

Residency Counts and Housing Rights

Conflicting Enactments of Property in Lima's Central Margins

by Kristin Skrabut

Online enhancements: supplemental figures

In a shantytown in Lima, who counts as a resident depends on who is counting. Drawing on 21 months of ethnographic fieldwork in a Peruvian “self-help” housing community, I show how censuses and surveys are woven into residency determinations and negotiations over property rights. In these contexts, “residency” is not a self-evident status but rather a complex performance that involves possessing the right kind of need, participating in development activities, accumulating documents, and being legible to myriad political and personalistic “state-like” entities. Meanwhile, conflicts over inadequate residency performances generate violence, insecurity, and confusion about who “the community” is and who is entitled to represent it. I argue that viewing residency as a contested performance that mediates and remakes long-standing inequalities can improve anthropological interpretations of the sprawling and pockmarked cities of the Global South and the dynamics of urban citizenship that produce them.

Meaningful Numbers

Apart from some children playing soccer in the empty highways and the occasional passing army truck, the streets to Pachacútec were deserted. It was the day of the 2007 Peruvian national census and President García had issued an “immobility order,” threatening to fine businesses that opened that day and asking conscientious citizens to stay in their houses between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. so census takers could get an accurate count.

The Sunday morning stillness was a stark contrast to the scramble that occurred the night before. People throughout Lima had arrived in droves to take their place in Pachacútec, an impoverished shantytown in Lima's northwestern periphery founded just 7 years earlier. Meanwhile, many already in Pachacútec were strategically placing family members in different houses and hastily assembling structures of *esteras* (straw mats) and *maderitas* (prefabricated plywood walls) on empty lots. The census was to be a picture of the population, so they were striking their poses (fig. S1; figs. S1–S6 are available online).

For weeks, García's administration and Peru's National Institute of Statistics (INEI) had advertised the census as a truth-finding technology that would finally tell Peruvians “How Many We Are, Where We Live, and What We Need.”¹ The controversy over these “facts” began shortly after Presi-

dent García was elected and the results of the 2005 census, conducted under his predecessor, were released. Compared with pre-census projections, the 2005 census appeared to undercount the population by 7% and reported that 18.5% of houses were unoccupied, a number far greater than the 3.8% reported in the de facto census of 1993 (Núñez 2006).² In an environment where social marginalization and the demand for *casa digna* (dignified housing) dominate political discourse, a census that rendered some people statistically invisible and indicated an abundance of empty houses was incomprehensible and unacceptable. García promised his administration would take a new census that would see every Peruvian properly. In his view, this meant the population had to stand still for a moment.

As I made rounds with census takers in Pachacútec, it quickly became clear that people were eager to be counted, albeit in particular places. They sat in otherwise empty houses or sprinted toward doors as census takers arrived to ensure their name was recorded next to that particular address and that a *vivienda censada* (house censused) sticker was placed on their door. Although INEI officials repeatedly explained that the census had nothing to do with housing rights, most people I spoke with believed the two were related. For Teresa, a 19-year-old census taker who lived in an overcrowded house in

1. Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática.

2. In 1981 and 1993 Peru took de facto censuses, counting physical bodies where they stood. The 2005 census, however, used methods similar to the United States. It was taken over 32 days and asked residents to report who belonged in each household. Had García not nullified the results, it would have been supplemented by comprehensive household sample surveys.

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Pachacútec with her mother, child, and two older brothers and their wives and children, it seemed logical that the census was intimately connected to property rights. “Why do you think [the INEI] emphasizes the difference between a home and a house,” that is, the group of people who “eat from the same pot” and the structure they inhabit? “The point of this census is to ensure each house has just one home in it. That way houses with many families in them, like mine, can be divided so each family gets their own, and people who already have a house don’t take more than they need.” Another Pachacutano explained that, this time, being counted in Pachacútec would not affect property titles unless individuals had officially changed their residence on their national ID cards. This comment suggested that many more counts had and would occur in Pachacútec and that, in this context of urban marginality and precarious legality, asserting and retaining land rights required appearing as a resident on as many documents as possible.

Between 2007 and 2010, I spent 21 months watching Peruvians move in, out, and around Pachacútec in accordance with the numerous counts conducted by various state-like entities. Although “marginal” shantytowns are conventionally depicted as neglected, unseen, and undercounted, in Pachacútec official body counts were relatively common and had important political and material consequences. Since the mid-twentieth century, people at the margins of Peruvian society, many literally squatting in Lima’s periphery, have been central to the construction and legitimacy of the state. Today, governors compete to bring benevolent, technocratic order to these areas, driven by a populist faith that combating poverty and disorder depends first on counting it properly (Collier 1976; Comaroff and Comaroff 2006). Moreover, in an era of transnational connection and “destatalization of government,” numerous other state-like entities—including subnational governments, aspiring politicians, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), university students, and the occasional foreign anthropologist—circulate constantly in Pachacútec, counting and categorizing residents in accordance with their own projects and priorities (Goldstein 2004; Trouillot 2001).

Pachacutanos have integrated these powerful but mundane enumerative events into their performances of active residency and understandings of land rights. Although Peruvians believe property rights in the urban margins should be based on a combination of active need and participation in community development projects, they also believe that linking this moral economy to land depends on the repeated, anxiety-producing verifications afforded by bureaucratic and statistical regimes. To analyze how need, participation, and documentation intertwine in Peruvian property regimes, I draw on the local idiom *hacer vivencia*, which translates as “to do living” or “to do residency.” This phrase is typically heard only in *pueblos jóvenes* (young towns) like Pachacútec, where people must continually reassert their resident status by contributing to development initiatives, participating in public demonstrations, and making themselves legible to myriad state entities promis-

ing land titles, infrastructure, and government services. Thus, “hacer vivencia” has a phenomenological quality. It refers both to performances of residency that include participating in neighborhood meetings, communal work parties, and grassroots social assistance organizations and to suffering the everyday indignities of shantytown life such as living without running water, choking on dust from unpaved and garbage-strewn streets, and contending with the perpetually damp laundry and wet coughs that result from Pachacútec’s cold and humid climate. The divergent ways Pachacutanos enact and interpret “vivencia” demonstrate that “residency” is a multifaceted and morally precarious performance that mediates and remakes long-standing inequalities. These findings reveal instabilities inherent in neoliberal conceptions of property (Blomley 2005) and highlight how variegated geographies of urban inclusion inform the shape and dynamics of urban growth in cities around the world.

Although the concept of residency is rarely analyzed in its own right, it nonetheless plays a critical role in social theory and in the everyday lives of shantytown inhabitants. The first two sections of this article emphasize this point by situating residency within anthropological theories of statecraft, marginality, and community and clarifying the moral and material stakes of residency determinations for occupants of Peru’s urban periphery. I then examine how Peru’s complex urban housing history has generated a composite understanding of residency that, although contextually specific, reveals contradictions in global efforts to promote rational, (neo)liberal property regimes. From here, I explore the idiom *hacer vivencia*, analyzing how residency is performed through political mobilizing, community building, and the repeated documentary recognitions enabled by censuses and surveys. As women often bear primary responsibility for (re)producing home and community life in Peruvian shantytowns, I elucidate these dynamics by drawing on the stories of five women who “do living” in different ways, highlighting the range of improvisations Peru’s urban property regime enables and its potential to challenge and remake long-standing inequalities. I conclude by suggesting that viewing residency as a composite and contested performance can improve anthropological understandings of how people relate to space and build communities in twenty-first-century cities. Such an understanding provides an important corrective to marginality, social exclusion, and citizenship frameworks that obscure the divergent identities and desires of people who occupy the urban periphery, the different ways people use urban space, and the experiential complexity of sociopolitical inclusion.³

3. Ananya Roy (2004) describes homogenizing, morally simplistic renderings of shantytowns as part of an “aestheticization of poverty” that impedes rigorous scholarship and legitimizes strictly aesthetic or legalistic solutions to poverty (e.g., land titling) that treat “inclusion” as a matter of singular, one-dimensional recognition, rather than an ongoing, multifaceted negotiation.

Theoretical Framings for Vivencia

Although the concept of residency is often taken for granted, it is nonetheless integral to how anthropologists theorize relations between populations and the state. Anthropologists have emphasized how efforts to control and render populations legible using censuses and statistics arose concurrently with state schemes to construct “rational” cities, governed by grids that transformed urban areas into “spaces of calculability” (Rose-Redwood and Tantner 2012:607; Scott 1998), where subjects could be easily located, taxed, counted, conscripted, and policed. The term “residency” encapsulates these efforts to legibly assign people to places, which are central to modern statecraft and democratic politics (Coles 2007). Moreover, as Appadurai (1996) explains, when the “enumerative habit” is applied to residents or property holders, political representation is tied “not to essentially similar citizens and individuals but to communities conceived as inherently spatial” (129).

These seemingly technocratic practices of mapping and surveying not only help states maintain power but also constitute “the state” as an ideological and material object. From this vantage, the state is simultaneously an incomplete project and a highly consequential abstraction produced through practices of counting and categorizing that divide the population into observer and observed (Sharma and Gupta 2006). Moreover, where power is fragmented and unsettled and too many actors compete for the state’s role, the state is less an entity than a rumor; a veil of uncertainty enveloping practices of counting, documenting, and policing that simultaneously index the promise of order and justice and the threat of violence and abuse (Aretxaga 2005; Das and Poole 2004). Meanwhile, the “margins of the state” are produced through tentative encounters with state agents, when it is unclear whether a person or practice will help or harm, and individuals find themselves suspended in the precarious space between “threat and guarantee” (Poole 2004:36). Although Latin American cities are infamous for the dramatic ways social inequality is inscribed in the urban landscape (cf. Caldeira 2000; Fischer, McCann, and Auyero 2014), the dynamics of residency determinations in Pachacútec illustrate the importance of embodied and experiential models of marginality that disaggregate the periphery and illuminate how inhabitants differently experience the state depending on their social, political, and official documentary networks, which both materialize and complicate class relations in this context.

Critically, theorists of spatial governmentality have shown that, even in the spatial margins, subjectivities and aspirations are forged in conversation with the uneven presence of the state. Moreover, in pursuing state-sanctioned ideals of “dignified” life—which in Peru means occupying a single-family home in a cohesive neighborhood equipped with modern infrastructural amenities—people actively engage the state, appropriating or redirecting its techniques to secure livelihoods and advance potentially subversive political agendas

(Anderson 2007; Holston 2008). For instance, some squatter organizations may strive to retain control over their communities by taking their own statistics, undermining the authority of official state entities through “governmentality from below” even if, as is often the case in Latin America, leadership in these organizations is contested and different community factions conjure different counts (Appadurai 2001; Lazar 2008). Likewise, shantytown residents are often aware that how outsiders perceive them has profound material consequences and work to represent themselves in ways that attract state assistance while keeping the threatening aspects of the state at bay (Goldstein 2004). In urban peripheries like Pachacútec, censuses and surveys thus become sites where people perform and negotiate their own perceptions of local realities with the legibility demands of state entities (Goldstein 2004).

These tactical and anxious engagements with the state generate numbers that function as capricious sociopolitical products that both “are relations” and “have relations” (Ballesteros 2012; Verran 2010). For example, Peruvian population counts are embedded in ideals of democratic modernity and populist promises that a “scientific politics” will benefit those at the margins (Haya de la Torre 2005; Merry 2011), embody relations between political entities and recognized constituents, and have active social lives as fodder for political debate and justification for action. Understanding the diverse effects of numbers requires investigating how experts and laypersons “participate in number” (Day, Lury, and Wakeford 2014:124) and what happens when people take “numbers into their own heads and hands” (Guyer et al. 2010:36). Analyzing residency counts in urban Peru advances this intellectual project by demonstrating how numbers, produced with populist and clientelist aims, are woven into Peruvians’ livelihood strategies and battles for land rights.

For decades, scholars have depicted the appropriation of urban land by the “popular classes” as a challenge to entrenched inequalities and a powerful claim to inclusion in modernity and state projects (Dietz 1998; Golte and Adams 1990; Matos Mar 1984). This work has insightfully analyzed the use-value of informality for squatters, politicians, and brokers (Fischer et al. 2014); the pragmatic and morally charged mix of radical and clientelist politics that squatters use to make claims on the state (Lazar 2008; Stokes 1995); and how redeploying hegemonic ideologies of citizenship, propriety, and family advances squatters’ land claims while reproducing forms of inequality and precarity (Holston 2008; Murphy 2015). Nonetheless, it is still surprisingly common for commentators to draw on languages of marginality, exclusion, and citizenship to portray squatters as a cohesive group, united by their collective sociopolitical exclusion and the precariousness of their land claims. Evidence from Pachacútec, however, emphasizes the heterogeneity of squatters, not only because the race and class divides that characterize Peru are also evident within shantytowns but also because of the complexities of shantytown property regimes. Squatters

claim land in various and conflicting ways, at multiple times, and for distinct but overlapping audiences, creating questions for would-be residents regarding who “the community” is and who is entitled to represent it.

Latin Americanists have long argued that “community” does not describe a “static, place-based social collective” but a “power-laden field of social relations whose meanings, structures, and frontiers are continually produced, contested and reworked in relation to a complex range of sociopolitical attachments and antagonisms” (Gregory 1998:11, cited in Goldstein 2004:96). In Peruvian shantytowns, communities are created as residents collaborate to build roads and schools, procure water and electricity, organize political rallies, and strategically represent themselves to state agents who anticipate particular forms of community and inscribe them into documents and registries. These activities forge intertwining networks of affective, economic, political, and documentary support that are connected to land but not contained by it (Allen 2002; Lobo 1982). This leads to conflicting visions, versions, and experiences of community and related disagreements about property rights.

Conflicts over residency and property rights in Pachacútec demonstrate that property is fundamentally relational, signifying a broad social agreement about the “bundle of rights” one holds against others and one’s obligations toward them. Moreover, the rules we make about property in land (e.g., who has rights to land, how land may be used, how much may be accumulated, how long rights last) engage deeply moral questions about the kind of society we want to create (Blomley 2003:122). Whatever rules we choose, “property”—like “community”—is not a static object but requires a “continual, active doing” through various performances, communicative claims, and material enactments. The complexities of this “doing” reveal fissures, contradictions, and inconsistencies in neoliberal and neopopulist models of property and generate practices that complicate and compromise these dominant orders even as they reproduce them (135).⁴

The government counts that occur regularly in Peru’s urban margins rely on and reproduce a concept of residency as a composite ideal that encompasses many disparate elements. These include being present in the area full time, participating in community development initiatives, having nowhere else to go, and using the land to create “dignified” single-family homes. However, acts of surveying and censusing effectively disaggregate this ideal and allow for multiple and conflicting performances of residency. These counts leave behind documents, the material remainders of official inscriptions (Ballesteros 2012), which Peruvians then integrate into their residency performances. Ironically, repeated efforts to update government registries and make residency legible effectively destabilize “res-

idency” as a governmental category. In this context, residency counts have complex and contradictory effects, generating anxiety and insecurity among some residents, while allowing others to strategize and prosper. I illustrate the relationship among residential anxiety, recounts, and large numbers in the next section.

Situating Pachacútec and the Vivencia Paradox

A local ombudsman once told me, “If there’s anything we know for certain, it’s that Pachacútec is BIG.” By most accounts she was right. Visually, Pachacútec is startling. Rows upon rows of houses stretch from desert mountains to the ocean. Numbers seem to confirm this visual immensity. According to government reports following the 2007 census, Pachacútec houses 180,000 residents—although this number appears to grow as it circulates. Because governments assess poverty based largely on spatial indicators, numbers also affirm the area’s identity as a homogenous “extreme poverty zone.”⁵ Eighty-four percent of homes are made of precarious materials that offer little protection against Pachacútec’s notoriously harsh climate, where winter fog is so thick it forms rivers in the streets. Ninety-seven percent of households lack piped water and sewage systems, leading to widespread infectious and respiratory diseases (Consortio Macro Proyecto Ingenieros 2009). One survey reported that children in Pachacútec suffer an average of 12 infections per year (Urruchi, Ampuero, and Caballero 2006; fig. 1).

These statistics, combined with mediated images of ramshackle houses, rolling fog, ragged children, and masses of people demanding water and roads, help generate Pachacútec’s public image as an overcrowded site of extreme poverty that rightly demands urgent attention from the various governments and NGOs operating in the area. Like other districts in Peru, Pachacútec falls under the jurisdiction of four different governing bodies: the district of Ventanilla, the province of Callao, the region of Callao, and the national government of Peru. As such, there are four different governments on which Pachacutanos may make claims and four different political administrations pandering for residents’ votes in an area where presumed population density makes this an especially good investment of political attention (fig. S2).

In the quest for political legitimacy, politicians compete to be seen as active on behalf of the poor, such that Pachacútec’s “impoverished masses” become a precious political commodity. Eager to transform atomized individuals into loyal constituents as cheaply as possible, neopopulist governors spend

4. “Neopopulism” describes the use of highly personalistic, anti-oligarchic political rhetoric amid fiscal austerity and privatization. Fujimori, for instance, gained broad support by financing inexpensive, community-based projects that could be directly attributed to him.

5. “Extreme poverty” is a term used officially and colloquially to describe Peru’s lowest socioeconomic sector. Although precise definitions vary by organization, national socioeconomic maps describe “extreme poverty zones” as political jurisdictions where inhabitants lack more than three of five essential services: water and sewage infrastructure, electricity, hospitals, primary schools, and land titles.



Figure 1. One quadrant of Pachacútec, a shantytown in metropolitan Lima-Callao, on a rare sunny day. 2007. Photo by author. A color version of this figure is available online.

much of their political energy counting or otherwise “recognizing” residents as legitimate community members, eligible for the state’s limited social assistance programs.⁶ In this effort, they both ally with local *dirigentes* (community leaders) who take special initiative when it comes to area development and hire enterprising residents with large social networks to work as political promoters. These promoter positions are highly prized and among the only formal jobs locally available to residents. Donning colored vests that represent different levels of government, promoters arrive at doors daily: taking surveys, registering residents, and promising that their political patron understands the community’s problems and is committed to resolving them. Surveys thus help construct political networks, and officially recognizing and registering impoverished “communities” helps build political constituencies. Likewise, the imagined divisions between “political” and “community” spheres, and between public servants and self-interested citizens, disappear in the bodies of neighbors who represent both (Auyero 2001; Poole 2004). Residents must therefore be careful about how they present themselves to neighbors, because it is never entirely clear how individuals and social networks will align with different political entities and the shifting identity of the state.

Despite Pachacútec’s image as a densely populated “extreme poverty zone” and its corresponding political value, closer inspection of the area reveals a paradox. In a place widely represented as housing Lima’s impoverished masses, many of the houses are empty. The words “*No Vive*” are scrawled on doors in large letters, and where they are not, neighbors eagerly tell outside observers whether the house is truly inhabited or if the supposed resident “*no vive, no hace*

6. Peru spends 8% of GDP on social programs, which is less than half the Latin American average (Levitsky 2014).

vivencia” (does not live here, does not “do living” here). Indeed, several interlocutors described Pachacútec as a *pueblo fantasma*, a ghost town only vaguely populated by formal shadows (fig. 2).

In addition to “empty” houses with the words “No Vive” on them, Pachacútec is frequently speckled with smoldering ashes—evidence that a *desalojo* (eviction) occurred the night before. Neighbors offer divergent explanations for these events. Some say the house was occupied by a *turista* (tourist) or “*un vivo que no hacia vivencia*” (a deceitful person who did not do living). Others say evictions are carried out by “bad community leaders” who incite neighbors to violence so they can “traffic” in stolen land.⁷ Still others hold both views simultaneously, revealing a moral economy in which multiple moral logics compete and intersect, informing a powerful, if ambivalent, sense of justice that shapes the dynamics, interpretations, and outcomes of land disputes (Fassin 2012; Thompson 1971). The high stakes and complex moralities of residency determinations result from a convoluted political-legal history that informs popular expectations about what shantytowns should be and who should inhabit them.

The Historical Construction of Multivalent Vivencia

The relationship between residency and land rights in urban Peru can be traced to the 1950s, when rural migrants began flooding into Lima. The simplest narratives argue that this “overflow” of the popular masses overwhelmed policy mak-

7. Legally, “land trafficking” means selling land that does not belong to you. However, ambiguous land laws make this a common occurrence. Colloquially, the “land trafficker” label is therefore reserved for people who facilitate morally contested land transfers that do not result in fully serviced urban neighborhoods.



Figure 2. Houses of people accused of not “doing living” in Pachacútec. 2008. Photo by author. A color version of this figure is available online.

ers, forcing them to leave urban development in the hands of migrants themselves and creating a city where governance and infrastructure are constantly catching up with urban growth (Collier 1976; Riofrio 1996). However, these descriptions too often overlook how the state, in various guises, has been complicit in these developments, structuring the economic, ideological, legal, and political environment in which squatters seek land rights, as well as the performances necessary to obtain them.

To begin, the mid-century migration streams that triggered battles over urban land were the result of “elite land grabs” in the countryside and the development of extractive export industries that disrupted rural livelihoods and provided few jobs to compensate (Fitzgerald 1979). By the 1980s, poverty, inequality, and political disaffection spurred the rise of the Maoist guerilla insurgency Shining Path and whole villages moved to Lima, fleeing the violence of a war that disproportionately affected indigenous peoples long considered “alien to modernity” (Franco 2006). The increasing visibility of informal settlements in Lima’s periphery—commonly called “invasions” to index their extralegal origins and the apparent foreignness of settlers—prompted anxiety among urban elites (Collier 1976). The presence of Andean migrants in Lima challenged both the ordering capacities of the state and conventional geographies of race in Peru. As “matter out of place,” many Limeños viewed migrant shantytowns as sites of delinquency and social breakdown, a perspective shared by conventional academic wisdom at the time (Lobo 1982; Weismantel 2001).

To gain legitimacy for their land claims, squatters had to counter these damning portrayals, such that battles over urban land were partly discursive and ideological. Staying within official moral frameworks, squatters combined liberal ideals of autonomy and entrepreneurship with conservative family values to contend that they were poor but upstanding individuals who, absent government support, were struggling to provide dignified lives for their families. Scholars and politicians from the left and right rallied around this framing, arguing that squatters were “mainly interested in consolidating their housing investments, getting their kids into

school, and identifying themselves as respectable property owners” (Mangin and Turner 1968:155; Murphy 2015). The fact that women, who were normatively linked to the moral space of the home and principally responsible for its maintenance (Blondet 2002; Boesten 2010), were often primary protagonists in land invasions helped evidence these virtuous intentions. Reframed as “progressive” or “self-help” housing, informal settlements were no longer opposed to the formal suburbs but could be viewed as proto-urbanizations that, with time, labor, and the proper political-legal tools, could be transformed into modern neighborhoods, occupied by dignified, propertied citizens (Anderson 2007; Fernández-Maldonado 2007).

Although marginal settlements continue to be viewed with marked ambivalence, over time, Peruvian politicians developed innovative ways to demonstrate a politically advantageous compassion for the poor while apparently preventing the disorder of the margins from engulfing the city. In 1961, Congress passed Law 13517 on Marginal Settlements, which officially prohibited land invasions while also creating rules under which invasions could be successful. For instance, one law gave local authorities only 24 hours to forcibly evict settlers, after which squatters had some legal claim to the land and the conflict became a “judicial process of arbitration and negotiation” (Dosh and Lerager 2006:39).⁸ If invasions survived these violent beginnings and subsequent judicial negotiations, Congress promised to help “organized citizens” create “modern” and “dignified” neighborhoods by installing infrastructure and legalizing individual land claims. By 1968, however, the national government realized it could not keep pace with these obligations, and Congress decoupled physical and legal land regularization. This created a pattern where illegal physical occupation was followed by legal recognition, with infrastructure eventually being installed after the fact (Fernández-Maldonado 2007).

The imbrication of formality and informality within Peruvian housing law has helped to normalize invasions as a

8. This law, Civil Code Article 920, was modified by Article 67 of Law 30230 in 2014.

form of “self-help” housing. Absent stable employment or affordable formal housing, invasions became a reasonable way for migrants, impoverished Limeños, and young couples to acquire homes of their own. However, obtaining housing this way also demands the performance of a particularly spectacular poverty that forces would-be residents outside the law. The components of this performance are so well established that one scholar described it as the “Recipe for a House” in Peru (Torribio 2005). That said, as enacted, this violent and anxiety-provoking invasion formula can also be understood as a morally precarious numbers game, the outcome of which depends on controlling when and how settlers are seen by authorities.

Initially, neighbors organize a simultaneous overnight arrival on vacant land. Although the sheer number of squatters arriving en masse makes it difficult for authorities to remove them by force, gaining legitimacy for their claims requires more nuanced techniques. Upon arriving, squatters must immediately begin performing residency: erecting provisional shelters on the site, soliciting the support of local governors,⁹ and publicly portraying themselves as members of the righteous impoverished struggling to provide dignified homes for their families. Meanwhile, to retain political legitimacy, governors must be seen “seeing” settlers as they “truly” are: either greedy invaders wreaking havoc on a peaceful social system or masses of poor but deserving citizens.

The moral and legal ambivalence of squatting was compounded by a rhetorical ambiguity regarding the nature of property, that is, whether property rights were based on active use and necessity or a product of official ownership and on-paper possession. In 1969, new Peruvian land reform policies promised land would begin to serve a “social function in a new system of justice” and rightfully belonged to “those who work it” rather than those who “charge rent without tilling” (Velasco 2005 [1968]:282). This sentiment was written into the 1979 constitution and has become an important part of Peru’s moral economy of property. Nonetheless, the final affirmation that land claims were legitimate was the delivery of legal land titles—paper fetishes that materialize a relationship of legal recognition between the state and the titleholder (Gordillo 2006).

Throughout Peru’s urban housing history, politicians at different levels of government have competed for the right to distribute land titles. As Gilbert (2002) explains, titling programs “constitute housing policy on the cheap. . . . [They are] an apparently unchallengeable recipe for popularity with ordinary people [that] governments have been anxious to pursue” (5). Because of these political battles, between 1961 and 2002 the administrative responsibility for titling lands shifted between national and local governments four times and the particular government office responsible changed 13 times

9. This step often precedes the invasion, when politicians informally indicate that land can be made available to squatters in exchange for political support.

(Calderón Cockburn 2002). Today, whether titling powers lie with national, regional, provincial, or district governments depends on the specific legal history of the settlement. Moreover, the specific requirements for obtaining these titles vary depending on how this legal history aligns with the particular circumstances of property acquisition. The only constant in this legal morass is that obtaining official title requires demonstrating continued occupation over time. As such, shantytown occupants do the most logical thing—continually accumulate documentary proof of residency from as many organizations as possible.

In the 1990s, President Fujimori attempted to streamline titling processes, temporarily cloaking clientelist titling practices in neoliberal ideologies. Around the time of Fujimori’s first election, right-wing economist and Peruvian neoliberal ideologue Hernando de Soto was receiving worldwide attention for his assertion that legal land titles could eliminate poverty in the third world. He argued that formalizing the poor’s property claims would give them access to capital and credit, enable entrepreneurship, and thus alleviate both individual and national poverty through a kind of “popular capitalism” (Calderón Cockburn 2002). In 1996, as Peru’s social programs were being slashed and state assets privatized to repay national debts, Fujimori received a loan from the World Bank to follow de Soto’s recommendations and create the Commission to Formalize Informal Property (COFOPRI). Between 1996 and 2009, COFOPRI issued approximately 1.8 million urban land titles (Fernández-Maldonado and Bredenoord 2010). At least 10,500 of these were distributed in Pachacútec (Consortio Macro Proyecto Ingenieros 2009). Over time, these titles, which ostensibly represented a supreme form of property recognition, have intersected in uneasy ways with the recognition of neighbors and local authorities, rendering the conflict between property as function and property as product and on-paper possession especially acute.

Local and Living Histories

Pachacútec occupies a special place in Lima’s history of urban development. It is one of three “planned *barriadas*” in which the national government appropriated and sought to reproduce squatters’ self-help housing solutions by relocating politically problematic invasions to parceled but otherwise barren land in the periphery and helping squatters organize the “grassroots” community development initiatives that invasions were known for (Collier 1976). The first planned *barriada* was created in 1971 when, following a violent and widely publicized invasion of private lands, President Velasco relocated settlers to vacant land that he promised to develop into the “model city” Villa el Salvador (VES). This model was repeated in 1984 and then again in 2000 with the founding of Pachacútec (Fernández-Maldonado and Bredenoord 2010).

The official story of Pachacútec begins in 1988 when President García founded a self-help housing project called the “Special Project City Pachacútec” and sold the land to im-

poverished citizens for a nominal fee.¹⁰ Due to infrastructure delays, the area remained relatively uninhabited until February 3, 2000, when President Fujimori relocated 25,000 people from an invasion in VES to what is now called the “Pilot Project New Pachacútec,” or simply “El Piloto” (fig. S3).

However, in the historical memory of community members, Fujimori’s administration planned the VES invasion specifically to incite a conflict that Fujimori could resolve, bolstering his image as a leader firm enough to bring order to disorder and beneficent enough to provide land to Lima’s neediest families. Amélie, a resident relocated from VES in 2000, knew the invasion was politically motivated but nonetheless took advantage of the opportunity to create a more dignified life for her family:

The Villa El Salvador invasion was huge. But that was planned . . . it was something political, because they came house by house by house registering people to invade. . . . My dad said this was political . . . that we would get in trouble. . . . But my mother said, “We can’t live our lives clustered like pigs. Our daughters need to go out on their own. If there’s an opportunity, it costs us nothing to investigate.” . . . And it was political . . . because who is going . . . to just give us land?

With the 2000 elections rapidly approaching, Fujimori endeavored to make the relocation as smooth as possible. The military provided food and water daily, and settlers assembled esteras in accordance with the tentative maps of urban planners. Fujimori’s administration further promised that land titles would be granted quickly and that infrastructure for electricity, water, and sewage was imminent. Not coincidentally, the relocation received enormous media attention. The promise of free land in a rapidly developing area prompted many to join the invasion in VES or to settle directly in the relocation site. Thus, although Pachacútec is often described as a site of *pura migrantes* (pure migrants), more than half of recent “migrants” come from metropolitan Lima-Callao, and only 24% come from mountain and jungle regions conventionally associated with rural poverty.¹¹

The rapid influx of residents disrupted Fujimori’s original, orderly, top-down development plans. By 2007, although most original Pilot Project residents had received land titles, only a few neighborhoods had paved roads and electric connections. Moreover, large-scale water and sewage infrastructure was perpetually delayed because Pachacútec’s founda-

tional dynamics were still in play. The area continued to attract people in need of cheap housing and experienced “growth spurts” every time a politician announced a development initiative, promised to rezone land for housing, or sent surveyors to register residents for a social assistance program. Different versions of land titles, called *constancias de posesión* (certificates of possession), are distributed by various politicians and community leaders, and the installation of water and sewage infrastructure remains imminent.

Urban housing experts have long argued that land titles promote community development by providing security of tenure and encouraging individual investment (Lloyd 1980). However, evidence from Pachacútec supports more recent research that suggests easy access to land titles may delay development in self-help housing communities, where people must contribute time and labor to build their neighborhoods from scratch (see Dosh and Lerager 2006). As Appadurai (1996) explains, land titles create “semiotically fracturable” entities. They bind land, person, and paper together in ways that can be strategically split, allowing land to serve as a home, a commodity, or a site of future plans and economic security. Land titles both tie people to land and liberate them from it, partially unyoking people and property from the complex local structures of accountability in which they would otherwise be embedded (Appadurai 1996). Within Pachacútec, these partially unyoked individuals are called *turistas* (tourists). The controversies surrounding them illuminate Pachacutanos’ ideals of residency, the various ways this ideal-type residency may be strategically disaggregated, and the relationship between residency determinations and the dynamics of social exclusion in Peru’s urban margins.

Shantytown “Tourists” and Vivencia Controversies

In the world imagined by Peruvian officials when they design housing policies, “living” in a shantytown implies numerous things: “truly needing” land to provide a family with “dignified” housing conditions, residing full time, suffering area discomforts, participating in community development projects, and eventually owning the land they occupy. Yet in practice, these traits do not always align. One may contribute to community development while living elsewhere, participate in local projects while having multiple houses, stay in a house all day and not participate, or “truly need” a house yet never be home. Falling short in any single aspect of *vivencia*, however, can lead to being labeled a “turista” and put one at risk of being evicted by neighbors or the state agents they enlist.

All my interlocutors agreed that *turistas* were problematic but disagreed about how this term should be applied in practice. Local government reports describe *turistas* as people “who began to trade in property or opted to convert their property into non-permanent housing. . . . They do not reside in Pachacútec but keep their lots occupied in one form or another or visit them on occasion” (Paytán and Villalobos

10. Alan García was president from 1985 to 1990, overseeing economic crisis and a dramatic rise in political violence. He fled to Paris following corruption charges in 1992 but was reelected in 2006.

11. These statistics are derived from the results of Peru’s 2007 census for Pachacútec’s encompassing district of Ventanilla. Given Ventanilla’s spatial development, it is reasonable to assume most “recent migrants” (i.e., people who resided elsewhere 5 years before the census) live in Pachacútec. Expanding this definition to include the 2000 relocation would likely increase the total number of “recent migrants” and the proportion from Lima-Callao substantially.

2005). A local schoolteacher, meanwhile, suggested that anyone working outside Pachacútec qualified as a *turista*. For her, Pachacútec contained two types of residents:

There are the people who live and work in the community . . . then there's the other 70% that works far away. . . . That's why they're called *turistas*. They live here, but you don't see them. They arrive home exhausted so they're disinterested in the community. . . . As a result, there are people who get angry, who bring justice.

"Justice" in this case meant punishing an individual's apparent indifference to community development by burning their house and replacing them with a more participatory and productive resident closer to the ideal self-help housing recipient.

Others were more sympathetic to people who, in pursuing dignified lives for their families, split their time between communities of work and rest. According to Pilar,

There are many people who work really far away. You can't come from one end of the city to the other [every day]. . . . The ones that we don't know, to those problems we say, "Oh they need to move, they don't really need the house." But that's not the way it is. In practice, we're very selfish because everyone has a right to have a piece of land for themselves, no?

Although Pilar admitted that not all types of *vivencia* were equal—"It's not like us who are here, suffering all of the inclemency of the environment, of the cold"—she maintained that transient residents who had no other option to own a single-family home still "lived" in Pachacútec because "this is where they have their land."

Pilar was not alone in this opinion. During the 2007 census, a fight broke out between a woman and a census taker who refused to count her in an all but empty lot. Neighbors took the woman's side: "That is where she will put her house, so you should count her there." Eventually the census taker agreed to record the house as "under construction," and neighbors watched as the surveyor placed a "house censused" sticker on the few standing *esteras*.

Together, Pilar's statement and the census incident suggest that *vivencia* is less about occupancy than it is about attracting the support and sympathies of neighbors, raising questions about the circumstances in which a person is accused of not "doing living." Indeed, there are some occasions when neighbors develop unfavorable opinions of precisely those residents who seem most in need of a home.

Teodora, for instance, lived in a straw shack in a recent invasion high on Pachacútec's sandy hillside. She had migrated from the Amazon a year earlier and worked as a cook in the local *beneficencia*, a government-run dining hall devoted to serving only the poorest of the poor. In exchange for working from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., she received food for herself and her two children but no monetary compensation. Adding to her troubles, the *dirigentes* in Teodora's settlement

were threatening to evict her because she was so rarely at home: "They think I have another house because I'm not at home. But I don't have another house. The reason I'm not home is because I'm here at the dining hall working." To counter these "no *vive*" accusations, Teodora sat in her dilapidated home for 48 hours to prove she did indeed live there. It was the only time I saw her miss work (fig. S4).

Teodora was accused of being a *turista* not despite her apparent need but rather because of it. As a single mother and recent migrant of obvious indigenous extraction, Teodora suffered from overlapping sociopolitical exclusions (Altamirano et al. 2004), filtered through the local framework of *vivencia*. Although her categorical and legible social marginality made her eligible for state resources and sympathetic enough that local leaders initially supported her land claim, her limited social network and lack of local knowledge caused her to fall short in two key aspects of *vivencia*: community participation and documentary acquisition. Although "participation" and "documents" in some ways represent conflicting ideologies of property as function and property as object, both can be understood as ways Pachacutanos incorporate counts—punctuated moments of political visibility—into their performances of residency.

Participatory *Vivencia* and the Art of Counting Extra

Many Pachacutanos had previously lived in one of Lima's "formal" neighborhoods, either as children, renters, or guests of relatives, and described "the reality" of Pachacútec as utterly distinct from what they had known before. In formal neighborhoods, they paid rent and worked independent jobs, hoping to save money and improve their circumstances. In Pachacútec, however, getting ahead required attending meetings, filing documents, and organizing work parties. Participation is a particularly powerful requirement for occupants of self-help housing settlements that distinguishes these areas from formal suburbs and defines the rhythm of everyday life in these spaces (Lloyd 1980).

One of the most demanding forms of participation in Pachacútec was simply "being there." When *dirigentes* and municipal employees told me that to accomplish things in Pachacútec "*tienes que estar allí*" (you have to be there), they meant it was important to be wherever would make them most politically visible until they got what they needed. This meant confronting bureaucrats and "following documents" for hours on end or dropping everything at a moment's notice to attend an information session, registration campaign, or impromptu political rally. During my first 3 months in Pachacútec, I attended seven rallies held by five different politicians and missed many more. These rallies were opportunities for Pachacutanos to make themselves visible to politicians as unified communities, capable of substantial political pressure or support. Politicians, meanwhile, would be seen seeing these constituents: acknowledging their existence, lending credibility to their land claims, and publicly demon-

strating their compassion for the visibly impoverished. Given the frequency and spontaneity of these events, “being there” involved more than mere physical presence. It implied an anxious and active awaiting—a constant readiness to be seen by the state as a faceless member of the easily politicized masses, a virtuous citizen actively promoting urban development, or a legible tick mark on a registry.

Pachacutanos’ emphasis on the participation component of *vivencia* made it possible for individuals to qualify as community members without meeting other criteria such as full-time residency or dire necessity. Silvia occupied land in two different settlements in Pachacútec. When I inquired how she managed to “hacer *vivencia*” in two places at once, she explained what real *vivencia* was:

Vivencia is not just to live there, to be stuck in your house day and night. Living also means to collaborate, participate in a meeting, to give your input. When there’s a chore to do, you go out and do the chore. When it’s necessary to protest, you go out and protest, and you work hand in hand with the *dirigentes*. . . . That’s what living is for me. . . . Whether or not you’re in your house 24 hours a day, you have to be there (*tienes que estar allí*).

Claudia offers another striking example of participatory *vivencia* and how people may exploit multivalent understandings of residency. Claudia and her husband built a house and restaurant in one of Pachacútec’s newest settlements. However, they also owned a house in a wealthy suburb, a summer home in a rural resort town, and a wholesale pasta business. Her four sisters ostensibly occupied adjacent houses on her block, and Claudia claimed yet another lot for her adult son. Although Claudia would never qualify as someone who “truly needed” land, she had the support of neighbors and was pushing the settlement to develop infrastructure. Overall, she performed residency quite well.

Although participation gives impoverished individuals opportunities to obtain land, these examples illustrate that participation has no necessary relationship to immediate need. As active participants in community development initiatives who know how and when to make themselves politically visible, Silvia and Claudia have mastered the art of counting extra as they perform residency for neighbors, state agents, and political figures. A similar but more socially and morally precarious art may be practiced using documents.

Taking Pictures: The Ambivalence of Documentary *Vivencia*

One of the most critical, and problematic, components of *vivencia* is the active accumulation of documents. When governments and other “state-like” entities count squatters to demonstrate their technocratic competence and concern for the poor, they construct registries—their own official pictures of the population—and leave behind documents. Documents

are the material remainders of counts, which Pachacutanos use to prove they have been “officially” recognized as residents by different organizations (Ballesteros 2012). In this context, documents are powerful objects, potentially capable of keeping angry neighbors and property usurpers at bay. Yet documents are also loathed for the distance they create between reality and representation and feared for their ability to destabilize the property rights that people had previously earned (Hull 2012).

Although anthropologists have critiqued statistics and documents as technologies of state control, they have also argued that not counting and not providing official documents can be extreme forms of political and epistemological violence (Scheper-Hughes 1992). In Latin America, histories of colonialism and racial inequality have created a situation in which documents are associated with whiteness, privilege, and social inclusion, whereas not having documents leaves one vulnerable to violence and state predation (Weismantel 2001). As Gordillo (2006) explains, for the historically excluded, state documents are fetishes that keep alive a connection between the documented entity and the state, providing tangible proof of that entity’s existence within the state and its right to be protected by it and from it.

Pachacutanos described the importance of myriad “official” recognitions using idioms of existence. A local childcare worker explained that birth certificates and child identity cards were valuable because “leaving a child without a document . . . makes the child like an animal. The child would be a zero that isn’t worth anything because he doesn’t have any document.” Likewise, one woman was outraged that the 2007 census had not counted her mother while she was traveling. “It’s really bad. It’s as if she didn’t exist in this country.” This valorization of documentary recognition extended to property. Interlocutors often described land titles as “birth certificates for the house,” objects that brought land into existence for the state and transformed the titleholder into a special type of social person, officially linked to land and ideologically associated with civic virtue.

In community meetings, speakers frequently mentioned that “the reality” of Pachacútec had changed over time. Whereas it was once full of *reubicados e invasores* (relocated persons and invaders), it was now largely occupied by *propietarios* (property owners) who had a special relationship to land and the state. For this reason, one very active community member declined a nomination to serve as a *dirigente*, explaining, “I would love to do the job, but I’m not, as they say, a titleholder. . . . So, it depends on you all. I am not a titleholder. I don’t exist.”

Although many Pachacutanos were proud of their status as property owners, others believed that easy access to land titles had contributed to the lack of full-time area residents. As the head of a popular dining hall explained,

It was a mistake to give property titles to those people. . . . Once they got them, they left. Here we have many empty

lots. . . . Some people sold them, but a few, because they have titles, don't even have esteras. And since they have land titles, other people can't move in there. If they did, the owner would come and give them problems, so you can't do it.

Officially, land titles are valued for communicating lived property relations to state actors, allowing these relations to do social work in expanded spheres of interaction (de Soto 1989; Hull 2012; Poole 2004). However, documents also reveal and widen the distances between official and lived social realities, enabling some to perform residency on paper and in state registries even when they are not "doing living" in the eyes of community members.

Amélie spoke at length about the problems caused by the lack of *vivencia* in her neighborhood:

People left and now there are many abandoned properties. . . . Because many people don't live here, we can't ask for things [from authorities]. . . . Also at one time delinquents moved into those empty lands and it was dangerous. . . . There were rapes . . . robberies. . . . *Vivencia* is important because we help each other. But look here, on this side I have my neighbor that doesn't live here. My sister [who owns land uphill] also doesn't live here.

Given the multidimensional nature of *vivencia*, the degree to which necessity confers land rights, and the problems that arise when houses stay empty, reverence for written documents did not go unchallenged. Although Pachacútec's governance statute stated *dirigentes* had to be titleholders, many residents believed titleholders were detached from Pachacútec's reality, while many of the most active *dirigentes* did not have land titles. This situation was an artifact of how the temporality of community contributions and documentary recognition aligned with peoples' shifting needs and land use practices. Following the relocation, some settlers worked with national government agencies and NGOs to bring development programs to Pachacútec and were officially recognized by these institutions as community representatives. Yet after these settlers received land titles, many returned to other homes in central Lima while continuing to "represent the community" in institutional negotiations. This angered other would-be *dirigentes* eager to work with local governments to install infrastructure, pave roads, and ensure that "active" residents received land titles. They therefore used other indicators of *vivencia*, such as duration of residence, the size of one's local social network, or being in the process of property formalization and documentary accumulation, to determine whether one could be a *dirigente*. Titling lands had indeed changed the reality of Pachacútec. But it did so by raising crucial questions about who "the community" was and who was entitled to represent it.

Due to these complexities, land titles are highly prized but do not necessarily ensure security of tenure. Many of my interlocutors feared that if they dropped their guard, someone could use a recount to undo their land claim. For in-

stance, Luisa bought land in Pachacútec in 1988 when President García first founded the settlement. However, because the area was uninhabited and undeveloped, she procured a house in another shantytown while retaining legal title to land in Pachacútec. For Luisa, the land was an important financial and relational resource, something she could lend to kin, sell in hard times, or reoccupy if she lost rights to her primary residence. When the 2000 relocation brought life to Pachacútec, Luisa began staying in the house twice a week to ensure new community leaders would see her living there and would not sell the land out from under her. As she explained,

If you live in a house, you're the new owner. . . . The titleholder can't just kick you out . . . because the owner . . . as much as he's the owner, hasn't taken possession. . . . The person who has more right is the person who lives there. . . . If you live in a house, even if it has a legal owner, you become the rightful owner of the house.

Other interlocutors affirmed Luisa's assertion that possession and community consensus had more weight than legal title. One of her neighbors explained that when the original inhabitants left their lots empty, *dirigentes* called a meeting to decide whether to accept new occupants. "And that's what we did. . . . There were some altercations with owners . . . but if the owner wasn't going to live there, well. . . ."

Although Pachacutanos recognize that documents do not always represent reality, they nonetheless believe that they should, and they take measures to rectify the disconnect. During my fieldwork, many community leaders were demanding that the state expropriate land from previous owners and redistribute it to people actively "doing living" in Pachacútec. Others exploited recurrent counts (e.g., tax registries, censuses, health surveys, activity sign-ups) to build a paper trail that could challenge a previous owner's claims, thus realigning official and lived realities. Local *dirigentes* also tried, and occasionally succeeded, in overriding previous recognitions by replicating state practices: constructing their own registries and producing alternative *constancias de posesión*. They used paper trails and recounts to make the real world align with their ideals of what property-making and state oversight should be. However, efforts to invoke the power and reproduce the "signature of the state" in various documents undermined both the legibility of the state and the force of documents produced in its name (Das 2007). In this environment, many official recognitions might be necessary to ensure security of tenure, and no single authorization was ever sufficient. Thus, every recount, every effort to link names to places on paper, forces people to reaffirm the state's image of them as residents while providing others opportunities to re-fashion that image.

Striking Poses: "Doing Living" for the State

Amélie spoke at length about the number of times she had to re-register her land claim during her first few years in Pa-

chacútec. She explained that if COFOPRI surveyors knocked and did not find her at home, they would give her land to another family. She said many people in Pachacútec lost land this way, regardless of whether COFOPRI had already registered them. Although Amélie disliked being trapped in her house for days waiting to be counted, she believed recounts were necessary:

COFOPRI at that time saw many lots were *en blanco* (blank; empty). . . . It shouldn't be *en blanco*. . . . Someone should be living there. It's the same as the dining hall. Some of us [are registered food recipients and] have our number, but other people are just there temporarily because they need food and another woman, one with a number, doesn't collect her ration. . . . [The authorities] don't let you keep the number if you don't take advantage of it. . . . It's the same with land.

Amélie's use of the term "en blanco" highlights the ideal relation between real-world conditions and documentary imaginaries. "En blanco" is used to refer to the ontological condition of the lot, which Amélie argues should lead to the erasure of the aspiring titleholder in the COFOPRI registry and their replacement with a new resident. Amélie both conflates real and documentary worlds and suggests they should be mutually determining. Moreover, by comparing the distribution of land to dining hall rations, she suggests that "need" is determined by active use. The dining hall Amélie referred to, the same one that employed Teodora, was committed to serving only the "neediest" Pachacutanos. Administrators believed keeping pace with the neediest required reassessment every 6 months to ensure recipients were still poor and, relatedly, still actively using the resource. Each reassessment meant surprise home visits, new forms to file, and new boxes to check. As Amélie explained, it is the same with land. After initial COFOPRI surveillance stopped, area politicians began conducting their own counts that, either explicitly or incidentally, assessed who was really "doing living" in Pachacútec. Retaining land rights thus requires incorporating repeated documentary recognitions into everyday performances of residency (fig. S5).

Although Amélie believed the lack of productive residents was a serious problem in Pachacútec, she nonetheless ensured that her neighbors and relatives did not come up "en blanco" on surveys. When surveyors arrived she ran from house to house, showing them the identity documents of presumptive residents and explaining why they were not present at that moment. Amélie was effectively "doing living" for everyone on her block. This was a common strategy that residents used to protect the land claims of loved ones while frustrating others who felt the land could be put to better use.

Recounts are exciting and perilous times, requiring some to defensively reaffirm the images states have of them while allowing others to remake that image in their favor. Luisa was among those who feared the count. She had a national land

title, but because of the historical and political circumstances of her land claim, and her responsibilities to multiple spaces, her claim among her neighbors was tenuous. When Luisa heard cadastral surveyors were making rounds, she stayed in her house for 3 days, scared that she would miss them or, worse, that a neighbor would register the land under another name and contest her land claim.

For Claudia, however, counts were opportunities to present herself and her neighborhood in the best possible light. When I first met Claudia, she was holding a crowbar and had just finished leading neighbors in knocking down one of the few brick houses in her neighborhood. The homeowner was livid. "They say they want development, but then they go around destroying houses!" Once the policeman mediating the conflict had left, Claudia and her neighbors approached me, metal tools in hand, and demanded to see my camera. They wanted to make certain I had not recorded the incident. For a moment, Claudia and her neighbors had resembled a violent, angry mob rather than an organized and industrious community. This was not an image they wanted "the state" or anyone else to have of them. Once I proved my camera had been off, Claudia invited me for a cup of Nescafé and explained that what looked like a violent eviction was a necessary act conducted in the interest of community development. That same week, regional government representatives were registering houses, and district government surveyors were measuring lots. Their neighbor's house extended over the street line and did not conform to the map district planners had recently redrawn. If "the district" saw the neighborhood that way, it could delay plans to pave roads in their settlement.

As we sipped our coffee, a registrar arrived to inscribe Claudia and her four sisters into the regional property ledger. They gave him their names and told him where they lived on the block and which lots belonged to their adult children. Together, the family occupied seven lots. When the registrar commented that they were all related, Claudia explained, "Yes, we're all the same family, but we're also individuals." This is how Claudia appears in official documents and registries, the pictures the state has of her. Two months after the district and regional governments had registered Claudia's house, her settlement received land titles. I rarely saw her after that.

One of the purported goals of recounts is to determine who "really" lives in Pachacútec—to find or create an ideal-type resident who will live with their nuclear family in a single house full time, building their homes and communities from the ground up. Yet these recounts lead not to stable living but to punctuated living. People scramble to present themselves in particular ways when they know they are most likely to be seen by state officials. Rather than contain residency, recounts are layered into multivalent residency performances. Whether it is constructing an image of community solidarity at political rallies, participating in neighborhood development projects, or being individually inscribed on as many

documents as possible, “doing living” in Pachacútec means being counted and recounted as someone who lives there.

Conclusion

The 2007 census was accompanied by much fanfare (fig. S6). President García assured the population that his census would see every Peruvian and count them correctly. By the time census takers arrived, people had assumed their positions. They answered doors donning the words *No Vive*, stood in front of esteras assembled the night before, or sat on the unfinished floors of houses they had purchased but never slept in. Luisa spent the evening in Pachacútec with her youngest daughter while her other children waited to be counted at her other home. Amélie volunteered as a census taker for the day, dutifully recording people where she found them while joking about their possible turista status. Claudia’s house remained empty, as it had ever since she received her land title. Given her financial resources, community position, and political and documentary savvy, perhaps she felt she could skip this count.

Ethnographic evidence from Pachacútec suggests that numbers, and the intermittent forms of state surveillance embodied in recounts, inform squatters’ actions in unexpected ways and play contradictory roles in constructing residency and land rights. Counts, which often begin as the populist machinations of constituent-seeking politicians, mediate relations between states and citizens, reproducing idealized imaginaries of both in the process. However, these encounters occur in spurts and jolts, and people “do living” accordingly. They anticipate counts, incorporating them into their performances of residency and efforts to gain land rights. Although many recounts are justified based on the belief that land should go to ideal-type residents, in practice they disaggregate residency, allowing people to “do living” in divergent ways and potentially undermining efforts to construct the urbanized, middle-class, and socially integrated neighborhoods that shantytown residents desire.

Although Pachacútec is following the trajectory of Lima’s older shantytowns and slowly developing into a fully serviced urbanization (see Anderson 2007), the different ways Pachacutanos “do living” continue to generate divergent experiences of community and intracommunal conflicts. For overactive residents like Silvia, collaborative residency performances produce intimate and official ties that she experiences as a “solidaristic community” (Auyero 2001) and that may succeed in obtaining infrastructural amenities, even if some families acquire extra properties in the process. For someone like Luisa, an owner and part-time resident excluded from dominant networks because of the timing of her land claim and her sporadic occupancy, neighbors and state agents are sources of anxiety and insecurity. There are people like Amélie, who desire a vibrant and cohesive shantytown community but work diligently with members of their social network to produce a neighborhood they experience as empty. Finally, as the stories of Teodora and Claudia show, at the extremes, conflicts over inadequate residency generate violence and perpetuate inequalities even as

they create ownership opportunities for people who would not otherwise have them.

This analysis of residency, property, and community in Pachacútec has implications for how anthropologists understand geographies of citizenship and the dynamics of urbanization. In recent years, anthropologists have shown that citizenship is more than legal status; it is a “complex bundle of practices” (Lazar 2013:12) that constitutes membership in different political communities, of which the nation-state is only one. In particular, scholars have examined place- and property-making as constitutive of political membership and described the city as both the site and object of these claims (Lazar 2013). However, the battles over residency in Pachacútec complicate this citizenship framework even further. They reveal that people may contribute to place-making in diverse ways that link them to space without binding them to it. Moreover, part of contributing to place-making is having your contributions recognized by different audiences, who may disagree about which contributions matter.

The diverse, knotted, and variegated inclusions that define Pachacútec conflict with conventional depictions of shantytowns as homogenous spaces of social exclusion. People have divergent claims to the same space based on different forms of occupancy and political recognition and on the different temporalities of right and need embedded in shantytown property regimes. In shantytowns, land claims may be based on past contributions to development, making property a product of labor and legal recognition; active use and contributions to everyday community life; anticipation of future need and socially recognized obligations to care for family; and beliefs about individual entitlements to security and autonomy. As anxieties about unsustainable urban growth in the Global South meet debates about speculation and accumulation in the Global North, anthropologists should attend to the multiple ways people use and lay claim to space in the city and the conflicts that result. Not only will this help us make sense of cities that are simultaneously sprawling, soaring, and pockmarked; it will also tell us something about the values that unite communities, indicate where the balance of power lies in a given society, and reveal socio-moral fault lines that might divine future change.

Comments

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This paper, inspired in part by the 2007 national census in Peru, appears just as the 2017 census is incurring criticism for many of the same reasons as swirled around that of a decade ago: faulty administration of the questionnaire, poor communication of the

intentions of the census takers, undercounting and misrepresentation of sectors of the population that have the most to demand from the state. Seen on a world stage, most of these populations are rural, located far from the seat of political and economic power. But increasingly they are the millions of human beings who live in poor neighborhoods ringing cities and squeezed into less desirable locations within them. The issues they raise are fodder for every school of anthropological theorizing, from the biological and ecological to the linguistic and symbolic. Using a performative perspective, Skrabut's article brings into juxtaposition several of the empirical referents that fuel these inquiries.

For Skrabut, the central act to be analyzed is the performance of residency: playing the role of permanent occupant of a house and plot, being present, counted, and accounted for. In contexts of informality, performing residency allows shanty dwellers to make claims to community membership and to the assets they gradually, tentatively, often nervously bring to the site.

The article suggests the many audiences that are being played to: national census takers, at one extreme, and, at the other, next-door neighbors. More should have been said, I think, about local community leaders. Long before the census takers arrive, the local *dirigentes* are there with their lists and inventories. They juggle competing demands. One is to welcome new residents and ensure that all lots within the settlement are filled. The other is to close off entry, creating a bounded entity in whose collective name petitions can go forward for water and electricity, sanitation services, infrastructure, amenities, and titles to property. Local leaders are usually well informed about the circumstances of the families occupying a plot. Wearing the two-faced masks so common in Andean dance quadrilles, they help their constituents manage appearances and simultaneously negotiate with outside authorities and interests: local mayors, police, NGOs, political parties, utility companies. To be sure, some are land traffickers and members of criminal gangs.

The article, in enumerating the elements involved in performing residency, understates the importance of an expanded time frame. The shantytown is a meeting place for strangers who become neighbors and who accept that, if all goes well, they will share an indefinite future. They must perform worthiness as long-term associates. I have been struck by the hyper-respectfulness of the language used among neighbors and the delicacy with which conflicting positions are articulated in community meetings. Various rituals of belonging create cycles linking past and future: anniversaries with speeches and pageants reviewing common history, celebrations of national holidays starring successive generations of schoolchildren, participation of the local soccer team in endless *interbarrio* tournaments.

The material advantages of performing residency also merit further exploration. Gaining a reputation as a good neighbor raises the likelihood of being called upon when there is an opening on a construction crew, for drivers on a bus line, for knitters in a handicraft co-op, for a promoter's job on a health project to which other neighbors are connected. Such a reputation involves honesty, reliability, and probably demonstra-

tions of an orderly family life and compliance with gender expectations. One's value as resident is enhanced by proving entrepreneurship, managerial skills, and social networks reaching deep into the world of the nonpoor.

A theme that is well developed in Skrabut's paper involves the multisited economic, social, and political strategies of shantytown residents. Although they are usually thought of as persons without alternatives, and many work to sustain that image, residents may have assets—land, houses, businesses—in other shantytowns, poor and middle-class neighborhoods, and rural areas where they enjoy advantages in niches involving trade, transportation, technology, and insider information. In a former shanty area at the opposite extreme of Lima from Skrabut's Pachacútec, I found residents who swore they would never move and never repeat the suffering and privations of establishing residency and community in their own name. Many were helping sons and daughters to initiate the process, however, and many were investing in urban land as part of a retirement strategy. A new shantytown in a rougher area of town further down the road might be the ideal location for a business too questionable for the home base: a bar or pay-by-the-hour hotel.

These activities, which involve acquiring stakes in a variety of socioeconomic settings, could have been predicted if we had been more aware of the same patterns in rural families. Though we no longer talk about closed peasant communities, the rural poor in Peru and the Andes still do not get enough recognition for their mobility and creativity in exploiting opportunities for expansion, diversification, and enhanced security. Many of their attempts to stake a claim, even start a new life, in far-flung parts of the country end up in failure. But conversations about openings and who can serve as bridges are never-ending, as are exploratory migrations.

In any discussion of the urban poor and their claim to a place to live and establish themselves, the unavoidable backdrop is the pursuit of inclusion and equality. In that sense Skrabut's focus on citizenship is spot on. Spatial segregation in Latin American cities continues unchecked. Social segregation is facilitated by policies that perpetuate differences in the rules of access and quality of the services that are installed in areas of informal occupation and those available to the rest. Shantytowns around the world suggest a pattern of building cities of the poor around cities of the rich. The poor respond with their own citizenship projects, including many of the dramatic performances described in this paper.

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I remember quite well the week the census takers came to town. The year was 1999 and I was living in a provincial capital in the

north of Bolivia's Potosí Department. They were not coming to actually count people and things, because the next formal census would not take place for another 2 years. But the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (INE) had begun a process of capacity-building throughout the country's rural districts. Given that only two censuses had taken place over the preceding 25 years (1976 and 1992), people needed to be taught how to be counted.

Before the white SUVs arrived—bearing INE *técnicos* in the ubiquitous logo-emblazoned field vests that marked them as experts with knowledge to share with their fellow citizens in the country's remote corners—the town relaxed into the festive mode that was more common around *Todos Santos* or during the weeks of *Carnaval*. Stalls began to appear around the central plaza selling snacks and *mocochinchi*, the favorite drink made with boiled peaches, sugar, and cinnamon. But even more telling was the appearance of the hanging bundles of eucalyptus leaves outside of certain houses, which was the eagerly awaited sign that the town's several *chicherías* were open for business.

During the few days in which the INE personnel were among us, they met with officials in the *alcaldía* to plan for the future census; they distributed pamphlets with practical information about census-taking; and, apropos of Kristin Skrabut's insightful ethnographic study of census-taking and housing rights in a shantytown in Lima, Peru, they promoted participation in the upcoming census as an act that was both good for the country and good for the town, because an accurate survey was a precondition for local development. Yet unlike in Skrabut's case study, when the INE SUVs left town, people returned to other preoccupations, other undercurrents of conflict that had nothing to do with being counted by the state.

This is all to say that one of the most important lessons to be drawn from Skrabut's intervention is the idea that the linkages between belonging and legibility are deeply contextual and therefore cannot be reduced, as she argues, to preexisting assumptions about citizenship, marginality, or governance regimes. Indeed, her article can be read as a radical exercise in phenomenological differentiation, one that takes place at just that point at which the tendency to simplify is the most acute: in considerations—both political and analytical—of the relationship between the apparently powerless marginalized and the apparently powerful state. Rather, she argues that the ethnography of residency practices in Pachacútec reveals what she calls “governmentality from below” (citing Appadurai 2001), in which forms of power are projected from the bottom upward and outward within a diffuse web of sociopolitical relations.

But I think that even this fruitful inversion does not do full justice to what she describes. Instead, the article shows how nuanced layers of materialization unfold horizontally and unevenly across the range of residency practices, or performances, as she frames them. What gives Skrabut's article such force is in the way it demands a complete and utter rejection of vertical metaphors of power. In their place what we are left with is an account of what might be thought of as sideways governmentality—the way, for example, the stories of Luisa, Claudia, and Teodora gesture toward endless permutations in

the practice of residency in Pachacútec that belie even well-meaning categorical reduction. Skrabut's own description of these horizontal irreducibilities is “punctuated living,” an apt phrase that captures, with a certain ethnographic urgency, what is vital to know about “the different temporalities of right and need embedded in shantytown property regimes.”

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In her evocative ethnography, Skrabut shows just how complicated possession can be, and how much it saturates social lives. I was particularly taken with this for how similar it is to the practices of rural Paraguayans with whom I have worked (see Hetherington 2011). Peruvian shantytowns and Paraguayan frontiers share similar legal regimes and are subject to the same development ideologies, and what is most striking is how closely the informal languages of ownership, and the anxieties about duplicitous documents, mirror each other. But unlike Paraguayan *campesinos*, Skrabut's informants buck two of the most obvious motivations for acquiring property: many of them do not appear to need housing per se, and few seem interested in property as a means to an economic end. Instead, property is a way of declaring self-sovereignty in the face of existential precarity.

The key to various kinds of property rights in Pachacútec is establishing residency, and Skrabut argues that this happens in two distinct ways. The first is the awkward phrase *hacer vivencia*, which Skrabut translates as “doing living,” although it could also be thought of as “making experience,” an ongoing commitment to presence and belonging. The equivalent expression in Paraguay is *arraigarse*, to root oneself, and it bears the same moral requirement to stick around. The second set of practices are “engagements with the state,” during censuses, enumerations, and recounts, that variously promise to produce formalized property titles. These two strategies can feed into each other, but they are also at odds with each other, as one requires intimate neighborly work, and the other harbors the danger of betrayal.

Skrabut calls these two modes “performances,” like “striking a pose” for the census taker. The performances, though, are part of larger property-making strategies that use various kinds of practices to build relationships of recognition. Savvy aspiring residents need to play both of these games at once, often using one to bolster their chances in the other. The key to successfully *hacer vivencia* is knowing and being known to one's neighbors, especially by building amicable relationships with local political patrons and with self-styled property vigilantes who can vouch for you to the census takers when you are not at home, or, alternately, take a crowbar or a torch to your house. Here the stakes of the strategy are at their clearest. Someone who is

successful at making *vivencia* builds a strong network of support, which can even lead to forms of parallel formalization, the *constancias de posesión* that operate on local legal conventions.

The second set of practices are somewhat less developed in the article, the constant work of making oneself appear on official state documents. Again, here, we can think of this as a performance before (and therefore desire for) a modernist seeing-state. But it is also a painstaking process of leaving traces on documents, even those, like the census, which officially do not “count” toward property-making, but which seem nonetheless important to one’s imagination of state vision. Documentary practices performed for the state are of a completely different nature from the intimate practices of neighborliness, because, as Skrabut puts it, “the state is less an entity than a rumor; a veil of uncertainty.” It is somewhat less clear here what the stakes are of this sort of inclusion. Skrabut quotes one informant saying that titled absentee owners can give squatters “problems,” but it is not clear what those problems would be in a place so totally governed by local legal practices. An absentee owner may not be able to count on the support of local committees of neighbors. But they are rumored to have other powers. More than a “fetish” representing a relationship with the state, the land title is an aspiration to participate in a form of power veiled in uncertainty, whose vague threat allows an owner to transcend local squabbles.

Even knowing how vigilant one has to be to uphold legitimate possession at the local level, residents like Claudia are quick to trade in this form of property for official title. Like other title owners, the rumor of other powers means she no longer needs to make *vivencia*. Skrabut calls this a kind of “unyoking,” and the tendency of titled property owners to disengage from the community is one reason people feel ambivalent about titling to begin with. Paraguayan campesinos describe the same relationship: even though successful *arraigo* ultimately leads to property titling, one of the effects of titling is *desarraigo*. The two cases suggest that Hernando de Soto and the World Bank were right, at least about one of the effects of land titling. For neoliberal property reformers, the title’s effect is to commodify land, precisely to disentangle it from the complex local relationships that sustain informal ownership regimes. Commodification, in principle, frees the property to be used as collateral and frees the owner to focus on things other than protecting her own property.

This is one place I would like to know more from Skrabut. After the performance of residency creates documentary traces, I am curious about what happens to those traces, particularly titles. In rural Paraguay, the rejection of land titles is less about a vague sense that people drift off the land once it has been recognized, but rather a precise denunciation of those who sell their titles to speculators. But this does not seem to be the case in Pachacútec. Do land titles matter here in ways beyond the vague threat of the state? Are there specific “problems” that they empower people to create? Does disentanglement of property and owners from the neighborhood lead to new kinds of capital in the way de Soto suggests? This may be a slightly different

project, one of following documents rather than describing local performances, but the two together would have much to say back to simplistic stories about property formalization that continue to resonate in international development circles.

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Squatter settlements and the conflict-ridden ways in which they become consolidated have been a phenomenon of central significance to processes of urbanization in much of the Global South for more than half a century. The dynamics at play in the making of squatter settlements provide a revealing window into residential segregation, experiences of precarity, and massive forms of inequality. They also underscore certain basic tensions, struggles, and myths that bedevil (neo)liberal forms of rule. This includes the making of property regimes, development paradigms, and citizenship status, in addition to the workings of legal documentation and personhood.

In their search for housing rights, squatters negotiate each of these domains at fraught and consequential moments. As such, close attention to the experiences and struggles of squatters is an excellent place through which to understand basic discontents and power dynamics central to (neo)liberal urbanization in the Global South.

In her study of the sprawling and slowly consolidating neighborhood of Pachacútec in Lima, Kristin Skrabut offers the kind of ethnographic perspective that is needed to better understand what is at stake in squatter settlements. This includes both her illuminating fieldwork and her engagement with anthropological literatures on the state, documentary evidence, and property. Of primary importance, Skrabut’s approach reveals many of the myths that bedevil understandings of squatter settlements. In taking these myths apart and providing an alternative perspective, Skrabut offers a series of significant insights.

This begins with the literature that Skrabut builds on to question key myths of the liberal state. The state, for example, is neither a singular entity nor an all-encompassing authority that unambiguously identifies its citizens and dispenses impartial forms of justice. Rather, the “state” is a series of overlapping jurisdictions and institutions. It is also a key player in a field of force that animates the forms of recognition and the kinds of legal mores that undergird the status of citizens and property relations.

As Skrabut details, Pachacutanos seeking property titles engage with an array of state and civil society institutions. They do so because these different entities can each offer documentary evidence that will validate claims for property rights, if in often conflictive and confusing ways. As a part of this, Skrabut develops how Pachacutanos must be able to demonstrate that

they are worthy of housing rights. In the local idiom, Pachacutanos must “do living,” including a range of variable practices, from permanent residency to community work.

Yet as they “do living” and seek property titles, Pachacutanos have different resources and networks they can draw on. This allows some a greater ability to gain access to securing housing rights and to enhance their relatively privileged positions. Yet those who are more impoverished and less well connected find it much more difficult to secure their properties and escape their precarious circumstances.

As Skrabut poignantly develops these outcomes, she reveals another myth: that squatters form a singularly cohesive community who unfailingly work in solidarity. This insight is well established in studies of class formation and community. Yet the myth itself still informs how development and state institutions work in squatter communities. Squatters must work as a community to develop their neighborhoods and even build infrastructure services, something that requires time and labor. This places a great deal of pressure on squatters, yet it often permits state bureaucracies to allocate fewer resources toward the provision of services.

State representatives can nonetheless tout the consolidation of squatter settlements as a success in “participatory” development. Moreover, the granting of property titles fulfills development goals and appears to provide the means for creating a more orderly city with residents who are clearly identifiable. Former squatters ultimately become less of a problem for an overall residential property regime that places greater value on formal possession.

The trouble, however, as Skrabut nicely illustrates, is that gaining access to property is a fraught, conflictive, and inequitable process. Squatters, in other words, are firmly engaged in the ways in which liberal property regimes actually work, especially among low-income groups. In her criticism of viewing squatters as marginal and excluded, Skrabut hints at this, but it is important to say this clearly and make it a central part of the analysis.

As squatters become homeowners, they are not excluded from property rights, but rather valorize and make use of them. In Pachacútec, those who gain property titles often occupy their homes, but they also might rent out their houses or keep them as a kind of reserve asset. These varied responses are intrinsic to how property operates. Land titles, as Skrabut puts it in an insightful turn of phrase, “both tie people to land and liberate them from it.” In Pachacútec, one of the results is that some leave their houses empty. This process, however, contravenes an important element of “doing living” in that Pachacutanos are supposed to occupy their residences and work together in neighborhood development.

Both the empty houses and the intense conflicts that Skrabut documents also contravene a myth central in liberal property regimes: that established property relations should lead to a “proper” order, good citizenship, and social integration. If Skrabut’s analysis helps us to see how mistaken this myth is, she does less to underscore how powerful and generative it is. Yet it

animates not only how liberal thinkers as diverse as John Locke and Hernando de Soto view property relations and titling, but also how deeply embedded such suppositions are in how Pachacutanos attempt to “do living.” (It was also, I should add, a powerful factor in my own work in Santiago, Chile.) Ultimately, this myth that ties property to understandings of propriety is both widespread and embedded in particular contexts and idioms.

Analysts, then, need to not only expose the myths of liberal property regimes, but also to reveal the profound consequences that they have. This can uncover, as Skrabut does, how complex, productive, and conflictive the politics surrounding property titling are. Yet it should also reveal how limiting these politics can be, including the fact that squatters have little space to criticize the forms of employment they occupy, as this is a domain framed beyond the field of housing rights. Skrabut reveals the inner workings of this field, but at times forgets to back up and discuss what this field leaves out. She herself says very little about jobs and employment, except in a few individual cases. Yet this is a crucial way in which squatters come to inhabit the city and their homes as a generally subordinate and disempowered group. Assessments of this disempowerment need to take account of property relations and state power, but also how such an account might also obscure other forms of exclusion and inequality.

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Informal settlements on the outskirts of Peruvian cities have fascinated scholars since the settlements expanded with increasing numbers of migrants from rural areas from the 1950s onward. The ways in which previously uninhabited (and apparently uninhabitable) land in Peru’s mountainous deserts is turned into neighborhoods—without official recognition but often strikingly well organized—raise questions about human ability to create community under shifting state and property regimes (see also Caldeira 2017). Although covering familiar ground in this regard, Skrabut offers original insights into the multifaceted dimensions of residency. “Residency” is not a self-evident status but a complex performance that involves participating in community work, accumulating documents, being legible to state-like entities, and being deemed sufficiently in need. The article provides rich ethnography and intriguing arguments, although its contribution would have been stronger with a more explicit analytical focus on labor participation as well as the ways in which residency counts subjectify inhabitants and make (in)visible dimensions of life.

The growth of new neighborhoods in urban outskirts, often with houses in varying stages of construction or sections measured out for plots and future houses, has spurred not only racial stereotyping but also an ambition to help the needy and thereby gain political momentum. As Skrabut vividly

depicts, the citizens of these settlements are by no means a homogenous group, however, and the processes of settlement cannot be depicted in an unambiguous narrative of state repression or abandonment, nor of outright popular resistance to state involvement. Although considered as challenging long-standing inequalities in Peruvian society (Matos Mar 1984), inhabitants in these settlements simultaneously engage the state in active ways, appropriating or redirecting its techniques to maintain livelihoods (see also Holston 2008). Over the years, as informal settlements have been countered, accommodated for, and/or contained through various laws and reforms, informal acquisition of land for housing has become common practice in the moral economy of property. Central to this moral economy is the rhetorical ambiguity of ownership, where property rights may be based on active use, necessity, and mutual attachment on one hand and the product of official ownership and titles on the other. Skrabut deals with the lived reality of this rhetorical ambiguity of ownership, but does not delve sufficiently into the issue of labor participation: neither its political economy nor its phenomenological dimensions.

Although governments initially tried to abolish the settlements, reforms made during the 1960s represented a first step toward the state's (partial) recognition of inhabitants' claims. Under Juan Velasco's regime (1968–1975), reforms brought marginal groups into organizations coordinated by the state, including an official system for neighborhood associations with the requirement that neighborhood committees coordinate the organization of informal settlements. The state thus sought to appropriate long-established practices of collective work in the development of neighborhoods, and subsequent governments followed suit (Ødegaard 2010). The article, however, lacks analytical room to substantially discuss the significance of labor's contribution to the workings of the state—or to the inhabitants' sense of residency and ownership. Although Skrabut mentions community participation as essential to the phenomenological quality of *hacer vivencia*, my view is that more could be said about the phenomenological, existential, and affective dimensions of people's work on the land and constructing infrastructure through their own labor, often through collective work. What, for instance, characterizes the enactment of ownership in the absence of ownership titles? How do people mediate between the different requirements for residency? Community participation and collective labor efforts are not easily registered or recognized, and may render clear the many dilemmas and implications of resident counts. Instead of addressing this issue explicitly, Skrabut is more concerned with inhabitants' efforts to make their residency visible: therefore, countable. Although this focus on counting is important, and while acknowledging that nonstate actors also initiate forms of counting, the result is a somewhat state-centric analysis. It could, therefore, be advantageous to delve more systematically into the dimensions of life, work, and relations that residency counts may systematically leave unrecognized and into the uncertainties that the rhetorical ambiguity of ownership entails. In practice, people are sometimes left with nothing even after years of community partici-

ation. At this crossroads of different ways of acknowledging residency and ownership, there is fertile ground for power abuse, speculation, mistrust—and a perpetuation of inequalities.

Numbers—including residency counts—are recurrent themes in an era of democratic modernity and neoliberal rule, where counting makes citizens legible and state institutions accountable in the quest to modernize cities and turn the needy into productive citizens. Residents' aspirations toward being counted, depicted vividly by Skrabut, are telling in this regard; some people believe that being counted may result in ownership titles. This and other examples could have been used to raise questions about the subjectivities that counting may create. Such questions are not explicitly addressed though, and here Skrabut seems to miss an opportunity to inform more general debates about processes of subjectification under different technologies of governance. In neighborhoods like Pachacútec, which are considered marginal and informal, surveys and residency counts are frequent, and inhabitants are subjected to forms of and requirements for counting that differ from those in formalized suburbs. Being counted for these inhabitants seems a rather time-consuming and laborious task entailing hours and days of waiting to be registered, traveling back and forth to be present at the right moment, participating in community development projects as well as labor efforts to show you are a worthy inhabitant. Residency counts may thus actualize and affect time and rhythms of life in particular ways. Through her rich ethnography, Skrabut manages to capture these effects of residency counts on people's lives. Unfortunately, by not explicitly addressing how these forms of counting may also differentiate between citizens in different neighborhoods, she misses an opportunity to ask, for instance, if inhabitants are thus made into particular kinds of subjects. Although questions about labor and time, (in)visibility, and subjectification are not sufficiently analyzed, Skrabut offers intriguing insights into the multifaceted and contested dimensions of residency, providing valuable perspectives on informality, state, and ownership.

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Kristin Skrabut shows in her article how the right to “residency” in the peripheries of Lima is built and practiced. The text illustrates Timothy Mitchell's (1999) statement that “the state is an object of analysis that appears to exist simultaneously as material force and as ideological construct” (76). To the poor looking for secure tenancy, the state is not just a structure, machinery that grants rights or services. It is also a set of practices and discourses, whose “effects” matter particularly at the local level (Mitchell 1999). Skrabut explains how poor residents in shantytown areas of Lima build their own conceptions of property rights and statehood.

The most revealing argument of Skrabut's study is the existence of a "policing community." In the shantytowns of Lima, a society-centered authority enforces public residency: the community. In one of its most interesting examples, Skrabut demonstrates how the community exercises effective authority over the land tenure of one of its most vulnerable neighbors, a single mother, who works all day in a restaurant in Lima to earn just enough money to buy food for her and her children. The mother of two children cannot "make residence" and is disqualified for not being seen frequently in the neighborhood or participating in community activities. In spite of this woman receiving "papers" from the local government, members of the community accuse her of being a "tourist" in her neighborhood and she faces the risk of losing her precarious living place. In the story, Skrabut reveals that neither the status of a needy family, legitimized by state classifications, nor the promises and concessions of local politicians or their signed and sealed papers outweigh the community policing and ruling. Residency in Pachacútec is not entirely granted by the state, but rather earned in the eyes of the policing community.

What are the reflections this story brings? What is it revealing to our knowledge of state-society relations? To explain the encounter between the state and Pachacútec inhabitants around residency, Skrabut draws on a vast literature of anthropological work on the state. The state seeks to control and render its subjects by making them legible by the use of numbers, statistics, and grids (Scott 1998). The state is less a material construct than a perceived and intermittent "ideal" for local people. Local inhabitants experience a heterogeneous, incoherent, fragmented state, which is more a "rumor" than a reality. We see these characteristics of the state as we read through the empirical material of Skrabut's paper. However, as the empirics reveal the account of residents of Pachacútec in more detail, theoretical arguments become less relevant for understanding the building of this "policing community." We miss a discussion on how the contradictory and incoherent deployment of state power occurs and how it is comprehended by the members of the community. Neither does Skrabut show how state practices are framing community resistance and producing transcendental consequences for its poorest members. In the next few paragraphs, I develop three comments with the aim of adding more elements to the study of the state in contexts such as the one described by Skrabut in her article.

First, I discuss the relative power of state counting. The state in Pachacútec is arguably Scott's (1998) totalitarian state. Scott refers to a state that effectively deploys power in its effort to make communities, people, and nature legible using modern conceptions and instruments of planning. The Peruvian state is rather the opposite. As the author describes, residency counts in urban Peru do not count at all. Paradoxically, the central argument of the text is that to be a legitimate resident in Pachacútec, categories created by the state do not in fact legitimize residency. Skrabut shows that members of the community consider it important to be counted in state statistics.

However, the author also shows that being "counted" by state officials is not sufficient, not even the most important fact, to win residency. We are left with the question of whose counting does really matter the most: state's or community leaders' counting? State counting is probably important, but "making residency" means not only to be physically in the neighborhood or to participate frequently in its activities, but to be "seen" and "counted" by the other members of the community when any type of activity (and not only counting) is carried out by the state.

Second, I engage with the daily state practices that local inhabitants encounter. Although the text makes clear what the practices of the community are, it leaves us with a vague idea of what are the many practices of the state. The author argues that we should see "residency" as a composite and contested "performance" to the various practices of the state at the local level. Strategies of the community constitute a response to these practices that continually and contradictorily allow for "multiple and conflicting performances of residency," the author argues. Making residency is, therefore, the contribution of each member of the community to this collective performance. However, it seems that Skrabut assumes that all those practices that are not carried out by the community are, in fact, performed by national and local state officials. Who are they, how do they relate to each other, what do they do, and to whom do they respond? In the empirical section, we are left with curiosity about how these varied, contradictory, official and semiofficial practices produce the performative community's strategy that the text reveals.

The distinction between state and society is undoubtedly arbitrary. The borders between both are composed of numerous porous edges that need to be explained to understand the particular character of the state we are studying. In the article, the distinction between official state agents, local politicians, and community leaders becomes blurred. In some way, all these actors and their practices condition the performative strategies and contradictory definitions of residency of inhabitants of Pachacútec. However, states do not act homogeneously everywhere or in every aspect of life. For instance, statistics used for the focalization of conditional cash transfer programs in Peru represent powerful state tools to legitimize some community members as poor, and therefore holders of certain rights, and others as nonpoor, and therefore not granted of these rights. The fragmented social control of the state (Migdal 1988) varies across spaces and even across specific sectors of the state. In the end, state domination is the result of both state strength and weakness.

Finally, I consider the consequences of fragmented social control of the state. The article carefully shows how weak and incoherent states reproduce inequalities. On one side, the state legitimates rights to residence for those in need. On the other side, the state leaves them with the uncertainty of "waiting" for tenancy regularization. This is another way to empirically corroborate the enormous consequences of Auyero's (2012) "politics of waiting" of the state. Waiting leaves poor people

helpless to the conflicting and contradictory practices of state agents. For instance, the clientelistic practices of local politicians or governors could turn community leaders into accomplices of the persistent marginalization of the neighborhood, and of the growing inequalities within the community. The co-option of leaders and many other residents by local politicians ends up undermining the lives of the poorest and the most disadvantaged ones in the community.

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Feelings of Community and the Combat of Poverty

Though the theme of Skrabut's article is familiar (self-help housing in Lima), her approach on documentation and multidimensional notions of residency is original. Processes of land invasions by the poor and house-building in Lima and beyond are widely analyzed and discussed (Degregori, Blondet and Lynch 1986; Golte and Adams 1990; Matos Mar 1984, 2004; Moser 2009; Turner 1967). Most invasions of the 1960s–1980s were the result of organized action that required a profound preparation and subsequently the establishment of neighborhood organizations. The invasions in themselves already created a sense of community, which was strengthened by the defense of the territory against the legal owners (state, large landholder) and the enormous task of building the houses and the neighborhood. The origin of the neighborhood of Pachacútec, where Skrabut has done her ethnographic fieldwork, shows a different pattern.

As Lima's urban history shows, on a few occasions, the national government has given its support to the poor—and appropriated their grassroots energy, I add with some irony—by designating land for their self-help housing. Pachacútec is in part the result of such a state initiative and a relocation of an earlier invasion. The dwellers of Pachacútec did not have the overwhelming and uniting experience that an organized invasion may produce. They have either bought the land for a nominal fee or come from another area due to the mentioned relocation. This relocation received much media attention, which enthused many others to settle in Pachacútec or to claim a plot of land for future use. Meanwhile, different versions of land titles were distributed by various politicians and community leaders. In this context, residency has received specific, multidimensional meanings, which are being debated and struggled over constantly.

Residency is connected to doing and performing, especially regarding living and being active in the neighborhood. It is a practice that can be executed in different ways, such as participating in collective activities to obtain access to infrastructural necessities, even if the resident is not present in the neighbor-

hood full time. Owning titles to the plot and its construction is not always enough to be considered as a full resident, as it is subordinate to the moral rights people may have who actually live on a plot. For this reason, titleholders are not supposed to kick someone out who has invaded the plot. Being present is important, and that is why on the days that one of the many surveyors, who are often politically engaged, pass by to check if the house is occupied, people feel an urge to be at home. Residents do everything to obtain documents that show that they live in the house they claim to live in. Also, some inhabitants have more moral rights to live in Pachacútec than others. The deserving inhabitants are those who do not only show their material need for a house, but who additionally give proof of their community commitment and documentary acquisition. Those who cannot show their “doing living” nor documents become labeled as the undeserving poor or *turistas* who fail to perform residency in a convincing way. Skrabut sketches the sad story of a poor single mother who is very occupied in the communal kitchen. This voluntary work guarantees her food for her children and herself, but takes her away from her home for long hours during the day. For this reason, in the eyes of the community leaders, she is not performing residency enough. They are convinced she has a house elsewhere and are threatening to evict her.

Comparing Skrabut's study with my own work (see, e.g., de Waardt and Ypeij 2017), it comes to mind that this complex and at times contradictory set of notions of residency in Pachacútec is related to its specific origin and history. The neighborhood still suffers from a weak social fabric and should be considered as a community in the making. As my own research in Año Nuevo (located in Comas, Lima-North, and only a few miles away, as the crow flies, from Pachacútec) shows, a strongly knitted social fabric adds to feelings of security and community and—under certain circumstances—enables its residents to overcome poverty. Año Nuevo is the result of a huge, meticulously organized invasion in 1970, which took years of preparation. Nowadays, the neighborhood is consolidated with full infrastructure. Residency of the original invaders and their offspring has never been questioned. Many of the original neighborhood organizations are still active, such as the women's communal kitchens. The inhabitants almost all managed to obtain titles to the plots and their houses. Titles are important in the struggle against poverty, because they turn the plot and its construction upon it into a financial resource that can be sold or, partly, rented out (Moser 2009). The feelings of connectedness to the neighborhood become especially noticeable in the fact that the children and grandchildren of the original invaders live either in Año Nuevo or in an adjacent neighborhood. The invasion, the years-long grassroots work of building houses and infrastructure, has both produced a feeling of community and is securing the need for housing for already three generations. I am not promoting a romantic perspective here. In the daily practice of the neighborhood organizations and committees, power struggles over leadership positions and resources, hatred, and envy are as much part of the picture as solidarity, reciprocity, and feelings of

community. Nevertheless, the organized character of the invasion facilitated feelings of shared positionings and goals.

Several houses have two to three stories. Some are divided into separate apartments, with outside staircases, front doors, and occasionally separate electricity meters. To be sure, not all families have experienced this level of resource accumulation, but a noticeable number did. Since Peru's economic spurt of the last decade, these families can be considered to belong to the so-called new urban middle classes. Compared with Skrabut's study, the conclusion is tempting that—because of its specific origin—Pachacútec's social fabric is much more fragile and loose. This raises the question of whether its poor inhabitants will be able to combat poverty in the near future and reach a form of social mobility in the long run.

Reply

Taken together, these thoughtful and constructive comments highlight important aspects of my efforts to problematize residency and provide useful opportunities to expand components of my argument that, due to space constraints, I was unable to fully flesh out in the article itself. In the paper I argue that “residency” should be viewed as a multifaceted and contested performance for various conflicting and overlapping audiences. I go on to argue that anthropologists should use this revised conception of residency to rethink the dynamics of urban growth and meanings of urban citizenship, particularly in cities of the Global South. Although I use Peru's 2007 census as an ethnographic entrée for my argument, my paper was more broadly inspired by the ubiquity of “empty” homes in Pachacútec, the centrality of *vivencia* to everyday conflicts, and the complex and contradictory ways I saw Pachacutanos engage with efforts to pin down area occupants.

Several commentators offer valuable reiterations and refinements of aspects of my argument. In particular, I believe Anderson's emphasis on Pachacutanos' “multisited economic, social, and political strategies” is spot on, and agree that we see remarkable continuity between expectations that rural dwellers' lives will be spatially fixed and grounded in singular strategies (see Bourque and Warren 1981; Seligmann 1995) and presumptions that people involved in “grassroots” urban development will be firmly emplaced. I also appreciate Goodale's description of my ethnography as rejecting “vertical metaphors of power,” leaving us with a “sideways governmentality” that reveals how power materializes “horizontally and unevenly across the range of residency practices, or performances.” This point, repeated in various ways by Murphy, Ødegaard, and Paredes, highlights the slipperiness of “the state” in this context and the ways people at the urban margins are both agents of and subject to power. Finally, I found Hetherington's reframing of Pachacutanos' desires for land titles as “an aspiration to participate in a form of power veiled in uncertainty” to be excep-

tionally insightful, as it illuminates the persistent allure of “formal property” in a context where other forms of property recognition seem to have more material weight.

Reading these seven comments consecutively, I was struck by the number of authors who suggest the article should have devoted more attention to other aspects of residency and property in these contexts, and by how little overlap there is in their specific suggestions. The range of issues these scholars raise help to affirm the centrality of “residency” to politics and everyday life in Latin America's urban margins, and also demonstrate how situated ethnographic moments open up to reveal a diverse array of interrelated issues and analytic threads, each of which can be tugged on and explored further.

Among the topics commentators suggest warrant further attention are the role of *dirigentes* in mediating community belonging; the real-world power of land titles and other documentary traces; the generative effects of property myths; the role of employment in conditioning battles over land; the production of subjectivities through state processes of counting and phenomenological experiences of labor; and the forms of solidarity and collaboration that exist in shantytowns. This final point about solidarity and collaboration is where I see the most overlap among commentators. Indeed, Anderson, Ødegaard, and Ypeij—all of whom conduct fieldwork in Peruvian shantytowns—raise questions about why this article does not devote greater attention to the collaborative community dynamics that seem so prevalent in other Peruvian shantytowns. Is there something unique about Pachacútec that has resulted in such a weak social fabric? Or are these differences more a question of ethnographic and political vantage? In what follows, I will elaborate on each of these issues briefly, and conclude with the final question of how to account for the seeming lack of solidarity and neighborly respect in this particular account of residency practices in Pachacútec.

Jeanine Anderson's point about how *dirigentes* (community leaders) are essential audiences for residency performances is an important one. As she rightly observes, from the start of any illegal land takeover, *dirigentes* maintain their own lists and inventories and help their constituents “manage appearances” for authorities and surveyors. In my experience, *dirigentes* are the ones who rally neighbors for political demonstrations and who spread the word when it is important for neighbors to be at home to respond to surveyors. Relating this work of “managing appearances” specifically to patterns of uneven residence, one *dirigente* I interviewed explained, “Here the people work [i.e., have jobs that take them away from their houses], so the *dirigentes* work. . . . People have to have their registration, so we help do the registering.” Although several functionaries told me that they try to keep the timing of occupancy assessments secret from *dirigentes* so they do not manipulate these assessments, in practice functionaries often warned *dirigentes* of their arrival in an effort to maintain friendly, *quid pro quo* relations with local leaders. For this reason, not being accepted as a fully legitimate resident by local *dirigentes* can render someone's tenure especially insecure, as the cases of Luisa and Teodora indicate. Thus,

the mediating work of *dirigentes* makes it possible to negotiate the ideals of residency that govern “progressive housing” sites with the multisited realities of people’s lives while also allowing for the perpetuation of inequalities.

However, as Anderson further points out, many *dirigentes* are also land traffickers. Although I mention this only briefly in the present paper, in other articles I take this insight further and describe the deep ambiguity between *dirigentes* who ensure lots are occupied and “land traffickers” who encourage invasions and resell lots that have already been claimed under the pretext of demanding *vivencia* (see Skrabut 2013, forthcoming). As one Pachacutano explained, the functional similarities between *dirigentes* and traffickers meant the two could only be distinguished “by their attitude.” That said, one of the points I try to make in the article is that *dirigentes* are not immune to accusations of inadequate residency. As with other would-be residents, questions of their righteousness, their commitments to the community, and the thickness of their social and patronage networks inform whether *dirigentes* are viewed as rightful representatives, land traffickers, or simply unscrupulous individuals who do not really live there.

In his insightful commentary, Kregg Hetherington suggests that while the article nicely demonstrates the everyday practices associated with how people *hacer vivencia*—socially rooting themselves in the community and “making experience,” as the alternative translation of *hacer vivencia* implies—the stakes and implications of “leaving traces on documents” are less well developed. Specifically, he asks: Do documentary traces, particularly land titles, matter in ways beyond the vague threat of the state? Are there specific “problems” they empower people to create? Do they lead to new forms of capital, in the way de Soto suggests?

In response, I would say that these traces do matter in both an affective-ideological and practical sense. Related to Edward Murphy’s point about the generative power of the myth that “property relations should lead to a ‘proper’ order, good citizenship, and social integration,” Pachacutanos aspire to land titles in part due to the power of the liberal myth that property-owning is synonymous with civic virtue and implies a greater commitment to the community (see Murphy 2015; Skrabut, forthcoming). As I mention briefly in this article, in community meetings, those people who were titleholders took pride in this status. Some went so far as to defend title holding as a requirement for representing the community as a gesture of respect toward the goal that they were all working for. From a pragmatic standpoint, though, I believe the most salient effect of documentary traces is to produce profit, either from resale value or as extorted through the threat of legal action.

Certain documentary traces—*constancias* from the community and local governors, tax payment receipts, and titles—increase land’s resale value in the informal market. Bulletin boards in Pachacútec’s markets are flush with advertisements for house and lot sales that prominently state just how formal the lot is. Land that is titled and completely *saneado* (registered and regularized) seems to demand the highest prices. But con-

trary to de Soto’s formulations, untitled land is not “dead capital”; it is simply slightly less valuable. Although questions of who exactly is selling these houses, how they maintain possession of the lot while the land is on the market, and how communities perceive the sale are ones that I cannot definitively answer, it is not hard to imagine people like Claudia, Silvia, or Amélie selling the homes they have retained control over but are not actively occupying, either for themselves or on behalf of their kin.

In the case of absentee owners and claimants, land titles and other documentary traces generate profit from the vague threat of legal action, as occupants will often pay claimants rather than risk a court battle or an altercation with police. Although each individual contest will play out slightly differently, whether the occupant pays off the owner, evacuates the plot, or agrees to go to court with the support of community members will depend on the specific accumulated recognitions of the occupant and the claimant. Nonetheless, it is significant that by invoking the vague threat of the state these documentary traces have force and can produce profit in the realm of the everyday. Titles, then, differ from other documents in terms of degree rather than kind. Although I do not believe they allow people to “transcend local squabbles,” as Hetherington suggests, they do give people an upper hand in these disagreements and produce profit through sale and extortion, rather than through an economic system of bank debts and guarantees, as de Soto indicates.

Edward Murphy’s point about how the politics of property and housing can limit other kinds of right claims is well taken and is a point he makes well in his historically grounded ethnography of housing in Chile (see Murphy 2015). I would add to this that employment plays an important role in conditioning conflicts over adequate residency and property speculation in Pachacútec. The problem of *turistas*—people who claim land in Pachacútec, but who spend much of their time in other parts of Lima—largely results from the fact that there are so few opportunities for employment locally. Moreover, whereas some of the economic logic of titling is predicated on the idea that it frees people from protecting their land and thus allows them to pursue jobs (see Field 2003), the value of this option is related to the value of the jobs available. Although some women, who unlike their husbands were bound to Pachacútec due to their childcare responsibilities, are able to find work with the local government, do piece work at home, or run local businesses, for many these opportunities are limited enough that invading additional plots becomes a more worthwhile investment of time and resources (see Skrabut 2018).

Cecile Ødegaard asks what it is that residency counts might not capture and inquires about the particular kinds of subjectivities these counts might produce. Specifically, she suggests that the phenomenological experiences of “community participation and collective labor efforts are not easily registered or recognized” such that people are sometimes left with nothing “even after years of community participation.” Although my article could perhaps have been more explicit about this, community participation and collective labor are indeed socially

recognized by neighbors and are even audited by community leaders, who record individual participation in group work parties and protest demonstrations, and who often assess fines or, alternatively framed, allow people to buy their way out of participating in these labor parties. Within Pachacútec, the only situations I am aware of where people are left with nothing after years of active, socially recognized participation occur when the entire neighborhood is evicted because they were settled on land zoned for another purpose and could not effectively lobby for rezoning or relocation, or when unmarried couples separate and the partner not listed on the title is left with no rights to the house.

Ødegaard's question about how regimes of counting might "differentiate between citizens in different neighborhoods" and thus produce "particular kinds of subjects" is one I have thought a great deal about. In a touchstone ethnography of Lima's shantytowns, Peter Lloyd (1980:15) argued that Lima's formal and informal suburbs represented two distinct realities, not because they attracted distinct types of people but because they presented residents with different kinds of opportunities and obligations. Although we could certainly view these different life rhythms and livelihood requirements as producing different kinds of subjects, making such a claim also requires a clear definition of subjectivity. In particular, I would ask: How permanent does a subject position need to be to constitute "subjectivity"? Clearly, inhabitants of Pachacútec develop different kinds of relationships with the state living in a shantytown than they would if they lived in a formal suburb. But I am hesitant to describe this as a "subjectivity" distinct from those of people who live in formal suburbs. To begin, people do in fact move between formal and informal suburbs as opportunities arise and as their needs demand. Moreover, as I try to show in the article, although everyone in Pachacútec is subject to similar counting regimes, they experience these regimes quite differently depending on their sociopolitical networks and other resources.

Finally, Ypeij's comments comparing Pachacútec to the shantytown of Año Nuevo raise questions about how to account for differences between the two areas, and specifically what Ypeij describes as the relatively "weak social fabric" in Pachacútec when compared with other shantytowns. Ypeij's suggestion that the complex and contradictory ways Pachacutanos conceptualize residency may result from the particular circumstances of its founding is compelling, and I do believe that residency conflicts and high percentages of inadequately occupied houses—which one survey of Pachacútec's Pilot Project put at 40%—may be especially pronounced in Pachacútec.

However, I would also raise the possibility that some of these apparent differences may be more a reflection of the particular ethnographic focus of this article than an effect of fundamental differences between these shantytowns. There are certainly examples of growth, prosperity, and collaboration in Pachacútec, and many people do feel a great sense of pride as a result of having suffered and survived various invasion experiences and built their homes and communities from nothing. Ødegaard's comments about the phenomenological experiences of

collective labor and Anderson's observations of neighbors' "hyper-respectfulness" and the delicate ways they negotiate conflicts also resonate with phenomena I have encountered in Pachacútec. Within this agglomeration of 180,000, there are certainly neighborhoods and social groups who experience a strong social fabric with solidarity and mutual assistance that allows them to ameliorate and perhaps escape poverty. The controversial mutual assistance strategies I outline in this paper, like protecting land claims while neighbors travel for jobs or accumulating multiple houses so one can extend these resources to kin, would be excellent examples of this (see also Skrabut 2018). In addition, as Ypeij concedes, in the community of Año Nuevo, which was founded in 1968 and has a population of 16,000 (de Waardt and Ypeij 2017), "power struggles over leadership positions and resources, hatred, and envy are as much a part of the picture as solidarity, reciprocity, and feelings of community." In other words, the presence of solidarity does not preclude conflict any more than the presence of conflict precludes solidarity. As I argue in the conclusion of my article, these different ways of doing living mean that some residents can perceive Pachacútec as a solidaristic community, while others experience it as hostile and exclusionary. Solidarity is often experienced by some in the very process of excluding others. Moreover, the moral ambiguities evident in the process of evicting "tourists" or "traffickers" or "delinquents" may be celebrated in retrospect as righteous acts of community building.

There are also reasons to think that residency conflicts and "empty" houses might be more common in shantytowns than the ethnographic record would suggest. Anthropologists are understandably often focused on the individuals who are most deeply involved in community building and often have moral and political commitments that encourage them to emphasize the uncomplicated and virtuous dimensions of shantytown residents' behavior (see Fischer 2014; Roy 2004). Nonetheless, I think it is important for anthropologists to embrace the complicated and often tenuous ways people relate to urban space and build communities, and to consider the social and political work that goes into producing "emptiness." Peru's 2017 Census of Housing and Population, like the censuses of 2007 and 2005, asked questions about the occupancy conditions of houses because such facts are of interest to "the state" broadly construed. Anthropologists, with our commitment to nuance and capacity to appreciate and elucidate gray spaces, need to approach our analyses of cities and urban community with at least as much perspicacity.

—Kristin Skrabut

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