Defining Human Trafficking in the Context of Indigenous Labour Migration in Peru

by

Monika Krzeminska

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Approval

Name: **Monika Krzeminska**

Degree: **Master of Arts (Latin American Studies)**

Title: ***Defining Human Trafficking in the Context of Indigenous Labour Migration in Peru***

Examining Committee: **Chair:** Gerardo Otero
Professor of International Studies and Sociology
Simon Fraser University

Alexander Dawson
Senior Supervisor
Professor of History and International Studies
Simon Fraser University

Onur Bakiner
Supervisor
Assistant Professor
Political Science Department
University of Seattle

Bill French
External Examiner
Professor
Department of History
University of British Columbia

Date Defended/Approved: February 14, 2017

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Abstract

As a result of the growing interest of many governments and NGOs around the world towards the problem of trafficking in persons, its definition has been constantly expanded to include more victims and more forms of abuse. Originally associated exclusively with sex slavery, now human trafficking is understood within the broader framework of labour migration. This expanded definition, which enables different cultural practices and survival strategies of the extreme poor to be labelled as trafficking, is strongly advocated by certain Peruvian NGOs. Mobilizing interviews conducted in 2013 and the essential literature on internal migration, this thesis examines the effectiveness of the widely formulated definition of trafficking in the context of Indigenous labour migration in Peru. I argue that cultural and social factors such as racial hierarchies stand in the way of seeing dark-skinned Indigenous labour migrants as victims of trafficking by the whiter population of urban dwellers. Thus, the expanded definition of trafficking may not be useful in this context.

Keywords: Peru; migration; human trafficking; labour migration; labour exploitation; Indigenous peoples; NGOs

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List of Acronyms

CHS Alternativo	Capital Humano y Social Alternativo is a non-governmental human rights organization founded in 2001. It specializes in dealing with the problem of human trafficking and its relation to two other social problems that increase the vulnerability of victims or populations at risk of becoming victims of this crime: human smuggling and missing persons.
CALP	The Center of Legal and Psychological Aid founded and operated by CHS Alternativo. It offers personalized attention for not only the victims of human trafficking, labour, and sexual exploitation but also for the families of missing persons and victims of migrant smuggling. The help center offers its services free of charge, seeking to also provide an environment of confidentiality and protection for the victims and their families.
RED LAC	Latin American and Caribbean Network against Trafficking.
RNPM	The National Network for the Promotion of Women is a civil association that was created in March 1990. The Network aims to promote and enhance the development, management, and monitoring of public policies as part of its National Program for the Promotion of Women and Sustainable Human Development. Among its strategic objectives are bringing together civil society and the state, building the capacity of the members of its grassroots social organizations, and monitoring citizen committees.
TVPA	The Trafficking Victims Protection Act is a federal statute passed into law in 2000 by the US Congress and signed by President Clinton.
RETA-PNP	The System of Registry and Statistics for Human Trafficking and Related Crimes. This system contains both qualitative and quantitative information that includes denunciations, operatives, and police investigations of human trafficking cases and, in general, the crimes of sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, and trafficking of human organs. It allows the Police Force and Special Crime Investigation Units to achieve improved characterizations of the modus operandi of organized crime, profile definitions of highly vulnerable groups, and create official statistics on a national level.
SISTRA	el Sistema de Información Estratégica sobre Trata de Personas, System of the Strategic Information on Human Trafficking operated within the Public Ministry.

Glossary

Bonded labour	A situation where one person loans money to another in exchange for future labour. The lender then refuses to apply the value of the labour to the debt, resulting in perpetual indebtedness (Dunne 2012:407).
Forced labour	Involuntary servitude; the act of keeping a person in captivity for the purpose of using that person's unpaid labour (Ibid.).
Forced prostitution	Involuntary provision of sex in exchange for consideration (Ibid.).
Human trafficking	"Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (Palermo Protocol, United Nations).

Chapter 1. Introduction

The perception of human trafficking is a significant factor in determining government policy regarding migration because it combines both what is enacted in the sphere of legislation and what is understood from a popular perspective. The understanding of "human trafficking" by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will often determine how governments deal with this issue and what people think of it. Studying perceptions can be very useful in the process of building knowledge about various phenomena such as human trafficking.

This thesis is a critique of the approach that certain Peruvian NGOs are taking in dealing with something that is actually contract labour migration, not human trafficking. Peru was chosen as the research focus site within Latin America because it presents interesting paradoxes and cultural diversity. Although it is a middle-income country, rich in natural resources, and its economy has performed reasonably well during the last twenty years, Peru is also one of the most economically disparate countries in the world and has a very high rate of poverty. Moreover, its people, according to opinion polls, are less satisfied with their lives than people elsewhere in Latin America (Copestake, 2008).

The last two decades have seen increased worldwide awareness about the problem of human trafficking. Since the United Nations (UN) adopted, in 2000, a Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, known as the Palermo Protocol, human trafficking has been recognized as a serious problem and considered by some as modern day slavery (United Nations 2016; Einarsdóttir & Boiro 2014: 387). As a result, the fight against this crime has become one of the international community's major political priorities, especially among NGOs (Dottridge 2007). The Protocol has also triggered a widespread response from governments internationally. Over a five-year span (2003–2008), the number of countries introducing anti-trafficking legislations has doubled (Ibid.). Indeed, as of

November 2015 the Palermo Protocol had been ratified by 169 parties (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Signature/ratification status of the CTOC, 2016). Although a definition of trafficking was introduced for the first time by the Palermo Protocol in 2000, there still has not been clear or unanimous agreement as to what this term fully encompasses. As such, trafficking in persons has been defined and redefined by a number of different groups over time (Jahic & Finckenauer, 2005: 32).

Human trafficking as a modern phenomenon became well-known for the first time in the late nineteenth century as "white slavery" – the kidnapping of white European women for sexual purposes (Doezema, 1999:25).

Up until the late 1990s, human trafficking was seen internationally as a form of violence against women and children, and the focus remained on trafficking for purposes of prostitution. Ten years later, in 2000, the United Nations adopted the Palermo Protocol, which was an expression of a new wave in understanding human trafficking. The protocol continued to stress that women and children were most vulnerable to trafficking, and thus the focus remained on these groups. However, it also recognized that this crime can occur in different forms that are not necessarily related to prostitution. This recognition helped change the way that human trafficking was viewed, and recent literature indicates that there have been attempts to break with the dominant discourse on sex trafficking and to reconceptualize the phenomenon within a broader framework of labour migration.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the growing number of scholarly works that critically deconstruct this new and broader perspective on human trafficking as a form of labour migration. The current research attempts to examine the usefulness, for the so-called victims of trafficking, of the expanded definition of trafficking in the context of Indigenous labour migration in Peru.

Peru has experienced mass migration from rural to urban areas over the last few decades. In the past, Peru had largely ignored the problem of trafficking; however, the issue now appears high on its political agenda, mainly due to the fact that Peru has signed the Palermo Protocol.

The following study endeavours to demonstrate whether the expanded definition of trafficking advocated by interviewed NGOs is appropriate and useful to the so-called victims of trafficking. In other words, the study seeks to understand whether the fusion of consensual migration and trafficking helps to improve the situation of people involved in migration processes and whether this definition resonates with the interests and needs that have been expressed by migrants themselves.

The study argues that racial discourse, including the ways that some Peruvians perceive Indigenous labour migrants, and how these migrants understand their own migration, can have an impact on the usefulness of the trafficking concept. Rather than seeing themselves as victims of trafficking, migrants understand their exploitation with regard to social injustices from which they suffer, such as racial inequality. The life stories of Indigenous migrant workers reviewed in the literature show that they faced discrimination and ill treatment based on their dark skin colour and were treated as an "inferior race" by their urban *mestizo* (mixed European and Indigenous race) employers. Racism, not trafficking, was present in most of their life stories and testimonies, and it seems to be the most significant issue for Indigenous workers to overcome. Thus, labour migration, which often involves certain levels of exploitation, should rather be perceived through the lens of racial inequality instead of trafficking. Interviewed NGOs seemed to purposefully overlook the possible role of racism in the difficult situation of labour migrants. This is a very significant silence and one that needs to be addressed.

Those who work to develop a definition of trafficking and the ensuing policies around trafficking should be aware of the kinds of cultural differences that exist within and between countries and regions of the world, and they should recognize that these differences can have an enormous impact on the efficacy of such policies. Because the problem of human trafficking remains under-explored in Latin America, research on this topic is crucial to helping decision-makers in Peru and other Latin American countries create informed and effective policies that are culturally sensitive and linguistically adequate. This research attempts to shed light on the situation of migrant labourers and the concept of human trafficking prevalent in Latin America.

This study relies upon semi-structured interviews with several Peruvian NGO officials. These interviews were conducted to discover the existing approaches that these NGOs have adopted to deal with the problem of trafficking in their country. This study also builds upon critical literature on the internal labour migration of Indigenous peasants in Peru in order to demonstrate the personal feelings, experiences, and attitudes migrants express towards migration and the cultural meaning they attribute to it.

The thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 1 presents a brief problem statement and explains the purpose of this paper.

Chapter 2 outlines the historical background necessary for understanding the phenomenon of trafficking in the local context and globally. It looks at how the discourse on human trafficking has evolved starting from the early twentieth century up to the present day, and it demonstrates how the phenomenon has been defined internationally. This chapter also provides an overview of the relevant literature that critically deconstructs the expansive definition of trafficking. The chapter introduces the local context and examines how human trafficking has been defined in the Peruvian national legislation, and it concludes with a historical perspective on internal migration.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in the study.

Chapter 4 focuses on different representations of human trafficking in Peru. It first presents and analyzes the images used by the Peruvian government in public anti-trafficking campaigns. It then analyses interviews with Peruvian NGO officials and discusses their understandings of human trafficking. This chapter concludes by focusing on the racial hierarchies in Peru and their role in labour migration processes of Indigenous peoples.

The final chapter presents conclusions and closing remarks. It briefly summarizes the main findings from the interviews and literature and replies to the final question regarding the usefulness of the trafficking concept in the context of Indigenous labour migration.

Chapter 2. Context and Literature

2.1. The Evolution of the Trafficking Concept

The issue of trafficking in persons becomes problematic largely because of the lack of uniformity in interpreting and understanding the concept by different groups and countries (Tyldum, Tveit, Brunovskis, 2005: 10). Human trafficking has been present around the world and throughout history; however, there are different opinions as to when exactly it started. One source states that trafficking for the purposes of slavery has very old roots dating back to ancient times, and that it has likely been present since the beginning of humanity. According to this view, human trafficking is a modern term for an old phenomenon (Kangaspunta, 2015:85). Another argument suggests that trafficking in persons began with the Atlantic slave trade in the early sixteenth century, when Africans were captured and transported to the New World.

Due to various existing interpretations of trafficking and the current clandestine nature of this phenomenon, the true scope of trafficking has remained in the realm of speculation (Jahic & Finckenauer 2005:27). Statistics, estimates, and numbers related to trafficking are still scarce, and there has been a serious concern to determine the actual number of people who fall victim to trafficking around the world.

Only recently have countries around the world started to adopt anti-trafficking legislation and develop new systems to register cases of trafficking. Nevertheless, there is still a weak sense of the scale of human trafficking. At the turn of the twenty-first century, one of the most commonly used estimates of trafficked persons suggested that there were four million people who fell victim to this crime annually – an estimate attributed to United Nations' reports (Bertone 1999:5; Jahic & Finckenauer 2005:30, Lobasz 2009:324). These reports, however, do not cite statistics, and it is not entirely clear how the organization arrived at this number. As Jahic & Finckenauer (2005) point out, this dramatically large estimate of trafficked persons was used in the latter Trafficking in Persons Report in 2001 (US Department of State, 2002). In the following years, the United States Department of State started to give its own estimate of trafficking, suggesting that there are between 800,000 and 900,000 trafficking victims each year

(US Department of State, 2003). In an article by Coontz & Griebel (2004:47), again the number of assumed trafficking victims is bigger and we read that "between 1 and 2 million people are trafficked worldwide each year and that the majority are women and children."

Another estimate, found in a report by Amy Richard O'Neill (1999:3), suggests that 50,000 women are trafficked annually into the United States. The author based this number on governmental and non-governmental publications. More precisely, this number was derived from a CIA document that is currently unavailable, and thus it is impossible to test its accuracy.

More recent estimates for the number of trafficked persons are also conflicting; for example, the number of trafficked victims is said to be as high as 2.45 million (Chuang 2006:438; Turner & Kelly 2009:187), whereas the data on trafficking gathered by the US Department of State from foreign governments implies that in 2015 there were more than 77,000 identified victims of trafficking around the globe (US Department of State, 2016: 42). The International Labour Organization argues that currently there are twenty-one million victims of trafficking around the world (International Labour Organization, 2016). So far, the largest estimate I found of trafficked victims is as high as twenty-seven million (Bales 2012:46).

As demonstrated above, there are dramatically different and conflicting estimates of trafficking. This can create a sense of confusion as to how large and significant the problem of human trafficking really is. Although it has been difficult to arrive at the exact numbers related to trafficking, and the figures we have are often called "guesstimates" (Jahic & Finckenauer 2005:30, Musto 2009: 282), some authors argue that the available estimates on trafficking are compelling enough to conclude that the crime of trafficking is increasing and is becoming a major problem in today's world.

Now, it is useful to briefly describe the evolution of the trafficking concept.

2.1.1. White Slavery

The late nineteenth century was characterized by rapid industrialization and mass migration mainly from Europe to the United States. In this period, human trafficking became known as “white slavery.” The term referred to the procurement of “innocent,” white European women who were kidnapped and forced into prostitution in Asia, South America, or “the Orient,” by non-Western men (Doezema, 1999:25).

The attention to white slavery was triggered by the increased number of Eastern European women migrating to other countries in search of work. In 1904 European countries signed an International Agreement for the Suppression of the “White Slave Traffic” aimed at protecting migrant women from being trafficked.

In 1910, the International Convention for the Suppression of the White Slave Trade was signed by thirteen countries. It focused on the criminalization of trafficking. As such, anti-trafficking committees were created in many European countries in order to monitor and report cases of human trafficking. Consequently, how the white slave trade was viewed shifted from its being seen as a domestic humanitarian issue to an international crime. It was only the advent of World War I that disrupted further efforts by the global community to suppress the white slave trade.

Some scholars note that the “white slave panic” started to become a major issue around the same time that the suffrage movement gained momentum and spread around the world (Doezema 1999; Grittner 1990). At the end of the nineteenth century, women in many countries had won the right to become educated, and by the early twentieth century, most countries granted women the right to vote. These were times of great change in gender relations and a revolution in thinking about women’s roles in society. Some scholars argue that white slavery was a cultural myth that expressed deeper anxieties at the turn of the century about women’s increasing desire for autonomy, as well as the civil rights of prostitutes (Grittner, 1990:7). The established image of innocent, young women who became prostitutes against their will created sympathy for the victims and a disapproval of prostitution, which in turn justified the need to abolish it.

2.1.2 Trafficking in Women and Children

The efforts to stem the traffic in white women were reactivated by the League of Nations after World War I. The organization carried out two studies on the trafficking of women, which demonstrated that most of the victims came from European countries and were transported to the Americas or to the Middle East. The understanding of human trafficking also started to evolve after the war. The term “white slavery” was eventually criticized for its lack of attention towards women of colour. Thus, during a conference on trafficking in June 1921, the League of Nations changed the title of its work on this issue to Trafficking in Women and Children (Kangaspunta 2008:39), thus abandoning the racial specificity of the first term. The scope of trafficking was expanded when the global community recognized and acknowledged that persons other than white women could be victims of human trade as well. In Geneva that same year, thirty-three countries signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children (Ibid.). This Convention emphasized the importance of protecting people during their migration processes.

A League of Nations’ report from 1927 later defined international traffic as “the direct or indirect procurement and transportation for gain to a foreign country of women and girls for the sexual gratification of one or more other persons” (Kangaspunta 2008:40).

2.1.3 Trafficking in Persons

The subsequent tragedies of World War II turned the attention of the international community away from the issue of trafficking for many years. The issue resurfaced in 1949 when the United Nations adopted the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. This was a turning point, since the convention was the first legally binding document that required signatory countries to criminalize prostitution. For the next fifty-one years, the global community relied on the convention of 1949. Although no more legally binding instruments were adopted until 2000, several conferences on the trafficking of women were held around the world in the interim.

Up until the late 1990s, human trafficking was seen internationally as a form of violence against women and children, and the focus was still on trafficking for prostitution. The

way people perceived human trafficking started to change during the 1990s. Since that time, the definition of trafficking no longer referred exclusively to the trafficking of women and children for prostitution but was instead expanded to encompass other forms of forced labour regardless of the age and gender of the victims. The conventional term has also changed to "trafficking in persons."

2.1.4 The Palermo Protocol

The United Nations, after a long debate that took place in Vienna in 2000, adopted the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol), which came into force later that year. The perception that women exclusively are trafficked into sex slavery changed with the adoption of the Palermo Protocol. It contextualized human trafficking within a larger conceptual framework that recognized and acknowledged the fact that both women and men fall victim to trafficking and do so in various labour sectors. Furthermore, according to the protocol (see United Nations, 2016), three elements must occur for a situation to be considered an act of human trafficking: the act (i.e., recruitment), the means (i.e., through the use of force or deception), and the purpose (i.e., for the purpose of exploitation). The Palermo Protocol was considered a turning point because for the first time it introduced an umbrella term for various forms of criminal activity and exploitation (e.g., forced labour, forced prostitution, bonded labour, forced child labour). It also described human trafficking as a process, a series of stages in which the exploitation takes place at the end. All of the above-mentioned criminal activities/stages have one important element in common: involuntariness, which is definitely the most crucial characteristic for understanding human trafficking. That being said, forced labour is distinct from situations in which a person consents to work for an unfair salary. Also, forced prostitution is something other than voluntary sex work (Dunne 2012:408).

2.2. Towards a Broader Understanding of Trafficking

Recent literature suggests that there have been attempts to break from the dominant discourse on sex trafficking (as discussed above) and to reconceptualize the phenomenon within a broader framework of labour migration. Thus far, the growing

interest in the connections between human trafficking and economic migration has found the most resonance within NGOs and human rights organizations (Derks, 2000: 1). For example, the International Labour Organization (ILO) argues that the first element of trafficking listed in the Palermo Protocol – the process of recruitment, transportation, or transfer – does not necessarily have to occur for the activity to be considered an act of human trafficking. This disagreement is supported by evidence that many victims enter into work relationships freely and that the act of force and exploitation occurs later on in their employment (International Labour Organization website 2016). Similar to the ILO, some NGOs argue that the narrow conceptual focus on sex trafficking is a misrepresentation of the actual problem and that a broader understanding of the phenomenon is needed, including reconceptualizing human trafficking within a broader framework of labour migration (Chang & Kim, 2007:6). This new framework perceives the trade in humans as forced migration and an exploitation of migrant workers for the whole spectrum of work (e.g., agriculture, domestic work, construction, manufacturing etc.) not just for prostitution. What is different about this new perspective on trafficking is that physical force, deception, and involuntariness (fundamental elements of trafficking according to the Palermo Protocol) are not the necessary elements in the trafficking process. Coercion is understood in terms of a person's vulnerability to being trafficked, caused by factors such as the destruction of subsistence economies, poverty, a lack of employment, and so forth. According to this view, coercion/compulsion should not only be associated with the exercise of force, but also with the circumstances.

Along with various scholars, civil society has actively engaged in developing this new approach to the discourse of trafficking. In her recent review of the Organization of American States' (OAS) research on human trafficking, Laura Langberg (2005) discusses the need to look beyond the dominant discourse on sex trafficking and proposes an analysis of trafficking through the context of mass migrations. According to Langberg, forced labour and domestic servitude are forms of trafficking that are still unexplored, especially in Latin America. In her view, trafficking for forced labour other than sex work is definitely a pressing problem in Latin America (Langberg, 2005: 130). This new approach to trafficking as a problem of economic/labour exploitation of migrants has started to gain support among other scholars as well. For instance, Chapkis (2003) argues that most victims of trafficking are economic migrant workers.

Kristof Van Impe (2000) also contributes to the literature linking trafficking and migration with respect to labour migration of Filipino women overseas. He concludes that because human trafficking takes the form of labour exploitation of migrants, more evolved preventive measures aimed at diminishing this crime are needed, such as policies regulating migration flows and strengthening external borders. Furthermore, human trafficking is also explained in context with respect to the global economy and power relations (Phillips 2013). That is, trafficking for labour exploitation has been neglected because it is more difficult to handle politically and because sexual exploitation is easier to condemn. According to Phillips, labour trafficking/forced labour can be characterized as having a quasi-contractual character. Here, the act of force or coercion does not necessarily occur at the point of entry into a work relationship; it can take place on many levels thereafter.

In addition to scholars, Latin American NGOs are among the main actors promoting a broader perspective on trafficking, one that looks closely at exploitation within the framework of labour migration. In Brazil, for example, sex trafficking is now defined as any assisted movements of prostitutes regardless of whether or not any deception or force was used on them (Silva, Blanchette, and Bento 2013: 388). Brazilian NGO JusBrasil defines trafficking expansively by pointing at migrants' disadvantaged socio-economic position in order to determine their trafficking status (Ibid.). Consistently, Argentina decided to break with the Palermo Protocol and developed a new definition of this crime. Currently (2016), Argentinean law states that any situation in which someone captures or convinces another person in any way, with the aim to exploit him/her, qualifies as trafficking, even when there is consent of the victim (Law 26.364 for the Prevention and Punishment of Trafficking in Persons and Assistance to its Victims, Argentina).

This new focus on human trafficking in the context of labour migration has provoked criticism from a few select scholars who have attempted to critically deconstruct the expanded understanding of the phenomenon – almost all of whom have focused exclusively on child/youth trafficking in Africa. For example, in her study on human trafficking in Mali's Dogon Country, Isaie Dougnon (2011: 101) argues that the expanded definition of trafficking proves to be rather inappropriate in the context of labour migration

of young Dogon peasants. Most of the so-called victims of trafficking decide to return to their urban work places after their forced repatriation to their places of origin. Despite harsh and exploitative work conditions, they want to go back to the cities and try to find employment again. Dougnon argues that this demonstrates that these young migrants have never considered themselves the object of human trafficking.

In her study of child trafficking in Argentina, Tanja Bastia (2005) comes to conclusions that are similar to Dougnon's. Bastia's is the only work of scholarship I found that criticizes the expanded concept of trafficking with a primary focus on Latin America. She analyzes whether the definition of trafficking is adequate to describing Bolivian teenage labour migration to Argentina. Through a collection of thirty-eight life biographies of Bolivian migrants, Bastia demonstrates that the experience of trafficking is only a phase within a larger process of labour migration. So-called victims of trafficking have become, through time, adult labour migrants. Migration was for these young people an opportunity to change their lives for the better. Although they worked under conditions that would easily fall under the expanded category of trafficking, most of them spoke of it as a necessary step/phase to gaining independence, access to education, and a better income. Over time, they were able to overcome these initial difficulties and find more satisfactory jobs that enabled them to finish high school. Bastia showed that teenage migrants from Bolivia made an informed choice to migrate and were positive about doing so. She concludes that labelling these people as victims of trafficking will do little to improve their situations (Tanja Bastia 2005: 81). According to her, anti-trafficking polices often reinforce existing vulnerabilities by constructing youth's dependency on adults. Her study is a significant contribution to the critique of the discourse on human trafficking because she considers cultural factors as crucial in determining the usefulness of the trafficking definition. In this context, the cultural perception of adulthood is the key to understanding labour migration and how the discourse on human trafficking can affect the lives of labour migrants. Together, the studies by Dougnon (2011) and Bastia (2005) show that placing trafficking within a larger framework of labour migration is an inadequate mechanism to address this problem insofar as the cultural factors of migration have not been considered.

2.3. Human Trafficking and Labour Migration in Peru

As this study aims to demonstrate, the attempts to break from the dominant discourse on sex trafficking and to place trafficking within a larger framework of labour migration have also been seen in Peru. Only recently has the Peruvian state decided to initiate the fight against human trafficking in the country. In 2000, Peru signed the Palermo Protocol, and the Peruvian Congress ratified the acceptance of this protocol almost a year later. Today, the Peruvian legislation, in accordance with the Palermo Protocol, considers trafficking as a complex crime whose aims include sexual and labour exploitation, the sale of children, begging, and trade in organs and tissues – Law No. 28950 – Against Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants, 2007, (Ministerio del Interior 2012). Despite the fact that the protocol has placed trafficking within a larger context, in Peru, the focus on the sex work of women has endured. Latin American governments, including Peru's, generally tend to emphasize sex trafficking over other forms of forced labour in their anti-trafficking measures, and this form of trafficking has been seen as more widespread and oppressive for females (Langberg 2005:136). Similarly, the scholarly literature on trafficking in this region of the world has focused primarily on the sexual exploitation of women (Ibid.). This becomes especially evident while analyzing the evolution of the Peruvian anti-trafficking legislation. For example, as of 1991, the act of human trafficking was incorporated as a criminal act for the first time in the Peruvian Criminal Code within the Chapter of Pimping, Article 153 (Codigo Penal Decreto Legislativo Nº 635, *Sistema Peruano De Información Jurídica* 1991) In this article it was stated that trafficking in persons was considered a special crime that sanctioned exclusive behaviours related to promotion/facilitation of transfer of victims for the sole purpose of prostitution. In the year 2004, Law No. 28251, which modified the crime of trafficking, was enacted. Nevertheless, human trafficking remained in the field of procurement and continued to be seen as a sexual exploitation of women (Ley 28251, *Justia Perú*. United Nations Global Database on Violence against Women, 2004).

As interviews will further reveal, this understanding of human trafficking, promoted by the Peruvian government as the sexual exploitation of women, has recently been challenged by representatives of the Peruvian NGOs with whom I spoke who attempted to place this

phenomenon within a larger framework of internal labour migration of Indigenous peasants from the Highlands.

The Andean Highlands, also called *La Sierra* in Spanish, is a region inhabited by the poorest communities in Peru (Indigenous Quechua and Aymara) (Rural Poverty Portal, 2016). According to some scholars, one of the most significant and profound changes experienced by Peruvian society was the internal mass migration of Indigenous peasants from the Highlands to the cities of the coast, mainly to Lima (Altamirano 1983: 127). Changes between 1940 and 1993 are significant: the Peruvian population in 1940 was predominantly rural, by 65 percent; and in 1993, it was predominantly urban, by 70 percent (Mar 1990: 5).

The mass migration to the coast that began in the 1940s was driven by the expansion of roads and economic transformations in the domestic market. The boom in exports caused by World War II and then the Korean War in the 1950s produced important developments in the Peruvian economy. An increase in exports multiplied the demand for manufactures and renewed the process of industrialization, creating new jobs in the capital and the coastal cities. The second wave of intense migration to the cities took place in the second half of the twentieth century and was conditioned by several factors such as the scarcity of land, the process of privatization, the prevalence of dry land, the lack of technical and credit support, and a lack of employment opportunities (Ibid.). Internal migration during that time was also the consequence of the increase in population and the expansion of large estates. The growing rural population expelled from their land began to form a part of the urban conglomerate (Ibid.).

Furthermore, as a result of the war against the terrorist organization Sendero Luminoso, throughout the 1980s people were migrating from the countryside to the coastal cities. As terrorist actions were concentrated in the central Highlands, an estimated one million people relocated during the conflict (Ibid.). Consequently, many inhabitants of *La Sierra* decided to abandon their land in search of the sense of security that was offered by the capital.

The main destination of recent labour migrants is Lima Metropolitana, especially the districts of San Juan de Lurigancho, San Martin de Porres, Ate, Surco, Comas, and

Olives. The other popular destinations are Arequipa, La Libertad, San Martin, Lambayeque, and Junin. Lima Metropolitana has more than nine million inhabitants, and 3.5 million are immigrants from other parts of the country, mainly peasants from the Highlands. Most of them come from Junín (388 thousand), Ancash (325 thousand), Ayacucho (274 thousand), Cajamarca (238 thousand), Lambayeque (165 thousand), Huanvavelica (139 thousand), Apumurac (139 thousand), La Libertad (135 thousand), Ica (127 thousand), and Cusco (122 thousand) (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática 2009). More than half of the migrants who came to Lima were women – and up to 5 percent of them were illiterate (Ibid.).

Today there are six million internal migrants in Lima, and they represent one fifth of the Peruvian population. At the district level, it is estimated that there are 10.4 million internal migrants. While the trend of internal migration has been diminishing, the number of migrants is still quite high – 20 percent of the Peruvian population changed residence between provinces and 34.5 percent between districts, which indicates the enormous contingent that makes up the Peruvian internal diaspora (Aguilar 2012). It is highly significant, then, that NGOs want human trafficking to be seen within context of labour migration because it suggests that trafficking is a much larger problem than the sexual exploitation of women, with a much higher number of assumed victims. According to this view, millions of internal migrants might fall under the category of victims of human trafficking. Furthermore, a field that is constantly growing in the urban occupational structure is one that refers to the informal sector; that is, those occupations that are based on interpersonal bonds of loyalty and trust, and that are, in many cases, channeled through the family. An example of this sector is domestic workers (INEI 2009). The largest percentage of internal migrants (70 percent) is employed as domestic servants, and most of them are females from the Andes (Ibid.).

Viewed through the lens of history, one can see that the internal mass migration of Indigenous peoples has been one of the most important phenomena in Peru during the last six decades, and it is still an ongoing process.

In the following chapters I will try to answer the question of whether the approach to human trafficking that NGOs are taking is an effective way to address this issue from the point of view of Indigenous labour migrants, the so-called victims of trafficking.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 General Perspective

This chapter outlines the methodology utilized in this study during the field research conducted in Lima, Peru, between August and October 2013. The thesis examines how the problem of human trafficking has been approached by different Peruvian anti-trafficking NGOs. It further analyzes the usefulness of the expanded concept of trafficking for the so-called victims of trafficking in relation to Indigenous labour migration in Peru. This qualitative study is based on a belief that anti-trafficking policy decisions must be informed by the priorities identified by local people (Bastia, 2005: 59). The conceptual framework of the study is based on the importance of understanding people's perceptions of the problem and determining the ways in which human trafficking should be approached. By analyzing a person's subjective understanding of a particular problem, the researcher can arrive at new meanings of human trafficking. Another goal of using such an approach is to draw attention to the social actors who undertake migration (Barber 1996: 181, 2000: 340). This study also draws from cultural theories of trafficking in persons that argue that a deeper understanding of the problem is almost impossible without reference to different civilizations, the historic and modern world orders, and the patriarchal relations that are functioning within societies (Tverdova 2011: 7). Human trafficking cannot be fully understood outside the social, economic, and cultural contexts in which it takes place.

3.2. Participants

The first organization that I visited was Capital Humano y Social Alternativo (CHS Alternativo); it was founded in 2011 with its main office based in Lima and a regional office located in the city of Iquitos (province of Maynas, Loreto Region). This regional office operates a referral center for victims of labour and sexual exploitation. CHS Alternativo specializes in dealing with the problem of human trafficking and the sexual and labour exploitation of women, children, and adolescents. The organization also works with cases related to social problems, such as human smuggling and missing

persons. The latter two issues are recognized as factors that increase the vulnerability of populations at risk of becoming victims of trafficking. The mission of this organization is "to promote the development of human and social capital in the country through social programs and projects directed towards the protection and promotion of human rights" (CHS Alternativo Website 2016 www.chsalternativo.org/en/about-us/mission-and-objectives). CHS Alternativo supports the development of individuals and the society. The primary role of this organization is to monitor compliance with public policies related to human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants and missing persons. It also encourages communication activities, studies, and research aimed at sensitizing and informing the society at large about human trafficking and its relation to the smuggling of migrants and missing persons. CHS Alternativo contributes to the formation of knowledge and a culture of protection and promotion of human rights.

CHS Alternativo has made its national presence felt through its various projects: *"Prepare Yourself for Life"* is the project that includes activities related to prevention of the crime of trafficking and is coordinated from Iquitos. Another project, *"Mirada Ciudadana"* – "The Citizen Watchgroup," is headquartered in Lima but branches out to six different regions of Peru: Lambayeque, Cajamarca, Junin, Cusco, Arequipa, and Loreto. The projects goals include prevention, prosecution, and attention to victims of trafficking. The Citizen Watchgroup also identifies the weaknesses in the Peruvian state and society that are possibly contributing to the development of human trafficking in Peru.

Three interviews were conducted within CHS Alternativo. The coordinator of the Center of Legal and Psychological Aid for Victims of Trafficking and Related Crimes (Centro de Atención Legal y Psicológico de Atención a Víctimas de Trata, Familiares, Personas Desaparecidas y Víctimas del Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes – CALP) was interviewed. The second interview was with a psychologist who works for CALP and provides assistance for victims of sexual and labour exploitation. The third interview was with the coordinator of the program "Combating the Demand for Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents."

The second organization I visited was the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Lima. There, the consultant for Organized Crime was interviewed. The organization deals directly with the problem of human trafficking in Peru. Its main goal is to raise awareness among local people regarding the problem of human trafficking by providing lessons to police officers and social workers. It also partakes in introducing and explaining the definition and the nature of trafficking in persons.

The third organization I visited was the National Network for the Promotion of Women (Red Nacional de Promocion de La Mujer RNPM). The interview was conducted with the president of the organization. RNPM was founded in 1990 by a group of women who wanted to change the situation of women living in Peru. The widespread violence against women, gender discrimination, gender-biased division of labour and other issues became precursors for the creation of RNPM. The organization also deals with the subject of human trafficking.

3.3. Instruments Used and Data Collection

3.3.1. Interviews

To understand and comprehend the perspective of selected Peruvian NGOs towards the problem of human trafficking in their own country, one-on-one interviews were conducted in Lima, the capital and largest city in Peru, where all of the anti-trafficking NGOs are headquartered. Peru was chosen as my research site due to the fact that the fight against trade in humans is relatively new in this part of the world and there is a strong need for scholarly literature on this subject there. Most of the information on trafficking in Peru comes from local media, NGOs, and the government.

I chose the NGOs mentioned above because of their active role in raising the awareness about human trafficking in Peru; for example, CHS Alternativo has published numerous articles and books that describe the phenomenon of trafficking. Thus, they have a significant impact on perceptions regarding this problem in their country.

The following research questions determine the scope of the research:

1. How do stakeholders from various Peruvian NGOs describe/define/understand the problem of human trafficking in their country?

2. Is their definition/understanding of human trafficking useful for the so-called victims of trafficking?

Five face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the use of an interview guide were conducted in Spanish during the months of August and September 2013 with relevant actors from three non-governmental organizations that deal with the problem of human trafficking in Peru, such as coordinators and directors of anti-trafficking programs. The respondents were selected based on their experience and knowledge regarding anti-trafficking measures in the country (purposeful sampling). They were found using the snowball technique and contacted via phone through publicly accessible contact information. The interviews were conducted in public spaces – at the organizations' main offices in the capital of Peru – and they lasted between thirty and sixty minutes.

I used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions in order to follow up on points of interests raised by my respondents and to reveal their personal feelings, language, and the meanings they attribute to trafficking. Although I prepared the list of questions, I allowed my interviewees to decide how and when they wanted to respond to them, encouraging them, at the same time, to open up lines of discussion.

All interviewees were promised full confidentiality and were informed of this on the consent form. Their participation in the interviews was voluntary, and they did not receive any compensation for it.

All interviews were captured on a hand-held recorder, then stored on the hard drive of my password-protected notebook, secured in a separate file, and transcribed upon my arrival back in Vancouver, Canada. Transcriptions were not associated with the names of the participants as I used pseudonyms/codes. All interviews and documents analyzed were produced in Spanish without the use of a translator. I personally transcribed and then translated all the collected data needed for this study. The following are some examples of the open-ended questions used in the interviews:

1. Can you describe the nature of human trafficking in your country (forms of trafficking, incidents of trafficking, etc.)?
2. Can you describe what you believe to be the cause/s of human trafficking in your country?
3. Can you describe who, in your opinion, is more at risk of falling victim to human trafficking (e.g., what sex, age, etc.)?
4. What is the value of anti-trafficking measures in your area today?
5. Can you describe who can take part in the effort to improve anti-trafficking policies in your country?

The interviews helped me understand how the issue of trafficking is defined and understood by stakeholders from various anti-trafficking NGOs. These interviews form the first and very important part of my research, because based on their results, the most crucial research question emerged: Is the approach that these NGOs are taking to trafficking useful for people who they believe to be victims of trafficking? In analyzing the interviews, I acted as a critical scholar deconstructing and checking the validity of what my respondents told me in the interviews.

3.3.2. Secondary Sources

Upon completion of the interviews and the collection of qualitative data, the findings were compared with existing literature on labour migration in Peru. As a large portion of rural-to-urban labour migrants are Indigenous peoples who find employment as domestic workers, this group was the focus of the analysis in determining the usefulness of the trafficking concept within the context of labour migration.

Specifically, the analysis is centered around, and builds upon, a series of case studies and work experiences of Indigenous migrant women who found employment as *"trabajadoras del hogar"* (domestic workers) in the cities; as well as upon Jessaca Leinaweaver's (2008) study of Indigenous child migration in Peru. This evidence has helped me understand the relationship between individual experiences of migration and the broader understanding of trafficking advocated by Peruvian NGOs.

In order to better understand the scope and nature of trafficking in Peru, I also engaged in public document analysis. A consent form to access the documents was not required. I analyzed documents such as public reports and statistics gathered from Peruvian government institutions such as El Observatorio de Criminalidad del Ministerio Público, El Ministerio del Interior, La Policía Nacional del Perú, as well as from the non-governmental organization CHS Alternativo. I also analyzed visual materials such as brochures used in the public anti-trafficking campaign.

3.3.3. Data Analysis

After collecting all the required data, I digitized it and followed Techs' eight steps to produce an analysis (Creswell, 2009). In doing so, I

1. Got the sense of the whole.

2. Chose one document, read it, and asked myself, "What is it about?"

3. Listed all emerging topics and structured them into columns.

4. Went back to the data with created list of topics; abbreviated the topics with codes.

5. Chose the most expressive wording for the topics and turned them into categories.

6. Made a decision on the abbreviation of each category and alphabetized these codes.

7. Assembled the data material belonging to each category in one place and performed a preliminary analysis.

8. When necessary, recorded the existing data.

After the analysis was complete, all data was transferred to an external hard-disk and will be stored in a locked cabinet at Simon Fraser University until 2018, and after that it will be destroyed.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

4.1. Representations of Human Trafficking in Peru

4.1.1. Trafficking as a Myth

While conducting interviews with Peruvian NGOs, I was mainly interested in the way in which trafficking has been understood and presented by these organizations. Thus, the interviews started from inquiring about the current perceptions towards this phenomenon in Peru. All of the respondents chose to talk about the existing misinterpretations of trafficking first, and only later on did they proceed to describe what trafficking really is for them and how they believe it should be seen by the general public

> *People are not aware of what trafficking really is…They see it as something distant from their reality…as something that takes place in other countries* (Interviewee E).

> *[The] Peruvian population often produces and maintains certain myths regarding human trafficking. It is true that here, in Peru they [Peruvians] confuse it more with sexual exploitation of women* (Interviewee A).

The word “myth” in relation to trafficking was coming out often during the conversations with NGO officials. A myth of trafficking as sexual slavery of women is, as my informants further commented, a big issue in public anti-trafficking discourse. The analysis of the national Peruvian anti-trafficking legislation shows that, indeed, human trafficking was first interpreted only as sexual exploitation of women, and it was clearly expressed in the law. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the act of human trafficking was first incorporated as a criminal act into the Peruvian Criminal Code within the Chapter of Pimping, Article 153 (Codigo Penal Decreto Legislativo Nº 635, *Sistema Peruano De Informacion Juridica* 1991). In this Article, it was stated that trafficking in persons was considered a special crime that sanctioned only behaviours related to promotion/facilitation of transfer of victims for the sole purpose of prostitution. In 2004, Law No. 28251 was enacted (Ley

28251, Justia Peru. United Nations Global Database on Violence against Women, 2004). Notwithstanding this, human trafficking remained within the field of procurement and continued to be seen as the sexual exploitation of women.

4.1.2. Public Images of Human Trafficking

This image of trafficking as the sexual exploitation of women also finds expression in the Peruvian anti-trafficking campaigns. When I arrived in Lima at the end of August 2013, I was not aware that September had been announced as the month against human trafficking (*el mes contra la trata de personas*). At the airport, as a newly arrived researcher, I received a few brochures that aimed to raise visitors' awareness towards human trafficking. Most of the brochures showed severe cases of trafficking with the images of enslaved and terrified women who were subject to physical and sexual abuse (see Figures 1-5).

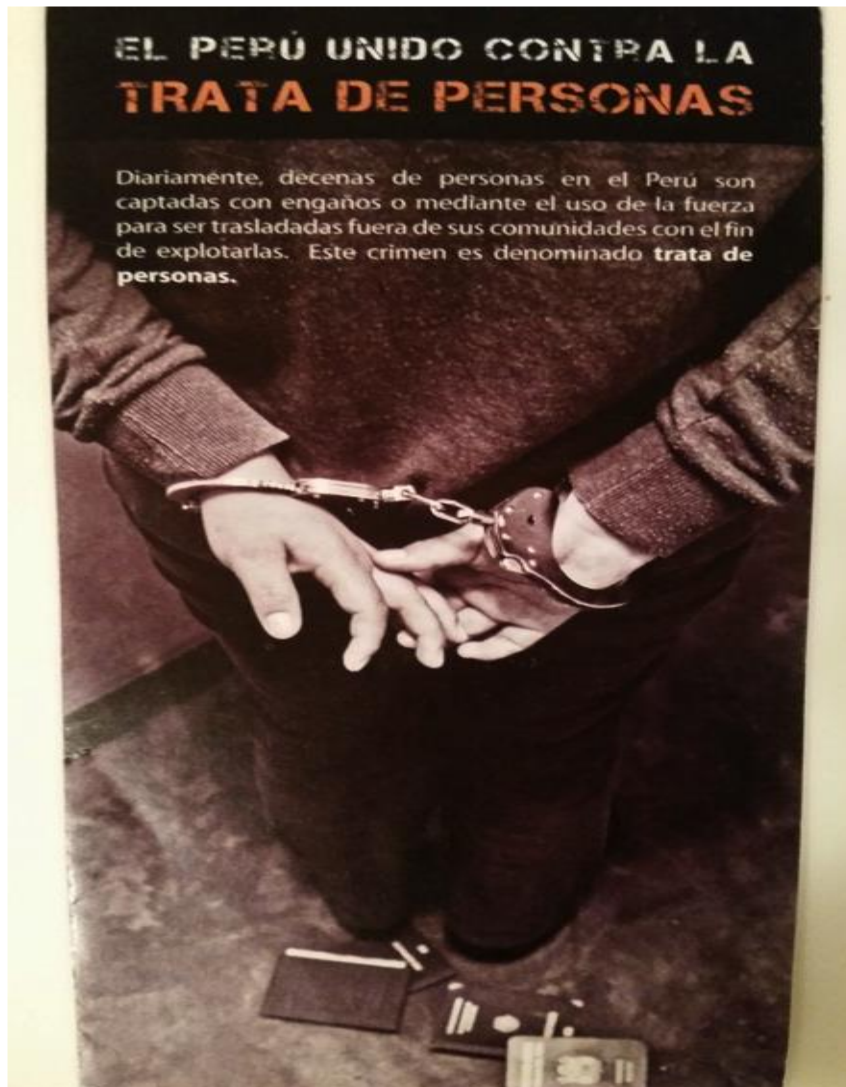

Figure 1: Women in Handcuffs – Image Used in Anti-Trafficking Campaign in Peru (Source: Ministerio del Interior del Peru)

Figures 1 and 2 show the first anti-trafficking brochure that I and others received upon arrival at the airport in Lima. The text seen at the top of Figure 1 states, *"Peru united against human trafficking. Daily, [a] dozen people are captured by the use force or deceit, [and] moved out of their communities in order to exploit them. This crime is called trafficking."* The word *"captured"* indicates that people fall victim to human trafficking against their will. This is emphasized by the visual of handcuffs and stolen passports seen beside the enslaved woman. On the back of the same brochure (Figure 2) the

victim (again, depicted as a woman) says, *"He [the trafficker] stole everything from me. There was no work. He stole my passport and all my things…"*

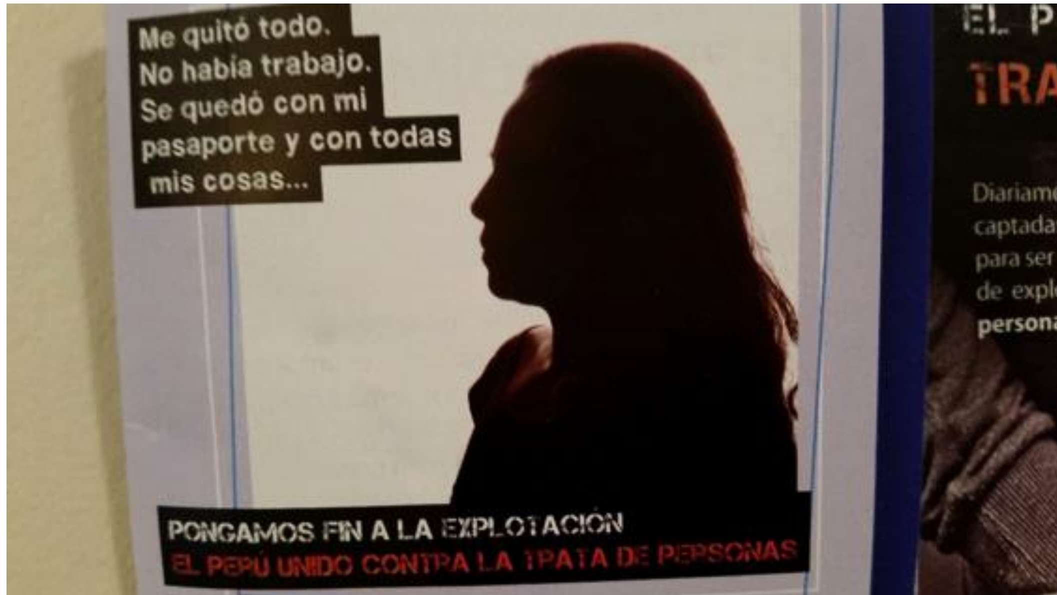

Figure 2: Exploited Woman Talks about Her Experience – Image Used in Anti-Trafficking Campaign in Peru (Source: Ministerio del Interior del Peru)

Figure 3: Young Girls as Sex Slaves – Image Used in Anti-Trafficking Campaign (Source: Ministerio del Interior del Peru)

Figure 3. shows another brochure used in the public campaign against human trafficking in Peru. Trafficking is presented here in the framework of involuntary prostitution whereby the victim is a minor, a woman, and is sold into sex slavery. A theme that was ever present across the brochures that were collected – *Trata de Personas* ("Human Trafficking") – is reduced here to a few words that literally mean: "disappearance," "slavery," "torture," "violence," "captivity," "kidnapping." Once again, these themes tend to dominate the literature on human trafficking on an international level (Jahic & Finckenauer 2005:25). Consistent with what is depicted in the first brochure, the horror seen on the faces of both of the women indicate that they are being held against their will and that they ended up in this situation not of their own choice. Both the images and text used here imply the naïveté of the victims who, most likely, are in need of protection. This naïveté, along with the theme of childishness, clearly defines and portrays their victimization. Such an image of innocent and enslaved females is more likely to be met with the empathy of the public and the desire to help.

The apparently obvious and pervasive theme that emerges from the brochures is that victimization is attributed solely to women, who are weak and disadvantaged. Of particular significance, here is the lack of representation of the male victims of trafficking.

This trend seems to point towards traditional gender roles in Peru since none of the images present a man, as doing so would interfere with the strong, masculine characteristics imposed by the dominant gender norms. The gender identities demonstrated through these images used in the public anti-trafficking campaign might be the expression of a patriarchal and sociopolitical order. For example, it is a common belief that Peruvian men maintain the authority within the household as well as a monopoly over the political, social, and economic sphere and that the source of their authority is their capacity to provide for the family. On the other hand, women are in charge of domestic service and are to provide sexual favours (Fuller 2001).

As Fuller (2001) points out, if a Peruvian male fails to get a job that his neighbours consider "good enough" and "prestigious," he instantly gains a reputation of being a "poor devil," and thus loses any social recognition. Furthermore, one of the elements that defines masculinity, as it emerges from Fuller's interviews with 120 Peruvian males, is that of strength (a muscular body, manliness, and the capacity to work). Strength here is also understood in terms of courage, which allows a male to defend his family. As Lucho and Rolando, two of Fuller's interviewees, explain, in order to confirm his social worth a man must appear in the eyes of others as strong and self-confident: "The first thing people look at is your face, your expression…Without physical strength, a man is nothing. When a man is physically strong he is respected in society…" (Fuller 2001: 320). For Peruvians, work is the most important symbol of masculinity. If Peruvian men work, it is said to indicate independence, responsibility, capability, and the possession of dignity. Capability includes being able to act, command, and change reality. Having said that, there is a perception that presenting an adult Peruvian man as a victim of trafficking, exploited worker, weak, passive, and in need of protection could undermine the existing patriarchal order in Peru and the foundation of masculinity. Being labelled as a victim of trafficking can be a source of deep social shame for a Peruvian man. As one of my interviewees commented, men who fell victim to trafficking were seen in the eyes of others as *"simply stupid and naïve."* As interviewee B further commented: *"All of [the] social programs and shelters in Peru are for women. There is no single program/shelter that helps men who fall victim to trafficking. In [the] case of men, no one knows how to serve/help them."*

The existing patriarchal order and gender inequality in Peru might account for the fact that males are not seen as victims; thus the social programs and anti-trafficking campaigns do not address them. By showing only severe and oversimplified images of trafficking as sex trafficking in women, the brochures not only empower males but also ignore the possible agency of the female victim who might or might not have had at least a little influence on her situation.

Although it is not my intention to deny that there are women in Peru who are indeed abused and in need of protection, the images of helpless, scared, and passive Peruvian women do not correspond with my own observations. While conducting my field research in Lima, I had the pleasure of being the guest of an active Peruvian feminist. She is a retired police officer, now actively participating in the women's movement. I had an opportunity to get to know her better as she accompanied me throughout my stay in Peru. On many occasions when we talked about gender roles in Peru, she emphasized that "although the violence against women in Peru is a common thing, we [Peruvian women] are strong, and we know how to survive." Her life was not easy, as she told me, but she never complained about that, and instead she appeared to me to be a strongly optimistic person with a lot of positive energy. She said that the key to diminishing violence against women is to convince them to participate in the women's movement and that through their own agency they would be able to change their lives for the better. In accordance with my own observations, one of the interviewees commented:

> *I think that the situation of women has improved over the last years significantly…They are able to prepare themselves more for what happens in their life…They have more control, more access to education…They are almost getting closer to men when it comes to the access to education…* (Interviewee D).

This statement is highly important as it contradicts what government-produced brochures and other interviewed NGOs say about women in Peru and how they present them: as persons who need protection, who lack the education needed to be aware of their rights, and who are unable to take care of themselves.

4.1.3. Re-emergence of the Myth of White Slavery?

Figure 4 presents a similar scenario to the one described above. Through this image, we also see violence, terror, and enslavement. However, this particular picture adds a whole new meaning to the image of trafficking by presenting the victim as a woman of rather light-skin colour, dressed in Western-style clothing. Similarly, figure 5 shows a cut-out from a comic book used in the anti-trafficking campaign, whose theme is the story of a girl who had been kidnapped, exploited for sexual purposes, and who, as a result of this tragedy, died. In this picture, as in several others shown earlier, the main character – a victim of trafficking (shown at the top) – and her family and friends are light-skinned. It seems that one of the purposes of such a representation might be to make people believe that these women become victims because of their "special qualities" – their attractiveness and beauty. Beauty in Peru is associated with Caucasian looks and is thus attributed to the "white" race (Fuller 2001: 322).

Thus, "an attractive woman" is most likely one with whiter skin. It is important to note that in the Peruvian context, the term "white" is also used to describe mestizos. For Peruvians, the term *mestizo* (a racial/ethnic term used used to describe people of mixed European and Indigenous descent) itself refers to a blend of cultural and racial components. Thus, a person who looks mestizo in the eyes of others might also be called "white," depending on cultural aspects (Thorp & Paredes 2010:46). According to this understanding, the potential victim of trafficking would most likely be a mestizo.

Figure 4: Woman Enslaved – Image Used in Anti-Trafficking in Peru (Source: Ministerio del Interior del Peru)

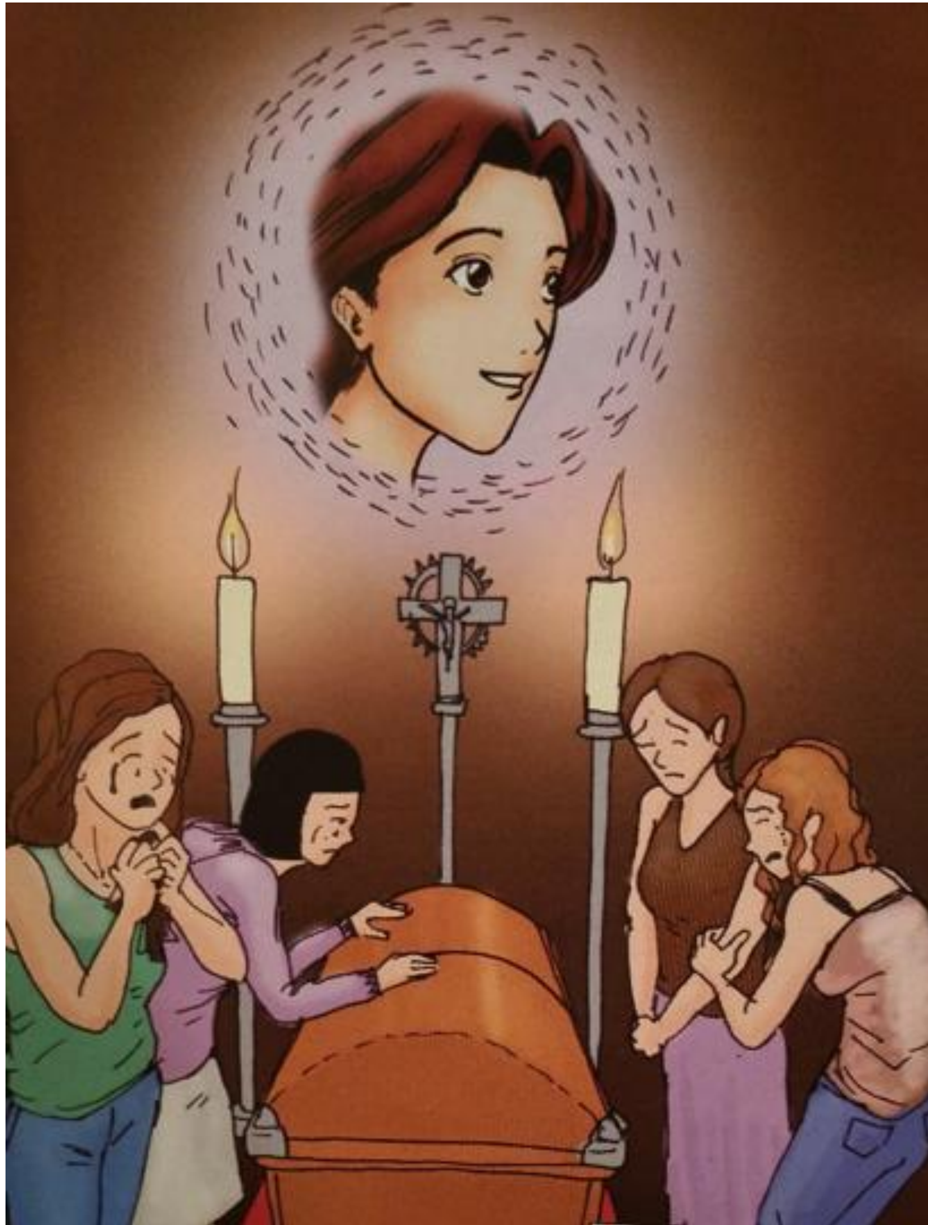

Figure 5: Image from the Comic Book About Human Trafficking (Source: International Organization for Migration, Peru)

It is worth asking, where does this concept of trafficking as sex slavery of light-skinned women – a concept that predominates in anti-trafficking brochures – come from? As Interviewee E commented, "*They [people] see it as something distant from their reality…as something that takes place in other countries…"* This sentence seems to be

of much help in answering this question. Similarly, interviewee D added, *"Before, you could hear about it happening in different places."* If, according to interviewed NGO officials, trafficking is typically seen as something *"alejano"* (distant) that takes place far away, in foreign countries, it may be that the image of trafficking is connected to the past, when human trafficking came into focus for the first time as the movement against "white slavery" (see Chapter 2). As mentioned in previous chapters, the term white slavery referred to the procurement of innocent, white European women who were kidnapped and forced into prostitution in Asia, South America, or "the Orient," by non-Western men (Doezema 1999: 25). There is a strong similarity between the language and terms that were used a century ago to describe the victims of white slavery and the theme that emerges from present-day anti-trafficking brochures:

- Young, naïve and innocent woman
- Deceived, kidnapped by dangerous groups of men
- Forced into sex slavery from which there is no way out

The white slave trade was seen by some as a tool to regulate female sexuality and to control prostitution (Doezema, 2000:177). The established image of innocent, young women who became prostitutes against their will created sympathy for the victims and a disapproval of prostitution, which justified the need to abolish it.

Having said that, the images of light-skinned victims of trafficking presented in contemporary Peruvian anti-trafficking campaigns might also be a re-telling of the old myth of white slavery, a new "moral panic" in the face of the increasing agency of Peruvian women, but also an attempt to maintain the patriarchal order of genders as well as the hierarchical order of races. This way of presenting victims does not reflect the multi-ethnic character of Peru, where Indigenous peoples comprise almost half of the country's population (Gootenberg 1995: 38).

4.1.4 Statistics

Is sex trafficking of women in Peru only another myth? Despite the allegations on the part of interviewed Peruvian NGOs of sex trafficking actually being a myth, some figures demonstrate that human trafficking for sexual exploitation may be a real issue in Peru.

In general, Peru suffers from a serious deficit of information regarding the scope and the extent of trafficking in persons. The first data regarding the rate of occurrence of human trafficking in Peru was gathered and published in 2003 under pressure from the United States. A journalistic report on the dramatic situation of children in situations of sexual and labour exploitation in Puno drew international attention towards the problem of human trafficking in Peru (CHS Alternativo 2012:5).

In 2004, with the purpose of eliminating gaps in information about the crime of human trafficking, the United Nations, CHS Alternativo, the Ministry of Interior, and the National Police of Peru designed and validated the system of registry and statistics related to the crime of Trafficking in Persons (RETA). The RETA system contains indicators on incidents of trafficking, victim's profiles, trafficking routes and so forth. RETA shows that between 2004 and 2012 a total of 1663 victims of trafficking were registered (Cavassa 2012:51).

Among all adult victims, 96 percent were women and only 3 percent were male. Among child victims, 90 percent were girls and 9 percent were boys. In total 61 percent of all victims were adults, and 39 percent were minors (Ibid.).

In some cases it is evident that trafficking may have taken place for more than one purpose. However, trafficking for sexual exploitation seems to be the dominate reason in 60 percent of the cases (Cavassa 2012: 54).

In 2012, the last case was recorded by RETA. Initially the system stopped working in February 2012 because of a failure to pay the telephone bills. Since then RETA has not been updated and remains disabled at the national level due to a lack of budgetary allocation from the Ministry of Interior and other administrative problems (CHS Alternativo 2012:8).

The RETA system within the Peruvian National Police was not the only one registering cases of human trafficking in Peru. The Public Ministry also collects data regarding incidents of trafficking through its Department of Crime Observatory. However, these two institutions have never cooperated with each other with regards to statistics on human trafficking, and their figures are not comparable.

Between 2010 and 2013, the Public Ministry registered through its SISTRA system (el Sistema de Información Estratégica sobre la Trata de Personas) 1,580 cases of human trafficking nationally, according to the Department of Crime Observatory (Observatorio de Criminalidad del Ministerio Público, 2013: 2). Among the victims, 85 percent were women and 57 percent were between the ages of thirteen and seventeen years old (Observatorio de Criminalidad del Ministerio Público, 2013: 3). More than 50 percent of the reported cases were related to sexual exploitation (Ibid.). Similarly, the RETA system (which recorded complaints, police investigations, and operations at each station) reported in 2012 that 59.9 percent of registered cases were related to sexual exploitation (Cavassa 2012:54). However, SISTRA's figures point to the fact that crime is more widespread than what had been reported by the National Police. The trends of both statistics are similar only until the year 2010, because from 2011 onwards the National Police started registering the cases of exploitation of adult women. It can be observed that in the case of the Public Ministry, the tendency to register cases including, first, minors and, second, young women, seems to prevail. However, figures from both institutions show that the female gender is predominantly the one targeted.

Although the statistics on human trafficking created by the Peruvian National Police and the Public Ministry are not exactly comparable, a similar picture of this crime emerges from their analyses. Based on this, trafficking in persons in Peru is mainly a problem of sexual exploitation of women between thirteen and seventeen years of age. More than 80 percent of the victims are Peruvian, and 98 percent of them are being trafficked internally, within the provinces (Ibid.).

4.2. How Interviewed NGOs Imagine Trafficking in Peru – Beyond Sex Slavery

Moving away from the subject of sex trafficking as myth, interviewed NGO officials went on to describe how they imagine human trafficking in Peru:

> *Iquitos is the population most vulnerable to trafficking. It is the second city that has the greatest number of victims of trafficking* (Interviewee A).
>
> *Usually rural people are being used and exploited…They migrate from villages to bigger cities where they are employed as domestic servants…where they are low-paid, ill-treated, and much more…* (Interviewee D).
>
> *It is widely understood that human trafficking involves force, violence, and sexual exploitation of minors and women, and that is not always the case…* (Interviewee B).

After analyzing official statistics and collecting anti-trafficking brochures, I found that the image of trafficking as presented in public campaigns does not correlate with how the selected Peruvian NGOs view this problem. Most of the NGOs members who I interviewed project special attention towards the potentially misleading quality of the available statistics:

> *I think they [the official statistics] are misleading and incorrect. They demonstrate that human trafficking in Peru is a problem of sexual exploitation of women, and this is not the case. There is a huge black figure and missing information about the nature and scope of human trafficking in Peru* (Interviewee A).

I found that almost all of the respondents shared a similar view regarding governmental statistics on trafficking. A representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime also commented similarly:

The problem is not necessarily where the numbers are…Cases of trafficking identified by the state do not draw the real picture of this crime in the country (Interviewee E).

This suggests a tension between the interviewed NGOs and the Peruvian state with regards to how human trafficking is approached and understood. In addition, CHS Alternativo has been criticizing the government for its lack of interest in this problem. A report presented by this organization and submitted to the Congress of the Republic reveals that the state budget to fight human trafficking is insufficient for the persecution and prevention of this crime and, as a result, the gains are unsatisfactory. The amount of money that the state allocated for anti-trafficking measures is minimal compared to other expenditures made by the government such as the investment of 30 million soles (approx. 10 million US dollars) for equipment improvement for the state broadcaster (CHS Alternativo, 2013). The interviewed NGOs argue that the sectors of government involved in the fight against human trafficking are more invested in providing lectures, workshops, and conferences and less inclined towards offering direct assistance and protection for the victims (e.g., Peru to this day suffers from a lack of shelters for victims of trafficking).

4.2.1. Human Trafficking as a Form of Labour Migration

Throughout the interviews with the NGOs, the respondents were highly motivated to call attention to human trafficking incidents that, they claim, had gone unrecognized because of the difficulty in getting the statistical evidence required and the reluctance on the part of the victims to report such situations. Uniformly, interviewees agreed that the crime of trafficking reaches, first of all, Indigenous migrants who belong to a lower socioeconomic status and come from the poorest Andean regions to the cities in search for work. As Interviewee B summarized in his comment:

The big issue here in relation to trafficking is temporary migration from the Highlands to the cities…During certain seasons of the year, when the land is no longer cultivated, people and their children emigrate from the

Highlands to other provinces such as Lima, in search for work. Many of these people end up being victims of trafficking.

The above statement provides insight into the context for which these NGOs want human trafficking to be understood and conceptualized. As the conversation deepened, Interviewee B argued that the problem of trafficking reaches not just women but also men and children. Subsequently, victims of trafficking are migrants from *La Sierra*, who, in large part, are Indigenous peasants. Perhaps the most important information that can be derived from this quote is that human trafficking in Peru mainly takes the form of labour exploitation, not just sex slavery, as has been presented so far by the government and media. This opinion corresponds with the information provided in the recent publications of CHS Alternativo on human trafficking. According to it, victims come from the region of Madre de Dios, Cusco, Puno, and Apumirac. As the organization describes it:

> *There is a world of immense labour trafficking in Peru that is affecting young boys and girls as well as adult men and women. There is exploitation in domestic services related to debt bondage, and labour exploitation in the informal mining, illegal logging, and extraction of chestnuts industries, and in drug trafficking* (CHS Alternativo, 2014:66).

The interviewed NGOs seemed especially interested in establishing every kind of labour abuse as “human trafficking.” NGO workers described the job arrangements as being exploitative, and backed this up by showing the reports of children working long hours or not getting paid. It is told dramatically, clearly indicating that however little the NGO is able to help, the interviewee clearly felt that this sort of labour is an abuse with no redeeming features. Such an understanding of the problem makes millions of people in Peru – and Indigenous migrants in particular – into those who are “trafficked.”

4.2.2. Going beyond the Palermo Protocol

As demonstrated above, NGO representatives used the examples of the abusive conditions taking place throughout Peru to clearly indicate that human trafficking in Peru goes far beyond the traditional definition of this crime found in the Palermo Protocol. In

fact, when NGOs were asked about a solution to the problem of human trafficking in Peru, one of the interviewees proposed the broader, more flexible definition of trafficking. The interviewee from CHS Alternativo gave the example of Argentina, where the government considered the international definition of human trafficking proposed by the Palermo Protocol to be complicated and difficult to understand. The Argentinean state found that police officers and state officials were often confused about the definition of human trafficking. As a result, they were not registering trafficking cases because they did not know how to qualify them as such based on the definition. Consequently, Argentina decided to change the anti-trafficking law and develop a new definition of this crime. Now the Argentinean law says that any situation in which someone convinces another person in any way, with the aim to exploit him/her, qualifies as trafficking:

> *Human trafficking means the recruitment, transportation, and/or moving – whether it is within the country or to or from the exterior, harboring or receipt of persons over the age of eighteen, for the purpose of exploitation, when deception, fraud, violence, threat, or any form of intimidation or coercion, abuse of authority or of a position of vulnerability, giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over the victim,* ***even when there is consent of the victim*** (Law 26.364 for the Prevention and Punishment of Trafficking in Persons and Assistance to its Victims, Argentina) (Ministerio De Justicia Y Derechos Humanos ARGENTINA [2008]).

With reference to the Argentinean policy, not all of the three elements presented in the Palermo Protocol (transportation, means of force, and purpose) have to occur in order to qualify the case as human trafficking. The Argentinean definition of trafficking that covers consensual exploitation was given priority over the international one in Argentina. According to the representatives of Peruvian NGOs whom I interviewed, the broader, more flexible definition makes it easier to visualize this crime, to reveal its scope and all forms under which it occurs but also to adjust the anti-trafficking measures to the social reality.

To summarize, the individuals interviewed who represent Peruvian NGOs want to challenge the traditional way of thinking about human trafficking and its historical definitions by advocating a broader understanding of it. They argue that in Peru this phenomenon occurs mainly in the form of labour exploitation, including consensual exploitation, of poor people from the Highlands who migrate to the cities in search of a better life. Thus, they want to expand the Palermo definition of trafficking for the Peruvian context so that this specific form of labour migration, which often has elements of exploitation, is also embraced. But is this widely formulated definition of human trafficking, which these Peruvian NGOs are advocating for, an adequate mechanism to describe the complex system of labour recruitment and traditional labour migration in Peru? I will attempt to address this question in the following sections.

4.2.3. Family Members as Traffickers

Interviewed NGO activists also pointed out a mechanism through which trafficking often operates:

> *They (trafficking victims) often come from families where there is violence … and that is why they let themselves be fooled by their own friends* (Interviewee E).

Here the interviewee implies that vulnerability to trafficking has its roots in family relations. Respondent B went even further in her claims by saying that the danger of being trafficked comes from family members and friends:

> *Traffickers in their majority are the persons who could be our uncles, parents, or neighbours ….* (Interviewee B).

This claim is highly important because it undermines a very fundamental cultural practice characterizing Andean communities known as *padrinazgo* (godfathering). This practice of sending children away to relatives who are able to provide them education and a better quality of life has also been a very important strategy of survival among the poorest Indigenous communities. In Peru, there is a tradition similar to *padrinazgo*, called child circulation or "companionship" (*acompañar*), by which the goal of the child's

movement is to relieve the other person's solitude, but it is also seen as a way for the child to gain access to education and to overcome poverty. In this cultural practice, a child offers assistance to the receiving family, who provides for his or her care and upbringing. Leinaweaver (2008) observes that this labour migration, specifically, a child labour migration, needs to be analyzed within Andean culture, meanings, and strategies for survival. Leinaweaver understands companionship as a process of "improving oneself" (*superarse*) through devoted attempts at self-improvement among Indigenous peoples in Peru (Leinaweaver 2008:70). It is understood here as a family strategy of child circulation and a moral commitment for the youth, a process through which young people are often expected to grow up outside of their place of origin, in the urban environment, with the help of their better-off relatives.

In some cases, these promises of a better future made by sponsoring relatives are indeed untrue, and the child is converted into a victim of labour exploitation or sexual exploitation. But as interviewed NGOs want us to understand, practices such as *padrinazgo* or companionship *per se* are mechanisms that drive trafficking in Peru. What does this mean for the Peruvian population? Should all Peruvians abandon their cultural practices and look at their closest siblings or friends as their potential exploiters and enemies? *"We should trust less…We should not trust one another at all…"* said interviewee C. Although interviewed NGOs claim that *padrinzago* eventually leads to trafficking, this cultural practice per se cannot be treated as such due to its consensual character.

Furthermore, although all of the respondents shared the same view regarding godfathering as a main method of recruitment of victims, none of them have demonstrated the evidence that would support their claims that most of the situations of *padrinazgo* end up as trafficking. Nor did they propose an alternative strategy for fighting poverty among Indigenous populations. Their claims were mostly based on the cases of trafficking, whose victims they assisted: *"They (trafficking victims) were exploited and they came from Puno (…) and who brought them? Their uncle did."* noted Interviewee B. As I was told, the number of cases assisted by one of the organizations totaled 446, and only 186 of these were related to human trafficking.

The notion that family members, in particular parents, are primary agents of their children's exploitation can be a continuation of the concept of "a bad mother," which resonates in Latin America. As some scholars of Latin America have demonstrated, the notion of a bad mother is consistently created through prevalent understandings of parenthood that ignore structural oppression, social and economic injustice, and cultural traditions (Leinaweaver 2008, Campoamor 2016, Fonseca 2005). In an article by Leigh Campoamor (2016), poor, dark-skinned Indigenous mothers practice what is called a "defensive motherhood." The author argues that the image of a bad mother is, in light of the existing injustice of the capitalist system, a mechanism through which the victims of this system are criminalized (Campoamor 2016:168). Indeed, those I interviewed tried to present family members, including mothers, as traffickers, thus trying to criminalize the Indigenous populations.

4.2.4. Child Trafficking?

> *While normally an adult gets paid 50 Peruvian soles per day, these kids get 20 soles per day. The work they do is inhuman…* (Interviewee A).

As these NGOs said during interviews, the trafficking often takes place when children are sent away by their parents/relatives to work or beg on the streets. Any child labour is seen here as harming the child and as exploitation on the side of the parents. Thus, the notion of family members as traffickers can also be an expression of attempts made by Peruvian civil society to diminish child labour and Indigenous migration:

> *We need to eradicate these cultural practices...We need to change this violent culture which comes from below, from family, and has its expression on the street…* (Interviewee D).

As interviewee B further explains:

> *They usually beg on the streets, sell newspapers, and do very basic, simple work. Children and adolescents between nine and sixteen years of age work more than eleven hours a day in exchange for tips.*

This "basic, simple work" is presented here as harmful to the children and reveals that interviewed NGOs adopt a strictly economic and fatalistic interpretation of child labour. But again, if one understands human trafficking as it is defined in the Palermo Protocol, which the Peruvian government signed and ratified in 2002, the work experience of Indigenous individuals described by these NGOs, even if, at some point exploitative, cannot be understood as trafficking because it does not involve all three elements of the trafficking process included in the Palermo Protocol (recruitment, coercion, exploitation). Also, because these migrants take up migration for work willingly (that is, they give their consent to enter into exploitative work relationships and are able to freely leave it at any point), this is not human trafficking but is, rather, labour migration with elements of exploitation.

Interviewee B went even further in his claims by saying that children have no capacity to act or to recognize what is good or what is wrong for them – and thus, adults should decide what is best for them. Any child work, according to this view is seen as destructive. From these kinds of statements, then, it can be understood that the NGOs' notion of childhood is one in which children do not work and instead spend all their young years in the protective environment of the home surrounded by happiness and love; or, as Interviewee B put it, *"Because he is a minor, he has no opinion of his own."*

This ideal and idealized image of a carefree and stress-free childhood, however, may be far from being a reality in the Peruvian context where the child's experience can hardly be reduced to the dimension of protection. The overwhelming focus on exploitation in relation to child labour leads one to miss other aspects of children's activity. The notions of child work and childhood cannot be analyzed without reference to various cultures.

These attempts on the part of interviewed Peruvian NGOs to present any child labour as exploitative and the parents as exploiters, and to suggest, at the same time, that this type of situation is the equivalent of trafficking, go hand in hand with the global abolitionist efforts to end child labour. For example, in 2011, the US Department of State granted more than 13 million dollars for the fight against exploitative child labour in Peru (US Embassy in Lima, 2011). In 2015, another 10 million dollars was announced to reduce child labour globally: "We are committed to eradicating child labour and forced

labour…" (Ibid.). Both NGOs and those who provide them with funds to eliminate child work do not clearly explain what the term "exploitative work" encompasses. Exploited children are, in their opinion, *"*children who are facing work-filled days – lifting heavy rocks, cutting sugar cane, or weaving carpets*"* (Ibid.).

The attempt on the part of NGOs to present *padrinazgo* as the source of trafficking and family members as primarily agents of their children's exploitation and trafficking might well have resulted in the increase in Peruvian children sent for international adoption (Leinaweaver 2015). The assumption under which these adoption practices operate is that white, adoptive North American families are "ideal families" because they are able to provide Peruvian children with a better life than their Peruvian parents can. This belief is closely connected to the notion of a family in which children are identified as fully dependent and adults as responsible and mature (Ibid.). Scholars of critical adoption studies have also shown that international adoption supports hegemonic Western-dominated narratives about "right" families such as the narrative of rescue, wherein prior to adoption, children are presented as "nobody's children" who are starving and waiting to be rescued by Western families (Briggs, 2012: 144; Yngvesson, 2010).

4.2.5 The Notion of Child Work in Peru

The way interviewed NGOs imagine family and child work, and how they link it to the problem of trafficking, stands in sharp contrast with what some scholars tell us about the Andean forms of life and the role that family plays within the Peruvian population. Domestic workers, among them children, are frequently empowering themselves by using family support, religious affiliation, or different union organizations as a source of upward mobility. Nanci, for example, one of the Indigenous domestic workers interviewed by Stiglich, derived her agency from the support of her immediate family. She has clarified, time after time, that the only reason she has the strength to work under difficult circumstances for minimal pay is due to her family's support and affection (Stiglich 2013: 71). Also, interviewee B cited what one of the assisted trafficking victims told him, although it seems to contradict what he had previously said about family as a source of danger: *"Why am I here? I do not understand…I want to leave this place (center for trafficking victims) and be with my family…They are there…far away from*

here." This sentence might indicate that the trafficking victim is highly aware of the role the family plays in her/his life. The concept of the family comes here not only in reference to immediate relatives, but it is also understood as a comfort zone and some kind of fortress, a place where one can find peacefulness and seek refuge.

Through the stories of children working on the streets of Lima and their families we learn that child labour is viewed not just as a means to satisfy the economic needs of a family, but also a way to teach children the value of work as a tool to invest in their future.

Children's work is highly valued in Peruvian culture, especially among Indigenous peasants. Certain segments of the Peruvian public consider child labour a justified practice, especially in rural areas (Tercelli, 2013: 174). Among Andean people, who make up the majority of in-street migrant workers in Lima, children help their families and take an active part in the life of the community (Invernizzi, 2003: 323). In an article by Invernizzi, we see the positive recognition of child's work as a part of children's socialization. Long working hours and children's work in general are seen as legitimate among Andean communities: "There is no harm in a child working," said one of the Indigenous migrants working on the streets of Lima. Interviewed children themselves described their street work in terms of a "career" and as a tool for social advancement. Marco said that thanks to street work he could not only eat better but could also earn social recognition, meet new friends, and become independent (Invernizzi, 2003:322). These interests expressed by children themselves seem to be crucial for any actions aimed at protecting them.

Peruvian children themselves, those working on the streets, point to the economic value of their work, but they also say that work is a way to earn independence (Bromley & Mackie; 2009: 147). More than 80 percent of them said that they work to earn pocket money (Ibid.). One of the comments made by Interviewee B was especially revealing of how migrants themselves perceive their work. He said that nine children who were exploited in the Tumbes on rice fields were rescued by the Ombudsman and the prosecutors and agents of the National Police of Peru. At the same time he added that these "rescued" children said in their interviews that life on the street was a comfortable norm that in one instance served to make funds available to purchase school supplies.

Interviewee B also commented that among the "abused" children, *"only nine were rescued; others ran away to a nearby beach."* He added, "*They simply do not want you to intervene."*

What we see here can be an attempt on the part of interviewed NGOs to impose Northern-influenced standards regarding child labour on their own country, even though these standards do not necessarily fit the Peruvian reality. These Northern standards try to separate childhood from adulthood, maintaining that children should be dependent on their parents economically until they reach an adult age. Thus, their participation in so called "adult concerns" is strongly discouraged (Myers 2001:40). However, it is interesting to note that many North American and European parents now choose to teach their children about jobs, money, and the economic world (Furnham 2001:398). North American children, just like Peruvian ones, often choose to work in order to earn pocket money, and this is not seen by members of the international community as something wrong (Ibid.).

Likewise, another interviewee commented:

> *A shoe company from San Martin, Lima, had brought eighty-three young women and men from the Highlands and forced them to work twenty hours a day. In the end, the company did not pay them anything and they ended up escaping…* (Interviewee A).

The fact that the victims had the possibility and choice of leaving this exploitative relationship *("they ended up escaping")* seemed irrelevant for the interviewees. Based on these observations, the exploitation *per se* is a factor determining the status of trafficking, regardless of the consent of the victim. Although bonded by cultural practices such as *compadrazgo,* quite often the migrating Indigenous children are the ones who negotiate the conditions of their employment (Leinaweaver 2008). If they realize that the transfer was not beneficial for them, or was even exploitative in nature, some of them decide to leave these harmful situations and search for different job opportunities.

During my field research in Peru, I came to understand that the expanded definition of trafficking advocated by these NGOs might be problematic. This became clearer to me

when I was staying at my friend's family house in a southern Peruvian city. The same people who were telling me how serious the problem of trafficking in Peru was were keeping under their roof a boy who could easily be classified as a victim of trafficking, following the interviewed NGOs' understanding of the problem. This eleven-year-old indigenous boy – I will call him Pasco (his real name is withheld due to confidentiality), lost his parents at the age of five. My friend's family members had taken Pasco under their roof, and he works for them day and night in exchange for food, a place to live, and an opportunity to pursue education. I remember my first visit to their house. Everyone was presented to me except for Pasco. Later, I asked my friend who he was, why his presence was not acknowledged by others, and why his name was never mentioned to me. Then she told me his story, that he was a servant, that her aunt occasionally maltreated him, and that he was sometimes physically abused. She also admitted that the rest of the family called him "indio" ("Indian") when he did something wrong. He was very shy in my presence and never spoke to me. I tried to establish contact with him, but he was always very busy, engaged in household chores. I also got the impression that maybe he did not have permission to talk to me. It was obvious that this situation was accepted by all those around me, and this seemed quite "natural" for them. Following the expansive definition of trafficking advocated by Peruvian NGOs with whom I spoke, this situation would easily fall under "their" category of trafficking. Long working hours, unpaid labour, along with the ill treatment that this boy experienced are all the elements of exploitation that determine trafficking status according to these NGOs. But was Pasco truly a victim of trafficking?

On one hand, it can be morally wrong to send children to work for city-based relatives. As Leinaweaver's (2008:65) interviewees, who were companions in their relatives' home, said, "[W]e practically have to humiliate ourselves and accept what they say to us...." Accordingly, interviewed NGOs name this practice of sending children away "child trafficking." On the other hand, as previously mentioned, child circulation can be a device for a child to gain benefits that his/her poor parents may be unable to provide. Working children can transfer money to their closest siblings, thus contributing to the betterment of their families. Hence, the tradition of circulating children is an accepted and decisive effort to overcome poverty among rural Indigenous communities. Pasco, in exchange for his assistance in my friend's relatives' house, had been offered a place to live, food, and

the opportunity to attend school. In this context, attempting to use the expansive definition of the problem, in order to encompass labour migration that often has the element of exploitation, and label this trafficking might do more harm than good. One has to ask the question: What are the main forces behind the exploitation of Indigenous peoples? Instead of seeing this as a human trafficking issue, and strictly as a criminal act, one can analyze similar situations in terms of structural oppression and the politics of exclusion suffered by Indigenous populations in Peru – for example, in terms of labour rights abuses and social discrimination at the work site (D'Andrea 2007:6).

In the following section I will discuss the issue of agency of Indigenous peoples in light of the help offered to them by the NGOs I interviewed.

4.3. Human Trafficking and Agency. Why Victims Often Refuse Help

When asked why labour trafficking of Indigenous migrants has been a hidden area, almost uniformly, the interviewed NGO workers put the blame on the victims:

> *In many cases, victims just want to leave this place (shelters for trafficking victims), refusing help offered by us* (Interviewee B).

> *We often take up the case and the person (victim) says, "I do not want to continue with this anymore. Stay out of my life"* (Interviewee E).

Interestingly, Interviewee E also mentioned the inability of Indigenous people to fully comprehend that they ended up in a situation of trafficking: *"Some of the population (Indigenous peoples) do not perceive the basic concepts of justice and law, and they lack self-confidence…"* What other respondents said also indicates that these NGOs treat exploited Indigenous peoples as passive, uneducated victims who are unaware of what is really happening to them:

> *Many times, victims are not conscious that they have been used and that they are in the situation of trafficking…they do not see themselves as persons who have rights…* (Interviewee D).

> *In some cases that we assisted, the victims did not understand the term "law," they knew nothing about it (…) Along with the non-recognition of their own rights goes their low self-esteem (…) they don't understand themselves and don't know what their values and rights are …"* (Interviewee B).

Household workers and children who roam the streets, in the view of those NGO workers I interviewed, are separated from their communities, managing badly without a support network that they cannot do without, and, lacking knowledge of urban life, cannot negotiate their employment conditions. As Interviewee B put it, *"They lose/lack the understanding that they are human beings who deserve to be free."*

There is, however, an interesting contradiction in what these NGO activists are saying about victims of trafficking. On one hand, they want us to think that the passiveness, lack of education, and low self-esteem account for the high frequency of incidents in which victims refuse the help that they are offered from NGOs and for the fact that human trafficking, as a form of labour migration (as interviewed NGOs understand it), remains in a hidden sphere. On the other hand, the subject of stigmatization, as something that victims want to avoid, came up several times during my interviews:

> *Being considered a victim of trafficking brings, for the person, severe social consequences...It destroys/undermines the whole social structure in which the victims had lived – it is going to be very difficult for him/her to find a good partner, to build new social relations with people, to build a family, and to trust in other human being ….* (Interviewee A).

In place of saying that victims do not seek help or refuse it because they are uneducated and passive, here Interviewee A (perhaps unconsciously) contradicts what was previously said and points out that being a victim of trafficking is a source of a deep shame. *"Culturally and socially speaking, there is a strong rejection towards victims of trafficking on the part of the Peruvian population,"* added Interviewee B.

Thus, the social stigmatization, not lack of education or a person's unawareness of her/his rights, might be the reason why victims choose to leave shelters for trafficking victims as soon as possible. This can also suggest that they are, contrary to what

interviewed NGOs said, highly aware of what it means to be a trafficking victim and what consequences that brings. As one of the interviewees said, in order for a victim to be assisted by psychologists and NGO workers, he/she is obligated to stay in the shelter throughout the whole resocialization process. After managing to escape the traffickers and getting her/his freedom back, the possibility of being held again (this time in shelters) probably seems the least appealing option that the newly liberated victim might choose. This is where they demonstrate their desire to be free.

According to Davidson (2011), this way of presenting labourers as innocent, helpless, and passive victims is common among social activists, and its goal is to draw attention to trafficking as a new and pressing social problem. NGO workers tend to argue that victimization is prevalent, straightforward, and unambiguous (Davidson 2011:458).

4.3.1. "I Suffer but I Keep Fighting" – Agency of Indigenous Migrant Workers

There are scholars who present a different perspective than the one proposed by NGOs for viewing exploited migrants. Instead of victimizing them, this perspective considers Indigenous labour migrants as social actors with full equal rights and capacities (Mick 2010: 192). As the literature on internal migration in Peru shows, although working under conditions that an interviewed NGO worker labelled "exploitative," many migrants speak of their own migration and work in positive terms. The conversation with one of Mick's informants demonstrates the determination and strength with which some domestic workers (*trabajadoras del hogar*) pursue their dreams, despite whatever ill treatment and discrimination they are facing. "I suffered but I keep fighting, we must try to be strong," the interviewee stated; "it is not easy but despite this I am getting what I most want in my life" (Mick 2010: 201). In this sense, the capacity to imagine the possibility of getting ahead (*superar*) determines what labour migrants will bear. As Leinaweaver summarizes, "I came to understand that although these young women were not always happy in their new homes, they appreciated their increased opportunities, in particular, the educational possibilities" (Leinaweaver 2008: 70).

What can be learned from the literature on internal migration in Peru can bring one to the conclusion that unpaid labour or too low a salary does not necessarily indicate that labourers are victims of trafficking, as these NGOs suggest in the interviews I carried out. There might be other benefits of such work. As Sarah Radcliffe points out, although they get paid much less, from the point of view of the female migrant, “she is able to buy clothes with her earnings and sometimes to pursue education” (Radcliffe 1986: 31). Non-monetary compensation is very common among labour migrants, especially those who come from La Sierra to the coastal cities. Sometimes the recruitment of poor girls from Indigenous communities is the result of an agreement between the adults in the family and the employer. The money is not given directly to them but to their parents, and hired girls receive only small daily tips (*propinas diarias*). Often the family that employs a domestic servant does not pay with money, but commits to providing for their care and education in exchange for the duties he/she performs (Leinaweaver 2008: 60; Pavez 2013: 123).

The positive aspects of migration and work experience are also seen through life history interviews with Gina, an Indigenous women. Gina Maldonado moved along with siblings from her Quechua-speaking home town in Colquemarca to the country (*campo*) to pasture animals. When she was ten, she migrated again. Gina's family sent her then as a companion and housekeeper for the older sister, although it meant that Gina had to temporarily interrupt her formal school. Gina next moved to Cusco where she experienced different levels of social exclusion, for example invisibility, silencing, and social isolation because of her lack of fluency in Spanish. However, rather than emphasizing the difficult experiences of her migration, such as discrimination and exploitative work, Gina decided to portray herself as a successful migrant who overcame all obstacles in order to get ahead (Hill 2013: 388). Should one call Gina a trafficking victim because she was exploited at work? The answer again would be no, as throughout her migration process she was showing her agency, and thus she willingly consented to harsh working conditions. She was not kidnapped or forced into this, and she could break out of this exploitative work at any point, which eventually she did. It cannot be denied, however, that Gina was primarily a subject of discrimination due to her poor Spanish and her Indigenous origins, and her exploitation might have been related to that. Here again, instead of categorizing Gina as “trafficked” or “non-

trafficked," her victimization could be analyzed in terms of structural oppression; for example, Indigenous peoples have limited access to education, which has an enormous impact on their future work and salary (D'Andrea 2007: 7).

The image of an Indigenous domestic worker that comes out of Carola Mick and Douglas Hill's interviews is that of a self-confident, strong, and proud woman who thinks of herself as able to change her social reality despite many difficulties (Mick 2010: 209). This image of Indigenous migrants as social actors with full capacities surely does not correspond to the image of oppressed, passive victims of trafficking proposed by interviewed Peruvian NGOs.

As already demonstrated, child circulation can be a process in which young people purposefully use their efforts and agency to change their lives and socially disadvantaged background. This life path often takes them back to their natal homes. The desire to get ahead (*avanzar*) becomes an important force in the lives of young Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, literature also shows that migrants are frequently capable of breaking out of exploitative work. Sometimes they decide that certain abuses/exploitation are too much to bear. This is again a moment when they show their agency and resistance. Agency here is described as a way to assert power, or more specifically, as a *"socioculturally mediated capacity to act"* (Ahearn 2011: 278).

Marilu, an Indigenous migrant woman interviewed by Janice Stiglich, left her employer after experiencing ill treatment and abuse and looked for another job (Stiglich 2013: 74). In the process, she was able to negotiate her position as a worker thanks to the advice she was getting from other domestic workers. The case of Marilu also demonstrates the complexity and ambiguity of employer-employee relations in the context of domestic work. It is usually not only a workplace but a place where boundaries between the personal and the private are blurred by the proximity of individuals. Marilu was very attached to Thania, a girl she was taking care of. Besides being her caregiver, she was also her friend and mother figure. Although this work was not always easy for Marilu (e.g., she was being verbally offended by her employer, Thania's mother), the attachment to the girl made her decide to keep this position.

Similar to this, Radcliffe (1990: 390) shows that women who are able to break out of domestic work often change jobs or simply return to their communities and replace their roles in their place of origin.

Another way in which these Indigenous migrants demonstrate their agency and resistance is through social mobilization. Evidence shows that social mobilization serves often as a tool for disadvantaged Indigenous labour migrants to bring about a change to their difficult working conditions. Domestic workers, among them often children and adolescents, derive their agency through different union organizations. There are already existing organizations that aim to protect domestic workers' labour rights, but as Goldsmith (2007: 20) points out, only a few of these organizations use the human trafficking approach to domestic work because it tends to present these workers as victims. For example, adolescent domestic workers in Peru are represented by *Movimiento Nacional de Colaboradores de Ninos, Ninas y Adolescentes Trabajadores en el Peru* (National Movement of Children and Adolescent Workers in Peru), an organization that defends the right to work under decent conditions and protects them against discrimination, marginalization, and exploitation. Again, contrary to the perspective proposed by the Peruvian NGOs I researched, this organization treats children and adolescents as social actors whose opinions and social participation should be recognized and who are able to question and transform their social, political, and cultural environment (Pavez 2013: 112). In addition, the organization questions the notion of child labour as a social problem and the child labourer as a victim because it does not consider structural and economic factors such as poverty and social exclusion suffered by children and adolescents in Peru.

4.4. Human Trafficking in Light of Existing Racial Hierarchies

> *It is widely known by the public that people are often exploited in domestic services. Long, unlimited working hours and harsh working conditions that these people experience are accepted by the society (...) one just gets used to that without analyzing why ...* (Interviewee E).

I was told during the interviews with NGO workers that domestic work is an area where trafficking most often takes place. Over twelve million women and girls in Latin America (15 percent of all economically active females) are employed as *trabajadores domesticos* (domestic workers) (Blofield 2007: 159).

Domestic workers in Peru originate in a particular ethnic group: they are primarily Indigenous, rural-to-urban migrant women (Radcliffe 1990: 380). Again, when speaking of domestic work as an area where trafficking most often takes place, those I interviewed argued that employers and those who recruit the workers (usually family members and siblings) are the primary agents of trafficking. It seemed as if these NGOs wanted to shift the attention away from the possible role of the state and the law in the current situation of domestic workers. It is important to note that in Peru, as it is in the rest of Latin America, people working in this sector do not have the same labour rights as other workers (Blofield, 2007: 159). Labour codes in Latin America tend to favour other sectors while discriminating against domestic workers. For example, in Bolivia the labour code established a maximum daily work day of eight hours for all sectors; however, a separate clause stated that domestic workers were allowed to work sixteen hours a day (Ibid.). In Peru, the average domestic worker works sixty-two hours a week (Stefoni, 2009:201). The Peruvian labour code gives domestic workers a right to only one day off during the week, and it does not specify a minimum wage for domestic workers (Ministerio del Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo Peru, 2016). Thus, the fact that domestic workers are often the subject of exploitation goes hand-in-hand with the general absence of regulations related to this sector in Latin America, which obviously leaves room for abuse.

4.4.1. Racial Hierarchies and Human Trafficking

Although Peru is a country where racism is known to be a major issue (Thorp & Paredes, 2010; Cadena 1998, 2000), when talking about the exploitation of Indigenous migrants, my interviewees never said anything about whether or how these racial hierarchies are influencing the working experiences of peasants from La Sierra. The subject of race was somehow absent or purposely overlooked by NGO workers during

the interviews. They either did not see the possible connection between human trafficking and racism or simply chose not to talk about it.

Scholars such as Thorp and Paredes (2010: 3) argue that social inequality and racial discrimination are still present in Peru today, and that racism naturalizes the inequalities that were first put into place by the Conquest. They call it a “double inequality” that consists of regional inequality between the coastal region and the Highlands, as well as an inequality within the Andean region between local elites and Indigenous people. They suggest that regional inequality originated in the economic model that was based heavily on the export of natural resources and the import of food from abroad. Andean regions had been neglected throughout the centuries. Their main argument suggests that inequalities have been historically consolidated and reproduced by the political institutions and by the economic system. They explain that discrimination is always in relation to groups and that groups are central to political action. Thinking in terms of groups gives the problem that is under study a spatial dimension and connects it to a certain place, for example, discriminated and marginalized populations in Peru have historically been centered in the Highlands while “the elites” have lived along the coast. (Ibid.).

Having said that, discrimination based on race is present in the everyday lives of Indigenous domestic servants in Peru. Indigenous *trabajadoras del hogar* work under conditions characterized by racial and ethnic differences (Radcliffe, 1990:380); and as Maich (2014:86) says, “Abuse and discrimination follow domestic workers wherever they go.” Urban mestizos who come from European-type middle or upper-class households often use racially offensive terms such as “*chola*” or “Indian” when speaking to their Indigenous servants. The word *chola* refers to a person who left their rural community to try to become part of “modern society” and adapt to an urban lifestyle. The term both humiliates peasants and underscores their inferiority in the social hierarchy where “indigenous is at the bottom of the heap and the whitest is at the top” (Radcliffe 1990:384).

4.4.2. Racism as a Push Factor in Migration Processes in Peru

The reasons for migrating expressed by Indigenous women themselves can also be an indication of the prevalent racial discrimination that they are facing from the whiter urban population. NGOs argued in the interviews that Indigenous peoples migrate in order to meet their basic economic needs. Indeed, female peasants often choose to migrate because of their inability to sustain a livelihood in their place of origin (Stiglich 2007:4). In an article by Sarah Radcliffe, a migrant woman from Cuzco states that migration for her and her relatives was a chance to get out of poverty: "We migrate because we are poor" (Radcliffe, 1986:37).

However, the need to provide subsistence is not the only reason for women to migrate (Leinaweaver 2008:63). Many women also migrate for reasons that fall outside the context of livelihoods, especially those who decide to escape interpersonal violence. For them, migration is both an attempt to escape from despotic husbands as well as an effort to engage in the external labour market. Migration also has moral connotations among peasants (Alcade 2006: 155). Ødegaard (2013: 57) describes the process of mobility among Indian peasants from the Highlands as a search for progress and modernity. For example, in Jerusalen, one of Arequipa's migrant neighborhoods, people associate modernity and progress with urban life, economic growth, and more specifically with the life standard of the middle class. The idea of "getting ahead" (*superar*) or "improving oneself" is also present within Indigenous women's reasoning for migration (Leinaweaver 2008: 62). In this sense, movement in space is related more to a renegotiation of identity. Although work was and is still the dominant reason why Indigenous women leave their villages, this mobility has to be seen in more general terms as an attempt to redefine the conditions of life among those who migrate. Leinaweaver (2008: 63) suggests that to fully overcome poverty in the Andes means that one must take on several social qualities such as "becoming educated, speaking Spanish instead of Quechua, dressing in Western clothing instead of woven skirts, eating noodles instead of potatoes, and living in the city instead of in the *campo*." In other words, to overcome means to become whiter and to shed an Indian way of life.

4.4.3. In Search of Mestizo-ness

The ideology of *mestizaje,* understood here as a mixed cultural homogenization and the process of becoming part of the mestizo group (Ødegaard 2013:67) is also an important point in the analysis of the process of mobility among Andean women because it points towards racial inequality as a driving force that makes people migrate in the first place. After independence, *mestizaje* became part of the national agenda and seems to have increased people's orientation toward the cities. In order to become mestizo, one had to distance oneself from anything Indian. In this sense, the migration can also be seen as a response to state policies. Aymara and Quechua women who leave their villages and move to Arequipa do this not only for economic reasons but in search of mestizo-ness, that is, to redefine their identity and to get to know "the other side" (Ødegaard 2013:59). Once in the city, they identify themselves according to the region they come from (chumbivillcanos, ayacuchanos, etc.) rather than as Indigenous people. Eugenia, another woman from the Highlands living in Arequipa, when speaking about her background, identified herself as mestiza, pointing to the presence of Spaniards in her district of origin (Ibid.).

The idea of becoming mestizo indicates that such attempts are made as a response to an existing condition. Specifically, the ideology of mestizaje becomes fully understood only in light of prevalent racial hierarchies still present in the contemporary Peruvian reality. Rather than diminishing the racialization, the ideology of mestizaje helped reinforce the mestizo racial hierarchy and became a new tool of social control (Cadena 2000:5, Scarrit 2012). Indigenous women who arrive in Peruvian cities are still marginalized due to their race; this is especially evident in their attempts to dress like mestizos, in Western clothing, and to imitate their characteristics (Stiglich 2007:8). Urban mestizo dwellers associate Indianness with worthlessness, illiteracy, and a lack of education; thus it is not surprising that, once in the city, Indigenous migrants often abandon their identity.

The beginning of the migration from poor rural areas to the cities and the negative perception of internal Indian migrants related to that is well described in the work of Delforge (2012). She analyzes the mass migration to Cuzco that started as a result of the catastrophic earthquake of 1950. After the reconstruction, the city became one of the

most important tourism and trade centers and it received many migrants from poor Andean regions (Ibid: 320). This migration created social tensions between the native inhabitants of Cuzco and newly arrived migrants commonly considered as poor and uneducated.

Before Cuzco became a popular place for international tourists, it was a remote, poor, and unknown place. With the arrival of tourism and trade, the local elites (landowners) wanted to create a new identity for their city; they wanted it to be associated with modernity and urban life. Thus, everything that reminded them of rural existence was rejected, particularly the Andean identity (Ibid:). This rejection of *"lo Andino"* generated a sense of inferiority for Andean culture and language and affected the way in which Andean migrants are perceived today in coastal cities. The concept of *"lo Andino"* – the Andean, has emerged as an entity geographically confined to rural areas, detached from society, historically national, and culturally separated from the Creole world (Karsten Paerregaard, 2000: 69). This negative attitude towards people of Andean origin is still present in the cities. Urban dwellers tend to associate demographic and cultural characteristics of migrants from La Sierra with unskilled work and low levels of education. Peasants are also criticized for their inability to speak Spanish. Here emerges the mentality of the virtual "border" between the Andean provinces and the coastal cities: "Sometimes they directly insult you, sometimes not. But always they call you *chola*, *serrana*, all these things. They always call you something, the people are racist. The people from Lima think that they are of higher value, that they have more rights to humiliate" (Mick 2011:192). The interviewed women here talked about humiliation, exploitation, and insults that they experienced because of their poor Spanish and ethnicity. As I mentioned before, the word *cholo* is related to specific socio-cultural belonging, and in this case, it refers to Indian peasants from the Andes. The word attributes a stigmatized position to migrant workers from the Highlands.

These women also spoke about the level of skin whiteness as a factor determining their position in the social hierarchy. Those who are paler (usually urban dwellers from Lima) are considered to be of *"higher value"* whereas dark-skinned migrants are openly treated as a lesser race. "Regarding the people from Lima they are very arrogant. The children who live in La Molina, San Isidro, they treat us as *cholos*, instead of referring to our

brown, mustard colour… Why do they minimize those of us who are of mestizo colour, those of us who are black? …if they think they are white, why do not they leave the country?" (Mick 2011: 203–204). This quote shows that those who are discriminated against because of the colour of their skin are also the ones who reproduce racism in Peru. This woman considers herself *"mestiza"* because she grew up in Cuzco. She does not want to be called *"chola"* referring to the lighter *"brown, mustard"* colour of her skin. By saying this, she differentiates herself from those who have darker skin.

In her work on race and justice in Cuzco, Laura Bunt (2008) decisively argues that an "innocence" and worthiness is often connected to race in Peru and how tensions over social hierarchies can shape the impact of evidence. Bunt tells the story of Marcedes, an Indigenous woman who was gang raped and decided to seek justice in the court. During the trial, although being a victim, the woman faced cultural and racial bias against her indigeneity. In her battle to pursue rape charges, Marcedes had to adopt a strategy in which she used the languages of race in order to present herself as more urban *mestiza* and less Indigenous (Ibid:291). Similarly, according to Cadena (2000) urbanity and education are among the factors that make one "less Indigenous" and "more civilized" in the eyes of others. In fact, Marcedes constructed her evidence around these racialized discourses by pointing to the Western clothing she was wearing at the time when the crime occurred and on her achievements in education, distancing herself in that way from her Indigenous attackers. Since Indian women are subjected to more scrutiny and speculation (Cadena 1996), and their indigeneity is seen as akin to lasciviousness, it is unsurprising that, in order to win the case, Marcedes had to distance herself from her Indigenous background.

Discrimination based on race was what I witnessed myself personally while staying at my friend's familial house in Peru. Every night they watched on Peruvian TV a comedy show called *Paisana Jacinta* (*The Peasant Jacinta*) (Benavides, 1999–2015). The show's main character is Jacinta, an Indigenous woman *"de la Sierra"* who moves to Lima and tries to adapt to the urban lifestyle. She is played by a man wearing Indigenous clothes and lacking front teeth. His face is purposely tinted and darkened (see Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6: The Image of Indigenous Migrant Women from the TV Show *Paisana Jacinta* (Source: www.diario16.pe)

Figure 7: The Image of Indigenous Migrant Women from the TV Show *Paisana Jacinta* (Source: www.diario16.pe)

This woman is presented in a very unappealing way: her Indigenous culture and her mannerisms serve as a source of comic relief, and her goofy facial expressions aim to entertain. It seems, however, that it is intended to present the Indigenous women as unrefined, ill-mannered, unladylike, and stupid. This show turned out to be quite popular among Peruvians. I, on the other hand, failed to comprehend the comedy portrayed in the show. I found it very offensive as it presents Indigenous people in a strongly negative way, as backward, wild, uneducated, and unable to adapt to life in the city. My Peruvian hosts were enjoying this show quite a lot and saw nothing racist about it. When I pointed out the offensive, racist stereotype of Indigenous women it produces, they defended the show, saying that *Paisana Jacinta* is produced for comedic purposes, *"to provoke*

laughter and to have a good time," as one of my friends said, and is not meant to be taken seriously. After studying my host's reactions to my opinion, I got the feeling that challenging the racial humour as I did, by openly criticizing the show, might not be socially acceptable in Peru. At that moment, I might have appeared to them as a person with no sense of humour. Peruvians use humour as a tool for expressing racial attitudes. In this context, racial humour perfectly mirrors racial hierarchies that are still vivid in Peru and that are strongly linked to unequal social structures.

Racial humour has another significant role: it develops a tolerance for race talk along with a tolerance for the suffering of darker-skinned Indigenous populations. Although Peruvians perceive the *Paisana Jacinta* show as being "only a joke," this kind of racial humour serves as a window into understanding how racism can influence the discourses on human trafficking in Peru. We find the perfect example of this in the work of Sue and Golash-Boza (2013), where Alicia, one of their interviewees, frames as a joke an incident that she witnessed in which people were making fun of a dark-skinned man, calling him a slave: "There was this man who was very dark and he went out to the street….They threw tomatoes at him…I only heard them say, 'Go on negro, you have to be a slave'…I took it as a joke" (Ibid: 1592).

The role of racial discourse, as shown here, demonstrates that Indigenous migrant women, due to the fact that they belong to the "racialized underclass," may hardly be seen as victims by the representatives of the whiter Peruvian population. Their moral values and honour are being constantly contested. This again strongly suggests that the notion of race as it is found in Peru can stand in the way of seeing Indigenous migrants as victims of trafficking.

This general denial of members of Indigenous communities as potential victims is also present in the contexts of human trafficking and labour migration.

As I have sought to suggest in this section, structural oppression, and more precisely racial discrimination, might be the mechanism that hinders the perception of Indigenous individuals as victims of trafficking by someone who considers him/herself to be of "whiter" skin colour. The life stories of Indigenous labour migrants reviewed in this chapter reveal that rather than seeing themselves as subjects of trafficking, these

migrants point towards the racial attitudes of their employers as a main difficulty from which they suffer. Thus, labour migration should be perceived through lens of racial inequality rather than trafficking. Furthermore, according to the Palermo Protocol, instances in which a person has consented to work under exploitative conditions cannot be called trafficking.

Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, this thesis shows that the interviewed Peruvian NGOs are pushing for a broader definition of trafficking that would situate this phenomenon within the larger context of Indigenous labour migration. This might be an interesting attempt to address issues such as labour exploitation in Peru; however, this new approach to trafficking may not be useful for the so-called victims of trafficking insofar as both the literature on internal migration and my own observations reveal that the experiences of migration for poor individuals from La Sierra are often ambiguous and to classify such experiences as acts of trafficking may actually have a harmful effect on these migrants' lives. Racism, which is an integral part of these migration processes, plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of the trafficking concept as it appears to be an obstacle to seeing dark-skinned migrant Indians as victims of trafficking. Therefore, a deeper study of migration processes, especially in developing countries, with an emphasis on various cultural practices is crucial to determining the usefulness of the trafficking concept in the context of labour migration.

This study aimed to understand how the issue of human trafficking has been approached by selected non-governmental organizations in Peru and whether their approach is a useful one. To summarize, the main findings from the interviews conducted with three NGOs and from literature on internal labour migration in Peru revealed that there are clear divisions in how human trafficking is defined and interpreted in Peru. While public anti-trafficking campaigns along with statistics present trafficking mainly as the sexual exploitation of mestizo/white women, the interviewed NGOs reject this idea maintaining that the phenomenon of trafficking in Peru goes far beyond sex slavery, and that the definition of trafficking should be expanded to cover consensual labour migration. According to these three Peruvian NGOs, the crime of trafficking reaches first of all Indigenous peasants who migrate to the coastal cities in search of work. Focusing on a monolithic theory of victimization and exploitation, NGOs represent

these Indigenous migrants, the so-called victims of trafficking, as naïve individuals who entirely lack agency and intentionality and are unable to negotiate their employment conditions.

The literature on internal migration in Peru, however, reveals quite a different picture of Indigenous migrants than the one promoted by the NGO activists I interviewed. The image of an Indigenous migrant worker that comes out of a series of articles related to domestic work in Peru is one of a self-confident, determined, and strong person. Instead of victimizing Indigenous migrants, this perspective considers them as social actors with full equal rights and capacities. As the literature further suggests, although working under harsh conditions that, according to those I interviewed at the NGOs, would easily fall into the category of trafficking, many Indigenous migrants choose to speak of their work in positive terms and are able to see the benefits of their employment.

The fusion of consensual migration and trafficking advocated by the Peruvian NGOs I studied stands in conflict with the Palermo Protocol in which the act of force, deception, and involuntariness are the crucial elements of the trafficking process. These Peruvian NGOs try to overstep this rule by defining trafficking expansively, arguing that migrants' disadvantaged socioeconomic background, along with the abuse of their labour rights, determines their trafficking status. In this sense, the consent of the victim is irrelevant to trafficking. Such an understanding of the problem means that millions of people, especially Indigenous migrants, are classified as "trafficked." The important question that arises here is: *Would that work? Is an expanded definition of trafficking, as advocated by these Peruvian NGOs, useful in context of labour migration?*

Although the direction of trade has seemed to evolve, as shown in this thesis, an intensive focus on sex trafficking has remained. As demonstrated herein, there is a strong similarity between the terms and language that were used a century ago to describe the victims of white slavery and contemporary discourse surrounding sexual exploitation in modern day. As this research has endeavoured to demonstrate, these similarities in terms and language also characterize the discourse on human trafficking in Peru, which includes the following: the victims are young, naïve, and innocent woman; they are deceived and kidnapped by dangerous groups of men; and they are forced into

a sex slavery from which there is no way out. Globally, human trafficking has been presented in gendered and racial terms (Derks 2000; Doezema 1999; Jahic & Finckenauer 2005; Van Impe 2000). As this study suggests, this also holds true for Peru. The image of trafficking as the sexual slavery of women, with whiteness as a leading theme, is also present in public discourses in Peru (Figures 1-5). Public campaigns displayed severe cases of trafficking, for example, in pictures of enslaved women in handcuffs whose passports had been taken away. These women were dressed in Western clothing and appeared white. The lack of representation of Indigenous people in the anti-trafficking campaign has been explained in the literature on internal migration, which shows that Indigenous migrant workers are being constantly discriminated against based on their race.

All in all, this might indicate that some urban mestizos simply do not connect the problem of human trafficking with the issue of the exploitation of Indigenous labour migrants. This may be because they follow the traditional way of thinking about human trafficking in which trafficking is presented in racial terms as a forced enslavement of innocent, white women.

5.1 General Conclusions

The question about whether the widely formulated definition of trafficking is appropriate to cover Indigenous labour migration is important as its answers can have policy implications that influence the situation of people involved in labour migration (migrants and their employers, family, and friends).

I have arrived at the conclusion that the broader definition of human trafficking advocated by the interviewed NGOs might not be useful when it comes to understanding internal migration of Indigenous peoples in Peru. First, such a definition would conflict with the Palermo Protocol, which the Peruvian government has officially signed and adopted. Second, because the understanding of human trafficking was originally associated with the sex slavery of white women, the prevalent racial hierarchies in Peru might stand in the way of representatives of a whiter race acknowledging the ways in which poor dark-skinned Indians are victims of trafficking. Furthermore, the conditions

that define human trafficking in Peru, as portrayed by the NGO representatives I interviewed, may well be beyond the boundaries of a mere criminal act. Keeping in mind various social, economic, and cultural factors, it is difficult to classify and generalize each and every act of labour that has an element of exploitation as trafficking. As the literature on internal migration demonstrates, the experiences of migration are often ambiguous and complex for poor people from the Highlands. Entering into a labour contract with and for richer urban families is often viewed as a means of escape from the drudgery of an impoverished rural life. Contrary to what was said by the Peruvian NGO workers I interviewed, some of the so-called victims of trafficking chose to represent themselves as successful migrants who overcame necessary difficulties and who spoke of their migration as a tool for their own social and economic advancement. Rather than being treated as passive, helpless victims of trafficking, they clearly want to be treated as social actors able to effect and impact their own reality.

5.2 Recommendations for Policymakers

Although the widely formulated concept of human trafficking may help in raising funds for anti-trafficking measures and may draw attention to labour exploitation as a pressing problem in Peru, it can also lead to the criminalization of an entire community and, furthermore, may undermine some positive cultural Andean practices such as *padrinazgo*, or companionship. Given the fact that a large portion of labour migrants are recruited via family channels, categorizing migrants as victims of trafficking inevitably results in classifying their recruiting family members as “traffickers.” In this way, entire families and networks of kin are implicated in this serious crime. An interpretation of human trafficking in terms of labour migration shows the ambiguity and complexity of the phenomenon and the difficulty of envisioning any direct solutions. Rather than thinking of trafficking in terms of labour migration, this issue should be approached taking into consideration the cultural, social, and economic realities of life along with the recognition of the needs labour migrants themselves feel are important. The definition of human trafficking is unlikely to be very useful if it is designed without reference to the social system in which it operates. While developing anti-trafficking policies, it is imperative to keep in mind how the “victims” themselves view their own situation. A breakdown of

each case and thorough research into a person's history is a must in order to ascertain whether there has been victimization or not.

While human trafficking undoubtedly is a serious problem in Peru and around the world, the focus should be more on diminishing the root causes of the unacceptable conditions from which Peruvian migrant workers suffer, such as racial discrimination, and enforcing the laws that would protect their rights as labourers. Labelling all exploited migrants as victims of trafficking may be neither adequate nor beneficial if the cultural context is not addressed. Racial hierarchies, such as they are in case of Peru, can have a significant, even devastating, impact on the usefulness of the trafficking concept in given regions.

5.3 Research Limitations

The researcher acknowledges that this research is limited in size and scope. The research presents the views of three different Peruvian NGOs all of which are situated in Lima, Peru; thus, its results are not meant to be generalized to all NGOs that are operating in Peru. The discussed approaches and understandings of trafficking are attributed to certain groups/individuals, not to the entire Peruvian population. Future research should address other groups and contexts as well. Moreover, the research was qualitative in nature; further quantitative research could look at the representativeness of these results.

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