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DOSSIER: INDIGENOUS MUSICAL PRACTICES AND POLITICS IN LATIN AMERICA

## Singing for Water, Singing Against Gold: Music and the Politics of Representation in the Peruvian Northern Andes

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<p><b>Resumen</b></p> <p>Desde los tiempos pre-hispánicos, Cajamarca ha sido una importante región agrícola del Perú gracias a sus recursos hidrográficos. Recientemente se ha convertido, sin embargo, en una zona de intensas revueltas sociales. Durante el gobierno neoliberal de Alberto Fujimori (1990-2002), el estado peruano permitió la entrada de corporaciones mineras transnacionales para la extracción de oro. La explotación minera ha causado un impacto negativo en los recursos hídricos de la región, afectando tanto al medio ambiente como a la salud y los modos de subsistencia de los habitantes de la región. Las nuevas concesiones de terrenos a las corporaciones mineras transnacionales por parte del actual gobierno sin el consenso de la población local ha intensificado la conflictividad social. Este artículo discute las canciones de los ronderos a favor del agua y en contra del oro, así como las actividades del Centro Documental de la Música Tradicional Peruana en Cajamarca. Además, este artículo investiga el papel de las representaciones mediáticas de las prácticas musicales locales en el conflicto, mostrando cómo las prácticas musicales y las prácticas etnomusicológicas convergen actualmente para contrarrestar las imágenes demonizadas creadas por los defensores de la explotación minera.</p>	<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>Since pre-Hispanic times, Cajamarca has been an important agricultural region in Peru due to its special hydrographic resources. But in recent years, it has become a zone of intensive social upheavals. During the neoliberal government of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2002), the Peruvian state admitted the entry of transnational mining corporations for the extraction of gold. Mining operations have had a negative impact on the water resources of the region, affecting the environment and the health and the livelihoods of the people. New concessions of land to transnational mining corporations approved by the current government without the consent of the local population have intensified the social conflicts. This article discusses rondero's songs for water and against gold as well as the activities of Yaku Taki, Centro Documental de la Música Tradicional Peruana (Centre for the Documentation of Traditional Peruvian Music) in Cajamarca. Furthermore, the article inquires about the role of media representation of local musical practices in the conflict, and, in doing so, shows how musical and ethnomusicological practices are currently converging in order to counteract the demonized image created by the advocates of the mining exploitation.</p>
<p><b>Palabras clave</b></p> <p>Cajamarca, música andina, canción protesta, Huayno y Pechadas</p>	<p><b>Keywords</b></p> <p>Cajamarca, Andean Music, Protest Music, Huayno and Pechadas.</p>
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## **Singing for Water, Singing Against Gold: Music and the Politics of Representation in the Peruvian Northern Andes**

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For two decades, the Peruvian northern region of Cajamarca has been a zone of intensive social upheavals. During the unconstitutional and neoliberal government of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2002), the Peruvian state admitted the entry of transnational mining corporations for large-scale extraction of gold. Mining operations have had a negative impact on the water resources of Cajamarca, being detrimental for the environment and affecting directly or indirectly the health and the livelihoods of the people in the region. New concessions of land to transnational mining corporations approved by the government of Ollanta Humala (2011-2016), leader of the Peruvian Nationalist Party, without the consent of the local population have intensified social conflicts. In the last years, articulated and unarticulated protest activities have emerged in Cajamarca, channeling the enormous dissatisfaction produced by the expansion of mining endeavors. In response, the Peruvian government and the private media enterprises related to the mining corporations initiated a campaign in order to demonize the social protests, representing Cajamarca as a backward place that obstructs investments, and, in doing so, stops the development of the whole country. In this context, the rural population of Cajamarca has begun to use music in order to promote its fight against mining expansion, attracting the attention of some Peruvian ethnomusicologists.

In this article, I discuss the musical practices of *ronderos* singing for water and against gold, as well as the activities of the Yaku Taki, Centro Documental de la Música Tradicional Peruana in Cajamarca (Centre for the Documentation of Traditional Peruvian Music). I show that music plays an important role in the media representation of the protest, fostering a cultural memory related to water as a fundamental resource for life. Using the categories of the “imaginary” and “technological a priori” by the German media theorist Friedrich Kittler (1999), I demonstrate how the media representation of musical practices in Cajamarca constitutes a comprehensive field within which campesinos, local and national governments, international corporations, the Peruvian public opinion, and ethnomusicologists are negotiating plural images of Cajamarca as place. In addition, I show that musical and ethnomusicological practices in Cajamarca are converging in order to counteract the demonized image created by the national government and mass media. In this sense, I will argue that ethnomusicological practice records and constructs its research object as an imaginary place. I am fully aware that I am taking sides with one of the parties in dispute. However, following Jeff Todd Titon (1992: 316), I argue that the issue is not whether ethnomusicology intervenes or not, but whether intervention is sensible. Accordingly, I am proposing a kind of actively engaged ethnomusicology: one that not only preserves music but also acts in order to protect the human beings who produce it.

## Place, space, and imagination

In his poem “Trilce,” the Peruvian poet César Vallejo speaks about a “place that I know but at which we will never arrive” (1993: 363).<sup>1</sup> The verse seems obscure at first, but makes sense when understood through personal experience: the places we actually know do not correspond with those we had imagined before we got there. In this article I want to demonstrate that, as Vallejo says, beyond the real places we experience, we also construct imaginary places.

Place, as conceptual category, has been discussed in social sciences. The French historian and sociologist Michel de Certeau (1988: 117-118) and the British anthropologist Tim Ingold (2011: 141) have advocated for notions of place as a realm within which something happens. Indeed, ethnomusicological and popular music studies have shown how musical practices can modify places into practiced places.<sup>2</sup> But such approaches have not paid sufficient attention to the role of media in the construction of place. With “media,” I am not referring to mass media as a channel for the transmission of data, but to Friedrich Kittler’s conception of media as techniques for saving, transmitting, and transforming information (2003: 19). Being the basis for the production of information since the beginning of the twentieth century, Kittler sees media technology as a historical a priori for the production of knowledge, as a technological a priori (1999: 29). According to him, the production of knowledge is conditioned by all the discourse networks which make possible the production, distribution, and reproduction of knowledge. Kittler differentiates between three different modes of media networks: the “symbolic” which reproduces “reality” in a discursive way, the “real,” and the “imaginary,” the latter two using media and digital technologies in order to codify and fix the “real” beyond the discourse, permitting the manipulation and transformation of the codified information (1999: 15). In this sense, representations constructed by media technologies— analog and digital—do not reproduce but create realities although media discourse tends to conceal that (Kittler 2003: 242). When speaking about Cajamarca as an imagined space, I am referring to the media representation and differentiating it from Cajamarca as a practiced place. On the following pages I will analyze how media representation forms and transforms the social protest in Cajamarca and in doing so transforms Cajamarca in the Peruvian collective imagination.

## The Gold from Cajamarca

In *Das Gold von Caxamalca*, the Austrian novelist Jakob Wassermann (1998) tells the story of the avaricious Spanish conquerors Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro, who decided to execute the last Inca, Atahualpa, in Cajamarca, in spite of having received a full room of gold in exchange for his life. The moral of Wassermann’s story: despite its value, gold may be entirely useless.

Cajamarca is one of Peru’s regions with the largest rural population, having been an important agricultural zone since pre-Hispanic times due to its privileged hydrographic resources. Currently, gold mining has surpassed in importance all economic activity in the region (INEI 2009: 339). Although mining existed in Cajamarca since pre-Hispanic times, it lost relevance during colonial times when the territory was divided into farms (Bury 2004: 81). Thus, the

<sup>1</sup> César Vallejo is considered one of the most important poets from Peru, although his poetry is regarded as obscure and highly idiosyncratic. According to Britton, “In *Trilce*, Vallejo was obligated to undertake a task of artistic demystification, one that demonstrated ‘the inoperability of traditional images and metaphors’ [...] In doing so, however, he is obliged to use the debunker’s traditional tools: irony, paradoxical allusion, and verbal games and puns” (1992: 604).

<sup>2</sup> Ethnomusicologists like Stokes (1994), Magowan (1994), and Solomon (2000) have studied how people construct place through musical activities. Inside the field of Popular Music Studies, researchers like Adam Krims (2007), Bennett and Peterson (2004), and Hitzler (2011) have analyzed the construction of place in urban locations. Jonathan Hill has shown that indigenous groups in Lowland South America ~~could~~ transform places into mythical spaces through musical sounds and ritual performances in order to regenerate nature and society (Hill 2011: 325).

implementation of large-scale gold extraction at the end of the twentieth century disrupted the rural identity of Cajamarca, triggering traumatic demographic changes. Mining caused a significant migration flow of national and international professionals, introducing new commodities, reinforcing tourism and non-traditional trade (Steel 2013: 242). But this economic growth is devious. Throughout the last centuries mining had played a decisive role for the disruption of traditional Andean social bonds in other Peruvian territories, imposing capitalistic economic relationships like wage labor and commodification in the region. Groups linked to subsistence economy were integrated into a capitalistic system as food providers for mobilized miners radically transforming their traditional social structures (Assadourian et al. 1980: 35).<sup>3</sup>



Figure 1: Rural Cajamarca. (Photograph by Julio Mendivil)

Although mining has brought “development,” “progress,” and better infrastructure to the region, gold mining has not reduced misery in Cajamarca.<sup>4</sup> Quite the opposite: mining has reinforced inequality and increased social and spatial segregation. The Newmont Mining Corporation Minera Yanacocha (short, Newmont-Yanacocha) is one of the biggest producers of gold in the global market, but the cost of gold production in Northern Peru is one of the lowest in

<sup>3</sup> According to Assadourian (et al.), in colonial times, mining was already an important factor for the disarticulation of the indigenous economic system due to the introduction of the Spanish monetary system into the agrarian societies in the Andes (1980: 29-35). Similarly, Taussig has shown how capitalistic mining was integrated into an indigenous mythology in the Southern Andes where it became identified with the devil and destruction: “the peasants give gifts to the mountain spirit owner who converts those gifts into precious metals and hands them over the government in exchange for feudal-like control over the peasants and their resources. This circuit ensures fertility and prosperity; it is based on an ideology of reciprocal gift exchange. [...] In effect the extended chain of exchange in the Andes is this: peasants exchange gifts with the spirit owner; the spirit owner converts these gifts into precious metal; the miners excavate this metal, which they ‘find’ so long as they perform rites of gift exchange with the spirit; the miner’s labor which is embodied in the tin ore, is sold as a commodity to the legal owners and employers; these last sell the ore on the international commodity market. Thus reciprocal gift exchanges end as commodity exchanges [...] This circuit ensures barrenness and death instead of fertility and prosperity. It is based on the transformation of reciprocity into commodity exchange” (Taussig 1980: 224).

<sup>4</sup> Other metals, such as zinc, copper, and silver, are extracted in Peru as well (Bebbington and Bury 2009: 17296). That gold mining has triggered most social conflicts could also be related to the symbolic character of gold as an expression of wealth. Another factor could be that gold mining shows clearly the asymmetries of power between the Peruvian government, the mining corporations, and the campesinos.

the world (Bury 2004: 81). Today, in spite of twenty years of gold production, more than 50% of the population in the region remains poor and 20% extremely poor (Gran Angular n/d: 31).<sup>5</sup>

Yet, it is with regards to water that the most intense social conflicts have emerged. Since pre-Hispanic times water has been worshiped in the Andes as a fundamental resource because of its scarcity (Carrion Cachot 2005: 19; Castro and Varela 1994).<sup>6</sup> Even today, Peru is South America's most water stressed country (Bebbington and William 2008). Mining rapidly became a problem for water supplies in Cajamarca. During the last decade of the twentieth century, small mining corporations abandoned mines leaving environmental



Figure 2: Environmental impact of gold mining Cajamarca. (Photograph courtesy of the Gobierno Regional de Cajamarca)

liabilities (mine waste and tailings) in several provinces. These liabilities contaminated the rivers directly affecting fishing and the consumption of trout (Echave 2009: 75). For this reason, the arrival of Newmont Mining Corporation Minera Yanacocha (Newmont-Yanacocha) to Cajamarca was marked by a negative experience with mining. Accordingly, campesinos see mining as an activity generating profits for strangers and damage for the locals. The predatory attitude of Newmont-Yanacocha confirmed the fears of campesinos who rejected the mining expansion. The dissatisfaction is above all due to the drainage methods used by gold extraction which impact water resources as natural capital. Drainage methods pollute water and the earth with mercury and cyanide, forming a chain of contamination which includes flora and fauna, eventually reaching human beings via the consumption of contaminated animal and vegetal products:

The impact of mining on water quality and environment health originate primarily from acid mine drainage (AMD) and the escape of ancillary products in processes of production and transformation. AMD occurs because rock is broken up during the mining process to gain access to the ore, and then deposited elsewhere on the mine site. The ore-bearing rock is ground down much more thoroughly. After minerals have been removed, it is stored in tailings. The surface area of the rock exposed to air and water grows exponentially, increasing rates of chemical reaction, as a result of which contaminants are released into the environment. (Bebbington and Williams 2008: 192)

<sup>5</sup> <http://elgranangular.com/graficos> (accessed Dec.16, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> For an in-depth view on water cults in pre-Hispanic times, see Carrion Cachot (2005).



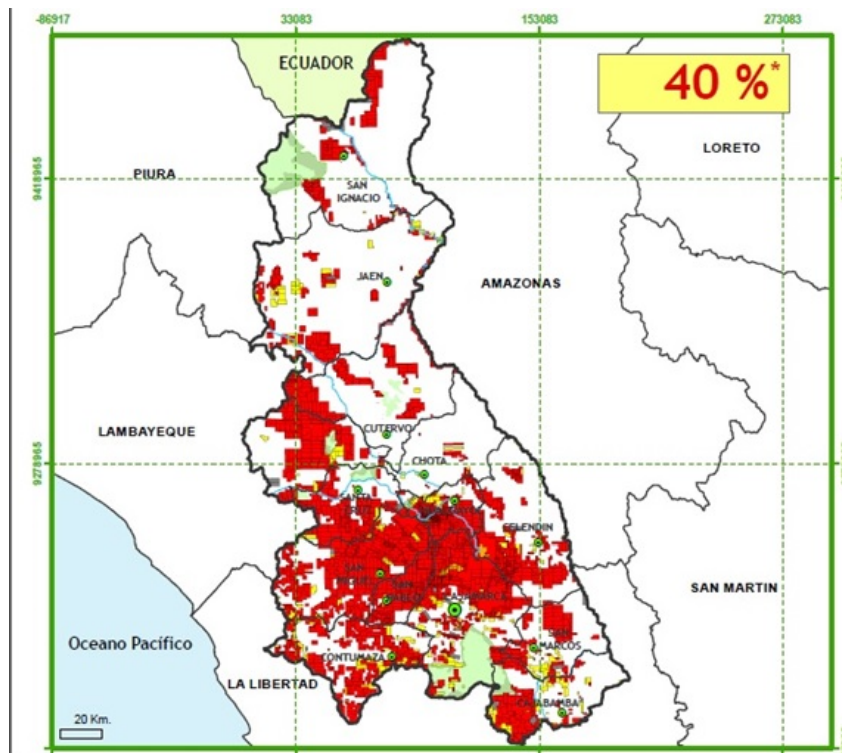


Figure 3: Map of Cajamarca showing the lands in concession for mining. (Courtesy of Gran Angular)

Since the beginning of the conflict, Newmont-Yanacocha has shown scarce interest in negotiation with local actors, eluding its responsibility for the environmental impact and the social conflicts. This neglect by the mining corporation has reinforced the distrust among the local population. An example for this policy is Newmont-Yanacocha's attitude concerning the accident in Choropampa on June 2, 2000, when a Newmont-Yanacocha contractor spilled more than 151 kilograms of mercury into the region around Choropampa, affecting more than three hundred community members in San Juan, Magdalena, and Choropampa. After the accident, Newmont-Yanacocha refused to settle with the victims arguing that the transport company was responsible for the damage. Since then, Newmont-Yanacocha's claim to respect the environmental controls "lost credibility and became controversial" (Echave et al. 2009: 83-84). On top of that, the corporation has kept an aggressive policy of buying lands, harassing small farmers in order to motivate them to sell their lands to unfair prices (ibid: 78). Supported by Peru's central government that is interested in promoting transnational investments,<sup>7</sup> Newmont-Yanacocha was able to dislocate local populations in order to expand gold extraction generating sharp social conflicts like that one with Máxima Chaupe de Acuña. The countrywoman suffered physical and psychological harassment because she refused to give up her land to Newmont-Yanacocha (that supposedly purchased it from the community) and defended the preservation of the adjoined

<sup>7</sup> During his electoral campaign in 2011, nationalist party leader Ollanta Humala promised to support the anti-mining movement. But as soon as he became the president, he changed his politics, favoring transnational corporations, such as Newmont and Southern, to whom he conceded more concessions in Ancash, Cajamarca, and Arequipa. The changing attitude of Humala is reflected in his relationship with Gregorio Santos, current president of the region Cajamarca. Santos was an important political ally of Humala before he became president of Peru. During a demonstration in Cajamarca, Humala said to an exalted population that the people have the right to demand his resignation if he does not keep his promises as a president. Accordingly, Santos demanded the resignation of Humala in 2012, arguing that he did not keep his electoral promises to defend water. The central government reacted immediately and began to whip Santos and his politics. Accused of corruption by the central government, Santos was arrested arbitrarily in 2014, depriving the anti-mining movement of its leader. For a chronicle of Santos' political persecution, see <http://segundomattacolonche.blogspot.de/2014/06/alto-la-persecucion-politica-contra.html> (accessed Dec. 12, 2015).

Laguna Azul (the Blue Lagoon). Chaupe was sued for invading Newmont-Yanacocha's property and, after a controversial verdict, was arrested and spent several months in prison.<sup>8</sup> After she was released, Chaupe kept refusing to abandon her land, becoming an icon of the anti-mining protest. "I am poor," Máxima said. "I am an analphabet, but I know that our lagoons of the plateau are our real treasures, because with them I can get clear and fresh water for my children, my husband, and my animals."<sup>9</sup> While campesinos in Cajamarca want clean water, Newmont-Yanacocha wants their gold.

But what has this all to do with ethnomusicology? In the following section I will explain how musical and ethnomusicological practices became a part of the conflict in Cajamarca.

### The *rondero's* songs during the eighties

Referring to small-holding peasants, Karl Marx wrote that they can not represent themselves because they are only locally organized, having to be represented by outsiders (1987: 162).<sup>10</sup> Although Marx spoke about parliament representation, the idea could be applied to the media representation of campesinos from Cajamarca, who, as a rural population with limited access to the mass media and new technologies, can hardly represent themselves to the whole nation. Like the peasants referred to by Marx, the campesinos in Cajamarca have to be represented by outsiders in order to be heard nationally. Of course, media representations are always politically motivated. Newmont-Yanacocha's spokespersons, for example, repeatedly attacked campesino leaders as social agitators in Peruvian television and radio broadcasts. Because anti-mining demonstrations ended several times in violent quarrels between campesinos and the police, the Peruvian press, economically related to Newmont-Yanacocha, began to represent environmental activists as extremists.<sup>11</sup> The Peruvian government too demonizes the protest, minimizing the environmental impact of gold extraction and presenting the mining corporation as a job generator and technological developer in the region. How could the campesinos counter this dominant media representation?

As is well known, music is a very productive tool to congregate people and to reinforce the cohesion of a social or cultural group (Turino 2008: 189). Many studies demonstrate that music is able to social protest and that it often serves as empowerment for threatened or subaltern groups (Bohlman 1995, Borszik 2003, James 1989, McDonald 2012, Neustadt 2004). This is the case in Cajamarca where music fortifies social bonds and canalizes protest.

<sup>8</sup> <http://larepublica.pe/24-02-2015/el-pantanososo-caso-chaupe> (accessed Feb. 2, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> [http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/03/17/planeta\\_futuro/1426588446\\_691506.html](http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/03/17/planeta_futuro/1426588446_691506.html) (accessed Aug. 25, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Nowadays, several indigenous groups use media with increasing expertise in order to represent themselves in a national frame. As some anthropologists have demonstrated, these representations could be created for own consumption or for negotiation with regional and international others (Warren and Jackson 2002: 12). Indigenous self-representations are not free from external influences such as the modernization discourse of development planners, the modernist discourse of ethnographers, and the political discourse of the State, and generate a new political field within which ideologies are created, transformed, and disputed (Gow and Rappaport 2002: 50). The use of indigenous languages also play a very important role as linguistic sign for indigenous "authenticity" (Graham 2002: 188). Clifford refers to these representations as an authenticity "authentically remade" (2004: 20), whereas Carneiro de Cunha calls it "culture"—in quotations marks—and understands it as a metalanguage which reflects about itself (2009: 356). Campesinos from Cajamarca also use new media tools for their representations. But these reach only a regional, not a national, audience.

<sup>11</sup> In 2015 Julio Morriberón, director of Public Relations of Southern Corporation Perú, introduced the category "anti-mining terrorism" to describe anti-mining activities in Tía María, Arequipa. Since then, the social protest in Cajamarca has been demonized in the Peruvian media landscape as environmental terrorism. See: <http://gestion.pe/empresas/adios-tia-maria-southern-copper-anuncia-cancelacion-proyecto-minero-2127474> (accessed Aug. 26, 2015). The reason that the press takes sides for mining is closely related to the fact that 80% of the Peruvian press belongs to the media group El Comercio, a well-known partner of Newmont-Yanacocha. For an in-depth view on media concentration in Peru, see Huamán Flores and Becerra Gómez (2014).

Cajamarca is a department with a vibrant and well-known musical tradition. Nevertheless, its music has not been studied profoundly.<sup>12</sup> Andean protest music has been a subject of inquiry by Vásquez and Vergara (1988, 1990), Ritter (2002, 2012), Tucker (2013) and Mendivil (2015a), who scrutinized the reaction of musicians confronted with exploitation and political violence. Such studies have commonly focused on lyrics or performance analysis, leaving out the social construction of place through representation. In my analysis I will focus on protest songs related to the *rondas campesinas* (peasant vigilante committees), which have not yet received any attention from music scholars even though the songs were already popularized in the 1980s after they were used as soundtrack in the film *Los ronderos* (1987) by the Norwegian-Peruvian director Marianne Eyde. In order to explore the musical changes in the *ronda* repertoire I will compare the songs collected by Eyde in the eighties with the songs recorded by Yaku Taki and myself in recent years, after the conflict with the mining corporation arose.

According to Gitlitz and Rojas, *rondas* “are a spontaneous creation of small peasant farmers, who have organized on their own, largely without help from outside, in response to concrete, specific, shared and vital economic problem” (1983: 165). Due to the large professional cattle rustling in the region, the lack of institutional operation of the civil government, and the abuse of the local population by the law enforcement, the *campesinos* saw the necessity to organize themselves in peasant vigilante committees to combat robbery and achieve the security which they do not receive from the national state. *Rondas* consist of two types of peasants: small and medium-sized livestock owners and poor *campesinos* without cattle who are also exposed to petty thievery. It is mostly well-off *campesinos* with cattle that benefit from the *ronda*’s protection (Pérez Mundaca 1996: 17). Beyond being local organizations against rustling, *rondas* often assume other responsibilities, such as resolving local conflicts and supporting social projects in small hamlets, where they have become a kind of local government. In this sense, *rondas* have an important political potential:

The *rondas* have continued to focus primarily on the same limited aims for which they were formed: the control of professional cattle rustling and petty thievery. Though they have constituted a form of local power and expanded their functions somewhat, that expansion has been very limited and focused inwardly. Moreover, they have not really sought to exercise their power at a broader level, to define other enemies, or to confront regional interests. [...] There is no evidence that they have tried to undermine the power of the government or to seek confrontation [...] Nevertheless, they have become a significant political problem, both regionally and to some extent nationally. Whether they have sought to exercise regional power, they are perceived as having the potential to do so, and to many this alone is sufficient in make them alarming. Moreover, as an organized force enjoying the loyalty of the rural population they could provide useful support to any group able to mobilize them politically. (Gitlitz and Rojas 1983: 192-193)

This broader level was reached with the mining conflict. The *rondas* became a fundamental force against the government and the aggressive policy of Newmont-Yanacocha. In recent years, the *ronderos* mobilized people and supported demonstrations using their networks and their political influence in the region. A significant means to promote *rondas*’ values is the expressive culture of the *ronderos*, especially their music which is deeply embedded in the musical tradition

<sup>12</sup> The Biblioteca campesina has published the volume *¡Música maestro! Instrumentos musicales en la tradición cajamarquina* (1989), a compilation of musical instruments of the region as described by teachers. On its behalf, the Archivo de Música Tradicional de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú has edited the album *Música tradicional de Cajamarca* (1988). Montoya (1987), one of the most profound studies on Quechua songs in Peru, mentions the region only tangentially, due to the dominance of Spanish as *lingua franca* in Cajamarca.



of Cajamarca. Ronderos, for instance, sing *pechadas* (a rural musical genre) and *huaynos* during their activities and meetings. *Pechadas* were usually sung a cappella by male, female, or mixed duos or trios in intervals of a third, occasionally changing to a fourth. Some times *pechadas*—also called *tristes* due to their nonmetrical and slow character—finish with a *huayno* as *fuga* (coda). *Huayno* is the most popular musical genre of the Peruvian Andes. It is a pentatonic song with a binary rhythm and strophic structure whose stanzas are made up of shorts sections like AABB' or ABAB'. Whereas the *huayno* from the Southern Andes is considered to be romantic and melancholic, the *huayno* from Cajamarca is often described as funny and with vigorous rhythm (Mendivil 2014: 389). The repertoire of the *ronderos* differs from that lyric tradition. To express reflexive issues *ronderos* sing *pechadas*, but when they sing of optimistic topics, then they prefer *huaynos*. Song lyrics are always for empowerment. Frequently they refer to the organization of *rondas*, to the importance of unity between their members, or to the bravery of *ronderos* who confront armed rustlers and other dangers. All these elements were characteristic for the songs recorded in Chota, Cajamarca, in the eighties by Eyde. In these lyrics *ronderos* appear as a homogenous entity that defends the interests of the *campesinos*, despite there are still economic and social differences. There are no allusions to the political violence of the time, even though the songs were recorded in mid-eighties when the guerrilla organization Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) was active and had insurgency bases in Cajabamba, San Antonio, and Jaén. The principal topics of these songs are the fight against rustling, the abandonment of the peasant communities by the Peruvian government, and the necessity of self-management and self-defense:

**“Con leyes o sin leyes” (*Legalized or not*)**

**Performers: Dúo Vásquez Campos**

**Recorded by Marianne Eyde in Acunta, 1986**

Venimos desde muy lejos  
de la provincia de Acunta.  
Apoyando a la ronda  
que el ladrón ya se agota.

*We come from far away,  
from the Province Acunta.  
If we support the rondas  
robbers will disappear.*

Que con leyes o sin leyes  
la ronda continuará.  
Que los hombres morirán.  
Sus ideas quedarán.

*Legalized or not  
the rondas will continue.  
The men will die,  
but their ideas will remain.*

Las mujeres campesinas  
debemos de organizarnos.  
Para no ser explotadas  
debemos de prepararnos.

*We peasant women  
we should organize ourselves.  
In order not to be oppressed  
we should instruct ourselves.*

Esta canción que les canto  
propia de mi inspiración.  
grabada la tengo en mente  
guardada en mi corazón.

*This song I am singing  
is a product of my own inspiration.  
I keep it in my mind,  
saved in the bottom of my heart.*

(Fuga:)  
Con esto adiós, adiós,  
compañeros campesinos.  
También quedan invitados  
a la provincia de Acunta.

*(Coda:)  
Thus, bye, bye,  
Companion, campesinos.  
We want to invite you  
To our province Acunta.*



Figure 4: Pechada singers in Apán Alto. (Photograph by Julio Mendivil)

**“Las rondas en estos pueblos” (*The rondas in our towns*)**

**Performer: Dúo Vásquez Campos**

**Recorded by Marianne Eyde in Acunta, 1986.**

Las rondas en estos pueblos  
por buena justicia luchan.  
Entre penas y alegrías  
hasta el cielo llegarán.

*The rondas in our towns  
fight for the right justice.  
With joy and sorrow  
they will go to heaven.*

Ríe, ríe, ronderito  
ronderito, vuelve a reír.

*Be happy, be happy, ronderito.  
Ronderito, be happy again.*

Compañeros de todas partes  
presentes en la reunión  
los ronderos por delante  
luchando de corazón.

*Companions from other places  
Joining this meeting.  
we ronderos walk ahead  
fighting with conviction.*

Ríe, ríe, ronderito  
ronderito, vuelve a reír.

*Be happy, be happy, ronderito.  
Ronderito, be happy again.*

Nuestro trabajo y alegría  
lo traemos a cantar  
nuestras fatigas y luchas  
las queremos ofrendar.

*We share our work, our enjoyment  
in our songs,  
sacrificing our hardships  
and our combats.*

Ríe, ríe, ronderito  
ronderito, vuelve a reír.

*Be happy, be happy, ronderito.  
Ronderito, be happy again.*

(Fuga:)

(Coda:)

Aquí, ronderos venimos  
por justicia y amistad.  
Somos pobres y oprimidos,  
ronderitos de verdad.

*We ronderos are coming  
For justice and friendship.  
We are poor and oppressed,  
We are authentic ronderitos.*

The huayno “Con leyes o sin leyes” refers to the necessity of self-management (we should organize ourselves) because of the absence of governmental structures in the region, encouraging women and men to join the rondas as the true organ of the campesinos. Rondas appear here as campesino organizations which will continue regardless of their legalization or not. On the other hand, the pechada “Las rondas por estos pueblos” alludes to the networks of the rondas referring to the solidarity between communities and to the fight for “right justice” which is contrasted to the inefficient official justice.

### “Ronderito”

**Performers: Trío Edilberto Coronel Carrillo, Edilberto Estela Acuña, and Juan Vásquez Carrillo**  
**Recorded by Marianne Eyde in Acunta, 1986.**

Cuando mi tierra estaba en peligro  
de ronderito me presenté.  
A dar mi vida y a dar mi sangre  
por mis hermanos, hay que llorar.

*When my land was in danger  
I ran voluntarily to be ronderito.  
To give my life and my blood  
for my brothers, I wanna cry.*

Somos ronderos, los más valientes  
que ni a la muerte lo [sic] temerán.  
Si algún día muertos cayeran  
recuerdos sinceros nos dejarán.

*We are ronderos, the most courageous  
who do not fear death.  
But if one day we drop dead  
we will leave pretty memories.*

Las injusticias por todas partes  
el pan del día nos quitarán.  
Pero algún día no muy lejano  
y el pueblo unido los [sic] vencerá.

*The injustices throughout the world  
will take the daily bread out of our mouths.  
But one day, not far away,  
the united people will overcome them.*

(Fuga:)

Con esto adiós, adiós.  
Tú te quedas en tu casa  
yo me voy para rondar.

*(Coda:)  
Thus, goodbye, goodbye.  
You remain at home,  
I am going to the rondas.*

The pechada “Ronderito”—the theme song by the film *Los ronderos*—is representative and considered to be the anthem of the ronderos because it expresses their values and portrays their everyday life. The song also exalts the bravery of the ronderos and their willingness to sacrifice themselves for communal benefit. The lyrics construct sharp dichotomies: On one hand, there are external menaces, death, rustlings and injustice; on the other hand, there are the community and the ronderos who are the most courageous and who will overcome the suffering of the campesinos. Analyzing the similarities between the three songs, one can remark that they are conceived as songs for empowerment as well as a deterrent message for rustlers. It is significant to note that values and concepts coming from different cultural traditions merge in the songs: pago cults (“we sacrifice our hardships and our combats for the community and for the land”), the catholic tradition (“they will go to heaven” or “I give my life and my blood for my brothers”) and

concepts like “justice,” “fight,” and “exploitation” coming from a pan-Latin American protest song (e.g. the intertextual passage referring to Quillapayun’s hit “El pueblo unido”). These rondero’s songs were not composed for representation but for participation. In this sense, these songs are a part of what has been called participatory performance—“a special type of artistic practice in which there are no artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants, [...] and the primary goal is to involve the maximum number of people in some performance role” (Turino 2008: 26). To the best of my knowledge, the songs from the eighties were used as empowerment during patrols and meetings and not for consumption outside the communities. The recordings made by Eyde are a self-representation by the campesinos but as a kind of intellectual appropriation which re-localizes the musical practices of the ronderos, moving them into a new format: the film. At the same time, the recordings represent an intrusive gaze which converted the empowerment practices of the ronderos into a representation through the use of sound and visual reproduction.

### **The ronderos’ songs on the current conflict with mining expansion**

Yaku Taki was founded in 2013 by Gregorio Santos, then president of the regional government of Cajamarca, in order to reinforce regional identity and the traditional culture of the region which he saw threatened by the mining expansion. The same year, Santos designated the non-indigenous music researcher Marino Martínez as director of the Yaku Taki providing logistic support for the project. Until now (early 2016), Yaku Taki has produced more than 300 hours of audiovisual recordings; some of them are posted as video clips or podcasts in social networks like YouTube or Facebook. Some of the songs recorded by Yaku Taki were performed by ronderos and contain political statements against Newmont-Yanacocha. Apparently, the songs continue the ronderos’ tradition of singing against exploitation and injustice. But a deeper look shows that they are significant differences. The data I will discuss here was recorded in Tambo Hualgayoc and San Marcos by Marino Martínez in 2013, and by Martínez and myself in Apán Alto in 2014. In February 2014, Martínez allowed me to observe and record his fieldwork activities for a project of mine about the interference of media technology (photography, audio and video analog or digital recording) in ethnomusicological representations (Mendívil 2015b). On this occasion, we made some interviews and spoke with local people and politicians about the conflict with Newmont-Yanacocha and the preservation of traditional culture.

Being an organization that claims to counter the menaces which beset the local population, the rondas have actively participated in the protest activities against mining expansion in Cajamarca. Ronderos, like the majority of the campesinos, see mining as an intrusive force that destroys the natural environment of the region, and they feel themselves attacked by the international corporation and the Peruvian government. Statements collected by the ronderos reflect this dissatisfaction. A rondera related:

The problem is that the water does not look good anymore. Now our animals have different diseases. Do you know why? Because the streams are not good anymore due to the miners from Yanacocha. It is because the miners that the water is not good now. As the miners want to steal our water, now the rondas campesinas from all our communities have responded; we all are mobilizing and collaborating [with the fight] in memory of the companions death defending our water.

(Interview, March 12, 2013)<sup>13</sup>

Another rondero argued that mining was responsible for the current devastating situation. He said the following:

In the past there were no plagues because there were no mines. The plague is very much now. Why? Because the air is contaminated. There are too many plagues now, there are too many diseases which we didn't know before. Now with the mines our situation is very bad. (Interview, March 12, 2013)<sup>14</sup>

A ronderos' leader from El Tambo said:

When I was a child our nature was absolutely healthy; our rivers, our land, our environment, our fields, our foodstuff were a complete healthy environment, a generous environment which nowadays is contaminated. Even our water and our land is contaminated because of the international mining corporations. (Interview, March 12, 2013)<sup>15</sup>

Some of the songs recorded after the conflict with Newmont-Yanacocha document the same dissatisfaction among the ronderos as the following version of "El ronderito" reveals.

**"Ronderito valiente" (*The courageous ronderito*)**

**Performers: Gregorio Santos and Rolando Cubas**

**Delgado**

**Recorded in San Marcos by Martínez,**

**March 12, 2013.**

Cuando mi tierra y mi chocita  
en un peligro se encontraban  
tomé coraje, tomé valor  
de ronderito me presenté  
a dar mi vida, a dar mi sangre  
por mis hermanos que hoy lloran.

*When my land and my hut  
was in danger,  
I got the courage  
and ran voluntarily to be ronderito,  
To give my life and my blood  
For my brothers, who are crying.*

Son los ronderos los más valientes  
que ni a la muerte le temen ya  
y si algún día muertos cayeran  
un gran ejemplo nos dejarán.

*They are the ronderos, the most courageous  
who do not fear death.  
But if one day they drop dead  
They will serve us as an example.*

Las injusticias de todas partes

*The injustices throughout the world*

<sup>13</sup> "El problema es, siempre ya, casi las aguas no se ve muy bien [...] A nuestros animales ya una y otra enfermedad lo agarra. Sabe ¿por qué? Los puquios, que nosotros los llamamos reventadores de agua, ya no están muy buenos por motivo de los mineros yanacochinos. Por esos mineros, ahora es que las aguas ya no están muy buenas. Ahora que los mineros quieren llevar nuestras aguas, ahora también nuestras rondas campesinas de todas las comunidades, se pusieron las pilas, a caminar todos, a colaborar todos, por esos compañeros que fueron muertos también en Yanacocha, por defender el agua."

<sup>14</sup> "Antes no había plagas porque no había minas. La plaga es muy mucho. ¿Por qué? Porque el aire está contaminado. Hay muchas plagas, muchas enfermedades que no hemos conocido. Y ahora, con estas minas estamos muy mal."

<sup>15</sup> "Cuando era niño nuestra naturaleza era totalmente sana, nuestras aguas, nuestra tierra; nuestro medio ambiente, la naturaleza que es en cuanto a nuestras plantaciones, nuestros alimentos, ha sido totalmente un ambiente sano, un ambiente generoso, que el día de hoy ya nos encontramos contaminados. Incluso nuestras aguas, nuestras tierras ya están contaminadas por motivo de las empresas mineras internacionales."



el pan del día nos quitan ya  
pero algún día no muy lejano  
el pueblo unido las vencerá.

*will take the daily bread out of our mouths.  
But one day, not far away,  
the united people will overcome them.*

Coge tu poncho y tu sombrero  
vámonos ya para rondar  
las injusticias de todas partes  
con los ronderos se acabarán.

*Put on your poncho and your hat  
Let us go to the rondas  
With the ronderos  
the injustice around the world will end.*

The lyrics show some important semantic changes: The land in danger is not the only reason to become a rondero, but also the suffering of the people, the brothers who are crying. Likewise, the second stanza obtains more realistic meaning as long as the menaces acquire a concrete character: several leaders of the rondas have been arrested for obstructing the activities of the mining corporation and some were killed during the protests by the police or by hired assassins. These murders have not even been subject of criminal investigation.<sup>16</sup> For this reason, the ronderos represent themselves as the ones who can end injustice and the aggressive policy by Newmont-Yanacocha and as the natural political agent of the communities and defenders of localness:

**“Mi Bambamarca” (My Bambamarca)**

**Performers: Blanca Ester Llamotanta and Ana María Llamotanta**

**Recorded in Tambo Hualgayoc by Martínez, March 12, 2013.**

Mi Bambamarca es buen lugar,  
provincia de mi Cajamarca,  
donde sus rondas campesinas  
defienden su medio ambiente.

*My Bambamarca is a nice place  
in the province of Cajamarca,  
where the rondas campesinas  
Defend the environment.*

Donde sus grupos de mujeres  
fortalecen a su gente.  
El pueblito de Tambo  
tiene gente progresista.

*Where a group of women  
empower the people.  
The town El Tambo  
is a progressive population.*

Donde sus hombres y mujeres  
defenderán sus lagunas  
con coraje y valentía,  
para que no lo destruyan  
Ese hermoso medio ambiente.

*There men and women  
will defend their lagoons  
with courage.  
In order to avoid the destruction  
of this beautiful environment.*

El Grufides y Cervandi [ONGs]  
capacitan a mi pueblo,  
en medios de comunicación  
para poder hacer radio.  
Y difundir las [sic] problemas

*Grufides and Cervandi (NGOs)  
are teaching our people  
in mass communication  
in order to broadcast information  
about the problems*

<sup>16</sup> According to the collective Gran Angular, between 2004 and 2013 eleven persons were killed and 280 were wounded during protest activities against mining. Peru has the fourth place in activists' mortality. Between 2000 and 2015 fifty-seven environmentalists were assassinated, the majority of whom were activists against mining. See <http://elgranangular.com/2015/04/26/territorio-yanacocha-relatos-de-impunidad> (accessed Feb. 29, 2016).

los progresos y las luchas  
que existen en mi pueblo.

*the progress and the fights  
my people have.<sup>17</sup>*

(Fuga:)  
Arriba, arriba, tambeños,  
luchando con emoción;  
como buenos campesinos  
alegrando la población.

*(Coda:)  
Stand up, stand up, people from Tambo!  
to fight enthusiastically.  
As good campesinos,  
we make the people happy.*

**“Hermoso Tambo querido” (nombres no  
consignados) (Wonderful and lovely Tambo)  
Recorded in Tambo Hualgayoc by Martínez, March  
12, 2013.**

Hermoso tambo querido  
generoso y luchador,  
defendiendo nuestra Conga,  
tierra de la hermosa trucha.  
Pa’ defender medioambiente  
subimos todos a una,  
no envenenen nuestras aguas,  
cuidemos nuestras lagunas.  
Los mineros desgraciados  
ya nos quisieron matar  
entres hombres y mujeres  
nos hicimos respetar.

*Wonderful and lovely Tambo,  
You are generous and wrestler,  
we defend Conga  
the land of the trout.  
In order to defend our environment  
we come all together.  
Do not poison our water  
take care of our lagoons.  
The damned miners  
Have tried to kill us.  
But we men and women [from Cajamarca]  
made them respect us!*

These songs were recorded during a workshop organized by the NGO Grufides, a non-governmental organization dedicated to instruct the local population in broadcasting in order to raise awareness about the danger of the mining expansion. Grufides hired Martínez to record the workshop, permitting him to interview the participants. The lyrics show the following interesting oppositions: on one hand, cajamarquinos are local, combatant; they defend the water, the lagoons, the trout (salmo trutta), and the mountains; they fight together against mineros. On the other hand, the authorities of the national government and the mining corporation are aliens; they represent destructive forces. These dichotomies are more explicit in the next song by Benjamín Quiroz, el Gavilancito Sanmarquino:<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Recent research has focused on the importance of radio broadcasting as a cultural tool of marginalized indigenous groups. For an in-depth view see Bessire and Fisher (2012).

<sup>18</sup> Video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl3oQo-2pqE> (accessed Nov. 21, 2015).

**“Defendamos nuestras aguas” (Defending our water)**

**Performer: Benjamín Quiroz, el Gavilancito sanmarquino**

**Recorded in San Marcos by Martínez, March 12, 2013.**

Bambamarca, Celendín,  
en mi Perú, número uno,  
defendiendo sus lagunas  
ante los ojos del mundo.  
Hermanos de Cajamarca,  
defendamos nuestros cerros,  
defendamos nuestros cerros,  
porque todos somos dueños.  
Los gobernantes de ahora,  
no piensan con la cabeza;  
les importa el dinero;  
que les ponen en la mesa.

Las bestias capitalistas  
llegaron a mi nación,  
tan solamente nos dejan,  
la muerte y la destrucción.  
Las bestias capitalistas  
llegaron a mi nación,  
tan solamente nos dejan  
to’a la contaminación.

*Bambamarca, in Celendín,  
is in Peru the number one  
defending the water  
in the sight of the whole world.  
Brothers from Cajamarca,  
we have to defend our mountains,  
we have to defend our mountains  
because we all are the owners.  
The current rulers  
do not think using their heads,  
they care about the money  
someone put on their table.*

*The capitalistic beast  
it came to my country  
in order to leave  
death and destruction.  
The capitalistic beast  
It came to my country  
in order to leave us  
contamination.*



Figure 5: Benjamín Quiroz, “Gavilancito Sanmarquino,” with bucolic background. (Photograph by Marino Martínez)

As in the previous songs, in “Defendamos nuestras tierras,” the ronderos from Celendín defend the lagoons and the mountains, whereas the capitalistic beast, the corrupt persons, are selling the nation by the pound. Accordingly, the ronderos appear here as the guardians of nature, rejecting technology and the capitalist penetration in Cajamarca, whereas *mineros* and *gobernantes* (rulers) appear as heralds of destruction, death, and contamination.<sup>19</sup>

Which role does the music play in the demonstrations? At potluck suppers or mass marches, music contributes to convert places into practiced, politicized places. But TV-reports have not paid attention to any kind of activities which show solidarity between the protesters, rather they focused on the clashes with the police and security forces of Newmont-Yanacocha. In doing so, the Peruvian press avoided to make the protest more human and continue representing Cajamarca as a backward place that obstructs the development of the whole country.

But not only the Peruvian press manipulated cultural practices using media technology. It is through the conversion of musical practices into a new form of media representation that the ronderos transformed their songs into political statements, contributing to contradict the image produced by Peruvian mass media.

### **The reinvention of rondero’s protest song**

In order to clarify how these songs are converted into effective political statements I am following an idea by Ana María Ochoa: the transculturation of oral traditions. According to Ochoa sound technology has been used by music researchers and the music industry to document and produce folklore music, transforming its oral and local character and involving it in new intellectual or political practices (Ochoa 2012: 389-393). Whereas Ochoa examines how traditional musical genres were inserted into a lettered codifications and later into a new sonic public sphere, I want to demonstrate how the local musical practices of ronderos were converted into audiovisual codifications by Yaku Taki in order to insert them into an academic discourse and through it into a national discourse on mining and environment.

We are accustomed to see media as devices that reproduce reality. But as Kittler points out, media create empires of simulations: “Storing, erasing, sampling, fast-forwarding, rewinding, editing-inserting tapes into the signal path leading from the microphone to the master disc made manipulation itself possible” (1999: 108). Kittler mainly circumscribes the imaginary to the visual, but he also speaks about a music beyond the humans, referring to recorded music which no longer simulates the chronologic nature of sound production but creates or invents sounds by time manipulation (2013: 70).

We know that technology plays a very important role for the conservation of tradition in ethnomusicology. But ethnomusicology does not have a convincing tradition of reflexivity concerning the manipulation of music through the use of reproduction technology in fieldwork. On the contrary, ethnomusicologists tend to construct what Turino has named “high fidelity” recordings; namely, the idea that media capture a true copy of a musical reality:

Like photographs, ethnographic field recording and live concert albums have a strong dicent lexical quality; the microphones and tape recorder, like the camera, are assumed to simply capture what is

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<sup>19</sup>The aggressive expansion of mining, oil and lumber companies in the Peruvian Amazonia has generated the emergence of new mythical figures among Awajun and Wampis like “bundles, stampers and flying gringos” who attack indigenous people (Santos-Granero y Barclay 2011: 161). These stories are surely an expression of the generalized feeling that the capitalistic beast and the State intend to exterminate native Amazonian peoples.

in their presence—a live music event. Thus the object of the sign (the live performance) is assumed to actually affect the sign (the recorded sound) in a direct “natural” way. Unlike studio art, high fidelity recording in a studio aims to make recording process “invisible” or at least to downplay production processes so that the recording will be received as faithful representation of lifelike musical performance [...] In fact, the sound of documentary field recordings can be, and usually is, manipulated through microphone placement and sound equalization (reducing or augmenting certain frequencies) to create, not merely capture, the sound that the documenter wants to hear and present to others on a recording. (Turino 2008: 68-69)

Following an ethnomusicological tradition, Yaku Taki conceals, consciously or not, recording technology in order to transmit a pristine image of the region. At this point I would like to clarify that my intention is not to question the accuracy or authenticity of campesinos’ representation by Yaku Taki as a means for political manipulation; hence, as I said, a representation is always a transformation and not a reproduction of information. Moreover, I really sympathize with the issue of Martínez. What I want to reflect upon here is how media representation takes part in the construction of place, converting the real activities into manipulated data. This conversion occurs on a symbolic (as discourse) as well as on a fictional (as imagination) level codifying sounds and images. For example: the protest songs collected by Yaku Taki were all recorded in other contexts than social protest activities. Thus, the protest is re-located and recontextualized acquiring a new significance.

According to the media representation, Cajamarca is a rural place, trapped in a pre-capitalistic past. Paradoxically, opponents to the mining expansion too have promoted the same vision, although for the latter, the pre-capitalistic forms must be protected against the international market system. But of course, capitalism and modernization have already been established in Cajamarca since the beginning of the twentieth century. Cajamarca is not isolated from the global world. During our visit to Apán Alto, I noted that the local population uses mp3 players and that people hear national and international popular music on the radio. I recorded two little girls singing a “traditional” carnival song which, in fact, is a modern hit by the pop-folk group String Karma, a popular group which has had success on the radio in the last years. However, when I compare Martínez’s recordings in Apán Alto with my own, I noted that he actually concealed the media technology we used (see Fig. 6 and Fig. 7), whereas I showed them. When I made him aware of it, he replied:

I didn’t see that as concealment. It is like when you watch a television program. If you watch a documentary film, normally you don’t see where are the cameramen; seldom do you see how the crew is moving or how they install the equipment. This is not what we want to show, because the prominence is not our work, but the thing itself. We are interested in showing the performers and not our job . . . Indeed, I do not have problems with issues like subjectivity and objectivity. I can imagine that there are debates and discussions [in academia] regarding to both, but I think it is impossible to show an objective reality, I show my own vision of the things. When a colleague takes a camera she is following a technical criterion, but it is evident that she is showing a personal impression. (Interview, Feb. 15, 2014)<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> “Yo nunca lo he pensado como ocultar. Es como cuando uno ve un programa en la televisión. Cuando uno ve un documental en general, uno no está viendo donde se puso el camarógrafo, muy rara vez se ve como se traslada la gente o como se instala los equipos. No es esa la parte que queremos mostrar porque el protagonismo no es tanto nuestro trabajo como el registro en sí. Nos interesa mostrar a los cultores, no nuestro trabajo . . . Yo la verdad, no tengo mucha preocupación por el tema de lo subjetivo y lo objetivo. Entiendo que a ese nivel pueda haber debates y polémicas, pero pienso que es imposible mostrar una realidad objetiva, uno muestra una visión propia de las cosas. Cuando una compañera toma



This statement reveals that he was recording with an end product in mind or, in other words, that he recorded the Cajamarca he had in his head. Like all of us, when he goes into the field, he has already a concept, not only concerning what he wants to record, but also regarding what he wants to show later in terms of video production. Obviously, this has clear political implications. Martínez told me that when he accepted the direction of Yaku Taki, he was aware of the political responsibilities he was assuming, and even if he did not always agree with the political ideas of Gregorio Santos, he felt he was a part of the fight of the campesinos against the mining expansion. In this sense, Martínez followed a political agenda: to counteract the representation of Cajamarca as a backward place by the Peruvian mass media, he constructed an alternative media representation of Cajamarca as an idyllic place that had to be protected and preserved. What did Martínez do?



Figure 6: Pechada singers in Apán Alto (Photograph by Marino Martínez)



Figure 7: Yaku Taki's crew recording in Apán Alto. (Photograph by Julio Mendivil)

Music is closely related to water rituals throughout the Peruvian South Andes.<sup>21</sup> But the music in Cajamarca does not appear to be directly related to water rites and ceremonies. For this reason, Martínez needed to construct a relation between water and music in discourse—a secondary relation in Foucault's terms (1999: 74). In the video presentation of Yaku Taki he explains the following:

Yaku Taki is a Quechua word and means “the singing of the water” and refers to the music of the people of this region [Cajamarca] as a singing which comes from remote times and which was able to transcend until our days like when the water perforates the rocks, maintaining its power and its beauty as well the force of its origins and its destiny . . . The traditional music takes place in the context of the costumes of the people and is closely related to the history . . . and to the deepest experiences of the community . . . The traditional music is like a flow that like the water holds and articulates the life in our towns.<sup>22</sup>

The fragment is highly suggestive because it presents water and the practicing of music as historical powers which foster tradition and, in doing so, resist modernization. The audio and

<sup>21</sup> Ethnographic literature confirms a close relation between music and water in the Andes. Turino referred to the relationship between water, the mermaid and the craft of love in Canas, Cuzco (1983: 97); Solomon showed that waterfalls are closely related to music in Potosí, Bolivia (1997: 255-261). According to other scholars, water cult and music are also closely related in Ayacucho (Arce Sotelo 2006: 32-34; Ulfe 2004: 61-87).

<sup>22</sup> “*Yaku Taki* es una palabra quechua que significa ‘el canto del agua’ y alude a la música de los pueblos de esta región como un canto que viene desde tiempos remotos y que ha logrado trascender, como el agua que horada la roca, hasta nuestros días, manteniendo el poder de su belleza, pero también la fuerza de su origen y su destino. . . . La música tradicional se desarrolla en el contexto de las costumbres de los pueblos y está profundamente relacionada con la historia . . . y las vivencias más profundas de una comunidad. . . . La música tradicional es el caudal que, como el agua, vertebra y articula la vida de los pueblos.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiNqHlmWMIU> (accessed Nov. 28, 2015).

audiovisual recordings by Yaku Taki follow the same strategy: they also have been made in order to represent Cajamarca as a pre-capitalistic place, threatened by the mining expansion and the aggressive capitalistic policy. A number of adjustments were necessary for that. As mentioned, the songs against mining were not recorded during protest activities. The first three songs were especially composed for the workshop organized by the NGO Grufides. The other song, by singer-songwriter Benjamín Quiroz, “Gavilancito Sanmarquino,” comes from a recording session in San Marcos. To record outside the social protest activities allowed Martínez to isolate the songs from all “disturbing elements”—noise, visual pollution or the skirmish with the police—and to focus the attention of the audiences on the texts and on the landscape reinforcing the “bucolic” character of Cajamarca. Recontextualized as media data, the protest songs become media products for private listening and personal enjoyment, or as Turino would say, they become representational music, acquiring a new quality (2008: 59-61). In doing so, Martínez (an outsider) dislocates the social practices of the *ronderos* and positions them in a national and even international public sphere. At the same time, Martínez contradicts the negative image of Cajamarca promoted by the government and the Peruvian press and emphasizes the necessity of saving the “pristine” region from mining activities and capitalist penetration.

Indeed, the reception of the videos posted on Facebook shows that Yaku Taki’s strategy works and that its recordings are being perceived as codified reality: “¡Wonderful the singing of water! Congratulations and thank you for contributing to preserve so many genres, songs, and stories!” wrote a visitor.<sup>23</sup> Another user praised “the preservation of traditional music with ecological consciousness.” A third person said: “Everyone should know that they [the mining corporations] come to our land and leave destruction, whereas they enjoy stolen resources [in their land]! We won’t shut up!!!”<sup>24</sup>

So far I have presented *ronderos* as a group which was represented either by the Peruvian press, the filmmaker Marianne Eyde, or by the ethnomusicological recordings of Yaku Taki. But the current *ronderos* are far from being a passive group. In order to acknowledge their contribution to this field of negotiation, I want to come back to some reflections about media. I agree with Kittler’s view of the artificiality of sound and visual reproduction, but I believe that it is not possible to ignore the human participation in the production of media representation. I see sound and visual reproduction as a network, as a whole set of relations, practices, people, and technologies (Sterne 2003: 225). As Meintjes has shown in the case of Zulu music in South Africa, technology functions as a network within which images, sounds, and discourses about race, class, and ethnicity are hardly negotiated (2003: 142-143). Similarly, in the case of the *ronderos*: they are negotiating sounds and images regarding to Cajamarca, social structures, and “right” justice.

*Ronderos* are not outcasts forgotten by the globalization and media. As I have demonstrated, modernization is present in the rural areas of Cajamarca. Through the access to mass media, *campesinos* are well aware of how they are being represented to the rest of the nation and accordingly they react. Martínez, for example, explained to me that his collaborators were very preoccupied with their appearance and with the setting of the performances at recordings. They always selected traditional clothes for the sessions and suggested to him to record in places that seemed to represent an intact rural world. During our visit to Apán Alto, I also noticed this attitude. The singers living in the city that joined us on our trip to their hometown decided to dress in ponchos and the characteristic hats of the region in order to look more

<sup>23</sup> “¡Hermoso, el canto del agua! ¡Felicitaciones y gracias por impedir que tantos géneros, canciones, historias se queden en el olvido!”

<sup>24</sup> “Que lo sepa el mundo,” said a third person, “como vienen a nuestras tierras a dejarnos solo su destrucción, mientras que ellos gozan de todo lo robado! ¡No nos callaremos jamás!!!”

“traditional” and “rural.”

Media consumption is undeniably influencing the self-image of the campesinos. This is especially obvious when analyzing the terminology with which they speak about their problems. Terms like “medio ambiente” (environment), “progresistas” (progressive forces), “medios de comunicación” (mass media), “capitalistas” (capitalist), and “contaminación” (contamination) do not come from the traditional discourse of the local population, but from Peruvian and international mass media and the discourse of the NGOs working in the region (note the differences in the language of the interviews). In this sense, the campesinos are aware that they are assuming a role for their representation, and I want to add that this role is hardly influenced by the technological a priori to which Kittler refers. For instance, campesinos are aware that they are protesting “in the sight of the whole world,” meaning, in front of the cameras of reporters and ethnomusicologists.

The ronderos are not against technology, modernization or mining per se, but against a mining expansion that destroys the natural resources and the culture of the local population. Paraphrasing Slavoj Žižek one could say that they are defending their traditional values and resisting the dangers of globalization speaking the language of modernity (Žižek 2015: 21-22). In order to reinvent Cajamarca and to contradict the media representation promoted by Newmont-Yanacocha, the mass media, and the Peruvian government, they assume the role of “passive social individuals” in the ethnomusicological representation and use the prestige of audiovisual media as a technology able to capture reality with high fidelity to create a counterpoise, a bucolic and pristine imaginary Cajamarca to the demonized one created by their political enemies. This imaginary Cajamarca corresponds to an ideal that only exists in a future time as an utopia, like the place Vallejo mentioned in his poem.

## Conclusion

In this article, I have shown how mining expansion impacts the water resources in Cajamarca contaminating the environment and affecting indirectly or directly the health and the livelihoods of the people in the region. I have also shown that the local population organized in the rondas is responding to this process with protest activities within which music plays a role as a tool for empowerment. As Simonett and Stobart demonstrate in this dossier, capitalistic structures have been introduced into territories inhabited by indigenous groups modifying their expressive culture. Whereas Simonett shows how farmers and multinational corporations using fertilizers and pesticides impact on the biodiversity in Sinaloa influencing the organological tradition of Yoreme Indians, Stobart analyzes how new technologies like digital video production is used by indigenous artists in order to represent themselves (see Simonett and Stobart in this dossier). This article is divided between both positions. On the one hand, my data confirms the destructive character of capitalistic corporations and how through the destruction of the environment Andean peasants lose natural resources and adapt their musical practices to this devastating process. On the other hand, the recordings of ronderos’ songs by Yaku Taki teach us that audio and visual transculturation can articulate political responses against the capitalistic penetration (Ochoa 2012: 399).

Both Yaku Taki as well the ronderos perform this transculturation. Yaku Taki’s recordings re-localize and re-contextualize social practices of the ronderos introducing them into a national discourse. Martínez e.g. broadcasts pictures and sounds which strongly contrast with those circulating in the Peruvian media. While mass media portray Cajamarca as a backward place, Yaku

Taki represents proud ronderos in bucolic landscapes singing for water and against gold. In this sense, audio and audiovisual reproduction creates “a realism that holds the place of reality without being it” (Sterne 2003: 245). But as the attitude of the rondero’s and Martínez shows, sound reproduction cannot work without human assistance and without the technological coordination and cultural and esthetic negotiation between the involved individuals. Indeed, both the ronderos and Martínez practice and record with an end product in mind in order to form and modify the media representation of the conflict between the mining company and the local population of Cajamarca. Ethnomusicology as practiced in this particular place and time by Martínez and the ronderos does not only describe, but creates reality through the codification and transformation of information, re-signifying social practices through the media reproduction as a form of ethno-orientalism (Carrier 1992).

May my article damage the right fight of the campesinos and Yaku Taki if I reveal their representations of Cajamarca as pristine place as imaginary and as ideological positions? I don’t think so. Ethnomusicological writings are trying to break up with a policy of representation of traditional cultures as passive, awkward, and static entities. My intention is not to denounce rondero’s and Yaku Taki’s manipulation of information for ideological proposes, but to emphasize that they are positioning themselves in Peru’s political arena by singing, acting, and recording conditioned by their technological a priori. Yaku Taki and the ronderos use protest songs as a new form of media resistance against the expansion of a destructive and inhuman capitalism. As in Bioy Casares’s novel, *Morel’s Invention*, sound and audiovisual reproduction captures and produces reality, shaping the future and reinforcing the fight of the campesinos against Newmont-Yanacocha. Could they have better luck than Atahualpa?

### Postscript (2016)

Music continues to be an important means for the campesinos from Cajamarca in order to represent the fight against the mining expansion. In April 2016 Máxima Acuña de Chaupe became Goldman Environment Prize recipient for this year. During the award ceremony, Máxima Acuña de Chaupe sang the following autobiographical song, giving her testimony to the international community<sup>25</sup>.

#### **“Yo soy una jalqueñita” (*I am from Jalca*)**

Yo soy una jalqueñita  
que vivo en las cordilleras  
pasteyando (sic) mis ovejas  
en neblina y aguacero.

*I am a woman from Jalca  
who lives in the mountain ranges  
tending to my sheep  
in mist and heavy rain.*

Cuando mi perro ladraba  
la policía llegaba;  
mis chozitas lo (sic) quemaron  
mis cositas lo (sic) llevaron.

*When my dog barked  
the police arrived;  
my hut, they burned down  
my things, they confiscated.*

Comidita no comía

*Food, I didn’t eat*

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orxv3jPsOgM>



solo aguita yo tomaba.  
Camisa yo no tenía  
con pajitas me abrigaba.

*only water I drank.  
A bed, I didn't have  
with hay I covered myself.*

Por defender mis lagunas  
la vida quisieron quitar.  
Ingenieros, seguridas (sic)  
me robaron mis ovejas,  
caldo de cabeza tomaron,  
en el campamento de Conga.

*Because I defended my lakes,  
They wanted to take my life.  
Engineers and policemen  
they robbed my sheep  
sheep's head soup they drank  
in the mining camp of Conga.*

Fuga:  
Si con esto adiós, adiós,  
hermosísimo laurel.  
Tú te quedas en tu casa  
yo me voy a padecer.

*Coda:  
And with this now I say goodbye  
wonderful laurel.  
You remain at home  
whereas I will have to suffer.*

When she returned to Peru, Máxima Acuña suffered further mistreatments from the Peruvian police and Yanacocha.

In July 2016, after 25 months in prison, the former president of the regional government of Cajamarca, Gregorio Santos was released. Since then Santos has reintegrated himself into the fight against Yanacocha and mining in Cajamarca.

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