These concrete and political networks of support allow MANTHOCas to become resilient and inhabit multiple roles in the movement.

Collective Agency as Sustaining the Movement

For the Instituto de Formación para Educadores de Jóvenes, Adolescentes y Niños Trabajadores (Training Institute for Educators of Working Children, Youth, and

⁸⁷ For MANTHOC, part of what makes the political work of the movement successful is in its capacity to provide material goods and services to its members. Their participation in the movement does not necessarily beget these resources, but allows for members to thrive despite difficult economic and political circumstances. Though their use of food, shelter, and play, are not the point of the movement, their use is part of a larger political project for children’s overall wellbeing, which contributes to the MANTHOC’s collective consciousness.

Adolescents, IFEJANT), *protagonismo* is a model for criticizing “dominant cultures.” They write, ““In a temporal sense, before speaking of social subjects or political actors, NNATS’ PROTAGOMISMO was spoken about in opposition to the condition of social concealment which, along with the rest of childhood was relegated by the dominant cultures; citing and denying the social role of children”” (Cussianovich 2016).⁸⁸

This does not mean that *protagonismo* is in opposition to Northern conceptualizations of agency; rather, it is a critique of dominant cultures’ notions of children. In the use of *protagonismo*, the movement pushes against the dominant conceptions of children’s incapacity, weakness, and social exclusion that are so ingrained from centuries of domination. It can be a dynamic way of perceiving citizenship. It is also necessary for the prolongation of critical, complex, emancipatory, and decolonizing thought (Cussianovich 2016, 131–32).

Since *protagonismo* is a notion that has been taken up by Latin American social movements, and children in particular, it may be helpful to view a similar concept, called *presencing*. I borrow this term from Indigenous scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, who views this notion as defining decolonizing processes that are meant to be nurtured by collective advocacy and mobilization for Indigenous resurgence (2011, 11). To *presence* could be thought of reflexively as inserting oneself into others’ experiences, stories, and understandings. For instance, in her book *Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back* Simpson recounts her visceral reaction to watching Indigenous artist Rebecca Belmore perform. Belmore’s performance acted as a suspension of colonial time and space, whereby

⁸⁸ This quote can be found in Cussianovich 2016, it comes from a booklet: *Jóvenes y niños trabajadores: Sujetos sociales, Ser Protagonistas* (IFEJANT 1998).

Simpson was reminded of her presence as that of Belmore's and Belmore's power as her own (98).

Presencing can also be conceptualized as a form of meaning-making that takes users time to learn, because they must endure living the knowledge, to know it. This is to say that even as elders may tell stories to make points, these points will not be fully understood until listeners or the audience undergo their own experience to know the point for themselves. Simpson notes, "Indigenous thought can only be learned through the personal; this is because our greatest influence is on ourselves, and because living in a good way is an incredible disruption of the colonial metanarrative in and of itself. In a system requiring presence, the only way to learn is to live and demonstrate those teachings through a personal embodiment of *mino bimaadiziwin* [the good life]" (41–42). The very act of presencing, as Simpson makes clear, is being erased by modernizing "consumer culture." She notes how the "good life" is corrupted by one's living as an assimilated or a colonized person (*zhaaganashiiyaadizi*), which Simpson notes to be "a culture of *absence*" because of requiring want to perpetuate itself (92–93, 141–43). This is critical, because a culture of absence will run out if it cannot be commodified, but a society of "doing" will make its own meaning.

Protagonismo is not presencing in exact form, yet each involves very similar processes, which are meant to disrupt the neocolonial order that persists throughout the world. Presencing in the movement serves to enhance and reinforce cultural understandings for MANTHOCas.⁸⁹ That is, through the use of material trainings like

⁸⁹ When I say that presencing can be a way of understanding how MANTHOCas gain intangible resources from their movement, I am relating this insofar as I understand how most organized working girls reach a critical valuation of themselves through their plural identities. In a related way, Simpson's decolonizing Indigenous thought deals with the resurgence of Nishnaabeg peoples, and other Indigenous peoples more

formación and immaterial resources like belonging, friendship, and solidarity, girls find empowerment through a presencing fostered by the use of *protagonismo*. MANTHOCas presence by inserting themselves in one another's stories of work, gendered inequality, and environmental degradation, to assume responsibilities as a collective. They also employ their *protagonismo* to "do" and engage in processes that create meaning. Meaning-making can be produced through any number of interactions. Whether they occur in the movement space or outside it, girls have the opportunity to presence politically through screaming *lemas* during a protest or a march.⁹⁰ They can also dance in their meetings to *dinámicas*, which bring their groups closer together, or be present with their friend's issues or problems in the movement.

Further, MANTHOCas presence through movement's campaigns for living the "good life (in Quechua, *sumak kawsay*). The way to live *sumak kawsay* is to live in a way that furthers movement conceptions of childhood, a temporarily nonassimilated way through the use of *protagonismo*.⁹¹ Deploying their *protagonismo* through public engagements, projects, assemblies, and retreats, MANTHOCas remind one another of their shared and individual power—of the collective. Although the work of presencing takes time, and not all MANTHOCxs reach the same levels of understanding about the movement, each child is capable of protagonic action. This is because MANTHOC's projects reflect the urgent and long-standing desires of working children and youth for a

broadly. Culture, as Simpson discusses, is a "series of interrelated processes that engage our full beings and require our full presence" (2011, 141). In this way, though MANTHOC is not a "culture," it acts as a microcosm of a decolonized possibility.

⁹⁰ *Lemas* are chants. Many girls told me that their favorite *lema* was one that was shouted during International Working Women's Day.

⁹¹ I say "temporarily nonassimilated" because as an intuition of MANTHOC's founding, the promotion of a childhood where children are the progenitors of their expressed interests and lived experiences could become more normative over time.

better quality of life, which guide the movement's purpose. The way I conceive of this kind of *protagonismo* is as a mechanism for accountability that works in MANTHOC through collective agency. Jessica Taft notes how working children's movements in Peru use *protagonismo* to highlight children's collective agency in their political and social life (2019a, 62). I define *collective agency* as it exists in MANTHOC as a diverse interconnected assemblage of energies, motivations, goals, and activities that function to propel the movement. These entanglements produce the kind of politicization that is layered and maintains the movement for current and future MANTHOCxs. Girls in MANTHOC become politicized through several processes that come from both inside and outside the movement. They participate in activities that are expressly meant to generate a political agenda to reproduce the kinds of childhoods they want to see locally and globally. They also become enmeshed in the small-*p* politics of their movement through entering because of a variety of resource-driven motivations.

In this chapter, I have asked how MANTHOCas in the study become political. I observed how girls in the movement do not join with political ideations, but over time, the concrete and abstract resources that the movement provides allow MANTHOCas to take up political causes. Whether it be with their movement's main purpose of advancing working children's rights or parallel campaigns to either eliminate violence against girls or stop the degradation of the environment through the movement's cultural trainings, which engender girls' capacity for presencing, they begin to embody the movement's values and critically reflect on their place in the world. This practice of inserting themselves into one another's stories is incorporated into their sense of autonomy in performing protagonic actions. These actions, in turn, foster a sense of collective agency,

with each individual experiencing different ways of participating in the movement, maintaining the richness of the movement in terms of diversity and plurality of understandings.

The processes that engender understanding among MANTHOCas is furthered through interactions between nonmovement children and adults, as well as helpful adults who support their movement. In the following chapter, the intergenerational aspect of the movement will be explored in the ways that MANTHOCas navigate adult power.

CHAPTER 5: ALTERING CONSCIOUSNESS

On a Monday evening at the Amauta base in Lima, Susana, an adult collaborator, burst through the back door of the house, announcing that a group of volunteers could no longer help with the mural painting event for Amnesty International that was planned for the following Saturday. I had previously mentioned Sr. Rojas's son, Carlos Andres, a graffiti artist and illustrator, and as Sr. Rojas's car pulled up, Susana asked Thalia and Alexandra, two delegates of the house, to approach Sr. Rojas and ask whether his son could assist in the mural. Susana explained to them how they must impress on this man the immediacy of Saturday's event and how his son's help would be much appreciated. I walked out in the middle of a plea to Sr. Rojas, both girls taking turns explaining their positions in the organization and the mural's importance. Sr. Rojas assured them that once the car hit the curve in the road, where the cell phone signal comes back, he would call his son.⁹² The girls shook his hand and bade us farewell.

That Wednesday I returned with Carlos to show him the wall. But before we could show him the space, we were tasked with helping children with their homework. I could sense his frustration, having waited to finally gaze upon the wall. He explained that for the project to take only a few hours on Saturday, the wall had to be whitened before the weekend.⁹³ This would mean that the whole wall would be bare of *chicha* posters and cleaned to administer a white base paint.⁹⁴ On Saturday, upon arriving at the space again,

⁹² As we made our way down the street, Sr. Rojas pulled out his phone and spoke with Carlos. He told Carlos, "We'll discuss it after dinner," and hung up. On the way back to my district, Sr. Rojas told me he felt compelled to act, because the girls presented him with a tone of urgency that he could not refuse. As luck would have it, Carlos spent that night lying on his bed, going back and forth on the time pressure of this proposition; after speaking with his father, he eventually agreed to help with the mural.

⁹³ Whitening a wall requires applying white base paint that allows layers of other mediums like spray, latex, or nonlatex paints to be applied on top with success and distinction. If there is no white base, or a kind of base, it is often difficult to see murals on brick buildings.

⁹⁴ *Chicha* posters are advertisements for upcoming musical performances. They are multicolored in neon paints with black backgrounds and are often plastered repeatedly on walls all over Peru.

we noticed how the wall had not been whitened or cleaned, and that the posters were barely cleared away. This caused notable anxiety and stress for Carlos, as the wall was not prepared for the day's mural event, but we did notice a group of Amauta members like Alexandra and Silvia playing around as they picked off posters from the wall.

While I put my things down and helped the kids tear pieces of weathered paper off the wall, I noticed Aynoa, Ariana, and Valeria from Yerbateros by my side helping Susana watch and play with Lara, Alexandra's sister. They shared that they all took the bus and *combis* together to get to Amauta on time, and Carlos made a beeline over to Susana to emphasize that the white base had to be bought and applied right away for the wall to dry in time to make the mural. She heard him out and walked over to Alexandra and Ariana to tell them about the wall situation.

Carlos and I were escorted to various hardware stores until we could collect the bag of white powder for the base and enough colors of spray paint for the project. When we returned to the house, more Amauta members had arrived along with Jon and Jaime, members from the Villa El Salvador (VES) base. As Sayuri and Estrella, thirteen and eleven, assisted Carlos in mixing the base paint to add to the wall, the rest of us, twelve kids and two adults, were tasked with clearing and cleaning the wall. Once the wall was cleaned and the first stroke of base paint was rolled on, a *combi* full of MANTHOCxs arrived with Paty, their collaborator, from the Yerbateros base. As Jon, Estrella, Carlos, and I took turns laying on the base in two coats, Aynoa discussed wall design with VES members and Franco, a national delegate.

Their shared concern dealt with embodying the Es Mi Cuerpo campaign without directly writing those words. Initially, Alexandra had printed out an image of a pregnant

girl to employ scare tactics about the “dangers of teen pregnancy.” Franco, who had a lot of experience in the movement and its messaging, kept coming back to the notion that this wall had to be eye catching, but also inviting. Laughingly he shouted out, “What do we say?!” As Alexandra and Ariana finished the second coat and Chiara arrived with a friend to help with the mural, I walked over to Franco’s group and suggested they look at the #NiUnaMenos or #JimenaRenace hashtags. While Valeria debriefed the newcomers on the status of the wall, I suggested to Aynoa and Franco that they look up feminist slogans from groups in Peru that also organized around those campaigns, so they might find some inspiration in those hashtags.

Carlos, ready for the idea to come to fruition, came up to me to relay messages for Susana or “whoever was in charge.” Knowing that Carlos had the best intention in mind, I went over to Franco and Aynoa again. Along with Paty and Susana, the MANTHOC delegates took turns looking up slogans about sexual and reproductive rights. In the end, they decided to go with the slogan of the Es Mi Cuerpo campaign, “Mi Cuerpo, Mis Derechos” (My Body, My Rights). Collectively, the MANTHOCxs and Carlos discussed the layout of the wall, how the letters would center around two figures, emphasizing the girl in the front but including a boy as well. Carlos mixed colors for MANTHOCxs’ work to make handprints and fill the spaces between the bubble letters.⁹⁵ Kids laughed, joked

⁹⁵ As Carlos got to work in the growing morning heat, many children sought the shade to watch him graffiti the bubble letters while other kids wrote their names underneath the words. At around eleven fifteen, we heard the noise from a bandstand down the narrow street we worked on; notably for Carlos, the progress of the project would be delayed because of “this interruption.” We were in the months preceding a mayoral election, and Somos Peru party affiliates walked through the streets handing out ice cream and comic book-style fliers about their candidate Zurek. Carlos kept working, looking disappointed at the disruption of the blaring horns, and commented on his disgust with “politicians.” The MANTHOCxs themselves welcomed the free ice cream and the break from hot work. As they began to settle down after their snack and the campaign demonstrations, Susana laughingly yelled, “We need many hands!” which were needed to redirect the lag that the break had created.

around, and spilled paint while playing tag, chasing each other to get paint on others' clothes, and thoroughly enjoying themselves despite the heat.

As the handprinters finished up, Carlos spray painted the figures in the middle of the words. Some children used excess pink paint to cover the wall adjacent to the mural. At this, Jon, Franco, and Analia grabbed paintbrushes and each used different colors to write and draw his or her own graffiti. Soon we were witness to two art projects, one being facilitated by an adult cooperator with a child-led movement and their collaborators, the other, unplanned and opportunistic, with only the children and youth to guide it. Franco drew an unfinished head with thoughts inside, while Aynoa wrote "PROTAGONISMO" in all capital letters on their pink wall.

As all this was happening, Valeria had been standing in the shade criticizing Carlos's style of art, making certain that other children heard her point of view. Alexandra and Ariana felt that it looked good, but the yellow color on the figures' faces made the characters looked "ill." Carlos approached the group to see if they appreciated the design. Alexandra and Ariana explained that they preferred that the yellow skin be changed to something more realistic. Carlos agreed to mix peach-colored paint and the girls carefully filled in the painted faces with small sponges. The mural was done by lunchtime and most of the kids got the inside of the base ready⁹⁶ while a few of us helped carry hot lunches from Susana's home kitchen a few streets away.⁹⁷ As we entered the space, I saw Paty painting "AMNESTY" almost as an afterthought in small stacked lettering on the leftmost side of the wall. At the completion of both murals, our group of twenty-

⁹⁶ There were almost twenty kids and two adults. Paty and her husband at that point were preparing for lunch, moving tables and getting forks and knives from the base's kitchen and washing hands and faces.

⁹⁷ While we were all doing the mural and worrying about its completion, Susana had enlisted her mother in cooking up a lunch of stewed chicken over rice with salad and dressing and, as a bonus, hot pepper sauce.

five MANTHOCxs and about five adults sat side by side for lunch, eating, joking, and talking about ordinary things and the fun we all had that day.



Figure 5.1. *A*, peeling off *chicha* posters; *B*, applying white base paint; *C*, Carlos mixing paint with Ariana and Silvia; *D*, Valeria walking along finished mural; *E*, Franco adding more information to the pink mural.

Although this day exemplified solidarity networks in action, the culmination of the mural project also displayed the critical importance of adults who assist and facilitate the MANTHOCxs' activities in the movement. The adults, such as Sr. Rojas and Carlos, who are not usually involved with these kinds of movements, may hold to a consciousness that aligns with notions around children's innocence or saving, and in these cases, MANTHOCas may use this worldview to manipulate with compassion, as with Sr. Rojas at the beginning of the event's planning. Yet there are also overt moments of hierarchical confusion for adults who are not accustomed to the child-led nature of the organization, as when Carlos did not know who was "in charge," to give logistical advice about the mural. Likewise, the adults who are deeply involved in the movement, like Susana and Paty, are meant to function as helpful, but not overbearing, a skill that takes time to perfect. It is also a skill that may be seen as strange in a social structure where the subordination of children has been normalized through colonial practice.

This day also exemplified how MANTHOCxs' use of *protagonismo* can culminate in a project like that of the mural. Ties are forged in relationships between movement members, their collaborators, and local consultants/partners, as well as international NGOS. Painting the mural was not simply about buying paint and performing the task; it was also an effort that required multiple layers of action and the fostering of new and previous relationships. These relationships, like those between Susana and me, then my connection with Sr. Rojas and that of his son, Carlos, work to provision and support the movement's maintenance. In an effort to uphold their

movement knowledges and Andean roots, MANTHOCxs treat this assemblage of nonmovement adults and children equitably. This project of sustaining coalitions enables MANTHOCas to promote their way of navigating typically hierarchical situations between themselves and adults in power. The day's activities and use of their collective agency by way of *protagonismo* can be further theorized by analyzing Chela Sandoval's (2000) five technologies of resistance from her text *Methodology of the Oppressed*.

This chapter will apply Sandoval's technologies to explore the various techniques that MANTHOCas use to resist, speak to, and work through power as autonomous girl organizers. For the purposes of this dissertation, it is important to note how Sandoval reorients the work of Roland Barthes and Franz Fanon, to better inform the decoding and reframing of power structures using a set of methods that she calls the "methodology of the oppressed." Her goal is to have oppressed readers identify these methods of opposition to strengthen their own ability to distinguish between differing kinds of consciousness and types of knowledge. She explains that these skills are like "mental weapons," which allow for more healthy and productive critical thinking around situations and places. I argue that though children generally use some of these technologies of resistance, MANTHOCas can employ all five. The girls do this by applying their knowledges from processes of politicization, to understand relationships of power and maintain their movement. By participating in activities that liberate through love and solidarity, they learn tools for navigating adult power structures, not widely available to girls who are not in the movement.

I ask the question, How do MANTHOCas navigate adult power? To get to this, I work through subquestions concerning adults' roles in the movement and how these

figure into MANTHOCas' ability to navigate power in broader society. For instance, when adults work with MANTHOC, how does their privilege have to be reckoned with (or is it?) to accommodate the spread of movement knowledges? How do the children negotiate hierarchies of age and is there a shift away from adult-centric power? As both cooperative adults and member children seek to facilitate the movement's child-led endeavors, I query, how do movement girls navigate power and counteract structures that may act to impede their movement's progress? Does the organization always empower movement girls above the adults? Are there instances where MANTHOCas are subsumed by adult authority?

Employing a Differential Consciousness

Sandoval (2000) expands on methods that could be used by oppressed groups to gain liberation; she calls these skills "technologies of resistance." Technologies she describes act like parts of a cycle, one that seeks to awaken the critical consciousness of the oppressed person(s). The first technology that Sandoval analyzes is semiotic perception, or *semiotics*. In semiotics, the acts of observation, reading, and interpretation of objects in culture help the subject distinguish signs of power. This is to say that the identification of oppressors and oppressive things lends itself to acknowledging how certain subjects make them feel like objects. For instance, a child may feel indignant for not being heard because of an adult's tokenism. The child's recognition of both the adult and the adult's words as signs of power is semiotics, because of their effect on the life of the child.

In the second technology, which Sandoval calls *deconstruction*, the mode by which an oppressed person runs into these meanings must be broken down to reorganize

the power and his or her place in it. In a way, the orientation of the dominant is laid bare. For example, children must reckon with their place in society, as a result of dealing with indignities because of their subject position in an adult-centric culture. This interpretation of signs of power and the reconfiguring of place in their minds allow children to enter a space of *meta-ideologizing*, or the third technology of resistance. For this third technology, identifications and the working out of power relations allow some children to mobilize “ideological weaponry” (114) to better survive their station. Here individuals who have traditionally been signified in oppression unmoor themselves from people who are signifiers, or those placing value on their life or position. A child may be defined as less valuable through his or her position as a young person, and by way of this technology, some children may choose to reframe their subject position and form their own definition, a form of counternarrative in attempting to take power back from society’s dominant conceptualization of them.

The fourth technology is what Sandoval calls *democratics*. Democratics occur in building up the technologies that allow for identifying, positioning, and rearranging the subject’s consciousness and then using what spatial arrangements are brought forth to act and foment change for the oppressed person’s benefit. To apply these concepts to MANTHOCas, the act of identifying their predicament, then reacting to it, and finally making sense of what has happened is not the end of their struggle with their issue. It is necessary to mentally tackle and overcome their concern by exercising their democratics to halt the cycle of oppression.

A problem that MANTHOCas face that is pertinent to how we can apply Sandoval’s democratics is how gendered violence is mapped onto the bodies of young

girls in particular. MANTHOCos may feel for the girl members, but their experience as boys make them at times unable to possibly understand the concerns, fears, or indignities that often negatively amplify the child subject position of MANTHOCas. Because MANTHOCas are girls, they have to at once contend with being marked as girl, young, laboring, and often poor. The conceptualization of girlhood in Peru places girls at once in a position as “innocents,” because of the influence of Catholicism during Spanish colonialism and current child-saving groups, and at once racializes them as valueless in the context of a globalized white supremacy. This intersectionality affects Peruvian girls’ persistence in a liminal and unsustainable duality, whereby they are made to appear socially incapable of knowing what’s in their best interest and at the same not valuable enough to protect.⁹⁸ Even within MANTHOC, democracies is difficult because of the different positionalities of girl and boy members, which are influenced by broader ideas of gender in Peruvian society.⁹⁹

MANTHOCas reach this position of democracies along with some of their male counterparts to regulate their rights and maintain their movement as a system for the future of marginal children. For new or inexperienced MANTHOCas in the movement, remembering the stories of how girls came to know MANTHOC, the use of democracies can be seen more superficially than that of not only girls who stayed but also those who chose to become more enmeshed in the movement. This means that these girls may have only up to four technologies that they were employing from the start. It is only when

⁹⁸ What is “valuable” in this particular definition is whatever adult society in Peru deems worth protecting. Given MANTHOCas intersecting identities as poor, working, and “of color,” their existence is seen in the greater public only when they are victims of rape, kidnapping, or femicide.

⁹⁹ If a girl is not in MANTHOC, she may still obtain the ability to navigate between technologies and even within the fifth, differential mode of consciousness. More research must be done concerning child-led and child-directed movements to see how these technologies are deployed or if they are used.

movement girls decide to close their proximity with MANTHOC's purpose that they become part of the system and at once obtain the fifth technology.

The four technologies function within the fifth technology, the *differential mode*. Here MANTHOCas can navigate their movement and trade between meaning systems. Although the differential mode of consciousness is reached, this expanding of ideologies is possible only by breaking through the systems of meaning. Individuals must make their way through the interstices between these systems, through the in-between places that exist outside categorization or fixed subjectivities. Often, this breaking through is painful, making individuals feel unruly or erratic because of their realization. Sandoval tries to better explain this process by referring to Barthes's rendering of reaching this cyberspace of consciousness. He reasoned that this exploration in liminality must feel akin to "falling in love" (Sandoval 2000, 140), the feeling of being untethered from reason and meaning to reach comfort with the unknown ahead. But all this pain in feeling, this unmooring, will lead to an even greater feeling of love. For oppressed persons who have gained access to the four technologies, the fifth can be reached only once they allow themselves to break through systems of categorization and drift in the abyss of subjectivity (142). For these five technologies to work well, they must be led with love.

For a MANTHOCa, over time, with more *formación*, working toward *protagonismo*, movement members gain the ability to detect shifts in power that affect their consciousness. In theory and often in practice, MANTHOCas who spend time in the movement can acquire Sandoval's differential mode by transcending the boundaries of adult space—in labor and in questioning their place as girl children in society and in childhood more broadly. One way MANTHOCas begin chipping away at these systems

of meaning and developing the differential mode of consciousness is by frequently interacting with adults and children at various levels of movement-building in child-led or child-directed spaces. Within the differential mode, children in the movement reorganize the position and role they must play in order to survive, contend with, or talk back to power.

In many ways, children outside the movement are capable of doing this mental task, to limit their danger or shift power structures to benefit their own outcomes. The difference between these groups of children is that the differential mode allows organized working girls to gain access to a means of structural change through their connections with many supporting actors. MANTHOCas are capable of navigating and shifting the wider society. While Sandoval's focus is on unshackling the realm of academic knowledge, I propose that an understanding of these technologies can dissolve the colonial heteropatriarchal knowledges that exist in the everyday. The differential mode becomes particularly inaccessible to girls outside the movement, who are often contained in systems of meaning that seek to contain and maintain demeaning conceptualizations of girlhood.

Andean Thought as Differential Consciousness

The differential mode of consciousness that MANTHOCxs employ in ordinary interactions is characterized well by Andean thought leaders and writers like agronomist Eduardo Grillo Fernandez and anthropologist Grimaldo Rengifo Vásquez, both members of PRATEC (Proyecto Andino para las Tecnologías Campesinas [Andean Project of Peasant Technologies]). Members of PRATEC have been criticized for appearing to romanticize even negative facets of ancestral Andeanism, but it is important to recognize

that groups like MANTHOC and GRUFIDES (Grupo de Formación e Intervención para el Desarrollo Sostenible [Training and Intervention Group for Sustainable Development]) draw on aspects of this thinking and not the whole to characterize their schema for their reflexive development. As Rengifo Vásquez notes, “If the world, like the Andean one, is constituted of persons and not of subjects or objects, its members are not interested in knowing the other, because they do not see the *other* as an object or a thing” (1998, 177). The ayllu is not interested in modifying or transforming the other. For decolonization to occur, the continuation of conversations between beings and the nurturing flows, therein producing a “dialogue” that “makes life flower and flow: it is personal, generating; it is seminal, it is a dialogue for life” (177).

In decolonizing the Andes, Grillo Fernandez suggests cultural affirmation to divide the ways that are in-group, to those that are coming from the outside, “their” way of being. Using the tools of “their” neocolonizing culture to learn how to play the game is part of the wider process of healing from collective pain as Andeans (1998, 144). As Peruvian anthropologist Marisol de la Cadena explains, the concept of “reason” that legitimizes modern history is replicated through discriminating between the real and unreal, such that “the social entity which does not provide reasonable evidence is unreal” (2015, 147). But de la Cadena argues, and I agree, that just because an event or a being is ahistorical and cannot be found because of lack of evidence does not mean that it did not or could not happen. For Grillo Fernandez, the Andean concepts of nurturance, equivalence, protection, and harmony lead to decolonization, yet key obstacles are Peru’s own politicians, intellectuals, and technicians. Decolonization cannot be marketed or

violently imposed; instead the reaffirmation of Andean culture, rejecting and breaking away from colonial structures of control, leaves Peru's officials without a function.

In referring back to de la Cadena's notions about the ahistorical and uneventful as archive, children's agentic participation is not discounted because of its lack of record and its past occurrence. There is no chronological time in considering the "right time" for children to be at once social actors and agentic people. As I noted in an earlier chapter, their lifeworlds as working children have always existed, even if we cannot find them in texts. For Andeans who live and work, whether as children or adults, "there is no notion of progress which is intrinsic to nature's own designs that might be applied to the evolution from simple to more complex forms of life" (Rengifo Vásquez 1998, 99). This means that there is only the renewal of life, the flourishing and emerging of others, which exist in a cycle and do not have a prescribed form of return.¹⁰⁰

Coming back to Spivak's strategic essentialism, MANTHOCxs' multitude of perspectives and capacity to move in differential space allows those who have gained this consciousness to move between what is sugar-coated in Andean thought, and the image that they want to be perceived by greater society locally and abroad. It gets slippery when talking about how essentialisms about Andeaness are interpreted by less experienced members and volunteers. This is where the possibility for hierarchy or appropriation is reproduced. Hierarchy occurs where the child is new and as such does not question the motivations of adults who cling to patriarchal values of children's place in society.

Appropriation occurs when adults by virtue of having good intentions for children in the

¹⁰⁰ As an example of this circularity, Rengifo Vásquez goes on to explain how "one knows that there will be a return but one does not know the circumstances or the manner in which the Sun, the rains, the maize, the *runas* and the winds will present themselves in their re-created form" (99).

movement, try to control or influence the perspectives of children in the movement.

Typically, this only goes on for so long, before a collaborator or a more experienced member notice the outlying adult.

For instance, there is a slogan-like quality to the way some religious and political topics are being perceived by both participating adults and children, those who have yet to develop more critical valuation of their position and place. The problem is that depending on how essentialism is used, it is either taught as a theory or used as a strategy. It is necessary to continue to question the use of the essentialism in order to see its deployment as a subversion of power and privilege. If essentialism are not endlessly interrogated, even if they are strategic, then the difficult work of deconstruction is lost to an attempt at a unified voice. This is to say that even as the use of Andeanisms like an ‘independent childhood’ or ‘living *sumak kawsay*¹⁰¹’ are ways to assemble part of an ideology for a paradigm-shifting way of viewing childhood, it is likewise important to remember that children’s lived experiences travel along many paths.

For MANTHOCas, their application of Andean movement knowledges can potentially shape policies and contexts that can work to alleviate oppression for girls more widely. Movement girls’ passage between different forms of consciousness can deconstruct power relations between themselves and adults who hold the most authority in Peruvian society, in particular those adults who seek to suppress their autonomy as girls. In the movement itself, the use of helpful adults becomes critical for MANTHOCxs

¹⁰¹ In quechua meaning, “The Good Life”, in the framework of the Andes. These are tenets further explored by Raúl Matta on the International Potato Center (CIP). He defines *sumak kawsay* as “‘good living’ based on the inherent Andean relationship of reciprocal nurturing between humans and nature -to re-establish indigenous ethics of sharing, care, and respect, seen as being eroded by modernity” (2019 66).

to feel capable of shifting between these different modes of consciousness. These adults, who have to be willing to experience a similar process in *formación*, to also become free from the comfort of their age privilege, are chosen by experienced movement children and long-standing adult collaborators.

The Hermeneutics of Love and Adult Facilitators

Taft explores how, “the practices of *colaboración* create a vibrant intergenerational culture where NATs are supported in the development of their political subjectivities, in their skill building, and in their personal lives. This affectionate and educational culture, combined with the discourses of protagonismo and intergenerational equality, encourages kids to become vocal, empowered, confident participants in the movement and in the wider political and social landscape” (2019 149-150). As movement adults are meant to act as only facilitators for children and youth, it would seem that their knowledge and experience would operate as mere tools for the attainment of MANTHOCxs’ cultural capital. Yet the more I worked alongside the collaborators and volunteers, the more I noticed how much these adults meant to their MANTHOCxs. While ordinary interactions took place between children and adults, the strongest bonds occurred when respect was mutual and children’s capacity and responsibility were acknowledged by the adult in question. Of these adults, collaborators were the ones who were present throughout all the programming, events, and planning meetings. They were at the margins of discussion circles and were often the creators of new groups in areas that had unincorporated working children.

For instance, though the word *collaborator* is used broadly to encapsulate adult facilitators in all roles, members’ level of trust in adults differs depending on either a

participant's experience within the movement or their connection to its ideals. A more experienced MANTHOCx might not mind dealing with a more inexperienced adult's misconceptions around children's powerful roles in the movement, because the MANTHOCx understands that this relationship of mutual respect is in flux. Likewise, if two inexperienced people, child member and adult facilitator, interact, they may reproduce a negative societal relationship of hierarchy, making the former inferior and the latter superior. This is why collaborators take great care in selecting volunteers whom they think fit the values of the movement, and even this selection is tested once a year with a grade.

Grading is a way that MANTHOCxs subvert the power of age hierarchy, by reducing adult facilitators to their ability to cooperate with and have a pleasant personality in the group. In an example of this, on my second day at the Amauta base in Ate, Susana asked me to input volunteer and collaborator grades for the year. This grading system included questions such as "How does the [volunteer] behave?" Some children answered with details: "I appreciate him, and how he treats us like his sons when we do a lesson," or "She's funny and always has new games to play." Each child is meant to write in response to four or five questions about each volunteer or collaborator, and then the delegates are meant to go over how each person performed. This kind of evaluation is one of many that MANTHOC has developed to keep adults who believe in maintaining the movement's mission and reduce conflicts. Over time, the facilitators who remain become comfortable working alongside movement members, seeking equitable treatment via mutual respect, despite age privileges.

To obtain the mutual respect that maintains the organization of MANTHOC, adult facilitators must reach the same breakthrough in thought that permits movement girls to lead with love. Collaborators often have excessive workloads and take on multiple roles at once. For instance, in San Marcos the MANTHOC group was formed by Yovana, a sociology graduate student at the Cajamarca National University. She used her connection to a classmate to locate a space for movement activities in the small provincial town. As briefly mentioned in chapter 4, Abril's family lent Yovana a space after she had gone around San Marcos.

When Abril talks about her collaborator, her appreciation is palpable. Yovana puts a lot of effort in the movement, traveling twice a week to meet with the kids, approximately eight to twelve hours of work. When she arrives in San Marcos, she acts as a social worker, meeting with parents while kids are in school, observing how home life is going. She had taken many arduous steps to proceed with a motion to start the municipality's CCONNA, often wasting time with bureaucratic obstacles. She repeatedly told me how much she loves the kids and that she can tell they look forward to seeing her; she would frequently get Whatsapp messages from members asking what time she would arrive on meeting days. One night, on the way back from San Marcos, she explained how the more children began attending the movement through word of mouth, the more tightly bound the group became, such that they began proposing their own initiatives without her facilitation. In addition to acting as a paid collaborator, Yovana contributes to her family's income and care of their lands.



Figure 5.2. Yovana updating Mensajeros del Saber group in San Marcos.

The time and dedication that collaborators contribute to leading groups coalesces in the growth of MANTHOCxs' consciousness. Collaborators have many roles, from acting as a sounding board and expediting projects on various themes to performing as figureheads and administrative managers for the group or bases' needs, as well as strengthening intrapersonal bonds. Susana, the collaborator from Amauta, remarked to me one hot afternoon before the MANTHOCxs arrived from school, "Many times we are mothers, ha ha, many times I am a friend, OK? Sister too; sometimes we are stepmothers because we have to be strict—it is the role that is needed, right? . . . yes, it's what you have to be. Sometimes you have to be a psychologist too, right? Be a lawyer, because, well, in MANTHOC we don't have everything, you practice and learn as you go" (Susana, interview with the author, 2018). In Susana's comment, her embodiment of the movement's maintenance is evident; she is capable of moving fluidly between roles, because she is capable of employing a differential consciousness. The act of shifting gears, as it were, going from one role to another, being able to code-switch between the

children and the adults, is an effect of MANTHOCxs' sensitization efforts toward the helpful adults in their lives.

Being a collaborator seems exhausting, and it requires the kind of hermeneutics that Sandoval (2000) made visible, in that the love for the role is what drives many collaborators to continue to be diligent. Many collaborators and some volunteers told me that the reason they performed their job with MANTHOC was because they felt so strongly about the role. Multiple collaborators in both regions described that they remained and became a collaborator because they "fell in love" with what MANTHOC signifies and that it is a kind of revolution guided by understanding. They shared how they felt consistently rewarded, despite the pain and the emotional toll the work took on them. MANTHOC is Catholic, and spiritual nourishment is a way that most collaborators and volunteers ease their mental and physical strains. We can refer back to the opening story and the chaos and disorganization around making the mural.

It is not that Susana did not want to complete these tasks in a timely manner; it is that she was the only one facilitating the Amauta base and she made an enormous effort in connecting with different bases alongside her delegates and volunteers.¹⁰² She is steeped in and "in love" with the movement's goals and messaging, and this allows her to continually push herself to employ democracies on behalf of MANTHOC's position. Her openness, and that of many other adult facilitators, to interacting as a part of children's culture predisposes them to reach a differential consciousness around childhood.

Although these adults might see child members as standing against, alongside, or within

¹⁰² In keeping with the notion that time is a colonial construction that has become an important part of city life, it may not necessarily be of urgency in everyday practices of working children's organizations or even the working poor. Time is prioritized to put out the small fires and when the big picture of the situation has to be dealt with, as with the story of the mural wall.

conceptualizations of childhood, or girlhood more particularly, their proximity to MANTHOCxs makes them practice the movement's paradigm around children's direct participation and leadership.

For example, MANTHOCxs' dealings with nonmovement adults like Carlos or Sr. Rojas began to change the way these adults saw childhood as well. In this way, adults' politicization over time produces a parallel consciousness, whereby the adults become subjects who believe in children's equitable treatment and the societal changes that MANTHOC would like to expand. Volunteering with MANTHOC is not for the faint of heart, as the process of mentally transforming the conceptualizations of children's citizenship challenges a traditionally hierarchical and often tokenizing adult-child relationship and may deter some adults from allocating volunteer hours to this particular movement. When I spoke with Janeth Urcuhuaranga, an ex-NNAT and the current coordinator of the Yerbateros base, she explained that some volunteers, who do not have the patience to "deal" with kids, are not right for the position. "Dealing" is more than being around constant screaming and commotion; it is about being able to listen and hear children and youth without imposing on or controlling their actions.

Not all volunteers will want to become collaborators, and not all who apply will be permitted if the delegates feel that their hearts are in the wrong place. To participate in the breaking down of hierarchies between adults and children, volunteers must be able to practice patience and compassion in the situation at hand. Volunteers should hold both children and adults accountable for any wrongdoing while also respecting the movement's intuitions. Movement adults police other adults at opportune times, and

children police adults who attempt to reestablish hierarchies or subvert the rules.¹⁰³

MANTHOCxs are meant to embody the ideals of the movement and at the same time do not fall into neat categories of politicization, and this may make adult volunteers and cooperators uncomfortable and unsure of how to work alongside the movement's messaging. How adult volunteers and cooperators proceed to work with MANTHOCxs is based on accountability and respect.

In my findings, the relationships between children and adults in MANTHOC diverge from the relationships Jessica Taft details in her 2019 book¹⁰⁴. She notes how reproductions in adult-based power help to strengthen hierarchies that negatively affect members. This is true: the more domination exhibited by adults in the movement, the longer it takes for MANTHOCxs to trust volunteers and collaborators. While her work is interesting and has the potential to make Northern audiences reconsider the widespread conflation of child work and child labor, Taft's theorizations of the movements and members themselves require reflexivity in representation and privilege.

In her 2019 book, Taft concludes that age-based power is dominant in the hands of adults who act as collaborators, despite being challenged by working children after she presented this finding to the groups of IFEJANT in 2013 (2019, 42). Though she does not suggest eliminating the ways in which care can positively effect children in the movements, she cautions that,

¹⁰³ As I described in chapter 2, Ladybug made both Melani's mother and me aware of the movement's rules and children's roles in the organization. At once calling us adults out on shifting the power of the organization by interrupting a workshop, and calling on her supportive collaborator, Janeth, for backup on the situation, Ladybug asserted her privilege in the child-run space.

¹⁰⁴ Taft engaged in ethnography from 2012 to 2015, studying intergenerational relations in the working children's social movements of MANTHOC, MOLACNATs and MNNATSOP and the adults who facilitate working children in IFEJANT.

Personalized and caring relationships are meant to reduce the inequality that is always present in the pedagogical relationship between children and adults.

However, in enacting these dynamics of care, *colaboradores* are also drawing on hegemonic models of childhood that expect children to be vulnerable. These expectations often imply that children are the group that needs care while adults are the ones who provide care. And, in the affective politics of the movement of working children, I note a tendency to slide back into this dominant relational model, with movement participants unwittingly repositioning children in a passive position as recipients of adults' care and tenderness, rather than as partners in a multidirectional relationship of mutual care and concern. (147)

Instead of seeing the reproduction of hierarchies implied by Taft, what I tend to notice are microaggressions on the part of adults who have yet to shift their consciousness to that of the MANTHOCas in their groups or bases. With a broad brushstroke, adult power appears to Taft to overwhelm the important work that the children are doing in the Lima base, and elsewhere. It could be that in the five years since IFEJANT's rejection of these reported dynamics, the multiple and complicated working children's social movements radically decreased the amount of control they ceded to adults. However, since organizations like MANTHOC have deep roots in traditional Andean conceptions of participation, it seems more likely that Taft's reasoning requires further reflexivity about the operation of power as more than an all-or-nothing force. In addition to offering overly simplistic characterizations of adult-child power, Taft dangerously ignores important aspects of geography and identity.

Her descriptions of children's political consciousness are formulated through the events that Taft sees and experiences in and around the unique case of Lima. However, in *The Kids Are in Charge* she refers to the entirety of Peru as "the working children's social movement." I argue that in doing this, she not only collapses several movements and organizations into one, losing the nuances in power relations between groups with different positions and agendas, but also collapses urban and rural working children—having Lima experiences stand in for all. In doing this, Taft neglects the more than twelve regions where MANTHOC, MOLACNATs, and RedNNA operate. This essentialization also makes it seem as though there is only one way to characterize working children's social movements.

Lima is not Peru, and this is a distinction that many Cajamarcan MANTHOCxs share as their cultural ethos, taking pride in an everyday existence of subsisting, living differently from those who reside in the large city. In her focus on child movements in Lima and surrounding areas (such as Ica), Taft, I suggest, takes a perspective on this multifaceted and multilocal movement that is partial and does not reveal the complexities and tensions across regions and organizations. To highlight this kind of one-sided argument, I will tie one of her quotes, where she writes on how "the working children's social movement" uses Andean knowledge, to the way that she talks about these movements essentializing Andean thought (67):

I met only a handful of kids who had lived in Peru's rural areas or smaller cities long enough to have significant memories of these places, but many of them would go visit family. . . . A few came from families where they spoke at least some Quechua at home, and more were part of different community projects

designed to help children maintain stronger connections to their families' Andean roots through activities like weaving or dancing, but none of the NATs really self-identified as indigenous or Andean. While many of them are likely to still confront racism in their daily lives due to their physical appearance, their clothing choices and language practices generally mark them as mestizos or *ciudadinos* (city kids), and both of these are terms that they would use to describe themselves. However, while the NATs may not describe themselves as indigenous, the movement explicitly draws on Andean indigenous perspectives, embracing these as counterpoints to a Western model of childhood, and encourages the NATs to value their individual and collective indigenous (usually Andean) roots. In comparison, the movement does not often discuss Afro-Peruvian experiences or perspectives, despite the fact that a few kids in the movement in Lima have at least some connections to Afro-Peruvian identity. (34–35)¹⁰⁵

Taft acknowledges the movement's use of decolonial activism (65); however, she does not seem to believe in its authenticity, as most children she has interviewed in Lima do not necessarily consider themselves "Indigenous." Here, Taft's ignorance of rural-urban differences in ways of identifying undermines the girls with whom I worked in Lima and especially Cajamarca. If we recall Ke Muin Ha in chapter 2, she explained how she would have liked to connect with her Quechua identity, even though she did not speak the language. Her connection was not based on a rigid definition. Not identifying as Indigenous is unsurprising, as there has been plenty of colonial erasure in the

¹⁰⁵ Twenty-six percent of the Afro-Peruvian population in Peru is located in Lima province, followed by Piura, La Libertad, and Cajamarca. For more, see the 2017 census, at https://www.inei.gob.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/publicaciones_digitales/Est/Lib1642/cap03_03.pdf.

racialization of Peru, making identification as Indigenous equivalent in many Lima circles to a negative aspect that a person should shed. But this is missing the point, because, as mentioned earlier, when working in and around Lima, there is an urban sense of self. There are many different groups of people in Peru, not just limited to individuals who are Indigenous, Mestizo, Ashaninka, Afro-Peruvian, and city dwellers; there are also migrants from Venezuela, Peruvian Chinese, Japanese Peruvians, Peruvian Arabs, Peruvian Jews, and Peruvian whites (and many more racial and ethnic variations and groups therein).¹⁰⁶ Members of each group may not identify themselves uniformly under the same label but contextually and within differing power dynamics.¹⁰⁷ The point is that the movements were founded on MANTHOC's intuitions, which at the time were grounded in Andean Indigenous thought and were brought about by liberation theology.¹⁰⁸

Taft's argument that movement leaders essentialize Andean notions of work and personhood is an indication of Northern scholarship's blindness to the sociopolitical events in an area that has been devastated by violence during the past thirty years. Additionally, Andean knowledge is taught and reinforced to attain a level of consciousness that allows MANTHOCxs to deploy their *protagonismo* (in whatever way

¹⁰⁶ There are mentions of Afro-Peruvianess in the Amauta base, as they have a *cajón* (box-shaped percussion instrument) lesson once a week from a volunteer who comes all the way from Callao to teach the kids. He also provides cultural lessons about the origin of the instrument and the people who made it during colonialism. This is not to say that a musical lesson once a week is enough; it is to note that Afro-Peruvianess is not absent.

¹⁰⁷ More research is needed to better understand the ways in which social movements like MANTHOC can apply new and more appropriate ideologies for areas with disparate racial compositions. A comprehensive longitudinal survey with metrics concerning a postcolonial understanding of children's well-being could be a good option for developing new programming and shifting concerns.

¹⁰⁸ As will be mentioned later, there are many nonmovement adults who come into MANTHOC and bring forth their ideologies, and there is cultural transmission between them and the movement members. This means that more than just Andean knowledges is spread to children in MANTHOC.

or whenever they want). Taft dismisses Andean notions of work and cultural relativity, which borders on “objectivity” and positivism, making the cultural context appear irrelevant to her argument. This invalidates Peruvian working children’s roots. She notes how scholars have “romanticized” the Andes and, in avoiding the complexities of this, does not acknowledge the very real impacts of the colonial legacy and the movement’s Catholic origins.¹⁰⁹ In the remainder of this chapter, I will speak with Taft concerning how there is strength in the intergenerational relationships exhibited by the movements. I also be speaking back to Taft’s claims of an overpowering adult-authority, showing how MANTHOCas do in fact navigate power in ways that are complex and shifting. Further, I will show that power relations among children and adults are never fully determined by age hierarchies and, in fact, in some moments resist and counter wider societal binaries between children and adults.

In my research, what I have found is that children and adults do in fact act within larger assemblages of power (Deleuze and Parnet 1987; Müller 2015). In other words, MANTHOCxs and helpful adults desire to belong in this relational, productive, and reterritorializing heterogeneous group.¹¹⁰ But their collaboration does not halt the power that flows through the church, the state, and global influences. These influences may not be important or as pertinent to some MANTHOCxs or adults who work with them; however, those coming in from the outside may display some of these oppositional

¹⁰⁹ In reacting to this text, I realize that a rigidly sociological study does not “need” to require decolonial methods; however, there were also little to no Latin American references, which could have spoken to some of Taft’s tensions in analyzing intergenerational movements.

¹¹⁰ In Deleuze and Guattari, to reterritorialize is to form new notions and groups based on being undone, or “deterritorializing.” They note, “Deterritorializing quantifies respective forms and according to which contents and expression are conjugated, feed into each other, accelerate each other, or on the contrary become stabilized and perform a reterritorialization” (1978, 88). This is to say that part of what being an assemblage is requires shifting and mutating meaning into new forms.

attitudes toward children and their place. What is interesting is that activities that would otherwise be very difficult for children to perform without adults become facilitated by helpful adults. This allows MANTHOCas to learn how to navigate and negotiate power structures with adults who are in positions of power outside MANTHOC. Regardless of age, MANTHOCas and their adult contributors undergo a process of consciousness-raising that enables them to succeed in transforming their personal vision into that of their organization. This kind of consciousness-raising can be thought of as a process of nonlinear coevolution and collective learning. As MANTHOCas move toward this capacity for full access to what Sandoval (2000) qualifies as the differential mode, their collaborators, and even some volunteers, participate in supporting collective growth.

Volunteers and Collaborators

Although the goal for movement members is to develop community bonds to add to their overall personal development, and “advance” the position of all children regardless of their affiliation, the use of strategic adults allows for MANTHOCas at differing levels of connection to flourish. As with the mural event, some MANTHOCas’ relationships with adults were much more varied than others. Seven-year-old Silvia, Maria’s sister, was following directions from both Carlos and Susana and not quite focusing on the meaning of the project, trusting that the day would be exciting. On the other hand, Alexandra and Ariana were heavily involved in codeveloping and adding to Carlos’s work, so as to shape the project into what they wanted for the movement’s image. Both forms of participation were valuable and necessary to the overall success of the mural project. As discussed in chapter 4, for the mural to come to fruition, diverse forms of participation were required to build coalitions between different groups. While

MANTHOC does not use adults as figureheads for the movement, the use of helpful adults makes movement processes considerably easier in an adult-centric society.

In the vignette of the mural, the adults involved in making the day a success were present at the behest of multiple synchronizing factors, brought together by key MANTHOCas and their collaborators. For instance, Susana's motivation was key in explaining how Sr. Rojas could be of use to the movement, and this motivation couldn't have been actualized without Alexandra and Thalia in turn convincing Sr. Rojas to act on their behalf. Likewise, Susana's coordination of provisions and support from her local connections became valuable to strengthening the network of providers who could collaborate with MANTHOCxs' rights consciousness for the Amauta base. Similarly, Sr. Rojas's advocating for the children and speaking to his son led to Carlos's ongoing connection with MANTHOC. Different base members arriving in *combis* coordinated by Paty and delegate Franco at the Yerbateros base led to MANTHOCxs' ability to finish the mural on time. In this way, though the adults are not the point of the movement, it is important to understand the real ways in which they function to bolster MANTHOC. Typically, Peruvian adults in both Lima and Cajamarca are accustomed to subordinating children's power; it is for this reason that MANTHOCas work to forge local partnerships, to adjust adult prejudices and work toward more equitable relations in society.

For a multitude of reasons, MANTHOC as a child-led organization relies on connections between the children and adults. During the time of their movement's foundation, there were frequent interactions between former JOC members and clergy who supported their growth as a youth organization. This advice and support from Catholic priests and nuns became a normative part of MANTHOC's movement, because

it was a tradition that they appreciated, and was necessary in the newness of the organization. The movement required adult communicators of children's needs. Working children in Peru during that time (late 1970s) and today are slighted, and the presence of adult facilitators functioning within MANTHOC was welcomed both to boost the credibility of the movement's voice and to foster the growth of the organization over time.¹¹¹ Because children do not have the training or cultural and social capital (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990) to perform some of the administrative tasks that are demanded of them, adults play a critical part in preserving the values of the child-led movement.

But before reaching the point of maintenance, adults who can treat children equitably must be chosen to volunteer or cooperate with the movement itself. For the Lima base, because of the lack of lodgings available to prospective volunteers, the adults who end up putting time into the movement are local teachers who are approached by collaborators and delegates to serve, or college students seeking to fulfill their thesis requirement or practicums. For instance, Gustavo's psychology department at his university organized an NGO fair catering to local college students and there, Gustavo approached MANTHOC's booth. Valeria and Aynoa convinced him to come by and "teach the kids math" and music. When he started his volunteer service, he found that the

¹¹¹ Although the movement's Catholic origins engendered the participation of priests like Alois Eichenlaub and Alejandro Cussianovich, mentors to both children and adults in the movement, members' most frequent interactions are with adults whom they label as *collaborators*. These early adults who worked with MANTHOC were known to espouse the ideals of liberation theology, which can be seen in the doctrine of the movement's intuitions. Their "advice" likely acted to guide the spiritual and political interests and directions of the movement's founding members. This does not mean that MANTHOCxs were indoctrinated into the ideals of these adults; as previous members of the JOC, they were already familiar with the structure brought about by adult facilitators. Also, one of MANTHOC's intuitions, developed in the years after their break from the JOC, states that children of the movement are never to be held under the control of older children and adults, affirming that their actions are their own. That said, member children must get along with their adult facilitators to meaningfully participate and assist in the building of their movement.

movement was not the kind of place where “they tell you what to do, but that you simply come and support them with all you have. It creates the feeling of a family life here, you get to know everyone because there is something very important here, here there are no hierarchies. You cannot say here, that ‘one is greater than the other,’ simply, there is horizontal communication” (Gustavo, interview with the author, 2018). This feeling of comfort at the sense of horizontal relationships in the movement is another reason that Noelia stayed with the movement after her practicum was satisfied.

Noelia said that when she started she was rather shy but became more engaged with the movement over time. She stated, “I think everything is a process, when one arrives, they may not feel that committed, but coexisting with the kids day by day, you become committed to being here and that it is ‘your responsibility,’ not so much that it is a ‘commitment.’” Noelia said another collaborator taught her that “power and authority has nothing to do with being bad, being the authority is to be the leader, and that is very different, because the kids here are to be respected. This does not mean that because there are no hierarchies that a NNAT can disrespect you.” Her extended experience with MANTHOC made her want to become a collaborator when she finished her degree. In Cajamarca, as in Lima, there is an influx of students needing to fulfill their thesis or practicum requirements, but because there are substantial lodgings at the MANTHOC house, international volunteers also contribute to the movement.



Figure 5.3. Collaborator and volunteer weekly check-in, Cajamarca¹¹².

To exemplify this, the *Fé y Amor* group that met on Fridays had Michael, an eighteen-year-old German man, and was facilitated by Paulina and Samuel, two sociology students from the central highlands in their early twenties. Michael came to MANTHOC through a partnership with his church and had already been at Cajamarca for nine months at the time of our interview. He had been tasked by the coordinators of the base to work as the kitchen staff of the school then later was given more responsibilities. He began facilitating the CDI then worked with his own group on Fridays as well as

¹¹² Though the sessions for collaborators and volunteers are devoid of children and youth from the movement, these meetings are meant to reinforce and strengthen movement adults for their draining job. Taft cautioned that, “in the context of intergenerational relationships, there’s a tendency for discourses and practices of care, affect, and tenderness to be articulated and an acted as a one-sided rather than mutual relationship between children and adults. Adults are rarely discussed as needing to be treated with tenderness, and there is little sense that kids can provide care and support for *colaboradores*”(2019 147). Considering the overwhelming literature in social psychology that permeates Peru, it is not surprising that adults in the movement do not want to burden children and youth with overarching concerns which may cause them trauma or stress. Though many collaborators and volunteers I met would consider movement children to be more resilient than nonmovement children, it would be taboo to break away from the diffusion of cognitive wellbeing that is seen as trusted and correct.

taking children to their doctor's appointments. At first he was disappointed that he did not spend that much time with the children, but over time he realized that "taking children to the doctor is a lot of responsibility, it's more, or, you feel it is a more important job, you are supporting them, and you are also in a position of responsibility to help" (Michael, interviewed by the author, 2018). This feeling of contributing to the movement shifted from a mild disappointment at not teaching like his fellow volunteers, to then being excited at the diversity of experiences he could be a part of in the children's lives.

For Paulina and Samuel, their sociology project was the driving factor for MANTHOC being their choice for an internship. Paulina had been working with MANTHOC for only two months at the time of our interview. She remarked that collaborating with groups was like "crashing" into a kind of ideology. She offered, "It is not the same as working with children who have a solid nuclear family of nondivorced parents; [those kids] have food, everything, absolutely everything. Unlike MANTHOC children, who have to do many things, and all the resources are not enough. I mean, they don't have enough resources to achieve something. So, every child is a story, we have to be very patient with them, learn from them, listen to them, then gradually change their mentality." While Paulina's statement of changing the mentality of the MANTHOCxs most likely refers to the impoverished children of the rural group they visit on Saturday, it is still a problematic ideology coming into MANTHOC.

Perhaps, as she had just consistently started working with her groups, she and Samuel would be called out by other collaborators or volunteers. Samuel suggested that volunteers should "have patience, joy, understand them, right? Because you were once

young and you didn't pay attention . . . you can't give up, you can't get discouraged and say, 'I'm not doing this,' or 'Dang, I'm leaving,' because sometimes you will feel that way . . . but, anyway, the kids love you, they look up to you, sometimes they listen to you, and you talk to them about their own lives and you start to teach them about the things in their lives, and they understand you much more, much, much more." His main concern was the completion of his project, but he recognized that the difficulties of the position were outweighed by how the kids treated him in return. Samuel and Paulina lend credence to Taft's claim about how affectively, some adults in the movement reproduce hegemonic conceptualizations of children as vulnerable, or in need. Though this is the case, the children in the Fé y Amor group still felt like they could "speak up, disagree with adults, ask tough questions, and actively engage in political debate" (Taft, 2019 148-149)

More than this, some youth were excited to see them each week, maybe even because of their notions of care and affect towards the group. It may appear problematic, but in gaining a parallel consciousness along with the youth, volunteers like Paulina and Samuel will not necessarily care less for the MANTHOC groups, they will learn to face themselves and their own presuppositions about childhood. Unlike in the case of the volunteers, the more Michael became enmeshed in the movement, the more his interest in how MANTHOC tackled issues currently in contention within society mattered to him. He explained that for him as an adult with influence in children's lives, it was important to "not influence them from above, but to have them be protagonists of their own lives, and give space for them to make their own decisions." As Paulina, Samuel, and Michael guide the Friday group, their interactions with each other and with the children of the

group will enable the kind of nonlinear coevolution whereby MANTHOCxs and their adult facilitators learn how to inhabit each other's space and learn to work alongside each other's personalities. The sense of persevering for the group's sake becomes a contagious feeling for both child members and adult facilitators.

Forging New Alliances with Child- and Adult-Led Groups

Coming into contact with MANTHOC, for Paulina, caused what seemed to be a “crash of ideology,” or perhaps a feeling of disorder in contrast with the normative order. A group like MANTHOC can maintain their movement only when children are at the helm of making the decisions that guide the organization. MANTHOC, as a child-led social movement, has had more than forty years of experience in reconfiguring power relations between children and adults, and it can exist only when its members are gathered. Its operation and success depend on the assistance of trusted connections between movement children and adult facilitators. These connections maintain the movement, but MANTHOC evolves by forging new interactions and relationships between members and local nonmovement adults and children. Support and direction from similar working children's organizations reinforce the way MANTHOCxs interact with one another and the ways children outside their organization work together. In their teaming up with MNNATSOP or the Movement of Latin American and Caribbean Working Children and Adolescents (MOLACNATs), techniques for subverting adult authority are reproduced and strengthened.

This is to say that for the “democratics” of Sandoval's (2000) methodology to be actualized, MANTHOCxs must come into contact with and build coalitions alongside groups of children and adults with similar orientations. Children who are movement

adjacent may have friends, classmates, or cousins, and these children can simultaneously be part of other child-led or child-directed groups. For instance, these children may belong to the CCONNA of a municipality, where children and youth advise the Dirección General de Niñas, Niños, y Adolescentes (General Directorate of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents, DGNNA) of the MIMP. In the CCONNA, democratically elected children and youth participate in expressing their opinions on public policies that may have an impact on childhood and adolescence, as well as offer proposals and promote the welfare and rights of girls and boys.

MANTHOCxs work alongside the CCONNA and may also be part of the council at different times, modifying their strategies by learning and sharing with children outside their movement in town. Along with CCONNAs, MANTHOCxs in other regions work with groups such as the Asociación de Alcaldes Regidores y Líderes Estudiantiles de Ayacucho (Association of Mayoral Alderman and Student Leaders in Ayacucho, AARLE) or the Coordinadora de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Organizados de Ica (Coordination of Organized Boys, Girls, and Adolescents in Ica, CONNAO). These regional connections are only part of the coalitional support that MANTHOC builds to ensure the promotion of children's betterment overall. Some of these nonmovement children may not be accustomed to the consciousness that MANTHOCxs have cultivated and may feel the need to oppose working children, to display a moral high ground. In these instances, movement members recognize that their role is to sensitize other children and youth who may not understand MANTHOC's particular position.

CDI as Authority

MANTHOC's NGO involvement has become a necessary adjustment to changing circumstances for organized working children on the international stage. Their notion of *protagonismo* remains rooted in the communitarian politics of the ayllu and projects of solidarity that occurred during the rise of liberation movements. To be legible to Western funders and NGOs, MANTHOC has had to shift from a communitarian rhetoric of *protagonismo* as part of liberation to a language of rights legible to development (Taft 2017). For MANTHOC to reform gendered attitudes compatible with a Global North subject, it is critical that there be a call to halt the femicides and increase sexual and reproductive health education. These same efforts are being threatened by loud conservative Christian groups in Peru. As much as it is unlike a grassroots Peruvian movement to trust an outside entity known for "development" processes, it is also part of the methodology of the oppressed to shift their language of liberation and *protagonismo* to fit the language of rights (Taft 2017). The collaboration between MANTHOC and ODW, by way of Amnesty International, is at once a strategic move for working children to appear relatable and "normal" and a way to sensitize adults to child-led movement-building. With the credibility of the well-respected Amnesty, MANTHOCs' authority in the project Es Mi Cuerpo provided a way for their movement knowledges to become central to the campaign.

To do this kind of work, MANTHOCs formed a new organization to tackle the larger social inequities that come from a lack of sexual and reproductive health information. Instead of using the model of the city-centric structure of the CCONNA, which is too limiting in gaining traction on issues that concern violence against girls, MANTHOC Cajamarca formed the CDI. This act of seeking children and youth from

different local organizations and secondary schools partly ensures that they meet the guidelines of their collaboration with the Es Mi Cuerpo campaign. Because of ODW's project-focused donation, Amnesty International had partnered with country contexts (Peru, Argentina, and Chile) to find adolescents with leadership qualities who would be trained to carry out presentations on sexual and reproductive rights. This was meant to sensitize speaking about taboo topics between the youth and the community at large. Through propagating a sense of normalcy concerning sexual and reproductive rights, traditional patriarchal conditions for girls are meant to shift.



Figure 5.4. MANTHOC schoolteacher with CDI initiates.

The creation of the CDI was meant to enact strategies for rights consciousness in groups of untrained children and youth. As in the delegate meetings, children and youth themselves were meant to create the norms of the organization and then participate in workshops to gain a better understanding of sexual and reproductive justice. The CDI initiates were joined by a few adult mentors from each organization and educational

institution, which appeared to add credibility to MANTHOCxs' authority in the space. For MANTHOCxs, it is important to involve nonmovement adults to gain a sense of working children's rights consciousness and the deployment of their founding principles. For nonmovement children, the novelty of the child-led encounter meant that a few initiates spoke silently and nervously in front of their peers. Other children took to the workshops immediately, wanting to participate fully with little convincing from MANTHOCxs in the crowd.



Figure 5.5. Group time, talking about how bullying is an issue for LGBT youth.

The MANTHOCxs led the other children in and out of icebreakers and group time to develop motivations for the CDI, goals to work toward, and routes of democratic action. As with the relationships members forge with groups of organized and disparate children, the movement seeks to sensitize adults who come from outside institutions and organizations, who wish to cooperate alongside MANTHOC. For delegate meetings in Cajamarca, the ways in which *formación* occur depend on direction from the national delegates as well as the regional and regular members. In attempting to inform themselves on climate change, and be protagonists concerning their physical

environment, MANTHOCxs in Cajamarca requested that collaborators find speakers who would be open to discussion with children about environmental justice and climate science, to the gain knowledge to build their own purification systems.

Eva and Roberto, the adult facilitators of GRUFIDES, arrived at Cajamarca base to lead a discussion on the importance of water and help the movement incorporate the NGO's teachings, to aid them in bringing about their purification project. Although the goal of nonmovement adults may be to raise the welfare and the knowledge base of children, sometimes "best interests" rhetoric or ideologies may obfuscate the ways in which movement children wish to interact. In this case, the biases of the collaborators nearly made their activities fall apart through tactless moments. Eva and Roberto had decided to start their activities with a pop quiz, which caused a bit of a kerfuffle when the facilitators handed out paper.¹¹³ The MANTHOC adult collaborators scrambled to find something for the kids "to lean on and write with." At this, the male facilitator, Roberto, laughingly announced, "Here, you can borrow these pens, but I want them back at the end of the lesson." While these interactions appear inconsequential, this microaggression reinforces stereotypes about children as not being worthy of the kindness of being given a writing implement while at the same time framing them as untrustworthy. The facilitators' notions about MANTHOCxs as children created a sense of deficiency in the space.

It is in these moments that MANTHOCxs, and MANTHOCas in particular, enter their differential mode of consciousness. For instance, once the workshop was under way, Estrellita Lunar raised her hand, yelling "Youth!" to get Roberto's attention to answer

¹¹³ The quiz had four questions: "What is water?" "What are the uses of water?" "How does water get contaminated?" and "What do we need to live?"

one of the quiz questions. He turned to her with an annoyed expression and rather aggressively blurted, “My name is Roberto and her name is Eva, not ‘teacher’ or ‘youth.’”¹¹⁴ Although Estrellita Lunar only smiled and listened to his disrespectful tone, the fact that Roberto wanted to be addressed in a liminal space between levels of hierarchy gave off an odd intensity in the room. For me, having spent a good deal of time with Estrellita Lunar, it was surprising that as a people pleaser, she chose to stand against Roberto by continuing to answer questions, ignoring his request. Perhaps it is what Noelia said earlier about respect being key in MANTHOC interactions. There is an oft-repeated expression in Peru, “Respeto guarda respeto,” translating to “Respect keeps respect,” a sentiment that feels rather pertinent to this vignette. The more Roberto continued to disrespect Estrellita Lunar, the more she had to, in turn, negotiate his authority in the ways that she could, in this case, by continuing to call him “youth.”

During the GRUFIDES lecture, the MANTHOCxs listened avidly and participated. I noticed Roberto and Eva’s faces become kinder and gentler. The bossy nature that the facilitators came in with was mostly gone; the ways in which Roberto asked questions initially appeared to gauge the children’s level of understanding, to reach an unstructured discussion. Toward the end of their lesson, before the kids were assigned to draw what they felt the Rainbow Prophecy meant, Eva attempted to split up the group of twenty kids by age.¹¹⁵ She shouted out, to be heard over the din, “We’re going to split

¹¹⁴ What’s strange is that the word *teacher* holds particular respect, but *youth* also holds a kind of “sameness” of caste in childhood.

¹¹⁵ The Rainbow Prophecy was an invention of U.S. evangelicals in the early 1960s who sought to bring love and peace around the world via acknowledging that those whose worldviews were tied to nature were having visions of impending earthly doom and brotherhood (Willoya and Vinson 1962). William Willoya and Vinson Brown’s book, *Warriors of the Rainbow*, however, exoticizes Indigenous lifeways and uses the trope of the “noble savage” as a way to invite white people to view the world as more than a resource. The Rainbow Prophecy is what could be thought of as romanticizing and appropriating an image of Indigenous knowledge with no connection to actual Hopi or Cree Indians (Niman 1997).

the groups up into different ages so you have similar artistic abilities.” She began demarcating groups into children “nine and ten”; “eleven, twelve, thirteen”; and “fourteen and up.” Awkwardly, Estrellita Lunar and Walter stood next to each other, realizing that they were a group of two.

I pointed out to an eighteen-year-old volunteer from Germany named Katja that the kids looked confused because Eva was using age to divide them. She commented, “The people that come here don’t know that the kids are accustomed to being mixed up.” She proceeded to explain how in her group, there were “four-year-olds working with thirteen-year-olds.” We looked on as fifteen-year-old Fátima approached Eva and whispered in her ear. Almost instantly, Eva called out that the groups would now be “multi-age.” The many seemingly consequential errors that GRUFIDES made are not out of a sense of “childism” or some kind of ill will toward the delegates of MANTHOC.¹¹⁶ These are simply adults who live in Peru and are accustomed to social norms where deputizing children and youth is seen as partially normative. Along with this, most children in Peru do not necessarily speak out against adults, because of obvious differentials in their power and marginality. It is not that Roberto and Eva meant to reproduce hierarchies of age or treat the members as though they were incapable of equal partnership; it is that ideas about children continue to beget adults with a sense of superiority that MANTHOC attempts to oppose explicitly.

In the GRUFIDES example, it can be inferred that the practice of collaborating is meant to “create a context where children can and do articulate their own points of

¹¹⁶ The term *childism* comes from Young-Bruehl’s eponymous 2012 book, which argues that there is a prejudice that exists against children as a group that could be comparable to sexism, racism, and homophobia.

view, raise critical questions, and express disagreement with the adults” (Taft, 2019 145), instead of alienating child participants. Yet, partnerships with groups like GRUFIDES are already closely tied to notions of the *buen vivir*, MANTHOCxs reinforced Andean ideologies of sustainable development. The delegates of the Cajamarca MANTHOC asked collaborators to find teachers in the field of sustainable or environmental justice who would be willing to speak with children. The MANTHOCxs were receiving knowledge about the importance of water; what Eva and Roberto got in return was sensitization to children’s active participation and perhaps an opportunity for introspection about their assumed authority. The ways in which adults become sensitized to the techniques of the movement, and their access to differential modes of consciousness, are not quick. These strategies take time but permit adult facilitators to have a broader perception of children’s capacities.

Despite GRUFIDES’s initially appearing to be insensitive to adult-child power dynamics within the movement, the organization’s relationship to MANTHOC was likely to start off awkwardly or even rocky so that each group had time to reflect, so as to improve their future interactions. Many adult-led social movements and other NGOs operate similarly to GRUFIDES in that their intentions are well meaning and hopeful for all parties involved, even if they differ in social consciousness. MANTHOC recognizes that unless there is blatant disrespect, interactions create meaning in coworking spaces with similar agendas.

It is interesting, then, that MANTHOC endeavored to seek funding and connection from a large multinational NGO, ODW, in partnership with a large international NGO, Amnesty International. Like the conceptualizations of place that the

Andean world evokes in the ayllu, the ways in which MANTHOC traverses this partnership is through the use of their movement knowledges and communitarian connection through “like” relationships. Where MANTHOC sensitizes adults in local organizations, a similar action is taking place to sensitize international NGOs to the lifeways of Andean organized working children. In referring back to the ILO’s enormous influence and the very real consequences of silencing, MANTHOCxs understand that the imagination of working children internationally must at least appear more respected.

The way they do this is by dignifying their position through partially wrapping themselves in Amnesty’s brand. MANTHOC is effectively using the master’s tools to reassert themselves and reach their goals as a social movement (Foucault 1991). The following ethnographic vignette may help in visualizing how these different large-scale NGOs are not simply being placed in a position of benefactor from the Global North. Here it is important to note how MANTHOCas not only navigate adult power locally but also traverse global relations to reconfigure themselves as stakeholders.

“The Most Important Thing Is . . . That the Three Together Make a Project”

Rr looked over at her collaborator, verbalizing, “Yes, wait. I’m on it.” She was taking a break to better explain to the assembled CDI members who ODW was in the project. Rr looked at the kids surrounding her and began, “They are a group of kids who work one day. So, like a whole day, since they get up, they work. For what? So they can raise money. And this money can be sent to another hill that [represents] Amnesty International.” With Pablo, she reorganized the construction paper labels to show all the stakeholders in the project.

She stopped again and considered the rest of the group. “Now, yes, what ODW does is clear, right? They collect this money and give this little hill, Amnesty International.” For a moment, she stopped moving and listened to her voice playback on a collaborator’s camera. “Hahaha, OK, are you recording me?” She smacked her head with the script she had been working on and continued, “Amnesty International, what’s this little hill, what’s going on with this little hill and Amnesty International, they get all this money, but for what? Or with whom do they make the agreement to generate this project that everyone here is part of? They do it with . . .” She bent over and put the card down as the children chorused in unison, “MANTHOC.”

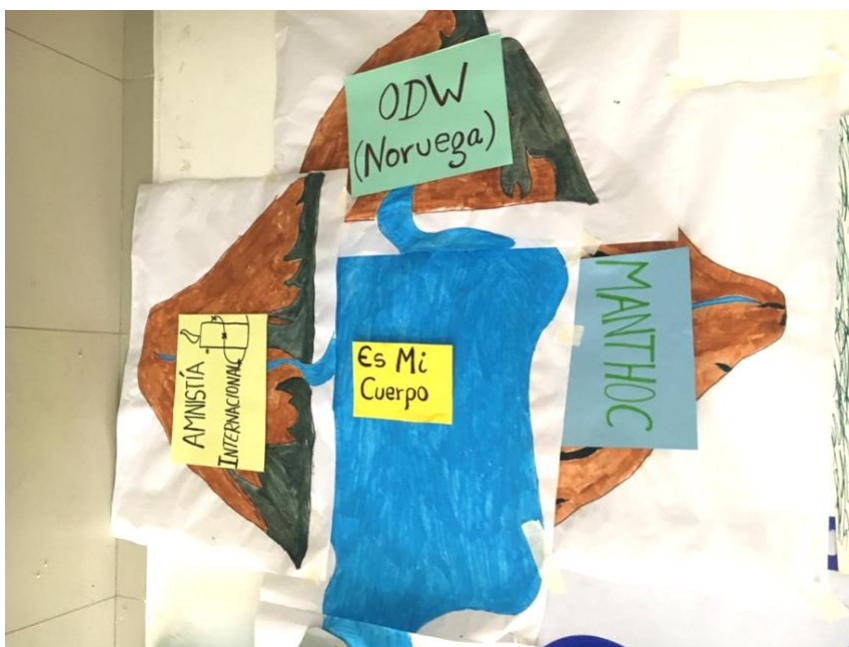


Figure 5.6. Image of the mountain metaphor activity that Rr facilitated.

Rr continued, having placed the card down on top of the hill, “Now, there is MANTHOC. So, ODW is the one who gives the money, the kids work a whole day, collect this money, gathering this money. They pass it on, to Amnesty International. And Amnesty International passes it on, to MANTHOC. And these three small hills together,

the most important thing is, not that they give the money, that they must receive it. [It is] that the three together make a project, and the project is called . . .” Nila hands her a card and all together the group said, “It’s My Body.” Rr paused, saying with a smile:

And we are all integrating in this project, right? So then, Amnesty is also the one that provides informative materials and MANTHOC is the one that executes the project. What are we going to do in the campaigns, together with Amnesty as well? We do the campaigns and advocacy, and all of this. So, the most important thing is not that MANTHOC executes, that Amnesty gives information materials, nor that ODW gives the money. Instead, the most important of these three little hills is that the three of them come together, they are allies, as siblings, these little hills. [That is why] this project “It’s My Body” is generated. That throughout these two years, this project has not only stayed here; as you can see, each one gives their contribution [forming] a small lagoon. From this lagoon, [a river] will be detached, [flowing] much, much further [down].

Rr pointed to the narrow river of blue paint running onto three more poster papers to signal the flow of the project from the three mountains.

An accessible teaching tool for the CDI members, the three mountains were meant to symbolize the key players, as it were, in the co-construction of this project. Rr considered ODW’s valuation of work, but she did not mention any structural privileges that could lead to their advantages in obtaining capital. She talked about Amnesty as arbiter, briefly exploring their role as facilitators, not mentioning all that the brand encompasses. She emphasized MANTHOC’s position as executor of the project, not detailing how long and hard they had worked to secure this grant and all the invisible

labor that continued to occur in order to proceed smoothly. This moment, more than anything, was to insinuate how important the CDI's work was to the completion of the project, such that MANTHOC as an equitable partner should be seen as established.

This assertion of MANTHOC as equally great in stature to global NGOs alludes to the ways in which Rr and her fellow movement members perceived their contributory role in the Es Mi Cuerpo project. It is not that Amnesty and ODW were victimizing working children by extending aid as a savior would; it is that MANTHOC had reframed their role and was acting in conjunction with the values of their movement's foundational principles. They were not lesser; they were equal in ideology and power, and if international NGOs wanted to participate with MANTHOC, then they had better realize this notion. The equivalencies that MANTHOC draws upon to domesticate Northern subjects is impressive and does not beget the typical sentiment of pressure from funding agents.¹¹⁷ Because MANTHOCxs in both Lima and Cajamarca are aware of their economic position (from *formación* to just personal experience), there is a sense that Europeans in the widely circulated organizations of Amnesty signifies a racialized upward mobility. In acknowledging this before the Amnesty-CDI workshop took place, Rr and her group of delegates chose to accentuate the necessity of MANTHOC's inclusion, as a partner and not a beneficiary. Additionally, though the grant made mention only of adolescent participation, MANTHOCxs continued to include younger children in the raising of sexual and reproductive rights consciousness, strengthening their control and authority over the project at hand by forming the CDI.

¹¹⁷ I will say that adult facilitators in both site regions were more anxious before and during the visits but did not believe that they owed ODW or Amnesty anything in particular.

MANTHOCas Navigating Power

Girls like Estrellita Lunar and Rr are more apt to practice their fluency in the differential mode, because interactions within MANTHOC enable them to practice dealing with all kinds of adults. For movement members, coming into contact with resistance against working children's expressed interest is normative, but having children on an equitable plane of respect with adults is profound. It could be that working toward a shift in ideology allows adults who work with the movement to collaborate more smoothly with the kids, therefore empowering children to gauge healthy adult-child relationships. On this basis, interactions relying on a balance of respect and love make children in the movement more resilient to adversity.

Throughout this chapter, it is important to note that movement and nonmovement collaborators and volunteers contribute to how MANTHOCas are able to navigate power. The way that adults in the movement cooperate with MANTHOCxs emboldens members to more easily attain the differential mode of consciousness. In addition to support systems composed of like-minded people, MANTHOCas' exposure to and coalition-building with nonmovement children and adults challenges normative beliefs about children's capacity for work, participation, and critical reasoning. MANTHOCas' almost constant defense of their dignity as "beings" in their own right influences their ability to navigate differing power structures, that of age-based power, that of misogyny, that of cultural erasure, and that of poverty.

For the girls whose stories opened this chapter, Ariana, Alexandra, Valeria, and Aynoa, their age and sex are compounded along with other class and race markers, and I suggest that the tools they gain in the movement can be applied in other facets of life. Sr.

Rojas and Carlos are examples of helpful nonmovement adults who were open to understanding and then supporting MANTHOCas in their lifeworlds. For Estrellita Lunar and Rr, who came across resistance from nonmovement adults and children, their interactions taught them to move within the differential mode to educate their audience in the ways that they could, switching lenses of understanding for survival and liberation.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The front door to the MANTHOC Yerbateros dining hall burst open. We all jumped a bit as a neighbor entered, announcing, “¡Ha habido un robo!” (There has been a robbery!) A school-age youth wearing a black cap had snatched a woman’s purse in front of two officers, who did not pursue him or deal with the victim. “Of course!” asserted Rosario. Noelia chimed in, “All the drunks sleeping on the street, do you think the police are doing anything?” They all told their stories of corruption as they ate; their expectations of law enforcement acted as a gateway to discuss more taboo topics. Having been made tense by the crime, different volunteers started to whisper, “What happened to Yuliana the other day?” I looked over at Yuliana without thinking. She was anxiously speaking with a German volunteer, excitedly circling her while she waited for more children to arrive. I did not think anything was out of the ordinary with her; however, the table conversation suggested something more sinister had almost occurred.

“¿Que pasó?” the other adults at the table whispered with concern. In a low tone, a collaborator told us that “last Friday by the avenue, a few men tried to kidnap her.” Yuliana had immediately run back to her coordinator, who then took her to speak to the authorities about what had happened. According to the volunteer, Yuliana had been acting “nervous” and distracted—she had not attended school since the incident had occurred. A collaborator at the table made it clear that if we were to speak to Yuliana, to “not talk about that; talk about something else.” We adults all agreed.

As a child-led social movement, MANTHOC has continually grown in ways that would align itself with the interests of their members. As gendered aggression has become rather normative, the organization began to focus more on sexual and reproductive rights education in an effort to halt these cycles of violence. I tried my best

not to concentrate on what we had just been talking about, but I could not help but think of the most recent case of a girl getting kidnapped—in front of the police station, no less! This was the case in Lima of an eleven-year-old girl named Maria Jimena Vellaneda Ruiz, who was kidnapped, raped, and then murdered by a police informant. Public response to her disappearance and the subsequent discovery of her body led to a citywide outcry and protest.

Over one million people marched on Plaza San Martin in downtown Lima, triggering both the resurgence of the #NiUnaMenos (Not One More [Dead Female]) movement as well as disparate groups of worried parents and children.¹¹⁸ While Jimena's femicide was blatant, issues of girlhood were subsumed by the scandal of corruption that let this crime occur. Parents and activists were livid at the police and the state for Jimena's murder, calling for the safety of their children. At the same time, not much thought was given to Jimena's gendered status as a girl; instead, her murder was seen as a kind of heinous form of child endangerment.¹¹⁹

Figure 6.1. Photo from the #JimenaRenace March.¹²⁰

The murder of Jimenita, as she was affectionately named by feminists and parent protesters, made me ponder what people would say about “Yulianita.” Protesters had

¹¹⁸ The #NiUnaMenos movement came about as early as 2013 after the disappearances of women at the Mexican-U.S. border. It has acted as a “cry of the other” for many organized and individual groups of girls and women. It has also functioned as a call for reproductive justice in Peru.

¹¹⁹ Jimena's murder embodied the complex conceptualizations of girls as innocents and the prevalent *machista* violence. Because of the taboo of sexual violence against girls in particular, their differentiation from the category of *child* is necessary to consider their multiple and intersecting identities, so they can be considered subjects of rights instead of objects of protection.

¹²⁰ Pulled from Mujer Dispara Facebook page, from a post titled “A las niñas NO se toca, NO se viola, NO se mata” which translates to “Girls should NOT be touched, NOT be raped, NOT be killed.” Photo credit: Rosa Villafuerte.

organized around eleven demands, one for each year of Jimena's life, the same number of years that Yuliana has been alive. These demands ranged from integrated sex education and the decriminalization of abortion in cases of rape to training officials and strengthening penalties for sexual violence.¹²¹ If her case had been that of Jimenita, would the media have glossed over her participation in society by mentioning only her lost futurity? Would they have talked about how Yuliana and her mates attempted to fight these very forms of violence through their movement-building? What would it take for a girl's life to get in the way of politics? For me, as a Peruvian anthropologist who was in Lima and Cajamarca expressly to study how girls' participation and advocacy affected their experiences and perceptions of organizing amid this increasing violence, it felt devastating that my project was so relevant.

In Peruvian society, girls' diversity must be seen as a constituent element of their overall condition, in a plural childhood. At that seemingly divided time, with scandals revealing government incompetence and corruption, Jimena's story became national news. Her death brought together a mass of people who gave a collective "cry of the other," calling for reproductive justice for girls and women in Peru. Luckily the path to Yuliana's relief from the trauma of her attempted kidnapping was facilitated by her membership in MANTHOC. Although she had escaped, albeit narrowly, the trauma of the attack was still being treated with varying levels of care and shelter. Had Yuliana not had MANTHOC, where would she be now?

¹²¹ The full list of demands from the #NiUnaMenos movement in Spanish and English is available in appendix F.

Before I started this dissertation project, I was aware of the rising apprehension brought about by the femicides in Latin America. Working children's social movements throughout the region, such as MOLACNATs, and those that were responding to local incidents, among them CONNATs in Paraguay, were blasting social media with their concerns. What I have noticed is that MANTHOC is a group that continues to advocate for their members because it is pertinent to breaking the cycle of violence. I was also aware of the tensions that existed, between many groups that wanted to abolish child labor and those that wanted to support the maintenance of working children. After having spent many weeks with MANTHOCas, in what felt like a very violent summer of femicide in Lima and Cajamarca, I found that many of the same abolitionists agree with changes that must be enacted for girls to live in equity and equality in Peru. Girls' development of their worker identity, their politicization in the movement, and their ability to navigate adult power allow them to have an edge in the outside society. Yuliana had somewhere to turn to; many girls are not so fortunate.¹²² In reexamining the stories from each chapter, I will use this chapter to explore what it would be like for most Peruvian girls to be socialized in the ways of MANTHOCas in the movement. I will look at *where we are now*, *what can be asserted* from my research, *where the working girls are left in all of this*, and *future research* that could inform and reproduce girls' well-being more broadly.

¹²² The number of femicides (women and girls) in 2018 was 150; in 2019, 168; and in 2020, 28 (as of February 26). For statistics on femicides between 2015 and 2018, see an INEI document: https://www.inei.gob.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/publicaciones_digitales/Est/Lib1659/cap02.pdf. For information on statistics from 2019, see a report by the Andean Agency on News: <https://andina.pe/agencia/noticia-cifras-terror-feminicidios-del-2019-son-los-mas-altos-de-decada-778043.aspx>. For information on femicides in 2020 so far, see an article by America News: <https://www.americatv.com.pe/noticias/actualidad/feminicidios-peru-2020-ya-son-dos-casos-registrados-primeros-dias-ano-n401619>.

Where Are We Now?

Peru, like other Global South countries, has not escaped the grasp of the modernizing effects of the Millennium Goals and the conditions of structural adjustment programs.¹²³ With the sale of public companies during Fujishock, private investors took advantage of lowered trade barriers to incentivize open markets for more foreign investment.¹²⁴ Because of this, free trade agreements with Northern countries employ their regulatory power to influence domestic and foreign policy. In looking back at the ILO's silencing of organized working children, Conventions 138 and 182 act as political fodder in limiting the economic conditions of the poorest Peruvians. Just as the U.S. Harkin Bill had global sway over the ILO and Bangladeshi contexts, so too can trade agreements pressure Global South states.

Because of the Peruvian elite's hold on economic prosperity in the country, the government's stabilization has over time employed neoliberal policies to eliminate restrictions on capital flows. The lack of restrictions reduces the necessary regulation of the private sector, which exacerbates the conditions of informal economy workers. The informal economy makes up more than half of Peru's gross domestic product and shapes working children's particular socioeconomic position. This deregulation leads to truly hazardous work, but it also disregards the basic economic needs of working children through their exclusion from the labor market. In their invisibility they are exempt from regulated labor benefits such as social security and health care, leading to dangerous conditions that impoverish working children.

¹²³ In 1999, Peru applied for the IMF's Extended Fund Facility.

¹²⁴ Fujishock was the political moment in which then-president Alberto Fujimori opened Peru's economy to the global market. This acted to curb the promulgation of Peru's period of hyperinflation.

Structural implications surely have an impact on the material exploitation of working children (Ennew 1995). Besides intimidation by adults, as in Ivan's story in chapter 3, which produces age-based abuse, and the kind of low-paid work that is available, there is an added dimension to gendered exploitation. Ivan may have been mistrusted for being a child worker, yet MANTHOCas like Mariana, Celín, or Estrellita Lunar are faced with additional security concerns for being girl children. With rising femicides from kidnapping and domestic violence, the tendency to keep girls from venturing past certain geographic limits conditions their work as they remain close to home. The labor of girls then may include domestic or care work that is nonremunerated and made "invisible" in the family unit.

Girls' involvement in movement activities, for political reasons or just for fun, deepens their appreciation for the group and one another. In an organization that struggles to make the lives of all children better, vis-à-vis the aspirations and concerns of working children, MANTHOCas' very participation in the movement allows them to negotiate uneven social and economic realities for necessary advocacy.

What Can Be Asserted

Like Rr at the beginning of chapter 3, there are girls who learn to defend themselves against imaginaries that perceive their work as "willful." Although notions of modernity in Peru and abroad are seen as mainstream in the global imagination, working girls' act of defiance is not considered corrupting by their families or peers. By having older members like Ivan come to younger groups like that of Encañada, girls are taught to feel no shame concerning their worker identity, because it is dignified, and this strengthens them as people. And though the existence of working children more generally

is often conflated with child labor and its total abolition, the continual efforts of MANTHOCas to foster a dignified working childhood strengthens the movement. Girls pitch their movement as a place that is at once a pleasant and understanding milieu yet also useful for its meaning-making.

The insertion of the movement into the lives of all MANTHOCxs supplements their difficult lives. What makes girls come into the movement are not the same reasons for which they choose to stay for the duration. MANTHOC brings girls in the movement tangible support in the form of happiness, comfort, and a feeling of family, of belonging. These are not just resources that girls get by chance by being part of the movement; they come about as girls participate through attending for concrete support like homework help, organizing, and playing with one another in community.¹²⁵ Through attending cultural training workshops like *formación* where girls cultivate their *protagonismo*, MANTHOCas enmesh themselves further into the movement's politics. Listening to one another by attending, MANTHOCxs begin to act in a collective agency, which allows members with differing experiences to commune in struggle. MANTHOC's social system, as it stands, allows for oppressed children to find it within themselves to fight for their, and one another's, liberation.

To reproduce this feeling of solidarity with one another, girls attend meetings for both intentional motivations or by chance, going to marches, working on environmental cleanups, hanging out at the base, and so on. This result of MANTHOCas' politicizing processes teaches them to flip between different modes of consciousness to effectively

¹²⁵ I am not saying that for those existing within a MANTHOC space, as with any communal space, there are not fights or arguments, but as Ladybug explained to me, "If I am tired, I will leave, but I come here, because my friends are here" (Ladybug, interview with the author, 2018).

redirect and speak to and against the power of one another and of adults. Adults who help the movement, whether in a very invested way or fleetingly, develop a parallel consciousness that also enables them to wield at least some of Sandoval's (2000) technologies of resistance. Girls like Estrellita Lunar learn how to manipulate situations in small points of resistance in the movement, to weed out or strengthen the connection between themselves (as individuals and as representatives of the group) and inflexible adults. MANTHOCas like Rr use their knowledge of critical valuation to reframe the contribution that children can produce in large-scale partnerships like that of the CDI, MANTHOC, Amnesty International, and ODW.

As girls are indeed made to feel marginal in Peruvian society, it is commendable to tender a response in opposition to the patriarchal norm in the mainstream. Yet, this act may appear separatist, it is important to note that the goal in MANTHOC is to collectively attain *formación* in ways that reproduce an individual child's *protagonismo*, to then hold multiple consciousnesses. This plurality of thought opens up opportunities for their work alongside groups like GRUFIDES, ODW, and Amnesty International, who may continue to cling to legitimized 'universals' about children's agency or innocence. With the escalating violence against girls and the rampant erasure of Andean lifeways, it is necessary to discuss the ways in which MANTHOCas experience their movement. It is this communication that makes it possible for girls to gain access to a world where the edicts of critical valuation, dignity, and belonging can shift their outcomes as present children, and as future adults.

Where Are the Working Girls Left in All This?

What would it be like to live in a Peru where MANTHOCas' experience of girlhood were more accessible and normative? Truth is, the amount of time and dedication that members and helpful adults put into maintaining the movement's ways is not cost effective in a neoliberal Peru. For the girls in this dissertation, through the wielding of the five technologies of resistance, their use of *protagonismo* engendered by participating in a collective agency, and begotten by a worker identity formation, requires concrete and abstract support from like-minded adults. Movement processes are in constant "evolution," as Cussianovich would say, and this is because members adapt to changes in their own needs and in the often unstable landscape of Peruvian politics.¹²⁶ MANTHOC uses its decolonizing processes of formation, its communitarian way of being, and the support networks it has built up to make sure that the movement remains in the hands of children. Girls in the movement experience a kind of suspension of time by existing in an ideal that MANTHOC attempts to create for its members, as a way of manipulating the world outside their base or group. Living in the ideal that

¹²⁶ The Ministry of Education has for the past five years been struggling to promote more egalitarian and culturally appropriate programs. The struggle for an integrated education on sexual and reproductive health is seen as a noninterventionist way of mitigating the rise in teen pregnancy as well as addressing the sexual inequalities that reproduce machismo and femicide. The 2017 curriculum would have also explained consent and talked about birth control; moreover, it included a portion that demystified sexuality and promoted equality of personhood to children who may be gay or questioning. Overall, the curriculum would have appeared as a resource for Peruvian children and youth; its goal was to include gender equity in teaching but to also include a more comprehensive sexual education than that in the 2008 curriculum.

On March 3, 2017, MANTHOCxs stood in front of the Ministry of Education to back up the national curriculum in favor of gender equity. An *El País* reporter, Jacqueline Fowks, captured the scene of about thirty members chorusing, "We want education with equality! When do we want it? Now!" On March 20, then-minister Marilu Martens dropped the "focus on gender" after members of Congress with ties to the antigay movement pressured her to remove it from the national curriculum.

On another note, before I arrived in Lima in 2018, I had taken a trip in late August 2017 to acquire permissions from different organizations. In that time, schoolteachers were more than two months into a full strike to resist incorporating more Western styles of pedagogy into the teaching of Peruvian children. MANTHOCxs often engage in fights for various rights at once, from environmental justice for the children of Cerro de Pasco, who are contaminated by mining waste, to end the perpetuation of sexual violence against girls. As of this writing at the beginning of 2020, they are planning the new work plan for the year at their national assembly in Lima.

MANTHOCxs build up for one another acts as a disruption of capitalist erasure, with the reinforcing of a culture of “doing.” As Simpson stated, “In a system requiring presence, the only way to learn is to live and demonstrate those teachings through a personal embodiment of *mino bimaadiziwin*” (in the Nishnaabeg language) or *sumak kawsay* (in the Quechua language), (both translated as “the good life”) (2011, 41–42). This embodying of the movement’s ideals through the use of *protagonismo* allows the movement to function purposefully in the lives of MANTHOCas in both Lima and Cajamarca.

Hope for Transformation?

If we cannot change neoliberal processes outright or make significant enough changes to spark an about-face to the lives of working girls, then there are small changes that could be made to increase their well-being today. There are a few different levels of research that could be considered when working girls are next incorporated into studies. First and foremost, from here on out, research should be carried out only in a meaningful way, whereby scholars are conscious of their participants and what their relative power positions are and how these subject-positions are relevant to the research itself. I am not perfect, but I am trying to be as aware as possible. In doing so, scholars should assist with their privilege, in the ways that the subjects want you to participate in their lives or in their movement.

As we see with Yuliana’s near-kidnapping and Aynoa’s pleas at the San Luis Health Forum (chapter 2), MANTHOCxs feel as though they are not considered worth the trouble of authorities. Although cultural trainings for law enforcement, ministry officials, and technicians are required to address better care for working children, what

would be more effective in the long term would be an esteemed liaison from each of these fields to be trained by IFEJANT to demystify working children's social position. Likewise, this liaison would be able to transmit the issues and concerns to provide community support where relevant. Yuliana knew where to go, and what adult would help; however, adding liaisons could create a more efficient network of support for working girls.

On a larger scale, it would be pertinent to study how the MANTHOC primary school in Cajamarca could offer a unique experience to working children registered as students—not just a pedagogical study but a critical evaluation of their capacity to promote the ideals of their movement. Children in the MANTHOC school not only learn the curriculum that is taught in other schools but also train in trade courses that reproduce cultural knowledge.¹²⁷ Additionally, donations to the movement and the volunteering provided by local parents and young Europeans support the students in concrete and abstract ways. This is a helpful public institution that could be replicated and transmuted to fit the establishment of a secondary institution for children to transfer to, at the completion of their primary schooling. This is important because even though Mariposa, in chapter 4, had attended the MANTHOC school, she had to forgo registering, to save up for a quality secondary school.

Last, alterations to the lives of working girls happen at a variety of discursive levels, but not all of them are necessarily broad or seem impossible. The first step to being an adult ally to working girls, and children more generally, is to persistently relay

¹²⁷ They learn how to make Peruvian dishes in a culinary and patisserie course and they have a woodworking shop, a *cuy* (guinea pig) enclosure, and a greenhouse. They engage in countless activities and events that add to their school's distinctiveness in the region.

power and privilege in ways that will be in the expressed interests of more oppressed groups. The next steps for adults who read this is to break through and attain a parallel consciousness to confront commonly held ideologies about children, their place, their worth, and the complications of gender surrounding these conceptualizations. As adults we must recognize girls' capacity for change and support them whenever possible.

APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

Round 1 (used only with first two interviewed girls):

Spanish

- ¿Cuántos años tienes?
- ¿Dónde vives?
 - o ¿Cuánto tiempo has vivido en Lima/Cajamarca?
- ¿Vas al colegio?
 - o ¿Cuántas veces por semana?
- ¿En que trabajas?
 - o Cuéntame como comenzaste a trabajar.
- ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas en MANTHOC?
 - o ¿Cuál es tu función en esta organización?
- ¿Que sientes que es lo mas esencial para entender la posición de tu organización?
 - o ¿Cambiarías algo?
- ¿Qué le dirías a una niña que quiere ser parte del MANTHOC?
- Cuéntame sobre tu opinión de las campañas de Ni Una Menos Perú, como #13^a en el 2016 o #12A en el 2017
- ¿Cuál es tu nivel de seguridad en tu comunidad?
 - o ¿En tu casa?
 - o ¿Por las calles?
 - o ¿En tu empleo?
- ¿Qué deseas hacer en tu organización en los próximos 5 años?
 - o ¿En tu vida?

English

- How old are you?
- Where do you live?
 - o How long have you lived in Lima/Cajamarca?
- What school do you go to?
 - o How many times a week?
- What do you work in?
 - o Tell me about how you began working?
- How long have you been in MANTHOC?
 - o What is your function in the organization?
- What do you feel is the most essential thing to know about your organization's position?
 - o Would you change anything?
- What would you say to a girl who wants to be part of MANTHOC?
- Tell me about your opinion about the campaigns of Ni Una Menos Peru, like #13A in 2016 or #12A in 2017.
- What is your level of security in your community?
 - o In your home?
 - o On the streets?
 - o At your job?
- What would you like to do in your organization in the next 5 years?
 - o In your life?

Round 2 (modified to accommodate girls):

Spanish

- Cuántos años tienes?
- ¿Dónde vives?
- ¿A que colegio vas?
 - ¿En que año estás?
- ¿En que trabajas?
 - ¿Cómo es un día típico de trabajo?
 - ¿Qué haces?
- ¿Cómo llegaste al MANTHOC?
 - ¿Cómo pasas tu día en el MANTHOC?
- ¿Qué le dirías a un niño, niña que quiere ser parte del MANTHOC?
- ¿Atiendes campañas o marchas?
 - ¿Me puedes dar un ejemplo de que hacen para prepararse para organizar?
Para una marcha o una protesta?
- ¿Atienden las asambleas?
 - ¿Qué hablan ahí?
- ¿Qué te gustaría hacer cuando salgas del MANTHOC?

English

- How old are you?
- Where do you live?
- What school do you go to?
 - What grade are you in?
- What do you work in?
 - What is a typical day at work like?

- What do you do?
- How did you come to know MANTHOC?
 - How do you spend your day at MANTHOC?
- What would you tell a boy or girl who wants to be part of MANTHOC?
- Do you attend campaigns or marches?
 - Could you give me an example of what you all do to prepare for organizing? For a march or a protest?
- Do you attend assemblies?
 - What do you talk about there?
- What do you want to do when you get out of MANTHOC?

APPENDIX B Characteristics of Interviewed MANTHOCas

Name/Age	Base	Work	How did she learn of MANTHOC?	Role in Movement	Aspirations for after MANTHOC
Ladybug /10	Yerbateros-San Luis district-Lima	Market selling jewelry from around the world with grandmother	From past coordinator	Regular member	Teacher, EMT, police officer; or actress.
Angeli/ 12	Yerbateros-San Luis district-Lima	Takes care of 8-month-old sister	Her mom connected her with Janeth	Regular member	Study interior design
Valeria/ 14	Yerbateros-San Luis district-Lima	Takes care of neighbor's twin toddlers	Friends from school and ex-collaborator told her.	House delegate Yerbateros, regional delegate, and delegate of CCONNA of Lima	Finish school, take a few years and get a degree, then come back to Lima or Loreto MANTHOC as a volunteer.
Ariana /10	Yerbateros-San Luis district-Lima	Operates a school supply business with other MANTHOCas	Her older sisters told her about it	Regular member who sometimes supports delegate roles.	Work in some capacity with MANTHOC or and NGO with similar goals
Aynoa /17	Yerbateros-San Luis district-Lima	Performer in a children's play for birthday parties	School friends and a collaborator from church told her to visit the movement.	Delegate for Lima MANTHOCs with some support given to National MANTHOC	Working on political campaigns, maybe being a politician.
Brigitte/ 14	Yerbateros-San Luis district-Lima	Making handicraft jewelry and keychains	MANTHOCxs came recruited her from work; and schoolmates that spoke positively about the movement.	Regular member who sometimes is sometimes a spokesperson for the movement.	Finish school and "somehow" get into university or an institute to become a psychologist.
Mariana/ 12	Yerbateros-San Luis district-Lima	Operates a school supply business with other MANTHOCas	Mom still works with MANTHOC, as an exNNAT	House delegate of Yerbateros, delegate of Agustino CCONNA and of Lima MANTHOCs	To be an a zootechnical engineer, so she can go to her family's land and take care of animals.
Maria/ 10	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	Domestic work at home and helps mom selling at ice cream shop; watches younger sister	Her older cousin told her about it.	Regular member	Working with MANTHOC in some capacity; making other children feel comfortable.
Rasa/ 11	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	"I do not work"	Cousin told her about MANTHOC	Regular member who supports delegates	Production Engineer, because she likes her dad's job.

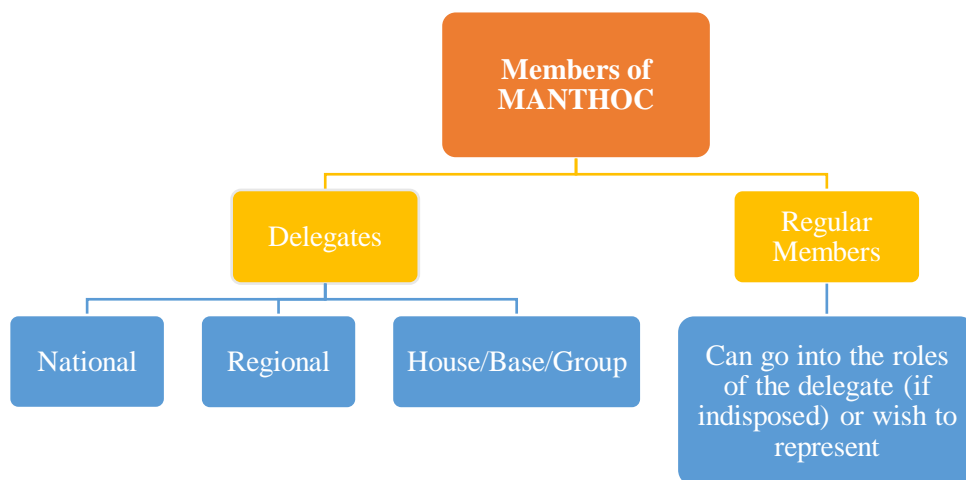
Name/Age	Base	Work	How did she learn of MANTHOC?	Role in Movement	Aspirations
Carla /10	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	Sells ice pops after school, next to her aunt's stall.	Schoolmates told her that MANTHOC was a good space to do a project for class.	Regular member who helps during campaigns.	Mathematician or pastry chef? She likes cooking, but she is very good at math. Maybe open a business selling cakes.
Estrella /11	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	Does not work.	Older brother brought her when she was five years old.	Regular member who helps during campaigns.	Engineer who drafts and volunteer at MANTHOC.
Sayuri /13	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	Domestic work at home and at her aunt's home (cooking, cleaning, taking care of younger cousins)	Friend told her that MANTHOC has a volleyball program.	Regular member who supports marches.	Wants to join the Peruvian Navy (MGP) because it's a family occupation.
Celeste /12	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	Domestic work at home	Was brought by aunt when she was three years old.	House delegate who supports campaigns.	Veterinarian
Esperanza/ 12	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	Helps mom sell breakfast cereals and juices on the weekends	Schoolmates told her that MANTHOC was a good space to do a project for class.	House delegate who wants to start a garden for the base.	Medical doctor, because she likes the occupation or secretary who is good with computers.
Mia /11	Amauta-Ate district-Lima	Helps nuns sell fruit on the weekends	Sister was a MANTHOCa and brought her to the base.	Regular member who supports campaigns.	Communications schoolteacher
Milagros /12	Mensajeros del Saber-San Marcos City-San Marcos	Helps mom wash with younger brother	Friend brought her.	Regular member	Wants to help MANTHOC in some capacity.
Abril /11	Mensajeros del Saber-San Marcos City-San Marcos	Works waitressing, bussing, and washing at mom's restaurant.	Collaborator approached her family for a borrowed meeting space.	House delegate who stepped into regional delegate role for national assembly.	Cosmetologist.
Luisa /12	Fe y Amor por Un Mundo Mejor-San Sebastian neighborhood-Cajamarca	Helps mom with domestic work at home	Collaborator told her sister to bring her to meetings.	Past group delegate; regular member	Business administrator and volunteer at MANTHOC

Name/Age	Base	Work	How did she learn of MANTHOC?	Role in Movement	Aspirations
SoyLuna /10	Fe y Amor por Un Mundo Mejor-San Sebastian neighborhood-Cajamarca	Work during summer vacation, helping mom sell tarwi beans, avocado and gelatin.	Sister was already in group and brought her.	Regular member who attends delegate meetings.	Hospital Nurse
Mariposa /17	Fe y Amor por Un Mundo Mejor-San Sebastian neighborhood-Cajamarca	Work during summer vacation, helping mom sell tarwi beans, avocado and gelatin.	Went to MANTHOC primary school in Cajamarca and decided to join school group about working children	Regular member who attends delegate meetings.	Pursue a career, help parents and teach younger siblings, and continue to support MANTHOC.
Sofia/ 11	Aventureros-Bellavista neighborhood-Cajamarca	Helps mom take care of one-year old brother in the afternoons	Collaborator went around neighborhood seeing what kids were interested in joining a new group	Regular member who participates in group's activities and some delegate meetings.	Don't know yet, but hoping to keep lending MANTHOC support.
Rr /16	Aventureros-Bellavista neighborhood-Cajamarca	Works at a bus station selling tickets and calling out trips.	Collaborator went around neighborhood seeing what kids were interested in joining a new group; aunt and mom had been in MANTHOC.	Regional delegate	Psychologist to start, be a collaborator at MANTHOC, but truly want to be president.
Xiomara /13	Aventureros-Bellavista neighborhood-Cajamarca	Helps mom with domestic work during the school year and sells candles and flowers with her aunt during summer vacation.	Collaborator went around neighborhood seeing what kids were interested in joining a new group	Group delegate	Police coroner or forensic specialist
Catalina /12	Aventureros-Bellavista neighborhood-Cajamarca	Takes care of younger brother on Saturdays	Collaborator went around neighborhood seeing what kids were interested in joining a new group	Regular member	Medical doctor, because she likes to see people on the mend.

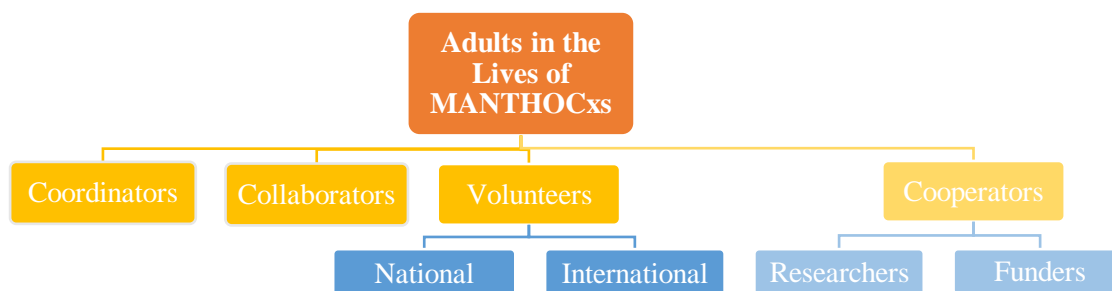
Name/Age	Base	Work	How did she learn of MANTHOC?	Role in Movement	Aspirations
Melisa /11	Aventureros- Bellavista neighborhood- Cajamarca	Helps mom sell products at bus station store.	Collaborator went around neighborhood seeing what kids were interested in joining a new group; came with sister	Regular member who attends delegate meetings.	Study for a veterinary degree, marry, have kids, and live a happy life.
Sherejade /11	Aventureros- Bellavista neighborhood- Cajamarca	Helps mom before school, selling alfalfa, fruit, corn nuts, cereals and desserts	Collaborator went around neighborhood seeing what kids were interested in joining a new group	Regular member	Civil engineer or architect because both degrees have math.
Ke Muin Ha /14	Aventureros- Bellavista neighborhood- Cajamarca	Helps grandma sell alfalfa and firewood before school.	Collaborator went around neighborhood seeing what kids were interested in joining a new group	Regional delegate	Study law, be a lawyer.
Estrellita Lunar /10	JCM Niños Emprendedores- Encañada	Helps mom process, cook, and sell grilled chicken feet with potato	Her younger sister told her about the collaborator asking for a space.	House delegate who attends delegate meetings in the city.	Civil engineer
Estrellita Marina /10	JCM Niños Emprendedores- Encañada	Helping mom with domestic work at home.	Estrellita Lunar brought her to the meeting.	Regular member	Nurse, because she likes when people get better.
Alecsa /10	JCM Niños Emprendedores- Encañada	"I do not work"	Collaborator invited her to join	Regular member	Primary schoolteacher
Celín /10	JCM Niños Emprendedores- Encañada	During summer vacation, helps uncle take care of his livestock.	Estrellita Lunar brought her to the meeting.	Regular member who participates in campaigns	Social worker or teacher
Jhoselyn /14	Jesus	Helps parents doing domestic work, planting in the field.	Went to MANTHOC primary school and joined organizing group.	National delegate	Become a collaborator at MANTHOC and study tourism/hotel management.

APPENDIX C: MANTHOC's Organizational Structure

How movement members organize one another



How adults are organized in the movement



**APPENDIX D: MANTHOCxs' Involvement in Marches and Protests
Protesting Sexual Violence**

Lima protest against child sexual abuse (MANTHOC Yerbateros FB page, May 2016)

Cajamarca at #13A Protest against femicide (MANTHOC Cajamarca private FB, August
2016)

Marching for Children's Inclusion in Dignified Work

MANTHOCas in Cajamarca (MANTHOC Cajamarca public FB page, December 2018)

MANTHOCxs in Lima (MANTHOC public FB page, May 2019)

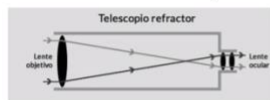
APPENDIX E: Projects I Did as a Cooperator for MANTHOC Amauta, Ate



JCM Niños Emprendedores, Encañada

¿Para qué sirve un Telescopio?

¿Cómo funciona? Los telescopios cambian la dirección de la luz de un objeto. Podemos ver estrellas con nuestros ojos porque la luz de las estrellas viajan hacia nuestros ojos. Pero la mayoría de esta luz no alcanza nuestros ojos y cae al suelo a nuestro alrededor. El telescopio recoge esa luz, la rebota y la canaliza hacia nuestros ojos.



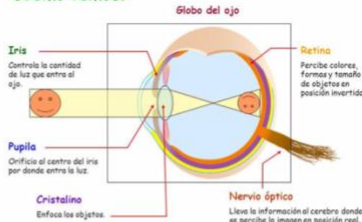
¡la refracción es cuando la luz se dobla!

luz que entra al telescopio se refracta y dobla el objeto que miras hacia donde está

¡la imagen se ve al revés!

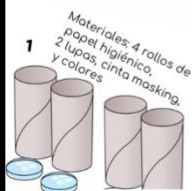


¿Cómo vemos?

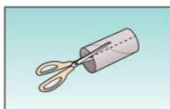


Los telescopios hacen que se vean más fáciles las estrellas y planetas que están lejos.

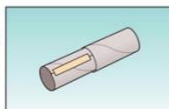
Reúne luz, cuanto más grande es el objetivo, más luz recoge, con un embudo en la parte inferior; como las pupilas de tus ojos.



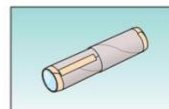
2 Corta 2 rollos por su lado largo con una tijera



3 Traslapa rollo y pega cinta donde has cortado. Mete dentro de rollos no cortados



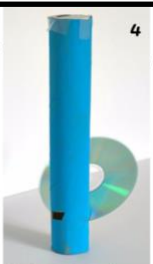
4 Con cinta pega los lentes de las lupas a cada lado de los rollos conectados



2 Corta una abertura de 45° en un rollo de papel toalla

3 Directamente al otro lado de la ranura, has una mirilla con un cutter

4 Calca el hueco del rollo en una cartulina. Cortala. Corta un rectángulo en el centro de tu círculo. Pégalo en el hueco opuesto



(¡Sol afuera y mira por el hueco!)

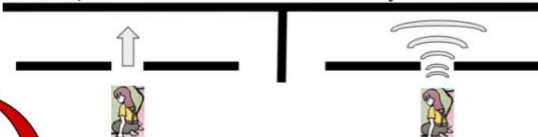
¿Por qué se usa un Espectroscopio?

¡La Luz está creado por ondas y partículas! Las partículas se llaman fotones. Actúa conforme a las propiedades de las dos.

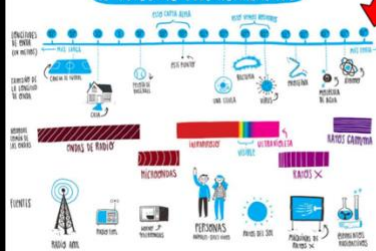
imagínate que: tiras canicas entre un hueco en la pared, ¿que pasa en cada caso?

Partícula foton

Onda electromagnética



EL ESPECTRO ELECTROMAGNÉTICO



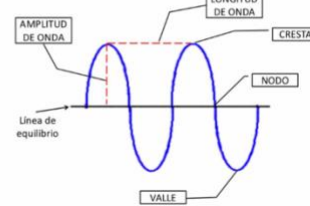
Partes de una Onda Electromagnética

Longitud de Onda: Distancia entre dos crestas.

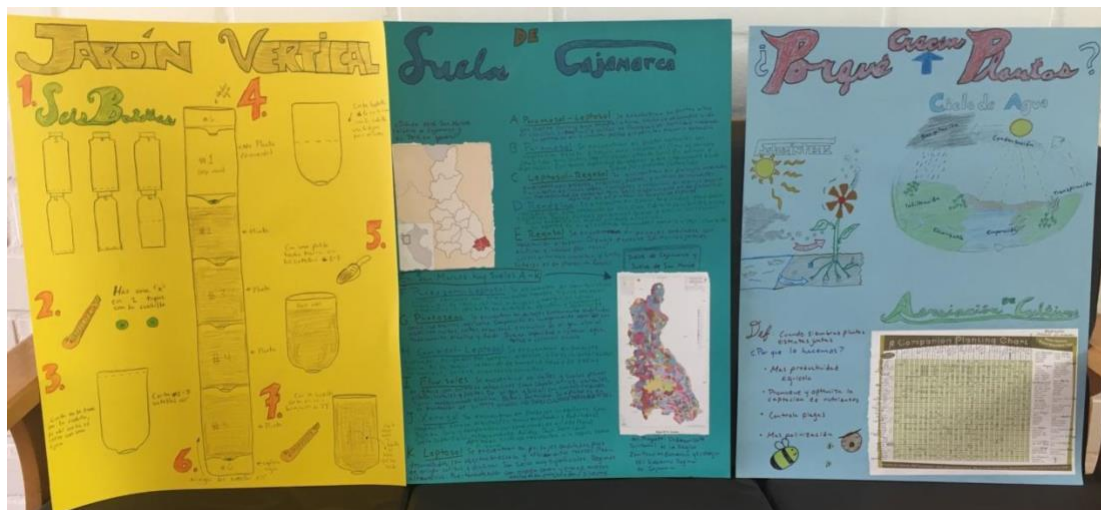
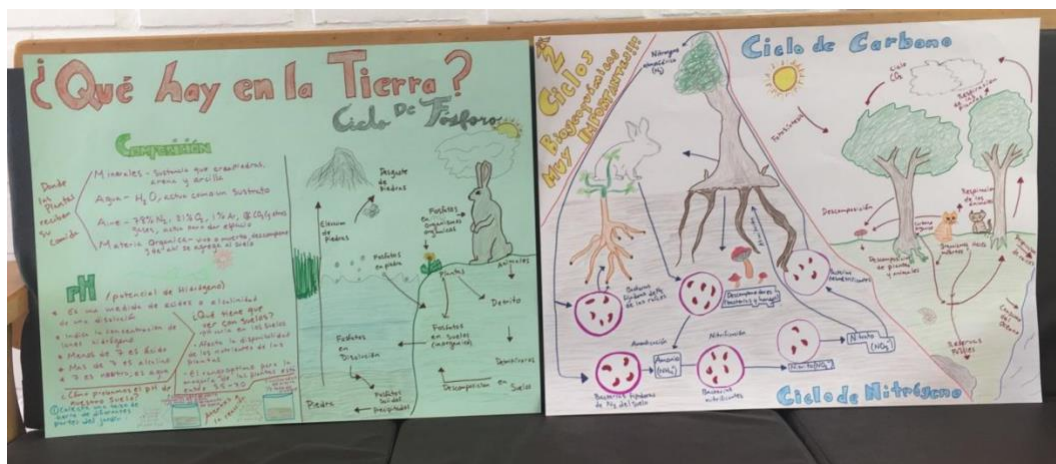
Amplitud: Es la máxima perturbación de la onda. La mitad de la distancia entre la cresta y el valle.

Frecuencia: Número de veces que se repite la onda por unidad de tiempo.

Partes de una onda



Mensajeros del Saber, San Marcos



Fé y Amor por un Mundo Mejor

There are no images for my work at this site. Here, we used the UNCRC and Peruvian Code to analyze different scenarios in which children could use these instruments to advocate for their rights.

APPENDIX F: List of Demands from the #NiUnaMenos Movement
(on behalf of Maria Jimena's murder)

Spanish

Estas son nuestras EXIGENCIAS, 11 demandas por cada año de vida de María Jimena, cuya voz fue apagada por la violencia de género, pero que sus compañeras de lucha exigimos ante la inacción y desidia del Estado peruano, cómplice y feminicida:

1. Educación sexual integral con enfoque de género. Las niñas, los niños y adolescentes no son objetos sexuales ¡Prevención, ahora!
2. Despenalización del aborto en caso de violación sexual. ¡Ninguna niña ni adolescente debe ser obligada a ser madre!
3. Capacitación con enfoque de género a policías, fiscales y jueces. ¡Justicia, ahora!
4. Endurecimiento de penas por violencia sexual. ¡Condenas sin beneficios penitenciarios, ahora!
5. Aprobación de la ley para que los delitos sexuales no prescriban. ¡No más impunidad!
6. Activación a nivel nacional del Registro Único de Víctimas y Agresores. ¡Ningún sujeto con denuncias por delitos sexuales debe estar libre, y a su vez, debe estar impedido de trabajar con la infancia!
7. Acción conjunta entre PNP, Ministerio Público y Poder Judicial para la atención y resolución de denuncias de violencia sexual. ¡Sanciones ejemplares, ahora!
8. Erradicación de la explotación sexual y de la trata de mujeres. ¡Que ninguna niña sea explotada sexualmente en nuestro país!
9. Comisarías y dependencias policiales con especialidad de investigación en violencia hacia la mujer y el grupo familiar y fiscalías con competencia penal para denunciarla.

10. Creación de juzgados especializados para la atención de denuncias por violencia de género en un máximo de 72 horas como lo exige la ley. ¡Atención rápida y efectiva!

11. Presupuesto especial para las instancias públicas encargadas de prevenir, sancionar y erradicar la violencia contra las mujeres que permitan la atención integral y recuperación de las víctimas.

Estado peruano y medios de comunicación ustedes son responsables y cómplices por lo que callan y no hacen.

¡Estamos hartas! ¡Nos vemos en las calles!

#NiUnaNiñaMenos

English

These are our REQUIREMENTS, 11 demands for each year of Maria Jimena's life, whose voice was shut off because of gendered violence. But we, her friends in the struggle, will demand from the accomplice and feminicidal partner in crime, the Peruvian State, in the face of their laziness and inaction:

1. Integrated sexual education with a focus on gender. Girls, boys, and adolescents are not sexual objects. Prevention now!
2. Decriminalization of abortion in cases of rape. No one girl or adolescent should be obligated to be a mother!
3. Trainings with a focus on gender for police, prosecutors, and judges. Justice now!
4. Strengthening of penalties for sexual violence. Convictions without penitentiary benefits now!
5. Approval of a law that will not allow for sexual crimes to proliferate. No more impunity!

6. Activation at a national level of the Universal Registry of Victims and Aggressors. No person with sexual accusations should be free, and at once should not be allowed to work with children!

7. Joint action between the Peruvian National Police and the Ministry of Public and Judicial Power to attend to and resolve the accusations of sexual violence. Exemplary sanctions now!

8. Eradication of sexual exploitation and ill treatment of women. Let no more girls be sexually exploited in our country!

9. Police stations and commissaries with detectives specializing in violence against women and families, and prosecution with criminal jurisdiction to denounce them.

10. Creation of special courts to attend to the complaints of gendered violence with a maximum of 72 hours as the law requires. Fast and effective action!

11. Special budget for the public instances in charge of preventing, sanctioning, and eradicating violence against women, that permit the integrated attention and recuperation of victims.

Peruvian State and the media, you are responsible and accountable for staying silent and not acting.

We are tired! We'll see you in the streets!

#NiUnaNiñaMenos

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