REVISTA ANDALUZA DE ANTROPOLOGÍA
NÚMERO 25
DICIEMBRE DE 2023
ISSN 2174-6796
[pp. 129-152]

https://doi.org/10.12795/RAA.2023.i25.06

INDIGENEITY, SILENT RACISM AND DEVELOPMENT: AN ANDEAN CASE FOR THE CENTRALITY OF RACE IN THE DESIGN AND PRACTICE OF DEVELOPMENT

INDIGENISMO, RACISMO SILENCIOSO Y DESARROLLO: UN CASO ANDINO PARA LA CENTRALIDAD DE LA RAZA EN EL DISEÑO Y LA PRÁCTICA DEL DESARROLLO

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ABSTRACT

Race has been present in critical analysis of development for decades. However, its analytical potential has been mildly explored. For this reason, this article aims to contribute to an effort to bring race into current discussions on development studies and practice. It argues the need to be reflective of race and racist practices to facilitate a more horizontal dialogue with indigenous people. This argument is sustained by a fictionalised ethnographic case study based in the Andes. This case illustrates the complexities arising from the encounter of development experts and Quechua farmers in producing new knowledge, which sustain a similar practice as what De la Cadena's has coined as silent racism.

Keywords: Race; Indigenous; Andes; Development; Silent racism; Traditional knowledge.

RESUMEN

La raza ha estado presente en el análisis crítico del desarrollo durante décadas. Sin embargo, su potencial analítico ha sido poco explorado. Por este motivo, este artículo pretende contribuir a un esfuerzo por introducir la raza en los debates actuales sobre los estudios y la práctica del desarrollo. Argumenta la necesidad de reflexionar sobre la raza y las prácticas racistas para facilitar un diálogo más horizontal con los pueblos indígenas. Este argumento se sustenta en un estudio de caso etnográfico ficcionalizado basado en los Andes. Este caso ilustra las complejidades que surgen del encuentro de expertos en desarrollo y campesinos quechuas en la producción de nuevos conocimientos, que sostienen una práctica similar a lo que De la Cadena ha acuñado como racismo silencioso.

Palabras clave: Raza; Indígena; Andes; Desarrollo; Racismo silencioso; Conocimiento tradicional.

INTRODUCTION

After a systematic review of papers in six major development studies journals, Patel (2020) finds that despite Kothari's (2006: 10-11) call: "for deeper engagements with race in development scholarship and practice, the response across the board has been negligible, and the field of scholarship on race and development has narrowed". Furthermore, "Race as an affective construct or as a critical lens in its own right, that can inform us about development as a subject and as practice, is a tiny field of scholarship (0.02%)" (Patel, 2020: 10).

This article takes on Patel's proposition to revalue race within development study and practice. It provides a grounded exploration of how race and racism permeate the design, implementation and reporting of an NGO-led development intervention in the Andes. Situated in the experiences of Quechua farmers; this article aims to contribute with ethnographic findings to a conversation about the place of race and racism within the negotiated process of development. In doing so it argues that silent racism – a type of racism based on formal education coined by De la Cadena (1998) – remains present in the implementation of this development intervention in Peru and that it needs to be discussed when thinking and practising development.

The research conveyed through this article has been conducted following an ethnographical approach based on Actor-Network Theory (ANT). While ANT is rarely used to explore development interventions (Heeks, 2013), this research has embraced its central task of translation as an approach to research (Akrich *et al.*, 2006). I will come

back to this in section five but it is important to mention that this approach has inspired interesting research in the area of anthropology of development (Lewis and Mosse, 2006) and development sociology (Long, 2003).

This article has six sections. After this introduction, the second section sets out the analytical framework for this article defining the key terms race, indigeneity and traditional knowledge. The third section starts by explaining the relation between race and indigeneity to explain why in Peru these terms have been often used interchangeably and traces the disappearance of race from the analysis of poverty and inequalities in Peru. It explains from a historical, cultural and political perspective how indigenous people have been excluded, dispossessed and left out of essential debates concerning them. The fourth section introduces the methodological aspects of handling data. It provides the grounds to focus on the description of unfolding events rather than on a theoretical framework to explain racist practices and clarifies the use of key terms. The fifth section presents the case of an NGO-led development intervention in which the encounter of Quechua people and development experts brings a persistent problem in Peruvian history—namely, the overt and subtle practice of silent racism. The last section will discuss what this means for the practice of development presenting a brief discussion and conclusions.

1. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Before I engage with the central concern of this article (presenting ethnographical findings of racism within development practice) I want to make clear the epistemological grounds in which the following sections are rooted by situating the definition of race, indigeneity and traditional knowledge used here.

Race could be understood as a social construct, embodied experience and historically specific segregation of humans (Kothari, 2006; Wilson, 2021). This means that while acknowledging the lack of biological grounds to divide the human population between racial groups it has material consequences and vital impact on the development and human wellbeing. Furthermore, it is dependent on historical context thus, it changes according to the flows of narratives in power. In Peru, Zapata and Rojas (2013) have identified three historical moments that moved race from bodily traits to an increasing focus on cultural ones to sustain racist practices. The first, during the colonial period and into the early moments of the republic, was based on indigenous people "barbaric" religious and social conventions. The second, emerging from the second half of the 19th century until the first years of the 20th century, was based on the supposed lack of political and intellectual skills of indigenous people. This idea was backed by the racial classification of authors such as Clemente Palma (1897). The third, from the 20th century onwards, is entangled with education and economic components. Ethnic aspects

are entangled with class differentiation and closely related to access to formal education.

The Peruvian government has identified 76 ethnic groups that belong to sixteen ethnolinguistic families (Ministerio de Cultura, 2010). Using a self-identification question in the last national census of 2017, the national government has stated that, while 60 per cent of Peruvians consider themselves mestizo, slightly over 22 per cent, considered themselves as Quechua (INEI, 2018). Using different methods, the World Bank (2015) has estimated that 26 per cent of the population in Peru is indigenous. In either case, indigenous people are a large part of the Peruvian population.

However, their identification is not a simple task, especially after the introduction of ILO Convention 169 in the country (Duque and Mosquera, 2018; Doyle, 2019). In this context, it is important to mention that indigeneity is not binary. According to Greene (2009), indigeneity is a historical assemblage that is malleable and multiple. It entails a bundle of positions and struggles. Following Tania Li, the self-identification of indigeneity could be framed as:

> "a positioning which draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes, and repertoires of meaning, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle. The conjunctures at which (some) people come to identify themselves as indigenous, realigning the ways they connect to the nation, the government, and their own, unique tribal place, are the contingent products of agency and the cultural and political work of articulation" (Li, 2000: 151).

Indigeneity is not static. In Peru exists an interesting shift reshaping the negative stereotypes historically assigned to Andean people. A process of de-Indianization (De la Cadena, 2000), by which segments of the population redefine their own identities by positioning themselves and others somewhere along a continuum running from people considered Indians ('underdeveloped', 'non-modern') to those considered mestizos (linked to modernity and development) while retaining aspects of indigenous culture. This adaptation and fluid mix of identities has also been identified by other authors (Cánepa, 2008; Cuenca, 2014).

In line with this approach to indigeneity, the knowledge produced by those considered indigenous is also contingent. It could be argued, as Agrawal has done it, that indigenous knowledge is not necessarily a clear contrast to scientific knowledge. It can be said that a social convention among development organisations seems to be that indigenous/ traditional knowledge: "exists in close and organic harmony with the lives of the people who generated it. Modern knowledge, however, thrives on abstract formulation and exists divorced from the lives of people" (Agrawal, 1995: 425). But this difference is unproductive because "modern" knowledge also emerges from the interaction of several elements in specific contexts. As Agrawal puts it:

> "it is likely that the so-called technical solutions are just as firmly anchored in a specific milieu as any other system of knowledge. More generally, nothing even makes sense without at least an imaginable context. The only choice one possesses about context is which context to highlight. This choice exists whether one talks about indigenous or modern knowledge systems" (*ibidem:* 425).

2. RACE, INDIGENEITY AND INEQUALITY ANALYSIS IN PERU

In this section, I introduce the concept of silent racism and explain the context in which it emerges while tracing the disappearance of race from the analysis of poverty and inequalities in Peru and its connections with indigenous people. To do so it is important to be aware of the diversity of indigenous realities in Peru. Poverty does not affect the indigenous of the Amazon and the Andes in the same way (Correa, 2011). In some respects, other ethnic groups are disregarded, as in the case of afro-peruvians (Valdivia, 2013). Political discourses have not been advanced in the same direction necessarily within ethnic groups (Chirif and Garcia Hierro, 2007; Tubino, 2004). With these differences in mind, and to situate indigenous politics, this research focuses on the Andean area of Peru.

The relation between race and indigeneity goes a long way in Peru. There seems to be a tendency to define race by prioritising allusions to culture, the soul and the spirit over bodily attributes (De la Cadena, 2000). This makes possible to justify inequalities based on the apparent 'uncultured' of specific people and the potential to close social gaps if they get 'formally educated'. Drawing on Gramsci's idea of contradictory consciousness, (the capacity to have two conceptions of the world), De la Cadena (2000) discusses that to justify inequalities in this way one is confronted with a contradiction. This is because one denies the existence of natural differences among groups and insuperable hierarchies while contributing to validate social differences based on educational achievements.

It could be argued that during the last historical moment identified by Zapata and Rojas (mentioned in the section above), racism takes its current form of silent. Over twenty years ago, De la Cadena (1998) denounced silent racism observing the processes by which more 'intellectually advanced' groups subordinate indigenous agendas. Silent racism is the exclusion of indigenous people based on academic degrees. This concept will be useful for understanding the interaction among development experts and residents of local communities in the case presented in this article.

It is important to mention that introducing this concept here does not explain what has occurred in the case study. Instead, it helps to connect local experiences to larger historical contexts. The practices on the ground legitimise, even today, the use of the concept. Hence, making the point that, as we will see in this section, throughout history the voices of indigenous people have been silenced in formal political debates.

Silent racism has been forged within a particular historical, cultural and political context, that explains how indigenous people have been excluded, dispossessed and left out of essential debates concerning them. According to the World Bank (2015), despite the social progress won in the first decade of this millennium, the distance with non-indigenous Latin Americans has remained the same or has even widened. In Peru, according to government figures, 44 per cent of native speakers of indigenous languages were considered poor (in monetary terms), which is almost double the percentage of Spanish native speakers (Baldárrogo, 2017). These figures are consistent with numerous independent studies which demonstrate that in Peru indigeneity, poverty, exclusion and discrimination are closely related terms and that it has been persistent over time (Figueroa *et al.*, 1996; Trivelli, 2008).

Looking at the socio-environmental conflicts triggered by the adverse outcomes of extractive industry (Bebbington and Humphreys, 2011), it could be argued that the efforts to bring about 'development' in Peru involve a heated conflict between those considered "moderns" and those "non-modern", commonly associated to non-indigenous (including mestizos) and indigenous people, respectively. This confrontation has long historical roots. After the Peruvian defeat in the Pacific war (1879 – 1883), there was a transformation in the approach to the inferiority attached to Andean culture. In a post-war context, Manuel González Prada attributed the problematic situation that the country was going through to the fragmentation of the nation (Zapata and Rojas, 2013). For González Prada it was necessary to reconcile small pockets of powerful groups in Peru with the Andean population. Prada's intervention could be described as a milestone in the discussion about Andean people's rights by sparking a conversation about the fragmentation of the Peruvian society.

However, it was not until books like *Tempestad en los Andes* (Valcárcel, 1927) that Andean culture was taken as a positive element for building the Peruvian nation. Despite the importance of his work, Valcárcel – who was a politician and thinker based in the southern Andean city of Cusco – misrepresented Andean communities as heirs of a "superior" Incan legacy (Urrutia, 2003). In this way, what had been racism towards indigenous people was not only overcome but discussed, in intellectual circles, as a superior culture on which the future of the nation depended. This is where the early stages of the *indigenismo* movement emerged.

Charged words such as 'class' and 'land' permeated indigenismo discourse radically, to the point of displacing race from the centre of indigenous struggles. In Peru, the 'Indian problem' arose around the beginning of the 20th century and has stimulated the debate about why the country has been unsuccessful in bringing about 'development' and how

to achieve it. The 'Indian problem' started as a racist issue which saw indigenous people mainly as a problem for the modernisation (industrialisation and economic development) of the country (Drinot, 2011). In the context leading to the agrarian reform in the late 1960s, the 'Indian problem' was analysed only as a class and land conflict backed by a Marxist approach.

Broadly speaking it could be said that imported ideologies made their way into Peru by the hand of intellectuals that disregarded the ethnic roots of poverty and inequality in the country (Zapata and Rojas, 2013). In 1923 Jose Carlos Mariategui returned to Peru. He was an exiled Peruvian who lived for five years in Europe and witnessed the upsurge of fascism in Italy. In 1926 he founded the left-wing magazine *El Amauta* which was to serve as a platform for the emergence of indigenismo with the contribution of figures like Valcárcel and Victor Raul Haya de la Torre (founder of the APRA, one of the most iconic political parties in Peru). These authors shaped and widened political spaces where indigenous inequalities could be discussed, but their Marxist-oriented discourses did not include indigenous voices. This approach to the analysis of poverty and inequality in the country seems to reduce attention to how race and racism could remain social determinants of inequalities.

The sustained exclusion of indigenous voices puts ontological and epistemological limits to imagining different futures. A recent doctoral study about indigenous politics in Peru has confirmed that indigenous leaders like Gil Inoach (former president of an important Amazonian indigenous movement, AIDESEP) do not frame indigenous struggles in terms of western philosophers because 'for indigenous peoples scientific and utopian socialism does not exist... proletariat's claims usually refer to improving of salaries and working conditions, not to secure territorial rights which is the core of the indigenous agenda' (Merino, 2015: 173).

The exclusion of indigenous voices from political and academic debates has been persistent over time. In 1968 Jose Maria Argueda's speech, known as "No soy un aculturado" (I am not an acculturated), has been identified as the source of reflection on interculturalism in Peru (Degregori and Sandoval, 2015). Arguedas explains how he considers his work a reflection of what he aims to represent: a complex link between oppressed and oppressor cultures. His work seems to suggest the transgression of previous cultural boundaries between mestizos and indigenous groups by indistinctly using ideological elements of both to make sense of and deal with an unequal socio-natural environment. However, his proposal was not received very well by Peruvian scholars, who according to Marisol De la Cadena (1998), in a demonstration of intellectual superiority, disregarded Arguedas' way of grasping the reality of the country.

This is the background sustaining De la Cadena's (1998) argument about unequal power relations in Peruvian society and helps to exemplify what she calls silent racism. Silent racism is defined as 'the practice of legitimate exclusions, based on education and intelligence, while overtly condemning biological determinisms' (*ibidem*: 143-144). In other words, indigenous people who have access to university studies, and in consequence have access to better jobs and higher income (and hence considered to be more a "cultured" person), can be considered as part of elite circles. Silent racism emerges as a conceptual tool to name the possibility of sustaining exclusion based on academic merits while condemning purely ethnic-based discrimination.

3. METHODS: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In this section, I will present the argument sustaining the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) approach for the study of development interventions and explain the data collection and analysis process. Critical authors to development (the political and socio-material process aiming to promote human flourishing) have discussed its discourse and practice as to how societies (broadly considered) part of the Global North push a particular agenda into the Global South. Escobar (2012) explains how discursively and strategically the "Third World" has been produced, and in turn, how it has produced ways of being and thinking that separates the global population into "developed" and "developing" worlds. A key argument of Escobar is that massive underdevelopment and impoverishment, exploitation and oppression could be explained through the discourse and strategies of development. On a similar line, critical approaches to development link it to a process of depoliticization that introduces a picture of development as oppressive machinery (Ferguson, 1994).

This body of work takes a type of discourse analysis that has been criticised by authors following a grounded-oriented approach to development studies. For example, Long (2003) discusses that the type of discourse analysis used to explore the industry of development requires not just presenting powerful narratives that represent the world in a particular way. It also requires a situated understanding of how it interacts with a variety of actors and interests and how, in an arena of struggle, it is bent, contested, accepted or ignored (etcetera).

Following that line of enquiry, the work of Norman Long (2003), David Mosse and David Lewis (2006) has seen in the analytical approach to scientific enquiry known as ANT a resourceful body of knowledge to draw from in their studies of development design and practice. Long's work (2003) introducing the actor-oriented perspective to the examination of development processes has informed the analyses of a considerable number of authors (Hilhorst, 2003; Mosse, 2005; Vincent, 2012). A central aspect of Long's approach is to explore how development is negotiated among diverse actors.

Later on, some authors would criticise the actor-oriented approach for (among other things) what they saw as its use of 'negotiation' [as] a poor descriptor of phenomena that may range from 'strategic stances' to 'unconscious dispositions' (Lewis and Mosse, 2006:10, parenthesis added). Despite their differences, the cited authors coincide with Long on the usefulness of the work of Science and Technology Studies (STS) scholars such as Bruno Latour for a grounded exploration of development. Among other things, these authors meet on the foundational role of *translation* in ANT. As Latour and Callon put it:

> "By translation we understand all the negotiations, intrigues, calculations, acts of persuasion and violence, thanks to which an actor or force takes, or causes to be conferred on itself, authority to speak or act on behalf of another actor or force" (Latour and Callon, 1981:279).

The translation model disrupts the origins of society (Akrich *et al.*, 2006). In an attempt to concisely present the argument behind it, this means that there is no pre-supposition of powerful (development agencies, capitalism, the state) and powerless actors. Neither it establishes a barrier to the kind of actors (human and non-human) that can be considered part of the social phenomena. Hence, it pushes the researcher to change perspectives. Instead of going with an already theoretical framework to explain how society works, it aims to maintain a persistent focus on the description of the interactions of diverse actors involved in a concerning matter. As Descola (2014) manifests, a central element of this methodological approach is "shifting the focus away from the internal analysis of social conventions and institutions and toward the interactions of humans with (and between) animals, plants, physical processes, artifacts, images, and other forms of beings" (2014: 268). This does not mean that translation works without analytical frames. The difference is that in it, all is for grabs, the actors, the topic, the context (and so on).

It is important to mention that implementing a translation approach does not negate the existence of powerful axis affecting society. But, as Law (2009) puts it "class, nation-state, patriarchy become effects rather than explanatory foundations. This is not to say that they are not real – they may indeed be made real in practice – but they offer no framework for explanation" (p. 147). In this way instead of understanding the politics of racial practices in development practice and planning in an already existing factual world, a translation approach proposes to explore the politics through which such a world is being brought into existence.

The translation approach was applied to the fieldwork for this article. It lasted for seven-and-a-half months, the primary methods to collect data were semi-structured interviews and observation. I was focused on the encounter between members of Quechua communities and development experts (most of them holding university titles and urban

backgrounds in the southern Andes of Peru). Hence, situating them outside the common demographics of the communities with which they interact. While most participants have a fair command of Spanish, the assemblies in which I participated were held in Quechua, their mother tongue. I was able to record the assemblies, and these recordings were later translated into Spanish by a native of a province close to the case study. But not related to the project. The translations allowed me to understand better some of the things discussed in the assemblies, which I contextualised with my understanding of the overall topics of discussion. Between her translation and the contextualisation, I provided, it was possible to develop a sound understanding of the debates occurring inside the project, which were then validated through interviews with local participants and staff from the local NGO.

In total, 66 interviews were carried out with subjects including researchers, consultants, community and religious leaders, residents of local communities, directly and indirectly, involved in the processes promoted by the local NGO, former and current local people working for it and NGO staff, their international partners, local NGO workers previously working in the area, and research partners. Interviews typically tended to last between 35 minutes and one-and-half hours and took place while I joined interviewees in their daily activities (or outside their working hours in the case of the local NGO current and former staff). They decided the time and place of the interview, this not only made them more confident to talk to me, but it also shifted the power position that is usually ascribed to the interviewer (Herzog, 2012). On some occasions, interviews with residents of local communities continued across spaces, moving from someone's plot into their house where I was invited to a meal. Hence allowing me to contextualise their answers by understanding better their realities.

Data obtained were then complemented by and contrasted with the official narratives found in the documentation provided by the organisations behind the project. In total, these documents numbered 56. They are comprised of annual reports, annual activity plans, output reports, flyers, funding proposal, presentations to international organisations, methodological guidelines, articles about the local NGO work and local practices, advocacy papers, and international partner reports about critical concepts and the work for the project.

To analyse all the data, I deployed Thematic Analysis (TA). This method provides a good fit for this research because it offers theoretical flexibility and provides clear guidance to analyse qualitative data. Braun and Clarke (2006) define TA as: "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). The approach allows the researcher to understand the patterns emerging from a data set. Through an iterative process of coding and defining themes, it bridges data to analytical frameworks allowing

the researcher to answer critical questions. The data gathered are used to develop codes and identify themes in the relations shaping a network of actors. Finally, the process was facilitated throughout by the use of the NVivo software, which made it possible to detect patterns in data across different sources.

4. THE CASE

It is important to mention that the intention of using this case study is to improve already worthwhile projects aiming to include the voices of indigenous people in the international conversation about development. While ethnographic work tells more about the researcher's stance on how things are than the realities present in the field; due to ethical concerns, the case is presented as a fictionalised ethnography. This is based on a sincere effort to avoid doing harm to personal and institutional reputations and hindering the possibility of future collaborations allowing for this type of project to flourish. As Inckle (2010) puts it, this type of ethnography does not "privilege closed, persuasive 'arguments', or a hierarchical model where an 'expert' pours 'truth' and 'knowledge' into empty heads but, instead, trusts the reader to think and feel with the stories" (p.39).

This approach is not new in accounting for development interventions. Rottenburg (2009) has used it to (paraphrasing him) help direct attention away from the strengths and weaknesses of specific real actors and toward the implications of the contingencies of the mundane exercises of the development industry. Rendering the findings of my work in this way has a political aspect. Namely, to challenge privileged ways of knowing and to open up space for more nuanced accounts. The story I present here is meant to appeal to reflection and not condemnation. Consequentially, the names, references and key terms have been replaced and characters have been created to sustain a story about how the encounter of Quechua communities and development experts reproduces silent racism.

Traditional Knowledge for Climate Change (TK4cc) is the name of the project. It aims to raise awareness about innovations based on smallholder farmers' knowledge systems with the potential to counteract the negative impacts of climate change on food security. According to TK4cc proponents (a local NGO and an international research centre), these systems entail an ever-present interconnection of, for example, a crop variety and the knowledge practices that facilitated its emergence. Henceforth, these innovations will be referred to as Farmers' Innovations Systems (FIS).

TK4cc plans to raise awareness about FIS conveying an important message to external actors (i.e., policymakers, academics, and farmer organisations). I frame it in this way: local knowledge, and its bearers, including their traditional values, are essential to developing FIS, and we will show through TK4cc their usefulness in facing climate change and fostering food security.

TK4cc has been implemented around the globe but this case focuses on a small number of Quechua communities in the Andes. Despite the steady rise in household income, these communities are still below the poverty line. And while paid agricultural work is present other means of income are occupying an important role in the local economy (e.g., taxi services, sale of food and handicrafts, porters on the Inca Trail and road maintenance). Most of these activities require migration out of their communities. According to a local NGO report, the number of residents migrating seeking temporary jobs has risen in the last decade.

From the perspective of TK4cc proponents (from now on development experts), international legal tools have a limited understanding of how traditional knowledge is produced because they do not focus on the cultural, biological and landscape elements involved. They argue the work regarding the recognition of traditional knowledge has focused primarily on its commercial use, rather than on the challenges to strengthen it. Consequentially, they manifest international policies that take only into consideration the intellectual/conceptual element of knowledge, which is not a good fit for how indigenous people produce knowledge.

Development experts suggest a holistic understanding of traditional knowledge systems. This approach englobes material, spiritual and cultural components. It could be argued that the production of 'non-traditional knowledge' could also entail a high and heterogenic mesh of interconnected entities. Hence, making unnecessary the binary classification between traditional and non-traditional (Agrawal, 1995). Nevertheless, development experts maintain that in Peru, the involvement of indigenous people in the development of policy affecting them could be difficult due to the often different practices, perceptions and concerns between 'western and traditional society'.

However, local residents do not fully comply with development experts' proposition. The president of one of TK4cc's target communities manifested a fairly common idea among them:

> "Like an indigenous community, I am not sure. Indigenous is the jungle, natives, right? But we are not. That is where the local NGO is leading us. I think it is a bit problematic. If there were indigenous, then yes. [But] Indigenous means people who do not talk to other people. How would they see normal people like us?"

Fearn (2016) has discussed that to tackle the low levels of self-identification as 'indigenous' found by academics, international agencies and NGOs, development practitioners have found the need to promote indigenous identity (*trabajar el tema de identidad*). The idea is that 'only when local people "realise" they are indigenous will they be able to access specific rights' (Fearn, 2016: 274). It could be argued that this way of thinking influences TK4cc, it produces a highly politicised discourse that

reinforces and, considering the above quote, potentially imposes the indigeneity of local people.

The difference in perspectives about what constitutes indigeneity and modernity is crystallised when discussing the kinds of FIS existing. This is because discussing FIS entails unpacking understandings about what is traditional and what is innovative and in turn what is valuable for the wellbeing of Quechua communities.

In order to better understand the number of FIS in the local communities development experts designed a baseline study. Development experts aim to involve a representative sample interviewing Quechua farmers about FIS. For Rick, a former staff of the local NGO it was clear that the concept of FIS was something, that although mentioned by some, was challenging to capture. This is because while for development experts, for example, an internet antenna could not be FIS because it did not emerge from 'traditional knowledge', for many Quechua farmers that antenna incarnated the definition of innovation. However, instead of this difference being a factor to enrich the concept, the responses not matching the definition of development experts were displaced. Thus, innovations that were not sufficiently embedded in traditional knowledge had to be ditched from the pull of FIS. The following excerpt from my conversation with Rick will further exemplify this point:

> **Researcher:** What was the concept of [FIS] that was used [in the data gathering of TK4cc]?
>
> **Rick:** [FIS] [long pause] even today I do not understand [laughing].
>
> **Researcher:** it is something that has always been in working process ¿right?
>
> **Rick:** yes, I mean [FIS is something] that on top of been something new is accepted, I mean culturally accepted.
>
> **Researcher:** so, for example, laboratory engendered improvement of cattle, that could not be FIS, am I right?
>
> **Rick:** no! [laughing] It could be some other thing, [pause] but [it is not sustained by local culture]. So, it must be something from both sides [referring to scientific and traditional knowledge].
>
> **Researcher:** and so, for example, innovations that had from one and the other, how do you determine to what extent it was local or external, how do you determine that?
>
> **Rick:** it was a discussion. In the end, development experts decided [laughing] […] because, as I am telling you, many innovations were emerging and at the end, they pulled others.

Development experts seem not to be open to understanding local perspectives of innovations overlapping with FIS and the realities they are shaped by and contribute to their creation. The decision to stick with an acknowledged equivocation instead of exploring the diversity of perspectives puts under a different light the self-proclaimed participatory and decolonising approach of the local NGO. Quechua farmers, if not actively negotiated the concept, they clarified that did not comply with development experts' definition. To illustrate this point, I will present a local celebration (an institutional FIS, as development experts manifest in the baseline reports).

Representatives of diverse Quechua communities come together to celebrate the 'Crop Festival'. A ceremony that has been gradually decaying but has been brought back to life thanks to the local NGO's efforts to revive traditional culture. It aims to secure the next year's crop production by appealing to *Pachamama.* Participants engaged in several contests and showed traditional practices to the many visitors (among them development workers from Europe and North America, academics, scientists and general tourists). To that end, a ritual was performed by a man considered to have the capacity to interact with sacred non-human entities. Meanwhile, visitors stand all around, some holding cameras and smartphones to capture the moment. Reflecting on what went well and less well at the Festival a development worker from the local NGO, stated:

> "although we were wearing our typical dress and using our traditional tools, we failed on the food compañeros. When it comes to business, we cannot […] tell people not to sell food. But as an authority, [the] president, should suggest that day, because it is a holiday, traditional food should be offered, whatever [the dish] may be. […] but no sausages, hotdogs, that is very wrong. Many hungry people have been buying them. But, as advice from the communal presidents, for the next years, depending on where [the festival] happens, should propose to sell food but the original, traditional food".

For this NGO worker, the issue here is the type of food that is being offered and how this misrepresents what the Quechua communities they work with are about. In this context is clear how the knowledge and practices of Quechua farmers can contrast and be manipulated by development experts who think they know best how to use the community's 'indigeneity' in its favour. This has also been identified by other authors observing the impact of NGOs on indigenous political agendas (Garcia, 2005).

The nuanced interactions described provide evidence that Quechua farmers and development experts have different ways of understanding innovations and local development concerns. For Quechua farmers income generation through 'non-traditional' food could be more valuable than maintaining a 'pristine look' of Quechua culture. This does not have to be in opposition but as Carmen explains, another staff from the local

NGO, a decision is made to exclude local voices from decision-making. Hence, losing the opportunity to see Quechua farmers in equal standing with development experts to discuss the best strategies to identify and reach their development goals. Carmen implies this in the following comment:

> "Quechua farmers were not understanding [the concept of FIS] right! And I presented the list of innovations I had. But in my list of innovations, they did not recognise a lot of them**.** For them, some of them were normal or were not an innovation".

Carmen's comment is interesting because she acknowledges that what locals see as innovation may not fully overlap with what development experts are looking for. However, she disagrees with them and claims some practices are in fact FIS, regardless of what Quechua farmers think. The fact that Carmen understands Quechua farmers' conceptions of innovations to be irrelevant makes clear how silent racism could be operating in this case. The displacement of local voices from the baseline reports illustrates the reproduction of a repeated pattern. Namely, how local voices while considered necessary by development experts are left out of critical decision-making processes (e.g., decide what FIS are and which to include in the baseline reports).

Silent racism is important to the analysis of inequalities because it shows that 'the relationship between structural changes, class formations and political consciousness is more complex than what simplistic versions of Marxism would suggest' (Gimenez, 2001: 26). The analysis of inequalities in the country exceeds a focus on who owns the means of production, as there are subtle and overt ways in which gender, race and other axes of power affect the way in which vulnerable people experience marginalisation. But, more importantly for the argument of this article is that silent racism helps to connect directly to more nuanced understandings of how inequalities affecting indigenous populations persist. And how it is through time that indigenous voices have been excluded from formal political debates, despite land reforms and other legal changes aiming at the restitution of indigenous' rights. How indigenous knowledge is valued by development experts and left aside (when it is not what they had in mind) entails a disconnection. I argue this disconnection is precisely what sustains silent racism in this case, and it exposes the exclusion of indigenous people in the name of development success.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This article has aimed to contribute to the opening of a conversation about the need for race and racism to engage directly with colonial trajectories present in the negotiation process that development is. Advocating for the reintroduction of race to the analysis of inequalities and development projects (especially those targeting indigenous people) does not aim to provide more abstraction nor tools to "explain" what is happening on the

ground. Based on Latour's approach, critical thinking entails negating debunking as the ultimate goal of criticism (Latour, 2004). His criticism aims to keep exploring the many interactions among human and non-human actors that make it possible for something to exist, including both matters of fact and matters of concern, broadly speaking, products of nature and politics, respectively. As such, silent racism is one more factor affecting the lives of indigenous populations and requires to be understood within the practices that sustain it. Hence, the case showed how it operates within a development intervention implemented in the Andes.

The presented case seems to instantiate what De la Cadena has called 'silent racism'. As mentioned in the third section of this article, silent racism is the process by which more 'intellectually advanced' groups subordinate indigenous agendas. Silent racism is the exclusion of indigenous people based on academic degrees. In TK4cc the exclusion is instead based on whether their knowledge matches what development experts have in mind for the project and their future. It remains silent because a "participatory and decolonial" narrative covers it.

The displacement of local voices from the baseline reports suggests that the type of silent racism present in this case could be ignited by the requirements to maintain projects like TK4cc alive. David Mosse (2005) has argued that 'success in development depends upon the stabilisation of a particular interpretation' (p. 8). Mosse was able to see how the representations of target populations and development projects are constructed to match the theories of change of social policies. Hence, making a project appear as successful because it accomplishes the expected transition from problems to solutions. In this process, communication of the project as successful becomes even more important than its actual outcomes.

The displacement of local voices due to the dynamic of the development industry pushing for evidence of development success seems to make the diversity of voices not aligned with development experts' proposition silenced. This means that what is brought to presence (i.e., TK4cc as a successful action research project and FIS as strategies to face climate change) cannot be sustained were the voices of local people included.

It is worth mentioning that reading the silencing of local voices as an example of silent racism, instead of just a patronising action from development experts, entails an analytical strategy. I say racism because regardless of time (colonial times or recent pandemic), space (an academic debate like the discussion of Arguedas' work or discussion over what consists of farmer innovation systems) or content (indigenous knowledge is considered too backwards by politicians or not authentic enough by development experts) the voice of indigenous people is the one ignored. Identifying the silencing of local voices just as patronising could reinstate the neglect of broader and deeper identity issues. Silent

racism could entail a patronising attitude from development experts, but also opens up a broader discussion about the situation of indigenous populations. Such discussion is based on who they are and what they represent, and not just on what they have access to. In this way identifying the silencing of local voices as silent racism counteracts a tendency to analyse inequalities experienced by indigenous populations from a purely Marxist-oriented perspective using class as the primary conceptual tool.

The power dynamics in this case study seem not to be unique to Peruvian history. Since the indigenismo period, there seems to be a continuous displacement from the decision-making processes of indigenous people and the realities they bring forward. Despite international development organisations showing an appreciation of local knowledge (Agrawal, 2002), the realities and voices that are being displaced from decision-making processes remain those of local populations.

There seems to be an increasing interest in bringing race and racism to the centre of development scholarship. The case of TK4CC provides a good example to remember the unequal foundations of development (Gardner, 2019) and also for the analysis of racism within its practice (Kothari, 2006). This agenda aims to consider how power, knowledge and inequality are entangled with 'race' to produce a more nuanced understanding of the workings of the aid industry.

At the 2019 conference of the Development Studies Association, Dr Neajai Pailey was invited to be critical about the 'white gaze' in development. According to her, the white gaze assumes western, whiteness and modernity as references for privilege, power and prestige. It measures the political and socio-economic processes of southern non-white people against the standard of northern whiteness and finds it incomplete, wanting, inferior or regressive. This delegitimises any action that escapes the representation of non-white people by development experts, rendering local strategies as poorly taught and lacking the 'apparently more' insightful reflections coming from outside.

A clear example of how this operates in TK4cc is that development experts argue that Quechua farmers face external pressures to move away from traditional lifestyles, disregarding the possibility that it might also represent a deliberate strategy. Contrary to development experts, I argue that such changes are indeed also a local strategy. This is clearly demonstrated in the exploitation of spaces promoted by development experts (e.g., the Crop Festival) to exceed the identities assigned to them, which shows the implications of the process of de-Indianization, mentioned in the introduction of this article.

To ensure that local voices are held on equal terms as the voice of other actors in discussions throughout the cycle of development interventions, it is required specific training and capacity-building programmes for development practitioners. Such programmes should

aim to discuss and promote tools that help inform our decisions, routines, and attitudes in our everyday work. The focus is on producing enabling environments for a diversity of methodologies to influence the practice of development as a space for contestation and articulation.

The chemist and philosopher Isabelle Stengers (2018) has discussed that fast science (the marketisation of scientific knowledge production) restricts scientists and scientific bodies from engaging in questions typically part of philosophical, cultural, political, and social studies. Hence, making scientific knowledge less suitable for addressing the complexities in which grand challenges are embedded. It could be said that a fast practice of development (the design, implementation and evaluation of development programmes and interventions that prioritise metrics-based solutions) is restrictive for a reflexive understanding about for whom is effective the type of initiatives that we as development practitioners promote (Valters and Whitty, 2017).

To counteract this situation, Stengers proposes the practice of slow science. I argue it could also apply to the field of development practice. In her words, slow science:

> "coincides with the seemingly modest definition given by [Alfred North] Whitehead of what universities should foster: rational thought and civilised modes of appreciation. Rational thought would mean being actively lucid about what is actually known, avoiding any confusion between the questions that can be answered in a purified or constrained environment and those that will inevitably arise in the wider and messier environment. A civilised mode of appreciation would imply never identifying what is well-controlled and clean with some truth that transcends the mess. What is messy from the point of view of fast science is nothing other than the irreducible and always embedded interplay of processes, practices, experiences, and ways of knowing and valuing that makes up our common world" (parenthesis added, Stengers, 2018: 120).

Reshaping development practice and discourse requires discussing it embedded into what Stengers has referred to in the quote above as messy. It is essential to focus on how development interventions are held together, including the understanding of the different ways 'beneficiaries' conceptualise what is around them and the things concerning them because it can facilitate more sustainable development.

It is important to consider that a meaningful proposal for the target population may not be necessarily in line with mainstream development proposals. For example, Blaser (2016) presents the case of Innu and Inuit indigenous communities opposing a hunting ban on caribou/atîku (animal driven by instincts/non-human person who has will). The government of Newfoundland and Labrador imposed the ban to preserve the species.

However, the opposition should not be taken necessarily as a complete disagreement to care for the species. Promoting and enforcing indigenous protocols could also mean hunting for fewer animals. 'Hence, neither the Innu hunters nor the wildlife managers had to subordinate their own practices of caring' (Blaser, 2016: 565). The moral of the example, as it relates to the point I am trying to make, is that development practitioners require to be attentive to the unexpected overlaps that could circuit together proposals that look good for state representatives, funding bodies and target populations without shaking the nature of either of them.

Declaration of interest statement

I have been professionally involved with one of the organisations promoting the case study. The research this article is based on has been sent to the organisations involved. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, I have not received any response. Nonetheless, the case is presented as a fictionalised ethnography to minimise any potential harm.

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