

# Lessons from Vicos

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**ABSTRACT:** This article describes the Cornell Peru Project of 1952 and the subsequent return of Cornell researchers to Vicos in 2005. It assesses the successes and failure of the 89 researchers over the 15-year period of the project during the Cold War and contrasts the interventionist methodologies of that time with the participatory methodologies that guided Cornell's return to Vicos in 2005. Various contemporary projects are described and evaluated.

**KEYWORDS:** Cold War development, Cornell Peru Project, intervention, participatory action research, Peru, sustainability, Vicos

## World Politics and the Cornell Peru Project

This article describes the Cornell Peru Project of 1952 and the subsequent return of Cornell to Vicos in 2005. After a survey and search for an appropriate community in 1949, Vicos in the department of Ancash in northern Peru was chosen in 1952 and Allan Holmberg, the chair of the Department of Anthropology at Cornell, signed a lease for the hacienda Vicos for US\$600 a year. Subsequently the Cornell Peru Project became a model for integrated development involving cultural and biological anthropology, archaeology, agronomy, economics, political science, psychology and sociology. However, as this article discusses, integrated development has subsequently been heavily criticised. Cornell had a presence in Vicos until 1966 and Doughty (2002) calculates that the project cost an estimated US\$711,000 or US\$35 per capita per year and it is not clear whether this figure includes the extensive funding for independent researchers over the almost 15 years of the project. As Alan Holmberg stated:

In 1952, as part of a research program in Cultural Applied Science, Cornell University, in collaboration with the Indigenous Institute of Peru, arranged to rent Vicos, a publicly owned hacienda on which previous observational studies had been made, for an initial period of five years. Broadly speaking, the purpose of embarking on this experience was twofold: on the theoretical side, it was hoped to conduct some form of experimental research on the processes of modernization now on the march in so many parts of the world; on the practical side, it was hoped to assist the community to shift for itself from a position of relative dependence and submission in a highly restricted and provincial world to a position of relative independence and freedom within the larger framework of Peruvian national life. ([1955] 1971: 21)

Vicos was part of a larger 'Cultural Applied Science' effort at Cornell that grew out of Cornell's long history of agricultural missionaries who introduced crops and technologies in China between 1928 and 1937 (Thompson 1969: 150). The larger comparative project on development and integration took place in five cultural regions and was initially directed by Morris Opler who had come to Cornell after serving three years in the War Information Of-

fice (1943–1946). The comparative project was carried out with Lauriston Sharp and Alexander Leighton, who also had experience in the War Information Office and the War Relocation Office that managed the internment camps for Japanese Americans (see Davies 2001 and Ross 2005, 2008 for fuller historical accounts). The regions chosen were: Bang Chan, Thailand; Senapur, India; Nova Scotia, Canada; the Navaho of the American Southwest; and Vicos near Huaraz, Peru (Avila 2002: 419).<sup>1</sup> The project coincided with the beginning of the Cold War with the underlying ideology and fears generated by the war against communism that these underdeveloped regions would be susceptible to communism (Ross 2005). The rise of communism in China, the Cuban Revolution, Arbez's modest land reform in Guatemala in 1952 (that the CIA derailed), and the Bolivian revolution (also in 1952) were worrisome. But even with these events, modernization theory was guided by the erroneous belief that peasants could not be their own agents of change due to their conservative values. Furthermore, it was believed that the transfer of technologies to improve production, coupled with controlling population growth, would be sufficient to deflect the communist threat and the growing unrest over distribution of land and resources.

When Cornell arrived in 1949 to conduct the initial survey, the hacienda was an unprofitable enterprise. The patrones were absentee landlords with little concern for the education and wellbeing of their peasants. Even though the plan was for Alan Holmberg and the team of researchers to be present for five years, during which time Vicos would purchase the hacienda, in spite of continuous negotiations on the part of the Cornell team, the hacienda purchase took 10 years to realize. One of the events that took place in 1961 was that Edward Kennedy intervened with the president of Peru. Kennedy was not the only prominent North American to arrive in Vicos. More than 500 foreigners arrived in

Vicos during the Cornell Peru Project to visit the 'miracle of modernization'. For example, in 1963, Charles Kuralt of CBS travelled to Vicos to make a film called 'So that Men are Free' for Walter Cronkite's 'You Are There' series <[http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/vicosperu/vicos-site/cornellperu\\_page\\_1.htm](http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/vicosperu/vicos-site/cornellperu_page_1.htm)>.

Seventeen hundred peasants who were close to starvation were listed in the lease as chattel. Today the population is approximately 5,500 and no one is starving but health and nutritional levels are not high. In 1952, even though the proceeds from the hacienda were supposed to support a hospital in Huaraz, the capital of the region, the earnings on the enterprise were in fact shared by the group of managers for whom the Indian population was required to serve as household servants or as field hands. Also, the *patrones* could sell the labour of the resident serfs to mines, textile factories or other businesses. For example, Vicosinos were required to work in the textile mills that produced linen for the Second World War. The Quechua-speaking Indians living on the land were serfs to the managers, or *patrones*, of the so-called publicly owned hacienda. The boundaries of the hacienda were guarded so that the serfs could not escape.

### Assumptions of the Project

Barbara Lynch (1982: 21–22), in her excellent assessment of the project, states that in an *ex post facto* analytical framework Holmberg, Vázquez and Dobyns [1964] (1971) set up two polar ideal types defined as medieval and Western Civilization with a continuum between the two. Vicos was seen as an isolated 'anachronism in the modern world' (Holmberg [1964] 1971: 32), not as product of modern power relations. The view was commonly held by social scientists of the time. In actuality Vicos was integrated into the national society. Also, Lynch cites Mangin's (1955) and Himes' (1972) assessments that Vicosinos were better

off economically than many other hacienda *peones* and communities in the highlands. They had access to more agricultural and pasture land as well as abundant water. Like other Andean populations, Vicos was integrated into the Peruvian economy as a source of labour for regional public works projects, for the mines of Conchucos, for commercially oriented haciendas on the western slopes of the Andes and for the Santa Corporation linen factory at Pati. The terms of this integration were generally unfavourable, but far less so than for many other Indian populations (Lynch 1982: 22).

By the time Cornell left in 1966, the project team believed the goal to guide the 1,700 Indian serfs living on the hacienda Vicos into the twentieth century had been achieved. We now see that the assumption that Vicos was an anachronism from the past was wrong. Moreover, they had been political actors since the turn of the century and had made numerous appeals to the Peruvian state. The earliest evidence we have is a photograph dating around 1913 showing a delegation petitioning the President of Peru for their ancestral land. And as stated above the population was integrated into the labour force but the anticipated industrial development in the region that Holmberg expected to absorb the excess population in Vicos from population growth and commercialization of agriculture did not take place (Martinez 1989). A major contribution of the project was that it made the conditions of subjugation of the hacienda system visible to a larger public. Doughty (2002, fn.3) points out that at the time of the project the hacienda system survived in some form in Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. The system was abolished in Bolivia in the 1952 revolution and the Cuban revolution of 1959 was right around the corner.

Since one of Cornell's stated goals in Vicos was to study modernization, the hacienda labour structure was kept intact for one year without the obligation of forced labour but

Cornell retained the hacienda overseer, Enrique Luna, who was appointed manager of production for the commercialization of potatoes to be sold in the Lima market. A photograph of him with a raised whip in hand was published in the Cornell Alumni News in May 1962 with the caption: 'Before They Took Orders from a *Mestizo* Foreman' (Figure 1). According to Doughty (2002) and Mangin (2006), Luna changed his behaviour and attitude towards Vicosinos as the Cornell project progressed. But according to participants in the Living Memory Project directed by Florencia Zapata (Zapata 2005), Luna is still hated today for his harsh treatment of Vicosinos 50 years ago. One of the few historical monuments in Vicos is the pillory, where Vicosinos were publicly whipped by Luna.

This discrepancy in historical perspectives was debated during a conference held at Cornell University in 2006 entitled: 'Sustainability:



Figure 1: Luna Giving Work Orders

Lessons from Vicos'. The conference was attended by Vicosinos and three generations of researchers who had worked in the community of Vicos.<sup>2</sup> Keeping Luna as overseer raises the issue of the ethics of research methodologies. Alan Holmberg and his team opted for the priority of science, rationalizing that keeping Luna would facilitate their comparative methodology to study the hacienda production system before and after they introduced 'modern' agricultural methods to the community. Vicosinos were not consulted about keeping Luna as overseer, possibly because none of the initial North American researchers who began the project in Vicos learned Quechua. However, Mario Vásquez, a young native speaker of Quechua from the region, joined the project and began his studies as Holmberg's graduate student at Cornell. He is remembered by Vicosinos with respect and fondness. For example, during the 2006 conference at Cornell in response to how Enrique Luna is represented in the Living Memory book, Doughty recounted how in 1957 when funding from the Carnegie Foundation ended there were no funds to pay the rent on the hacienda, Vásquez and Luna paid the rent out of their own pockets. Doughty felt that Luna had changed. Vicosinos however remembered the various beneficial actions of Vásquez but not those of Luna.

William Stein, who joined the project later, is the only North American researcher who learned Quechua. I think it is significant that he has published a critical volume on the Cornell Peru Project (Stein 2000, 2003) in which he concludes that, although the project did produce better living conditions for Vicos in the form of a school, medical clinic and housing for teachers, integration into the local region declined. He argued that possibly the project also prolonged the life of some Vicosinos and improved the quality of life of many. On the other hand, Vicos has grown and changed and was not much different from thousands of other Andean communities; they exported their population to urban centres: they fought

to improve their lives in a poor country that is burdened with an enormous foreign debt and did not have the resources to provide services to villagers (2000: 395).

The number of Peruvian and North America researchers between 1951 and 1966 numbered 89 according to Paul Doughty (2002) and ministerial staff numbered 16.<sup>3</sup> The Project personnel worked with mostly young men, largely excluding monolingual Quechua-speaking women and the very poor, especially from the agricultural innovations introduced by Cornell to facilitate potato commercialization. They did introduce a Singer sewing machine and teach women to sew. Doughty states that the original project was participatory; however, decisions about the direction of the project were made by researchers not by Vicosinos.

### **The Most Significant Achievement of the Project: Improvements in Education**

It is my opinion that improving education has been the most significant and lasting achievement of the project. Today over 30 Vicosinos are studying in post-secondary institutions, and most of those who receive higher education return to Vicos. The Cornell team set out to improve education by building a school to accommodate 250 students using communal labour, to replace the old school which fewer than 30 boys attended (see Vásquez 1965). One of the primary goals of the Cornell Peru Project (CPP) was to integrate the Indian population into the national culture. But, Cornell could not predict the continued racism that has led to the rejection of the indigenous population, their heritage and cultural practices. Even with an education, Vicosinos find it difficult to integrate into the national culture at the level commensurate with their education. Several post secondary students are seeking further education in tourism that will provide employment that values their heritage, allows them to maintain their ties to Vicos, and to integrate into

national culture as well. About thirty Vicosinos live in Alexandria, Virginia. The wave of migration to the U.S. began when one of the first young men to complete high school married one of the women on the Cornell team. He later completed Howard University and has a business in the area. His sister owns a restaurant called Huarascarán in Alexandria. They return to Vicos for vacations and have built a three-story house in 'downtown' Vicos (Doughty, personal communication). I heard expressions of resentment that such an ostentatious house was built by Vicosinos who have left the community.

Photographs often provide clues of the underlying assumptions of a development programme. Schoolboys in their uniforms stand beneath the Cornell University Seal that was proudly displayed in the new school (Figure 2). What does this photograph signify? Certainly Cornell's presence, but perhaps it signifies Cornell and education as the pinnacle of modernization.



**Figure 2:** School Boys with Cornell Seal



**Figure 3:** From Serf to Modernity

Another staged photograph (Figure 3) depicts the progression from traditional, poor, ragged and illiterate Indian status to modern, educated, integrated into national, *mestizo* society, showing three boys on three steps with the one on the lowest step dressed in rags and looking dejected. The boy on the highest step is dressed in a full school uniform (modelled after military uniforms) with the boy on the middle step 'in-between' – he has on a traditional vest and woven belt, but proudly wears the school uniform, complete with hat. Both boys wear the homemade leather thong sandals, while the poorest boy on the bottom is bare foot. Shoes were the most expensive marker of modernity.

Other CPP photographs explicitly compare levels of modernization as in the following (Figure 4) taken in 1963 of two young brothers: the one dressed in 'western clothes' is the most educated young man in Vicos who is also a vet-



**Figure 4:** Brothers Dressed in Traditional and Modern Clothing

eran of the Peruvian Army. His brother wears the traditional clothing. The older brother insists that his younger brother get an education and join the military reserves. The military was promoted by the Cornell Project staff as a means of integrating Vicosino men into the national culture and economy; staff believed that once men served in the military they would become part of the urban work force.

### Health and Nutrition

Health issues were a major item on the Cornell team’s agenda. A new health clinic, with a visiting doctor, nurse and dentist and a school lunch programme were established. In Dobyns and Vázquez (1963) immediate improvements in nutrition were claimed. The Cornell team contrasted the arrival of modern medicine with such traditional practices as shown in Figure 5 – a woman curer rubbing a patient’s body with a guinea pig. She then cuts open the guinea pig to diagnose the disease. It was believed that the guinea pig absorbs the patient’s



**Figure 5:** Woman Curer Rubbing Guinea Pig on Patient’s Body

disease into its organs. A doctor is shown giving the same patient an inoculation – Figure 6. These photographs were published in the *Cornell University Alumni News* in 1962 to contrast modern and traditional medicine.

What the Cornell team was not aware of was the vast Vicosino knowledge of medicinal plants that they grew and collected. Today we know that Peru is recognized as one of the twelve most biodiverse regions of the world. Over 4000 species of native plants are known, providing low-cost medicine to 80 percent of



**Figure 6:** A Doctor Giving a Shot to the Same Patient

Peru's population. In Dobyns and Vázquez (1963) numerous scientific research projects linked to the Cornell Project were enumerated, involving the Vicos population. The studies that resulted in intervention included: parasitological testing showing that infection was universal as well as nutritional studies measuring the levels of malnutrition. Clinics were established to treat these conditions. However, numerous other studies were carried out for scientific purposes: blood, human growth and development, and even a personality study conducted by the Sullivan Psychoanalytical Institute of New York City in 1960. Alarming, during the Vicos conference in 2006 Mangin mentioned that Park Davis pharmaceutical company tested a drug to treat parasites in Vicos. According to Mangin (2006) this practice was common during the 1950s and 1960s.

In his publication of 2002, Doughty stated that nutrition levels were currently high and pointed out that a small government hospital was accessible to all Vicosinos. However, recent nutritional and health surveys in Vicos indicate that malnutrition and intestinal parasites remain high among children (Zapata, personal communication). This is most likely due to lack of sanitation, plumbing and clean water. Even though the community has initiated a water purification programme in response to mining pollution, parasites continue to be a problem indicating that they are not addressing parasites in the drinking water.

## Democracy and Self Determination

In the introduction to *Peasants, Power, and Applied Social Change: Vicos as a Model*, Dobyns, Doughty, and Lasswell stated:

The role of power in opening the door to change was appreciated by Cornell Peru Project leadership right from the beginning when it assumed the position of patron of the Vicos manor with all the absolute privileges that the role contained. Through the planned devolution of that power

to the people of Vicos, Project leadership was able to modify other areas of life which had been very rigidly controlled. Thus, power is the key factor whether one speaks of peaceful or of violent change. Writing in a comparative study of peasant revolution of this century, Eric Wolf says: 'The poor peasant or the landless laborer who depends on a landlord for the largest part of his livelihood, or the totality of it, has no tactical power: he is completely within the power domain of his employer, without sufficient resources of his own to serve him as resources in the power of struggle. Poor peasants and landless laborers, therefore, are unlikely to pursue the course of rebellion *unless* they are able to rely on some external power to challenge the power which constrains them.' (1969: 20). The Cornell Peru Project provided that important external source of power constituting a social umbrella under which the people of Vicos were able to alter their lives to their greater satisfaction, and without the imminent threat of tragedy and retribution to discourage them as it had before. ([1964] 1971: 15–16)

The above quote clearly states the view Holmberg and the project staff held regarding the importance of power relations. They expected 'planned devolution of power' that would transform their position as patrons of the hacienda and allow Vicosinos to develop self-determination, which they have. Moreover, Vicosinos have the reputation in the region as being politically aggressive outside of Vicos, holding several regional offices and working to have Vicos become an independent district. But we must ask whether Non-governmental organizations are providing the 'external source of power' today that Wolf thought was necessary for rebellion and the Cornell personnel thought provided an umbrella under which the community could change their lives. The 1952 quote above by Holmberg demonstrates the he saw Vicosinos moving from a subjugated position to one of relative independence and freedom. However, barriers to integration into the national culture remain and as stated earlier, most Vicosinos who receive post secondary education return

to Vicos. The governance structure representing the 10 barrios or sectors of the hacienda of Vicos that was set up with an elected village council exists today. However, the *consejo* or council changes frequently because of internal disputes or accusations of corruption, making it difficult to ensure continuity of decisions and programmes. Mechanisms for accountability are not in place.

Nevertheless, Vicos has taken successful collective action against powerful mining companies. While we were in Vicos in February of 2008, we learned that the Toma La Mano mining company was about to pay Vicos the last of three compensation payments totalling one million dollars. The community voted that the funds were to be dispersed in three payments to all households. At the time of our visit, none of the funds were allocated for public works even though several needs have been discussed in public meetings, including the need for Internet access. The level of political participation and community organizational skills is a long way from the conditions that the Cornell Peru Project personnel found when Cornell took control of the hacienda in 1952.

### **Agricultural Innovations**

The story of Cornell's agricultural innovations is complex and provides us with a cautionary tale. The CPP in Vicos is paradigmatic of the Green Revolution because if you take less than a 10-year view the increase in production was a success. But the intensive technologies were not sustainable over time. The commercialization of potato production for the Lima market with mono-cropping, the introduction of Cornell 'improved' varieties, chemical fertilizers and insecticides was an initial success. In 1954, the first year of these new techniques, production doubled. Ten years later, Vicos was providing two percent of the total potatoes sold in the Lima market but production began to fall shortly thereafter in the mid-1960s and

eventually failed due to insect infestations to which the introduced varieties were not resistant. Nevertheless, the 10 years of commercialization of production allowed Vicos to purchase the hacienda in 1962 after seven years of difficult negotiations with the Benefit Society, which at one point raised the price 900 percent. From a capitalist short-term perspective, the rise in production was an enormous success. But, if you take a longer view, it was ultimately a failure. The introduction of chemicals and mono-cropping almost destroyed the biodiversity of the region and caused damage to the fragile environment. Vicosinos are engaged in projects to preserve their biodiversity and redress the damage to their environment. Their projects were described during the Vicos conference in 2006. An example is the project on biodiversity and culture in the Callejón de Huaylas initiated by the NGO Asociación Uripichallay (1999).

### **Women and Biodiversity**

Vicosina women and the very poor (the 100 families without access to plots) were excluded from the project to commercialize potatoes in favour of working with male heads of households. Florence Babb ([1985] 1999) and Barbara Lynch (1982) both pointed to the methodological failings of such exclusions in their publications. However, the exclusion of women and the very poor became an unforeseen benefit. They continued their ancient practices of seed conservation that eventually saved the 120 varieties of potatoes and numerous other crops that they produced.

Today we know that the Vicosina women not only manage household economies but also have great knowledge about the plant world. They are ultimately responsible for seed selection and preservation. Every year fairs to exchange seeds are held and people travel from across the country to participate. Variability is celebrated and shared through



these exchanges. Unlike the capitalist notion of ownership protected by patents, new varieties are exchanged. Archaeological evidence suggests that Quechua-speaking farmers understood from ancient times that maintaining biodiversity in their seed collections was critical to survival – and were willing to travel hundreds of miles to guarantee it. Agents of change in the 1950s and 1960s, on the other hand, thought they could trump nature by using chemical additives.

### **Unintended Consequences of the Cornell Peru Project**

The Cornell Project began their modernization efforts in 1952 and remained in Vicos until 1966 without anticipating the agrarian reform of 1969 that expropriated neighbouring haciendas and allocated the land to the serfs that lived on them. Most Vicosinos believed that they were still paying off the enormous long-term debt while their neighbours received land free. However, during the Living Memory Project, Vicosinos learned that the debt had been discharged by the Peruvian Government.

Today we are aware that the hope that ‘modern’ high-intensity agriculture with chemical inputs and mono-cropping would solve the hunger problem in the so-called underdeveloped regions of the world has not been realized. Of course we are becoming rapidly aware of the costs to the environment and to human health from the use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides required in high-intensity agriculture. According to David Tilman (1998: 211–212)<sup>4</sup> of the University of Minnesota, it is unclear whether high-intensity agriculture can be sustained because of the loss of soil fertility, the erosion of soil, the increased incidence of crop and livestock diseases and the serious effects of nitrogen on terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems, because half to two-thirds of the nitrogen applied to fields enters these ecosystems. Moreover, Til-

man and his colleagues estimate that it would take 200 years of natural succession whereby fields are left abandoned and invaded by successive populations of native vegetation for fields to recover pre-agricultural carbon and nitrogen levels. Vicosinos have experienced these unfortunate consequences of Cornell’s introduction of chemicals. It appears that these chemicals in combination with nitrogen commonly found in groundwater may have a broad range of effects on the immune, endocrine and nervous systems.<sup>5</sup>

The failure of the Cornell’s potato project to be sustainable over time was an important factor in precipitating rejection of outside interventions. However, according to the interviews conducted for the Living Memory Project, Vicosinos declared that the misunderstood actions of one Peace Corps volunteer who borrowed funds from his father to renovate the hot baths and hotel at Chancos led to their expulsion in 1964 before Cornell left in 1966.<sup>6</sup> They believed that the volunteer was attempting to take possession of the property. They also declared that in 1973 corrupt state administrators of a cattle project stole funds from the community and that was probably the final link in the chain that barred outsiders. Vicosinos finally said: ‘Ya Basta!’ Enough! They closed their doors to all outside intervention.

### **Cornell’s Return to Vicos**

In 2005 after five years of discussions with the community of Vicos, I initiated a project to return to Vicos to document the history of the Cornell Peru Project in collaboration with The Mountain Institute and with Florencia Zapata who developed the Living Memory Project during her two-year tenure at Cornell as a visiting fellow. We collaboratively developed several motivating questions for Cornell’s return to Vicos: what were the successes and failures of the Cornell Peru Project? What have been the lasting impacts and how are people of

Vicos faring today? What do contemporary efforts of development look like? Can the history of that project teach us anything as the world struggles to address poverty, health and development issues? The Cornell Peru Project in Vicos is one of the best-documented case studies of directed change and it can provide the bases for beginning a discussion of what issues have remained and what has changed.

Participating in those discussions were Vicosino leaders, The Mountain Institute (TMI), and Urpichallay, a Peruvian NGO that has worked in the region for 15 years. The participatory methodologies that we adopted contrasted markedly to that of the CPP. Our discussions centred on the priorities of the community within the framework of what Cornell University could offer as a participating partner. Two initiatives were collectively agreed upon: (1) building a Vicos website that would document not only the history of the Cornell Project but also describe the contemporary development projects chosen by Vicosinos, and (2) developing the participatory Living Memory Project that would allow Vicos to explore their own history (see Zapata 2005).

A website was created that addresses the history of directed change in Vicos initiated by Cornell University as well as videos and interviews of current development projects chosen by the community <http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/vicosperu/vicos-site/> (Isbell and Zapata 2005). Also included in the site are the full texts in Spanish of the oral histories recorded in Spanish and Quechua of community members, which have been recorded and printed as a book that the participants designed. Copies of the book, *Memorias de la Comunidad de Vicos*, were then provided to every household in Vicos as well as to the schools. The volume is also available online in English translation on the web site above. Therefore, fifty years of history is available online from the Vicosinos' diverse points of view that provide an interesting comparison with the vast quantity of research material written by academics, much of which is

housed in the Kroch Rare Manuscript Library of Cornell University. A spin-off of Zapata's Living Memory Project has been the return of digitized research and photos to Vicos. The community built a local museum called Casa de los Abuelos which houses these materials, but it is only opened when visiting tourists arrive. Evidently, it is viewed as something that interests outsiders and not locals. Hopefully, it will be used in the future by the schools.

An ongoing project initiated in 2006 and directed by Florencia Zapata of TMI with Cornell participation and support involves a committee of Vicosinos who are working to locate and digitize historical records to validate their land claims and establish legal boundaries. One of the major motivations for the creation of the digital archive is that Vicosinos want Vicos to constitute an independent *distrito* (a Peruvian governmental unit similar to a county). They also understand the importance of legally documenting their land as privatization of land threatens the future of peasant communities who make up 37 percent of the population and hold 39.8 percent of agricultural lands in the highlands. With increased population and with the government's push to privatize communal lands in 1996, Vicos is experiencing an acute shortage of available agricultural land. To gain usufruct of land one must be a *comunero* and participate in the communal structure of the community by attending meetings, work parties and holding office. That causes a dilemma for those with enough education to work outside of Vicos who want to maintain their membership in the community. If they work too far away to stay active in the communal structure, they lose their membership and also lose access to land.

In response to Vicosinos' expression of urgency over the need to provide historical documentation of their communal status, I applied for and received a second Innovation Grant from Cornell in 2008 to continue collaborative work with TMI, Urpichallay and Vicos to organize workshops to digitize historical doc-

uments and facilitate the creation of a digital archive with the participation of Danielle Mericle, the production manager for Olin Library's Digital Media Group. She directed workshops not only in Vicos and Marcará at Urpillachay but also in Lima at the Archivo Nacional. We hope to create an open access portal in the library system allowing Vicosinos, researchers and students to deposit, access and communicate digitally. The workshops in Peru were the first step in the process to build such global communication. In Vicos, 35 participants attended including six women and 29 males ranging in age from 11 to 67 years old. Sixteen of the participants had used a computer before and eight had experience on the Internet. The core group has been working with Zapata in national and regional archives to copy documents relevant to the community. They developed and broadcasted a radio programme in Quechua about their efforts. The workshop took place in the new computer centre built with communal labour with funding from a Cuadalu Mining Company that purchased 15 computers as part of a compensation package after winning a lawsuit. When we arrived, the computer centre was locked and the instructor was not being paid by the Toma La Mano Mining Company as agreed upon because Vicos was engaged in a dispute with the owner and had burned him in effigy in the plaza.

## Final Reflections

CPP's original plan was to be involved in Vicos for five years but they remained for 15 years with legions of researchers pursuing individual goals, leaving little behind of their research (Mangin [1979] 1988). For example, archaeological research that was conducted in the region certainly mapped areas that would have been useful to the local communities but these researches were not shared with Vicosinos. During the Vicos conference the represen-

tatives from Vicos conducted a search of Vicos Archive and we have digitized documents for the digital archive they have established in the community. Communities in the region will no longer tolerate researchers without coming to an agreement on the benefits that will be delivered to them. That lesson from Vicos and other communities like it has been learned well. Perhaps one of the most interesting lessons learned has been to uncover the different versions of the histories of the Vicos Project: The community constructed a history of the project from their collective memories that differed significantly from the history held by the researchers involved. Comparing such histories could guide contemporary development (for example, see the forthcoming volume, *Haciendo Antropología Trabajar: La Experiencia Andina*, T. Greaves and R. Bolton, editors, Lima, IEP).

An academic institution like Cornell, unlike an NGO, a state or international agency lacks the experience and skills to work with local populations for long-term development. Nor can academics maintain their presence in the field continuously for sustainability – an issue in Vicos. However, universities have the capacities to act as mediators between local institutions and local populations. We can participate in providing basic research, historical and comparative perspectives that local institutions and populations may not be able to achieve alone. The history of the CPP, like many histories, teaches us that what may look like success in the short term (10 years) may not be sustainable in the long run. Sound record-keeping is essential to establish an historical basis for continual evaluation. Universities must share those records with local populations. The CPP attempted to return research to Vicos but the community was not ready at that point in time to receive the data. Now they realize the value of historical records. Collaborating with TMI to work towards establishing a digital archive and to provide advice on digitizing was our goal during the 2008 visit to Vicos. Cornell will

continue to return the records to Vicos that the community prioritize.

University faculty staff and graduate students often have difficulty working within an open learning paradigm. Within academia it is a question of ownership of research, theses and innovations. In Vicos and in many other parts of the world, that kind of individual ownership is not recognized. Knowledge is collectively owned and shared. This perhaps is one of the largest obstacles to collaborative research and application. During my 15 years of working with Cornell's International Institute of Food, Agriculture and Development (CII-FAD), whose aim was to form interdisciplinary teams to work in Latin American, Africa and Asia to support research and development efforts, I discovered that academics often found it difficult to step outside of their disciplinary training and learn 'from the natives' – and the harder the science the more difficulty faculty had. But time and again we learned that 'the natives' had a lot to teach us and that the best innovations came from collaboration between users and sources of research, like universities.<sup>7</sup> The experiences of interdisciplinary work have led to greater participatory action research and a greater openness by academic disciplines involved to accept natives as collaborators.

Most Vicosinos are positive about the future and many have plans for micro enterprises. For their incipient ecotourism they need to be able to connect with tourists directly to avoid the control outsiders have exerted over Taquile (Zorn 2004). They hope that the move to embrace computer technology can accomplish that. One of the high-potential micro enterprises developing rapidly is organic production. An association of organic growers has been formed and, Beatriz Rojas, the former director of Urpillachay, informs me that young people from the region are receiving fellowships and training in Lima in organic production and marketing, restaurant management and cooking through the efforts of Gaston Ocurio, one of Peru's most successful chefs.

Finally, we do not know what events will flow from the introduction of the digital technology that we have facilitated in Vicos. We cannot assume universal access and differences in class structure could be exacerbated. In the spring of 2010, I will return to Peru as a Senior Specialist through the Fulbright Programme to facilitate workshops open to leaders from the Andean region on digitizing technologies and archival research that Vicosinos will participate in as teachers. Communities realize that they must provide historical documentation to validate their communal land claims in the face of privatization being pushed by Garcia's neo-liberal government.

In conclusion, one of the long-term effects of the CCP is that Vicos learned to negotiate with outside agencies and articulate their demands clearly. Moreover, the expulsion of Cornell and other agents of change reinforced their own sense of empowerment. The successful lawsuit against Toma La Mano mining is evidence of that empowerment. However, the communal structure of Vicos has ironically resulted in the funds from that lawsuit being distributed among communal members and not being used for public benefit. Stable local governance and accountability continues to be a problem. Vicos leadership in the region speaks to their increase in education which is perhaps the most important lasting effect of the project but gains in health have not been as strong. Vicosinos consider themselves international citizens with connection in various parts of the world and perhaps Cornell's presence accelerated that process.

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## Notes

1. Avila's article is an excellent source for placing the Vicos project within the historical context of the development of Peruvian anthropology. For a full description of the research conducted in Vicos see Dobyns and Vázquez 1963. Doughty (2002) states that over 200 books and articles have been written about Vicos; however, it is significant that in 2005 and 2008, we found no evidence of that research existing in the community. Evidently, a filing cabinet of research was left in Vicos, but at some time the papers were dumped on the floor of the Holmberg-abandoned house in order for the filing cabinet to be used by the village council. Consult the video entitled 'The Holmberg House' on the Vicos website to see scenes that look like the archaeology of development. I have appended on the site a timeline of the project provided by Doughty. <[http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/vicosperu/vicos-site/cornellperu\\_page\\_1.htm](http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/vicosperu/vicos-site/cornellperu_page_1.htm)>.
2. For an early evaluation of the Vicos project see Lynch (1982).
3. I wish to thank Paul Doughty (1985 ms.) for providing this information. It is unclear how many of the Peruvian researchers and ministerial personnel were Quechua speakers.
4. <<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v396/n6708/full/396211a0.html>>
5. According to Kaplan and Morris in a U.S. News and World Report article published in 2000 (47–53) the increased prevalence of these neurotoxins in U.S. water is linked with increases in neurological disorders in American children. The authors link the toxins with the statistic, for example, that in California, reported cases of autism rose 210% between 1987 and 1998. The authors also note that in New York State, the number of children with learning disabilities rose 55 percent between 1983 and 1996. Statistics like these make researchers at The Mountain Institute wonder what might be happening to children exposed to neurotoxins in places like Vicos (personal communication). Did Cornell, following the paradigm of the Green Revolution, export potential health and environmental problems that outweigh the increased agricultural production that was achieved?
6. It is notable that the Peace Corps is currently posted in Vicos. In 2005 and 2006, Vicosinos complained about the laziness and lack of communal spirit of the volunteer. They said he lived off of them but did not work at all.
7. CIIFAD annual reports can be accessed at <[http://ciifad.cornell.edu/about/annualreports/2004-2005/04-05\\_CIIFADar.pdf](http://ciifad.cornell.edu/about/annualreports/2004-2005/04-05_CIIFADar.pdf)>

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