The Rise and Fall of 'Internally Displaced People' in the Central Peruvian Andes

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the possible effects of the introduction of the category of 'internally displaced people' — IDP — in the context of violent conflict in central Peru. It gives an account of the ways in which the IDP category has been introduced and appropriated by local NGOs, people affected by violent conflict and displacement, and by the governmental organization, PAR, set up to facilitate return and repopulation after the declared end of the armed conflict. The category has facilitated and given leverage to a national organization of IDPs. However, the agencies and programmes that work in support of IDPs tend to regard existing mobile livelihood practices as an impediment for advocacy and longer-term development strategies. This article suggests that, instead of considering displacement (and return) as an absolute break with the past, a focus on networks and mobile livelihoods may be a better way to help people affected by violent conflict to move beyond emergency relief.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of 'internally displaced people' (IDPs) has been around since the mid-1980s and became well known during the 1990s among international agencies, donor governments and NGOs in the fields of development and relief assistance. The plight of people who have fled their homes because they fear for their lives, but without crossing international borders, has been increasingly accepted — except by a number of governments, which have been directly or indirectly involved in population displacements. The category of IDPs has become institutionalized in a number of ways although, as Richard Holbrooke (2000) has stressed, protection and assistance in the field of IDPs is weak and patchy, because responsibility has not been unambiguously placed on the international system.

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Without downplaying the all-too-common problems of insecurity, displacement and loss of livelihood due to violent conflicts, we would like to question some of the assumptions inherent in the category of IDPs. We argue that the category — and the identity that comes with it — are premised on the idea that people usually live in one fixed place. It therefore tends to ignore the mobility inherent in many livelihood practices before, during, and after violent conflicts. If this mobility is recognized analytically — for example by introducing the notion of 'mobile livelihoods'[1] (see Olwig and Sørensen, 2001) — the differences between migrants, displaced people and those who stay put, may not be as marked as usually imagined. In the course of our research on everyday livelihood practices in the study area, we have found significant overlaps between migration and displacement. Thus, this article will not take IDPs as an existing group of people to be identified, protected, and assisted. Rather, we will analyse how different agents introduce, experience and come to identify with this category in a specific setting, and will explore the effects of its use in the fields of relief and development assistance.[2] In this regard, we will argue that the non-recognition of mobile livelihoods may work against the attempts to move beyond emergency relief and assist longer-term development.

For the purposes of this analysis we have chosen the case of the armed conflict in Peru, where the Maoist guerrilla group *Sendero Luminoso* engaged the Peruvian army in warfare between the early 1980s and the early 1990s. In the Central Andes, the conflict involved especially the high-lying rural districts, and affected the livelihood and security of the population connected to, or living in, those districts. Many people sought refuge in the regional capital of Huancayo, resulting in a swelling of the population in the city. Local NGOs and churches provided relief to the poor areas in the city from the outset of the armed conflict, but the concept of IDPs was not introduced until the beginning of the 1990s when the plight of the internally displaced in Peru was recognized internationally. By the end of the 1990s, however, recognition and support for IDP-organizations was dwindling, on the part of the donors as well as the base of the organizations.

In this sense, this case illustrates the effects that the introduction and institutionalization of the IDP category produced. In what follows, we will first consider the concept of IDPs and the assumptions contained within the concept. We will then provide the necessary context in terms of the extended spaces of social relations and the widespread mobile livelihood practices in the Central Peruvian Andes before the armed conflict, and discuss the consequences of the armed conflict in terms of the displacement of livelihoods (see also Sørensen, 2001; Stepputat, 2001). Thirdly, we will analyse how local NGOs and IDP organizations have dealt with the issue of displacement, before examining the organization and perception of return of a group of IDPs under the governmental programme for repopulation. Finally, we will discuss the implications of the analysis for the way we use the category of IDPs.

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[1] 'Mobile livelihoods' connotes the social and spatial practices of people involved in migratory movements, and lifts the concept of 'livelihood' out of its locally-bounded context.

[2] The 2000 UNHCR Report on the state of the world's refugees discusses the extent to which a meaningful distinction between refugees and IDPs can, and should, be sustained (UNHCR, 2000: 282). While distinctions between various groups of displaced populations may be necessary to establish certain rights under international law, it may nevertheless not be the best analytical optic for understanding how individuals and groups experience their situation and which social processes have mobilized them in the first place.

The Concept of Internally Displaced People

IDPs have been defined and perceived in much the same terms as refugees. According to the UN guiding principles, they are persons 'who have been forced or obliged to flee their home or places of habitual residence in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of, armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural disasters or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border' (quoted in Cohen, 1998). In accordance with this definition, current policy-making and mainstream research regards refugees and IDPs as characterized by a series of discontinuities which separate their present life from their own past lives, as well as from the lives of people who do not belong to these categories. Multiple losses — of property, livelihood, relatives, entitlements, security, good health, identity, trust, and so on — are central to the common characterization of refugees and IDPs. In the words of Frerks (1999: 10, 11): 'They are — by definition — cut off from their environment: physically, economically, socially, and culturally. This has large consequences ... with respect to longer-term perspectives and the material, cognitive, social, and other prerequisites for future recovery'. If, Frerks goes on, they have to stay in refugee camps until there may be an opportunity to repatriate, 'the idea of a continuum and other forms of linking relief and development, are problematic. In contrast, these refugees' positions are characterized by a whole series of discontinuities'.

Perceiving refugees and IDPs in terms of an essential discontinuity has repercussions for the ways in which development-oriented assistance can be conceived. There are, in principle, three different options: 1) the refugees/IDPs are assisted in the site of refuge with the perspective of settling and integrating permanently in this site; 2) refugees and IDPs are kept 'on hold', receiving (temporary) relief until conditions are ripe for return or resettlement to a site where they can be assisted with a long-term perspective; or 3) they are assisted in ways which prepare their future return (or resettlement) by investing in portable assets, such as education, training, and organization. In the current terminology, the latter would be elements of development-oriented relief, which may be provided right from the beginning of the emergency. However, as Frerks notes, 'it is difficult to imagine what type of useful development initiatives can be designed related to their future environment, still far away in time and place, and anyhow insecure' (ibid.: 11).

We suggest that a shift in analytical focus will help us to imagine such 'useful development initiatives' among refugees and IDPs. While the deeply engrained assumption that the lives of refugees and IDPs are marked by profound discontinuities is valid in many cases, it also produces a certain analytical blindness, with the inherent risk of misconceiving interventions on their behalf. We believe that a greater perceptiveness of the role of mobility (or lack of mobility) prior to, during and after violent conflicts will often show that places of refuge are not necessarily new to people fleeing violence, whilst spatial constriction appears to be a common, and often devastating, condition during violent conflict whether people are 'displaced', 'migrants' or 'stayees'.

MOBILE LIVELIHOODS AND ARMED CONFLICT IN THE MANTARO VALLEY

This article is based on findings from an exploratory field study at the edge of the Mantaro Valley between the provinces of Huancayo and Huancavelica.[3] The Mantaro Valley is located in the Central Peruvian Highlands. It is dominated by the city of Huancayo, which during the armed conflict attracted numerous persons from the Departments of Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurímac as well as from the surrounding peasant communities in the highlands of the department of Junín, and from the tropical lowlands to the east of Huancayo. In these environments of relative isolation and extreme poverty, *Sendero Luminoso* (SL) emerged in the 1960s, grew in the 1970s, and dramatically escalated its terrorist activities in the 1980s (Gonzalez, 1988). Massacres, selective killings, rape, destruction of buildings and livestock, and other forms of political violence were committed by the SL (and with less intensity and different characteristics by the Tupac Amaro Revolutionary Movement, MRTA), as well as by government troops in the Peruvian government's attempts to subdue the insurgents. While government troops managed to quell terrorist activities in the mid-1980s, much of the area of the Central Andes was again under SL control from the late 1980s until 1992, when Abimael Guzmán, former professor of philosophy at the University of Huamanga and the founder and leader of *Sendero Luminoso*, together with several top lieutenants of the movement, were captured and sentenced to life imprisonment (Oré Cardenas, 1998).[4]

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[3] The project 'Mobile Livelihoods and the Government of Movement in the Aftermath of Civil War in Peru', was a joint project between Henrik Rønsbo, Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, and Finn Stepputat, funded by the Danish Council for Development Research through the research programme 'Livelihood, Identity and Organization in Situations of Instability'.

The city of Huancayo is the capital of the Department of Junín.[5] It lies at an altitude of 3260 metres on the flat Río Mantaro Valley, which is one of the most fertile areas in the Central Andes and supports a large rural population. Being the major commercial centre in the region, it is of great importance as a market town for the surrounding rural areas. For centuries it served as 'a resting place between wanderings' (Manrique, 1978), and as an unavoidable crossroad for travelling people, livestock and agricultural products. But it was not until the rapid expansion of commercial agriculture in the lowlands and livestock production in the high Andes in the late nineteenth century that it gained status as a regional centre. Since then, the population has steadily increased, most dramatically during the last ten to fifteen years in which the city's estimated population has tripled, to one million.[6]

In general, the Mantaro Valley is characterized by the population's extended spaces of livelihood, maintained through high levels of mobility between sites of subsistence production in different ecological zones, and sites of wage labour in different parts of Peru. Temporary migration to the jungle, the mines, the coastal plantations and to Lima have provided peasants from the zone with incomes outside agriculture, which again have facilitated their establishment in the city of Huancayo (de la Cadena, 1988). The fact that migration to Huancayo has not been conditioned by a demand for industrial labour, but rather by a possibility of creating employment in smaller workshops, in the informal sector, and in the surrounding agricultural sector, leads de la Cadena to characterize Huancayo as a 'city of peasants' (ibid.: 46): the Mantaro region and the city of Huancayo constitute a complementary space in which agricultural livelihoods are complemented with urban lives.[7]

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4. Although neither SL nor the MRTA have managed to destabilize the country to the levels experienced in 1992, the SL has nevertheless continued to carry out armed actions in several departments of Peru. From 1995 to 1997, 1456 violent actions occurred, causing 851 deaths (Hampton, 1998). Ten departments continue under state emergency (*La República* 11 April 1999).
5. Peru is politically/administratively divided into twenty-four 'departments'.
6. The last national census was taken in 1993 and reports a much lower number of inhabitants. The Statistical Compendium of the Department of Junín reports the number of registered voters for Huancayo to be 129,642 in 1979, 216,863 in 1989, and 266,166 in 1995. Taking into account a high percentage of non-registered persons as well as the number of dependent children in each household, the estimated one million inhabitants becomes quite probable. However, frequent travelling between urban and rural areas makes any estimate highly dubious.
7. Karsten Paerregaard reached a similar conclusion in his study of migration in Arequipa and Lima. He argues that interdependence, rather than separation, is the key to understanding the complex, heterogeneous nature of Peruvian society (Paerregaard, 1997 :2).

In the study region, the better-off peasants from the district capitals migrated to Huancayo and Lima from the 1940s and 1950s onwards. They developed dual household strategies and formed 'confederations of households' which tied households in different sites together, permitting for example, urban-based households to invest in livestock production 'back home', and rural-based households to send their children to Huancayo for secondary or higher education (Smith, 1989). Often the formal representatives of peasant communities spent most of their time in Lima or Huancayo where they had better access to government offices, lawyers and merchants. During the 1960s and 1970s migration increased, including new groups of poorer households. While extending their spaces of livelihood, these households faced less secure economic conditions and were unable to buy property in the cities. For both groups, the central lowlands became a new site of settlement as more and more highland peasants acquired additional land at the edge of the Amazonas from the 1950s onwards.

These well-established mobile livelihoods were severely changed by the outbreak of civil war. The arrival of *Sendero Luminoso* in the rural communities of the valley and the surrounding mountain areas during the 1980s forced the inhabitants to change their mobile lives for at least two reasons: either to follow the demands of SL, not to leave the villages at all (to prevent villagers from informing the Peruvian military about SL's presence), or to abandon their fields and livestock and flee to safer (urban or not yet 'liberated' rural areas), hereby displacing themselves on a more permanent basis. The latter strategy was also a response to the military presence in what soon became declared *zona roja* — the red zone — by the Peruvian government.

In the mid-1980s roads and bridges were blocked, the railway occasionally bombed, and travelling by road became extremely dangerous. It became very difficult to transfer livestock to the local and regional markets and commercial travellers were prevented from entering and leaving the zone. Thus, the presence of SL and the military resulted first and foremost in a discontinuation of well-established mobile livelihood practices. Political violence led to less (itinerant) mobility.[8] But it also created distinct new forms of livelihoods, namely those of more permanent displacements, away from the rural districts. Those who fled the villages under the cover of darkness had to leave all their belongings behind, and if they managed to sell their possessions (land, livestock and houses), they did so at throwaway prices. People who had for decades rotated between the villages and various urban settings, had to stay in the cities for security reasons, unable to maintain long-distance social control and entitlements in the countryside. The sudden impoverishment of better-off, 'dual residence' peasant families forced many of their children out of secondary or university education, as they were cut off from their rural livelihoods and incomes.

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[8] See Wilson (1997) for similar observations in the Tarma region.

People who had to develop new livelihoods away from their land and pasture either entered the agricultural sector in the Mantaro Valley, which had a high demand for cheap seasonal labour, or they tried to make a living as street vendors or in domestic services. Seasonal labour in sugar, coffee or cotton plantations at the lower altitudes was a necessity for most of the poorer families, and it was very common for Huancayo-based households to have at least one member looking for wage labour or other opportunities in Lima. Establishment in Lima was facilitated to a great extent by established networks of kin or community, such as the 'confederations of households'.

These forms of mobile livelihoods and displacement make it very difficult to estimate the number of displaced people in Peru during the conflict. Depending on the source, estimated numbers of IDPs in the first half of the 1990s vary between 310,000 and 600,000 (SEPIA, 1997; Stavropoulou, 1998). In the Central Andes (including the departments of Junín, Huancavelica and Huánuco), NGOs used the working figure of 90,000 IDPs of which 15,000 were supposed to have taken refuge in the Mantaro Valley (SEPAR, 1998). In comparison, the NGOs in Ayacucho estimated that there were 150,000 IDPs in this department (SEPIA, 1997).[9] In the following we will examine the interaction between the NGOs and the people who were identified as IDPs in the Mantaro Valley.

FROM 'MIGRANTS' TO '*DESPLAZADOS*'

In an interview in 1999, an employee of a Huancayo-based NGO explained with regard to the introduction of the concept of IDPs that 'the existing terminology of the migrant didn't help us. We lacked appropriate concepts. With the concept of the displaced we had more analytical strength and more conceptual precision . . . it's a juridical concept'. This conceptual change is central in the following examination of perceptions, concepts and strategies that structured the field of humanitarian assistance in Huancayo from 1983 to 2000. The local humanitarian field was transformed significantly with the introduction of the IDP concept in the early 1990s, when it became linked more tightly to the transnational space of donor agencies, IGOs and NGOs in humanitarian assistance.

While the beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance in Huancayo somewhat reluctantly appropriated the IDP concept, the discovery of the concept was a revelation for the NGOs that had identified most directly with the cause of 'migrants from the zones of emergency' as they were labelled in the 1980s. Discussing how to move from an emergency situation towards a longer-term development perspective, these NGOs clearly articulated a need for a strong concept that could help them provide for, and stabilize, the displaced population and have them officially recognized as victims of the armed conflict. They were indeed ready for the concept, although the strategy of singling out IDPs for special attention was contested by other NGOs in the local humanitarian field, as we will see below.

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[9] Numbers are based on information gathered by the NGOs themselves, supported by official sources. They must be considered approximate at best. Statistical estimates used to quantify the political violence in Peru during the 1980s relied for their data on information provided by the press, which in turn relied on military information; however, regional sources of information are more accurate than national sources (Manrique, 1998: 220f). The NGO estimates used here rely on regional information.

The following examination of the local humanitarian field in Huancayo and surroundings is based on documents from local NGOs and interviews with key actors among NGOs and IDP organizations. The former are represented by the NGOs SEPAR,[10] most closely connected with IDPs in the period, and IDET,[11] which broke away from the IDP-centred strategy in the early 1990s. The organizations of the IDPs are represented by current leaders of *Jatarai Ayllu*, the first umbrella organization to emerge in the 1980s, and ARDCP, the Regional Association of Displaced People in Central Peru, in which *Jatarai Ayllu* was incorporated in the early 1990s.

The NGO Perspective: The Quest for a Fixed Identity

The first organizations to engage in the provision of relief to newcomers in Huancayo after the outbreak of the conflict were Catholic and Protestant churches. During the 1980s, a number of NGOs emerged from within the churches and from different (leftist) political groupings, but it took them some time to identify and establish relations with the displaced people, who tried to hide themselves in the city and the surrounding agricultural towns. The NGOs distinguish three major waves of displaced people arriving in 1983–4, in 1986–7, and in 1989–90. According to the NGOs, the first two periods brought mostly Quechua-speaking peasants from the south; our own data suggest that Spanish speakers formed part of the three 'waves', but they were harder to identify for the NGOs.

The third period brought many Wanca and Spanish-speaking people from the mountain areas surrounding the Mantaro Valley. By then, the valley had become the scene for intense proselytizing and fighting on the part of the SL, the MRTA, the army and a para-military group. These conditions of course affected the security of the population in general, but given the stigma attached to Quechua-speaking people from the first epicentres of rebellion in the south, they and the organizations working alongside them were particularly suspected of being involved with the SL. To the authorities and to most residents, they were 'subversives' or 'terrorists'. In this period, the fringes of the city of Huancayo were often beyond government control during the night, and the army frequently occupied and searched the poor neighbourhoods where many IDPs were staying. From 1990 onwards, the army gradually regained control in the region.

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[10] *Servicios Educativos Promoción y Apoyo Rural* (Educational Services and Rural Promotion and Support) was founded in 1987 as a former NGO broke up.

[11] *Instituto Democracia y Trabajo*, the Institute for Democracy and Labour.

In general terms, the NGOs involved describe three phases of assistance (Zamudio and Flores, 1997) which broadly resemble the phases of the emergency–rehabilitation–development continuum as described in the relief literature of the mid-1990s (see, for example, Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell, 1994). First, the phase of 'critical emergency' from 1983 to 1989/90 focused on provision of food, clothes, blankets, health facilities, school equipment, documents of identification, and celebrations of 'cultural identity'. As time went by, assistance also comprised workshops, training for income generation, and in the 'emergency/sustenance' phase from 1990 to 1992/3, some NGOs embarked on the organization of credit schemes for micro and small enterprises, such as street vending, artisanal and agricultural production. From 1992/3, after the capture of SL leader Guzman, the NGOs entered the phase of 'insertion and return' in which they sought to provide 'the conditions for definitive solutions', including social and physical infrastructure, and the development of modern production alternatives. After three to four years, this phase was supposed to give way to the phase of 'sustainable development' when assistance would be faded out. As of 2000, this had not yet happened.

Documents from the late 1980s and early 1990s reveal intense discussions among the NGOs as to how to move beyond the provision of emergency relief. Discussions focused increasingly on the organization of the recipients of assistance as a means to move towards self-sufficiency. In the mid-1980s NGOs had established communal soup kitchens, which formed the core of local committees of 'migrants from the zones of emergency'. In 1985, SEPAR 'centralized' fourteen committees, representing 350 migrant families, within the umbrella organization *Asociación Comunidad de Migrantes Quechuas 'Jatarai Ayllu'*, ('The Quechua Migrant Community Association "Rise up, family"'). The idea was to gradually transfer responsibility of the soup kitchens, occupational training, income generation, health services and micro-credit schemes to *Jatarai Ayllu*, which, according to SEPAR in 1990, felt 'an increasing responsibility in terms of coordination, administration, improvement of menus, etc.' (SEPAR, 1990: 9).

The transfer of responsibility did not work well, however, either in economic terms or in organizational terms. If the workshops ever became viable, they tended to become 'personalized' as family enterprises, and the participants did not display an understanding of 'the collective character of this activity' (ibid.: 10). In general, SEPAR noted, it was hard to guarantee the continuity of activities upon transfer to *Jatarai Ayllu* because of the economic conditions in Peru and the need for permanent subsidies, and 'because of *the inherent dispersion and instability of the migrants*'[12] (ibid.: 18, our emphasis).

Apart from improving the organizational and administrative capacities of the associations and collective enterprises of the displaced population, SEPAR saw advocacy for the 'migrants from zones of emergency' as the most important means of moving beyond the emergency phase by changing the conditioning political environment. The aim of this advocacy was to achieve the public recognition of the displaced population as victims of violence, to have the state set up a programme of attention to these victims, and to denounce the general state of human rights in Peru:

> Recognizing the existence of an ample space which is not attended by the state (typical of the general lack of attention to the victims of violence), it is imperative to construe a programme of demands of the displaced population ... the 'living' victims of the political violence. ... It is necessary to strengthen the identity of the refugees as such, in order to be a 'living' example of the costs of the violence and to develop a proper space that contributes to the creation of a sensible public opinion and the recognition of their situation. (SEPAR, 1990: 16–18)

However, 'the inherent dispersion and instability of the migrants' — that is, the constant movement of many migrants and in particular of the young who left Huancayo for wage labour elsewhere — jeopardized the attempts to strengthen the identity of the displaced. People engaged in a number of different economic as well as organizational activities within and outside the frameworks set up for them by the NGOs. In particular, relations to the popular or revolutionary movements were deplored by several of the NGOs, who saw this 'multi-participation' as an obstacle for their advocacy since they risked losing 'their identity as displaced, thereby jeopardizing their demanding attitude' (ibid.: 15–16).

In this perspective we may interpret the organization of the migrants as an attempt to fix them in manageable sites and structures. The evasiveness and instability of the object of assistance and organization, and the apparent fluidity and 'blurredness' of their identity, presented practical as well as analytical problems. Thus, in the minutes from a meeting between the Huancayo-based NGOs in 1990, a number of different terms circulated with reference to the people in need of assistance: they were compulsive migrants (*migrantes compulsivos*), internal refugees, rural refugees, refugees, displaced population, displaced, or just migrants.

At this point the NGOs did not mention the lack of a single concept as a problem, but they repeatedly emphasized the need for a 'proper identity' for the forced migrants. The incipient development of a proper identity for some of their organizations was indeed regarded as a major achievement by the NGOs, since it 'allows them to have a relatively proper space at the local level, and to a lesser degree at the regional and national level' (ibid.: 18). The strengthening of this identity and the co-ordination of the accompanying organizations to raise awareness of the special problems of displaced people had high priority among the NGOs. They developed different typologies of the displaced people, while grappling with the conceptual issues, but ended up making a basic distinction from the 'current migrant', and emphasizing 'the humanitarian view', assisted by the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights (interview with former SEPAR employee, May 1999).

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[12] 'la disperción e inestabilidad propios de los migrantes'.

This was reflected in the name of the SEPAR programme, which in the early 1990s changed from the programme for 'migrants from the zones of emergency' to 'The Regular Programme [for] Emergencies and Human Rights'. As the director of SEPAR noted in 1992, 'we are an organization that confronts the problem [of human rights] but we have only recently begun to construct our identity within the program of "Emergency and Human Rights"' (Flores, 1992). The construction of a proper identity for the internally displaced was thus directly connected to the construction of a particular identity for the NGO that specialized in issues of human rights and political violence.

In retrospect, former NGO employees identify three encounters at the national level between 1991 and 1993 as central to the formalization of the concept of the internally displaced people in Peru. The Catholic Church brought NGOs and church-based organizations together to discuss problems related to the population displacement: here a 'national reading of the problem' was elaborated for the first time. Oxfam organized a meeting for the same group in 1992, at which they were introduced to the Colombian and Central American experience of conflict and displacement. And in 1993, Oxfam and the Project Counselling Service brought a mission from the International Committee for Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) to Peru, which had a 'profound influence, in particular for the constitution of the National Board [for the internally displaced]' in 1994. For the Huancayo-based NGOs it was a revelation to discover that 'the whole world was interested in the theme of refugees and displaced'. Previously they had felt 'like orphans' (interview with former SEPAR employee, May 1999).

On the basis of the IDP concept, SEPAR tried to reorganize the *desplazados* in order to put more pressure on the state from 1992 to 1994. SEPAR considered *Jatarai Ayllu* to be well suited for the phase of emergency, but too small and ill equipped to act as a mediator at the regional and national scene (Peña, 1993). In an attempt to centralize the organizational set-up, *Jatarai Ayllu* was joined with new, similar organizations in the Regional Association of Displaced in Central Peru, ARDCP (ibid.). This also involved new 'reconstruction-committees' that were to prepare returns to the rural areas when conditions were ripe. At the national level, the regional associations of *desplazados* were joined in a national organization in 1996.[13]

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[13] CONDECOREP, the National Coordinator of Displaced and Communities in Reconstruction in Peru.

The international and national pressure for recognition of the problems of the IDPs was among the factors that led to the conception of a governmental 'Project in Support of the Repopulation', PAR, which we will consider below. While it remains questionable how much influence the national organizations of *desplazados* and the assisting agencies had, the effort to engage in a dialogue with the government, and the strategy of involving the state in programmes of assistance to the *desplazados* was a radical change from the 1970s and 1980s. Until the mid-1990s, most of the political organizations and NGOs had regarded the state as *el gran cuco,* the great ghost. The state should be resisted by all means. Only reluctantly did some NGOs establish relations with local representatives of state or local government in order to solve specific problems of the displaced population in Huancayo.[14]

Opposition to IDP-Focused Strategies

Alongside the described process, an alternative strategy towards the *desplazados* was developed by NGOs with a different political inclination from SEPAR. These organizations had close links to the peasant unions and fought the SL in the political field of popular organization. In the late 1980s these NGOs insisted that the *desplazados* joined the general struggle for water, electricity, and sewerage. In an interview, a representative of IDET explained that even though they began to work with *desplazados* in 1990, they pulled out of the regional network of NGOs when the transnationalized, IDP-focused strategy became manifest between 1992 and 1994:

> Some NGOs used the Central American refugee-experience to argue for their case and gave the *desplazados* the idea that they should have their own schools, their own hospitals, their own land, just as the refugees in their camps, and the repatriates in their settlements.... But here, they had previous relations and were integrated.... [Therefore] community members never understood why the *gringos* always went to the *desplazados*, why they only gave to them.... The *desplazados* never wanted to join the rest. (Interview, IDET representative, May 1999)

Finally, we should mention the strategy of *Sendero Luminoso* — although this is made difficult by the very nature of that strategy. SL considered any form of visible organization a form of collaboration with the state, a helping hand to the state. They therefore deliberately fought the popular organizations; if they could not make the organization disappear, they infiltrated, took over the leadership, and managed the organization from that position. The organizations of the displaced were no exception, in particular as SL became a serious presence in squatter settlements around Huancayo in the late 1980s and early 1990s. After initially fiercely opposing the return of IDPs to the countryside, where armed civil patrols had begun resisting SL, they changed their position in 1992–93 and tried to take control of any kind of 'promotional work' in relation to return and reconstruction (Coral, 1994). The moderate NGOs believed that they should confront this challenge although 'we have to take very much care ... SL has been more than 12 years in the scenario and has an important advantage compared to us' (ibid.). One strategy was to involve and co-operate with the state in support of the return process, but as mentioned above, not all the NGOs agreed with this.

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[14] In Huancayo, a leftist populist party controlled local government when the Mayor encouraged the squatters around Huancayo — including many displaced people — to occupy private land and establish 'Human Settlements' with some support from the government. SEPAR launched an initiative for the formalization of the relation between the municipality of Huancayo and the displaced.

The Perspective of the IDP-Organization: '*Jatarai* became our University'

The first organizations of the *desplazados* came into being in the mid-1980s in the form of mutual self-help groups among relatives or people of trust from the same communities. Some organized in order to counter what they saw as discrimination against Quechua speakers by the 'Wankas' (people from Huancayo), others in order to be able to receive assistance from churches and NGOs, but in general the groups served as fora to discuss 'the painful experiences of our *pueblos*' (quoted in Tamagno, 1998). As the first groups stabilized in the form of 'committees' they adopted means of organization that were known from the peasant communities, such as the 'Book of Acts', and meetings with pre-established agendas.

The leaders, however, recognized that the formal organizations of the *desplazados* were, to a large extent, creations of the NGO interventions. In this sense, an NGO representative is right in his claims that 'we handed over this identity to them'. This was experienced differently by the *desplazados*, however: 'When this word *desplazado* appeared ... it was uneasy, it always signalled a certain disdain. We preferred to say that we migrated because of the violence ... In the beginning, the term was an insult; nobody knew what it was.... But little by little we got used to it' (quoted in Tamagno, 1998: 17). When we asked a group of leaders of *Jatarai Ayllu* to reflect upon the category, they noted that people started using the term after ICVA's visit. Suddenly 'groups of families who did not identify themselves as such, well, suddenly groups and organizations of displaced emerged [all over Peru]'. This was when 'the organizational fever' hit Peru, and *Jatarai Ayllu* became the model of organization (interview with the Regional Association, March 1999).

This was the period when the IDPs appeared in large numbers in public. More than 300 would turn up for a general assembly, and the organization could mobilize several thousands for demonstrations. However, the leaders distinguished between the 'legitimate' *desplazados* and the others, the migrants, some of who had organized opportunistically 'for the gifts', 'without having suffered' (interview with the Regional Association, March 1999). But the *desplazados* also identified themselves as different from, and interacting with, other actors and entities in the arena which they had entered by becoming organized; these included the state, the unions, the parties, the 'locals', those who stayed in the communities of origin, and, perhaps most importantly, the NGOs.

Relations between *Jatarai Ayllu* and the supporting NGOs were always ambiguous, shifting between the enthusiasm engendered by the help, solidarity and shared achievements, and resentment at what the leaders saw as control imposed by the *licenciados*, the educated people from 'the office' (Tamagno, 1998). Conflicts emerged when the NGOs required the displaced to work in groups, rather than providing individual support, or when they sought to establish a central soup kitchen instead of the decentralized ones in the different neighbourhoods. Relations broke down completely during the latter part of the 1990s due to a combination of factors. The NGOs started to move away from support to *desplazados* in urban areas, and towards reconstruction, development and democratization in the areas of return; leaders of the *desplazados* accused their main ally among the NGOs of corruption; and simultaneously they began to engage in competition for development funds with the NGOs.

In a way, this 'competition' was a sign of the success of the NGOs' strategy: they had successfully upgraded the leaders' organizational and administrative capacities. *Jatarai Ayllu* had formed 'secretaries' in the fields of income generation, human rights, return and reconstruction, women, education and culture, and organization, and they managed various sorts of classified registers, elaborated annual plans, and started to engage in the design of projects in order to achieve 'direct projects' for themselves and their members. '*Jatarai Ayllu* has been our university', as one of the leaders put it.

The leaders realized that their future legitimacy rested on their ability to get access to resources on behalf of their members. By the late 1990s, members' support for financial and practical purposes had dwindled, and those who returned to rural communities became involved in different organizations. Leaders were struggling with a redefinition of their identity as *desplazados*. 'The NGOs say that we now have to convert ourselves into something different, since there are no funds for this anymore. Now it's the women and other [budget] lines, but it's not that easy to change; a bachelor doesn't that easily marry' (meeting of ARDCP, April 1999). The people who had identified themselves with the IDP organization, those who had put their efforts into the development of the organization, resented what they perceived as abandonment and disinterest on the part of funding agencies and NGOs. As organizations, *Jatarai Ayllu* and the regional association of *desplazados* were caught in the gap between relief and development. Individually, the leaders had alternative strategies for their future between the city and the countryside.

BETWEEN THE CATEGORY AND EVERYDAY LIFE

As already suggested in the introduction, our research found a certain overlap between migrants and IDPs in the city of Huancayo. The overlap was primarily founded on the following factors: 1) the historically high mobility levels in the region; 2) persons originating in the same rural communities had arrived in the city at differing times (before, during, and after the conflict); and 3) the affiliation with either migrant organizations or organizations of displaced persons was, to some extent, a matter of tactics and/or social networks. Thus, individuals, groups or families were themselves often uncertain as to how they should categorize themselves and rarely identified as *either* migrant *or* displaced person.[15] Many people who had been cut off from the rural sources of their livelihood never identified themselves with *desplazados* and never came in contact with the IDP organizations. Others, for instance those who had moved to Huancayo before the conflict in order to study, easily identified with the *desplazados* since their parents' loss of rural assets had forced them to give up social mobility through education.

The following case is illustrative of this point. The case deals with an attempt to organize for a collective return from Huancayo to the department of Huancavelica. The return was facilitated and supported by the government agency, PAR, the 'Project in Support of Repopulation' which was established in 1993.[16] The programme came into existence after the national (and international) mobilization for the plight of the IDPs, but the organization of the IDPs was probably only one of several factors behind the creation of PAR. Although PAR represented the first official recognition of the existence of displaced persons in Peru, the programme was only directed towards those who wanted to return: 'We have determined that the best option for the displaced would be for them to return to their areas of origin — with the necessary help' (PAR representative quoted in USCR, 1996: 11). In principle, the rest of the displaced population would be assisted through general programmes for poverty alleviation.

PAR received substantial funds from UNDP, EU and others, and through co-ordination with other agencies of the Peruvian government, PAR's support for return and resettlement — the emergency phase — was to be complemented by governmental funds for development of the rural areas. 'In this way', a PAR document sets forth '[the multisectoral coordination] makes possible the extension of the State's services ... to the most remote population centres' (PROMUDEH, 1997). Thus, the return of the displaced population was envisaged as a vehicle for the state institutions to establish themselves in the rural areas. While the 'base organizations' were supposed to participate in the 'definition and implementation of the actions', PAR seldom had contact with the formal organizations of *desplazados*, or with the NGOs and churches working in the field. Like many other governmental funds, PAR preferred to work directly with small groups of *desplazados* who applied for support.

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[15] One important factor influencing self-identification obviously had to do with security.

[16] PAR started operating in 1994. In 1996 it was turned into a Presidential 'Programme for Repopulation', and later in 1996 it became the 'Programme for support to the repopulation and development of the emergency zones' (PROMUDEH).

In the case in question, a group of people who had arrived in the migrant districts of Huancayo between the late 1970s and the mid-1990s decided to organize for a collective return to two rural communities in the department of Huancavelica. The initiative was taken by two (male) schoolteachers who had heard about PAR-assisted returns elsewhere. They contacted PAR who told them to organize and submit a collective request for return. When we first met the group in March 1999, 117 families (a total of 420 persons) had signed up for the collective PAR-assisted return. Eventually it became clear that several had done so without really knowing the conditions and — as quite a few admitted — because they had been told that it was 'either all of us or none of us', and some therefore had felt a certain pressure to sign up in order not to ruin the project for the rest.

Interviews also showed that many had in fact signed up for the PAR-return in order to get access to what they saw as the only available development fund for this group of urban dwellers. Several owned property in the city, but they felt that only renewed access to farmland and livestock could secure a future urban living. Thus their vision of return was not a permanent settlement in the rural communities but rather a livelihood based on dual residence. For this vision to materialize, in fact, they felt they were less in need of assisted return than of an improvement and extension of the infrastructure, in particular the road system connecting villages with market towns, and the development of irrigation systems. In sum, if the state provided public works (roads, irrigation, and electricity), they felt quite confident that they could manage the rest as private entrepreneurs.

Another category of participants in the organized return project consisted of single mothers. The single mothers generally saw city life with small children as impossible. They lacked a network of female relatives who could care for their smaller children while they worked. These women found themselves in extreme poverty, often unable to feed their children, and the prospects of getting access to land and the promised 'gifts' (tools and kitchen utensils) were felt to be a far better alternative than a continuous struggle for survival in the city.[17] Furthermore, they relied on communal traditions which would allow them to work for family members so as to enable them to establish their own flock of sheep.

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[17] One woman signed up in order to escape a violent husband. In contrast to the (male) entrepreneurs, the battered wife saw a PAR-assisted return, with its display of state force, as her one and only opportunity to escape.

Thus a recurrent theme was the deteriorating living conditions in the city, especially after the Fuji-shock in 1990.[18] Wage work had become increasingly difficult to find, earnings had gone down, as had the purchasing power of the money earned. Informal street vending and formalized market places had become less attractive, particularly due to increased competition among a steadily growing group of people relegated to these sectors. The majority saw renewed access to land for the cultivation of food products as a welcome contribution to the family economy, because, as one participant put it, 'there's no development in the city either'.

It was quite obvious that most members of the return-group had a different vision of return than that held by the PAR. Thus most negotiations between the PAR official and the group revolved around the question of how permanently they had to settle in the rural communities, how much mobility in and out of the community would be accepted, and the extent to which families could divide themselves between the city and the rural communities. The PAR official explained time and again that 'the government does not provide assistance to help people continue living in the city'. Upon return participants were expected to become *comuneros activos* (active peasants in the traditional agricultural community structure). Only people with special skills such as musicians and traders would be allowed to move away from their communities for short periods of time, but, for example, women wanting to stay with their school-attending children in the city would not be allowed to do so. Basically, entire families were expected to return and to stay together in the rural communities as a family: 'Father, mother, children, the entire group — that is what we call a family. This is the idea, this is the objective', as the official repeatedly told the anxious mothers.

In fact, only a few saw themselves as future permanent residents in the rural communities. The majority wanted to go back for the sowing and reaping, or, as was mentioned many times, to develop and start up new projects in the communities: 'We are not going back to be the same, *así como comunero* [like traditional peasants]. We are not going back to compete for scarce resources. We are going back to start new *vivencias* [livelihoods]'. The PAR official tried to meet some of these demands by stating that no one was expected to go back to be herders and agriculturalists the way they were before. Rather, they would have 'fatter animals' and a 'larger yield of return' from the fields because of the 'technological inputs' secured by the second phase of the return programme, the development phase that would be based on a technical study.

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[18] In August 1990, the Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori agreed to the terms of a neo-liberal stabilization and structural adjustment programme. The programme involved a reduction of public expenditures in health, education, housing and social services, and the price of foodstuffs and the unemployment rate increased overnight.

During one of the last planning meetings between the (reduced) return group and the PAR official in April 1999, a group of women once again raised the question of education. How could PAR expect them to take their children away from the city school system when anybody knows how inferior village schools are? Again the PAR official gave way a little by assuring the group that children enrolled in secondary schools could stay in Huancayo, but that the mothers were supposed to return with their smaller children and thus secure the return of entire families. In addition, he anticipated that rural schools would only improve if there were sufficient parents present in the countryside to assert local claims for better educational facilities. His last words of reassurance were that soon others would join them in their demand since this return was only the first in a series of returns to follow.

FROM CATEGORIES TO NETWORKS?

This case of return neatly demonstrates at least three points. First, a lack of urban development funds makes the resources available in the relief fund attached to the state-sponsored return or repopulation programmes, if not attractive, then the only option left for impoverished city dwellers. Second, the self-initiated mobile livelihood strategies embarked upon by large numbers of people — strategies which to a large extent have secured their survival in times of war as well as in deteriorating economic conditions — are totally ignored in the state's vision of future development. In order to qualify for state-sponsored return programmes people need to stay put in one place. Finally, the case demonstrates that the categories of migrants and IDPs tend to lose their meaning and analytical applicability when complex processes of violence and migration generated by civil war combine with already established patterns of migration.

Both the organized returns and the people's own efforts to secure a better living are occurring in a period of flux. The Fujimori government of the 1990s was keen to fill the political vacuum created by the defeat of SL by making the state apparatus present in rural districts on an unprecedented scale. Thus, state agencies joined with displaced persons and migrants in the scramble for power in the rural highland. The 'post-conflict' complex of relief programmes, (re-)building of schools and clinics, roads, bridges, electricity and irrigation schemes, and the progressive individualization of communal pasture, is changing the conditions and balances of power. The prize is control of production assets, means of transportation, and the brokering of relations between the settlements and peasant communities on one side and state institutions, NGOs and development funds on the other.

In this potentially divisive process, the IDPs emerge as a state-endorsed category of citizens. Given the blurred boundaries of the category, and the extended and multi-sited networks in which people develop their livelihoods, the IDPs further complicate the process, adding the potential of generating conflicts between differently positioned people with comparable claims to having suffered the impact of armed conflict. In a country still recuperating from the effects of violent conflict it is tempting to treat those directly affected by the violence as a special and separate case.[19] In order to avoid the fuelling of new social conflicts it may nevertheless be a better idea to consider IDPs, impoverished migrants and those who stayed in the rural communities not as separate categories with different entitlements but as part and parcel of a common recuperation and reconciliation process. It is worth mentioning that, in 1997, PAR recognized the negative effects of treating returnees as the only victims and included wider support — tools, utensils and food for communal purposes — in the programme.

At the same time, it should be emphasized that migrant communities are not necessarily harmonious and homogeneous entities in which all members feel a sense of affinity or solidarity with each other. The divisive and hierarchical nature of rural districts also characterize the urban migrant community and may be played out in the subgroups of 'migrants' and 'IDPs'. So while migrant communities may provide newcomers with subsistence and support, they may also be the setting of division, exploitation, repression and violence in the public as well as the private arena. The exclusion of a few community members from participation in the collective return indicates that longstanding patterns of rural privilege and access do not necessarily disappear but rather are recreated in the new urban setting.

This phenomenon is not limited to the city of Huancayo. As noted by several scholars (such as Crisp, 1999; van Hear, 1998) it has become increasingly difficult to make a clear distinction between voluntary and involuntary migration. Distinguishing between 'outward movement' as departure, and 'inward movement' as return or integration into a new setting, van Hear (1998: 47) notes that 'while outward movement may be forced, precipitated by persecution, conflict, war, or some other life-threatening circumstances, inward movement including the choice or determination of destination, may be shaped by economic, livelihood or life-chance considerations. At some point then, forced migration may transmute into economic livelihood migration'. Thus, most migrations include a combination of compulsion and choice, and both 'migrants' and 'refugees' seem to be motivated by a mixture of fears, hopes and aspirations.

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[19] In this case it is nevertheless important to stress that SL not only threatened indigenous authorities and peasants in distant rural communities but also directly attacked municipal authorities and inhabitants of important provinces such as Huancayo. Among the group of 'migrants' included in our study, several lost close family members after their arrival in the city, especially children attending the Universidad Nacional del Centro, where political assassinations were committed by both sides in the late 1980s (by SL as well as the army). For an elaboration of the consequences of the civil war for the city of Huancayo, see Manrique (1998).

In addition, many refugees live alongside compatriots or co-ethnics who are not necessarily refugees but are part of broader population movements. It may therefore be more helpful to focus on these more comprehensive networks, rather than only on those people who have been identified as refugees. We believe that dissolving the categories may prove helpful in the case of internal migrants/IDPs as well.

CONCLUSION

This article has looked at the possible effects of the introduction of the IDP category and the forms of assistance and protection implied by this category. Our analysis has revealed the historical existence of networks of kinship and rural origin that encompass the countryside and the city of Huancayo as well as other more distant sites at the coast and in the jungle. These spatially dispersed networks clash with NGO and state strategies contingent upon either developing and maintaining a special IDP identity separate from a 'migrant' identity, or, in the case of the state, upon establishing post-conflict order by repopulation programmes that do not take rural–urban networks into account. We have also found that the Peruvian processes of categorization cannot be viewed in isolation from transnational networks and discourses. While the local NGOs had come a long way in terms of the conceptualization of the IDPs before the category was introduced from abroad, the backing from western NGOs and international agencies consolidated the category and made it much more powerful.

Seen in this perspective the IDP category has had a number of effects. Most importantly, it has strengthened the claim for recognition of IDPs as victims in need of special assistance and protection through the formation of a nationwide understanding of IDPs and organizations in support of IDPs, and has probably influenced the parameters of a governmental programme for the return of IDPs to their communities of origin.[20] In the process, a number of organizations have been formed or strengthened on the basis of an exclusive identity as IDPs. Members have come to see themselves as different from migrants. Within these organizations, a number of leaders have combined capacities for organization, planning, administration, communication, negotiation, public advocacy, and politics, which have enabled the IDP organizations to engage in an increased competition for resources with the NGOs. They may also have a positive bearing on the abilities of IDPs and their communities to negotiate with state or other agents of development and as such strengthen the presence of the state in rural areas.

However, our analysis also shows how the entities which have been forged around this category — certain NGOs, the IDP organizations and PAR —

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[20] We have not analysed the genesis of the PAR programme in detail. The government may also have had other reasons for initiating PAR.

have had problems containing the IDPs in stable and fixed relationships, and drawing clear boundaries. Whereas a high degree of presence and sense of belonging to one place and one organization is seen as a prerequisite for advocacy and longer-term development, the IDP target group has engaged simultaneously in different networks, alliances and organizations, in different occupations and in different sites. The relationship of the group to the label and its significance has also changed over time, sometimes claiming that 'ordinary migrants' have invaded the domain of the IDPs, trying to capture the resources made available for them, whilst at other times differences have been of less importance. The instability of the category has hampered the continuity and viability of projects and has undermined the legitimacy and very existence of the organizations that work on behalf of the IDPs.

The category of IDPs in Central Peru can be interpreted as having formed through the intersection of institutional/political dynamics and the livelihood strategies of the population. The categorization produces or reinforces differences between IDPs and others, and tends to neglect the relations and movements between different sites in the IDP networks. The attempt to fix the returnees in their places of return where they are to 'develop', rather than understanding the potentials of mobile livelihoods and rural–urban linkages and taking these as a point of departure for development initiatives, amounts to a missed opportunity for moving beyond emergency relief.

However, the most important problem in the regions to which the IDPs are expected to return is the general lack of prospects for economic development. Apart from some infrastructural investment by the Fujimori government (roads, schools and water), the productive potentials of the region are not being supported or developed in any significant way. According to the Peruvian analyst, Carlos Monge, the government considers these regions 'a giant soup kitchen' (quoted in Pearce, 1998), where mothers' committees and 'glass of milk campaigns' spring up. Thus, in these regions, 'development' is increasingly difficult to distinguish from relief provision, which renders ideas of linkages and continua between relief and development somewhat meaningless.

Meanwhile, the population of the region engage in the spatial extension of their livelihoods in order to include more sites and sources of potential income. The IDP 'return' to their communities constitutes such a movement for many increasingly urban-based households that want to re-include or reinforce the rural elements of their livelihood strategies — although, in many cases, in different ways than previously. Ironically it is this mobility, rather than any permanent settlement in the villages, that holds the promise of social change and economic development.

In conclusion, this article has problematized the category of the IDP when defined as essentially different from 'migrants' and 'stayees', and has shown how this categorization tends to ignore the conditions, dynamics and potentials of mobile livelihoods. We are well aware of the problems related to our analytical outcomes in terms of practical policy, especially a possil destabilization of a category that anchors certain rights or entitlements. T is a general problem in strongly polarized and politicized fields, and the debate over refugees and IDPs elsewhere. As noted by Crisp (1999: an analytical inclusion of the 'role played by social networks in promptii facilitating and directing the movement of asylum seekers and other migrai [into western Europe]' may question the motives of flight.[21] Neverthele the development potentials inherent in mobile livelihoods and extend social networks (including differently categorized people) seem to hc better opportunities for sustainable development for people living in frag ecological zones such as the Andes.

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[21] For this reason, Crisp advocates that the issues of means and motivation rem rigorously separated.

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