# Shipibo-Konibo Community in Lima and the Right to the City<sup>1</sup>

La comunidad Shipibo-Konibo en Lima y el derecho a la ciudad

Anuario Latinoamericano Ciencias Políticas y Relaciones Internacionales vol. 13, 2022 pp. 113-135

DOI:10.17951/al.2022.13.113-135

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The paper starts with a description of the Amazon migration to Lima and the concept of the right to the city, then the following section presents the history of the Cantagallo neighborhood and how Shipibo residents position themselves, organize the political struggle, and collaborate with municipal and national institutions. The study is based on visits and interviews carried out during fieldwork in Lima in 2013 and 2014 and subsequent desk research and remote follow-up interviews in 2020 and 2021 that allowed to present and analyze the specific case of the Cantagallo community and Shipibos' attempts to exercise basic citizen rights. In this paper, I would like to suggest that the notion of the right to the city may be an effective concept for indigenous urban communities in the formulation and execution of their rights and citizenship.

**KEYWORDS**: right to the city, urban indigenous, Shipibo-Konibo, Lima.

#### **RESUMEN**

Este artículo parte de una breve descripción de la migración amazónica a Lima y el concepto del derecho a la ciudad, luego la siguiente sección presenta la historia del barrio Cantagallo y cómo los habitantes de origen shipibo se posicionan, organizan la lucha política y colaboran con las instituciones municipales y nacionales. El estudio se basa en visitas y entrevistas realizadas durante el trabajo de campo en Lima en 2013 y 2014 y posterior investigación documental y entrevistas de seguimiento a distancia en 2020 y 2021 que permitieron presentar y analizar el caso específico de la comunidad de Cantagallo y los intentos de los shipibos en ejercer derechos ciudadanos básicos. En el presente artículo me gustaría sugerir que la noción del derecho a la ciudad puede ser un concepto efectivo para las comunidades indígenas urbanas en la formulación y ejecución de sus derechos y ciudadanía.

**PALABRAS CLAVE**: derecho a la ciudad, indígenas urbanos, Shipibo-Konibo, Lima.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Part of the research for this paper was financially supported by National Science Centre (NCN) (Project No. 2013/09/N/HS3/02011).

#### Introduction

Indigenous communities in Latin America were mostly associated with the area of the province and indigeneity was built for a long time with reference to rural areas. Indigenous people are not usually seen as migrants, assuming that their ethnic communities are geographically static due to their link with the land of origin. Meanwhile, current migratory patterns in Latin America indicate that indigenous peoples form a growing population of migrants (Alexiades and Peluso, 2015, p. 1), with many moving to cities where they become a distinct population of *indígenas urbanos*. Unfortunately, in most cases, the cities in the region do not provide these new citizens with appropriate policies and do not create inclusive urban spaces. However, the right to the city and civil struggle sometimes emerge within the indigenous urban community, who then leads the process of recognition.

Before proceeding to substantial aspects of this paper, it is worth noting that in Peru there is a clear distinction between Andean and Amazon indigenous. There are two terms, *indígenas* and *campesinos*, which also refer to the culturally diverse groups of Peruvian citizens. Since the agrarian reform and the rule of Juan Velasco Alvarado, Andean communities have been referred to as *campesinos* (peasants), which was to emphasize their relationship with the land and reflect the agricultural nature of the social organization. This distinction was also intended to emphasize the cultural distinctiveness of Andean communities, mainly belonging to the complex ethnic groups of Quechua and Aymara, from those of the Amazon. The area of the Peruvian Amazon is inhabited by small and more ethnically diverse communities, treated by the state as 'more Indian' than the inhabitants of the Andes and thus referred to as *indigenas* (indigenous, natives).

It is also worth mentioning the groundbreaking change introduced during the 2017 census. For the first time, the Peruvian census included the question on ethnic auto-identification, making it seem possible to obtain accurate data on the spatial distribution of different ethnic groups and the presence of indigenous people in cities. The earlier census of 2007 included the question about the language learned during childhood. The addition of another question on ethnic identity was intended to provide more factual data on the composition of Peruvian ethnicity. According to the results, only a quarter of the country's population identifies themselves as Quechua, Aymara, or other indigenous groups from the Amazon. The vast majority – which is more than 60% of Peruvians – identify themselves as mestizos, then 22.3% of the society define themselves as Quechua (which is the second largest group and significantly ahead of the white population), 5.9% as white, 3.6% as Afro-Peruvians, 2.4% as Aymara, and more than 1% identify themselves with various communities of the Amazon, mainly Asháninka, Awajún, and Shipibo (INEI, 2017)<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Racial and ethnic terms used here to delimitate group identities are the same categories that were used in 2017 Census carried out by Instituto Nacional de Estadistica e Informatica (INEI, 2017).

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## Migration from the Amazon to Lima and Shipibos-Konibos

Scientific research on migrants and new residents of Lima has not yet fully addressed the question of the urban presence of the Amazon community. Peruvian social and cultural academic literature was primarily concerned with Andean migrants. Some publications on indigenous urban communities of the Peruvian Amazon have only recently appeared. CAAAP and its researchers published two key works on Lima residents who identify themselves with the indigenous communities of the Amazon (Terra Nuova Perú, 2013; Vega Daz, 2014). An extensive analysis of the social organization, culture, and identity of migrants from the Amazon in cities is presented in the papers of Oscar Espinosa de Rivero (Espinosa, 2009, 2012, 2019). The Amazon community in Lima is also documented in the issue elaborated at the University of San Marcos *Los Estudiantes indígenas amazónicos de la UNMSM* (Tejada, 2005).

There are about 60 different Amazonian groups in Peru, divided into more than a dozen linguistic groups. Traditionally, some of the indigenous communities of the Amazon have migrated and settled permanently in Lima, although this is changing now. Migration from the Amazon to the capital only became visible in the middle of the 1980s, when the headquarters of the most important indigenous organizations (including AIDESEP and CONAP) were founded in Lima. These institutions allowed the Amazon community to gain

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Part of the research for this paper was carried out during my Ph.D. project devoted to changes in the cultural identity of migrants in Lima. The field work took place in 2013 and 2014. It consisted of visits to the site, during which participant and non-participant observation and in-depth interviews took place. In total, 30 in-depth interviews were conducted with people form Cantagallo, some of which are cited in this paper. These were mostly individual interviews; however, in a few cases, there were two or more persons present. Follow-up interviews numbering about 10 were conducted remotely in 2020 and 2021. A list of all cited interviews with signatures and descriptions of interviewees is included at the end of this paper.

representation in the city, but there was no permanent community living in Lima yet. The Amazonian migration to Lima can be divided into three periods. The first one was from 1985 to 1995, when the Asháninka people were dominant and the main push reason was an armed internal conflict. The second was from 1996 to 2000, when Shipibo migrants prevailed and, apart from terrorism, access to the labor market was among the main pull reasons. The last, from 2001 to 2011, characterized by migration of various Amazon indigenous communities and the main pull reason was access to higher education (Espinosa, 2009, p. 56; Terra Nuova Perú, 2013; Vega Díaz, 2014). Amazon migrants began to arrive in the Peruvian capital on a larger scale in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

So far, there has been no official census allowing to determine the population of Amazon communities in Lima (Espinosa, 2009, p. 49; Vega Díaz, 2014, p. 23), and the inference drawn on the data revealed in the INEI migration statistics is based on too many unknowns to be sure of the values obtained (INEI, 2014). However, in 2017, the question of ethnic self-identification was included in the census. According to the results reported by INEI, 14,216 identified themselves as representatives of the Amazon indigenous communities in the Province of Lima (out of the total population of 6,801,252 people aged 12 and over). For comparison, there are 1,121,193 residents who recognize themselves as Quechua and 47,085 as Aymara (INEI, 2017a, 2017b). In the province of Callao, which forms the Metropolitan Area with Lima, within the total population of 799,608 people aged 12 years or older, 1,447 people identified themselves with different indigenous Amazonian peoples – 81,554 as Quechua, and 4,987 as Aymara (INEI, 2017a, 2017b). Contrary to Andean migration, Amazon migration has never been a mass phenomenon, but the urban presence of communities originating from the Selva area has been noticeable in the city over the last two decades (Espinosa, 2009, p. 47; Vega Díaz, 2014, p. 36). There are Amazonian groups living in the districts of Ancón, Ate, Rímac (Cantagallo), San Juan de Lurigancho, San Miguel (Pando), San Martín de Porres (San Germán), Ventanilla in Lima Metropolitana (Terra Nuova Perú, 2013, pp. 19–129).

Shipibos-Konibos form one of the largest indigenous groups in the Peruvian Amazon. According to the data from the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, there are currently more than 25,000 people who identify themselves with this indigenous group and more than 34,000 who stated that their mother tongue is the Shipibo-Konibo language (INEI, 2017). Like other ethnic communities of Pano linguistic family, they traditionally lived along the Ucayali River. Today mainly settled near the Ucayali, Pisqui, and Madre de Dios rivers in the departments of Ucayali, Madre de Dios, Loreto, and Huánuco.

Shipibos-Konibos were formed after the cultural fusion of three separate communities: Shipibos, Konibos, and Shetebos (BDPI). The group was in contact with other Amazonian peoples and Andean communities already in the

Pre-Inca period (Tournon, 2002). In colonial years, especially the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries arrived in the region and began evangelization attempts. Historically the group is also known to be hit by the rubber boom which decimated the native population of the region at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, Shipibos-Konibos have to struggle mainly with logging companies owned by colonists being descendants of Europeans who arrived during the rubber boom, and mestizos living in the area (García Hierro et al. 1998; Roe, 1982, p. 35). The group is organized and gained relative political representation as that grown by Coshikox – the council of the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Nation – an organization focused on self-governance of the native territory according to indigenous knowledge and culture. Moreover, in 2007 the official alphabet of the Shipibo-Konibo language has been approved by the Ministry of Education<sup>4</sup>, and today there are more than 280 bilingual schools that provide education both in Shipibo and Spanish in Peru (BDPI).

Shipibos-Konibos have long been the subject of acculturation processes driven by other groups they interacted with. Currently, the group is perceived as an outcome of the cultural change either defined as mestizaje or transculturation in which the migration process also played a significant role. Shipibos-Konibos are known for their mobility as community members often migrated to urban areas, especially in the Amazon, but also to Lima. Shipibos, like other indigenous groups of the Peruvian Amazon, are exposed to various problems today, as they occupy an area threatened by industrial development and exploration of raw materials, transnational organized crime, but also urbanization, and migration processes. The first Shipibo migrations to Lima began in the 1990s. Currently, according to INEI data, there are 2,435 people who autoidentify as Shipibos-Konibos in the province of Lima and 205 in the province of Callao (INEI, 2017).

## The history of Cantagallo

In Lima, the growing community from the Amazon is recently acknowledged. The symbolic beginning of this migration was the year 2000 when the Shipibo settlement in Cantagallo in the Rímac district started. Currently, Cantagallo, located just two kilometers from the Government Palace, is the most renowned neighborhood of Amazon migrants in Lima. It has also become an icon of Shipibos' struggle with Lima's magistrate and the Peruvian state for the recognition of the urban rights of indigenous communities. The Cantagallo area was occupied by migrants from Peruvian provinces since the 1970s. They were mainly migrants from the Andes, who lived in abandoned and impoverished buildings.

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 $<sup>^4~</sup>$  Resolución Directoral Nº 0337-2007-ED del Ministerio de Educación: http://www.ugelcasma.gob.pe/files/Data\_EIB/Normas\_EIB/Lenguas%20originarias/Alfabetos%20de%20lenguas%20originarias/RD%20337-2007-ED%20SHIPIBO.pdf

The Amazon community, mainly from the Shipibo group, soon after arriving began to organically stand out among other ethnic groups in the neighborhood, but also among other popular districts in the metropolitan area.

There are at least two accounts of the origin of the settlement of Shipibos. The first one, according to which the Shipibo settlers from Cantagallo were participating in Marcha de los Cuatro Suyos (March of the Four Parts), which took place in Lima in July 2000 (Espinosa, 2019, p. 162). It was an event organized by then-presidential candidate Alejandro Toledo in the face of the rigging of the presidential election results, paving the way for Alberto Fujimori's third presidency. Among the participants in Marcha de los Cuatro Suyos was a group of 30 Shipibos who, having no money to return, decided to stay in the Peruvian capital (Espinosa, 2019, p. 162). According to the second version, the first Shipibo settlers arrived after the Feria Artesanal de Todas las Sangres (All Bloods Crafts Fair) at the end of 2000 (2/2013; 4/2014)<sup>5</sup>. It was an art fair where communities from various regions of Peru presented their handicrafts. The Amazon Shipibos community was represented by a group of approximately 10 handicraft artists. Several participants in this event decided to stay permanently in the Peruvian capital and occupied the market buildings in the Rímac District. As Ontaneda observes, competing stories on the foundation of Shipibo Cantagallo prove certain political rivalry among leaders of the community (Ontaneda, 2017, p. 31).

Regardless of which story is closer to the truth, the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries marks the beginning of Shipibos presence in Lima. Since 2000, new migrants have begun to settle in the historic and central district of Lima, and the informal neighborhood has grown over the landfill around the market. Shipibos arriving in Cantagallo did not only migrate from the Peruvian Amazon, they often moved from other parts of the metropolitan area (4/2014). Shortly, new residents created the first organization – Asociación de Artesanos Shipibos Residentes en Lima (ASHIREL), the main objective of which was to represent the community and act for its benefit. The primary issue was to legalize the occupied land that belonged to the City Hall. The right to property was the first citizen demand of Shipibos. And it was ASHIREL that in 2007 finally obtained the document to prove ownership of the almost 1860 m² land plot from the Municipality of Rímac (2/2013; 4/2014; Ontaneda, 2017, p. 32). It was a milestone for Shipibos community in gaining control over their settlement and success in the struggle for obtaining legal property title.

Today, about 1,000 Shipibos live in Cantagallo, that is, more than 260 families. Although those of the Amazon are not the only ethnic population here, some say that Shipibos constitute only 10–15% of the total population. Andean people who settled in the area at least three decades before Shipibo migrants also made their home in Cantagallo. Currently, the community has

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The list of cited interviews with signatures and interviewees information is included as an appendix at the end of the paper.

its own board of directors and authorities and three organizations leading the political fight for Shipibos: ASHIRELV (Asociación de Artesanos Shipibos Residentes en Lima-Pro Vivienda) that emerged from the former ASHIREL, AVSHIL (Asociación de Viviendas Shipibas de Lima), and ACUSHIKOLM (Asociación de la Comunidad Urbana Shipibo-Konibo de Lima Metropolitana) (2/2013; 3/2014; 4/2014; 10/2014; Espinosa, 2019; Ontaneda 2017). The last one operates with the help and support of the municipal authorities and, as Ostaneda points out, "the lack of reference in the association's name to housing suggests the Municipality's intention to delegitimize Shipibos' claim to Cantagallo land." (Ontaneda, 2017, p. 33). One of the most essential institutions for Shipibos integration into the urban environment is the bilingual elementary school – Institución Educativa Comunidad Shipiba. It was built by the community back in 2008 and in 2012 it was recognized by the state and the ministry; according to the residents, it is 'the only bilingual public school in Lima' (1/2013). Today there are more than 200 students – though not all of them are Shipibos -who are thought in the native language of the Amazon and Spanish (10/2014; 14/2021). Cantagallo became the center of Shipibos culture in Lima and a place where all Shipibos moving to the Peruvian capital can find support.

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## **Everyday life in Cantagallo**

Cantagallo is located in the district of Rímac, close to the river of the same name and at a short distance from the official and municipal institutions. Such a location seems to be symbolic in two ways. Firstly, the proximity to the Rímac River is sometimes mentioned by residents as an effective reason for the location of the settlement. Shipibos in their original territories live by the Ucayali River and thus Rímac reminds them of their homeland and typical landscape (1/2013; 5/2014; 10/2014). However, the Rímac River also manifests the urban pollution problem, as it is a muddy and dirty water stream. Second, Cantagallo's proximity to official national institutions may also be essential to understanding its position in negotiating citizen rights. As Cantagallo is located in the Rímac District, it is not far from the most important institutions of state and local authorities, such as the Government Palace, Legislative Palace, and Municipal Palace (11/2014). As Ontaneda observes, such a "location has allowed them [Shipibos] increased political activity and visibility, perhaps making them 'the only native community' Lima cannot overtly ignore." (Ontaneda, 2017, p. 29).

Today there are more than 1500 people of various ethnic backgrounds living in the area, and before the construction of Línea Amarilla, the settlement was usually divided into three sectors. The first was a commercial sector, where Centro Comercial Las Malvinas is located. The second one is inhabited by mainly mestizo residents, though some Shipibos also live there. In this part of the neigh-

borhood, there are various points of interest, such as Evangelical congregations, shops, liquor stores, street food vendors, a sports field, and Institución Educativa Comunidad Shipiba. The third area is where most of the Shipibo families reside, especially *artesanas* who are selling their art and products and at the same time generating income and empowerment for the community (1/2013; 3/2014; 6/2014; 10/2014; Vega, 2014, pp. 84–85; Espinosa, 2019).

The architecture is typical for the shanty town in the city of Lima, but in one case the Shipibos neighborhood is specific and stands out from the rest. It is because of the street art on the walls of Cantagallo's houses and buildings. The number of murals, graffiti, stencils, and paintings that refer to the nature and culture of the Amazon changes the experience of these streets for each resident and visitor. All street art in the neighborhood fills a certain gap. As migrants from the Amazon lack nature, they bring nature back in the form of beautifully painted plants and wild animals. Many buildings are decorated with the works of local artists who referred to the iconography and cosmovision typical of their or their parents' place of origin (3/2014; 5/2014; 10/2014). Cantagallo became a popular street art location for urban artists from Lima, yet one can also find the pieces delivered by foreign artists. Such street art has the power to transform the most unprivileged urban landscape into a more humane and socially friendly neighborhood.

The specificity of Cantagallo is also seen during observations of the activities of residents in the public space of the neighborhood and the measurement of their contacts. Observations in the settlement indicated that the community is united and cooperative. In general, activities in public space can be divided into optional and necessary. In Cantagallo both types are occurring, proving that a community is well integrated and the space encourages social contacts with others. And, as Gehl and Svarre observe, "studies in public space and life in it provide knowledge of both the physical framework of space and the way people use it." (2021, p. 137). Everyday life in Cantagallo has certain characteristics that make this neighborhood unique in comparison to other settlements in Lima. When visiting Cantagallo observations were made that residents use public spaces of streets for such activities like cooking or washing clothes, which appears to be a characteristic of a closely tied community. Life in the neighborhood seems peaceful and safe, which is evident as some residents even leave the doors open. According to a few accounts, the community knows how to ensure safety and exercise justice on those who commit crimes, although the cases of violence are rather rare in Cantagallo (1/2013; 6/2014; 11/2020).

Shipibas in Cantagallo, especially *artesanas*, wear traditional clothes as a manifestation of their cultural identity. Women artists dress in kené-patterned skirts, shirts in various colors with typical adornment, and headbands. There are also young male artists who dress in typical attire, but – as in Shipibo communities in the Amazon – art and handcraft are usually performed by women (1/2013; 4/2014; 8/2014; 10/2014). The textiles used by Shipibos are

traditionally hand-woven and decorated with distinctive esthetics – kené<sup>6</sup> (in Shipibo-Konibo means design). Kené is an abstract composition, a combination of geometric patterns and line structure representing cosmovision of Shipibos as experienced during the ayahuasca ceremony. "Characterized by a *horror vacui*, the use of contrasting colors, heavy and fine brushstrokes, straight and curved lines, and filigree fillings, kené designs constitute webs of complex compositions." (Belaunde, 2016, p. 81). Some say that it is the symmetry that characterizes kené, but in the symmetric visual whole, there are also some asymmetrical elements (Belaunde, 2016, p. 82). It is an ancestral design that identifies Shipibos as an ethnic group and expresses their vision of the world and nature. Apart from embroidery, kené can be found in painting, ceramics, jewelry, architecture, decorating of a body, and almost every surface. Music – another art manifestation experienced in the neighborhood – varies from traditional to specific as cumbia mashá or chicha genre mixed with Amazonian influences, such as one performed by Los Konish del Perú (8/2014; 14/2021).

Art and culture are visible markers of the Shipibo community and are spread throughout Cantagallo. There is a popular festival 'Shipibo Soy' (I am Shipibo) that is one of the largest cultural events to celebrate Amazonian culture in Lima and brings together many Shipibo representatives from various artistic disciplines (8/2014). As in traditional Shipibo communities, women are usually occupied with art and crafts. There is a group of over 45 women artists in Cantagallo who make handicrafts typical for Shipibo culture and market them assuring an income for the community. Women in Cantagallo have a significant role as artists; they sing, paint, embroider, weave, and do handcrafts – often referred to as *emprendedoras*, meaning entrepreneurs, and *artistas* at the same time. Women artists from the neighborhood even represented Peru at the Madrid Bienal Iberamericano, where they showed the Cantakené project, a collection of embroidered masks inspired by Amazon culture.

One last but not least important element that distinguishes Shipibo residents is their sentimental attitude toward the place from which they emigrated. The biographies of migrants often reveal that they left their homeland as young people. This may be one of the reasons for the clear sentiment intensified by the longing for childhood land, so different from the landscape of the popular neighborhood in the city of Lima. Amazon migrants recall their region of origin with nostalgia. However, the concept of nostalgia that characterizes Amazonian migrants should be understood as conventional, as it cannot be reduced to the meaning of nostalgia in the Western context. Each cultural group or social community develops its own sense of time, past, and change (see Berliner and Angé 2014; 2020), and delivering its deep analysis goes beyond the aim of this paper.

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 $<sup>^6~</sup>$  It was declared Cultural Patrimony of the Nation on April 16, 2008 (Resolución Directoral (RD N 540/INC-2008).

## The concept of the right to the city

Today, the concept of the right to the city is promoted by activists, scientists, and urban planners (Cities for all, 2010). Though it was formulated decades ago, it only recently gained attention and became a hot topic in discussions over urban exclusion and social justice. For the purpose of this paper, the right to the city is considered a metaphor and not a legal record. The right to the city belongs to the third generation of human rights. It is also considered a collective right. Thus, it is the right of all residents to undertake the collective decisions on how to use the city's resources and perform privileges. The right belongs to all residents of the urban community, not only the rich and powerful. Therefore, it is the right of all residents to co-decide on the most important matters in the city and especially matters related to them. The right to the city refers primarily to the right to decent housing and participation in urban space.

The concept of the right to the city was first proposed in 1967 by the French sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre<sup>7</sup> in his essay 'Right to the city' (*Le droit à la ville*). The author wrote that it is "a demand for a modified and renewed access to life in the city." He then explained the concept of the right to the city in his 1968 book 'Le Droit à la ville', although the first time the right to the city appears in an article published in 1967 in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of the magazine *L'Homme et la Societe*. However, this concept was more fully developed in later publications, including *Espace et politique* (1973), and "Du contrat de citoyenneté" (1990), which perhaps contained the most coherent elaboration of this concept (Fernandes, 2007, p. 205).

Lefebvre noted that although more than 200 years (1789) have passed since the adoption of the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights – the key document of the French Revolution – and today we can see extensive protection of human rights, but the same progress has not been guaranteed in the protection of citizens' rights. Today's Declaration of the Rights of the Citizen, according to Lefebvre, should refer to all the political rights that have emerged in the last two centuries but have not been legally considered. One of these rights is the right to the city. Lefebvre's main argument was that cities were transformed into consumer goods and became commodities. Commodification converted them from place to space. The way residents interact with the urban environment resembles rather a consumption of space, not consumption in space. Lefebvre stated that the right to the city cannot be conceived as a simple right to return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as the right to renewed urban life<sup>8</sup> (Lefebvre, 2009). The right to the city is the right

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Lefebvre, associated with Marxist thought, is known in urban studies as a theorist of the concept of the right to the city and the production of social space.

<sup>8 &</sup>quot;Le droit à la ville ne peut se concevoir comme un simple droit de visite ou de retour vers les villes traditionnelles. Il ne peut se formuler que comme droit à la vie urbaine, transformée, renouvelée".

of all residents to a place of residence (right to habitation) – as well as the right to direct involvement in the administration of recourses and in access to the city itself (right to participate) (Fernandes, 2007, p. 208). The concept of the right to the city was especially inspiring for certain sociopolitical projects, initially mainly in Latin America, but then also in other parts of the world. In Latin America, since the mid-1980s, there have been attempts to implement the right to the city on the political and legal levels.

The US geographer and anthropologist David Harvey proposed his own interpretation of the right to the city. Harvey is actually the one responsible for popularizing Henri Lefebvre's works and the concept of the right to the city. Harvey described the concept in detail in the book *Rebel Cities* (2012). The author defines the right to the city as "the right to change and reinvent the city more after our heart's desire". (2012, p. 4). Lefebvre understood the right to the city as the right to city life and the right to use all the resources offered by the city, although he also wrote about the right to participate in co-creation, but understood them differently. Harvey argues that the right to the city is first and foremost the right to power, the right to change, and the right to recreate the city as the citizens want it. As he points out "To claim the right to the city in the sense I mean it here is to claim some kind of shaping power over the processes of urbanization, over the ways in which our cities are made and remade, and to do so in a fundamental and radical way." (2012, p. 5).

The concept of the right to the city was especially inspiring in Latin America. Perhaps more than anywhere else in the world<sup>10</sup>, Lefebvre's "right to the city" was influential since the mid-1980s in the work of activists, scientists, but also state and municipal agents (compare also with the concept of the radical city; McGuirk, 2015). Brazil was the first country in the world to introduce provisions guaranteeing the right to a city in the constitution. One of the examples may be the "participatory budget" model developed first in Porto Alegre. The case of Brazil is interesting because it shows the problematic understanding of the right to a city as a real right enshrined in legislative acts, it also shows how the concept of Lefevbre can be developed by making it cease to be only a metaphor (Fernandes, 2007). The Brazilian formula was generally understood from a combined philosophical and political perspective, providing the substance to articulate both a general discourse of rights and social justice and a more detailed and concrete rights-based approach to urban development.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Brazil was the first country in the world to introduce provisions guaranteeing the right to a city in the constitution.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Which may be confirmed by the data gathered on UN-Habitat Urban Lex Platform, where we can learn about the development of municipal law in different regions of the world and Latin America boasts one of the higher numbers in urban legislations, https://urbanlex.unhabitat.org/search-by-region

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Oscar Espinosa notes that the difficult relationships of urban indigenous with the city and national authorities result from the non-recognition of urban indigenous communities by state institutions (Espinosa, 2019, p. 175). Most sources point to the decade of the 1970s and laws following agrarian reform to develop such an understanding and definition of indigeneity that excludes indigenous residents of the city. Some authors indicate the colonial period and the existence of two republics as an original reason for considering the indigenous peoples as attached to the rural territory (e.g. Horn 2018, p. 3). The Peruvian state recognizes only communities in certain areas of the Amazon as indigenous groups (comunidad nativa11 is the legal term used in Peru) so that only inhabitants of rural communities receive state support in access to education in their own language and other rights of indigenous communities. This makes migration to the city a huge challenge for people from indigenous communities related to their place of origin and traditional culture. In the new urban space, they face the inability to implement all existing cultural practices and to fully manifest their own cultural, ethnic, and religious identity. Shipibos from Cantagallo in Lima are not the only urban migrant community; important settlements of this ethnic group are also in the cities of Tingo María, Pucallpa, and San Ramón. All these urban communities work to be recognized by the state as indigenous communities, but the case of Cantagallo of Lima is specific, as it is the only city outside the Peruvian Amazon (2/2013; 3/2014; Espinosa, 2019, p. 164).

The history of Shipibos in Lima proves the emergence of new forms of citizenship and social inclusion among indigenous communities in urban areas. The increasing number of urban indigenous generates new ways of community organization, as well as new mechanisms of experiencing, manifesting, and expressing indigenous identity, both collective and individual in the city space. Shipibos developed the migration strategy long ago and are historically known for their ability to adapt to new conditions, and also to form indigenous organizations in urban areas. It is worth noting that Shipibo Cantagallo stands out from other settlements and districts established by migrants from the provinces and new residents of Lima. Oscar Espinosa, an expert and one of the few researchers of urban migrants from the Amazon in Peru, states that the Shipibo community of Cantagallo has the best and most stable relationship with a modern city of any indigenous migrant community. The very establishment of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> See the provision of Decreto Ley N° 20653 – Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Promoción Agropecuaria de Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva (1974) and Decreto Ley N° 22175 – Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Desarrollo Agrario de la Selva y de Ceja de Selva (1978) at https://www.ecolex.org/es/details/legislation/decreto-ley-no-20653-ley-de-comunidades-nativas-y-de-promocion-agropecuaria-de-regiones-de-selva-y-ceja-de-selva-lex-faoc124296/ and https://www.ecolex.org/es/details/legislation/decreto-ley-no-22175-ley-de-comunidades-nativas-y-de-desarrollo-agrario-de-la-selva-y-ceja-de-selva-lex-faoc124297/

first Shipibo organization in Cantagallo, ASHIREL, reflected the new concept of urban identity and the approach to leading the community. The reference point was to be the entire Shipibo community (*comunidad*) and not individuals or individual families living in the neighborhood (3/2014). The collective way to achieve the goals was to guarantee greater power and effectiveness, but also indicated a new construction of urban indigenous subjectivity. Although it has to be underlined that the group's struggle for rights was a strategy for coping with oppression already practiced in the Amazon. Communal activities were previously developed in the Amazon, when communities began to form the first indigenous unions and organize themselves into communities of interest. In the city, this way of operating was even more clearly structured and became the basis for negotiating their own place and rights in the city.

Shipibos may be the only urban indigenous group to be successful in demanding their rights as citizens in Peru. Cantagallo stands out from other popular neighborhoods or asentamientos humanos (this term is today preferred in reference to informal districts in Peru), most of which are inhabited by new residents of Lima who generally come from the provinces or are descendants of migrants from the country's rural areas. Even other residents of Cantagallo, those of Andean origin whose migration exceeds substantially that from the Amazon in terms of time and demographics, were incapable to negotiate the same treatment by the municipality. Shipibos have learned to be fluent in negotiating between the indigenous and urban dimensions of their cultural identity. It seems that the contemporary city, though often hostile and reproducing colonial narratives, is also the place where the indigenous become integrated and can perform their citizen rights at the communal level. Oscar Espinosa proves the same, claiming that Shipibos "have chosen to establish what they themselves call 'intercultural communities' where they not only live in contiguous houses but also where they reproduce or adapt forms of social and political organization and seek to be recognized as indigenous communities in the middle of the city." (Espinosa, 2019, p. 157). Shipibos from Cantagallo often mention that they are "citizens of Lima" (2/2013; 5/2014; 10/2014; 15/2021), which is uncommon for other residents of informal neighborhoods in the metropolitan area<sup>12</sup>.

The community, along with cultural identity, seems to be the basic principle of the Shipibos organization in Lima. Horn, describing urban indigenous in Bolivia and Ecuador, where urban indigeneity was constitutionally recognized in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, states that even there we observe barriers in developing appropriate social policies. "This policy delivery problem is a result of a variety of factors, including (1) prior constructions of indigeneity as an essentially rural category, (2) political and economic development priorities that conflict with indigenous interests and needs, and (3) difficulties

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Reference to own fieldwork on cultural identity done in 2013–2014 in the settlement of Nuevo Pachacútec (Ventanilla, Lima Metropolitana).

in promoting access to universal rights and services while simultaneously guaranteeing IPs access to collective rights." (Horn, 2018, pp. 1–2). As it is easier for the state to guarantee collective – instead of individual rights – perhaps the right to the city concept is better to apply. Even if the Peruvian state does not recognize indigenous communities in the city, applying the right to the city for all its citizens can be more effective in guaranteeing access to power and the execution of rights.

## Rio Verde Project

In 2009, the then mayor of Lima, Luis Castañeda, announced the 'Línea Amarilla' (Yellow Line) project, which involved the construction of a road through the Cantagallo area. The road investment was to run through 11 districts of the metropolitan area and connect San Juan de Lurigancho to Callao. The decision to build the road interrupts former efforts, led mainly by ASHIREL, to recognize the ownership of the land and the right of Shipibos to live in the area and designate specific places to sell art, handicrafts, and traditional cuisine (2/2013; 3/2014; 7/2014). The announcement of the project signified the shift from the previous position, as since this decision it was obvious that residents had to be moved to another place in the metropolitan area. At that time, Shipibos began to demand consistent treatment by the city as a community and, in the event of a transfer, a guarantee of a place where all Shipibo residents will live together. Unlike Cantagallo residents of other ethnic groups, Shipibos want to continue to live together as a community rather than be relocated as individual families to different parts of Lima (Espinosa, 2019, p. 166).

In 2011, Susana Villarán was appointed mayor of Lima, and her administration was a time of dialogue and the most advanced consultation between the Lima City Hall and representatives of the Cantagallo Shipibo community (3/2014). The project "Línea Amarilla" was included in the project "Río Verde". The concept of the "Río Verde" (Green River) was created back in the 1980s and concerned the development of public space around the Rímac River in the central district of the same name. Although the project was constantly reappearing on the agendas of subsequent Lima mayors, until the end of the 1990s it remained only a plan on paper. It came back to life during the tenure of Villarán (2011–2014). At that time, the most progressive urban projects, financial calculations, and implementation plans were created. The assumptions of this project included the creation of a 25-hectare public park and the revitalization of the quays of the Rímac River, which are also stipulated in the spatial modifications of Cantagallo (1/2013; 3/2014; 11/2020).

The most organized ethnic group in Cantagallo is Shipibos, and they became one of the parties in the dialogue with the City Hall on the implementation of the "Río Verde". As the project involved interference with neighborhood space, Shipibos, who live in the Rímac District, began negotiations with the

city to relocate the entire community to a completely new location that would guarantee access to proper urban infrastructure and services. In August 2012, a "Taller de Pre-Consulta" (Pre-Consultation Workshop) was organized by indigenous rights expert Raquel Yrigoyen. As an outcome of these consultations, Shipibos recognized key elements to be achieved for the entire community, i.e. consent to be treated as a community, legal ownership title to the occupied area, the continued functioning of a bilingual school, as well as public infrastructure, including sports ground, communal premises, and a workshop and market for artists from the community (3/2014; 11/2020; Resolución de Gerencia 112-2013-MML-GPIP<sup>13</sup>; Espinosa, 2019). Fulfilling these aims was critical to the success of the Shipibo neighborhood.

In 2013, a contract was signed and funds were secured for the implementation of the entire "Río Verde" project. Residents of Cantagallo were to be directly involved in the process of the relocation planned in the project. In May 2013, by the decision of the mayor, the so-called "Mesa de Trabajo" (Working Group) was established. It was composed of representatives of the metropolitan administration and of three Shipibo organizations: ASHIREL-V, AVSHIL, and ACUSHIKOLM. Negotiations lasted through 2013 and 2014, and finally, in September 2014, all three organizations agreed to relocate to the district in the eastern part of Lima, San Juan de Lurigancho (2/2013; 3/2014; 11/2020; 13/2020; 15/2021; Espinosa, 2019, pp. 168–70). The Shipibos of Cantagallo seemed to have finally solved the problem of their right to live in the city under decent and humane conditions. For Villaran's administration, the project was an attempt to revitalize the public space in central Lima and transform it into a more integrative, green, and human-oriented environment.

Unfortunately, the "Río Verde" project was never finalized, because Villarán's successor, Luis Castañeda, who took the office in January 2015, suspended its implementation, and used the funds allocated to build a viaduct on Avenida 28 de Julio. Changing the existing policy of dialogue with the community, the city authorities decided to abandon the planned relocation of the settlement and did not propose any alternative, despite the continuation of road works in part of Cantagallo (11/2020; 13/2020; 15/2021; Río Verde 2015; Espinosa, 2019, pp. 170-72). Now the project of Vía Parque Rímac was the main interest of the subsequent municipal administration. Such a change in the attitude of the magistrate towards Shipibos caused social resistance and protests. The largest was the one in April 2015 in front of the City Hall located on the main square of Lima (11/2020). While such a change in the official policy of the municipality can be understood, as Vía Parque Rímac – a project to build a new artery to connect Lima's districts with neighboring Callao - would help with traffic jams, it was also a sign that the urban indigenous are not at the forefront of the current political agenda of the City Hall.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Resolución de Gerencia 112-2013-MML-GPIP, http://www.transparencia.munlima.gob. pe/images/descargas/obras/normas-legales/gpip/Resolucion-N-112-2013-MML-GPIP.PDF

The change in the municipal approach demanded other actions from the Shipibos. To carry on Río Verde project the government assumed well known PPP model which unexpectedly may provide an opportunity for the vulnerable and subaltern communities to achieve certain goals on their political agenda (Ontaneda, 2017, p. 27). It was accomplished mainly using the cultural identity that together with the community is the main axis of the organization of the urban experience of Shipibo. The use of cultural identity as a political argument constitutes also the qualitative difference between Amazonian and Andean migrants to Lima. Andean migrants who began to arrive in the Peruvian capital in the middle of the 20th century did not manifest their culture freely and openly. Traditional Limeños were often discriminating against new residents of Lima, as they connected indigenous culture with backwardness and primitivity, thus migrants from Andean provinces were rather hiding their cultural markers (Altamirano, 1995, p. 229). Moreover, during the Violence period, Andean identity was often associated with the activity of terrorist groups and that hindered the process of Andean culture recognition. Shipibos, in their experience of urban migration, learned just the opposite strategy. That it is beneficial to manifest their culture in terms of clothing, language, handicraft, and arts.

Although today it is the Andean cultural influence that is mostly acknowledged as the main resource for various manifestations of chicha culture. But while the Andean world serves as the main inspiration for the popular culture of the new Limeños, we observe growing interest and demand for the Amazonian cultural production in Lima. Amazonian artists, festivals, and events that celebrate the culture and knowledge of the indigenous peoples of Selva are common in Peru's capital. Shipibos are one of the most visible ethnic communities in the city, mainly because many of them are artists who sell their products on the streets in the city center. Ismael Vega Díaz observes that Shipibos' "strategies of territorial occupation and visibility in public spaces in Lima are strengthened through the implementation of advocacy strategies and dialogue with the authorities and public instances of Lima, with the aim of achieving social benefits and defending their rights in the city" (2014, p. 84). For Shipibos, cultural identity became the instrument of achieving representation in public spaces and gaining recognition as citizens of Lima.

Preserving Shipibos' cultural identity may also help in the future struggle with municipal and national institutions. The ILO 169 Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, which introduces the prior consultation mechanism with communities affected by various infrastructure projects, was ratified in 1994. Even if it came into force in 1995, the regulations were not respected by Peruvian authorities, claiming the need to formulate an adequate national law. Finally, the *Ley del derecho a la consulta previa de los pueblos indígenas u originarios* (Ley No. 29.785) was passed in 2011<sup>14</sup> and opened the possibility of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Peru was the first country in Latin America to incorporate this right into national legislation.

defending the rights of different indigenous groups who preserve their culture and identity, as is the case of Shipibos (3/2014; 13/2020; 15/2021). However, the mechanism has some limitations, as we can observe that it is not fully respected when other arguments are more urgent, especially those based upon politics and economics.

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## Cantagallo resilience

Cantagallo residents have the ability to overcome the hardships and disasters that challenge this urban community. In November 2016, there was a huge fire in the settlement, as a result of which 436 houses were destroyed, and only 10% of the houses were saved. As most of the buildings were made of flammable materials, a fire that broke out in the local store quickly spread in the neighborhood. Since the fire, a concrete solution to the housing problem is needed even more than before, a solution that had been announced for several years by the Municipality (12/2020; 14/2021). Despite the enormous damage and difficult situation in Cantagallo, mayor Castañeda did not return to the resettlement project. The solutions he proposed were not respecting the community's demand for resettlement as a group and ignoring the difficult economic situation of the residents (Espinosa, 2019, p. 172).

In the absence of the intervention of the mayor Castañeda, the help was guaranteed by the then president of Peru, Pedro Pablo Kuczyński, who visited Cantagallo in December 2016. The president promised to rebuild the settlement and construct Nuevo Cantagallo, grant property rights, and provide access to water, sewage, and electricity. According to Kuczyński's words, this was to be provided to the residents within a period of a year, and the institution responsible for implementing the plan was the Ministry of Housing, Construction, and Sanitary Infrastructure (Ministerio de Vivienda, Construcción y Saneamiento) (Mandatario anuncia construcción ..., 2016).

Eventually, after a series of administrative struggles with ministry officials, a new project was agreed to build a housing complex in the Cantagallo area, and Shipibos to be temporarily relocated to other parts of Lima. As a result of the negotiations, Shipibo families were to be resettled for a period of almost 2 years, and the area was to be cleaned and rebuilt. In total, more than 200 plots of land were to be delivered; the number was determined on the basis of the list of victims of the fire. Each family was to receive a plot of land with an area of 50 m2 free. The project also included the creation of green areas and the construction of a bilingual school to replace the existing one of nonpermanent construction (11/2020; 12/2020; 15/2021).

In mid-2017, Shipibo families were transferred the amount of 500 soles, which was to be allocated to the rental of temporary accommodation. Part of the community began to leave Cantagallo and move to other districts of the metropolitan area. President Kuczyński reappeared in the neighborhood

in October 2017, confirming support for the community and a new name for Cantagallo, which after the reconstruction was to be called "Buen vivir – Jakonax Jati Jema" (Espinosa, 2019, p. 174). In 2018, the start of construction work was significantly delayed, increasing the distrust of the community toward officials that ensured the possibility of returning to the area. On 26 September 2019, in the early morning hours, the Shipibo community occupied the zone for fear that the authorities would not meet the contract conditions. More than 200 families have moved back to the former Cantagallo settlement and requested a dialogue with President Martín Vizcarra (11/2020; 12/2020; 15/2021).

Another dramatic event occurred at the beginning of 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic started. As sanitary conditions are low in Cantagallo, the virus quickly affected the neighborhood and, eventually, more than 70% of the community contracted COVID-19 in 2020 (PAHO, 2021). When the first death case was reported, Cantagallo was surrounded by the army and the police with a cordon. Residents were not allowed to leave the neighborhood since March 15 and were locked up for several months under the supervision of soldiers and police officers. There were food and medicine shortages, but also interruptions in the supply of basic urban services such as water and electricity. The isolation of Cantagallo during the pandemic strengthened the spirit of community and mutual help between neighbors. It was an extremely difficult time for Shipibos, as some lost all possibilities to earn a living due to lockdown measures. There were projects and initiatives<sup>15</sup> to support Cantagallo residents, but their effects were limited and not enough (14/2021).

The history of Cantagallo shows how it became a symbol of indigenous pride in the city and an empowered community that overcomes difficulties and a hostile environment. Social organization, grassroots democracy, resilience, sense of citizenship, and community are often indicated as values prized by residents of informal districts in Latin American cities, but in all these aspects the Shipibo neighborhood and its community stand out from other migrant districts and ethnic groups in Lima.

#### Conclusions

Shipibo migrants and their children live throughout the metropolitan area, but nowhere else than in Cantagallo have they built an efficient and effective community capable of enforcing their rights in an urban environment. Migration itself is an example of agency, so it is not surprising that migrants are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Proyecto Cantakené can be an example; with the support from Municipality of Lima for artisan sector during pandemic, women artist from Cantagallo in a collaboration with designer started to produce masks inspired with esthetics and patterns typical for Shipibo-Konibo culture.

active city residents and feel the need to exercise their citizenship in practice. While for the Cantagallo community negotiating its right to the city has various effects, it is worth paying attention to the way in which the Shipibo residents of the Rímac District represent and conduct their political struggle. The city becomes a place for Shipibos to be active and achieve community goals. Residents of Cantagallo clearly, though not directly referring to it, implement the concept of the right to the city, demanding full rights of the urban citizen who cocreates and decides about the new city.

Shipibos use their strength as a community to negotiate their position as citizens and, at the same time, they do not have to use complicated political systems to gain representation. The community appears to be the most important benchmark for new indigenous residents. "Overall, it can be said that the concept of ethnic community (la comunidad étnica) has been reexpressed in the city based on the difficulties and challenges that the Shipibos community faces in its new urban context." (Zavala & Bariola, 2010, p. 619) This new concept of community is visible, inter alia, in efforts to obtain communal land title to the site of Cantagallo. As Oscar Espinosa described, the claim for collective property titles was developed during discussions between community members and organizations, and the most important arguments comprised "clearly the desire to maintain the community, avoid its division or disappearance; as well as arguments related to the maintenance or reproduction of the Shipibo culture" (Espinosa, 2019, p. 167). This community dimension of Shipibos' agency is also characteristic of the right to the city, which is always based on collective actions. As Harvey wrote, "changing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization" (2012, p. 4).

The Cantagallo community actively opposes the exclusion, inequalities, and injustices that are still a reality for some of the citizens, especially those of migrant backgrounds. Such activity in the above-mentioned areas requires efficient and effective organization, but, on the other hand, it is also a source of agency and new subjectivity in the city. Research on this issue shows, first of all, a change in the role of migrant women. Perversely, threats caused by migration to the city become certain challenges that force indigenous migrants to act. And being active citizens is the basis for their urban functioning and identity. In contemporary cities, migration is a central process of constituting citizenship and the Shipibo case in Lima forms the best example here.

The concept of the right to the city is about how we understand and shape contemporary cities. It refers to inclusion and sustainability, which are the same values as those mentioned by Shipibos in their interactions with official institutions in the city. As Bhagat observes, "Right to the City is a theoretical framework that enables us to examine development through the lens of space and place, which is epitomized in the form of urbanization. It requires collective action, mobilization of people, and a functional urban democracy as a prelude to inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development." (Bhagat, 2020, p. 8). Analyzing the case of Cantagallo proves that there are certain catego-

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ries essential for the proper execution of the right to the city, these are citizen rights (at the level of the community), democracy, and territory. Although Cantagallo Shipibos still fail to gain full access to these categories, they are the focal points of their political agenda.

It seems that the policy pursued by the Shipibos of Lima is effective and allows the community to efficiently negotiate its place in the city and establish relations with both municipal and state institutions. The undoubted success of the Cantagallo community was the recognition by the state of the Colegio Intercultural Bilingüe in May 2012. As well as negotiations with the administration of Mayor Susana Villaran and Ministry officials in a project promoted by President Pedro Pablo Kuczyński. Despite these achievements, it is still not possible to declare the implementation of all citizen rights. Cantagallo people must fight to be recognized as indigenous living in cities (*indígenas urbanos*). As was already mentioned, in Peru there is no such category in national law. Peru's neighbors, Bolivia and Ecuador, have implemented it in the constitution, although they still struggle to develop appropriate social policies for indigenous urban citizens. Therefore, it seems that the direct inclusion of the concept of the right to the city by Amazon urban communities and its creative connection with Sumak Kawsay (good living) idea recognized and promoted by indigenous organizations may be an effective strategy for implementing and enforcing urban citizenship. On the other hand, city hall and state institutions may also adapt the concept to the current legal regime to ensure the protection of indigenous and other urban citizens.

## **Appendix**

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Katarzyna Górska

#### List of cited interviews with signatures of interviewees

Signature	Gender	Age group	Information
1/2013	F	Adult	Resident and artesana
2/2013	M	Adult	Founder and <i>dirigente</i>
3/2014	M	Adult	Founder of a local organization
4/2014	F	Adult	Resident and artesana
5/2014	F	Youth	Resident
6/2014	F	Adult	Resident and employee of a comedor popular
7/2014	M	Adult	Resident and comerciante
8/2014	F	Youth	Resident and artesana
9/2014	M	Adult	Resident and owner of an Internet point
10/2014	M	Youth	Resident and artesano
11/2020	M	Adult	Founder and leader
12/2020	F	Adult	Resident
13/2020	F	Adult	Resident and artesana
14/2021	M	Youth	Resident and artesano
15/2021	M	Adult	Founder and dirigente

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