Place-based communities and neoliberalism: a study of the artisanal fishing community of Chorrillos, Peru

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Place-based communities and neoliberalism: A study of the artisanal fishing community of Chorrillos, Peru

by

Héctor Andrés Bombiella Medina

A dissertation submitted to the committee
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Major: Sustainable Agriculture

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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
2016
DEDICATION

Dedicado a mi madre, Cecilia Medina, por su amor incondicional; por enseñarme que con disciplina y esfuerzo se pueden lograr todas las metas propuestas. A mi padre, Héctor Bombiella, por mostrarme que con buena energía, actitud positiva y creatividad, todo es posible. A mi hermana, Maritza Cecilia, por creer en mi, por escucharme y darme siempre fuerza y esperanza. A mi abuelita por su conversación. Y a Angélica Reina, mi compañera de vida, por tu amor, consideración y cariño; por tu claridad y apoyo permanente durante los momentos más difíciles de este largo proceso.

A toda la comunidad de la caleta de pescadores artesanales de Chorrillos “José Silverio Olaya Balandra” y en especial a los pescadores, “los dueños del mar,” por acogerme y permitirme ser uno más de ustedes. Por mostrarme a través de la pesca y sus palabras, el valor de la vida y la virtud del trabajo.

A todos aquellos que sin serlo, tienen alma y corazón de pescador, y saben que para sobreponerse a las vicisitudes de la pesca y de la vida, la paciencia y el buen humor son el mejor remedio.

A todos ustedes les dedico esta tesis doctoral
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<table>
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<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English translation/explanation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>APRA movement</strong></td>
<td>American Popular Revolutionary Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balneario</strong></td>
<td>Beach bathing area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caletas</strong></td>
<td>Small artisanal fishers’ location, wharf or cove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campesino</strong></td>
<td>Peasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carné de pescador artesanal</strong></td>
<td>Artisanal Fisher Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costa Verde Project</strong></td>
<td>Development plan for Lima’s coastal strip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costanera,</strong></td>
<td>Road along the Lima’s coastal strip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criollos</strong></td>
<td>European descendants born in Hispanic-America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doctores</strong></td>
<td>Generic designation to upper-class individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DS 005/2012</strong></td>
<td>Decree which regulates anchovy fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fileteros and fileteadores</strong></td>
<td>Person (men or women) who cut the fish into fillets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flota bolichera</strong></td>
<td>Fleet of semi-industrial trawlers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fondo Nacional para el Desarrollo Pesquero y la Acuicultura (Fondepes)</strong></td>
<td>National Fund for the Artisanal Fishing and Small-Scale Aquaculture Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fondo para el Desarrollo Pesquero Artesanal (Fondepes)</strong></td>
<td>Fund for the development of artisanal fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gota a gota</strong></td>
<td>Informal small loans at high interest rate payable in daily small-amounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gremios</strong></td>
<td>Stakeholders or interest groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harina negra</strong></td>
<td>Fishmeal produced in unregulated/informal plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jaladores</strong></td>
<td>Person (men or women) who attracted tourists and visitors to restaurants or for boat-rides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lenguados, jurel, bonito</strong></td>
<td>Flounder, horse mackerel and bonito, high-quality species almost depleted from bay’s waters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limeños</strong></td>
<td>Lima’s residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministerio de la Producción or Produce</strong></td>
<td>Minister of Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Padrón</strong></td>
<td>Association membership official record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paseadores</strong></td>
<td>Individuals who tourist services as boat-riders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peruvian New Soles</strong></td>
<td>Peruvian currency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pesquero or Cámara (de hielo)</strong></td>
<td>Intermediary or broker between fisher and market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Playa Pescadores</strong></td>
<td>Name of beach located in the fishers’ dock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proceso de Comunidades Negras</strong></td>
<td>Black Communities Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pueblos jóvenes</strong></td>
<td>Shanty towns located in Lima’s periphery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sedapal</strong></td>
<td>Lima’s water company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asociación de Pescadores Artesanales de Chorrillos José Silverio Olaya Balandra</strong></td>
<td>Chorrillos fishing community’s organization (affiliates are only registered fishers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociedad de Pescadores y Auxilio Mutuo</strong></td>
<td>Mutual association of artisanal fishers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TASA-Tecnológica de Alimentos S.A</strong></td>
<td>Peruvian fishmeal company devoted to food processing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe sincere gratitude to each and every member of the community of artisanal fishing of Chorrillos. Also, I would like to thank to the association’ leadership for their constant support and collaboration since the beginning of the project. In particular, I would like to offer my gratitude to Julio César Quispe Alzamora, mi compadre, for his friendship and care, and the Baldo family, for being always around and ready to help during my visits to the dock. This dissertation would not have been possible without them. I would like to thank my co-major professors Maximilian Viatori and Jan Flora, and my committee members Cornelia Flora, Elisa Rizo and Christina Gish Hill. I could not think in a better, more balanced and supportive committee. I am especially thankful to Max for his unrestricted support, his guidance and for showing me the path to become a social scientist and a better social advocate; thank you for the friendship to which all these years of travelling and sharing have given rise. I would like to acknowledge Cornelia and Jan for being my academic, intellectual, political and social justice mentors through all these years of doctoral studies. You helped me become a better person, citizen and scholar. Special thanks goes to each person of my network of collaborators from the artisanal fishing sector in Peru; a lot of Peruvians helped me understand with great patience and consideration their country’s culture and nature; I will always be grateful to all of them. In particular, I would like to mention Jesica and Juan Carlos for being always available for my questions and for a good conversation. Finally, many thanks go out to all my friends here and elsewhere for just been there for me.
ABSTRACT

This dissertation is about artisanal fishers in Chorrillos, a small bay near the southern edge of Lima, Peru, and how they use place as an instrument to defend their access to fishing resources on Peru’s central coast. The context of this research work includes global neoliberal influences on the Peruvian state and the negotiation of global and local economics, politics, and social issues. Over the last decade, depletion in fish stocks has led to tensions between industrial and artisanal fishers, and demands from the industrial sector to reduce Peruvian state protections for artisanal fishers. Not only are Chorrillos’s fishers dealing with these problems, but they also face pressures from urban elites and tourism developers who see the fishing dock, located in a highly desirable area of Lima, as a space that could be put to lucrative use for urban development projects. This study adds to the current literature on place-based activism by providing an ethnographically grounded account of the struggles of an urban community of artisanal fishers. The research looks at how artisanal fishers of Chorrillos construct and develop in their everyday life sustainable strategies for maintaining their cultural and socioeconomic status. Alternative policy pathways and guidelines useful to public officers and non-government actors to better interpret fishing regulations and to issue norms more in accord with the artisanal fishers’ situation are provided. This dissertation will resonate broadly with scholars aiming to study marginal local communities in less-developed countries using interdisciplinary and creative frameworks. More specifically, while introducing fishers based in an urban setting as environmental and political activists, this research brings new elements to the Peruvian and Latin American scholarship on artisanal fishing.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study is about artisanal fishers in Chorrillos, a small bay near the southern edge of Lima, Peru, and how they use place as an instrument to defend their access to fishing resources on Peru’s central coast. Artisanal fishers are defined by the Peruvian government as individuals who engage in predominantly manual fishing activities intended only for direct human consumption in domestic markets and sometimes preserved for export. Artisanal fishers have exclusive access to fish within the first five nautical miles from shore, fishing grounds prohibited for industrial fishing. Over the last decade, depletion in fish stocks has led to tensions between industrial and artisanal fishers, and demands from the industrial sector to reduce state protections for artisanal fishers. Not only are Chorrillos’s fishers dealing with these problems, but they also face pressures from urban elites and tourism developers who see the fishing dock, located in a highly desirable area of Lima, as a space that could be put to lucrative use for urban development projects. Using an ethnographic approach, I explore how Chorrillos’s fishers have used discourses of place, both on- and offshore, to face these threats and secure their rights to the bay to maintain their cultural and socioeconomic reproduction. The study of place is crucial because it goes beyond the geographical and physical space where the fishing activity happens, to serve as a locus of production of fishers’ heritage, as well as of specific forms of activism and citizenship. The dock and the fishing grounds are therefore lived spaces of cultural production, transmission and transformation from which fishers re-create and re-define their roles in society.
1.1 Statement of the problem

Artisanal fishing is considered a low-class occupation, and fishing communities suffer from poor infrastructure and living conditions. But fishers are not passive nor are they resigned to their exclusion; they regularly engage in multiple minute interactions with private and public actors at the local level, where power and territory are often at stake. Fishers are poor, and their responses to poverty have been crafted and immersed in historical structures of power and authority that have systematically separated them from the benefits of growth and development. Neoliberal transformations built upon these inequalities allow the state to retreat from its duty to provide for the less privileged, creating instead a complex framework of institutions and agencies that reward well-behaved, assertive and resourceful citizens. Recent changes have exacerbated the fishers’ situation, demanding more creative and imaginative mechanisms and strategies to maintain their presence and status at the dock. This project analyses these dynamics and the ways in which fishers use place to advocate for their right to the bay’s productive resources. This study explores the possibilities and limitations of such place-based activism for urban fishers.

One of the most significant ways in which fishers demonstrate their capacity as place-based activists is through advocating for the recognition of the importance of their knowledge and skills for the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems. Yet, dominant actors and institutions involved in setting Peru’s environmental agenda criticize and underestimate the positive potential of fishers’ ecological proposals, arguing that their lack of proficiency in mainstream conservation and sustainability debates actually make them threats to the environment. The fishing industry accusations are related to the lack of state control over artisanal fishing, which is seen as encouraging excessive fishing and
ultimately resource depletion. By the same token, environmental NGOs and part of the scientific community complain about artisanal fishers using unapproved methods and gear harmful to the environment, like unauthorized drift net sizes that could harm juveniles or protected marine species (Alfaro-Shigueto et al. 2011; Estrella Arellano and Swartzman 2010). Statements of territorial legitimacy and environmental stewardship alone are not sufficient to restrain powerful stakeholder attacks, and artisanal fishers have learned to navigate state authority and the law to legitimate their practices.

The case of the artisanal fishers of Chorrillos serves as a good example for studying how broader neoliberal transformations intending to impose financial and political terms to national and local groups and economies (Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005), play out in a particular community. Over the years in Lima, urban elites and developers, along with the government, have enacted laws and regulations that subordinate the needs of the artisanal community in favor of the urban economic and political elites’ demands for growth and development. Peru’s elites, as in other Latin American countries, are the inheritance of the Spanish colonists’ value system in which family status and prestige were preferred over individual performance and hard work (Portes 1976). As mine-owners and landowners detached themselves from laborers and manual activities, their efforts went directly to achieve status and wealth to secure the necessary conditions for their protection and reproduction. This was attained through the establishing of latifundia (large-scale plantations) in the countryside and an unaccountable oligarchy in the cities, around which social and kinship structures, class relations, education, and other institutions were founded (Lipset and Solari 1967).
Peru’s land ownership was divided among regional and coastal *latifundios*; landowners of the *sierra* kept a feudal-type socioeconomic organization, while on the coast cotton and sugar plantations more influenced by the international market gradually invested in technology and granted limited labor rights and civil liberties only to the extent necessary to comply with international requirements. Foreign capitals and investments have always played a significant role in the Peruvian export-oriented economy, but the benefits of such investments did not add to the national wealth. Instead they were monopolized by the elites who captured significant revenues and concentrated enough power to continue with the same course of action. This type of class-capitalism, functional at the same time for urban and rural elites, has changed little and is still the dominant model of wealth and power distribution within which Peruvian society unfolds (Portes 1976; Quijano 1979).

By the end of the 19th century, coastal elites diversified into other business and manufactures for export. During the 1950s following the same patterns, European migrants and entrepreneurs started the national fishing industry, which soon became a relevant interest group with leverage in Peru’s political economy (Crabtree 1992; Tord 2003). Elites more aware of transformations brought by economic liberalization and globalization have found in Lima the natural space to expand their business and capital in sectors different from land-based capital such as technology, construction, tourism, etc., usually in partnership with foreign corporations. The community of Chorrillos confronts the pressure exerted by these particular elites that have consolidated into a powerful interest group in the city, which perceives the dock as a potentially profitable space that remains largely untapped.
Although this debate affects fishers’ continuity in the bay and hinders the possibility of low-income communities to enjoy the space, it has been framed as the contradiction between a small group of individuals profiting from a public natural resource and the common good. For fishers as individuals, this situation entails a formalization process of registration and certification before the Ministry of Production and the Coastguard office, and as a collective, switching from a union to an association. In this regard, shifting the nature of the organization has multiple implications, ranging from new financial and accounting duties to changes in their electoral system and democratic procedures.

Under this form of neoliberalism with a more active state, dispossession potentially takes a new form, where poor individuals become responsible for establishing their right to resources; they have to earn the right, and if they cannot accomplish that, they lose it (Burchell, Gordon and Miller 1991; Mitchell 2011; Rose and Miller 2010). This differs from earlier notions of citizenship, where rights were granted by a paternalist state that regulated alternative forms of civil organization (unions, juntas, etc.), and told individuals how to behave in order to remain under state protection. State structures are different now, and fishers who formerly congregated around a union, today have switched to an association, which implies greater accountability and demonstration to the authorities that they are willing to change and improve. However, they have managed to bend certain formalities and deadlines to their benefit, and moderate the changes so that they occur at the fishers’ pace. My purpose is to study how those strategies are the foundation of their self-governance and agency, leading to strategies of resistance and
social change, and from there understand their alternative notions of categories such as environment, city and citizenship.

In order to accomplish this, I examine different ideas held by dominant national and international actors and reflected in Peruvian official documents that discuss what it means to be sustainable, what environments are worth preserving (Gobierno del Peru 2013, 2015), and how these concepts of sustainability and place relate to concrete forms of dominance and resistance in specific minute interactions among fishers and other power actors. The government of Peru, through its different departments and agencies, issued documents establishing the nation’s environmental agenda, which converges with the parameters set by relevant international organizations, excluding localities and its inhabitants from the process of defining and therefore addressing environmental issues.

This dissertation demonstrates the struggles of the Chorrillos fishing community from the fishers’ point of view, revealing how urban elites, powerful stakeholders and dominant discourses of sustainable development in Peru potentially collude to deny artisanal fishers the right to reproduce their community, and the ways in which fishers have contested the threat of dispossession. In doing so, I demonstrate the depth of local ecological knowledge that fishermen rely upon to navigate changing economic and ecological circumstances, knowledge that has the potential to contribute to more sustainable development in Lima’s coastal zones.

1.2 Research questions

Fishers, in order to preserve their on- and offshore fishing grounds from external threats, have realized that strengthening their practices that reflect both environmental stewardship and agency can lead them to better achieve this purpose, while gaining social visibility and internal cohesiveness. Similarly, these pressures and responses are
expressions of national changes that have reshaped the relationship between the state and marginal groups of society, like the artisanal fishing communities.

In this context, my questions are:

1. What are the concrete manifestations of specific neoliberal changes that have driven recent transformations in the Peruvian artisanal fishing landscape and to which these communities must adapt?

2. What are the practices carried out by the fishers and fishing community from Chorrillos that have enabled them to resist and survive while advancing their struggle to protect their place and fishing culture?

1.3 Purpose of the study

Specifically, this study explores how a community of poor artisanal fishers has responded to contemporary neoliberal state demands for self-sufficiency and autonomy. Fishermen are used to a top-down clientelist politics, but now are being forced into a different relationship with the state that requires self-governance to establish their rights to the dock and the fishery. Under this form of neoliberal statecraft, citizens are expected to be independent and self-sufficient. As a result, fishers have established mechanisms, some more successful than others, to make their voices heard by outside actors. Within this context, they have come to understand that economic and political claims with status as a marginal community neglected by the state are insufficient. In order to deliver more positive outcomes, they represent their status as sustainable actors and stewards of the marine ecosystems, emphasizing their traditional and artisanal character to improve their image and gain public and media support to their claims.
The purpose of this study is threefold. First, I add to the current literature on place-based activism by providing an ethnographically grounded account of the struggles of an urban community of artisanal fishers. Second, I look at how artisanal fishers of Chorrillos construct and develop in their everyday life sustainable strategies for maintaining their cultural and socioeconomic status. Finally, drawing on the intellectual foundations acquired in my experience with the community, I provide alternative policy pathways and guidelines useful to public officers and non-government actors to better interpret fishing regulations and to issue norms more in accord with the artisanal fishers’ situation.

1.4 Significance of the study

There is a critical need to understand the problems of Peru’s artisanal fishers from the ground-up, since small scale fishermen are the least powerful actors in the global fish value chain, and therefore historically neglected in decisions concerning Peru’s fishing sector. Fishing stakeholders, ranging from large-scale fishing companies and decision makers in government to environmental groups, should take into account artisanal fishers’ knowledge and key lessons. Influential actors must first learn how artisanal fishers have perceived and defined problems that affect them individually and collectively, and then about the activities and strategies designed to remain in place after several years of decreasing fish stocks and economic downturns. Through the descriptions of everyday life and concrete actions of the community and its organization, the Artisanal Fishers Union (Association, after 2015) of Chorrillos “José Olaya Balandra,” this study will critically analyze how the Peruvian state and the fisheries industry approach artisanal fishing communities and suggest more inclusive and innovative ways of integrating the artisanal sector into fisheries policy.
Over the last decade, the Peruvian national government has tried to implement comprehensive plans to bring progress and development to artisanal fishing communities, yet these programs have not proven beneficial. For instance, in 2004 the Minister of Production (Ministerio de la Producción or Produce in Spanish), which currently regulates the industry and fishing sectors, issued a national development plan for the artisanal fishers indicating concrete and measurable goals ranging from building new facilities to expanding social security coverage (Produce 2004). However, ten years later, fishers agreed that little had changed and they were actually unaware of the existence of the aforementioned plan or other relevant policies, plans and programs issued by the state, supposedly for their benefit. One of the reasons behind such failures is the government’s lack of knowledge about important characteristics of the target population, such as the notion of place as a space of social construction of the fishing culture. Findings from this study will contribute to improving development projects and plans implemented by public or private institutions aiming to reach this population.

This dissertation will resonate broadly with scholars aiming to study marginal local communities in less-developed countries (LDC) using interdisciplinary and creative frameworks. More specifically, while introducing fishers based in an urban setting as environmental and political activists, this research brings new elements to the Peruvian and Latin American scholarship on artisanal fishing. And finally, and perhaps most importantly, building on my experience and learning accumulated in the field during the data collection process, I provide a set of methodological strategies for future field workers attempting to engage in social work with communities of fishers similar to Chorrillos.
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Historically, marine artisanal fishers’ struggles have revolved around disputes with private and public actors over rights and access to marine resources, and related issues like overfishing and overcapitalization (Aguilar Ibarra Reid and Thorpe 2000a; Diegues 2008; Maldonado and Moreno-Sánchez 2014; Mansfield 2004; Thorpe, Aguilar Ibarra and Reid 2000). More recently, scholarship has focused on fishers’ adaptive and management capacity to protect and preserve the marine natural resources (Agrawal 2010; Orlove and Tosteson 1999). However, there is a less studied aspect of these problems, which is the place from which these claims are made. This research uses a political ecology approach in order to account for why and how fishers construct place as a locus for everyday practices of resistance and strategies of economic survival and cultural reproduction.

2.1 Political ecology

Political ecology emerged as the study of how power relations mediate human-environment interactions, ascribing problems of adaptation to environmental changes and structures of inequality (Biersack and Greenberg 2006; Wolf 1972). It grew as a field seeking to explain how forces engendered by larger and more complex social and economic systems changed and disrupted the ecological stability achieved by specific communities after long historical processes (Bailey and Bryant 1997; Bryant 1998; Watts and Peet 2004). More specifically, in their research on development in the Third World, political ecologists Blaikie and Brookfield (1987) argued for a more situated approach. This meant that without giving up the global dimension, political ecology should focus on local knowledge and practices to overcome the limitations of condemning abstract forces
when specific actors are actually fostering environmental changes (Ribot and Peluso 2003).

Hall (1997) observed how global processes such as neoliberalism are in permanent negotiation with local specificities, transforming but also stimulating different levels of resistance to the same economic practices that it was trying to validate (Featherstone 1990; Mittelman 2000). Capitalism, however, is not simply global or transnational. It connects local spaces, works through existing power structures, and has to take place in specific places and everyday realities, touching people and places through history and culture (Berner and Korff 1995). Indeed, globalizing processes do not affect everybody in the same way, and marginal communities usually have a difficult time overcoming institutional and material barriers created by the neoliberal process. In response, local organizations and movements have emerged looking to provide communities with more bargaining power in conflicts over their interests, with different outcomes re-shaping and producing contested spatialities, which in turn expose different possibilities and limitations to capitalism (Castells 1983; Martínez-Alier 2002; Harvey [1982] 2006).

Along these lines, global capitalism has provoked a progressive reconfiguration of the role of the state, questioning notions like national borders, protection of domestic economies, and capital and labor tied to the national territory (Scholte 1997; Scholte 2005; Tilly 1994). Conversely, the state has consolidated into an ally of multinational corporations. Corporations advocating for a pure form of laissez faire economy where shrinking governments take the part of reshaping the political and economic framework to foster the interests of private investment (Geiger 1986; Lefebvre 2003). Ironically, the
state remains active in carrying out economic reforms, regulating investments, etc., imposing changes compatible with market mechanisms, which in turn are favorable to transnational capital and neglect social inclusion of poor people (Fasenfest 2010; Polany 1944). Although LDCs and developed countries alike have seen a growing gap between the rich and the poor as an effect of economic liberalization, Third World nations, where traditional, indigenous or peasant ways of life have been predominant, have experienced more inequalities and disintegration of the social fabric than industrialized economies. While it is true that extreme poverty has been reduced substantially during the last decade in Latin America (WB 2013), these changes relate more to informal market emergence or alleviation programs rather than genuine plans to redistribute wealth, power and opportunities. In the past fifty years, neoliberal economic reforms have transformed the way in which the state produces labor and access to resources, encouraging the formation of alternative, non-formal spaces where market rules, politics and citizenship are negotiated and constantly redefined (Anjaria 2011; de Soto 1989; Jaramillo 2009).

This is evident in the transformation of Latin American nations. As Nugent (1994; 1997; 2002) posits, the capitalist state in this region was the result of new economic, social systems and structures that intertwined with an already active set of traditional economic and social relations, often non-capitalistic, which cooperated or resisted according to the circumstances. This meant shifting away from the confrontational dualism between state and a community that has to be homogenized, and takes the discussion to potential collaborative or conflicting scenarios where communities’ interests affect the nature of their relationship with authority. From these tensions, traditional institutions, resources, agencies and resistances were formed and developed
within accumulation processes of a wider scope, but were shaped differently at particular moments and spaces (Agrawal 2010; Harvey 2006, 2010). Nevertheless, despite the nature of state-society relationships, these traditional cultures are in a clearly disadvantaged role before global forces striving to capture and re-colonize local instances, inciting innovative social solutions by the affected communities (Bandy 2000; Dujon 2002; Panitch 1997).

Indeed, one aspect of this neoliberal globalization has been the de-territorialization of many aspects of social and political life. Such globalization requires movement of people, capital and power across national borders to carry out its transnational investment projects; in this process, spaces are re-created, re-configured, and sometimes re-named, deleting or commodifying their historical and cultural significance and stimulating dispossession and forced displacement of entire communities (Appadurai 1996; Ballvé 2013; Borras et al. 2012; Hanagan 1998; Harvey 2006, 1989; Holston and Appadurai 1996; Sassen 1998, 2000). However, scholarship has shown that the transnational connections created by globalization have also presented new opportunities for local communities to contest their displacement or re-make their relationships to place by proposing alternative ecologies and new ways of human-nature interactions (Appadurai 1996; Brenner and Theodore 2002; Matos Mar 2004; Mignolo 2012; Rademacher 2011; Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter, and Wangari 1996; Watts and Peet 2004). For example, in Lima, despite the increased orientation of the urban core to privileged mega-infrastructure projects and transnational tourism, in turn fostering shantytowns’ growth (Desforges 2000; Field 2007; Ploger 2012), disadvantaged social groups made up of people with different backgrounds, taking advantage of their
experiences, have designed responses to challenges like housing or education, neglected by the authorities but latent among urban poor populations (Chambers 2005; Fernández-Maldonado and Bredenoord 2010; Matos Mar 2004; Strauch, Takano and Hordijk 2014; Zaaijer and Sara 1993).

It is important then to study local spaces and local ecologies because they represent alternatives that value territorial rootedness in contrast to the dispossession generated by globalizing neoliberalism. These alternative formulations teach us about how different means of development might succeed. In this context, the ecology of difference as a ramification of political ecology arises as an attempt to analyze the reality from the neglected participant’s perspective. This takes account of and exposes “privilege” as a universal historical determinant enjoyed by certain people, groups or institutions, and becomes evident when they engage in power relations (Escobar [1995] 2011). Political ecology of difference examines local-global interactions while keeping the community in view, taking part in their struggles to preserve their place, ecologies and environment and stop dominant and destructive models of development (Biersack and Greenberg 2006; Escobar 2011; Walsh 2007).

In doing so, the political ecology framework enables empowerment and visibility of both grassroots and community, sometimes using local or transnational linkages through activism and solidarity networks, and other times engaging in political action and public demonstrations (Álvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998; Escobar 2006; Martínez-Alier 2002). Out of these local dynamics, place-based movements emerge as social movements of resistance that implicitly or explicitly advocate strongly for holistic visions of place as a physical and social space vital for the community (Escobar 2008). Place-
based movements, then, not only claim the importance of space to address the local but also stand for a re-positioning of local ecologies in the center of political and economic debates. Although not always successful, these organizations represent an alternative for defending local culturally significant spaces, and seek to set the pace of adaptation to new socioeconomic and political scenarios (Moore 1998; Harcourt and Escobar 2002; Naples and Desai 2002).

My study of the bay benefits from this approach for two main reasons. First, I am able to go beyond economic explanations of the relationship between the fisher and his on- and offshore fishing grounds, and integrate in this analysis artisanal fishers’ cultural structures and histories as mitigating factors in persistent socio-political inequalities (Biersack and Greenberg 2006). Second, as this framework assesses the role of community organizations, it allows me to address the role of the Association (formerly Union) of Chorrillos's fishers in shaping a stable and more united community that enables them to transmit and reproduce their fishing culture and represent themselves as relevant actors of the territorial debates on that side of the city. Moreover, since the community is located in a densely urbanized sector of the city, it is interesting to show how a local community of artisanal fishers navigates with relative success the demands and requirements of life in the city.

2.2 Place-based (ecological) communities

Place-based movements are social movements of grassroots or local organizations advocating for a particular geographically grounded space as an integral part of their life, both as individuals and as a collective. Place is configured out of a specific set of cultural and social relations among humans and between humans and nature, where communities and places strengthen one another through permanent feedback processes (Feld and
Basso 1996; Kemmis 1990; Nazarea, Rhoades and Andrews-Swann 2013; Rocheleau et al. 1996; Rupp 2012). The notion of place, although experienced as local specificities, has taken on a universal significance as a result of recent global (neoliberal) capitalist dynamics that are expressed in accumulation by dispossession of the less privileged, and commoditization of territories according to market values.

Difference is embraced by the neoliberal system because it is functional to its ends of permeating people’s daily lives. Striving to allocate value to territories, institutions and cultures and transforming the meaning of notions like race, class, education and citizenship, neoliberalism absorbs local differences without destroying them. Capital accumulation redefines local spaces and exacerbates differences across formerly symbiotic relationships among places and communities, in turn leading to greater social unrest and protest over specific issues, which ultimately are driven by the same pattern of systematic dispossession. As local differences are redefined during the process of value allocation, communities and movements advocate and resist by not only re-claiming their unique interaction with their ecosystems, but also adapting their struggle and building trans-local and national networks of support. By doing this, the neoliberal local differences are contested as these new dimensions are not based on market value, power or money but instead on collaborative, holistic and non-competitive visions of place (Andersson 2010; Appadurai 1996, 2002; Clark 1997; Connolly 2013; Dirlik 2011; Harvey 2006; Woods 2007).

Place becomes a trans-local category traveling through boundaries creating global networks and alliances of resistance with similar minded organizations and/or transnational NGOs or aid institutions (de Lima Costa and Álvarez 2014; de Sousa
Santos and Rodríguez-Garavito 2005) Yet place, instead of growing as a flawless and unfixed notion after this process of openness (Chernaik 1996), remains grounded, spatiality graspable and definable due to the ecological aspect imbued in it (Dobson 1991; Sillitoe 1996). In other words, the geographical scope of place keeps the concept locally situated and therefore, claims related to place always bring us back to the group of people living in such space. Through this lens, we can explain why global capitalism, nevertheless intended to be timeless and spaceless, happens in specific places and is led and executed by people linked, attached to, or with interest in alienating, transforming or protecting a specific portion of territory. The creation and consolidation of global financial markets and their associated political and cultural processes unfold in particular and definite spaces, which are constructed together among communities and ecosystems. By making such territories another commodity, the market turns those live places and their inhabitants into objects of negotiation, transaction and ultimately appropriation. Each conflict has its own history, dynamic, actors and outcomes that should be examined to understand larger cross-national processes.

Furthermore, Escobar and other scholars have discussed how in the past, governments used the tools of the welfare state to mediate between local grievances and global aspirations to facilitate the assimilation of new development standards (Escobar [1995] 2011; Pigg 1992; Dolhinow 2005; Mitlin 2008). This balance was distorted after the adoption of the neoliberal state during the 1990s, and so, without the state leveling interactions between small communities and powerful actors, asymmetries and inequalities were exposed and became more visible, although they were underplayed and dismissed by mainstream neoliberal actors like multinational corporations (Doyle and
Doherty 2007; Schock 2013). This situation forced social organizations and grassroots movements to look for alternative ways to fill the gap left by a formerly active state. They did this in different ways: forming alliances and creating transnational networks of grassroots and community organizations, but also re-imaging and re-writing their criticisms and grievances. In part, this search for alternative forms of resistance is the backbone of the place-based movements where new dimensions of place integrate with ecology to produce new social and political forms (Dirlik 1999; Escobar [1995] 2011; Featherstone 1990).

The claims of place-based movements span a wide socio-political spectrum including indigenous (Castree 2004; Escobar 2008; Van Cott 2005), peasant (Rosset and Martínez-Torres 2012; Routledge 1992), fisher (Orlove 2002), ecological (Escobar, Rocheleau and Kothari 2002), feminist (McDowell 1999; Shiva [1989] 2010) and urban movements (Molotch 1976; Oliva Campos, Prevost and Vanden. 2012; Schonwalder 2002). In these organized movements, activists and participants explore socio-political alternatives to place-space and local-global relationships from below, accounting for the history and context of their constituencies while voicing particular readings of concrete realities. Their advocacy is historical, since community values and principles are not always a consequence of negotiation, but an effect of interactions among members and with the environment over time, and contextual because structural differences introduced by current processes of de-territorialization, displacement and expropriation do affect their set of values and principles (Dirlik 1999).

Place-based movements therefore are diverse and engage in multiple strategies of action, sometimes non-confrontational, but always advocating for resistance and
proposing transformations at different levels (Anguelovski and Martínez-Alier 2014; Burbano Sandoval et al. 2013). Also, recent movements have put place in the center of the environmental debate as profitable spaces for aesthetic development, biodiversity conservation or wildlife preservation (Chan et al. 2007; Katz 1998; Sarkar 1999). In contrast, place-based organizations are the result of people’s everyday struggles to protect and keep vital spaces for their reproduction. This “environmentalism from below” has received different names like popular environmentalism, livelihood ecology or the environmentalism of the poor, highlighting those actors and activists who end up defending the environment as a matter of survival (Gari 2000; Martínez-Alier 2002; Watts and Peet 2004).

Along the same lines, place-based movements have used local and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) to frame and build up their claims and struggles. TEK advocates for the recognition and value of knowledge acquired by traditional communities over generations in relation to natural resources use, consumption and conservation at their immediate site, including cultural practices based on this understanding (Menzies 2006; Rinkevich 2008; Tsuji and Ho 2002). TEK principles help strengthen and legitimize the ecological aspect of the place-based movements’ agenda, highlighting the role of communities in the creation of effective and sustainable ways to protect natural resources while claiming greater autonomy and sovereignty over their territories (Coombe 2005; Menzies 2006). Precisely, the most important reason to protect, preserve and promote TEK is that millions of poor communities, including indigenous, Afro descendants, peasants, artisanal fishers, and so forth, depend upon their traditional knowledge to survive and secure their social reproduction (Coombe 2005; McGoodwin
The fishing community of Chorrillos has generated over generations place-based knowledge and information central to understand first the reasons behind the systematic failure of mainstream resource management initiatives, and second the importance of taking into account local knowledge and practices when designing management and development plans. However, TEK is not yet a key component of contemporary resource management solutions, since protocols of integration are reduced to a simple acknowledgement of local knowledge instead of mobilizing towards an actual collaborative process; such disconnection is evident in LDCs and world regions (Menzies 2006).

In Latin America, place-based organizations have often emerged in opposition to mainstream discourses of development, contesting the top-down idea of pursuing economic growth while protecting the environment in order to achieve ecological modernization, disregarding alternative economic and social perspectives (Adams 2003; Daly 1996; McCormick 1989; Pearce, Barbier and Markandya 2013; Altieri and Toledo 2011; Slater 2004; Stephen 1997; Yashar 2005). In this region, development has not been primarily a state responsibility, but rather an effort pushed and funded by powerful multilateral institutions like the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, etc. in conjunction with or at times in conflict with state institutions. Local movements have often exploited these frictions to advocate for themselves, for example, aligning with international human rights organizations to promote the adoption of progressive legislation, or getting certifications from international NGOs to advocate for official rights to territory.
Artisanal fishers in Chorrillos have also attempted to craft a definition of environment based on their knowledge accumulated by generations. Such definition is the result of long-term interactions between the community and the marine and urban ecosystems. Thus, fishers do not understand the environment as an isolated item that should be protected due to their intrinsic importance for conservation of species or climate change prevention; the environment is instead a community construct that matters because it is part of their everyday lives. For fishers, to protect and take care of the environment is as important as providing for their families, keeping the community together or preserving their on- and offshore territories. This does not mean a secondary role, instead a more important place since their daily bread depends on a healthy environment. Fishers’ place-based ecological knowledge emerged when they act protecting the environment as a functional component of their goals of having fish for themselves and for the future generations. For example, fishers have learned that certain fishing spots need to rest every one or two weeks depending on the specie that is nesting in that area. They have a system in place, learned from experience that has taught them to choose the fishing spots considering factors among others, such as market prices, water temperature and family needs. This has allowed them to preserve the fish without having to declare *vedas* or closures. However, overfishing practiced by the industrial and semi-industrial fleets plus water warming, pollution and acidification due to climate change and urban sprawl are constantly challenging fishers’ place-based knowledge.

Two studies on Latin American place-based movements serve as strong examples of how local organizations have designed strategies directed towards preserving their territory as a meaningful space of living and as raw material for producing local, place-
based knowledge. In the first, Escobar (2008) lays out the case of Colombian Pacific black communities called Proceso de Comunidades Negras, formed after the opening for political and social activism granted in the Colombian constitution of 1991 that explicitly recognized black communities as part of the new national multicultural identity. Even though these identities (e.g. Afro descendant and indigenous), acknowledged under neoliberal principles, were issued with the purpose of co-opting and planning the development of these populations, the organizations saw the opportunity to gain visibility as communities of difference.

According to the Proceso, black communities pursued the reaffirmation of the black identity, the right to territory, and autonomy in the construction of their own future according to values of collectivism and solidarity. For these movements, territory was a living space where history, culture, environment and social life met (encounter) and self-organized, creating and re-creating the socio-ecological structures of communities. These communities, aware that the elevated notion of territory could be unintelligible to the outsider, had as a main component of their struggle land entitlement and their redeployment to large areas of the Pacific region of Colombia. This often took the form of conflicts with multinational mining and agricultural corporations. Natural resource abundance was the driver of those tensions that in Colombia were exacerbated by internal conflict (involving insurgencies, paramilitaries, and the Colombian military) and violence associated with drug trafficking. Nevertheless, the communities that participated in the Proceso have been recognized as peace territories, land has been awarded to them, and they are currently actively involved as victims of the conflict in the current peace negotiations.
In the second example, Meltzoff et al. (2005) investigated social changes in the bay of Paracas, a natural reserve in southern Peru. Social changes in the 1990s were necessitated by the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO), an ongoing phenomenon consisting of the upwelling of warm water currents from the Western Pacific moving eastward, which reduces plankton production and forces surface-feeding species (like anchovies) to look for cooler waters in the depth of the sea, making fishing more difficult, while pushing other species to coastal waters benefiting artisanal fishers. During the 1990s, a boom in scallops, induced by El Niño, turned the fishers into divers who, with the state’s mediation, began to create and consolidate fishers’ organizations in order to secure tenure rights over the bay, and optimize the exploitation of this new market. This attempt to foster unity among fishing communities was stopped by the lobby of powerful environmental NGOs with a rather radical conservative agenda, who urged the state to protect the reserve by re-zoning the coast and relocating some of the communities.

Their research demonstrated that as the state swung its positions with respect to fishers and fishing resources depending on the domestic or international political climate, associations similarly tried to secure short term income for their constituencies, offered in this case by a third party, a foreign investor familiar with the scallop business and the fishing site. This study shows how the state, shielded in a growing environmental bureaucratic mess, avoided accountability while at the same time serving the interests of the fishing industry. The researchers revealed how artisanal fishers, in an effort to preserve their vital space on the coast and fishing zones, engaged in multiple complex interactions with local and global stakeholders, whose concerns are different than those
critical to the fishers’ everyday struggles. In addition, there was evident interplay among place-based communities that also advocated for the preservation and protection of their local knowledge, not just as part of an emotional bond with the bay, but also as a profitable way to make a living.

As McGoodwin (2006) remarks, integrative approaches are at best latent in fisheries management, particularly because scientists and managers often see artisanal fishers as non-collaborative parties whose only interest is to maximize their catches. Yet, fishers have developed practices that have sustained them over generations without exhausting the resource while keeping a socioeconomic balance in their communities (Ben-Yami 2001; Berkes 1989; Diegues 2005; Orlove 2002; Trimble and Berkes 2013). This lack of connection between experts, managers, policymakers, and fishers is fundamentally due to the ineffective role of the state, in that it has privileged biological and economic over holistic and socio-ecological views (Dyer and Leard 1994; Jentoff 1989, 2013; Pomeroy and Berkes 1997). It is in this intersection among place, politics, and natural resources management where place-based movements come into play by advocating for the importance of the fishing areas as spaces of cultural production, and from there, promoting a shift that places artisanal fishers as primary stakeholders and makers of marine resource management plans.

Within this framework, my project in Chorrillos offers the opportunity not only to explore alternative solutions to artisanal fishing concerns from the experience of a particular dock, but also to study how this community, whose way of living has an intense rural character, has learned to live as urban dwellers embedded in the city of Lima. Fishers’ reciprocal relationship with their marine environment is an opportunity to
observe how a poor urban community has advocated and mobilized resources to preserve their territorial and fishing rights. More interestingly, this study unveils how fishers craft their strategy of resistance from their intimate knowledge and understanding of the bay gleaned after years of experience, which accounts not only for maintaining a presence in the dock and fishing grounds, but also for engaging other main stakeholders in this struggle. I analyze how the community has negotiated, failed and succeed in redefining and re-claiming their difference, specificity and genuine culture.

2.3 Urban (political) ecologies and urban social movements

Urban ecologies are sets of social practices placed in time, space and politics that, through social organizations or other type of citizen involvement, challenge current urban paradigms and propose different ecological futures. Oftentimes, the desired futures of subordinate groups conflict with mainstream discourses about defining environment and how stewardship and conservation should be understood. As Rademacher (2011) argues in her study of the Bagmati River in Nepal’s capital, biophysical environments like a river, lake, forest, mountain, etc. are in reality eco-cultural entities co-produced among nature and society. In these spaces, different stakeholders struggle to dictate the “valid” science and knowledge regarding conservation, preservation and restoration of ecosystems. Since in contemporary politics environmentalism and state making are two inseparable projects, power and authority are essential aspects of the urban ecologies debate. Dominant players’ initiatives and responses to environmental depletion imposed out of power or authority (political or economic power or scientific expertise) fail to include the less privilege actor’s perspective and achieve their goals. As a result, often times the poor are held accountable for the failure, and a more drastic solution is encouraged, repeating and accentuating the circle of neglect and marginalization.
These ecologies are efforts to theorize and understand the city as an intricate ecosystem that hosts a set of specific tensions arisen from the clash of biophysical processes and sociopolitical and economic developments. Therefore, they suggest pathways to imagine the city as an ecosystem that stems from historical and cultural processes where human and non-human organisms intertwine to produce and transform urban environments (Alberti and Marzluff 2004; Redclift and Benton 1994; Marzluff 2008; Watts and Peet 2004). The city is at the same time an arena where contested visions of the society meet, and is the product itself of those tensions (Alberti et al. 2003; Castree 2000; Keil 1998; Pickett et al. 2013).

Such disputes have a public character because they affect everyone’s lives; therefore, they are political. When they relate to environmental issues, then the environment becomes a politically contested concept subject of deliberation and definition by the society (Ferguson and Gupta 1992, 2002; Luke 2003; Redclift and Benton 1994). Furthermore, these struggles expand beyond the city’s biophysical boundaries, and concern global actors such as multinational corporations or international NGOs interested in influencing how citizens interpret and interact with the environment, in order to move forward the transnational entities’ political and economic agendas (Cox 1998; Luke 2003; Keil 2011). Thus, the modern city is more than a concentration of markets and consumers, and has gone beyond urban society’s being the locus of capitalist production (Lefebvre [1970] 2003; Swyngedouw 1996).

Society has been mostly urbanized. Today more than half of the world’s population lives in the cities, and much of the world is still urbanizing (United Nations 2013); Peru is a clear example of this phenomena with more than 78 percent of the total
population living in the cities and almost 30 percent now living in Lima, the capital city. Urban societies not only produce new social and political processes, transforming individuals’ mental outlook, and domestic and international politics (Appadurai 2002; Lefebvre [1970] 2003; Rademacher 2011), it is also considered one of the drivers of environmental change (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1998; Marzluff et al. 2008; Pickett et al. 2013; Satterthwaite 2008). Urbanization implies major investments, changes in infrastructure, concentration of wealth and per capita consumption. Increased fossil fuels use and greenhouse gas emissions results in the increase in the ecological footprint of urban centers, which in turn translates into serious environmental and public health issues such as air pollution, shortages of drinking water, sewage management, waste disposal, and so forth (Grimmond 2007; Grimm et al. 2008; Krass 2007; Rees and Wackernagel 1996).

Until recently, there was a disjuncture in the study of the relationship between the rural and urban realms; scholarship considered them two separate domains, where concepts like environment, biodiversity and nature were absent from the concerns of urban life (Lefebvre [1970] 2003; Endlicher 2011; Katz 1998). Likewise, issues concerning political ecology, such as conflicts over access to and use of natural resources, were absent in the debates about the city and confined to the countryside (Benton-Short, Price and Friedman 2005; Keil 2003). Yet, systemic inequalities in the socioeconomic order, evident in planning and distribution of both space and resources in the city are rooted as well in environmental injustices. This recognition has motivated the recent study of the city as a more indispensable space of living for humans where the environment counts as an essential component of urban life (Castree 2000).
This situation has encouraged different political discussions relevant to urban ecology like governance (Baptista 2012; Fabricant and Postero 2013; Gibbs and Jonas 2000), participatory planning (Aylett 2010; Manzo and Perkins 2006), and urban social organizations (Christoff 1996; Leontidou 2010; Pansters 1986; Oliva Campos et al. 2012; Rutland 2013). Based on these ideas, urban political ecology serves a twofold purpose. It is first a theoretical program aimed at raising awareness about the existing inequalities intrinsic to most urban socio-ecological processes. Second, it is a call for action to mobilize people and resources to develop alternative urban representations of socio-ecological sustainability (Heynen, Kaika and Swyngedouw 2006; Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003).

Although socioeconomic inequalities are intrinsic to major urban centers in both industrialized and LDCs (Langner and Endlicher 2007; Endlicher 2011; Portney and Berry 2014), Third World countries, especially since the 1990s, have experienced disproportionate urban expansion incurring severe environmental costs, which have been neglected partly because such growth has also triggered the sharpest social and economic inequalities. The environment is then displaced and removed from society’s mainstream debates around individual and civil rights. Urban political ecologists deal with the environment, a part of the urban fabric as important as politics and economy, while arguing that oppressive power relations are beneath any unequal distribution of benefits or burdens in urban areas.

The urban-oriented character of Latin America can be traced back to the colonial rule, where cities were founded as political and economic centers from which military and social control over the conquered and subjugated was easier to exert (Portes 1976).
Such an approach hinders the possibility of an urban bourgeoisie, and instead it was a haven for a Spanish and eventually a *criollo* aristocracy. Increasingly over time, a growing mass of landless rural immigrants expelled from the countryside to the cities, saw themselves inside this fixed hierarchical structure adding to the ranks of urban poor. Although there are multiple factors affecting contemporary urban sprawl, the present situation is not alien to the foundations established during the colonial and early republican times: urban predominance over the countryside, perpetuation of an exploitative model of production, self-regulated unaccountable elites, and invisibility of the poor subject to exploitation and marginality.

Urbanization is increasing in most LDCs, especially in Latin America, and so are the environmental challenges it entails (UN 2013). In these countries, both local and national government capabilities have been exceeded, and they have been unable to neutralize acute problems like illegal housing, lack of access to basic services, or insufficient healthcare and education, etc., opening a window for local and global civil society and nongovernmental actors to participate in decisions, initiatives and processes concerning the city and the environment (Sassen 2006; Satterthwaite 2011). However, this involvement has not unfolded peacefully, especially when grassroots or community-based organizations were among the key players.

Indeed, social movements arising from underserved communities, although claiming to have specific solutions, usually implicate in different degrees transformations in the socio-political and environmental landscape of the city (Escobar 2011). An urban center, as a dense network of interlocking economic, social, political and environmental processes, produces ecological spaces, resulting in advantages as well as disadvantages to
different social groups (Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003). Dominant elites, for instance, engage in relations of exploitation, taking advantage of cheap and informal services provided by the poor to nurture these unequal urban environments, which are perpetuated through promises of emancipation and freedom portrayed by urban life (Aide and Grau 2004; Merrifield and Swyngedouw 1996). Urban environments become socio-physical products of specific power relations revolving around concepts of class, gender and race, implicating processes of social control and oppression that instigate the growth of urban ecological movements.

Greater attention has to be placed on how grassroots and community organizations have proposed alternative ecologies (environmental policies, resource management plans, land-use development plans, participatory budgets, etc.) to dismantle dominant systems of inequality. In Latin American countries, although there is a growing scholarship addressing these issues, struggles over class and poverty, particularly associated with environmental inequities, have been subsumed by studies on movements around race and ethnic grievances, and as such artisanal fishers claims have been invisible. Against this background, my study seeks to illustrate a powerful yet silent vision of Lima that has been proposed over the years by Chorrillos’ fishers, shown through their everyday ecological-cultural and political-economic decisions and practices.

Multiple factors triggered Lima’s population growth and expansion: migration to the city’s peripheries of poor peasants displaced by the decline of regional agriculture in favor of coastal agro-industrial plantations, high exposure and lack of responsive capacity of rural populations to environmental disasters (earthquakes, floods, droughts),
centralization of services and resources in the capital city to facilitate financial and wealth accumulation to dominant classes. During the 1980s, the combination of the terror imposed by *Sendero Luminoso*, particularly in the regions, together with the military and police brutal counter-guerrilla tactics, expelled again thousands of rural inhabitants to the capital city (Masterson 1991; Matos Mar 2004; Chambers 2005).

The most salient manifestation of the city’s population sprawl is the proliferation of *pueblos jóvenes*, slums or shanty-towns, which started as illegal land invasions and over the course of months or years amenities and other services were provided by local authorities or political figures. In the 1970s, especially during the government of General Velasco (1968-1975), the absence of policy mechanisms available to local authorities to regulate illegal land occupation and appropriation and the need for social legitimation of government policies, prompted them to cooperate with the settlers and acknowledge certain rights and guarantees. Initially, there were successful examples of urban informal development, like the largely studied settlement and today stable neighborhood named *Villa El Salvador* that resulted from a relocation agreement among the state and the collective of organized invaders. In broad terms, the agreement implied moving the communities to a planned place, providing families with construction materials to build their own houses, and afterwards establishing services, amenities and resources. (Blondet 1991; Dosh 2010; Hordijk 2005; Peattle 1990; Rush 2013). The government’s non-negative response to invaders influenced others, including Lima’s inhabitants living in critical conditions in Lima’s districts, to engage in this strategy of access to housing and shelter. For the settlements’ dwellers, coming to live in the *barriadas* (another name given to more consolidated *pueblos jóvenes*) was almost a natural transition from their
village to the city, where entire families and vecinos (neighbors) met again, and together with other invaders from different regions and backgrounds, re-defined and created alternative notions of community, mobilization, participation and citizenship.

This scene did not last long. In the 1990s the neoliberal government of Fujimori (1990-2000), as part of a re-centralization strategy, formed an agency in charge of the entitlement, regularization and formalization of all informal landownership in the city. Becoming a formal property owner was thought of as a way to enhance citizens’ capacity as productive members of society, which meant active participation in the financial market via banking, credit activity, etc. When entitlement became a priority in relation to land occupation, other priorities that used to encourage collective action such as demands for electricity, water or transportation, became secondary, and getting a title document was the people’s first concern. Government desire for formalization opened the door for unethical and abusive practices of land speculators who anticipated where occupants would invade, bought the land from the state or previous owners, and then sold it for a higher price to settlers (Dosh 2010 Rush 2013; Stokes 1995). Nevertheless, in some cases, urban social movements remain active, yet advocate for more diversified goals with mixed motives, transcending local claims and dialoguing with broader issues, using different non-violent and extralegal strategies including new alliances with political and non-political actors, and using technology and the media to communicate their grievances (Dosh 2010). For these reasons the social movement category falls short of what these collectives, communities and groups are doing, and they are better framed by a more comprehensive typology of politics of contention. According to Tilly and Tarrow (2015), riots, civil wars, demonstrations, protests, revolutions, as well as non-violent political,
social and cultural manifestations of difference, dissent and disagreements within or outside the political regime belong to this field of study. In this regard, it is critical to examine how different forms of contention are reactions and responses to a complex set of institutional and para-institutional politics of repression, oppression and surveillance. The presence of the fishers of Chorrillos is contentious as it is a concern and poses a challenge for authorities, urban developers and other stakeholders interested in the dock area.

In summary, using a political ecology framework, my study shows how artisanal fishers in the community of Chorrillos, who are embedded in the city of Lima, manage to reproduce and carry on alternative ecological practices despite a number of pressures coming from different actors and structures. Due to the particular symbiotic connection of this community with the territory in which it has developed, this community not only practices economic means of subsistence, but also a variety of sociocultural practices with political repercussions. I represent the fishers of Chorrillos as place-based social activists, and since the fishers’ lives unfold in an urban setting, their socio-political, economic and environmental struggles and victories translate to alternative ecologies for the city.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This project uses an ethnographic approach to examine the complex relationship between the Chorrillos fishing community and the environment, and to identify and analyze what kind of cultural and ecological knowledge has resulted from those interactions. An ethnographically grounded methodology is an adequate instrument in this process of making legible to outside audiences the intricate aspects of the artisanal fishing culture. Furthermore, since I am investigating how fishers make sense of their place as a locus of knowledge production (Escobar 2008), this research focuses on the interaction of subjects (the fishers) with place (the Chorrillos dock) in a constructionist fashion (Andrews 2012; Berger and Luckmann 1991; Burningham and Cooper 1999; Crotty 1998). In this sense, I am assuming that reality is contingent upon interactions between humans and their natural world, consolidated and disseminated within an eminently social context, historically and culturally framed (Hammersley 1992).

Therefore, reality and concepts like place, environment and subject are not discovered, but co-constituted through meaningful relationships where power disparities influence the content of those definitions (Crotty 1998). Through my work with Chorrillos’s fishers, I learned how broader power inequalities play out within a community that is proposing different ecologies to the city, which are, in essence, aspirations for redistribution of power and alternative interpretations of reality. The result of this work is a better understanding of how dominant discourses and power dynamics work through and is potentially contested in daily life in specific cultural and ecological settings. Such understanding was arrived at through this ethnographic study of daily interactions at the dock.
My dissertation project emerged out of a broader, multi-year project on artisanal fishing politics in Peru’s central coast, initiated in 2012 by Dr. Max Viatori. The goal of this project was “to study artisanal fishers working in the Lima-Callao metropolitan area of Peru’s central coast, where over 3,500 artisanal fishers are active (there are approximately 7,000 artisanal fishers total in the Province of Lima, which bears the same name as the capital city)” (Wenner-Green Post-PhD Grant Application, 2014). Since 2012, I have worked as a research assistant for this project, making five trips to Lima to conduct informal interviews and participant observation with artisanal fishermen. For this dissertation, I drew information from more than 40 individual and 10 group interviews.

Figure 1: The dock at Chorrillos
that I conducted for Viatori’s project with members of the community of Chorrillos, mostly fishers, with a couple of exceptions, such as the dock’s boats mechanic and one of the market workers, or *fileteros*, who worked on the dock fixing fish for *pesqueros*, or buyers. I also interviewed a few women of the community including market, restaurant modules and boat-ride workers. Specifically, young fishers were also interviewed. These interviews included critical information on the history of the dock, like the situation of the natural resources and how fishers assess the physical (environmental) transformations that have happened on the dock. In addition, I conversed with them about the dock’s daily life and the nature of the community, their place and role in the community- their values and standards, the work of the Association and their relationship with the state, NGOs, experts, and so forth. Sometimes conversations went on for hours touching on a variety of issues, where the exchange of stories, anecdotes and ideas were mutual.

I will also draw on the participant-observation with the community in Chorrillos during the five field trips I made for Viatori’s project. These visits were documented in detailed field notes, in order to better see how fishers’ practices are informed by their political and ecological knowledge and vice versa. Conducting participant observation in this context meant spending long hours conversing, visiting, working and travelling with fishermen and their families in order to study how daily interactions and understandings of place both reproduce and also reshape dominant power dynamics. Such research required me to establish a network of personal contacts and build rapport with members of the community.

I conducted my fieldwork through short visits over a period of four years, which gave me a better understanding of the fishers’ situation dynamics of their community,
than would a single, but longer field visit. My interactions with the community and the data collected during my first field visits compared to my last field visits reflects the nature of my ethnographic approach and the validity of my discussion. In 2012, a typical day during one of my visits began early around nine in the morning. Once I arrived to the dock I sat close to one of the group of fishers that were gathered in the mending area, and began to observe them and tried to listen to their conversations. After a couple of hours, I approached them and asked about their nets and fishing gear. In response they asked about how is the fishing in Colombia and what I was doing in Peru and Chorrillos. My answers to this questions that were not initially very clear, helped me think about my intentions with the community, and to inform myself about fishing in my home country. The conversation quickly moved to soccer teams and national championships, music and politics. My conversations revolved around general aspects of the fishing and the community life. The welcoming environment of the dock facilitated my job of collecting relevant information, however I felt that a lot of specific interactions that occur on the dock were out of my reach.

In 2015, I could say that I was already part of the community. I arrived to the dock after noon when the dock activity starts since most fishers unload their daily catch around 3 or 4 in the afternoon. I had a group of fishers friends who where always around me facilitating contact and conversation with other fishers. As I built a close relationship with some of the fishers, I was treated as one of them by the rest of the community. The conversations and interviews became an exercise of information exchange where parties involve mutually learn and share experiences. Some conversations went to the family and
personal level helping know better the character and personality of the fishers in Chorrillos.

Thus, this research was not conducted from a distant, “objective” perspective, but emerged from my engagement with the community and its desires for a more just future. At the outset of my research, I made a commitment for greater social justice for Peru’s artisanal fishers, and I made clear that my research pursues this common purpose. Much recent work in anthropology underscores the importance of an engaged approach for addressing the needs of underrepresented communities in an ethical manner that stresses their participation alongside the researcher in the ethnographic process, as well as the importance of this process for producing public ethnography relevant to the study of pressing social and ecological issues (Beck and Maida 2013; Hale 2008; Sanford and Angel-Ajani 2006). Moreover, previous sociological work stresses the importance of researchers establishing a critical standpoint for the ongoing consideration of the relationship between the researcher and community, particularly in studying private and sensitive issues (Quantz 1992), and breaking down the existing barriers among social actors coming from substantially different worlds (Bloom 1998).

In Appendix 1, I provide the questionnaire that I used in my data collection visits. Through this set of questions I explored how fishers frame and speak about the practices that have enabled them to survive and continue being a viable urban community of artisanal fishers. Fishers are aware of the pressures exerted by urban elites over culture and territory. Clear examples are the implicit expansionist aims of the Marina Club south of the dock, and the (so far) failed commercial developments that started from the Barranco beaches. These are not new, but historical threats that have shaped a
relationship of mutual distrust between the community and outside actors. Particularly, fishers have learned to interact with public authorities depending upon their jurisdiction (District of Chorrillos, Lima municipality, or Produce, for example) and the personality of the individual. For example, fishers are confident that the extensionist is doing his best to contribute to fishers’ wellbeing, although his superiors at Produce have a different agenda. Also, fishers perceive local authorities as more approachable than national ones, particularly because the bay is part of the Chorrillos jurisdiction and fishers are closer and more visible.

Along the same lines, fishers have found that communicating directly with the Club’s representatives to address immediate issues concerning both parties is a good strategy. Examples of this form of agency exerted by the fishers are a couple of deals that for the past few years have brought these two parties together to collaborate with each other. First, over the past five years, the Union leased part of the dock’s parking space to the Club for its members. Second, a couple of years ago, the Club began to provide free water service to the community. According to the Union, in a gesture of generosity, the Club offered help facilitating water until an administrative issue with the utilities company was solved. I argue that underneath these agreements there are meaningful negotiations over power, space and territory where fishers have successfully managed to advance their role as relevant actors of that part of the city. Having some leverage in these negotiations is evidence of a trust-building process over non-institutional grounds, versus just being forced by the authorities to act in certain directions. The Club did not consult with the city about the decision to share water with the fishers. This also shows a gradually growing legitimacy of the community in the eyes of society, since having deals
with the Club entails displaying a certain degree of dependability. Following the path taken by fishers to create and carry out these strategies and practices, and observe how they portrayed and talked about them, has informed me about how fishers understand governance and autonomy, and alternative forms of citizenship functional to their goals of preserving their territory and protecting and reproducing their culture.

Another relevant aspect addressed is the role of women in the dock’s daily life, and young fishers’ perceptions about the future of artisanal fishing and the community. It should be noted that specific research exploring and analyzing women’s roles and feelings as members of the fishing community still need to be conducted. In this study, I provide insights about their perspective that, although limited, lays the ground for future research. Women’s involvement in alternative economic activities on the dock, like restaurant services for visitors and locals, has brought out their interest in the dock’s future. Women’s points of view about the dock’s everyday life helped me understand and anticipate possible transformations in relation not only to gender interactions, but also to the dock’s possible alternative economic and political futures. Moreover, women’s voices, although veiled in a male-dominant culture, are active makers of strategies and practices that can be sustainable, and have allowed the community to remain active and viable.

Women testify that they have been members of the community for generations working, selling, and fixing fish at the dock (fish fished at the dock, so transacting directly with the fishers), and as beach vendors of different products like food and handcrafts. Most women at the dock are adult and elderly. Although they have not been registered yet, the number of women at the dock is less than the fishers, no more than 60
individuals, and decreases significantly during the winter season. Over time, women have concentrated in three main activities: selling fish at the dock’s market, filetear or fixing fish for major vendors or regular buyers, and preparing and selling food at the small stands located around the market, or at the larger restaurant modules of the dock. The majority of women are situated in this last group. I have found that women have concentrated in this sector because it is separated from the fishing activity itself; in other words, they do not have to buy/sell in their restaurants fish caught in the bay. However, women in charge of restaurants sometimes sell the fish caught by their husbands, brothers or relatives, and although this is not very common, it is another indication of how women are involved in the community’s daily life. Women’s main contribution, I would argue, is providing the dock—a male dominated environment—with a set of values such as empathy, solidarity, and mutual care. While these values are not exclusively the domain of women, they are present on the dock because women raise their families near the dock, and fishers’ children spend a lot of time in the community. It is in this sense that women see a different reality of the dock, and including their perception of the dock in my study helps to show potential transformations regarding forms of governance and representation, and provide a comprehensive view of the community.

Likewise, young fishers’ views are relevant to understanding key features of the fishing culture in Chorrillos, including traditions and values, and notions of place, environment and community. Their role in the community, their opinions about the dock’s socioeconomic futures, and in general, their thoughts over artisanal fishing, provide this study with a complete picture of the artisanal fishing realities happening at the dock. Traditionally, young fishers have preferred to work on distant/deep-sea fishing
instead of performing coastal or subsistence fishing, which is predominant in Chorrillos. This explains the lack of young faces at the dock. Nevertheless, after carefully observing the community and interviewing a few young fishers, I realized that although they are not abundant, there is a new group of youngsters, 18 to 28 years old, raised on the dock with close ties to the fishing community, who foresee in artisanal fishing an attractive occupation. Unlike adult fishers, this young population did not enjoy the golden years of artisanal fishing; instead they grew up hearing the stories of how fishing was not viable anymore and how fishing communities have been neglected by recent governments. Therefore, it is worth exploring the process behind young fishers’ decisions to choose fishing as a source of income.

Aside from the intimate connection with the sea and the beach, these individuals work as fishers in Chorrillos for two main reasons. First, although they are not convinced that artisanal fishing is a promising economic activity, they take advantage of other benefits like the support and mentorship of older fishers, and the knowledge and ability to navigate the socioeconomic networks already in place. And second, once they become full members of the Association they have the possibility of obtaining the right to claim benefits like scholarly bonus, Christmas box, etc., which can compensate for some of the economic stresses of being an artisanal fisher. Interviews and participant observation with this group of fishers helped me explore strategies and practices that protect and sustain the fishing culture and fishing grounds that are being transmitted, and how this process of knowledge transmission occurs within generations, what role is played by the community, women, leadership and elders fishers in the process, and the reactions of the young fishers.
3.1 Artisanal fishing community of Chorrillos

I collected ethnographic data using participatory observation and actual involvement with fishers. Some of the individual and group interviews were recorded, while with others, recordings were not possible without risking the validity of participants’ responses. In these cases, notes were taken immediately following the interview. Photographs and videos were also taken to document activities taking place at different times of the day and of community activities. As part of this endeavor, both my experience in situ and the data collected in my visits to Peru serve as an ideal base to explore multiple aspects of everyday life in the Chorrillos community, for instance, how fishers use place as an instrument to advocate for their territory, how from that geo-social interaction they have designed and implemented multiple sustainable strategies, and why, despite their role as marine stewards, dominant actors insist on fishers’ lack of proficiency in mainstream conservational and sustainable science.

Through five visits of different lengths to Lima, I accumulated in-depth knowledge of the community. The first two visits were made with the purpose of exploring the research site, making initial attempts to access the community, and gathering preliminary data. During the first visit in spring 2012, the community of Chorrillos was identified as a potential research site and I began to have contact with some members of the community; a few months later, in summer 2012, I began the data collection process. My first approach to the community was trying to talk with a group of fishers that were spending time on the dock mending their nets and arranging their fishing gear. They began to speak about general issues, asking me about fishing in Colombia or the political situation of my home country. After a while, I shared my intention of learning about their lives and struggles as artisanal fishers. Then, after learning about the
role played by the Union (Association, after 2015) in the community, contact with the Union’s board of directors was established and authorization to be on the dock asking questions and taking pictures was kindly given by the president. Once permission was granted, I began to get acquainted with other fishers, who eventually become permanent participants and collaborators every time I was at the dock. Subsequently, I made three longer visits (2013, 2014, 2015) that were key to achieving an ample and in-depth knowledge of the community. Visits were conducted in different seasons in order to have an idea of how the dock landscape differs depending on the weather and fish abundance.

These experiences in the field have helped me to better craft my research design, assuring its significance and validity to the community and to the scholarly discipline. It was after having long talks with the fishers that I realized the importance of the dock in their everyday life, and also how over time they had learned to protect their fish, and had become custodians of the coastal ecosystem. Moreover, at meetings and Union and Association assemblies, I learned about their methods and strategies to efficiently navigate the regulatory and political system, although with mixed achievements.

Historically, fishing has been an activity performed in the area since pre-Inca times by fishing indigenous communities, whose remains have been found either by archeological research, earthquakes or most likely, by land invasion projects in the neighborhoods of Armatambo and San Genaro. But community members trace the origins of their union to the story and legend of Jose Silverio Olaya Balandra, a fisher hero of colonial times who carried messages from Chorrillos to Callao for nationalist troops. During one of his missions, Olaya was captured by the Royal army, and instead of revealing the secret message he was carrying, he was tortured and killed, giving his life
for the Peruvian nation. According to the fishers, a relative of Olaya, almost 100 years old, is still alive and actively fishing on the dock. I was introduced to this fisher, but he was deaf and we could not converse, however, he was sure about his ancestors. In all, this heroic character stands over the Chorrillos community, and they use this heritage to enforce their right to remain at the dock and fish in the bay.

There are different hierarchies and statuses in the community. The most respected group of fishers is the elders; the community agrees that without them, the bay or the dock would be long gone. *Los viejos* in Chorrillos are relatives and apprentices of the first settlers that occupied the bay, they caught their first fish more than sixty years ago when they were only children; and they have been crucial in achieving state recognition and protection. They become uncles or grandparents of younger fishers, regardless of an actual blood tie among them, and although they very rarely go out to fish, elders keep coming every day to the dock to hang out with other fishers, tell their fishing stories, or do odd jobs like mending or repairing other fishers’ nets for few soles. In turn, the community, through the Association, collaborates with them, for example, assigning a restaurant module to one of their relatives or donating money for medical treatment. Certainly, the community does not guarantee the elders’ wellbeing, but the community is aware of their contribution and is always finding and supporting ways to give back to the old fishers.

From these kinship relationships, the rest of the community is built. Fishers go out to fish with their fishing partners, a group of about ten fishers that could be relatives, close friends, or skillful fishers. The decision to fish with one or another member of the *banda* depends on multiple factors ranging from who showed up earlier that day, or who
owes money to other members, to what kind of fish they are looking to catch. These are friendships that are established on the dock, although on land life is not in jeopardy and fishers interact under a different standard. Their fishing activity unveils the character of each individual, and friendships last for long time, with mutual trust built on sharing uncountable hours in the ocean and the sharing of a good catch or a bad day. As individual fishers begin to build a network of kinship, trust and support, they gradually address political and economic matters affecting the Association and community’s future. Gaining knowledge about the networks underlying the community allowed me to better understand fishers’ decisions, forms of representation, and political choices, as well as the distribution of functions in the community and within a household.

Fishers in Chorrillos could be categorized in different subgroups depending on the support, rejection or apathy shown to the decisions made by the Union’s board. This does not suggest a divided community, but rather an attitude of permanent scrutiny learned by the fishers after a history of non-accountable and corrupted former Union boards. I had the opportunity to have conversations with the majority of these factions, and hear fishers’ opinions about the Union’s role within the community and with external actors, like Produce’s extensionists and city investors. During my last visit, my research took a qualitative leap forward in terms of my involvement with the community. I found myself included as part of the community and my relationships with different fishers grew substantially. To cite an example, regarding the community, the Union allowed me to attend general and extraordinary assemblies, which are almost sacred spaces reserved only to fisher members of the Union and prohibited to other community members. Also, regarding the fishers, I was invited several times to family and personal events and
celebrations, which is, according to fishers, a very rare deference to non-kinship members.

Furthermore, I spoke at length with various members of the current board, including the president. Approval by the Union was my first step towards accessing the dock. Once the purposes of this study were discussed with the Union and permission was granted, it was easier to come closer to the fishers, attend to their meetings as a guest, move freely around the dock, and interact with other stakeholders posted at the dock, such as the Coastguard officer and the Produce extensionist assigned to Chorrillos. Although my interactions at the beginning were indirectly mediated by the Union, such influence faded over time, and after a few weeks I could talk with sympathizers and critics of the Union alike.

Similarly, I also interviewed four young fishers, for whom fishing is only a seasonal and temporary occupation while they secure a more stable and better-paid job in the city. These fishers are less interested and involved in the Union’s affairs, but they were raised on the dock and are an integral part of the community. Young fishers face a complex situation because even though they want to work in the city, opportunities there are scarce. I also noted that they cannot elude the deep-rooted fishing tradition that is permanently calling them to come back to fishing and hence to the dock.

As a result of my fieldwork, I gained a comprehensive knowledge of fishers’ challenges, strengths and expectations, and a fairly complete picture about the everyday life on the dock. From this information, I can identify the main concerns of the community, and how they have changed and adapted over time, but especially how they have performed as transformative actors of the city’s realities.
3.2 Preliminary Topics of Analysis

Fishers’ responses could be preliminarily grouped in the following topics of analysis:

**Place:** Fishers made permanent reference to the dock as their home, and as the space from where their identity as artisanal fishers and citizens is constructed. Place is a critical category to understand the nature of fishers’ strategies to resist displacement and dispossession. For them, the on- and offshore fishing grounds constitute a single territory to protect and defend. The dock has different meanings for the community. For the elders, the dock is the place where they are respected and can transmit their knowledge to younger generations, while working for other fishers and making a living. For active fishers, it is an extension of the sea, as the fishing trip does not finish when they come ashore, but after spending hours doing different activities on the dock. For young fishers, the dock is a space where they feel at home, and away from the pressures of the city to become economically productive, self-sufficient and responsible for their own rights and resources. In the dock they are their own boss and have permanent assurance from their fisher-peers about their work and decisions. And for women, the dock is the place where they can raise their children in a safe environment that allows them to work and make a contribution to the family economy.

**Stewardships of the marine ecosystem:** Fishers understand that in becoming agents of conservation of their marine ecosystems they must address two main issues. 1) They must secure fish abundance for the future; 2) they must discredit the perception of non-sustainable actors assigned by other stakeholders interested in displacing the community. For fishers, fish scarcity is the main environmental concern, because it affects their capacity to be active members of society.
Thus, in order to define environment, fishers make a logical connection between its natural and socioeconomic dimensions. Therefore, measures taken to protect the environment become vital to their existence. On the dock, there are two different aspects of the same issue: first, there is a formal yet ineffective control exerted by a couple of state representatives posted on the dock; second, there is an informal control made by the community, and sometimes the Union, evident when a fisher uses unauthorized fishing gear, or fishes juveniles when there are other species available. Sanctions vary depending on the action.

The city: Fishers perceive the city as a separate world from the dock; especially old fishers who rarely attempt to explore the city. Nevertheless, fishers do take advantage of the city’s services, for example, access to education for their children, available health services, alternative leisure spaces for their families, and access to cheaper and better fishing gear.

According to the fishers, the city has transformed and they need to learn about the new ‘rules’ under which society works; however, they see their dock as an island far from the congestion of the capital, and therefore foresee tourism as a potential alternative, and even a preferred source of income. Under these terms, fishers engage in disputes and negotiations of concepts like urban land-use and development.

The Association (formerly Union): Although only fishers can be official members, the Union is a permanent concern of the community. The Union was established generations ago and has served the community to consolidate and secure their place before the city, state and different fishing stakeholders. Yet the incumbent Association’s board is under permanent scrutiny by fishers and outside actors like the
Produce officers due to a history of corruption of former leaderships. The Association not only manages the dock, it is also the external face of the fishers interacting with outside actors, including the state.

Fishers, who are sure of its importance, do not question the institution’s legitimacy. However, under recent fishing regulations issued by the Ministry of Production in favor of decentralization and better resources allocation, there are voices (scarce, though) within the community pushing for a parallel association to compete for the few resources available with the existing one. The Association is key in the fishers’ process of adaptation and apprehension of the changes occurring outside the dock, and in keeping the community cohesive around major objectives.

3.3 Other artisanal fishing communities in Peru

Parallel to the ethnographic study conducted within the Chorrillos community, in order to have a reasonably representative sample of the significant players in the field, I visited and learned about other artisanal fishing communities located north and south of Chorrillos within the circuit of greater Lima’s coastal area. Along the coast of the greater Lima area, I established contact with communities of Lurín, Punta Hermosa, Playa del Silencio, and Pucusana, which are located south of Chorrillos, and with Ancón, a fishing town located north of Lima. Although these communities, except Pucusana and Ancón, are small groups of no more than one hundred fishers, they all belong to an organization that represents them as fishers. Community organizational capacity tells me about the existence of common interests and challenges, therefore relevant for my work. Pucusana together with Ancón complete the group of important artisanal fishing communities of Peru’s central coast. I also visited a quay located further south in the region of Pisco, one of the largest and recently built artisanal fishing facilities. I also visited, interacted and
interviewed fishers and stakeholders of the fishing community of San Andres/ Paracas, a bay located in the state of Pisco, southern Peru, concentrating the majority of southern fishing activity of the country. This community is particularly interesting because the dock was rebuilt in 2011 after being impacted by a Tsunami in 2007, so it is an interesting place to observe resilience and coping practices of a fishing community distant from the capital city. These visits to communities different from Chorrillos also opened new research paths to learn more about artisanal fishers’ challenges, struggles and ways of life.

The purpose of these visits was to broaden my knowledge about artisanal fishing, as well as compare the case of Chorrillos with the experience of other communities. By knowing and having continuous contact with other fishers’ organizations, I gained perspective on the challenges and struggles of the Chorrillos community. Likewise, other actors in the fishing sector, like non-profits, academic experts, public servants, and so forth were contacted and interviewed with the purpose of broadening my network of collaborators and exploring the perception of other social actors about artisanal fishing.

3.4 Outside stakeholders of the fishing sector

I also interviewed non-fisher actors for Viatori’s project during my visits to Lima. Many of these participants were interviewed more than one time, and became an integral part of my network of research collaborators. I approached this group with the intention of learning the informed third party’s perspective on artisanal fishing in general, and on the Chorrillos’ community in particular. Also, I wanted to find out about concrete plans and activities carried on by the institution or organizations to which they belonged regarding artisanal fishing and related topics. All of these participants played an important role in aiding me to map the different aspects of Peruvian artisanal fishing. As I
gained in-depth knowledge about Peruvian fishing, these contributors also helped to corroborate and validate my understanding of the issues, opening new research directions that enriched my project and laid the groundwork for future collaborations.

Part of the group of non-fisher actors is divided in two subgroups according to their link to public or non-public institutions or organizations. Since the relationship between the state and artisanal fishers is a key aspect of my research, this separation facilitated further data analysis. I talked to current and former public servants of different rank in the administration working for the Ministry of Production, in particular for the Office of Artisanal Fishing. I interviewed the current director and legal advisor of the office, consultants and extensionists. Likewise, I conducted extensive interviews with the delegate of the Coast Guard who supervises marine activities in Chorrillos, and the delegate of the Ministry of Production who works in Pucusana. In the non-governmental sector, I visited with a national expert consultant member of a recognized research group, a couple of entrepreneurs who founded a fair trade/price project benefiting artisanal fishers, a founding director of a Peruvian fishing magazine, and a couple of chefs working for high-end restaurants in Lima.

3.5 Data analysis

My relationship with the fishers provided me with a unique outlook on the collected information, and a specific understanding of the community and their own interpretation of the world (van den Berg 2008; Miles and Huberman 1994). With this in mind, I conducted my data analysis as follows. Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. Interviews were deleted once transcriptions were made. Fishers’ identities and the names of other contributors (artisanal fishing stakeholders different to Chorrillos’ community) remained confidential. Although most of the recorded material was subject
to transcription and analysis, special focus was placed on the conversations held with members of the Chorrillos community, and the information collected from other parties served as context to provide validity and legitimacy to this study.

In the next stage, I followed the steps of basic qualitative data analysis although with some variations, consisting of data reduction, coding and categorization, and revisiting the data and drawing conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Richards 2009). Initially, the analysis consisted in reading the transcripts, observation notes, and other documents (media, secondary data) that were analyzed. This first reading resulted in a series of notes on the material, and tentative ideas of categorization (Dey 1993; Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2008). The next step was to draw matrices and networks that allowed me to justify the conclusions based on these notes, codes or categories (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Finally, I extracted the explanations, reasoning and realities that were meaningful to the study, and through a permanent feedback process with the fishers I drew my results and conclusions.

After presenting the theoretical and methodological considerations upon which this study is constructed, I move to expand on the context and background of my case study. In the following chapter I provide extensive information related to the fishing activity in general and particularly of its development in Peru, with the purpose of critically presenting the antecedents that have contributed directly or indirectly to shaping the situation the fishers of Chorrillos are facing. The theoretical framework and methodological approach presented serve as a baseline to understand and critically read the political and economic realities involving the situation of artisanal fishers of Chorrillos, the region and the world.
CHAPTER 4: CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Several themes are central and cut across my research and are key to understanding why the Chorrillos’ fishing community is facing difficult challenges in becoming recognized as an environmentally, politically, and socially relevant actor in the national fish value chain. Four general topics, all of which are covered in this chapter, provide a broad-based understanding: 1) artisanal fishing as a global issue; 2) Latin American and 3) Peruvian political economic history, to understand the complex relationship between the state and small undeserved communities and the role of external forces in shaping and participating in these interactions, and finally; 4) the Chorrillos research site, the community and the interactions among them and with outside actors.

4.1 Artisanal fishing as a global issue

Worldwide fish consumption reaches a new high every year, and both catch and farm fisheries are producing at their full capacity to satisfy a growing demand. In 2010, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported that fish represented about 17 percent of people’s intake of animal protein and almost 7 percent of all protein consumed around the world. Raw data shows how catch fish production has remained stable during the last several years (2006-2012) at about 90 million tons per year (FAO 2011, 2014); however this has masked a complex problem of overexploitation, inappropriate and inefficient regulations, mismanagement of natural resources, and so forth (Castilla-Espino et al. 2014; Cinti et al. 2010; García and Newton 1997; McGoodwin 1990; Rice and García 2011).

Artisanal fishing communities cannot be dealt with by ignoring their specific realities; therefore, localized in-depth fieldwork should be done to learn about the
challenges of these populations and to formulate better analyses. This is particularly true in the case of Chorrillos, because the majority of its population is mestizo and of urban background, it is close to the physical facilities of the main state institutions, the type of fishing is limited to coastal biomass, the availability of although informal and low-paid job opportunities is at hand, outside pressures constantly exist in order to make the dock more profitable and viable for major development projects, and there is intermittent state presence through social assistance or future investment plans. Thus, the case of Chorrillos, in addition to addressing common concerns of artisanal fishing (e.g. declining fish stocks due to environmental changes in the midst of growing domestic and international seafood markets), reveals specific issues experienced by the community that are relevant to questions of urban development and environmental and marine sustainability in Peru and Latin American.

An understanding of the Latin America political economy is critical to draw the foundations over which structural inequalities today affecting underserved communities were built, and to situate the artisanal fishers in this regional framework. Background reasons behind artisanal fishers’ current difficult situations go beyond marine pollution or industrial overfishing, and are rather linked to broader issues of regional political economy and development. By understanding why fishers have been politically and economically excluded, explanations of their environmental inequalities will become evident.

Many developed countries have experienced a decline in their production (down 10 percent in the period 2000-2010), driving them to rely more on imports from the LDCs (Swartz et al. 2010; Jacquet and Pauly 2008). In turn, LDCs have intensified their
production in order to satisfy both a growing domestic market and new markets in
developed countries (Eggert and Greker 2009; FAO 2014; Naylor et al. 2000; Watson
and Pauly 2001). As a result, addressing the problem of commercial fish-stocks depletion
has become a priority for different stakeholders along the fish value chain. Such fish
shortages have repercussions beyond international trade, and relate to broader issues
concerning the international community such as poverty alleviation, food and nutritional
security of low-income populations, and the livelihood of artisanal fishing communities
(Bene 2009; Bene, Hersoug and Allison 2010).

Indeed, LDCs not only contribute more than 70 percent to the global fish harvest
but also have the majority of small scale fishing areas located along their coastlines
(Swartz et al. 2010). Therefore, aside from the relative importance of fisheries to national
economies and diets, it is worth noting that in LDCs with prominent fishing sectors,
artisanal fishing provides employment and subsistence for millions of poor and otherwise
Moreover, artisanal fishing is often seen as an economic buffer for people moving in and
out of fisheries, depending on the opportunities available in the national economies,
explaining its permanent unregulated expansion despite public efforts to integrate them
into formal markets and legality (Badjeck et al. 2009; Defeo and Castilla 2006; FAO
2011; Jul-Larsen et al. 2003).

Artisanal fishing is a very flexible notion that fluctuates in its definition
depending upon specific historical, sociocultural, geopolitical, and legal frameworks
where the activity unfolds. Nevertheless, the following commonalities are found in most
artisanal fishing communities: use of simple technology, low-capital inputs and labor-
intensive practices; the operation is carried out by small groups and in small vessels, therefore individuals are under constant jeopardy due to the multiple changing environmental conditions affecting the fishing activity (FAO 2012); third parties usually handle marketing and distribution, and; all levels of production, distribution and organization are influenced by kin-group ties. Likewise, communities, despite marginality and poor infrastructure, play a central role in conservation, natural resource management, marine stewardship and other sustainable strategies (Coulthard, Johnson and McGregor 2011; Demuynck 1994; McGoodwin 1990; Meltzoff and LiPuma 1986; Pomeroy et al. 2001; Tvedten and Hersoug 1992).

In view of this panorama, kinship and community structures stand out as particularly interesting characteristics because on one hand, artisanal fishing is a rather autonomous and independent activity performed by small groups, but on the other hand, there are daily signals of solidarity, sharing and mutual support. This is evident not only when difficulties arise but also when community projects have to be carried out. Fishers organize in associations, foundations, unions, etc. around these ideas, and along with state programs or on their own initiative. They advocate for their on- and offshore rights, claim greater accountability from other fishing actors, and are involved in different forms of governance and political participation (Asher and Ojeda 2009; Escobar 2011; Hirst 1994; Meltzoff and LiPuma 1986; Oslened 2004; Rodriguez and de Sousa Santos 2005). For example, studies of fishers’ organizations claim and confirm the importance of grassroots and local leadership involvement as key factors for the failure or success of development plans (Coulthard, Johnson and McGregor 2011; Harper et al. 2013; Jentoft,

4.2 Artisanal fishing and neoliberalism

The bonds linking fisheries and poverty can be traced to the arguments relating the open access nature of fish resources as the main reason of fish depletion and, consequently, of fishers’ impoverishment (Bailey and Jentoft 1990; Hardin 1968; FAO 2000). This is part of the explanation, but depending on the community, other factors are determinant in strengthening the fishing and poverty relationship. Relative easy to access employment and difficult exit due to the absence of buffer activities traps fishers in extreme circumstances associated with poverty, exclusion and marginalization. Fishers are poor because such disadvantages force them to further overexploit their stocks, and industrial fishing has had repercussions on their livelihoods (Hogan and Marandola 2005; Masters and Kisiangani 2012).

Artisanal fishing communities are among the most destitute socioeconomic groups in developing countries, suffering from structural poverty and social exclusion as well as high exposure to natural disasters. The social, ecological and political settings under which fishers live and operate are key determinants of the nature, needs and future possibilities of artisanal fishing activity (Allison et al. 2009; Allison and Horemans 2006; Bene 2009; Gutiérrez, Hilborn and Defeo 2011). Factors that define the nature and behavior of the fishing community include:

- exclusive rights of access to fishing resources,
- community vulnerability and capacity to adapt to environmental changes,
- effectiveness of integral management approaches,
- strength and quality of regulatory fishing institutions,
household reliance on non-fishing economic activities, and

institutional arrangements favoring specific sectors of the national economy such as the fishing industry (Allison et al. 2011; Jazairy, Alamgir and Panuccio 1992; Johnson et al. 2013; Mills et al. 2011; Muelhlmann 2012).

The characteristics of the location, whether it is rural or urban, attractive for tourism or fishing-only, and fishers’ cultural background whether it is peasant or agricultural, indigenous or Afro-descendant, also take on special importance when aiming for nuanced understanding of the realities of artisanal fishing. These commonalities have served to shape poverty alleviation policies and marine resource conservancy initiatives; however specific work in situ is still needed to shed light over the actual benefits or adverse effects of those programs. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization through the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (UN-FAO) is the entity that sets the agenda guiding the efforts of public and private institutions working in the fishing sector. States, corporations, NGOs and civil society networks’ statutes reflect the principles and tenets published by UN-FAO since the 1990s (FAO 1993, 1994, 1995). Governments sometimes back away by delaying ratification of treaties. Conversely, intergovernmental and third party institutions encourage severe restrictions over specific fisheries and practices. The issuing of voluntary codes of conduct, standards and governance documents by these regulatory agents establish another layer in the politics of the environment, complementing and usually replacing and fixing failed public policy efforts (Constance and Bonanno 2000; Gardiner and Viswanathan 2004; Hale and Held 2011).
The market for sustainable standards and labels is characterized by managing supply, demand and civic concerns through designing standards accessible to producers, convincing retailers and buyers about the advantages of trading sustainable labeled products, and seeking the endorsement of visible NGOs, foundations, governments, parties, etc. (Cashore 2004; Ponte 2012). The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an example, set up in 1996 by the World Wide Fund for Nature and Unilever, a major food and consumer goods supplier. The MSC encouraged “the best environmental choice in seafood,” certifying those fisheries that complied with their sustainable standard. By encouraging retailer accountability and consumer awareness, it delivered evident marketing advantages and brand recognition to their stakeholders by accepting a lenient interpretation of sustainability. The MSC sustainable certification program often benefits large-industry, and has failed to enhance market accessibility, or to deliver incentives for sustainable practices to small-scale fishers. Moreover, and contrary to the case of the agricultural sector, where there are many certification agencies, in capture fisheries the MSC certifies more than half of the fish sold in the marketplace, keeping a type of monopoly status, which explains its focus on a market for “sustainable fish” while failing to support the creation of “sustainable fisheries” (Christian et al. 2012; Falkner 2013; Gibbon, Ponte and Lazaro 2010; Gulbrandsen 2009; Ponte 2008, 2012).

The belief that market-based instruments will deliver sustainable outcomes is embedded in the neoliberal premise of creating individuals and communities committed to environmental conservation as a vehicle of wealth and profit generation. The rationale for linking capital and nature lies in the notion that the market by itself will create the right set of incentives and sanctions to prevent further environmental depletion (Cashore
Indigenous, Afro-descendants, peasant or artisanal fishing communities are coopted, dismantled or even deleted, and then re-shaped and manufactured according to top-down compulsory sustainable standards. Examples range from organizations coopted and convinced about the benefits of development and progress that agreed to host for instance, mining investments; or organizations and stakeholders created by the companies to confront existing and opposing social organizations. Challenges in harmonizing technological standards and social realities by the authorities or communities themselves, have often been the pretext to rely on external certification processes, since those are not subject of negotiation or even interpretation. Community participation in establishing these standards is minimal, and therefore guidelines are alien to communities and fishers. These requirements and processes to ensure “sustainability” promote further marginalization of less privileged actors due to their lack of access to resources, technology, advising, etc. Additionally, the government’s participation in this mandatory adaptation is marginal, as the conditions are given and communities have to fulfill the requirements.

Place-based communities are often difficult to coopt or buy-out because for them separating from their territory is not an option. Their bond with the geographical space is essential for their existence. Thus, a slow process of first symbolic and then physical displacement, de-territorializaton and invisibility is put into operation by stakeholders looking to appropriate and profit from the territory’s resources. As major producers, retailers and consumers have the resources to simultaneously craft, bend and follow certification standards to gain market advantages, smaller players are left with the choice
of either joining larger stakeholders or using their tradition and knowledge to resist and survive. The economic and political pressure exerted by these neoliberal artifacts is experienced differently worldwide, but with particularly intensity in fisheries of the global south. Examples from diverse regions show how neoliberalism operates in accordance with the contexts in each community, but mostly deliver similar outcomes and consequences.

4.3 Fishing for subsistence in Africa

Research conducted on small scale fishing in sub-Saharan Africa found that food insecurity, basic healthcare services and access to credit are the main households’ concerns that displaced their focus from resource-related issues like fish scarcity. Problems associated with poverty cut across families regardless of their predominant activity, fishing or farming, requiring solutions targeting basic needs (Mills et al. 2011). Efforts, particularly from foreign aid, directed to support fishing and protect the marine environment usually focus on building fishing institutions, transferring technology to enhance fishing capacity or establishing natural reserves, overlooking how communities have assessed and confronted poverty (Akpalu 2013). Similarly, West African’ coastal communities carry out fishing as a subsistence activity, providing household safety and employment generation for producers, but their contribution to poverty alleviation or increase in national wealth is non-significant. In this case, governments and non-government programs pay more attention to the problems of profit generation, questioning fishers’ technological backwardness, instead of trying to integrate scientific and social approaches to address poverty (Belhabib, Sumaila and Pauly 2015; Bene 2003, 2004; Harper et al. 2013). In Namibia, a national effort to accelerate growth and development that started in the late 1980s promoted strategic alliances between artisanal
fishers and foreign-owned capitals as vehicles to receive fishing rights. Domestic and local coalitions among communities were blocked, which hindered development and increased inequality and conflict among groups unable to find a private partner (Gore 2000; Melber 2003; Paterson, Kirchner and Ommer 2013).

The economic, political and institutional arrangements made by governments, NGOs or private companies to pull fishers out of poverty, when successful, are only preparing the ground for fishers’ entrepreneurial transition. Communities are obligated to enter the market and produce commodities to generate profit, or else remain poor and marginal. Alternative development involving fishers’ knowledge and their capacity to balance natural resource use and decent living standards is dismissed or at best rewritten to foster a development model where environmental sustainability would be a natural outcome of a free market.

4.4 Fishing from the countryside in Colombia

In Colombia, artisanal coastal fishing is highly seasonal and characterized by a great variety of fish stocks and a fluctuating number of fishers. Marine resources management and sectorial regulatory frameworks, particularly over the industry, have been almost absent throughout history. Similarly, fishers’ participation in decision-making processes have been minimal because, aside from the systematic institutional abandonment, they have struggled with poor organizational capacity, lack of leadership, internal corruption, and so forth (Saavedra-Díaz, Rosenberg and Martín-López 2015). River and watershed pollution due to deficient water management, urban sprawl and loss of biodiversity after macro-dam and mining projects, as well as the non-significant contribution of artisanal fishing to the national wealth, have also contributed to the systematic institutional and social abandonment of these communities. These conditions
are exacerbated by specific socio-economic and political factors associated with Colombian internal conflicts, including massive internal forced displacement, overcrowding of the artisanal fishing neighborhoods, and a culture of drug trafficking activities. Saavedra-Díaz et al. (2015), conducting fieldwork in both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts, identified the main concerns of three stakeholders: the fishers, fishers’ leaders, and experts from university biology departments, conservation agencies, NGOs and so forth. Aggressive and unregulated fishing in restricted waters and tensions with newcomers or non-native fishers were the main problem detected by fishers; community welfare and basic rights satisfaction were the concerns of leadership, who demanded stronger grassroots organization; and finally, experts’ critical concerns included institutional instability that translated into employment insecurity and unfinished projects. In short, stronger fishing institutions working together with community organizations to learn, enhance and promote fishers’ ecological knowledge and adaptive capacity should be the priorities of future fishing development projects (Escobar 2008; Moreno-Sánchez and Maldonado; Saavedra-Díaz, Rosenberg and Martín-López 2015).

State absence in Colombia is mainly due to a disproportionate attention and investment on solving the internal conflict and a diversion strategy consisting of having weak institutions that function to forward multinational corporations’ interests. Place-based communities whose source of livelihood depends on the health of the environment are mostly located in renewable and non-renewable resource abundant areas (suitable for mining, agro-industry, biological reserves, etc.) that are also the target of private and foreign capitals. Deficient land-tenure laws and massive internal displacement forced fishing communities to receive both victims and demobilized actors of the internal
conflict, leading to further confrontation within communities over access to the few available resources. In this situation, communities atomized, and leaders in some cases were coopted or were regardless unable to keep the community unified. This indirectly contributed to investments from external actors and consequently, third parties’ participation in internal decision-making processes. This gradual loss of autonomy hinders communities’ ability to maintain their cultural traditions, transmit their local ecological knowledge and preserve their natural resources, ultimately motivating top-down interventions.

4.5 Peru

Peru is among the largest fishing countries, accounting for nearly 12 percent of the world’s total fish catches (FAO 2011). The cold-water Humboldt Current provides for nutrient-rich waters, creating ideal fishing grounds for extensive pelagic stocks. The Peruvian anchovy (*engraulis ringens*) is the world's largest fishery of a single species measured in landed volume (Estrella Arellano and Swartzman 2010; FAO 2011; Pacheco et al 2012). This species is also the main raw material for the fishmeal and fish oil industry, which are the more profitable sectors of the fishing industry (Tord 2003). Peru has an export-driven economy, and although the fishing industry’s contribution is not significant to the national economy in terms of royalties (El Comercio 2014; Zapata 2008), it is the second largest export after mining products. Recently, the government has promoted fishing and domestic fish consumption as new components of its strategies to counteract hunger and malnourishment among the country’s poorest communities (Ministerio de la Producción 2014), however the outcomes of this policy have not yet been evaluated. More interesting, though, is the socioeconomic and political history that has shaped the fishing sector, and the character of artisanal fishing communities’
interactions with other actors starting with the state, industry, the fleet of *bolicheros*, and civil society organizations.

4.5.1 Fishing for subsistence in a nascent divided republic (~1850s-1950s)

Artisanal fishers have historically been disregarded as active contributors to the construction of the Peruvian nation, although they have played a significant role shaping the current widely advertised fishing identity of the country. Despite the fact that artisanal fishing as an economic activity has always been in the shadow of mining or agriculture, they are the major fresh fish providers for Peruvians, represent the largest population of the fishing sector, and are the first stewards of marine coastal ecosystems. Being invisible is not unique to artisanal fishers, as it is a trait common to a large number of Peruvians such as indigenous peoples, Afro descendants, landless peasants, low-wage workers, urban poor and of course, artisanal fishing communities. However, this unequal society is not the result of recent sociopolitical junctures, but rather of structures and mechanisms that were set in motion since the foundation of the republic by dominant actors.

Fishing in Peru can be traced to pre-Inca times. Fishing communities were highly influenced by the natural environment, and benefited from fish as a high protein resource that required low-energy and simple technology, allowing for many to labor without obligation to organize (Moseley 1975). Precisely, fishing as an independent artisanal activity was transmitted along different generations via kinship or family relations, constituting a lifeline of hundreds of coastal communities over time (Orlove 2002). More recently, fishing stories from the beginning of the 20th century can be found that describe fishers from the north as lone riders of the sea who adopt and adapt ancestral traditions of Mochica indigenous communities, venture out on the ocean hundreds of miles along the coastline nearly as far as Ecuador looking for fish for subsistence, but also to trade for
potatoes, cotton goods or fishing gear (Bourricaud 1970). As these narratives reveal the autonomous character of the first fishers, they also show the lack of strength as a social group to push for favorable economic policies.

Mariátegui (1969) reported that Peruvians of the early 20th century imagined Peru as a nation of mestizos and creoles originating from Spain and alien to their Inca past, which was considered pre-historical and strange to the nascent republic. Furthermore, the strong Hispanic heritage of the new citizens who were literate, property owners and European descendants, and the lack of cohesive revolutionary ideals after the independence war (1821), left a country that was divided into aristocrat elites and the masses. Following colonial patterns, the elites distributed power and means of production via inheritances, arranged marriages and convenient legislation, ignoring the existence of the masses. The masses, lacking class-consciousness and motivation to overcome economic and political marginalization, remained in the margins of the republic ((Bourricaud 1970; Gonzales 1991; Haya de la Torre 1931; Hodge Dupré 2011; Matos Mar 1964; Starn, Degregori and Kirk 1995; Mariátegui 1975). The absence of a cohesive Peruvian society was patent during the War of the Pacific (1873-1879), which pitted Chile against Peru. During this conflict, although Peruvians had a larger and better-positioned army, their lack of cohesion and determination resulted in a very negative outcome for the Peruvian nation.

Politically, during this period, Peruvian presidents were sworn in after military coups, questionable elections by soldiers or former soldiers of mixed origin, and in a few exceptions, of civilian transitions of mandates from elites to relatives or friends. Indeed, aristocrat families’ direct involvement in government issues was rare, they only aligned
with the authority so far as it served their interests. Their social condition placed them above the law, and therefore the only obstacle to their dominance derived from their own peers (Gonzales 1991; Starn et al. 1995; Balmori, Voss, and Wortman 1984). For the masses, the state was seen as an instrument at the service of elites, useful to them only when other mechanisms of social control failed. Thus, the state was not per se negative, and had the potential to be useful to the poor’s interests as well (Burga and Flores Galindo 1987; López 1978; Nugent 2002). Later on, in the 1930s, the idea of the state being on the side of the popular classes was partially channeled with mixed success by the leftist party, APRA (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance or Peruvian Aprista Party, in Spanish: Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana or Partido Aprista Peruano). This movement claimed that only educated and prepared masses could foster the democratic transformations required by the country, like comprehensive agrarian reform and nationalization of foreign capital (Haya de la Torre 1931; Hodge Dupré 2011; Ugarte 1978).

Economically, Peru’s economy was based on foreign investments and export of primary products. Foreign investments, focused specially in mining products like copper, left enough money for state functioning and for keeping close political clienteles (Balmori et al. 1984; Dancourt 1999; Gonzales 1991; Thorp 1992). Likewise, cotton and sugar exports provided elites with enough returns to remain independent from the state, upholding their superior status (Bulmer-Thomas [1994] 2003; Bourricaud 1970; Gootenberg 1989). Over the years, coastal plantations, driven by ideas of progress and development, began to recognize labor rights and to pay higher wages, partly due to the proximity of the capital city. Andean latifundistas, instead of investing in technology and
opening to foreign capital, remained unproductive and the rural population depending on them was neglected. As a result, and despite multiple small movements of resistance, a large number of peasants were displaced and forced to migrate to the city (Arguedas 1974; Burga and Flores Galindo 1987; Bourricaud 1970; Hodge Dupré 2011; Nugent 2002; Smith 1989). However, paradoxically, the distance separating the central state from the regions did not threaten the state’s legitimacy; on the contrary, indigenous peasants embraced the state not as a detached bureaucratic entity but as their own idea of common good and equality. The state for them was an everyday practice (Nugent 1994, 2002; Smith 1989). Such a perception of the state resonated in communities living on the margins who portrayed the state precisely in accordance to the universal purposes of the republican state.

Perhaps the first attempt to sell fish to foreign markets was through the United States’ involvement in the Peruvian economy. Since fish was not considered part of the Peruvian diet, as part of the U.S. WWII plan (1939-1945) Peru supplied fish to the nations affected by the war, encouraging an increase in fish production and also creating a market for a domestic shipbuilding industry and other inputs needed for the business. Nevertheless, this was a short-term venture, subject to the U.S.’s war endeavors that ended as soon as U.S. fish producers began to recover from the war economy (Caravedo Molinari and Gorman 1977). So, during this period of consolidation of national identities, political instability, social inequalities and urban growth, artisanal fishers were considered marginal to the state construction process. Fishers’ poor conditions and lack of participation in the market economy placed them with the majority of the population
Prior to the 1950s, the fishing industry in Peru was fragile.

4.5.2 Fishing for food or fishing for feed in an export-oriented economy (~1950s-1990s)

At the beginning of the 1950s, protectionist policies implemented by foreign buyers and a growing Japanese fishing industry pushed Peruvian industrialists to search for alternative fish products. This situation re-directed the business to the production of anchovy-based fishmeal for fertilizer and animal feed, which soon became the new star export product, reporting benefits to the overall Peruvian economy, particularly contributing to the exports and imports balance. Precisely, this dynamic economy triggered social transformations, creation of new port-towns with processing plants and export facilities, migration to these areas and emergence of new associated markets in these regions. In 1955 Peru exported 18,700 metric tons of fishmeal, equivalent to 4 percent of world production. A few years later, in 1964, fishmeal output peaked at 1.5 million tons, more than 60 percent of the global catch (Roemer 1970).

Placing excessive pressure on a single natural resource soon resulted in negative environmental consequences, e.g. an unbalanced marine ecosystem and product exhaustion, forcing the government, with the agreement of the industry, to implement emergency and improvised measures to recover the anchovy stock using moratoria (vedas) and closures of fishing areas. These transformations began during General Odría’s government (1948-1956), when the country deepened into an export and liberal economy focused on free trade, uncontrolled prices and creating selective credit lines for promising exports. The background idea was that with steady state participation in the economy, development and progress would be an eventual outcome. Fishing therefore benefited greatly from these measures, which coincided with a growing international
demand for fishmeal from the U.S. and Europe. To supply this market, industrial fishing grew into a business with international market potential, absorbing much of the labor of the small scale fisher, who gradually became a simple vendor of his low-cost labor power (Caravedo Molinari and Gorman 1977). Initially, the fishing industry was led by European migrants and Peruvians entrepreneurs with management experience acquired in foreign firms based in Lima. These entrepreneurs pioneered the field, bought boats, and built and equipped factories to process fish. A few years later, they became an important interest group, competing with traditional elites to control the regulatory and bureaucratic machinery of the state (Crabtree 1992; Roemer 1970; Tord 2003).

Before the anchovy fishmeal industry appeared, domestic fish consumption, although representing less than 2 percent of the total catch, was already high for Peruvians in relation to regional and international standards. Nevertheless, for artisanal fishers it was more attractive and profitable to secure a job in the fishmeal industry than to sell food fish to a limited domestic market. Thus, an important number of artisanal fishers began to work for the industry along with thousands of rural migrants who came to work in the major production centers: Chimbote in the north; Callao, the port city for Lima, in the center, and; Pisco on the southern coast (Appleyard 1973; Caravedo Molinari and Gorman 1977; Schaefer 1970). Labor surplus in the coastal region was not only due to the fishing boom, it was also the result of deep economic crises in the Andean latifundios that systematically expelled migrants to the cities, creating political and social instability more apparent in Lima, whose population increased from 650,000 in the 1940s to more than 2 million in the 1960s (Blondet 1991; Starn et al. 1995).
National companies, in order to win foreign fishmeal markets, sought external financing in order to invest in technology and upgraded machinery. Increasing debt, together with a drop in fishmeal prices (1966-1968), pushed many medium and small-size companies into bankruptcy and laid off thousands of workers. In 1967 the number of workers involved in artisanal fishing was around 13,000, increasing in 1972 to more than 25,000. It was during this crisis that Belaúnde’s presidency collapsed and General Velasco took power after the military coup of 1968. Velasco’s government continued and strengthened Belaúnde’s program, attempting to carry on comprehensive agrarian reform, internal industrialization, and nationalization of foreign capital goods like oil refineries and the fishmeal industry, creating for the latter the Minister of Fishing in 1972 (Jaquette and Lowenthal 1987). This office supervised Peruvian fishing sovereignty within the declared two hundred-mile territorial waters, and issued rules favoring the fishing sector, especially after 1973 when the El Niño phenomenon hit the Peruvian coast and impacted anchovy stocks (Masterson 1991; Caravedo Molinari and Gorman 1977; Roper 1969; Starn et al. 1995).

Under Velasco’s administration the state grew rapidly and soon overran all economic and political spaces, weakening local governments and political parties. Following a modified corporatist model, the government created agencies to compensate for the lack of political representation, while indirectly exerting social control within those agencies (Crabtree 1992). A growing authoritarian rule also meant centralization and a growing bureaucracy concentrated in the capital city, which in turn widened the breach between the province and Lima, exacerbating regional antagonisms and reactivating historical social conflicts. A growing unrest fueled by the frustration of a
deeply authoritarian government motivated a portion of a leftist leadership to commit to the armed struggle, but also encouraged unions, shantytown dwellers, and students to protest, which showed some organizational ability to oppose the regime. So, soft-dictatorship constraint mechanisms were not enough to keep acceptable levels of legitimacy, and Velasco’s government had to buy off elites and popular bases, which incurred an excessive foreign debt, which led to a fiscal deficit and economic crisis (Crabtree 1992; Hofman 2000; Thorp and Bertram 1978).

The presidential crisis facilitated the return of democratic rule in the 1980s. Ex-president Belaúnde returned from his exile in the United States, ready to re-take power with popular support comparable to his first mandate. By then, the industrial and artisanal fleets had grown and the industry was flourishing again, thanks to state advocacy, without foreign debt or labor burden. Conversely, the artisanal communities developed and grew in different ways depending on their proximity to: 1) large markets of supply and distribution of fish for human consumption; 2) Peruvian boundaries (the Chilean or Ecuadorian coast); 3) processing facilities and ports from which fishmeal is exported; and 4) Lima, where the majority of fish consumers lived. Chorrillos fishers living in the heart of Lima, according to their own words, benefitted on one hand from the central government’s efforts to coopt and win the urban masses to their political program, and on the other hand, rising domestic consumption in line with an extremely productive fishing season contributed to their becoming an economically and socially stable social group (Jaquette and Lowenthal 1987).

Belaúnde’s second mandate (1980-1985) had two main goals—stimulation of the economy and legitimation of the political system. The first goal was overtaken by
multilateral institutions like the IMF, which imposed structural adjustment programs and free-markets. The second goal was not fully accomplished because inclusion failed, especially in the regions that later provided eventual popular support to Sendero Luminoso, a leftist guerrilla group that would become a significant actor in the future of Peru’s politics (Bourque and Warren 1989; Crabtree 1992; García Belaunde and Eguiguren Praeli 2008). New economic conditions required a smaller state, and therefore sharp cuts in public spending entailed reductions in real living standards, unemployment of more than 50 percent, and an uncontrolled growth of the informal sector. Artisanal fishers were not immune to these changes, since the sector served as a buffer zone for unemployment. The recession did not impact the fishmeal industry, since it was not regulated and therefore assimilated as a group as part of the growing informal sector.

By 1985, disenchantment with the neoliberal state once again helped the left to win the presidency, electing Alan García (1985-1990), who represented a moderated version of Aprismo (APRA supporters). García came to power enjoying massive public support and political legitimacy that could facilitate the implementation of radical reforms. However, the APRA political party’s first presidency was considered a lost opportunity falling soon into economic improvisation, political exclusion of right or left forces, delayed inclusion of the poor in development programs, an ill-conceived counter-guerrilla strategy, and ambivalent discourses towards national capital and financial power. All of these shortcomings combined to end the aspirations of the party for a second term.

4.5.3 Fishing for business and a fractured sector (~1990-today)

By the 1990s a comprehensive regulatory framework, at least for the industrial fishing sector, was necessary. Previous legislation aimed at addressing specific fishing
issues, such as product shortage and drops in international prices, were not sufficient to provide a stable investment atmosphere for foreign investors. Neoliberal policies pushed not only for development of infrastructure to prepare the country for international competition, but also for updating the national law. Thus, both the need for a special regime and the widespread reformist spirit facilitated the issuing of general fishing legislation (1994) inspired by the principles of neoliberalism promoting private ownership, market liberalization, tax reform, a boost in exports, postponement of natural resource conservation, and so forth (Gwynne 1985; Aguilar Ibarra, Reid and Thorpe 2000a, 2000b; Weeks 1995). For the artisanal sector, although some positive regulatory spills-overs like the creation of the National Fund for the Artisanal Fishing and Small-Scale Aquaculture Development (Fondo Nacional para el Desarrollo Pesquero y la Acuicultura, Fondepes), there were no major changes. However, transformations did come but as a result of programs targeting the poorest sectors of the population undertaken by populist governments (Aguilar Ibarra et al. 2000).

President Alberto Fujimori won the presidential election of 1990 as an independent candidate enjoying unprecedented popular support and bearing a mixed agenda of neoliberal reforms harmonized with an ambitious populist platform. In 1992 he engineered a so-called “autogolpe/self-coup” followed by constitutional reform that allowed him to continue in power until 1995, when he was reelected for the 1995-2000 period. Regarding the fishing sector, Fujimori’s government sped up the process of returning a bailed out fishmeal industry to private hands, attempted to reactivate the export sector, and consequently motivate a greater fishing effort by the industry and the emerging bolicheros fleet (Nadel Egea 1991; Gillespie, 1997; Kent 1997). Precisely,
although legislation ruled over vessels’ capacity, minimum size of biomass, and use of specific gear and fishing methods, enforcement was rather symbolic and selective due to the influence of the industry in the legislative and executive branches of the state.

Furthermore, regulation mirrored regional and international norms. Fishing laws in Peru were negotiated between the government and the industry, and ultimately issued to satisfied international buyers and consumers rather than to protect national fish stocks or the domestic fish value chain. The lack of the state’s response to the problems created by an inappropriate regulatory framework led to overcapitalization and overfishing to the point that only 40 percent of the fleet was needed to exploit the anchovy stock at its full capacity (Anon 1999). In addition, an historical El Niño event occurred in 1997/8, provoking a fishmeal production decline of more than 70 percent, prompting reactivation measures like fishing moratoria and more strict controls of fishing activity, as well as welcoming concepts like resource sustainability and resource management in the fisheries agenda. However, once the stock recovered progressively, the sector began to experience the same problems of overfishing, which are still unsolved despite more serious efforts of recent governments.

The artisanal sector has also been affected by this situation for two main reasons. First, anchovy overfishing has disrupted the whole marine food chain, provoking scarcity of middle and large-size fish that feed on anchovies and are the target capture of the artisanal fleet. Second, although the fishing industry monopolized the fishmeal market, high prices and increasing demand for this product induced artisanal and small scale fishers or bolicheros to enter this market, providing fishmeal raw material to informal and unregulated processors. However, to succeed in the fishmeal business volume over
quality is a key factor, and a regular artisanal vessel may not be large enough to supply the factory. Overcrowding of the fishmeal industry does not concern the artisanal fleet, but another group of fishers called the small scale fleet or *bolicheros*.

While considered artisanal by law, *bolicheros* use a mechanical pulley to get the full net into the boat (Alfaro-Shigueto et al. 2010; Arias Schreiber 2012; Freón et al. 2014). Strictly artisanal fishers have acknowledged that manually, a fisher can only handle a vessel of less than 10 tons; however, the general law of fishing considers artisanal a boat with a capacity of up to 32.5 tons, completely ignoring reality. In short, artisanal fishers, like the Chorrillos’ community, witness fish depletion not only exerted by the industry, but also by the *boliches* fleet. According to conversations held with experts in the field, these measures, and most of the Peruvian fishing regulatory framework, have been issued as a reflection of international fishing guidelines established for example, by the FAO, and also following changes made in Chilean fishing legislation.

It is worth noting that in 2012, the Peruvian government, looking for a sustainable and rational exploitation of the anchovy-stock and encouraging its direct consumption in low income sectors, issued the Supreme Decree 005/2012, where among measures related to monitoring, control and surveillance of the sector, split the artisanal fleet into two separate segments. Indeed, Article 1 of the Decree defines as *artisanal* boats of capacity up to 10 tons, and as small scale, vessels of capacity up to 32.5 tons, grouping here most of the *bolicheros* fleet. Consequently, Article 2 reassigns the first five nautical miles exclusively to the artisanal fleet, and miles 5 to 10 for the small scale fleet as far as they fish for human consumption, thereby displacing the industrial fleet to the 10-mile mark.
Repercussions brought out by the introduction of this new regulatory framework are discussed at the end of this section.

To some extent, Fujimori’s populist government was functional in that it implemented neoliberal shock measures accepting wholesale privatization programs, which allowed for abundant funds to buy off and reward loyal citizens that supported their policies and government style. To this end, it was necessary to break deep-rooted political hierarchies and alliances redefining the nation’s social class structures, equally alienating elites and majorities, using the money coming from the neoliberal reforms. In other words, Fujimori implemented a political platform that consisted of giving comfort to the historically neglected poorest sectors of the population through direct handouts, demobilizing and delegitimizing any grassroots or party project of political resistance, and conversely, killing and eradicating any sign of resistance and opposition (Burt 2006, 2012; Caistor and Villarán 2006; Conaghan 2005; Johnson 2000). Such social control, for some based on generosity and for others on corruption and fear, allowed and even motivated power abuses and state-sponsored violence indistinctly against terrorist groups, armed guerrillas, and political opposition. In this sense, a very wealthy state looking for legitimacy used the cash surplus to implement welfare programs coopting and alienating the masses while advancing its neoliberal reforms. However, once the desirable economic status quo was achieved, the unpredictability of a populist/authoritarian and very deteriorated political regime had to be replaced, if possible by a more dependable and loyal leadership, which eventually led to the collapse of Fujimori’s regime (Kay 1996; Viguera 1993; Weyland 2000).
The successive regimes of Toledo, García’s second mandate, and the current Humala government have continued export promotion, foreign investment and mixed-capital megaprojects. Over the years, social welfare programs were dismantled and a few social movements of resistance began to emerge again after years of cooptation, only that this time, in some cases, alongside transnational networks of support. Beginning in the 1990s, an international community concerned about the shortcomings of development facilitated new spaces for social mobilization, especially in export-dependent economies. In turn, indigenous, Afro-descendants, urban poor, and other social groups, including artisanal fishers, have found commonalities in neighborhood and foreign communities grievances and struggles, engaging in sponsorships and coalitions with other forms of activism and advocacy represented by local NGOs and local advocates (Greene 2006; Hellin 2012). In this context, artisanal fishers are looking for a place in this recently opened arena of popular mobilization, created with the purpose of sharing and advocating for their visions of nation and reality, over issues of different scope like resource sustainability, food and nutritional security, and community development.

Still, it is difficult to talk about an active and progressive civil society in Peru, a historically conservative country. The democratic crisis left by 10 years of Fujimori’s populist soft-dictatorship has not been addressed either by the parties or social movements. This breakdown of the social fabric brought about apathy in the public with regard to problems of national breadth like poverty, corruption or the free surrender of natural resources. Also, the country experienced a crisis of representation of traditional and new political parties, with a lack of convening power by social movements to address these issues. Still, there are a few relevant cases where social movements did prompt
national transformations, sometimes following specific political or rather electoral purposes, and other times reflecting people’s extreme discontent with the country’s overall policies.

On one hand, a number of mobilizations of political nature drove Fujimori out of office and demanded the installation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, or the political movement that led Toledo to the presidency (Barr 2003; Bland and Chirinos 2014; McNulty 2011; St. John 2010). On the other hand, and more recent and relevant, multiple anti-mining social movements sprawling in the Andes and in the northeast against gold and oil extraction carried out by multinational corporations have destabilized local and regional governments, attracted media attention and prompted the national government to declare such protests illegal (Bebbington 2007; Bebbington and Bury 2009; Lewis 2011). In this scenario, in places like Moquegua, Tacna, Cusco and Amazonas, social movements have emerged stronger, but as a reaction of social conflicts expressing local population extreme discontent, and not disagreement with specific policies or state models (Bebbington 2007; Caballero 2009; Carrón 2006; Conaghan 2005; Himley 2013; Madueño 2008; Ponce and McClintock 2014).

4.6 Social movements and organizations in Peru

Problems faced by social movements have both political and economic rationalities. Politically, the lack of public accountability of multinational corporations, together with the heritage of a strong central state that alienated the masses, hampered the consolidation of forces to resist government policies. Economically, the extractive and export-based model of growth hindered and atomized social mobilization. Therefore, movements’ claims are usually limited to spontaneous direct action targeting the central state presence, in terms of asking to send a representative to serve as a guarantor in
negotiations with the industry and other actors. People's rejection of any type of representation, institutional weakness of a virtually nonexistent district government, and the difficulty in creating alliances among movements are clear problems for the organization and mobilization of Peruvian civil society (Bridge 2004; Bury 2005; Caballero 2009; Ormachea Choque 2011; Ponce and McClintock 2014).

In spite of this situation, there have been several instances where social organizations have received media and public attention, and have played an important role in the defense of the territory and natural resources of rural communities. As stated, the growing relevancy of collective action has been notable in mining regions located in the highlands and the Amazon region, populated by indigenous communities and peasants (Arellano-Yanguas 2008; Himley 2013; Muradian, Martínez-Alier and Correa 2003). In this case, the multiple environmental, economic and social implications of a mineral investment have attracted domestic and international civil society organizations, who foresee in these communities' struggles an opportunity to advance their own environmental or human rights agendas. Although local community organizations depend on these external actors' support, there is evidence that international NGOs, churches, students' bodies and so forth, do guarantee the mobility, stability and visibility of their struggles (Hickey and Bracking 2005; Keck and Sikkink 1998; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001).

Scholarship has documented how the Latin American state has intensively abided by international financial institutions and multinational corporations guidelines, and has allowed opportunities for grassroots and communities to gain national visibility, especially in the environmental realm (Bakker 2013; Bury 2005; Castree 2008; Harris...
and Roa-García 2013; Sader 2011). An increased use of market instruments to manage natural resources has been implemented, displacing the state from its conservationist role. Participatory governance as well as marketization, commodification, and privatization carried out by external global players, together with local people, have been the preferred mechanisms to transform nature into an active asset of the neoliberal project (Bakker 2010; Brenner et al. 2010; Harris, Golden and Sneddon 2013). In particular, participatory governance, although portrayed as an instrument of collaborative learning, has served to re-locate the responsibility of natural resources protection on low income and non-equipped communities. Thus, as conservation standards were written following a top-down approach and have not been re-defined, they are therefore unattainable to these communities that eventually will give up welcoming external cooperation (Harris 2009; O’Reilly 2010). This has led to direct action, protest, and resistance, but also to examples of community empowerment and legal reform. (Colmenares 2009; Harris 2009; Harris and Roa-García 2013)

Conversely, this is not the case for social organizations that stem from artisanal fishing communities. I argue that certain features specific to fishing explain why artisanal fishers have received less attention from the public than other marginal sectors. With respect to the territory, since the on- and offshore fishing grounds are perceived as two separate things, a fisher can be relocated or displaced to another coastal area without causing significant socioeconomic damage. So, when a community’s on-shore areas are needed for investment in mining or development, relocation is portrayed as a win-win outcome for both parties, including the fishers’ organization. By the same token, if the investment comes from the industrial fleet, it would affect offshore areas usually
inaccessible to the artisanal fisher, and it would raise problems associated with over-fishing or water pollution, which concerns the environment but not the sociocultural stability of a poor coastal community.

Furthermore, unlike the campesino or indigenous movements, which emerged as a response or reaction to different forms of exploitation and accumulation (Harvey 2005; Moore 1993), most of the fishers’ organizations were established after a state’s call for formalization. In fact, it was during Velasco’s government (1968-1980) that fishing communities were required to register a representative body in order to gain control over their traditional fishing grounds that belonged to the Peruvian Nation. Thus, while it is true that some fishers were already organized, as the Chorrillos’ organization formed during the 1920s, the role played by the state facilitating social organization necessarily shaped the relationship between the state and communities.

For instance, sometimes the explicit attitudes of resistance expressed by agrarian movements contrast with fishers’ resignation and expectancy for answers coming from the state. Therefore, fishers’ responses and processes of adaptation to current political and economic transformations have followed different timing and pacing than other communities. Theartisanal fishers of Chorrillos for that matter represent a unique opportunity to observe how these dynamics played out. The community has managed to be proactive despite being within the scope of the central state located in Lima, which means that government has at least a symbolic presence on the dock. They have learned to cope in a growing city always demanding rapid adjustments by its population.

4.7 How the fishmeal international market shaped the Peruvian domestic fishing industry

Historically, fishmeal has been used as a fertilizer for agriculture and gardening or protein component for animal feed; however it is only since the 1960s that consumption
of meat and fish products escalated to became a global enterprise (López-Mosquera et al. 2011; McVey and Stickney 2002). Fishmeal used to be a versatile product but its reported benefits regarding animals’ (cattle, pigs, poultry and aquaculture) growth, development and reproduction converted it into an almost inelastic commodity essential to the animals’ diet. In the 1990s, poultry and pigs counted for almost 75 percent of the total fishmeal produced worldwide with aquaculture using less than 20 percent, however a rising demand for fish in large countries like China changed the fishmeal market; in the 2000s, the farmed fish industry consumed almost 50 percent and currently it buys almost 80 percent of the product. In addition, the chemical qualities of fishmeal and fish oil have enhanced its application to other industries, like the dietary supplements and pharmaceutical industries. Their entrance into the market increases demand, driving fishmeal prices higher (Bechtel, 2002; exalmar.com.pe; McVey and Stickney 2002). In this context, Peru became the world’s largest anchovy-based fishmeal producer, landing today more than 3.5 million metric tons (10 percent of the global total), and exporting approximately 800,000 metric tons of fishmeal (given that you need 4.3 metric tons of anchovy to produce 1 metric ton of fishmeal) (Christensen et al. 2013; gestion.com 2015).

The growth of TASA-Tecnológica de Alimentos S.A., a Peruvian company that in a few years developed into one of the largest fishmeal world producers, illustrates the transformation of the fish value chain in the last decades. TASA is dedicated to the extraction, transformation and trade of hydrobiological resources for direct and indirect human consumption (tasa.com.pe). In 2002, a Peruvian conglomerate (Grupo Brescia) renamed a modest fishmeal factory to TASA and began its expansion the same year.
TASA bought, among other companies, Pesquera San Antonio and Pesquera Sacramento, two of the largest fishmeal producers in the country, located in Callao and Pisco; afterwards TASA started its large-scale operation. By 2007, the capital and portfolio of the company has increased significantly with investments in the construction of a shipyard, acquiring and upgrading several plants along the coast, and buying a canning factory in Chimbote, a frozen warehouse in Callao and several boats, vessels and a large trawler (Mathews 2012). Driven by the growth of aquaculture, the fishmeal price per ton has gone up from $500 (USD) in 1990 to $1,600 in 2014, and reaching the $2,500 for super prime fishmeal (Figure 2). Fishmeal switched from a commodity to a high price marine strategic protein, key for certain sectors of the world industry (Villégas 2015; globefish.org 2015). Currently TASA has a fleet of almost 25,000 metric tons of haul capacity, processes about 25% percent of the total allowed quota, and produces annually about 250,000 metric tons of fishmeal, exporting the entire production to the Chinese, Japanese and Chilean aquaculture industry (tasa.com.pe 2015).

This monopoly-type of growth is due not only to increasing prices in the fishmeal international market, but also to fluctuations following product scarcity and governmental restrictions over captured stocks. Increasing demand for a non-substitutable product automatically elevates prices, persuading producers to intensify the fishing effort to take advantage of the bonanza triggering an imminent crisis. In the face of scarcity, the government ordered a closure for recovering fish stocks. Nevertheless, the waters never fully replenished and the cycle repeats itself with less anchovies each season. Furthermore, anchovies and other pelagic species are highly sensitive to changes in waters temperature and other climate events like El Niño, which forces anchovies to go
deeper and closer to shore, making the catch difficult for the industry. The industry reacts by investing in technology or lobbying for reduced protections for artisanal fishers. In turn, black-fishmeal producers (boliche and illegal plants) take advantage of this lack of product availability and enter the market. Market fluctuations therefore became intrinsic to the industry leading to a selective elimination of companies with little capital and influence in the government, conversely benefiting larger companies with more resources and rapport with political and economic elites. Fluctuations were particularly severe in the 1980s and 1990s. In November of 1988 the fishmeal metric ton was sold at $730 (USD). Less than 10 years later, in November of 1993, the price dropped to $373, provoking a restructuring of the domestic industry, determining the distribution of todays’ fishmeal market.

Figure 2: Monthly fishmeal prices U.S. dollars per metric ton, Price in USD. International market. (Source: World Bank)

4.8 Peruvian artisanal fishing: main problems, responses and neoliberal constraints

Poverty and inequality are also part of the everyday life of the Peruvian artisanal fishing communities. However, Peru is a fishing country with one of the most marine-fertile grounds in the world, thanks to the Humboldt or Peruvian Pacific Current that
brings cold nutrient-rich waters to the shore, creating an ideal ecosystem for pelagic stocks, like the Peruvian anchovy (Estrella Arellano and Swartzman 2010; FAO 2011). Such abundance has been a determinant variable in the country’s economy, however artisanal fishers have been historically excluded from the returns of this vector of development. The ways that anchovy-based economies developed and consolidated since colonial times, explain in part the structural problems endured by the fishers.

Before the anchovy-based fishmeal boomed in the 1950s, this species was the natural food for the sea birds that produced guano, which was the only commercial fertilizer available for the world’s agriculture for most of the 19th century. This quasi-monopoly over a global commodity plus the royalties from an established mining industry brought an influx of capital to the domestic economy, and although it remained stagnant, created a growing class of bondholders, rentistas and bureaucrats that captured the export rents (Gootenberg 1989; Hunt 1973; Mathew 1970; Schaefer 1970). This group of bourgeois capitalists was the first to invest and develop the anchovy-based fishmeal industry during the second part of the 20th century.

This sector soon became the second largest export after mining, leading to further industrialization of the coast and increasing internal coastal migration, especially of serranos looking for better opportunities in coastal urban centers (Molinari and Gorman 1977; Roemer 1970; Tord 2003). However, excessive pressure on a single species, the anchovy, led to stock collapse and the industry, in spite of being bailed out by the state, laid off thousands of workers that then joined the already impoverished and marginal artisanal fishing population (Jaquette and Lowenthal 1987). Fishers have been key actors in building national identity, preserving sovereignty and supporting in food and labor
needs of poor coastal communities. Their autonomous, almost self-sufficient character shaped communities distant from national interests. In particular, communities far from the central state were not included in the state development plans and their administration was delegated to traditional elites and regional authorities.

Before the scarcity, marginalization was functional for the fishers, since unlimited access to abundant fish was sufficient to meet their needs (Bourricaud 1970). This partially changed during the 1970s after three interconnected realities affected the sector. First, fishers began to compete for product with the fishing industry, reducing further stock availability. Second, fish scarcity and a particularly strong El Niño (1972-1973) affected the industry, leading to plants closing and layoffs, turning the artisanal docks into buffer zones for the unemployed. Third, growth prompted fishers to redesign the networks and structures that were in place to accommodate the new fishing population (Appleyard 1973; Starn, Degregori and Kirk 1995). While president Velasco (1968-1975) was heavily spending public money bailing out the industry and paying off economic elites to carry out his nationalist project, different social groups also benefited with investments in infrastructure and basic services, welfare programs, and so forth. By the same token, regulations were issued to satisfy both wealthy and poor populations. Specifically for the fishing sector, he established the 200-mile territorial limit and built facilities at the main artisanal ports (Crabtree 1992; Tord 2003). These measures helped recover the fishmeal industry and kept artisanal fishing communities aligned with the government. The Fujimori government (1990-2000) also favored the sector, strengthening national fishing institutions like the Fisheries Ministry, establishing an export promotion commission, Prompex, issuing financial and tax reforms, and in
general, equipping the industry with rights and resources to compete in the international market (Aguilar et al 2000; Kent 1997; Weeks 1995). Artisanal fishers again were awarded grants and aid as part of larger poverty programs.

The implementation of the 5-nautical mile exclusive zone and the creation of the National Fund for the Artisanal Fishing and Small scale Aquaculture Development was also a boost to Peruvian artisanal fishers (Fondo Nacional para el Desarrollo Pesquero y la Acuicultura, Fondepes) (Aguilar et al 2000; DS-101/1992; DS-017/1992). The five-mile restriction resulted from a debate around the serious interference of the industrial fleet, and particularly the boliches fleet, in waters traditionally exploited by artisanal fishers, in addition to the relevant role they played contributing to the protein intake and food security of the coastal population, and providing jobs and sustenance to a significant number of Peruvians (Arellano and Swarrtzman 2010).

According to Peruvian law, artisanal fishers still have exclusive rights to fish any product including anchovies within the first five nautical miles from shore, fishing grounds prohibited to the industrial fleet (DS-005/2012). This prerogative provided a tacit permission for land tenancy and use of onshore areas adjacent to their traditional fishing grounds, despite the public nature of these areas. Despite the fact that it is not explicitly mentioned in the cited regulations, in practice the 5-mile restriction drove artisanal communities to feel more comfortable in their coastal territories. Later on, the state validated such assumptions, building and upgrading artisanal coastal facilities and leaving the management to the fishers’ organizations located at each dock. Although it is true that since the first settlements, fishers assembled around collective bodies of mutual support, the need to communicate with the government and external institutions induced
them to follow a formalization process. Initially, during the 1920s fishers aligned with unions and social organizations of agricultural, mining and factory workers that under the influence of the APRA movement felt empowered to claim participation in the economic and political life of the country. Fishing communities closer to urban and economic centers like Lima or Chimbote (mining) were the first to organize.

These early social responses to problems of unequal distribution of wealth and rights, questioned the role of the state as a supporter of private capital and unaccountable to the poor, and overcame their individualistic character and developed a collective sense beyond scarcity and natural disasters. Although incipient, social organization was in place, and when Velasco came into power to establish a corporate-like civil society to deliver resources through sympathetic civil organizations, fishers already had unions, gremios, associations, juntas, etc. to claim or appeal for those benefits (Molinari and Gorman 1977; Zabaleta 2005). Later on, in the 1990s, Fujimori also used social organizations already in place to access, control and deliver basic services to poor communities, including the fishers.

Since artisanal fishers represented a small portion of the overall impoverished population, their condition was not of extreme deprivation, and their claims did not demanded radical reforms, it was convenient for the government to gain legitimacy, media and popular support by addressing some of fishers’ needs. Facilities and docks were built or upgraded throughout the coast, regulations were updated, and fishers received, through Fondepes, financial and technical aid (Ibarra et al. 2000; Weeks 1995). Fujimori spent the money collected from privatizations and foreign investments. Therefore, the expected social crisis generated from unemployment, forced migration and
dispossession emerged once such funds were exhausted years later (Gillespie 1997; Kent 1997). As the funds wound down, welfare programs were cut, generating social unrest and political changes. Fujimori left the presidential chair in 2000, but consecutive governments kept the same economic orientation, undertaking economic reforms that led to further privatizations, signing free trade agreements with global powers, re-launching mining and natural resource exploitation as drivers of development, and allowing participatory spaces for civil society, provided they lived within the institutional framework (Barr 2003; Bland and Chirinos 2014).

Thus the state has considered artisanal fishers as part of the nation’s poor population, historically unable to progress or increase productivity unless external investments and internal reforms were carried out. Fishers have learned to survive poverty through their ability to navigate both the ocean and politics. Nevertheless, weak social organizations are not among the failures of artisanal fishing, in comparison to other poor populations. The problem is that fishers’ organizations are far from the expected associative framework desired by neoliberalism: resourceful, transnational, proactive and non-partisan (Fasenfest 2010, Escobar 2011). Instead, I find fishers’ organizational mechanisms and tools, although flexible and dynamic, do not prioritize productivity, profit, or public visibility. They focus on their own cultural reproduction, on the viability of being able to keep fishing for a living, and the future. So, fishers’ discourses of escaping poverty, achieving a better living standard at the expense of the government and private investors, or to become entrepreneurs and active market participants, should not be confused with the underlying purpose of permanence and stability as a fishing community.
By definition, fishing is seasonal, and fishers have traditionally combined it with commerce, agriculture or mining, depending on the region they are located. Likewise, if artisanal communities are close to larger docks or processing plants, they switch, albeit informally, to catch anchovies or feedstock for fishmeal, taking advantage of the unrestricted allowance for fishing all over the sea. Before the DS 005/2012 this situation represented a serious threat to the anchovy stock, the artisanal fishers themselves, and the fishmeal formal market. Before the Decree was issued, an artisanal vessel could catch up to 32.5-tons of product, including anchovies, unfettered. Such a margin led to a chronic fishmeal-feedstock oversupply and consequently to a parallel fishmeal market producing low-quality but still well-paid fishmeal known as *harina negra* (in reference to the black market). Indeed, the ocean was filled with *boliches* of 20-tons and up fishing anchovies or any species in order to deliver raw material to black-fishmeal producers, re-victimizing artisanal fishers who worked on boats of 10 tons or less, already affected by the overfishing practices of the industrial sector. As a result, a portion of the artisanal community, instead of looking for fish in exhausted waters, transited to or were employed by the *boliches* fleet. The government overlooked these processes and regulated as if the *bolicheros* and artisanal fishers were two separate groups. Part of the *boliches* continued being informal, returned to the overcrowded artisanal sector, or added to the already unemployed. This formalization effort shows how the state, by re-defining what is an artisanal fisher, intends to transform their social and economic situation.

4.9 Fishing in the bay of Chorrillos

For the case of Chorrillos, despite entitlements of the five-mile limitation or the authority to control the dock operation, efforts to prevent large vessels from practicing aggressive fishing close to their fishing grounds has proven insufficient (Murillo, Maffei
and Sueiro 2014). City planners question the legitimacy of fishers’ tenure on dock areas (Desforges 2000; Fernández-Maldonado and Bredenoord 2010; Gellert and Lynch 2003; Strauch, Takano and Hordijk 2014). On one hand, the fishing industry has had a close relationship with the government, handling the appointment of the Minister of Production (Produce) and his employees, sponsoring members of Congress, and influencing the activities of the fishing law-enforcement bodies. The lack of documentation proving these links does not conceal the fact that the fishing industry, in its early stages, benefited from exchange controls and internal investments, and subsequently from the creation of special funds to aid the firms during low-season or closures, from reforms and regulations sympathetic to the industry, and from little or non-existent record of sanctions or fines for malpractice to fishing firms (Aguilar Ibarra, Reid and Thorpe 2000; Appleyard 1973; Pauly and Tsukayama 1987; Roemer 1970).

On the other hand, and more recently, municipalities, planners, commercial chains and environmental organizations have come together around a comprehensive project to bring public infrastructure, sustainable development and private investment to all of Lima’s coastal municipalities (*Autoridad del Proyecto de Costa Verde, Municipalidad Metropolitana de Lima*, 2015). The plan includes Chorrillos’ bay, and although the fishers are the only community whose culture and livelihood depends directly on their interactions with the coastal ecosystem, their participation in the political process of directing the area’s coastal development has been marginal. Therefore fishers’ interests and input in this project has faded into the multiple affairs that concern the entire district. Still, fishers have been invited to informal meetings intended to socialize the plan, but a fishers commented that no outcomes of the meeting were reported “*allá fue la directiva*
pero aquí no se sabe nada todavía...” [people from the leadership attended to the meeting but here (in the dock) nobody knows anything yet.] This opinion does not reflect a general perception, as the project was not fully set out during my data collection process, however it foreshadows potential ramifications of the issue. Fishers’ lack of political relevance and disconnection of their speech with mainstream environmental debates, among other issues, place them at a disadvantage as compared to the power and specialized knowledge and lingo of other stakeholders.

Different aspects of the community’s everyday life reflect how dominant actors at the local, national and international level work together to facilitate the fishing industry’s work and the elites’ and developers’ desires and plans to slowly displace the fishers and transform the dock. Likewise, fishers, drawing from their connection with their on- and offshore territories, have built and designed different discourses and practices to explain and defend their position as sustainable and legitimate tenants of the bay. Place is a co-product of the permanent feedback between community and environment. This feature of the bay is only revealed when researchers shift their lens and attempt to understand the problem from the community experience. To this end, I use the political ecology of difference, a ramification of political ecology framework that observes the implications of the environmental problems from the less privileged actor’s perspective, advocates for their grievances and takes part in their struggle (Biersack and Greenberg 2006; Escobar 2008, 2011). By spending time with the fishers, I could see how political and economic global changes have occurred at the local level, unveiling minute but significant relationships of power and authority that transform communities and ultimately the society. Despite the differences in means and leverage, communities, state and private
actors are active participants shaping the focus and outcomes of these dynamics (Scott 1985, 1998).

Artisanal fishers comprehend underlying problems, including fish scarcity, poor infrastructure or lack of public investment, and act upon their own interests to remain as legitimate and relevant actors in the bay. Fishers use discourses of place to make legible to external actors the importance of their on- and offshore territories in their livelihood. Artisanal fishing is an activity that relies on a healthy marine ecosystem, and as a result, throughout the years fishers acquired the knowledge and ability to balance fishing with stock stability. Moreover, due to the small scale nature of their activity that permits them to come ashore a few times a day to rest, socialize, trade their product, etc., fishers develop a connection with their inland grounds as well. They consider the sea and dock a single territory to defend and preserve as they have done for generations. The bay is redefined as a co-production of these specific practices among fishers and the environment; from these processes the physical space and the community shifted into a geo-cultural unit, in other words, a place-based community.

4.10 Chorrillos as an artisanal fishing community and ideal research site
Chorrillos is approximately 20 kilometers south from downtown Lima and is bordered on the west by the Pacific Ocean. The Chorrillos district currently has approximately 323,000 inhabitants, while Metropolitan Lima has around 9 million inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, INEI 2014).
In colonial times, Chorrillos was a socially exclusive area of rest and recreation, with large haciendas and luxurious mansions originally built for Spanish officials, and later enjoyed by oligarchs and elites as summer homes during the consolidation of the republic in the 19th century. From that period, Lima’s elites have seen Chorrillos and southern neighborhoods as attractive spaces for leisure activities, and still today seek to control the development and use of these areas. For example, in 1875 European descendants and coastal elites founded the Club de Regatas “Lima” [Lima Regattas Club] in Chorrillos, an exclusive Club for rich people to socialize and practice nautical activities such as surfing, sailing, yachting, and skiing, along with other sports considered for the upper-classes. Such is the power of the elites interested in keeping control of this space that despite the devastation and partial destruction of Chorrillos after the War of the
Pacific (1879-1884), the Club and other properties of the wealthy were partially rebuilt. The Club is located on the bay next to the fishers’ dock, thus both communities, the fishers and the Club members, share inland and on-shore spaces; fishers stretch their nets in the same waters where the Club’s recreational crafts and vessels navigate and are anchored. They use the same access roads from the city.

More recently, Lima’s southern corridor of beaches and surfing waters became a target of high profile large-scale urban projects to establish those areas as main destinations for Lima’s wealthy visitors, especially foreign tourists. Lima’s urban planning has been based on infrastructure megaprojects aiming to attract foreign investments to reactivate the city’s income generating opportunities in areas of construction and services, but without considering the existing socio-spatial limitations that have deepened social disparities (Barreda and Ramírez Corzo 2004; Dosh and Lerager 2006; Fernández-Maldonado and Bredenoord 2010; Gellert and Lynch 2003; Strauch, Takano and Hordijk 2014). As has been the case in Lima, Chorrillos has experienced acute demographic growth, mainly in the district’s peripheries, largely through the growth of pueblos jóvenes, or shantytowns, whose inhabitants came to Lima precisely to enroll in the few jobs offered by the city development projects. The mismatch between labor demand and supply pushes people into the informal sector, which is also functional and to some extent expected by formal society. The tradeoff between formality and informality works because the informal and unregulated Lima residents provide cheap and accessible goods and services to the other portions of the city that enjoy benefits otherwise financially unattainable (Graham 1991).
New residents also live on the verge of informality, settling on empty or unused terrains usually owned by the state, or occupy unsafe and unstable slopes that need to be permanently fixed by the community with their own funds and knowledge, in hope of being legalized and endowed with basic services by a sympathetic administration (Dosh and Lerager 2006). The overwhelming informality characterizing the newcomer’s livelihood is not unique; in general, poor urban inhabitants are permanently immersed in non-formal and irregular transactions among themselves and with the more formal side of the city, interactions that could range from providing cheap goods and services to activities bordering on illegality (Novelli 2010; van Garderen 1989; Zavaleta 2005). So, the difference between these two groups is to be found in the family and kinship relations and connections consolidated after years of sharing the physical space, cultural practices and conditions of hardship. Based on conversations with the community, Chorrillos’ fishers are a group of urban poor people who settled around the fishing grounds of the bay long before the demographic growth and migration waves occurred in Lima. Although some of them arrived in Lima a few years ago, the majority of fishers and family members were born near the dock, and at some point, have been involved in fishing activities.

Parallel to the history of Chorrillos as a leisure destination, and lately as a district that holds upper-class zones and sprawling shantytowns, there is a long history of using the bay for artisanal fishing, likely extending to pre-colonial times (Moseley 1974; Zabaleta 2005). During the first half of the 20th century, although artisanal fishing was considered an activity of a subsistence economy, Chorrillos’s fishers saw the importance of organizing, especially after seeing how mining and agricultural workers began to form
associations advised by the nascent APRA party. Such pro-community organizations reflect the permanent feedback between fishers and political and social transformations occurring in Lima, in contrast to the experience of other more rural artisanal communities, which change at the slow pace of regional politics, detached from the capital’s reality.

Figure 4: Artisanal fishers in Chorrillos

The first artisanal fishers’ organization was registered in 1927 when, perhaps under the increasing influence of the APRA movement, the climate was right to associate and participate in the institutional and political life of the city. Forming a social organization was an important step towards community integration for fishers, as they had to tame their individualistic character and practice solidarity beyond scarcity and natural disasters in order to privilege community wellbeing. In all, the small number of fishers and abundance of their product facilitated this type of commitment, especially if they were to secure benefits from outside, including simple visibility, and hence
participation in development-oriented projects. Based on fishers’ testimonies, it was only in 1969, during the Velasco presidency and within his program of empowerment of under-represented communities, fishers saw an opportunity to reach external resources and, following the national trend, changed the institution’s name to “Union of Artisanal Fishers of Chorrillos ‘José Olaya Balandra.’ ” It is worth noting, that José Olaya was not only an independence war hero, but also a fisher from Chorrillos who sacrificed himself for the sake of the nation. So the name implies, they argue, that current fishers are Olaya’s heirs and should be protected to honor the memory of the hero.

Since the 1970s and in accordance with the statutes, the Union is required to represent the community’s economic, social and political interests, celebrate agreements with government institutions, make coalitions with other organizations, defend fishers’ territory, and support daily fishing operations. However, the community implicitly was aiming to secure from the state the management and administration of the quay’s facilities including the dock, shipyard warehouse, restaurant modules, small market, etc., facilities built over the years by the government and loaned to the association. Meanwhile, the government, in view of the growing number of artisanal fishers, was looking not only for the cooptation of fishers but also for their loyalty over emerging leftist political groups (Caravedo Molinari and Gorman 1977). So, finally the Union consolidated and since then has been the visible authority on the dock, a situation that explains the community’s deference towards it.

According to the Peruvian constitution (Art. 54), Peru’s territorial waters, which spans 200 nautical miles from shore, belongs to the people. Yet, allowing fishing communities to control their own areas of landing and unloading product is an indirect
permission to limit the use of surrounding waters, as fishers upon finishing their day need to unload immediately at the nearest dock, so they tend to stay close to their dock. Each community uses this prerogative according to its needs; fishers from Chorrillos have prohibited both landing and selling fish caught by fishers from outside the community unless there is an emergency or the Union grants permission. By doing this, they avoid product surplus that will drive down their prices and destroy their market. Formally, the Union should help to protect the environment, preserve the fishing culture, and promote the economic viability of the fishing community. These objectives have been achieved to some extent, for example, limiting landing of non-local catch on one hand discourages over-fishing, and on the other hand keeps the number of fishers low in the area, reducing fishing pressure on the area. Also, regulating the small market supply helps secure the community’s economic viability and shields the market from outside economic pressures.

Chorrillos’s fishing is entirely oriented to direct human consumption. Part of the catch is intended to be sold to fish intermediaries, or pesqueros, who already have secured costumers in in the city’s large fish market, called “Villa Maria,” or is sold directly by fishers in the same market, or to the public in the small market located on the dock. Depending on the season, amount of product, type of fish, time of the day, etc. the product is sold on the dock or in Villa Maria. Of course, fishers get better prices if they sell their product themselves and on the dock without having to incur transportation and other expenses. Also, fishers tend to remain in Chorrillos despite the mobile nature of the profession. This happens because the city offers more opportunities to make a living when fishing is low, although jobs are often scarce and poorly paid. This explains why Chorrillos maintains approximately the same population for most of the year, regardless
of biomass abundance or shortage. In addition, since the bay has a small beach that attracts numerous tourists during peak season, some fishers have found in tourist-related activities the income to fill the gap left by low fishing profits. In this regard, fishers have managed to offer to visitors from Chorrillos and nearby neighborhoods a set of services like boat rides, tents and sun umbrellas for rent, seafood sales, and also fishing trips for small groups. Basically, according to some fishers, the economic future of the dock will witness a growth in tourism to the detriment of fishing.

The fisher population in Chorrillos is made up of two large groups and a small cluster of young fishers of less than 29 years of age. The first group is made of fishers between the ages of 29 to 59, and the second group is made of over the age of 60. More information about the demographics of the dock is provided in the following sections. As a result of this demographic distribution with a large number of senior fishers, fishing operations are limited to a few miles out from the coast, and fishing trips only last from a few hours up to a day; often, fishers make multiple trips to the sea to set, move or check on their nets, returning to the dock afterwards. Generally, artisanal fishing is physically and emotionally a very demanding undertaking, involving many hours and sometimes days of continuing activity out in the ocean, perhaps without any outside contact and under continuous uncertainty as to when and what quantity of fish will be the catch. In Chorrillos there are only a couple of vessels able to go out to the sea for long trips of several days; in this case, expenses are covered by the boat’s owner and broker, the product is meant to be sold in Villa Maria, and usually has a fixed crew of five to six younger fishers. This type of fishing attracts the youth because it is economically more rewarding and allows the crew to have more free days of rest and leisure, as opposed to
the daily trips practiced by most fishers. Therefore, Chorrillos’ young population is more prone to engage in offshore fishing, or the mentioned low budget tourist services, or even in construction or in odd jobs in the city, than to practice coastal fishing. Nevertheless fishing is always a risky activity; old fishers prefer a less laborious operation even though it represents less income and even more uncertainty. Despite fish stocks’ general depletion, there is still fishing in Chorrillos’ coastal waters, and almost every day fishers can catch a couple of buckets of different species, such as lorna, cabrilla, cojinova, pintadilla, pejerey and the like, to sell in rudimentary tables that they set on the dock.

Chorrillos features three interesting aspects making it a compelling research site. First, it is perfect to explore how a small group of artisanal fishers have become sustainable stewards of marine and coastal ecosystems vital to the city while advocating for their autonomy and control over traditional spaces. Fishers have achieved stability, among other benefits, by allowing the neighborhood community and Limeños in general to access and enjoy their territories; thus even though those visitors are not unconditional supporters of fishers’ claims, the fishers have learned to live together and share the space with the community. Likewise, the bay’s waters are to some extent productive and provide daily income and sustenance to fishers, despite problems of water contamination and consequently adverse publicity. The presence of fish in this part of the coast signals the ability of Chorrillos’ fishers to preserve fishing grounds that should be depleted due to overfishing and pollution. Second, it also serves to study the transition from fishing to tourism that is gaining ground over recent years among fishers. Indeed, tourism is no longer a secondary alternative, but rather a preferred income source during the high tourist season. According to fishers, privatizations and development projects along
Lima’s coast have displaced low-income classes from their traditional areas of recreation. Therefore, this population has found in the dock a gateway for recreation, which has also become a relevant economic driver for the fishers. Despite this reality, artisanal fishers as potential eco-tourist operators are invisible to the city, and dominant views of the dock as a decadent place that has to be transformed have prevailed. Finally, the research location is ideal due to different elements like geographical location, size of the population, type of fishing, social organization, accessibility, and a process of reliable data collection. This was possible due to the number of visits done to the community where I became a familiar face, and the connection, trust and later friendship built with some of the fishers, who helped me interview other sub-groups difficult to access, like young fishers and women. The group of fishers I spent time with enables me to comment about other fishers’ testimonies. They also helped by discussing the information I was gradually putting together about the dock’s history, economy, cultural traditions, etc., and in general allowed me to learn more personal and intimate information about the community in general.
CHAPTER 5: THE DOCK OF CHORRILLOS

Fishers’ daily lives are mediated by dominant socioeconomic structures that put them at a political and economic disadvantage, affecting their capacity to confront and respond to changes rooted in neoliberal political transformations. Yet, based on their own experience in their own dock, fishers have responded to this situation by producing transformative strategies and practices, sustainable in essence, and effective in securing a possible future for their community. Neoliberal transformations in general, but particularly in less developed democracies, have ceded the national state to other forms of authority, including international bodies, private firms and local governments, releasing the central state from its social welfare obligations, assigning such responsibility to poorly-equipped local institutions or unaccountable private corporations (Allen 2009; Brenner and Theodore 2002). As a result, social and individual rights are not viewed as inherent human rights, but awards granted by third parties once requirements like good behavior or individual success have been met (Dosh 2009; Rose, O’Malley and Valverde 2006). This neoliberal context has denied artisanal fishers social inclusion and access to resources and opportunities, keeping them on the fringes of full citizenship. Fishers have neutralized and countered this marginality using a number of practices rooted in their traditional knowledge and social networks. Such practices, in turn, gain validity because in essence they coincide with principles underlying the sustainability discourse of other local, national and international social actors.

Sustainability can be an alternative that defies dominant forms of food production, creating food systems that contest the simple equation of achieving profit maximization through increased production (Allen 2010). In contrast, the sustainable approach takes
into consideration the permanent feedback between environment and livelihoods, advocates for equal access to local, healthy and affordable food, and maintenance of conditions that allow for stability, resilience and reproduction of the local communities (Allen 2010; Clancy and Lockeretz 1997; Kloppenburg 1996). Despite the breadth of the concept, sustainability has been reduced to another simple equation that has proven popular and functional to mainstream agricultural stakeholders: protecting the environment while promoting food producers’ economic wellbeing, leaving aside notions of accessibility, justice, locality, community, and so forth. Despite the existence of holistic and systemic sustainable approaches addressing environmental as well as socioeconomic and political inequalities (Meadows and Wright 2008), the legitimacy of sustainability discourse has not been well translated into practice (Allen 2010; Allen and Guthman 2006). Sustainable initiatives often follow the same epistemological path of mainstream science: a separation of the object of study (nature) and the subject (the researcher), uni-disciplinary analysis of the economic and sociopolitical implications of the produced science, profit and market oriented-goals, etc.

My argument is that fishers’ culturally produced approach to sustainability has been effective in facing and resisting dominant forms of food and fish production using their traditional knowledge and adaptive capacity. The purpose of this study is to make legible to external audiences the notion of sustainability crafted by the community of fishers. Fishers’ idea of sustainability co-constructed from their reality and with the environment, the community, and the city, shed light on broader discussions about alternative approaches to social problems. This notion of sustainability is different in the sense that fishers have been influenced by dominant sustainable and non-sustainable
approaches, and they have managed to balance between what they ought to do according to mainstream knowledge and what they need to do in order to keep working in the bay. Fishers, for example, are told that they have to reform how they sell and distribute the product into a profitable business model, and invest in infrastructure to facilitate the loading and unloading processes. In response to these requirements, fishers indeed try to make more money but to distribute the revenues among the associates, while setting aside little money for infrastructure. They follow criteria that privilege community stability over an individualistic, competitive and productive marker model.

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate through fishers’ own words the challenges and the possibilities they foresee for their dock. Using fishers’ language to write about their own issues gives this study further validity and cogency, especially considering that mainstream discourses about artisanal fishing come from powerful stakeholders whose interests differ from those of the fishers. In order to illustrate this point, I used data collected through multiple interviews conducted with members of the community including young, adult active and elder retire fishers, women and people from the community, over a four-year timeframe. Building from this information, I demonstrate how fishers think about and define sustainability in their own, locally relevant ways.

I developed codes using fishers’ own language and in accordance with their interests and concerns. The codes refer to how fishers’ and community life unfolds in different coexisting daily life settings: fishing, on- and offshore territories, the issue of fish scarcity, and their association and their relation with the state. From there I built a rationale that allows me to connect fishers’ words and ideas with the guiding questions of
this study. The conditions of productivity, profitability and marketization encouraged by neoliberalism are also intrinsic to dominant sustainability approaches; this is problematic as both the problem and apparent solution revolve around the same logic. I sought to learn how fishers interpret, resist and counteract this scenario, which in their life translates into marginality and poverty, lack of resources and ecosystem depletion. Also, I sought fishers’ responses to their condition of disadvantage. Such responses are survival mechanisms that inform me about the community’s ability to resist and overcome pressures threatening their way of life. In this section, I use fishers’ language to describe their problems, responses and initiatives, which have allowed them, thus far, to preserve their territory and culture. But, before continuing, I briefly describe the development of the coding procedure to clarify the genesis of the categories used in this chapter.

5.1 Initial coding overview

In this chapter I analyze the community of Chorrillos with categories used during the data analysis process. These categories, or codes, reflect the most widely discussed issues in fishers’ conversations when it came to sharing personal and community experiences. After reading the field notes and interviews, I realized that although fishers comment on a variety of topics, there were recurrent and salient words and expressions they used to discuss their collective daily life. An initial round of classifying the responses was necessary for me to decide the categories I should use to organize and make sense of fishers’ information.

During the first wave of coding I accounted for several emerging categories and sub-categories that appeared attractive at first glance as I moved forward in the analysis. I then revised, reduced and integrated those preliminary codes into broader categories that I consider to encompass and report as closely as possible these fishers’ voices. To
illustrate this process of deepening and broadening, I will explain how codes from the first wave like environment, state, and city (see Table 1 for the first wave code-tree) were reformulated and merged into the final set of codes (see Table 2 for the final code-tree).

Table 1. Codes used in the initial coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Place</th>
<th>2. Environment</th>
<th>3. Economic constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Description</td>
<td>a. Offshore</td>
<td>a. Description of the problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Meanings</td>
<td>b. On-shore</td>
<td>b. Tourism-related solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Relation to the State</td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Other economic activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Representation and agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Association (Union)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Agency of fishers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Kinship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Codes used in the final coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name in Spanish</th>
<th>Name in English</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La pesca</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>The world of artisanal fishing seen through the fishers’ eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La caleta</td>
<td>The dock</td>
<td>Significance of their on- and offshore territories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La escasez</td>
<td>Fish scarcity</td>
<td>Fishers’ approach to dealing with problems stemming from poverty and inequality, and environmental depletion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La asociación y el gobierno</td>
<td>Fishers’ association and government</td>
<td>Descriptions of the community organizational process (agency and representation) on one hand, and perceptions of and interactions with the state, both municipal and national, and other external actors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the category environment, I coded for two separate sub-themes: 1) fishers’ definitions of environmental problems with regard to their fishing grounds, and 2) fishers’ comments on issues of an environmental nature that relate to their experience of the dock. Fishers do not distinguish between their land and offshore territories, or separate the natural and cultural dimensions of environment. Rather, they perceive their on-and offshore grounds as a single territory that belongs to them, which thus has an intrinsic natural, cultural and economic value. Actually, throughout the interviews the notion of environment was often talked about together with references to how fishing had changed, or the economic repercussions of fish scarcity; therefore it is pertinent to redistribute and subsume the code environment under the new set of codes.

The code state was also replaced by a broader category including community interactions not only with public, but also with private actors. The new category highlights the contribution of the fishers’ association to community organizational capacity to perform and operate under the scope of powerful actors. Furthermore, this code also responds to the decentralization model promoted by neoliberalism, where the central state apparently lost prominence in favor of refurbished and new transnational, regional, local, and private-public bodies that currently replace certain functions of the state. I learned from the interviews that, even though fishers desire the return of the paternalistic state, in reality they operate as if the government is simply another influential player in a socioeconomic arena where they have to compete for territory, rights and resources. This change of approach responds to my goal of privileging fishers’ views about the state and power instead of re-editing the traditional hierarchical relationship between state and communities.
Finally, the code city included selected quotes about Lima itself and its physical and social proximity to the dock. The purpose of this code was to discover the city’s role in the life of the community. This relationship is more intelligible when it is considered in light of fishers’ discourse about place and economic activity and their position in the larger political economy. For instance, fishers refer to the city as a place to look for resources when the catch is low. Either selling their product in larger markets or acquiring low-skilled temporary jobs does this. However, for most of the community Lima is seen as an alien space, and fishers prefer to experience the city from the dock, hosting tourists or participating in events organized by the municipality and carried out on the dock. Using these more comprehensive codes allows me to “re-locate” the city as a space that has a relevant role in defining the territory, economy, and other elements of the community of fishers.

5.2 Second wave and final categories of analysis
These codes were not mutually exclusive but were intended to provide a nuanced view of the community. Therefore themes may overlap and intertwine among each other regardless of the code’s contents and limits. Categorization in this case is a tool serving my purpose of presenting the community as its own members portray it, while striving for rigor and accuracy. Moreover, while providing essential insights into the experience of the community, I aim to clarify and rework the lens through which external actors perceive fishers, and in the process lay the foundations for meaningful relationships based on values of solidarity, mutual respect, and consideration.

5.2.1 Work process

“Los pescadores siempre están hablando de pesca, siempre”
[Fishers are always talking about fishing.]

This is a common saying among fishers, and Chorrillos’ artisanal fishers are no exception. Throughout the interviews there were significant portions of conversation where they provided insights about their fishing experiences and routines as veteran fishers. By doing this, fishers not only shared their knowledge and expertise, but also demonstrated their dedication and commitment to artisanal fishing and controlled their self-representation as fishers. Fishing is a lifestyle, and fishers were proud to have the skills and physical strength required to perform a hard and dangerous activity. When fishers talk with each other about their daily trips, disseminating information, they also use this conversation as a vehicle for stress and tension release. Conversations about fishing are not anecdotal to a fishers’ life but an essential feature of his personality.

The fishing category considers a number of topics relevant to how fishers perceive political, economic and environmental problems, and realize the values and principles underlying their organizational processes. Various topics were reiterated in the interviews, such as a general account of the fish value chain, beginning with the fishers’ expenses before going out to sea, an explanation of how they learned to identify a species by its sound, movement or by the color and temperature of the water, descriptions of different types of fishing performed in Chorrillos and other docks, and the reasons why Chorrillos is not as large a dock as neighboring artisanal ports.

The unstructured format of the interviews prompted fishers to cover many issues and subjects. Although not all comments related directly to the main questions of this study or did not fall into more specific categories, they served to enhance and enrich my knowledge of artisanal fishing itself and the community in general, and this knowledge is
reported and reflected throughout this dissertation. The way in which fishers verbalized and stated their worldview and concerns informed me about their priorities and values. Behind their responses on general issues like the adverse conditions of deep-sea fishing, the geographical characteristics of the bay’s sea floor or former fish abundance, I was able to observe how sociocultural dynamics and internal networks operated within the group. This is relevant because fishers relate, welcome, and negotiate with distant or separate external stakeholders based on the degree a particular actor helped them to maintain their way of life, in spite of intrinsic inequities and internal division. Broader political and social changes, conflicts and encounters occur in reality and take shape as relationships, agreements, deals, ruptures and other interactions that take place in specific places and locations affecting specific communities.

5.2.1.1 A fisher is a hunter, and fishing is a gamble

Most fishers stated that they have worked the entire Peruvian shoreline, and their expertise goes beyond coastal fishing and expands to deep-sea and industrial fishing. When fishers are young they often try deep-sea fishing for a few years, looking for experience and more profit. For older fishers, deep-sea fishing demands more physical strength, but also the willingness to embark on a high-risk venture. Although fish scarcities have also affected deep-sea fisheries, the good catch in terms of the market is almost exclusively found in deep waters. Thus for young fishers, it is worth the adventure and the risk. “Si no arriesgas no ganas, tienes que salir” [if you don’t take risks you’ll never make a good profit, you have to quit fishing entirely].

Yet, profit is not the only appeal of deep-sea fishing. When fishers speak about their long trips in high waters, there is an emotional component they express through their anecdotes and stories. The way fishers talk about their traditional knowledge
indicates how the fishing activity separates them from the outside (terrestrial) world, and indirectly helps me foresee why decisions regarding the household economy or about the dock’s administrative issues are alien to their knowledge and character. Fishers spend hours discussing, explaining and teaching how to identify a species by the way it “walks” and by the type of waters entering and leaving the bay, and so forth: “Salimos en altamar y sabemos un bonito como corre, porque camina largo y se esconde… ese es el jurel, va atrás con una cola así como hélice atrás…” [out in the ocean, we know how a bonito moves because it swims great distances at the surface and then hides… that’s a mackerel, it follows behind other fish and has a tail like a propeller…]

Yet, not being able to communicate or have news of the family is the hardest part of deep-sea fishing, and a major determinant of leaving deep-sea fishing. So, the necessity to provide for and take care of their families is a driver and simultaneously a deterrent for enrolling in or leaving deep-sea fishing. Family, therefore, is another key element in shaping fishers’ character; family is the main reason they work for and sacrifice themselves every day. This is how a young fisher reflects about deep-sea fishing and its difficulties:

“In fishing, you take risks out of necessity… because if you have everything covered then you don’t do it well… I began out of necessity as my child was due, and I decided to embark on deep-sea fishing… so, I went… first trip and we got caught in a thunderstorm (…). But the fishing occupation is the same as here [near the coast]… do you know the sacrifice involved? You leave your family. Not
knowing if they will have an emergency or an accident; out there you can’t communicate… Then I decided to leave it (deep-sea fishing). Why? Because my little daughter was growing up fast and was always asking for me.]

Nevertheless, it is not common to engage in deep-sea fishing from Chorrillos. In the dock, there are only five or six vessels suitable for deep-sea fishing, so fishers go to larger nearby ports, like Pucusana to the north or Ancón to the south, to fish in deep waters. These ports began as small docks similar to Chorrillos, but today they are the major unloading points for the catch along the central coast near Lima. According to the fishers, Chorrillos has a very uneven, rugged and difficult sea due to the shape of the seabed, or in fishers’ words “es que el mar aquí es muy accidentado” [the ocean here is very turbulent (unpredictable)]. It is especially notorious during the winter season, when most of the time boats have to be grounded or anchored to prevent accidents and destruction caused by strong waves and tides. This explains two relevant observations: first, the changing ecosystems and cultural practices that vary from dock to dock, and second, the small-scale nature of Chorrillos. The geographical characteristics of the bay have historically discouraged fishers from investing in newer or larger vessels because eventually they will be destroyed. So fishing has remained small, artisanal and coastal, while in other places deep-sea semi-artisanal fishing has increasingly gained more ground. Few fishers in Chorrillos own more than one boat.

Fishers deal with risk on a daily basis, and although the lifestyle can be precarious, there are family, kinship and community safety nets established to help fishers who are victims of disasters or have economic losses. Different devices designed by the community to cope with risk and disasters are also a response to state absence and lack of regular public and private support. Fishers have learned to rely on their own
resources when accidents, natural disasters or scarcity occurs. Risk is inherent to fishing, particularly in Chorrillos’ troubled seas, and therefore, risk is a factor that has inhibited newcomers from venturing into those waters. However, more recent and frequent extreme weather events associated with El Niño, ocean warming and pollution, urban growth, etc. have made fishers more vulnerable to risk and less equipped to face it. For these reasons, fishers are entered into the dynamic of communities at risk but within the neoliberal lexicon in which these groups have to be relocated for their safety, facilitated by making inevitable the processes of displacement, dispossession and further accumulation by others (Marino and Lazrus 2015; Oliver-Smith 2014). Struggling to cope not only with scarcity and change in waters but also with the pressure from outside solutions like relocation, fishers’ confidence in their own means of survival is a sign of resistance and adaptation.

5.2.1.2 Fish value chain

In deep-sea fishing, the owner claims half of the profit, and the other half is distributed among the fishers. The owner makes the initial investment, like buying a new or refurbished boat, nets, gear, radio, GPS, etc., and also applies for licenses and permissions from the authorities. Deep-sea fishing requires not only capital, but also a different set of skills and connections, which become critical for entry into deep-sea fishing. When the boat is ready, an intermediary called el pesquero or la cámara supplies the money needed for the trip, paying in advance for gas and provisions. This person is entitled to negotiate all the catch. He or she usually owns boxes to carry and store the fish and a refrigerated truck to transport the product to Villa María, the large Lima fish market. El pesquero trades the fish, then he deducts his credit and profit, gives half to the owner, and finally distributes the rest in equal parts to the workers. In the face of this
situation, every fisher aspires to have his own boat. In the past, after a successful fishing trip of fifteen to twenty days, a fisher used to make more than one thousand Peruvian New Soles (approximately $300 USD). Today, due to overfishing and overcapitalization, they make only half this amount.

In contrast, artisanal fishing requires less investment and does not need licenses or permissions, and the owner usually is in charge of the boat, maintenance of nets, and gas. When they return with scant production, e.g. less than four boxes of forty kilos each, then the fish are sold on the beach to local buyers or tourists. Otherwise, the owner himself goes to the city market, or la cámara comes and pays what he or she considers appropriate. Fishers prefer to market their product directly to tourists because they pay better prices and there are fewer intermediaries in the transaction. However, the difference is not significant in terms of financial stability, especially because the catch of Chorrillos (pejerrey, lorna or cabinza) is not commercial and fishers ended up selling their fish as fillets in the large city market.

Afterwards, the profit is divided in equal shares. The owner gets one part on behalf of the boat, and if he went fishing then he gets two parts: “el dueño es el que pone mayormente, no es mucho, cincuenta lucas de gasolina... salen, el bote gana su parte, por ejemplo salen tres puntas, y la producción de divide en cuatro” [the owner puts most of the expenses, it’s not a lot, fifty bucks for the gas… the boat gets its share, for example, if three fishers went out, the production is divided in four.] After a hard day of work, a crew of three fishers could make around thirty soles ($10 USD) each, which is very little compared to what they earned twenty years ago. The topic of past abundance
always comes up in fishers’ conversations; back then they could make a living by just fishing close to the shore:

“... ahora no pasa nada... yo agarraba, despachaba en la mañana, volvía a darle en la tarde, hacía una segunda vuelta, igual agarraba cantidad de pescado, y volvía acá, de ahí a la cantina... ahi cuarteábamos.”

[... today nothing happens. Back in the good days, I caught fish in the morning, then went back in the afternoon for a second trip and caught lots of fish again, after that I returned to the dock, and from here went straight to the bar (tavern), where we divided the profit.]

Most of the fishing is coastal in Chorrillos Bay due to two co-existing conditions:

1) the bay’s troubled waters, and 2) the former abundance of the biomass. These factors discourage fishers from engaging in major ventures, like buying larger boats or dedicating themselves full time to deep-sea fishing based out of the dock. They prefer to risk less and earn less with the certainty that there will be fish in Chorrillos: “siempre ha habido pesca en Chorrillos, debe ser porque hay criaderos; por toda la costa hay, allí hay un criadero de pejerrey” [there has always been fishing in Chorrillos, it should be because of the breeding grounds along the coast, for example, there are silverside hatcheries over there...] In turn, fishers developed a special relationship with this place because they go to the dock every day for several hours, which allows them to spend considerable time with their peers sharing their experiences and building community.

The small nature of the fishing community is the result of multiple circumstances originating from a combination of environmental, economic and political factors, which in turn challenges the idea of fishers as rational actors looking for profit maximization at expense of a common pool of resources. Fishers do want to make money, save, and secure a future from fishing and other related activities; however, when
the dock was ready to transit towards deep-sea fishing, the fair amount of fish near the coast persuaded them to stick to coastal fishing while discouraging new fishers from settling in Chorrillos. Thereafter, tourism grew and compensated for scarcity, and over time new generations’ interest in deep-sea fishing declined and the dock remained small, coastal and strongly tourist oriented. The community owes its character to geographical characteristics of the bay that forced fishers to remain close to shore and return a few times a day to the dock. The dock remains undeveloped and accessible to the low income and poor population. Above all, decisions taken by fishers under specific circumstances to prioritize the possession of the dock and therefore their community (place-based), focuses their methods of making profits from their coastal fishing and tourist-related activities. Unfortunately, they are confronted with an urban developer agenda of transforming the bay into a modern and luxurious tourist center where artisanal fishing and fishers themselves are portrayed as a tourist attraction.

5.2.2 Work setting

“¡Es que yo nací acá, yo nací acá!”

[I was born here, I was born here!]

Fishers express their attachment to the dock in different ways. They consider the dock their home that, instead of being loaned by the state (which it is), embodies their history and tradition. Recent projects to develop the city’s coastline, involving both public and private actors, have challenged the legitimacy of the rights to the territory claimed by the fishers for generations. The increasing interest in implementing this type of macro-development plan has not included fishers’ participation in decision-making
forums affecting their place, and instead assumes that these infrastructure improvements will benefit everybody.

The majority of fishers in Chorrillos have engaged in fishing from a very young age. They began working on different activities at the dock, washing and selling fish, fixing fishing gear, cleaning up boats, etc. until they had the opportunity to embark. Most of them were raised in the world of fishing by their fathers, relatives and family friends, and learned about fishing by experience from their childhood. Fishers also welcome fishers from other ports and people who have wandered around the dock and wanted to try fishing. Boat owners or the association does not control access to the profession in Chorrillos. Although there is a preference to teach and embark with relatives and acquaintances, the sea is open access. Fishing is rather a self-selective activity, since according to fishers, not everybody is ready for the cold water or the sunlight, following fish for hours, nor has the physical ability and strength: “al mar tiene que dedicarse una
“Yo comencé a lavar las canastas y me daban mi pescado, ya poco a poco ganaba más dinero y vamos. Y como era huérfano de padre muy pequeño, había escasos recursos económicos en el hogar... entonces en el mar sí, ya me sentí un poquito aquí en la playa y me daban centavos y mantenía a mi familia. Ya comenzó a gustarme, a ganar más centavos y empecé a salir a la pesca ya.”

[I began by washing fish boxes and getting paid with fish, and later a few cents, which gradually increased. As my father was deceased there were limited resources at home, but here on the beach I felt welcomed, and I could support the household with the money I gained here. I liked it here, and finally I went out to fish and made more money.]

Fishers consider their on- and offshore territories as their home. Their connection to the place is rooted in multiple physical and metaphysical reasons, which was expressed in different ways during the interviews. More specifically, there were two recurrent and transcendental ideas or feelings that bonded fishers and territory beyond economic and political reasons—a sense of freedom and the perception of being valued. They felt free because they were born there and for generations they have managed to keep that territory as their own. Therefore, on the dock they felt safe and confident as if they were at home. On the dock, fishers could be themselves, whereas in the city they were subject to criticism and discrimination because of their marginal economic situation. Likewise, despite their appearance or behavior, the outsider or tourist would show respect and recognition to the fisher as long as they were at the dock. A young fisher after a little
experience “up there” in the city working, learned that for fishers the dock and the city
are different spaces:

“Yes, yes, here on the dock you have a good time, it’s like… well, here nobody is
bossing you… it’s not like a company where you’re always under someone’s
orders, you do something wrong and they yell at you, treat you poorly and belittle
you… That happened to me before when I worked for a company."

Indeed, although people know about the public nature of the bay and beach,
visitors assume that fishers have control over the area. This deference is based on
attitudes that stem from the fishers’ representation of their authority. Once it became the
norm, others who observed how fishers were treated followed it. Fishers have a particular
way to advocate for their place. They have learned that political mobilization and public
demonstrations are no longer the most effective mechanisms to publicize and settle their
grievances. Instead, fishers continue moving their struggle forward by engaging and
committing other powerful actors like city elites, social activists, local authorities and
neighborhood communities. The central state is no longer the only space where fishers
advocate for their rights, although that almost never succeeded; for instance, the
municipality and Regatta Club are strategic allies for specific issues affecting the fishers.
The municipality counts on the fishing community to keep the beach area safe and under
control. This grants the fishers more territorial autonomy. The Regatta Club gives water
to the fishers, in exchange for using part of the dock’s parking spaces for their members,
and treats the community as a partner in sharing the beach and fishing spaces. Fishers are
not diminishing their resistance, but rather rethinking the means through which they seek
to achieve their goals. More recently, fishers have presented themselves as fishers for low income families, “pescamos para la mesa popular” [we fish for the poor people’s table] and also as custodians of one the few leisure spaces on the beach left for this population group.

As food providers for the low income population, fishers align their claims with those of people experiencing marginalization and inequality. In this case, fishers argue that people treat them with consideration because, as stated by a couple of them: “la gente sabe que nosotros somos los que nos arriesgamos y sacrificamos a diario” [people know that we’re the ones that risk and sacrifice our lives every day] and “aquí nosotros pescamos para el pueblo, lo que sacamos es para la mesa popular, para los restaurantes de por acá también, para el consumo directo” [here, we fish for the people, we put fish on the people’s table, the popular table; the product we catch is for the neighborhood restaurants too, everything is for direct human consumption]. Thus, even though fishers consider themselves as poor and neglected, they also perform as citizens responsible and in solidarity with similar social groups. This is also a strategy to avoid criticisms of fishers as only receptors of society’s generosity, allowing them to fish in everybody’s waters, rather than being seen as unaccountable and as free riders.

Conversely, there is a negative perception with regard to the state of the beach. In particular, city authorities and media outlets, especially during summer season, have repetitively listed Chorrillos as one of the inadequate beaches for human leisure due to poor water quality along Lima’s shoreline. Even though fishers do not deny the problem, they draw attention to being unfairly singled out, and question the standard under which the authorities are evaluating the beaches.
“Antes de la temporada del verano, vienen a ver si la playa está operativa o no... pero así le pongan no operativa... la gente viene... porque en otras playas, donde van los gringos está peor. Entonces cuál es el nivel... en las noticias siempre sale Chorrillos pero nunca sale Club Regatas Lima. ¡Es la misma agua!”

[Before summer season they (authorities) come to see if the beach is suitable [for swimming] or not… but people come anyway… because in other beaches where foreigners go, it is worse. Then, what’s the standard? Chorrillos always shows up in the news, but the Lima Regatta Club is never mentioned. Yet, it’s the same water!]

5.2.2.1 Family tradition

“Somos los hijos de Olaya.”

[We are Olaya’s sons.]

With this saying, fishers try to establish their right to the dock. José Silverio Olaya Balandra is a fisher hero who sacrificed himself helping the independence troops by carrying secret messages from Chorrillos to Callao. He was captured, tortured and killed by the Spaniards but he did not divulge the secret, thereby rendering a significant service to the future success of the liberating troops. This fisher gives name to the institution that represents the community, the fishers’ association. Moreover, according to the fishers, a descendant of Olaya lives among them and is almost one hundred years old, and still the old man goes out and fishes. Keeping Olaya’s heritage alive, preserving the grounds where he used to fish and perpetuating traditional and artisanal forms of fishing are among the fishers’ main arguments for legitimizing their possession of this valuable beach-front territory. This conviction travels beyond fisher’s local conversation, and is also well recognized by Limeños and visitors who find fascinating the story of the only national fisher-hero in this part of the world. The Chorrillos neighborhood, including the bay, the dock, and the residential community, are important pieces of Lima’s history.
Fishers are aware of this, and embody the Olaya myth and narrative to enforce this relation.

This romantic vision of the community of fishers as descendants of the same ancestor serves as a foundation for the cultivation of strong family and kinship values. Such values are evidenced in the reverence and respect with which the elder fishers are treated by the community. As younger fishers stated, they inherited the bay from the veterans who fought with persistence and determination to keep the dock for future generations. The struggles were not only to cope with fish scarcity, but also to counter expansion plans of the Lima Regatta Club and projects for transforming the city’s shoreline. Hence, this collective notion of indebtedness and gratitude for senior fishers engrained in the community’s imagination has developed specific values that have kept the community united against internal divisions and conflicts. This is a shared feeling for all members of the community, transmitted from parents to children. Older fishers, in their effort to communicate and share knowledge, experiences and anecdotes with the youth are also planting values for the future community. Of these values, the importance of family and community are transmitted.

Women in particular also recognize the role played by the elder fishers in securing the bay for the community. In the past, fishers’ wives collaborated more in the fishing activity, cooking for their husbands, selling fish for the family, and did not act as independent economic individuals as some women are today. In other words, before food businesses and tourism, women were only fishers’ helpers or assistants, and therefore they also embraced idea of respect and reverence for old fishers, who are also their parents, in-laws, husbands, sons and relatives. However, women’s respect for fishers’
position in the community does not imply they are content with the existing male-dominant structures governing the community. Women’s participation in decisions concerning community is marginal, and their opinion is heard only regarding the wellbeing of the families.

According to women’s testimonies, their priority is family, and although they prefer to keep their children away from the fishing environment, almost all the family activity takes place at the dock. Not every fisher has family working at the dock, but since the rule of the association is that every person working in Chorrillos needs an affiliated fisher’s endorsement, eventually several family members end up linked to the dock. Women do not clearly express their commitment to the dock or the fishing community itself, but they recognize that a good fishing season benefits everybody. Similarly, women’s permanent presence at the dock arguably provides a balanced environment that otherwise a male-dominant community of fishers would not have.

Participation of women and their children in the dock’s everyday life gives the dock a more welcoming atmosphere to outsiders. In this case, women indirectly contribute to the dock’s stability, even though, sometimes, their job are as exhausting as is fishing. This is the daily routine of a woman working in a small food stand:

“Yo me levantaba a las 2 de la mañana y a esa hora a preparar mi comida, porque yo bajaba después de las 3 de la mañana. Ya traía mi almuerzo preparado, frijoles con seco o a lo italiano, entonces yo agarraba una carrera y armaba mi puesto, porque los pescadores salen a partir de las 3 de la mañana... después que ya he vendido mi desayuno hasta las 9 de la mañana, dejaba a mi hija en el puestito, mientras yo me iba a la paradita a comprar víveres para hacer menú... para qué, yo no me puedo quejar... cuando uno sabe trabajar, sabe ganar.”

[I would wake up at 2 in the morning and begin to prepare the food because I came down (to the dock) after 3 am. I brought breakfast already prepared—beans
with meat and a starch (plantain, rice and/or yucca) or Italian style, then I took a taxi and assembled my stand because fishers started coming from 3 am on…. After selling breakfast until 9 am, I left my daughter in charge, and went to the market to buy supplies for cooking supper… I can’t complain… when you know how to work, you know how to earn money.]

Women see their contribution to the household economy through childrearing, family care and also providing a service to the community, like serving food in early morning hours. Women may seek to trade flexible schedules and family for health insurance and stable income offered by other jobs in the city. However, women know that in reality jobs are also scarce and poorly paid in the city, and that they are better off in the place where they are accustomed to living, surrounded by the people that have known them for years. This situation is common to most of the female personnel, since to work in the dock it is a requirement to be well known to the community or to have a fisher relative. As fishing is physically very demanding, traditionally women have participated in the fish value chain; thus women are working individuals who actively partake and contribute to the household economy. A woman remembering when her husband went away to fish in a distant regions, reflects how she perceives her contribution to the family household as important as her husband’s input, which in turn influences her perception about her involvement in the community as a whole:

“Mi marido dice que él prefiere estar acá... y a mi no me gusta que se vaya... (yo le digo que) como sea nos buscamos (un ingreso)... por eso yo también trato de ayudarlo en algo para que no esté preocupado ya tantos gastos solo él no puede solo... y ahí vamos saliendo adelante, entre los dos.”

[My husband says that he prefers to stay here (in Chorrillos)... I don’t like him to leave... I told him that we do what it is necessary to cope with our economic hardship... that’s why I try to help him so he doesn’t worry too much about all our expenses... but here we are... moving forward through joint effort.]
Along with their marginal, but critical, participation in the economy of the family and community, women do not participate in the assemblies and cannot become members to speak for themselves. Even though some women have husbands, brothers, fathers or sons affiliated with the organization who can communicate their grievances, there are other women who are alone and find it very difficult to be heard. Women’s relationship with the dock is filled with tensions. While they would like more involvement in the decisions affecting the community, they are invisible to the assembly. Still, they consider the dock as territory worth preserving for themselves, their fishers and their families.

Women expresses feelings of frustration in different ways, for example some indicate that fishing is no longer the dominant activity. Tourism, where women are key actors, is the new income source, and women should have more presence in the decisions: “en la mar ya no hay nada... pero acá todo es para el pescador, nada para las visceradoras (fileteradoras)... pero yo creo que debe ser todo por igual... por lo menos un seguro.” [Fishing is not relevant, not a business anymore… but here everything is for the fisher, nothing for the cutters… but I think that everything should be equal… we should at least have insurance.] Women also develop in their own way, “fishing blood” or a “thick skin” to be able to bear not only with the anguish and hardships their relatives face every day in the sea, but also with the separation and marginalization they experience, especially when the assembly gathers to decide about the dock’s relevant issues. The following extracts indirectly reflect women’s thoughts about the life on the dock and how it feels to be a fishers’ partner. The following quotes reveal to some extent how women relate to the specificity of the fishers’ territory. In other words, women live not only with fishers’
hardships but also the frustration about lack of representation and neglect in a male-based community:

“El trabajo en la playa es un trabajo independiente... acá no te controlan, vienes y trabajas, y pagas tu mesa cada día... es flexible... aunque a veces no hay, si no hay pesca, pues no hay nada.”

[The work on the beach is an independent job... nobody is monitoring you, you come and work at your own pace, and pay for your spot daily... is flexible... but sometime there is nothing to do, if there is no fish, there is no job.]

“Me gusta venir cuando estoy por ejemplo, pues así como preocupada... me vengo a relajar, a despejar la mente... a ver a las amistades, y ya me olvido del problema.”

[I like to come here (to the dock) when I feel lonely and worried... I come here to relax myself, to clear my head... in the dock, I see my friends and then I forget about the problems.]

“Se han perdido en la altura y aparecen a los 15 días ¡es terrible! Sin agua, deshidratados... yo ya pasé por eso con mi papá, y ahora no me gusta que él (mi compañero) se vaya a la altura, y no me gustaría que mis hijos hicieran lo mismo... Es un riesgo, es un calvario.”

[Fishers have been lost on the high seas, and then they reappear after 15 days, it’s terrible! Without water, they are dehydrated... I’ve been through all of that with my father and brothers, and now I don’t want him (my partner) to work in deep-sea fishing, nor my children... it’s a risk and a suffering.]

Fishers ponder family tradition in different ways. When talking about their family, they note that they were virtually born on the dock, counting the number of fishers they have trained, etc. A fisher expressed kinship traditions as follows: “el abuelo de él, su bisabuelo de él, hacía pescado con mi abuelo y mi bisabuelo... luego yo salía con mi viejo, mi viejo además salía con su viejo.” [His grandfather, his great-grandfather fished with my grandfather and great-grandfather... then I fished with my father, and also my father fished with his father.] Everyone knows each other in the community, and everybody is family, understood in the broader sense of the word including family
friends, in-laws, sponsors, etc. Sometimes, entire families work on the dock, with men working on fishing or as jaladores (barkers) for restaurants and boat rides, and women working as jaladoras, beach vendors or helping in one of the food stands or restaurants. At a young age, during school breaks and vacations boys and girls are already helping and working on these activities. Although parents advocate for the importance of education, learning how to work at such a young age can influence their decision to continue or discontinue their formal education. One fisher responded to the question about his education with the following words: “pues sí, ya estaba trabajando... trabajaba acá lavando pescado y estudiando... pero como ya agarré plata grande pues dejé de estudiar.” [Yes, I was working here; while I was in school, I worked here washing fish... and then as I earned money, good money, I stopped studying.] This was particularly true for old fishers for whom fishing offered better prospects than a city job. Conversely, today, fishing is not a well-paid activity, but nevertheless it serves as a buffer, providing quick income in response to an urgent need, usually a medical or family emergency. This fisher illustrates this point as follows:

“I have partial technical studies in electricity and mechanics... but I couldn’t finish them... the reason why I couldn’t was because my girlfriend, the mother of my child was pregnant, and I had to get a job... then my dad (a fisher) told me, taught me how to fish, and then I went on the high sea (deep-sea fishing).]

The bond between fishers and territory does not happen individually; it is a social experience mediated by values of friendship, kinship and solidarity. Hence, the place
category comprises the variety of ways that place resonates within and beyond the community. For example, regarding kinship and family networks, fishers have specific forms of interaction that have been practiced by generations. Most of the fishers were taught to fish by a family member, or by a friend of the family who then became the sponsor of the young fisher. This sponsored fisher can then fish with other fishers of the larger group. In turn, this group of partners in fishing meets daily on-shore to share anecdotes and information. During an average fishing day, it is usual to find about six groups of eight to ten fishers together. Depending on age, experience, knowledge and history they rotate freely among groups and younger fishers tend to mingle around. The following quote expresses how fishers interpret this process of initiation, learning and mentorship:

“Esto es como un colegio... los profesores ellos son, y a nosotros nos enseñan.”

[This is like a school… they are the professors, and they teach us.]

This process developed with little influence from external forces or actors. The small nature of the dock made it irrelevant or invisible for many years to public or private investors and development projects. Although historically Chorrillos has been a city landmark for its beach and fishing community, the bay area, specifically the dock, has not been included in the district’s urban transformation plans. The exception perhaps has been a few investments in infrastructure adaptations that have occurred over the years, but it is difficult to discern if those were made to upgrade the Regatta Club’s accessibility and surroundings, or to improve the conditions of the artisanal fishing dock. Furthermore, the type of fishing and the nature of the catch of Chorrillos was not considered, compared to other artisanal docks like Callao in the center, Chimbor in the north or Pisco in the
south, significant for the domestic market. Therefore, there was little interest in
supervising the unloaded fish or to invest in infrastructure for fishing. Still, due to their
proximity to Lima’s markets, important amounts of fish were unloaded that were caught
in other regions. This situation allowed fishers to keep their traditional patterns of
interaction, and modify them at a slower pace than other caletas (docks) with better
prospects for export fishing or upper-class tourism plans. Without the influence of
external inputs, fishers had abundant time to spend building, strengthening and
reconstructing community bonds based on their own experience, and adapted their
knowledge and activity to the difficulties arising from the fish shortage and the
challenges posed by a growing city.

It was not until recently, with the Costa Verde project, that fishers have been
called upon to participate in some way in the city development plans. Before this, fishers
perceived Lima’s growth as something that happened somewhere else, outside the
boundaries of the dock. For fishers, population growth affected the dock’s tourism
economy more than the fish market itself. For the fishers there is always a market for
fresh fish, regardless of the national economy or political situation. People are always
willing to buy fresh fish; a different issue is a preference for a certain species, size, taste,
etc. Even if more visitors and more demand means better prices for their product, they are
accustomed to the deal with the fluctuating prices of the intermediaries or the larger city
market. The economy of the dock is ever fluctuating.

These situations and informal interactions have equipped the community to
respond better to the struggles presented by neoliberalism. Despite difficulties
experienced by women regarding marginalization from the administrative and political
decisions taken within the fishers’ assembly, they speak about their flexible schedule as an advantage of working on the dock. It is difficult to assess women’s feelings about their status in the community, which deserves a separate thoroughly study; however it could be said that those women with young children and whose husband is an active fisher are content with having their family around, and their children in a safe environment where virtually everyone knows each other, instead of paying for childcare or leaving them with third parties.

After spending several days on the beach, observing how fishers interact with other fishers’ family members, I could say that women and children through their family representation on the bay, temper the nature of the dock and the character of the fishers, making it more appealing to visitors. Women’s role therefore is central in keeping both the community grounded in terms of family values and responsibilities, and more indirectly the bay’s attractive character for tourists.

Women have learned to cope with social and economic adversity by focusing on their family and recognizing that at the dock they have advantages not offered through the average urban job. Nevertheless, such flexibility does not compensate for the lack of health insurance, social security and higher education opportunities for their children. In this aspect, women are second-class citizens, while in the dock they perform for the most part side activities to fishing, and as such, they also have a secondary role in the community. Women’s lack of participation in decision-making processes prevents the community from expanding the range of mechanism and strategies of resistance, and also to project a more inclusive image to the broader community.
5.2.3 Context of ecosystem change

Data collected from fishers indicate how alterations in the balance of the marine ecosystem impacts the dock’s economy, prompting fishers and families to look for alternative sources of income within the dock and in the city: “aquí cuando no hay pesca toca dedicarse al turismo... los chibolos se van a abrir zanjas arriba, en construcción, otros se van a otros puertos a pescas más grandes.” [When fish are scarce you concentrate on tourism-related activities… younger fishers go up there (to the city) to work on construction, others go to other docks to work on large fisheries]. This situation in turn frames how fishers experience the city and perceive issues like urban development, land-use management and so forth. The fishing activity at all levels is highly dependent on healthy and productive marine ecosystems. Yet when fishing stocks are low, technological advances have served the industrial fleet to find and catch fish in remote areas and with gear that formerly did not exist. In addition to technology, the industrial fleet has political leverage to influence government officials’ decisions regarding total catch allowed and the length of the fishing season. Fish scarcity is evident in Chorrillos, landings are minimal and several times I witnessed fishers returning with only a bucket of small pelagic fish after a daylong fishing trip.

In contrast, the Peruvian fishing industry is in permanent expansion in terms of their capital and services portfolio. Nevertheless, according to one of the experts consulted, data available to account for these differences is not only scattered through different institutions and reports and has to be reconstructed. The situation is also distorted due to the former arbitrary distribution of the sector into industrial and artisanal fleets. Before the DS-005/2012, the artisanal fleet comprised vessels of up to 32.5 metric tons storage capacity that could fish anchovy for either direct or indirect human
consumption. However, a growing fishmeal and fish-oil market created perverse incentives to catch anchovies only for fishmeal. In other words, the non-exclusion of the anchovy fishery upset the national fishing statistics, artificially enhancing the numbers of artisanal fishing landings (Christensen et al. 2013). Today, although regulations are more realistic, restricting artisanal vessels to 10 metric tons, lack of regulations enforcement has impeded the clean-up of the sector and the situation has improved very little.

A fisher with experience in the industrial sector talks about the use of technology. “Un boliche puede ser de 500 o 1000 toneladas, yo trabajé en uno de 500, con satélite, ecosonda no más, se hacía todo... la red cae, pero ya detecta todo el pescado. Lo sacamos todo.” [One boliche could have a capacity ranging from 500 to 1000 tons; I worked in one of 500 and to fish we only used satellite information and a sonar technology, and that was all. [As] the net goes down, it [the sonar] already detects all of the fish. We took out all of it [the fish]]. This is not the case in Chorrillos, where fishing has been performed pretty much the same for the last couple of generations. When asked about the changes in fishing techniques, elder fishers commented that fishing in general is carried out very similar as when they were young, except that net material or boat motors in the market had improved. Artisanal fishing involves small wooden boats of no more than four tons, with-in groups of two or three fishers, using gillnets or hook lines that were once made of cotton but now of nylon and polyester, who go out only along the coastline for no more than 12 hours.

Being small scale makes Chorrillos very sensitive to overfishing and the resulting imbalances in the marine ecosystem. According to fishers, fish look for calm coastal waters to reproduce and hatch, then they leave for the high seas and come back as adults
to repeat the cycle. Fishers wait for the fish to return and spawn before they catch it. However, if the industry catches all the fish in the high seas, this not only prevents fish from coming near coastal waters but also interrupts the reproductive cycle. Furthermore, despite available technology, sometimes the industrial fleet does not find fish and they sail the coast in search of fish, invading artisanal fishers’ exclusive fishing grounds. Fishers illustrate this point through telling the bonito fish story. According to them, until ten years ago bonito was abundant and could be caught close to shore. “Agarrábamos a media hora quince, veinte cajas de bonito” [just a half hour away from the coast we caught fifteen, twenty boxes of bonito], but following a significant increase of industrial and large fleets fishing for anchovies and other species for fishmeal, the bonito went deep and can now only be found 200 miles out on the high seas. This apparent environmental problem is also an economic issue with political elements that affect artisanal fishers directly.

5.2.3.1 Overfishing and the boliches problem.

Intensive fishing of anchovy and other pelagic species for producing fishmeal have created an imbalance in the entire fish chain, forcing larger species to go deeper and far out in search for food, where they are out of reach of artisanal coastal fishers but still available to more modern fleets. Anchovies are one of the species that lies at the bottom of the fish chain; they live in cold waters and feed on plankton, and are the main diet of other species of fish and seabirds. The Peruvian current brings cold waters close to shore, therefore anchovies and their predator fish are abundant. In addition, fishing anchovies closer to shore (e.g. from within the 6 mile-limit) favors the fishmeal industry because it requires less fuel, ice use, transportation, etc.; thus large vessels prefer to fish as close as
possible to land, leading to the tensions among artisanal and industrial fleets referred to above.

When El Niño or other weather phenomena bring warm waters to shore, anchovies withdraw to deeper waters. Technology is used, up to a certain point, by large fleets to locate the anchovy stocks offshore. Larger vessels equipped with high-end technology obtain detailed satellite images of the fish, allowing for a more efficient and intensive fishing activity. The root of the problem lies in the increasing international price of fishmeal (see Figure 2), with a demand for the product that long ago exceeded the supply. Anchovy-based fishmeal is used for fertilizer and animal feed, especially in aquaculture. Today, more than fifty percent of the fish consumed worldwide come from aquaculture production, which means that fishmeal demand will continue to grow (Hannesson 2003; Tveteras and Tveteras 2010).

Since the 1950s the Peruvian fishing industry has been the world’s major exporter of anchovy-based fishmeal, producing almost fifty percent of the global fishmeal output, which translated to an excessive focus on expansion of both the fleet and in-land processing capacity. The industry eventually fished out the anchovy stock, affecting the balance of the marine ecosystem and creating a crisis for other fisheries intended for human consumption. This meant that in order to sell fishmeal in the international market, the fishmeal industry needed to abide by domestic and international fishing regulations that limit its catch to authorized quotas, impose seasonal restrictions, and require product traceability. Such restrictions were insignificant or not strictly enforced when fish stocks were plentiful. However, when fish depletion was more noticeable and regulations
became less flexible, the industry had to reduce its catch. As a result, fishmeal factories faced shortages of the raw material to produce fishmeal.

In this context, the *boliches* fleet appeared as a non-regulated actor able to catch the fish the industry could not, supplying the market illegally. Fishmeal demand was so high that it created a parallel market that focused less on traceability and more on the product, which in turn opened spaces to trade fishmeal produced by factories that bought raw material from the *boliches*. Before the Minister of Production issued in 2012 the Decree DS-005, the *boliches* fleet was considered artisanal (from 0 to 32.5 metric tons of capacity) and could fish the entire sea without restrictions. Yet, there is a major difference between artisanal fishers fishing for food on boats of less than ten tons, and *boliches* fishing for feed on vessels of approximately 35 tons, exceeding the ceiling with the argument that by deducting the weight of ice, sidewall density, etc. their net storage capacity met the parameters.

The fish caught by the *boliches* is the fish that artisanal fishers of Chorrillos, for example, are no longer finding in their fishing grounds. For fishers there is a circular relationship between overfishing, overcapitalization of the fishing sector (surplus of factories and vessels -- both industrial and artisanal), the elite’s economic and political interests, and compliant institutions of control and supervision. Throughout the interviews, fishers stated that the *boliches* and industry’s abusive fishing practices are the main reason for scarcity. For them, once overfishing is controlled, then broader issues related to climate change, warming waters, urban contamination, etc. would be considered reasons for fish scarcity.
Meanwhile the attention should be placed on the other concrete issues. This is how an old fisher expressed his opinion about the fishmeal industry:

“¡Dólares! Es que no es solo anchoveta… todo va a la harina: cojinova, lisa, etc. no solo la anchoveta… si es que la harina de pescado no sirve de alimento para el pueblo, la harina es para darle alimento a los animales, a los cerdos… hay empresas que trabajan en eso, gente que trabaja también y genera empleo… pero pescan volúmenes que también se sobrepasan.”

[Dollars! It is not only anchovies… the entire product goes to fishmeal production, along with other species… and fishmeal is not for the people but for animals and pigs… There are companies working on fishmeal production and generating jobs, but honestly they fish excessive amounts.]

For the fishers, the amount of product caught by the artisanal fleet cannot be compared under any standards with the large quantities captured by other fleets. Besides, fish landed at the beach, docks, or piers is not accounted by Produce (The ministry of Production) or the Instituto del Mar Peruano, Imarpe (Peru’s Institute of the Sea), adding to the difficulty of having reliable statistics. A study conducted by Alfaro-Shigueto et al. (2010) on artisanal fisheries in Peru shows how between 1995 and 2005 the number of artisanal fishers and vessels, including the boliches, has augmented while the reported landings have decreased, as shown in Table 3. These numbers corroborate fishers’ argument of scarcity, regardless of the fishing effort but also lets us see that despite that fact that there are fewer fish available, the artisanal fleet and personnel have grown over the years. It appears then that small-scale fishing in 2005 still attracted newcomers and capital, and continued to generate enough profit to keep people interested in participating. By the same token, this population increment could be due to restructurings and layoffs in the industrial fishing sector and lack of opportunities in other sectors of the economy, however more research would have to be conducted.
Table 3. Estimated changes in the Peruvian artisanal fishing landscape (11 ports, period: 1995-2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year season</th>
<th>Fishers</th>
<th>Vessels</th>
<th>Landings tn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>28,098</td>
<td>6,268</td>
<td>606,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>37,727</td>
<td>9,667</td>
<td>469,960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even during times of abundance when artisanal fishers would go out three or four times a day and return with their boats filled with fish, their capacity did not exceed a total of 6-8 tons, as opposed to the 30-40 tons captured by the boliches, or the thousands of tons fished by the industry. According to fishers’ testimonies, a boliche could be registered to hold 32.5 metric tons, but in reality their weight can be above this number because they are built with removable doors, false rooms, etc. Additionally, fishing regulations also place artisanal fishers at a disadvantage because the government and the authorities rule and perform taking into consideration the needs of the industry, neglecting in turn smaller actors’ demands.

Institutional corruption is the underlying reason for the pervasive corruption affecting every sphere of the Peruvian society. The fishing sector, due to its profitable and open-access character, has deep corruption problems, prompting fishers to question why they should abide by new regulations that affect their fishing capacity, when the real cause of fish scarcity and environmental imbalances are not addressed in the government offices, and regulations are not enforced to harness the industry. As a fisher expressed when I asked him about who supervises the industrial fleet:

“No, nadie, nunca ha habido control... venían las patrulleras y encontraban un barco... cerca, dentro de las 5 millas, se subían y salían con su maletín normal (lleno de dinero de sobornos), dámela a mí (la plata) y nos vemos con los panchos...”

[No, nothing, nobody, there is no control or supervision... the coastal patrol came and found a boat... within the five-mile limit, boarded the ship and left with a bag (full of money) – business as usual... give me the money and see you later...]
Corruption is also a condition practiced by the fishers, especially regarding the administration of the income from running the dock’s facilities; corruption is a trait that has been learned over the years from their national and local leadership.

Fishers have in place a set of informal controls directed to protecting their fish, fishing grounds and livelihood. On occasion, these measures coincide with official guidelines issued by the Minister of Production regarding size of capture, authorized gear, type of specie and so forth. However, for fishers, the legitimacy of these restrictions and whether they agree or not with official regulations lies in the need to preserve the fish for themselves and future generations. In addition to the lack of strict regulation, problems of corruption and bribery have taught fishers about the illegitimacy of official controls, regulation and authorities, which in turn award fishers’ informal rules with an atmosphere of validity. In this case, fishers’ reflection is redirected to their own problems as if the state was simply not there: “hay que ponernos a pensar: los compradores nos están pagando menos porque el pescado es chiquito… por qué no mejor hacemos que todos agarren pescado grande (…) y ya muchos tienen la malla más clara (amplia), y no sacan pescado chico.” [We should start thinking: buyers are paying less for the small fish… why don’t we try to catch only larger fish (…) many of us are already using a wider net, and have stopped fishing small fish.] Still, due to the open-access nature of fishing, it is difficult to have all the fishers abide by restrictions offshore, which emphasizes the key role of on-shore controls restricting the type and amount of fish that can by brought to land and sold on the dock.

On the dock there is a customary prohibition enforced by the Union -- and now the association -- of landing fish from boliches or larger vessels. As the Chorrillos’ catch
is small, fishers usually sell the product to visitors on tables arranged on the dock’s grounds. Although the fish sold at the dock is more expensive than that found in large markets, it is a fresher product and the profit stays in the community of fishers. Therefore fishers protect their market, and ban any major fish landing. Not daily, but frequently a *boliche* or two is spotted in the Chorrillos’ waters. Fishers argue that they come to Chorrillos not because of the bay’s abundance, as there are richer areas, but mainly because it is close to their unloading places in Callao or Pucusana. Nevertheless, one *boliche* has the capacity to fish out in a couple of hours what artisanal fishers would catch in the following days.

“*Por ejemplo, vinieron boliches de Piura, del norte, con bonito, ¿qué pasaba? Que los pescadores (de acá) traían sus pescados y no vendían porque los boliches venían y la gente (pescadores y personas del muelle) se recurseaban (compraban pescado a los boliches para vender al menudeo) con bonito y lo colocaban en la mesa... pero la gente que no se recurseaba y salía a la mar se quedaba con todo ese pescado sin vender... hubo quejas por eso y por eso cerraron... de ahora en adelante ningún boliche tiene por qué venir a descargar acá.***”

[For example, once *boliches* came from Piura, from the north, with bonito. What happened? Fishers from Chorrillos brought their fish to sell in the dock, and they didn’t sell anything because other fishers and people from the dock bought bonito from the *boliches* to re-sell it in the dock, cheaper (and bonito is a more commercial product)... So, those fishers that went out to fish couldn’t sell... fishers complained and the dock was closed for major landings. From now on *boliches* cannot unload in Chorrillos.]

Fishers live under the assumption that the government and authorities will not change their corrupt practices, and have decided to move forward and look after their place using their own strategies and mechanisms of protection and advocacy. “*Tenemos que cuidarlo (el mar), no ve que de eso comemos.*” [We have to take good care of it (the sea), don’t you know that it is our livelihood.] Fish scarcity is then a derivation of industrial and *boliches* overfishing that is protected or ignored by the corrupt
government. As a result, fishers are pushed to extract as much fish as possible when the product is available. Still, when different environmental and economic burdens align, there are simply no fish. But, fishers are resourceful and over the years they have dealt with a lot of problems, and still managed to save money from the various services the community provides to the public.

Fishers struggle against fish shortage. Although scarcity could be ascribed to multiple environmental factors like pollution caused by urbanization, marine waters warming, El Niño, changes in ocean currents due to extreme weather events in other latitudes, etc., fishers drawing from their experience, argue that the industry and boliches overfishing practices are the most responsible for the current lack of fish in their bay. Economic and political inequalities are a result of evident power imbalances based on historical hierarchies implanted by the most privileged and directed to keep the status quo. Fishers acknowledge this problem, and have designed and implemented alternative strategists, instruments and activities to overcome scarcity through their association and engaging tourism. Fishers also try to communicate their grievances to the society at first via the association’s leadership, but also in multiple minute interactions where power, visibility and economic rewards are negotiated and settled.

5.2.3.2 Alternatives to fishing

Activities alternative to fishing are also available on-shore. The dock is a second option for those unable to go out as often because of age or health issues. If an elder fisher can do one of the jobs available on the dock then he or one of his relatives will be the first choice. The idea is to support a fellow fisher in trouble, especially if he is a senior member of the community. The activities available on the dock are, among others, providing administrative, logistics and security support for the dock’s facilities, cleaning
and general services for the dock’s common areas, managing the shipyard store or running errands in and around the dock for the association’s board of directors. Fishers speak about this network of support as something that has been in place for many years and passed on for generations. For example, old fishers or their relatives come to the assembly to ask for funding usually for health expenses or fundraising activities.

However, the support is also symbolic as young fishers also tell stories about veteran fishers’ resilience and strength to maintain a cohesive community and presence in the dock. Nonetheless, this solidarity network does not replace fishers’ desire and need for a pension or proper health insurance.

Fishers feel and know that they can count on their peers’ cooperation and solidarity, at least to provide for their daily livelihood. Major health issues, expensive treatments, and other expenses are dealt with in the assemblies, where major means of support and funds have to be approved by the general assembly. Regarding support of senior fishers, a member of the association’s board of directors commented: “se les da su apoyo porque sabemos que han trabajado toda su vida en la pesca por esta caleta y no se les puede dejar en el abandono” [we give them economic support because we know that they have dedicated their whole life to fishing and to this dock, we can’t leave them behind.] Funding for seniors, or injured fishers that have been in fishing accidents is part of the assembly agenda; if the fisher is present (or a relative), he pleads his case -- explains the need for funding to the body of fishers. Then the assembly votes and funding can be approved. For example, I attended one of the assemblies where an old fisher with knee problems caused by a fishing accident had no daily income and needed money for his maintenance and medicines while he contacted extended family for support. The
assembly not only approved funds for him but also offered a spot as a cutter in the market to one of his daughters.

Another form of support, directed to senior fishers as well, is to allow them to organize social events, like polladas or a chicken-party. The assembly approves, the association lends money to the organizers. After selling the food, and the beneficiaries return the loan and keep the profit,

“Ahí tenemos el local disponible, tenemos concesión de cerveza. Si le faltaría para condimentos, pollo, enseres, insumos, uno les presta... Haga su actividad compañero, luego uno recoge lo prestado y la ganancia, el resto es tuyo.”

[The space is available, and we can provide beer on contract. If the fisher needs seasonings, chicken, furnishings, supplies, we provide those things... we say, comrade carry out your activity, then you pay us, and the rest, the profit, is yours.]

However, when an elder fisher is not up to the job, another fisher has the preference. Priority is given according to the fisher’s skills, household needs or sometimes the rapport he has with the leadership in office. During a fish shortage, a fisher commented about the dock as an alternative income solution:

“Mañana tampoco salgo porque la mar está movida. Tengo que buscar... a veces sale un trabajito... no en la ciudad, aquí en la playa... por decir algo, el muelle tienen que repararlo, yo lo arreglo y les cobro la mano de obra... tengo que escribirles (a la asociación) una propuesta para decirles cuánto les voy a cobrar.”

[Today I didn’t go fishing today, nor tomorrow because the sea is rough. I got to look for something.... Not in the city but here in the beach... Say, the pier needs to be repaired... I can fix it and charge the association for the labor. I have to write a proposal to let them know how much I will charge.]

Other economic activities that stem not only from environmental changes but also from the dock’s geographical location are also relevant here. Since the district of
Chorrillos lies in the heart of southern Lima, the community has adapted to take advantage of this proximity, unique to this dock. When fish are scarce, fishers can also work on the dock in activities relating to tourism, or go “up there” to the city to look for unskilled jobs in construction, security or services. Thus, there is a connection between fish scarcity, low profit and how a fisher interacts with the city. More interestingly, this is not exclusive to fishers. Women who work on the dock during the low season also take advantage of the city to look for resources to meet their family’s needs and contribute to the household economy:

“A veces cuando el agua mueve, los que hacemos paseos, pues no podemos hacer paseos en bote… lo que yo hago es que vendo mis ganchitos en el mercado… ganchos de ropa que compro por paquetes o docenas, y los vendo poco a poco en varios mercados.”

[When the sea is rough, we who offer boat rides to tourists must suspend the service… Then what I do is buy dozens of packages of clothes-hangers and I sell them one-by-one in different markets.]

The city is primarily a place to look for alternative income. During the interviews, fishers mentioned the city, for the most part, as a place where temporary jobs are available when fishing is low. They also go to the city to buy material to repair their fishing gear, boats or houses, to run errands in public offices, and less often to take a family outing to a park or a mall. Young fishers also go to the city to enjoy the nightlife in Chorrillos and nearby neighborhoods. But overall, fishers do not consider the city as part of their social space. Starting with transportation, a trip to the city is expensive: “En la ciudad todo te cuesta plata” [in the city, it is all about money].
These two testimonies, the first one from an older and the second from a young fisher, demonstrate the mentioned distinction:

“Uno cuando ya está acostumbrado a la pesca es diferente que trabajar en tierra... no salgo a la pesca y me pongo a arreglar mis herramientas, tejiendo, tejiendo. El trabajo en tierra a la edad que tenemos, nadie nos va a dar trabajo... a veces la municipalidad te da trabajo, tú vas a la municipalidad y allá te consiguen (serenazgo), pero solo por 3 meses para no comprometerse con seguro... y te dan lo mínimo, y tengo que estar aparte 12 horas, a veces más... a la final sales como con 18-20 horas trabajando, y no te reconocen.”

[When you’re used to it, you find fishing different than working inland… if I don’t go fishing I stay fixing my gear, mending… Inland work at our age, nobody will hire us… occasionally the municipality gives you a job (security guard), but only for three months so they don’t have to provide social security… and they give you minimum wage, but you have to be there for 12 hours, sometimes more than that… at the end you work about 18-20 hours without compensation.]

“A veces que veo que no hay mucha pesca, y tengo mis obligaciones, entonces me tengo que buscar un trabajo... trabajo de albañileria (construcción), cachuelos (pequeños trabajos), pintura por ejemplo... por necesidad el pescador de acá ... se va a trabajar de albañil, de barredor, de cobrador de chofer.”

[Sometimes there is no fishing, and I have to be responsible for my family, then I have to look for a job… I work in construction, or in odd jobs like painting, etc… Out of necessity the Chorrillos’ fisher works in construction, cleaning, and ticket collector for drivers…]

Fishers’ perceptions vary. Young fishers, who are better equipped to navigate urban life because they have been exposed to it since childhood, perceive the city differently. Conversely, for elders, urban life is difficult and uncomfortable. On one hand the city was not that large twenty years ago, and on the other hand there was enough fish to supply for the community, so they rarely ventured into the city. Old fishers prefer to stay at the dock fixing and cleaning their nets and gear, and waiting for the sea to calm or for other opportunities to arise, rather than going to the city. This relates to the feeling of freedom and respect that old fishers enjoy on the dock.
Tourism completes the set of mechanisms and activities that fishers have adopted and adapted to cope with fish scarcity. Yet tourism is also part of Chorrillos’ history, which explains the location of the Club Regattas next to the dock, the constant influx of visitors to the bay and elites’ ongoing attempts to develop the area. But fishers, especially after the city’s demographic growth, have designed several ways to serve the new public consisting of low income and poor population from neighborhood districts. Touristic services offered by fishers are few and limited; however, tourism is considered a real source of income for them, which eventually will replace fishing as the main activity of the dock.

5.2.3.3 Tourism-related activities

Chorrillos is located in a highly appealing tourist area of the city, receiving hundreds of visitors all year around and especially during summer. People coming to the beach of Chorrillos belong to the less privileged sectors of the population, and for the most part are residents of Chorrillos and neighboring districts. The upper classes rarely go to any of Lima’s beaches except if they are members of the Regatta Club, preferring leisure and recreation spaces farther south, a few hours away from Lima. The beach circuit bordering Lima has more beach areas, however most of them are rocky and suitable only for surfing or other water sports. Only the beaches south of Miraflores, Barranco and Chorrillos have sandy beaches appropriate for family recreation. The beach corridor is administered by each municipality, which grants permissions and concessions to individuals and companies to market their products on the beach. In these areas, retailers and merchants pay fees and taxes established by the local authorities in order to operate in public spaces. However, despite formalization efforts, most of the personnel working on the beaches are part of the informal economy. The authority at the dock is
represented by the fishers’ association, which has its own set of requirements to work on the dock. This set of rules may involve less paperwork and documentation (permits, tax reports, etc.), but it is stricter and enforced by the leadership and the community. After many years, the seasonal touristic workers are well known by the community and moreover, many of them are relatives and extended family. Work at the beach is seasonal and unstable but represents a source of income for the unemployed and unskilled labor.

A similar situation takes place at the dock of Chorrillos, except that every person working the beach has to be sponsored by a member of the fishers’ association, or have been part of the community for several years. The Association exerts an authority similar to the municipalities, organizing the sales, charging daily, seasonal, or annual fees to the vendors, monitoring and looking out for the beach, and so forth. Chorrillos is easy to access by foot or public transportation, as a fisher put it “todos los caminos conducen a Chorrillos” [all roads lead to Chorrillos], and as vendors pay less for fees and permits, prices are also convenient for low income populations. Tourists also acknowledge fishers’ authority and abide by the basic rules of coexistence; unless a conflict is a police matter, fishers are the first to come and address the issue. This provides the beach with a relaxing and safe atmosphere different from an openly public beach.

Fishers are conscious of these realities and would like to take advantage of these strengths; they talk about tourism as the activity that could help everyone when fish scarcity deteriorates further. “El único futuro que le puedo ver a esta caleta, es el turismo… arreglando esto bien, bien hermoso, bien lindo ya la gente va a venir… más negocio va a entrar… va a generar trabajo.” [The only future I foresee for the dock is tourism… sprucing up the dock, making it pretty, and these will attract more people… ]
new businesses… more jobs.] Yet tourism is already an important source of income for the Association. The money collected from the beach vendors, service providers, and food stands, together with the rent paid by the restaurant modules is deposited directly in the Association’s account. The purpose of this income is to help the fishers, cover the expenses of the Association and pay for the facilities’ utilities. Incidents of corruption have come to light in relation to these sources of income that have gone into the pockets of some of the leaders. For this reason, the current board of directors, instead of investing the funds in the facilities or looking for alternatives to allocate the money, redistributes it among fishers in different forms. Examples include a scholarly bonus given at the end of summer as a gesture of accountability after the high season, a Christmas box, and events like the fishers’ day or the end of the year party. This money is also used to assist fishers who have to pay for expensive medical treatments or have been in an accident while at sea. Such aid has to be approved during a general assembly of fishers.

It might be said that tourism is an integral part of the economy and culture of the entire community, especially because the all members of the family can works together in tourism; each member contributes to household livelihood. This is how an old fisher talked about the family involvement in the household economy:

"Acá es chamba… mi señora trabajaba limpiando pescado… mis hijos y a mi hija, desde chicos se les enseñó a trabajar… ahora no trabaja en pesca, pero jalá carro, o sea jaladores de estos que venden comida, y ahí chambea con su hermana porque mi hija trabaja en el módulo de mi viejito… todos se buscan la vida, eso es lo que hay enseñarles a los hijos."

[Here, you work! My wife works cleaning fish... my sons and my daughter were taught to work since they were little... now they are not working on fishing, but the son works as jalador or cart-puller for a mobile food stand, where his sister works selling food. My daughter and son both work at my dad’s restaurant...}
module…. They all know how to work and fend for themselves. That’s what you have to teach to your children.]

The dock has adapted to carrying out in a harmonious way both fishing and tourism. As a fisher expressed, “Este muelle es un muelle mixto, permitido para pesca y para turismo.” [This is a mixed dock, where both fishing and tourism activities are carried out.] Tourism resonates with the community in multiple ways. Aside from perceiving direct income through the Association’s charges, visitors buy fish directly from fishers, eat in the restaurants run by fishers’ relatives and take boat rides on larger boats that are also owned by fishers. During high season some fishers prefer to lend or rent a boat out for rides instead of going fishing because it is less uncertain. This activity is very popular among fishers as it represents a more secure source of income, and is safer and less exhausting than fishing.

The paseadores of Chorrillos are an established group of former fishers who have switched to boat riders, and have a crew of three or more individuals who bring tourists to the dock and help accommodate them in the boat; likewise, boat-ride providers have equipment like life vests, overhead shade and speakers for music and guiding instructions. Other fishers, not officially paseadores, also work on boat rides, but only seasonally and have to go to neighborhood beaches. Access to this activity is restricted due to the culture of the community. Only former fishers authorized by the General Assembly and committed to the rules set by the community of fishers are able to carry out this activity, which prevent conflicts among them and the rest of the fishers. Interaction is common among fishers and visitors as well as a common knowledge of which spaces are exclusive to the fishers’ use, like the net mending areas, the shipyard or
other gathering places. Similarly, fishers share their boarding and loading zones with the tourists, registering little conflict between these two groups.

5.2.4 Context of political-economic change

This section presents and discusses expressions that captured the nature of fishers’ relationships with both public and private actors in light of recent political and economic transformations. The indifference of the state towards fishers’ demands on one hand, and the increasing presence of private actors with abundant resources on the other hand, have reworked hierarchical power relationships within the community and between the community and the state, as well as with other actors. Relationships within the community are transformed because private actors are not obligated to interact only with the fishers’ Association, thus providing incentives to sub-groups and factions to organize and advance in individual and uncoordinated agendas. This does not imply a questioning of the legitimacy of the association to represent the community, but does provide an opening for some stakeholders to take advantage of smaller factions, thus dividing the community.

5.2.4.1 Law-abiding fishers

Relationships between the community and outside actors have changed, mainly with the state, because fishers have observed the state’s lack of response to their demands and have turned to the private sector for funding and solutions to their problems. Nevertheless, and due to past benefits received from the former paternalistic state, fishers still desire the central state to step in during times of scarcity, in which case they would not have to negotiate with third parties, including regional or local governments. The state currently interacts with the fishers via the Artisanal Fishing Sub-division of the Minister of Production, who sends an extensionist to advise fishers in the required
formalization processes and communicate fishers’ claims to the central government. Yet, the agent’s work does not meet fishers’ expectations, and fishers still await the return of earlier well-funded aid agencies. The Minister of Production visited the dock in 2012 to promote the first artisanal fishing national census. As part of his agenda, the Minister led the opening ceremony, helped fishers to complete the census forms, and spent time at the dock hearing fishers’ claims and delegating tasks to his staff. That day, I met the Minister, who introduced me to the person in charge of the artisanal fishing sector and other staff members. In time they became permanent collaborators with my study.

Fishers remember that day in the following terms:

De los 63 años que voy a cumplir, en toda mi historia, este es el primer censo nacional que he visto de pesca artesanal. Vino el ministro, viceministro, de todo. Se llenó de puros periodistas, gente en sus carros, de todo. En el momento oportuno ellos recibieron todas las inquietudes... escucharon, apuntaron y chao... se olvidaron de ti, y punto. Como le conté, acá hubo un maretazo hace poco ¿acaso viene el gobierno...? ¡Nada!

“(...) vienen a veces los ministros a tomarse fotos con los pescadores, y dicen: -sí claro, yo te voy a dar esto y lo otro, te pintan el otro, los pajaritos... fotos, y luego no te dan pero ni para comerte nada.”

[I'll be 63 years old, and this is the first artisanal census I’ve ever seen in my entire life. The minister, vice-minister, everybody came. The dock was full of journalists, people in cars, everything. When the time came, they took note of all our concerns… they heard and wrote everything down… then left… bye… then they forgot about us. As I was telling you, recently there was a massive surge of water… do you think that the government actually came? Nothing!]

[(…) Ministers come to the dock for the picture with the fishers saying that “sure, sure, we will give you this and that,” making promises… pictures and then nothing, not even food to eat.]

Fujimori’s government serves as an example to illustrate this complex perception of the central state. Fujimori’s relentless war against terrorism that often involved intimidation and violence against the civilian population contrasted with the creation of
welfare institutions and programs destined to exert social control over poor populations, as a way of preventing them from enrolling in radical-left wing organizations. Such programs were financed with monies generated by the privatization of public service agencies and grants given to foreign firms to exploit the country’s mining and natural resources, including fishing permits to large fishing companies. State and terrorist violence, together with the lack of opportunities in the countryside, provoked massive internal displacement to the cities, prompting the government to concentrate its investments for the most part in the capital city. The government delivered infrastructure, public services, and other social benefits to “well-behaved” individuals and neighborhoods (Caistor and Villarán 2006; Conaghan 2005; Johnson 2000; Kent 1997).

Chorrillos’ fishers were included in this group. On one hand, even though they grew tired of the state’s unfulfilled promises, they remained within the institutional framework, meaning that they did not align with non-official ideologies (leftist groups and guerrillas), or other political forces, except those that represented a benefit for the community or neighborhood. On the other hand, the bay location was key, accessible to the President and his crew who often visited the dock to mingle with fishers, and to show their commitment to popular communities. Such relationships strengthened during the Cholera outbreak in 1991, when Fujimori went to the dock and ate ceviche in the fishers’ market to prove the rumors wrong that Chorrillos’ fish was contaminated with the bacteria. Fishers soon realized their inability to counteract the alliance between government and industry, and instead of demonstrating or mobilizing, decided to take the grants and handouts available to them. The following quotes, part of the same
conversation with a group of fishers, provide interesting insights about fishers’ intricate interactions with the state.

“Antes existía la PRONAA (Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria)… Venía un camión y repartía víveres para toda la gente en tiempos malos, de invierno… eso fue cuando Fujimori… lo solicitábamos y traían nuestra bolsa de víveres con 4-5 kilos de arroz o los frijoles, aceite, leche, arroz, fideos de todo traían. Se repartía a través del sindicato a todos los que estábamos empadronados, y pues siempre sobraba y ya se le repartía también a la gente del entorno de nosotros; si necesitaban, les dábanos. Para todos había.”

“Comenzaron en los 80 con los rusos y los polacos. Luego en la época de Fujimori entraron los japoneses con más fuerza, los españoles también, pero en el tiempo de Fujimori entró toda la flota Japonesa y hasta los chinos, parecía ciudad en alta mar, ciudad, ciudad. Alumbraba en cantidad… Decían los japoneses: acá no se pesca acá, se recoge… se metían a 100 millas y venían los arrastres de 1,000 toneladas, 1.500 toneladas iban cargaditos y lo trasladaban a los barcos madrina, tipo porta aviones…”

[Before, there was the PRONA (National Program of Food Aid)… A truck came and distributed food and goods for all the community during hardship, especially during winter…. The happened during Fujimori’s mandate… we requested and they came with a bag of provisions for us like 4-5 kilos of rice and beans, oil, milk, pasta, and other stuff. They distributed the food through the Union to registered fishers, but there was always enough for everybody… we shared food with the community as well, even if they weren’t fishers… if anyone was in need, we provided for them.]

[It began in the 1980s with Russians and Polish fleets. Then, during Fujimori’s government the Japanese stepped in with strength, the Spaniards as well, but with Fujimori in power, all the Japanese fleet entered the Peruvian waters, even the Chinese fleet came…. Offshore it looked like a city, a big city in the middle of the sea, all lighted up. The Japanese used to say that in Peru they didn’t fish, they collected… They entered the 100-mile zone and came with large trawlers of 1,000 or 1,500 tons. The boats left filled and took the product to a larger ship, which looked like an aircraft carrier.]

This is how fishers perceive government action and management of the national marine resources. However, the majority of the Peruvian fishing industry is nationally owned, and foreign fleets are only authorized to fish in international waters (up to 200 nautical miles). It is possible though that foreign trawlers have trespassed this limit and
fished in Peruvian waters; these are the fishers’ perceptions, on which their opinions and actions are based. The sale of state assets and resources to international capital is a characteristic of neoliberal practices. As a result, the government is enriched and freed from its obligations to guarantee people’s basic rights and needs. Since private capital is unaccountable to the people, the state re-enters the public arena, in this case as a grants supplier with preference to benefit passive and compliant citizens and communities. In this particular case, the state was redirecting to fishers, in the form of aid, a small portion of the profits made from the selling off of marine resources to the Peruvian fishing industry.

5.2.4.2 Fishers’ reasonable activism

Ever since fishers began to populate the bay at the turn of the 20th century, they have been aligned towards social organization. In 1927 they formally registered the Sociedad de Pescadores y Auxilio Mutuo [Fishers’ society and mutual aid]. It was a mutual created to raise funds to help fishers in hardship, interact with the authorities as a collective, and reaffirm their presence in the bay. Although the society helped form feelings of solidarity and cohesion in the community, it failed to really collect funds for the mutual trust. As a fisher portrayed, “en mi época de muchacho había una mutual. Mutual quiere decir como una asistencia social. Allí tenías que dar un aporte de un tanto de dinero, pero era una cosa simbólica, mínima, pero mayormente nadie cumplía y siempre estaba sin fondos.” [When I was young there was a mutual or a sort of social aid organization. You should paid a small fee, almost symbolic, nothing, but almost none of the fishers paid it, and the trust was always unfunded.] Thus, even though fishers could not rely on the mutual to face a crisis, its mere existence effectively contributed to the purpose of appearing to the outside world as a single and united body.
This representation of community cohesion and unity, together with an image of ancestral tenants of the bay as descendants of Olaya, a low-profile strategy adopted to avoid public attention, and a general lack of interest from the city to develop the beach corridor, were determining factors that shielded the community against potential threats of dispossession and relocation. Indeed, aside from specific failed attempts of the Regatta Club to occupy a few meters of the fishers’ beach, there is no documentation or fishers’ testimonies recalling attempts of physical displacement during the first part of the 20th century. And, certainly there is no proof of any material attempt of this kind at all. Yet, the absence of any physical force does not dismiss the existence of political, economic and social pressures that could be even more effective than aggressive material threats. These tensions suggest both the existence of strategies in place for slowly dispossessing the fishers and conversely, the effectiveness of fishers’ actions adopted to resist them.

The community of fishers formed separately and parallel to the city, oblivious to Lima’s disproportionate growth and uneven development. Fishers learned about these issues through the increasing number of visitors coming to their dock, or from their participation in neighborhood organizations of a religious or civil nature. As an elder fisher said when he was talking about having leadership experience, “no solo he sido dirigente de aquí, también estuve de dirigente en mi cuadrilla del Señor de los Milagros, y por unos años en el comité electoral del asentamiento urbano de mi barrio, donde yo vivo.” [Aside from being a leader here, I’ve also been leader of my Lord of Miracles’ devoted crew, and for a few years I was on the elections committee of the human settlement where I lived.] But this is exceptional, and for the most part fishers’ only membership is with the Association. As a result, fishers’ internal processes of
representation and decision-making have been a combination of experiences gathered by some fishers involved in community groups, adaptive processes carried out within the general assembly, input of fishers that have lived and participated in other fishing communities, participation of fishers who have formal education and developed leadership skills, and so forth. For example, fishers have figured out their own set of membership requirements, and are careful to maintain themselves on active status, which entitles them to receive organizational benefits.

Por ahora soy postulante, pero también recibo apoyos... para poder afiliarte tienes que tener 5 años de actividad, portándote con buena conducta, ir a todas las asambleas al desfile de San Pedro, cargar a la virgen, dar las cuotas que a veces se piden y tener dos garantes... y ahora sacar mi carné de pesca... luego voy a la asamblea y se vota. Solo se exoneran a los de la tercera edad, que nunca pierden sus derechos y no tienen que participar en asambleas ni nada... todo está en el reglamento (los estatutos).

La obligación de un socio es asistir a todas las asambleas y seguir participando en el desfile... participar en las votaciones, y así... asamblea que falte creo que es un punto o dos que te restan... los que no votan, igual, los que no participan en el desfile, igual... son obligaciones que tienen. Se te va restando... si no está completo al 100% no te dan pavo, te toca pollo el día de la canasta navideña, y te afecta si necesitas algún apoyo.

[I’m still an applicant, but I’m entitled to support from the institution… to become an official member you must have five years of fishing activity, good behavior, attend to all the assemblies and participate and carry Saint Peter and Virgin Mary statues the day of the parade… pay dues when asked, and have two sponsors… and now have the artisanal fisher identification, then the assembly votes again for or against my inclusion. Only the elders are exonerated of these requirements, they don’t have to do anything… all of this is in the statutes.]

[It is the obligations of every member to participate regularly in the assemblies and the parades… to vote in the meetings, and so forth. If you miss one assembly they will take one or two points from your record… if you don’t vote, or don’t do the parade there is also a sanction… those are the duties of the fisher members… points kept being taken… if you’re not on 100% instead of turkey you get chicken in your Christmas box, and it affects you if you need future support.]
The fishers’ association remained as a *mutual* until the late 1960s when it switched to a union, and changed its name to *Sindicato de Pescadores Artesanales de Chorrillos José Olaya Balandra* [Union of Artisanal Fishers of Chorrillos José Olaya Balandra]. This was not the fishers’ own initiative but a logical outcome of a number of incentives designed by the government of Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975), consisting of arranging the masses around civil organizations that were accountable and easily dealt with by the state. Such an organization served as a bridge, facilitating public investments in the communities. Fishers formed the Union to integrate themselves into this system of benefits, which eventually translated into infrastructure for the dock, and more importantly, a public reaffirmation of their presence in the bay. Velasco’s paternalistic state was no different from Fujimori’s authoritarian but populist regime regarding their behavior towards the masses. Velasco’s was financed differently, initially with money derived from the profits of a growing but soon inefficient nationalized economy, and afterwards with foreign debt. Such reliance on foreign loans paved the way for succeeding economic and political transformations of the country. Later on, in order to maintain its international credit rating, Peru was persuaded to undertake adjustments and reforms that created more inequalities and exclusion. However, for fishers, Velasco’s government was positive as it left improved fishing infrastructure, state presence and contributed to a more solid social organization. During their conversations, fishers remembered Velasco’ mandate as positive and efficient.

“*Velazco Alvarado fue bueno para la pesca... un gobierno nacionalista militar pero estricto... Sí, sí, hizo reformas, la agraria por ejemplo, era un gobierno nacionalista, el último que hemos tenido, pero positivo... construyó todo esto... desde entonces hasta ahorita no ha habido más que corrupción...*”
[Velasco Alvarado was good for our fishing… a nationalist and military government but rigorous and strict… yes, he made a lot of reforms… for example, the agrarian reform. It was the last nationalist government of Peru, and I say this in a positive sense…. Built all of this… but between then until now, corruption have spread out everywhere.]

As mentioned, fishers became a union following a paternalistic model of political organization and public resources distribution. In this framework, the state performed as a patron and fishers as unionized employees. This functioned as a corporatist arrangement. However, instead of collective bargaining or negotiations, the fishers were endowed by the state to manage the dock’s infrastructure at their own discretion with few limitations. Specific structures like the large market, the icemaker room, and a portion of the parking lot had to be run by a separate person. This manager, appointed by the Union, would submit a financial report to the Ministry of Produce for its approval, and deposit the money into a bank account. This money, together with the revenues generated by the seafood modules, parking lot, restaurants, and other income constituted the trust from which the Union paid utilities, the dock’s maintenance, and support for fishers. However, the state was only interested in securing communities’ active or passive support, but failed to provide support or training to help the fishers better administer the renovated dock. The new income opportunities that arose parallel to the fishing activity gave the community more autonomy, but also fostered problems of mismanagement and corruption. A couple of fishers talked about the dock’s income and corruption problems. It is interesting to note how, regarding corruption, references to the government and organization leadership are made without making any distinction between those two.

Siempre ha habido ingresos acá, poco pero había, pero la mala administración produce muchas cosas menos dinero… Aquí ingresa mucha plata: tienes el
parqueo, el muelle, estos módulos que pagan mensualidad, y cada dos años aparte para ingresar pagan... y eso es mucha plata para nosotros...

Esta vez hemos elegido un nuevo directorio, que hemos estado apoyando para que ojalá nos vaya bien... pero el anterior mucha corrupción, incapacidad e injusticia... es que en este país hay mucha... esta playa no progresa porque los dirigentes se llevan toda la plata...

[There’s always been income in the dock, little but something. However, mismanagement only leads to more bad things… It’s good money, we have income from the parking lot, the dock, these food modules pay monthly and another payment every two years for adjudication… it’s a lot of money.]

[This time we’ve elected a new directory, we’ve been supporting them and one hopes for the best… the preceding leaders showed corruption, inefficiency and injustice… there is a lot of corruption in this country… we can’t progress because some of the leaders have taken all the money.]

The Union shared the same goals and purposes of the mutual in representing the community before external actors, supporting fishers and maintaining and improving the dock infrastructure. At that time, the Union signed an agreement with Mapfre, an insurance company, to cover each member for mortuary insurance. This is one of the few positive examples of good management, as a leader posited, “el pescador ahoritica tiene un seguro que paga el sindicato, es el mortuorio por intermedio de Mapfre, el sindicato paga una mensualidad por todos los compañeros... el compañero no paga ni un céntimo de mensualidad de mortuorio.” [Right now the fishers have the mortuary insurance through Mapfre paid by the Union… the Union pays a monthly stipend for each fisher… fishers don’t have to pay a dime for this insurance.]

Once the Union began to manage the accounts of the community, distrust among fishers and between fishers and leadership unfolded along with an ongoing cycle of corruption, accusations of corruption, questioning of the legitimacy of the leadership, and increasing internal disputes. Interestingly, this did not seriously affect the unity of the
community, which was seen as a single body by the state and third parties. Nevertheless, disagreements about investments and funds allocations have given way to internal quarrels among subgroups. Such tensions are evident in the assemblies or meetings but are rarely heard by external audiences. It took me a few visits, with interactions and trust-building, to get permission to sit in the assemblies. Fishers took care of their disputes domestically, and always showed sound behavior to the state. For fishers, malpractices and mistakes of the leadership were part of their journey as a board of directors, but their stability and autonomy were more important than a transparent and fair administration of the dock. Yet, this is a permanent issue and part of everyday life of the fishers. In the following lines, various fishers discussed the Unión:

Las directivas no hacen nada con la plata, con el ingreso de acá no hacen nada. El problema es que son personas que ni siquiera tienen estudio, a veces no saben ni siquiera qué cosa es, por ejemplo, las cinco vocales... no son dirigentes preparados... si usted es novato y no sabe nada, pues hay otro que es más vivo que lo va a convencer que haga lo que él diga.

Por lo menos con la nueva directiva se está haciendo limpieza... te acuerdas como antes esto estaba cochino... por lo menos ya se está haciendo lo mejor posible para hacer una playa más amplia, más bonita, y más limpia....

Yo creo que esta institución sí ha hecho un cambio porque hubo una directiva anterior que ha desfalcado la institución.

[The leaders don’t do anything with the money, the income that we get from here. They are not educated, that could be the problem, they don’t even know the five vowels… they’re not prepared and if you’re brand new and someone with experience comes, you end up following that person.]

[At least, the new leaders are cleaning the beach… do you remember that this was a mess? Well, they are cleaning it the best they can… the beach will look wider and prettier…]

[This institution is better; you can see the change… the former leaders embezzled money of the Union.]
In 2014, the Union shifted again and became an association after a long and complicated implementation process. The new organization, Asociación de Pescadores Artesanales José Silverio Olaya Balandra [Association of Artisanal Fishers José Silverio Olaya Balandra], shares the goals and purposes of former institutions but this one has a commercial character. Being a commercial entity opened a door for potential agreements with individuals and institutions formerly uncertain about how to do business with a union. Furthermore, the Association had to abide by financial regulations that govern any regular business, and adjust its statutes to the Chamber of Commerce requirements. Among other formalities, the Association had to update the padrón or the membership record, and in order to do so, each fisher had to have the official artisanal fisher identification (carné de pescador artesanal). To facilitate this process, the Association made an agreement with the Coastguard.

Capitania es la que da el carné... vino un capitán mandado aquí por una semana... esa semana tuvimos que dar una cuota de 25 soles, o sea lo mínimo pues, como somos pescadores hicimos un trámite, y nos colaboraron... y nos dieron el carné... y ese carné nos sirve para todo... nos dieron una charla, y unos exámenes en el agua... como saber nadar, primeros auxilios de marino, o sea, si se voltea la lancha entre varias personas cómo abrigarnos... flotar, etc. El examen era hacer lo mismo que ellos mismos nos enseñaron en la charla...

[The Coastguard issues the id… a Captain came to the dock for a week… during that week we paid a fee of 25 soles, the minimum, very little because we are fishers. We made an agreement, and the Coastguard collaborated us… they gave us the card… and we can use that card for everything… they gave us a talk, and tested us in the water… if you know how to swim, marine first aid… if the boat flips over, how to wrap up several persons as a group, how to float, etc…. the (practical) exam was to reinforce what we were taught in the class…]

Fishers, through their Association, have created and practiced alternative forms of income generation and redistribution to benefit their members and community. The purpose of providing support for fishers is not only to provide aid during the low season,
but also to appear more like other public institutions, posing as a more assertive and proactive collective subject. This is illustrated by the following testimony:

“(…) hemos visto conveniente que los fondos que tenemos vamos a dar un bono… bono o también le dicen apoyo de escolaridad, como toda institución, al policía, al maestro que por derecho de escolaridad le asignan una cantidad, como base hemos propuesto tantos soles, pero la asamblea puede decidir si es más.”

[(…) we see it as appropriate that the Association with the funds it has, gives our members a bonus for the education of their children… just as any other institution, the police or teachers, receives a certain amount of money to ensure the right of their children to attend school. We (the leadership of the organization) have proposed a base amount that could be increased by the General Assembly.]

In all, the community and the Association have kept operating in the same way; fishers are still a neglected community with little economic, political and social resources to secure their place and dedicate themselves to enjoying the benefits of their privileged location. They have learned to practice parsimonious active behavior that allows them to remain alert and react if their territory is under threat, and also to maintain the status as subjects of deference and consideration.

In this chapter I analyzed the information I gathered and learned from the fishers and people forming the community. I grouped it into four different broad and comprehensive categories, the fishing activity itself, the dock, the fish scarcity and the fishers’ Association and how this organizations and the community in general interacts with the government and other actors. The breadth of these categories allowed me to present the information that recalls how fishers perceive their reality, not segmented but rather as a complex circular set of interactions. Each category reflects how the fishers engage their situation using their experience and the learning acquired during their life at the dock. The fishing category aims to introduce the history and circumstances shaping
fisher’s characters and the major aspects of their personality as well as their own ideas of environment and how it intertwines with the economic and political context they have to live in. This chapter gradually narrows down the narrative of the life of the artisanal fisher to shed light about the specific circumstances surrounding the daily life of the fishers of Chorrillos. After setting the scene of the offshore situation of the fishers, I moved to study and, using the fishers’ voices, drew a picture of the dock and the on-land territories where fishers interact and share experiences after a fishing trip. The dock category therefore contains the reasons why fishers consider their on and off-shore fishing grounds as a single territory, and how from this connection they make sense of place an ecological and cultural category essential for their community. In this instance, kinship and family ties are explored and explained as well as the different roles played by elder and young fishers, and the women in the community. Once I established this connection between the bay and the dock, and elaborated more around the interactions and feedbacks among the environment and the fishing community, I can address, also from a more comprehensive perspective, the main problems and struggles that challenge the community’s daily subsistence. The fish scarcity category analyzes how fishers interpreted and understood the difficulties they have to overcome every day. Fishers associate most of their problems with the issue of fish depletion, but from this circumstance a variety of factor intervene, making the scarcity itself a category encompassing environmental, economic and political problems. This section describes how fishers cope, face, resist and ultimately resolve and dismiss the scarcity that has affected them with particular acuteness over the past twenty years. I also discuss the implications of addressing tourism-related activities as the only alternative to artisanal
fishing, and how the urban variables play out in fishers’ reflection and decision-making process about other futures apart from fishing. In this chapter, I 1) lay out how the fisher’s character and personality is crafted by the activity itself, and as a result fishers create an image and an understanding of themselves that is projected to the community and the society; 2) describe the place and explain why it is a social construct emerging from daily exchanges and interactions among nature and community; 3) discuss how fishers, while acknowledging the immediate problem of fish scarcity, reflect on more complex issues where their ideas and postures about power and authority, citizenship and democracy, are debated and defined; and finally 4) I proceed to analyze how fishers have found in the history and legitimacy of their representative organization the opportunity and the agency through which they voice and advocate for their claims first to the authorities and also to other external actors. How these analytical categories dialogue and integrate into a singular set of mechanisms, strategies and responses of resistance that fishers have articulated and implemented after years of experience in confronting the neoliberal process will be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 6: NEOLIBERAL RELATIONSHIPS

This study is about the intersections of poverty and place, and how the poor experience and respond to poverty in the midst of recent neoliberal transformations where the state welfare obligations have been diffused into ill-equipped local institutions or regional offices, and transnational corporations ranging from financial institutions to certification agencies. However, state power is not fully transferred to its decentralized units (municipalities, governmental agencies), but instead diverted and diffused into institutions like regulatory and supervisory entities in a power compartmentalization, which creates more bureaucratic obstacles between the central government and local authorities (Bloom 2014; Budds and Hinojosa-Valencia 2012; Ferguson 2005). This proliferation of entities has led to an authority gap that has facilitated the emergence of nondemocratic and unaccountable bodies, sheltered under international certification programs or multilateral organizations’ guidelines, thereby reinforcing hierarchical and global structures of domination and setting the final criteria to validate domestic production processes. The rationale behind these groups and organizations is the inability of states to protect public goods like the marine ecosystem, rainforest and so forth. The state never actually protected the natural resources; indeed, natural resource depletion was considered to be a necessary cost for development and growth. That keeps occurring, except that today the environment has a price, and has entered the market as another commodity, appropriated by entities that have assumed a crusade for the protection of renewable and non-renewable resources (Vandergeest 2006; Vandergeest and Unno 2012). Examples range from the Marine Stewardship Council, Rainforest Alliance and Fair Trade Seafood Program to a myriad of sustainable certification transnational groups.
and organizations. This rather fast transformation within the neoliberal framework of international and domestic policies regarding the environment and food has prompted the poor to reorganize and strategize differently. New actors have appeared on the landscape, and the state has also transformed to continue to serve the goals of development and growth.

The poor strategize for survival by first demanding basic rights from the government by using traditional confrontation strategies like demonstrations, blockades and media pressure (www.huarmeyperu.com). At the same time, they develop mechanisms and instruments through their traditional knowledge and networks to engage in negotiations of rights and resources with other power actors. Both pathways are suitable for achieving their goals, but the latter is enabled by neoliberalism because it fits neoliberal ideologies of more assertive, resourceful and self-accountable citizens free from state dependence (Connolly 2013; Fasenfest 2010; Noman 2012). Indeed, to some extent, underserved communities have successfully learned to combine anti-government rallies and manifestations demanding basic social rights and investments with alternative forms of community or transnational advocacy (Anguelovski and Martínez-Alier 2014; Escobar 2008; 2011; Orlove 2002; Rademacher 2011).

Nonetheless, achieving that prospective civil society is based on the supposition that during the de-centralization process, economic and political capitals and resources will be redistributed, strengthening and equipping communities to face the new scenario (Bloom 2014; Brenner and Theodore 2001; Peck, Grugel and Riggirozzi 2011; Theodore and Brenner 2002). As that redistribution and investment has not happened, the poor have been forced to re-create the means through which they interact with external
stakeholders, giving rise to different versions of leadership, citizenship and governance.
Alternative manifestations of community action, especially by groups whose livelihoods depend upon their constant interaction with their place’s natural resources, include the environment as a central part of their advocacy discourse, addressing jointly environmental, economic and sociopolitical issues (Escobar 2008). These expressions are sustainable in essence, as they pursue the conservation and viability of the natural environment and the community who lives in it.

The artisanal fishing community of Chorrillos has figured out strategies and practices to transform the situation of disadvantage in which its members have lived for generations. This chapter provides knowledge about how fishers found ways to achieve environmental stability, economic survival, and cultural reproduction and, to a lesser extent, political visibility. Drawing from fishers’ responses, it becomes clear that politics only matter when it affects them directly; they are not party supporters nor do they aim to become a movement. This is a community who experiences activism in their everyday lives. I demonstrate how fishers have managed to be part of the city’s political landscape not only by interacting with the state through their formal association, but more importantly through multiple minute power interactions with other actors and institutions that do not necessarily represent the public authority. Multiple factors affect the intensity with which these problems are addressed by the fishers, ranging from international fishmeal prices, incentivizing fishmeal production, to the increasing importance of tourism for the national economy, encouraging investments in the sector. I argue that these problems share the same underlying causes rooted in historical political and socioeconomic inequalities presently being translated and upgraded in the course of the
neoliberal process. Neoliberalism operates at different levels and in different areas. It is not just a political regime nor an economic model, but a comprehensive process transforming every aspect of life. Neoliberalism implies that state accountability should gradually disappear, dispersed to a myriad of new actors like multinational corporations, international advocacy groups or multilateral bodies. The citizen’s role in society acquires a new dimension that requires a proactive, assertive and capable individual who does not need state protection. However, in the field, poor communities and individuals have to perform on the same unequal ground without new resources or opportunities, and now without the state’s intermittent support (Harvey 2005; Mitchell 2011; Nugent 2002; Ong 2006; Rose and Miller 2010; Weyland 2003).

Peru has an export-oriented economy based on natural and non-renewable resource exploitation. As a result, international markets have set the tone of the domestic economic agenda. This happens, for example, through packages of guidelines and recommendations issued to each country by multilateral bodies like the World Bank or the Inter-American Development Bank to correct and adjust internal economies to the current international context. In Peru this has led to an increasing population living in the limbo of the informal economy, as opportunities available to enter the formal market are insufficient, and once entered the formal market benefits and incentives to stay are meager. Thus, informal firms do not transit to the formal economy and instead create their own space of action (De Soto 1989; Graham 1991; Jaramillo 2009; La Porta and Shleifer 2008). According to the INEI (2014) in 2013 the informal economy encompassed more than sixty percent of the national employment offered, about 9 of the 15 million existing jobs, in all sectors. The informal economy has two different yet
complementary dimensions, the sector and employment. On one hand the informal sector comprises productive units that are not registered with tax authorities, and on the other hand informal labor represents those jobs that do not meet any of the legal requirements like social security and other benefits, wage-and-hour requirements, safety inspections, etc. (INEI 2014). Nevertheless, the apathy of the state regarding marginal populations sometimes opens up opportunity for new scenarios of action and advocacy, leading to participatory processes where communities design and carry out their own action plans, or sometimes make new alliances and build solidarity with similar-minded communities and organizations within the country or in the transnational sphere (Appadurai 2001; Rademacher 2011).

However these alternative possibilities did not open in Peru until recently. During Fujimori’s mandate (1990-2000), civil society organizations vanished into the governmental politics of oppression and clientelism (Burt 2006, 2012; Conaghan 2005). Successive governments have not been able to reestablish a functional governance system with active civil society organizations (Bland and Chirinos 2014; Caistor and Villarán 2006). Nevertheless, a growing number of environmental and indigenous movements with relative visibility are advocating and creating alliances with international networks and communities that can eventually change the Peruvian civil society landscape (Ponce and McClintock 2014). Artisanal fishers’ claims have been tangentially included in these new forms of advocacy for their indigenous background or for the protection of their marine environment. Fishers have remained in the margins of these forms of contention, yet they portray another type of resistance rooted in their mutual feedback and dependency on a particular place, which have led them to develop a
rounded knowledge regarding modes of approaching ecosystems sensitive to human intervention, like marine fishing environments. As fishers have lived on the boundaries of formality and have some of their basic needs covered due to the abundance of the bay, and the fairly universal public education system, their actions and demands are difficult to locate within the spectrum of politics of contention, so their grievances are sometimes forcefully associated to those of more familiar undeserved groups. There is still a lack of knowledge of the potential contributions of fishers to current debates; moreover despite some scholarly reports, small media presence and a number of organizations (research institutes, foundations and NGOs) exploring the socio-environmental issues of artisanal fishing, these findings are overlooked by policymakers and authorities. As an example, there is the work of the Center for Sustainability of the Peruvian University Cayetano Heredia and the Peruvian Society of Environmental Law, the online magazine PescaPeru, a list of undergrad and graduate theses written by the students of Fisheries Engineering, from the National Agrarian University-La Molina, and many others, including this dissertation.

The political ecology framework allows me to examine fishers’ problems from a multidisciplinary perspective. Political ecology connects the consequences of environmental degradation with the distant yet determinant political and economic processes behind them. This approach allows one to expose historical power inequities in addressing the implications of natural resources depletion that particularly affects poor and neglected communities. These inequities manifest themselves differently depending on the context in which they operate. The case of Chorrillos shows how these power dynamics have been faced and on occasion challenged by a marginal community whose
livelihood is highly dependent on its interactions with the environment. Over generations, fishers have developed a set of mechanisms and instruments to relate to the marine environment to secure resources for the future, keep the community together and maintain their presence at the dock as stewards of the bay. These strategies have proven effective insofar, as today fishers are major actors within the bay, and, although scarce, there is still product to catch, which allows the community to survive. Yet the fishers’ situation is precarious and fragile.

6.1 Fishers & Co.

The rest of this chapter draws from the data analysis, and explores the nature of the community relationships/interactions with different powerful stakeholders: the central state, government officers and local authorities on one hand, and the Lima Regatta Club and urban elites on the other hand. The detailed descriptions of how fishers deal with different actors in order to achieve their goals allow me to integrate and make sense of the concrete interactions of the economic, environmental and political (sustainable) dimensions of fishers’ everyday lives.

6.1.1 State authority revisited

Fishers’ behavior and conduct with other stakeholders has transformed in order to cope, adapt or counteract issues rooted in neoliberal changes, like fish depletion due to overfishing, scarce resources and opportunities in the city, poor infrastructure due to lack of investment, exclusion from participation in urban development plans and an overall sense of abandonment from the state and society. Such institutional neglect results in a permanent uncertainty and carries the risk of fishers slowly losing their rights to their on-shore territories, forcing them to engage in disputes and transactions with actors that have a better rapport with the state, including the local authorities, media and urban elites. The
role of the neoliberal state thus goes beyond arbitrating the rules and grounds upon which
individuals and organizations interact, and shift into a kind of protection agency of
markets and the interests of private capital, as illustrated in table 4 (Fasenfest 2010a,
2010b).

**Table 4. Paternalistic state versus the neoliberal state**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statist (paternalistic) model</th>
<th>Neoliberal model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State active presence and control over the economy</td>
<td>Primacy of the market rules and values with a supportive state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central state close to the civil society demanding passive citizens and support to state policies</td>
<td>State distances itself from the civil society as other actors, organizations and institutions (public or private) appeared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights, resources and services are provided by the central state to secure popular support</td>
<td>Rights, resources and services are provided to those individuals or groups proactive and self-sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability lies in the central state</td>
<td>Accountability vanishes among other actors, organizations and institutions (public or private)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A union-type organization therefore is functional because it can be coopted and controlled by hierarchical structure of the state</td>
<td>An association-type organization is the result of neoliberal policies of reworking civil society organizations into independent groups able to manage (gestionar) their own rights, resources and services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is evident, for instance, when fishers speak about the privilege enjoyed by
the fishmeal industry, reflected not only in soft fishing regulations and corrupt
enforcement, but also in its minimal contribution in terms of royalties to the national state
or to the artisanal sector. Fishers have confronted this problem by asking the central state
and politicians for regulatory changes and state presence, while strengthening and
consolidating their position in the dock through organizing tourist activities, networking
with local organizations and interacting directly with Club members. Following a natural
disaster or during low season, the community leadership visits the fishing authorities in downtown Lima, submits its grievances and usually receives promises of aid that rarely are fulfilled.

As expected, the state still makes promises to its subjects and partially fulfills them when needed, to win elections or to satisfy the international community’s requirements for development standards. However, it is difficult for fishers to receive government support, as the aid available targets primarily communities in critical condition; fishers, although poor, have their basic needs met. Additionally, as a former employee of the Ministry of Production posited “ellos tienen el mar y pueden pescar lo que quieran y no pagan impuestos ni nada” [they have the sea at their disposal to fish whatever they want without paying taxes or anything]. According to this view, fishers access to water, tenancy and use of the bay and its facilities, should be regarded as sufficient to keep them satisfied. Fishers, aware of this perception, have found a balance between activism and low-visibility that has served to preserve their authority over the dock without conflicting with the state. In a way, the state has created institutions to award responsible and proactive fishers and communities, or fishing populations in dire conditions. As Chorrillos does not fit into any of these categories, years ago fishers learned that regular aid institutions would not respond to their needs.

The Fondo Nacional para el Desarrollo Pesquero y la Acuicultura, Fondepes [Fund for the Artisanal Fishing and Aquaculture Development] serves as an example to illustrate this point. It was created as a public institution responsible for developing products to promote artisanal fishing, facilitating accessible credit lines and different products that help consolidate and improve artisanal fishers’ sustainability and identity:
financial support, building infrastructure and technical training as well as guidance in
goods and services to aquaculture projects (fondepes.gob.pe). Fondepes was established to redirect
fishmeal industry contributions, foreign aid money and public budgets to the artisanal
communities. As portrayed on the institution’s website, thousands of fishers have
received micro-loans and specialized training, and enjoy brand new facilities. However,
fishers interviewed for this study complained about bureaucratic barriers to accessing
these funds, including formalization, collaterals, and government loans, whose interest
rates, while comparatively low to the commercial banks, are still more expensive than the
*gota a gota* (an informal small-loan at high interest rate made by a private individual to
the fisher, who returns the money making direct daily small-payments) or the local
moneylender. Furthermore, the selection criteria for investments begin with the artisanal
dock’s relevance to the national fishing sector. Therefore only a small portion of the total
number of artisanal fishers (44,161) will be trained, and investments in infrastructure will
not reach the 116 identified landing points (INEI 2012; Fondepes 2015). Similarly, San
Andrés/Paracas, a fishing bay located in the southern state of Pisco and destroyed by a
tsunami in 2007, was granted with a new unloading dock that opened in 2011. However
despite the upgrade, it is under-utilized, as fishers have no interest in changing most of
their traditional practices. The expectation is that modern facilities bring about forward-
thinking communities, but that does not appear to be borne out in fact.

The state also approaches the fisher in a more individualistic, localized and
decentralized fashion, directly on the work dock through *Produce* (Ministry of
Production) extensionists. State power and authority survive and are reinforced under the
decentralization process. While the state central structure is being reduced to satellite,
regional and local offices, which in reality are only processing entities, in presidential regimes like the Peruvian, the executive power still controls key aspects of state structure like budget allocation, major investments in infrastructure, licensing for resource exploitation, tax regimes, and so forth. With the purpose of taking the institutions to the public in the neighborhood, the countryside and other territories, the state creates the illusion of proximity between citizen and government, translating the burden of gaining rights and resources to the communities.

In 2013, Produce restructured its artisanal fishing unit, decentralizing its extension system, giving that function to local authorities, who are still trying to find a place for the new personnel in their administration. However, communities close to Lima’s metropolitan area, including Pucasana, Chorrillos and Ancón, remain under the aegis of the director of the artisanal fishing unit directly responsible to the Minister. After multiple conversations with different current and former workers of Produce, I realized that the main goal of the extensionist working *in situ* with communities is to facilitate the paperwork regarding the multiple formalization processes and requirements needed to operate and continue having a quasi-formal relationship with the state. This does not mean the extensionist is a courier or errand-person of the minister. Instead the extensionist is a sort of translator of the intricate rules and complex forms that have to be completed and a facilitator of interactions between fishers and other public institutions.

For the ongoing transition from union to association, fishers had to revise the *padrón* or the register book, and include only members with up-to-date artisanal fisher identification. The naval authority issues the artisanal fisher ID, and since it is an exhaustive and expensive process, the majority of fishers did not apply for it on their
own. As it is a requirement to remain members of the new organization, the Produce office facilitated the process by subsidizing the issuing fees and bringing the institutions to the dock instead of fishers having to travel to offices in Lima’s downtown. The extensionist also helped the fishers to fill out the forms and explained to the General Assembly and individually to fishers about the necessity and direct benefits of having the ID and being an association. Similarly, the extensionist, who is usually a young fishing engineer, participates in meetings that fishers hold with other institutions or stakeholders representing Produce. The extension agent usually presents the ministry position on a given issue, but generally in a more softened manner, as there is complicity between fishers and the agent. Precisely, fishers consider the agent a person, although paid by the government, whose job is to help fishers navigate state bureaucracy as much as possible. Fishers are also aware that an extensionist can achieve very little within the ministry; however, they have found an interesting balance keeping the agent on their side while advancing at their own pace in meeting the formalization requirements of the government.

This is how the state manifests itself in the life of the fishers. Each participant in this relationship of power plays a different role. The macro-scenario prescribes that formal communities are able to manage their own resources and raise their own funds with the help of public or private institutions. Additionally, communities are environmentally accountable to society, and hence alliances with other domestic and international organizations to help fulfill this responsibility or actually improve their managing practices, are welcomed. In practice fishers’ symbolic power is restated daily via presence and fair use of their territory, and interactions with more powerful
stakeholders. The central state is not reduced to the extension agent, but that friendly insertion in the community ensures institutional presence with two dissimilar effects—a reminder of the preeminent state authority over the territory, and at the same time a legitimizer of the fishers’ occupation. The extensionist’ limited power within the ministry facilitates the encounter of two neglected subjects, the fisher and a low-ranking public servant. If the state is unable to provide for its own members, how can it satisfy artisanal fishers’ needs?

6.1.2 Relationship with non-state actors, a complicated friendship

Fishers have learned to manage and move forward alternative yet meaningful power interactions with stakeholders other than the state. The bay’s strategic location has made Chorrillos an attractive leisure destination for Lima’s residents and visitors for decades. As the bay is one of the few portions of the city’s shoreline with sand beaches suitable for bathers, it quickly became a balneario, or resort, for wealthy European-descendant families. In view of these attributes, traditional elites built the Lima Regatta Club in 1875, an exclusive space to enjoy the beach and practice aquatic sports. Urban growth and waves of rural and underprivileged migrants from the interior eventually meant that elites had to find new leisure spaces further south of the city in places called Asia and Sur Chico, more than one hour away from Lima.

As such, obligated to be neighbors, fishers and the Club have learned to relate and interact over the years, sharing an ongoing history of tensions and agreements. This low intensity territorial dispute has not been an obstacle to reaching consensus around specific issues. Examples of arrangements among the fishers and Club members have taken place at personal, communitarian and institutional levels. An old fisher recalls that during the time of abundance about thirty years ago, when large-size and highly commercial fish
were found close to shore, he had as loyal buyers some of the Club’s members. Fish availability therefore oiled and facilitated different formal and informal interactions that occurred despite the fishers’ poverty status. According to an old fisher’s testimony, almost every summer morning while returning from his first fishing trip of the day, a Club’s member and his bodyguards were swimming in the ocean. They would run into each other, and when they were close, swimmers asked the fisher for his fresh catch and bought almost his entire product. Then the fish was taken to the Club’s kitchens. These sorts of personal and informal transactions were customary, and several fishers still have their own clients among Regatta Club members. Fishers recall that knowing that the doctores from the Club were ready to buy their product, the fishing effort was reduced and they focused only on catching large, high-quality fish like lenguados [flounder], jureles (mackerel) and bonitos. The transaction was simple. Fishers asked for a price and buyers paid it without bargaining, aware that such price covered the cost of the fish, plus the preservation of the business relationship, a contribution to the fishers’ family, and also as an indirect donation to the community. Fishers in turn, did not charge excessively high prices, but what they considered fair without paying a lot of attention to official market prices, “se les cobraba lo justo, nada más” [we charged a fair price, nothing more, nothing less].

In the water, where fishers and swimmers met, the conversation went beyond the mere economic transaction, and information about the fishing operation, current events, and families were exchanged. Although the fishing and non-fishing communities performed following their own interests, they did it under an informal set of rules that indirectly created socioeconomic and political stability. The presence of Regatta Club
persuaded the state to exert regular control over that corner of the city, allowing the emergence of interactions based more on history and tradition than on official regulatory agendas. For the fishers, the Club represented not only the upper class, but also the government, politics and economy of Lima and the country, so the state was present through these multiple minute power interactions, yet embodied in an eminently private body, the Club.

The weight of these interactions remains today, and both players fuel it. A few years ago the former fishers’ leadership fell behind in water service payments to Sedapal, the public water company, and the water service was cut off. Although the fishers did get caught up, due to logistic and bureaucratic problems the service had not been restored. To alleviate this situation the Club stepped in and gave water to the dock, while mediating with the authorities for a faster solution in this and other issues. In addition to helping prevent a health crisis in the neighborhood, the Club earns other symbolic benefits from helping the community, like gaining presence at the dock and strengthening its reputation for corporate social responsibility. Besides, fishers lend parking space to the Club during the high season, and although the community could use such areas more profitably, the Club is given preference. This is similar to the interaction with the extension agent, where the fishers facilitate the agent’s job even though the potential benefits for the community were minimal. In this instance, they make it easy for the Club to fulfill its obligation to demonstrate social responsibility to the city’s stakeholders and the general public. This is relevant for the Club because inequalities are evident in this part of the city, particularly by looking at the bay from a higher point, the wealth of the neat and uniformed Club’s beach, contrasted with the neighboring resourceless, disorganized and scattered fishers’
bay. By partnering with the fishers in multiple low-impact projects, the Club demonstrates a permanent a set of good deeds to keep the public content. After multiple conversations with Limeños, fishing actors and visitors of the bay, I perceived a general consensus about the positive role of the Club in helping the fishers and keeping the area relatively safe and linked to city development. For instance, the Club was determinant in the construction of the Costanera, a road connecting the airport and other parts of the city with Chorrillos, and attracting a broader range of tourists to the bay. In all, the Club is considered a good neighbor and as such surrounding communities strive to become part of the Club’s social agenda. Even the municipality knows that having a good relationship with the Club facilitates other interactions with major political actors at the national level. The Club built up its network of influence covering national and municipal as well as local and neighborhood levels, becoming virtually indispensable to any project involving the bay and the district.

The Club’s predominant importance is the outcome of multiple specific relationships that its members have tailored for generations with political and economic elites. Despite the country’s political changes and economic growth that led to the emergence of new powerful players of different economic and political origin, the Club’s image as representative of traditional yet current elites remains intact. Fishers have gained from the Club’s resistance to change of status. Since changes in the fishers’ territories or waters will have direct repercussions to the Club’s geographic landscape, the Club has to make sure that eventual transformations will not disrupt their members’ ability to practice aquatic sports or have convenient access roads. For example, the construction of an unloading dock for large vessels, expansion of the existing pier or
similar projects affecting marine or on-ground traffic, would affect the main attractiveness of the Club, which is a peaceful leisure spot conveniently close to members’ living and working places.

Neoliberalism as a socioeconomic and political process implies a minimal state that contributes to consolidation of a self-regulated market where investments, capitals and resources will be effectively, optimally and coherently allocated; reported outcomes nevertheless are pervasive market failures, social polarization, uneven development and so forth. Likewise, neoliberalism entails, among other flaws, the instrumental role of the state to protect major industries, prevention and elimination of organized labor, restriction of social mobility, intensification of inter-locality competition and criminalization of the urban poor (Lin and Mele 2003). However, in order to transit from a more ideological stance to a concrete criticism exposing inequalities and privilege, it is necessary to observe neoliberalism acting in the lives of people who live in specific geographical and sociocultural spaces. By identifying how neoliberalism works *in situ*, criticisms and solutions that seem initially unrealistic and unattainable become real and feasible. Chorrillos’ fishing community, in this case, has struggled against dispossession and relocation attempts via minute power negotiations and transactions and have managed to stay in their traditional grounds. Neoliberal effects come to light in fishers’ lives not through unstoppable macro-development urban plans, but through a multiple set of relationships with political and economic elites, where resources and opportunities have been systematically denied, or intentionally distributed to preserve the conditions that keep fishers bound by poverty and neglect.
6.1.3 Prospect of the new dock

As the city expanded, especially during the years of terrorism in the 1990s (INEI 2001), the bay began to receive more visitors from Lima’s newly founded *pueblos jóvenes* and surrounding low income neighborhoods. Growing tourism prompt fishers to not only envision alternative income sources but also to strengthen their role as symbolic owners of the bay. In this regard, fishers exercise sovereignty not only by posing as custodians of Olaya’s heritage, but also portraying the dock as a place where the poor can access the coast. By providing a safe and accessible beach space for poor families that otherwise the city offers very partially, fishers became touristic-service operators, gaining visibility and eventual support from their clientele as they offer inexpensive services to the community.

Fishers are aware of the Club’s need for growth and consequent interest in their beach areas, yet this has always been a constant low-intensity dispute that has not prevented the parties from reaching more significant but yet implicit consensus over particular situations. The tone of the fishers-Club relationship also has ramifications regarding recently issued urban development plans aiming to transform Lima’s coastline, including the fishers’ bay. Even though fishers are the only established community on the coastal strip, they do not have representation in the coordinating board of the project, leaving them at a disadvantage when facing the municipalities or developers. However, fishers believe that the coastline and dock-restructuring project could bring positive changes to the dock by creating jobs, income opportunities and attracting a wider range of tourists with greater economic capacity. The Club does not have representation either, but its interest in the project is clear because it is an opportunity to improve access roads as well as infrastructure and public safety in surrounding areas. Therefore, increasing the
commercial value of the area, attracting investments and a public with greater purchasing power, and above all restoring the traditionally exclusive status to the bay area implies a process of self-displacement and relocation in the peripheries of Chorrillos and neighborhood districts of current low income Chorrillos’ inhabitants. Representation is symbolic for both fishers and the Club, but while this is functional for the Club leadership, it does not favor the community. The Club could influence the decisions but it is not exposed if the outcomes are questioned by the public; however, for fishers, being under the Club’s wing means giving up their voice in favor of the Club, and relying on internal and non-written negotiations made with the Club as well. In this regard, for the Club it is important to have the fishers’ vote in the project, and they are confident that they can keep having direct understandings with the community. Similarly, fishers consider the Club a supporter in this contemporary transformative process.

With the goal of reviving and renovating the entire city’s coastline from Callao to Chorrillos, Metropolitan Lima created a decentralized entity called Autoridad del Proyecto Costa Verde [Costa Verde Project Authority]. The purpose of this Authority is to coordinate and facilitate the integral and sustainable development of the coast by promoting private and public investments in infrastructure and other projects. Framed into a national decentralization effort, the Authority is neither national nor municipal and although public, it has administrative, technical, economic and financial autonomy. This is how power works in a neoliberal framework. Such autonomy is key to attracting private investments, as they can skip the step of dealing with the central state’s bureaucracy and corruption, and trade directly with a more amenable, accessible and cooperative institution. The Authority’s website, media reports and opinion leaders
coincide in the advantages of this new paradigm that favors Lima’s progress and modernization (apcvperu.gob.pe; comercio.pe; gestion.pe). Major delegates of each municipality have a seat on the Authority advisory board, which also includes a representative of the city’s mutual fund. Moreover, the Authority can issue regulations and executive orders of a binding nature, reorganizing land and beach-uses, for example, from residential to commercial or deciding about the convenience of preserving the cliffs or building infrastructure. The mandate of the Authority is eminently technical, precisely to free this entity from political pressures; however this could end up in the capture of the Authority itself by private actors and the complete loss of accountability. This type of decentralization that evolves to a poly-centered centralization, manifest in the creation of a new set of technical institutions, is designed to transfer state’s power and resources to third parties but keep accountability out of the equation, discouraging communities from pursuing explanations (http://www.apcvperu.gob.pe).

Specifically in Chorrillos, in September 2015, the Club as part of its “ethical” commitment to society, opened a design competition to improve the infrastructure, life quality and landscape of the Fishers’ Beach (Playa Pescadores is the official name of the beach that hosts the fishing community), prioritizing fishers’ wellbeing. The project, organized by the Club and other Costa Verde Project’s stakeholders, will be financed through the system of special tax regimes and exemptions for private actors investing in public infrastructure. As expected, several investors are lined up waiting for the go-ahead to begin construction. It is a matter of months before permits are issued. Proposals should focus on recovering the beach, improving the dock and the fish market, offering an original gastronomic alternative to the public (Clubregatas.org.pe), while including the
fishing community. The jury was composed of seven members: two from the Club, the president and architect, one from the Architects’ Association, one from the Schools of Design Association, one from the city of Lima, one from Chorrillos’ district and finally, one from the artisanal fishers’ Association.

The competition finished on October 17, 2015 and the award was given to a project proposing a modern structure that will replace the entire dock. The new place, according to the information available on the winning project, has been designed from an eminently tourist-oriented perspective. The main facilities are a modern hotel, food sale stands and very long sidewalks, footbridges and lounge spaces for visitors to admire the surroundings; in short, the new dock looks like an extension of the Club’s facilities.

Despite the emphasis placed on the fishers throughout all the competition documentation, it is evident the designer’s lack of knowledge of the fishers and community’s daily lives, routines and necessities. Basic activities like net mending are not pictured in the proposal, nor a space for ground-anchor for their boats, etc., which suggest that fishers will have a difficult time adapting to the new infrastructure.

Interestingly, the Club has carefully integrated fishers in each stage of the competition process; this is determinant since the Club is basically acting on fishers’ behalf out of solidarity and ethical values expressed in the Club’s statutes. Thus, if fishers are not on board, the whole renovation project breaks down along with the Club’s social values discourse. To avoid the risk of fishers’ desertion, the Club socialized the project as another effort to help the fishers, offering its leverage and resources towards this end. As a result, fishers felt compelled not only to endorse the competition, but also to accept the Club’s agency and advice in instances like the competition preparatory meetings, where
fishers interacted with designers to engage in conversations about the best possible way to address fishers’ own issues. According to testimonies and conversations with members of the community, fishers see the Club as a broker between them and the economic and political actors including the state, investors, local authorities, etc., who years ago should have helped them improve their situation. In this transaction, fishers are aware that investments will not come for free, and they will have to let other entities and businesses work in their territory. However, the scope of this incursion will be decided by the Association, which will count with the support of the Club and the society in general. As a fisher posited, “usted cree que la gente va a dejar que nos saquen de aquí, si nosotros somos de aquí, la gente lo sabe” [do you really think that the people will let them kick us out? We’re from here, people know and they will support us.] Conversely, as strong as the fishers’ territorial certitude is the Club’s belief that its agency will only benefit the community, and by no means it will threaten their way of life. The Club’s knowledge on fishers’ issues stemmed from their long-standing relationship based on trust and mutual support. The Club also uses to its advantage the evident poor and precarious fishers’ situation, and argues that it is unexplainable how fishers have been unable to crystallize economic profit out of the beach and marine grounds. The Club reflects that in the spirit of solidarity, it is called upon to participate in helping out. From the fishers view, the prospective vast investments represent them as an even poorer community, which needs all the help it can get.

Limeños’ opinion is not divided, but yet it is aligned with the goal of the Club in particular and the Costa Verde project in general as it appears on the Club website (www.crl.pe) of achieving for the fishers a better standard of living by re-constructing
and modernizing the dock. However, the implicit objective of the restructuring project is to minimize and alienate fishers’ presence and activity on the beach and the bay, because as promoted by different media outlets, informational videos and reports, fishers’ improvements will arrive once the dock is transformed into a major gastronomic and touristic center for the city (El Comercio 2015). Based on informal conversations with different Lima residents from different background including media, authorities, private actors, visitors, neighbors, workers, etc., they see the project as the inevitable transit from backwardness to modernity. In this logic, fishers are associated with underdevelopment and poverty, and the new dock with progress and wealth. Even fishers have been led to believe that the only way left in order to keep their territory and livelihood is supporting this dock-restructuring project. Therefore the tone of the debate is not about the convenience of the project, but how it will least affect the fishers’ culture, detaching in this particular moment the territory that needs to be transformed and the community who lives in it.

I argue that from the beginning fishers have been secondary to the Costa Verde Authority and to the Club’s role in the project; for the latter two entities, the ideal scenario would be a beach without fishers and ready for development. However, the fishers’ importance as historical inhabitants of the bay and symbolic owners of that piece of the city’ coast have different effects. It has put pressure on the involved authorities and developers to include fishers, at least symbolically, in any plans for the future dock. This is problematic since the fishers’ lack of formal education and knowledge is interpreted as ignorance, and therefore instead of recognizing and embracing fishers’ input, they will be “educated” on what is best for their community, the fishing and the city. In this regard,
fishers need to find ways to be heard by the people leading the project, as well as take advantage of the big urban impact of the project because it might open a window through which they can present their case to the public and expose how they are being overlooked and excluded from actively contributing to the project.
CHAPTER 7: IMPLICATIONS

Findings from this study hold important implications for the artisanal fishing sector and other stakeholders, policymakers, community individuals from the city, and researchers who seek to understand and contribute with that knowledge to a more fair and informed discussion about the realities of the artisanal fishing communities. Also, this work underlines the importance of integrating critical interdisciplinary perspectives, methodologies like in-depth case study approaches into research on poor communities whose livelihood is highly dependent on their reciprocal relationship with the nature and the environment. Private and public institutions and individuals interested in contributing to the debate regarding the viability and future of rural or urban artisanal fishing communities can take action promoting and issuing regulation and policy, designing programs and other resources or approaching communities to observe the reality from their point of view. Precisely, a deeper understanding of fishers’ reality, their struggles and victories, and the kind of help that works best for them, is the first step in this task. Afterwards, a more nuanced approach to fisheries development privileging communities’ wellbeing has to be negotiated with more powerful stakeholders, politicians, land and business owners, multinational corporations and multilateral organizations. These actions have to be concomitant as threats of displacement and forced relocation that endanger communities’ ways of life and traditions are already under way.

In this instance, entities like Fondepes and the office of artisanal fishing of Produce, through their extensionists who have a positive rapport with fishing communities, are in a position to advocate for this new approach. First, they have to recognize and understand the intrinsic bond between fishers and territory, which in most
cases have led communities over the generations to balance their cultural and ecologic necessities to the requirements for self-sufficiency and formalization of the predominant political and economic systems. Second, once difference is acknowledged, and while programs and regulations change to account for these considerations, authorities and field agents should work together with and advise fishers, always bearing in mind that fishers’ on- and offshore territories have the same importance for the fishing community and serve similar cultural and ecological purposes. This long-term approach, although difficult to undertake because it requires decisive political will, should demonstrate early results that will eventually inform artisanal fishing public policy. By the same token, research groups associated with universities, non-profits or NGOs can also contribute to this task by doing more fieldwork and engaging in mutual learning processes with the communities. The work done by these institutions to date has been insufficient, and fishers alone are still confronting conditions that undermine their wellbeing. Researchers and students working with fishing communities should prioritize fieldwork and overall strive to engage in direct conversation with community members, which over time will provide them with realistic perspective on the community’s issues. Afterwards, multilevel, collaborative, interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder initiatives should be designed and implemented but using fishers’ experience as feedstock to come out with nuanced approaches producing beneficial outcomes for fishing communities and marine environments.

Defining development as overcapitalization and short-term profit, as Peruvian elites do, has put excessive pressure on those communities unable to achieve these goals, undermining alternative pathways to overcome poverty through prioritizing traditional
and community-based practices. This study aims to assist individuals or groups interested in understanding why the adoption or endorsement of this specific development model is having adverse consequences for communities, while encouraging them to become agents of change. To expose the problems of mainstream development and emphasis on nuanced approaches to address poverty should not be alien to the work of different social stakeholders. In this case, communicating the findings and conclusions of this study in academic journals should be complemented with publications in outlets with broader audiences, which may in the end reach specialized political and technical audiences and organizations that would include these implications in their materials. More importantly though, is how this work has been socialized with the fishers themselves, the most important stakeholder. Precisely, through my conversations with the fishers and community members, I gained knowledge of the fishers’ own process of re-creation and transformation, imperceptible but dynamic. As a result of my learning process with them, I believe that fishers at least understood the purpose of my conversations, visits and stays in the dock: to learn about their culture, social processes and struggles. Although I support the fishers’ struggle, I did not pretend to have answers or solutions to their issues, despite (or because of) coming from an American university, institutions typically associated with top-down plans and well-funded projects. I gained rapport with the fishers after several visits to the dock—in conversations, attending general assemblies, building friendships with some fishers and families and through other interactions—, which allowed me to explain in different settings the purposes of my presence. In turn, I could engage in extended and meaningful conversations where we shared opinions and
perceptions of the situation of the world, politics, and society that allowed me the opportunity to formalize their experience in research, with their cooperation.

This ethnographic study of artisanal fishers can re-conceptualize how researchers, policymakers and others intervene to work for the inclusion and improvement of these communities. Fishers face the contradiction of having been completely excluded from the country’s socioeconomic and political development, while being currently forced into an even more aggressive development process. Initially, the city growth turned its back to the sea and therefore to fishers, but today when the shoreline is seen as a source of profit, it has to be built immediately regardless of whose livelihood depends on this territory. Thus, the more aware stakeholders are of the delicate balance between community and nature intrinsic to their way of life and traditions, fishers will have better chances of survival.

Fishers from Chorrillos are used to the intermittent presence of the state, visible during times of crisis or elections with handouts, gifts, etc., but completely absent at other times. Fishers have learned to live between two realities; the state does not represent an eminent threat for fishers’ permanence in the bay, but nevertheless fishers strive to keep the government content to ensure that their place and lifestyle is not jeopardized. Building on their traditional and ecological knowledge, fishers developed into a viable urban community that adopts modernization at its own pace and ought to be supported—as stated in the Regatta Club’s Dock Modernization competition documents. These transformative adaptations are concrete and physical, producing visible effects both symbolic and material, like painting and repairing a building with money donated by the franchised beer company, going to training sessions organized by the Produce
extensionist, having meetings with members of social organizations on specific topics, accommodating and providing services to a number of low income visitors, and so forth; in sum, establishing minute synergistic power relationships with multiple actors. The movement from a statist to a neoliberal context suggests a shift from a patriarchal organizational response to what may turn out to be contested identities among social categories within the so-called community of Chorrillos. Specifically the shift from sindicato to Asociación implies pressures toward diverse associational groups: male and female, age groups, and differentiation into occupational groups, even within the fishers’ community due to former disagreements, proximity to political parties or factions, and so forth. These diverse identities and potential proliferation of associations provide a fertile basis for future studies. Chorrillos fishers will face a complex situation when other associations arise because it will provide the authorities and power actors the opportunity to discredit or deny the legitimacy of the traditional fishers association. If new organizations use more inclusive criteria, they could have a chance to succeed in at least, taking away part of the authority from the traditional association.

The way fishers have faced and confronted demands for change and progress illustrates to other stakeholders potential pathways to engage communities in faster-pace processes of transformation. Micro-interventions should be pursued after the processes of collective deliberation to learn from and with the community about their interpretations of reality, priorities and practices, to adapt and fine-tune ongoing development plans and construction projects.

Artisanal fishers, peasants, indigenous and black communities, and other underrepresented groups have been historically ordered into social hierarchies, keeping
them in poverty and allowing another set of individuals to secure their own position of power and privilege. Therefore, the situation of marginalization, exploitation, dispossession and de-territorialization of the poor is the outcome of decisions deliberately taken by those in power to maintain their status and predominance at expense of the majority of the population. Neoliberalism added new actors and institutions to the same problem. Those new actors complicate the setting, but encourage the conviction that without the state, a free market alongside a liberal economy will produce answers to address poverty and inequality.

Within these strictures, the first goal of this dissertation is to dismiss such assumptions, unveil the complexity and inevitability of the neoliberal argument and provide a detailed example of how a traditional community has figured out ways from their day-to-day experience to adapt and survive in contemporary urban society. I showed how via low-cost micro-interventions tackling specific issues relevant to the community and a few interested stakeholders, non-radical yet effective solutions could be employed with rather positive effects in the long term. To identify how fishers’ experience provides inputs for the formulation of alternative urban ecologies that integrate marine stewardship, socioeconomic viability and cultural values, is also a pending task of the city. Additional research on place-based communities in the city could make visible how other groups strategize to survive poverty through re-formulating their relationship with the environment.

Low-income urban communities experience geographical, socioeconomic and political marginalization, which keep them trapped in poverty given the multiple layers of difficulties they have to overcome in order to move upward in the social scale. Yet,
macro-level and top-down efforts to radically change the situation of the poor usually fail due to lack of community involvement in planning, and unrealistic expectations laid down in the projects. This study provides an illustration of how fishers have succeeded in preserving their territory and cultural traditions until today. Fishers, building on their intimate bond with the bay, were able to produce mechanisms and strategies to address economic and political exclusion that have helped them remain viable despite their situation of deprivation. However, the growing importance of the Chorrillos bay and Lima’s coastline for the city’s development and modernization plans poses a new and greater pressure over the fishers’ future. Once again a comprehensive plan to reform the city’s coastal landscape will be implemented, but with the difference that there are no official institutions to ensure that fishers’ rights will not be violated. Despite the adverse situation, the current time is an opportunity for advocates and activists of artisanal fishing to support a community that is unique in multiple aspects. Although commoditization of the environment and natural resources is negative, it has activated the media and public opinion that have turned their attention to the issues like global warming, ocean pollution, etc. In other words, environmental issues are already on the public agenda, and this type of focus can provide such problems with a face and a voice that people slowly will be ready to see and hear.

The findings of this ethnographically-grounded account also contributes to future research and interventions directed to addressing problems concerning place-based communities in less developed countries, either in rural or urban areas. The importance of history, traditions and how kinship liaisons are built through generations among the group’s members should be a central concern of scholars, advocates and policymakers
attempting to engage with traditional communities. In the case of Chorrillos fishers, an initial assessment will pass over crucial aspects of the community social fabric, only visible from the less privileged point of view. To design and successfully carry out projects to help communities leave poverty, it is necessary to engage in a second-level of reflection and questioning initial assessments, which usually prescribe large investments in infrastructure and the strengthening of community organizations. Once these external actors are able to see the network of kinship interactions, understand how they are created and re-created every day, and what purposes, functions and services they provide to the community, micro-level interventions and low-capital investments drawing from ongoing community actions will make sense. Consequently, commonalities and meeting points among place-based communities will come to light as well as alternative creative ways to deal with the barriers and challenges faced by underserved groups and individuals.

In terms of theory and methodology, this dissertation holds important implications for researchers and scholars. Fishers’ experience, traditional knowledge, ecological expertise and socioeconomic resourcefulness may encourage researchers to ask further questions regarding the role of artisanal fishers in development projects designed to recover (for the city) the coastline and beach areas. The community of Chorrillos is a testimony of resilience, and a lesson about the implications of neoliberal global realities on small local communities to advocates, agents and other stakeholders. In other words, this study is evidence of a permanent feedback between global and local transformations; neoliberalism occurs at both levels and it is precisely for that reason that exposing how it operates is often difficult. This account shows connections between local and community-level issues (dispossession, resource deprivation, etc.) and major economic
and political measures, like signing free trade agreements with larger powers, abiding by the recommendations of multilateral organizations, de-centralizing and re-centralizing some of the state functions, privatizing essential public services, and creating public-private partnerships.

Qualitative data allowed for a detailed description using fishers’ own voices, reflections and lived experiences to bring forward the strategies and mechanisms they use to survive, culturally reproduce and keep a presence in the bay in the face of recent neoliberal transformations. The ethnographic approach provided detailed, current, reliable and holistic data of the community’s everyday life. Using a case study methodology enabled me to situate the community of Chorrillos in specific political and economic contexts, from which fishers have answered the questions posed at the beginning of this study. Similarly, this methodological choice permitted a balance between writing a rigorous account for the scholarly community, and an intelligible story about artisanal fishing for a broader community.

Political ecology of difference serves to analyze these realities. This theoretical framework facilitates the process of unveiling the circuits linking local and global realms, while providing, from the less privileged perspective, alternative epistemological pathways of approaching social groups and individuals. Neglected communities perceive themselves as active participants of the political and socioeconomic life of their territory, region and nation, delivering through their everyday actions cultural traditions and knowledge relevant to addressing poverty and exclusion. In this regard, for instance, fishers do not see themselves as resourceless individuals, although they are aware of the multiple structural obstacles in place and pressures on their territory, culture and way of
life. Yet, for more than a century they have built their lives from their collectively produced knowledge of the marine ecosystem that allowed them to create a stable economic and social environment, with strong kinship relations and institutions that have served to reproduce their culture. Fishers’ strategies for culturally survival and reproduction contain environmental, political and economic lessons for the artisanal fishing stakeholder and the larger society. Research on small communities, therefore, after identifying the threads connecting global and local issues, should identify how communities, in order to achieve stability and overcome poverty, negotiate—and win in some cases—opportunities, resources and rights against powerful actors.
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APPENDIX: SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

For women

1. Where are you from? If not from Lima, why did you come to the city?
2. How long have you been a member of this artisanal fishing community of Chorrillos?
3. For what reasons did you come to work on the dock? Are you relative of a fisher?
4. What activities do you do on the dock? Have you always done the same activities?
5. Do you have alternative sources of income?
6. How do you describe the importance of the dock in your life?
7. Do you participate in the decisions affecting the dock (taken by other fishers or the Union)? If so, how do you make your voice heard?
8. How was your business in the past and how it is today?
9. Why it has changed? What changes have taken place on the dock and in the city that have affected your (economic) life? (Urban, political, environmental transformations)
10. How do you see the economic future of the dock? And yours?
11. What do you think would be a positive future for you and your family?
12. Is the Union important for your family’s future? Are there ways in which it needs to be changed to be more effective in the future?

For young fishers

1. Where are you from? If not from Lima, why did you come to the city?
2. When did you first come to the dock? Why?
3. Have you been working elsewhere? Describe the type of activities.
4. When did you learn to fish? Who taught you?
5. What do you like (and dislike) about fishing?
6. What type of fishing do you perform? What type do you prefer?
7. Did you go to the school? What was the last grade that you completed?
8. Would you prefer to be doing something different? Or alternative to fishing?
9. Do you like the city? Explain.
10. What occupations do members of your family have?
11. What do you think will be the economic future of the dock?
12. Where do you see yourself in the future?

To all interviewees (emphasis on fishers)

The dock

1) Do you remember your first visits to Chorrillos?
2) How old were you? Who were you with?
3) Why did you keep coming to the dock?
4) When did you begin to fish? Who taught you how to fish?
5) What kind of fishing was that?
6) What type of gear did you use? Have they changed? Have you changed your gear or your mode of fishing? If not, why have you not updated and upgraded your fishing gear and methods?
The environment
7) What meaning does the sea have in your life and in the life of your family?
8) Did anyone teach you how to be a steward of the sea? How did they do it in the past?
9) Currently, what do you do to protect the species/types of fish that you catch every day? What do you do to protect the marine environment? What does the community do to protect it? What do you think you should do to better protect the sea?
10) What are the major reasons behind fish scarcity? How should scarcity be addressed?
11) What do you see as the major barriers for an adequate marine stewardship?
12) Who external to the community have concerns about the marine ecosystems of the Chorrillos’ coast?
13) What other issues related to the environment worry you? Why are they important? How do you learn about them? Do they relate to you directly or indirectly? Why?

The city
14) Where do you live? (If he or she live in Chorrillos), have you always lived in Chorrillos?
15) Where did you live before living in your current house? What is your present housing situation? (owner, tenant, other)
16) Most fishers in Chorrillos spend most of the time on the dock and go very little to the city. What are the reasons that make you go to the city?
17) What are the major problems the city must address to improve the quality of life here?
18) Do you vote to elect the union’s board of directors? Do you believe it is important to vote? Did you vote in the last municipal election? If not a union member, did Union members discuss the election with you? What were the major issues the candidates for Union office addressed?
19) Do you belong to any political party? Are you a member or supporter of any social, civic, or political movement?

In Spanish

Para las mujeres

1) ¿Usted de dónde es? Si no es de Lima entonces ¿cómo llegó a la ciudad?
2) ¿Hace cuánto tiempo es miembro de esta comunidad?
3) ¿Cuáles fueron las razones por las que usted se vino a trabajar al muelle? ¿Es familiar de algún pescador?
4) ¿Qué actividades hace en el muelle? ¿Siempre ha hecho lo mismo?
5) ¿Tiene otras fuentes de trabajo o ingreso?
6) ¿Qué tan importante es el muelle en su vida?
7) ¿Participa usted y de qué manera en las decisiones que se toman los pescadores o el sindicato y que afectan al muelle?
8) ¿Cómo era antes su negocio y cómo ha cambiado a través del tiempo?
9) ¿Por qué cree que ha cambiado? ¿Qué cambios han pasado en el muelle o en la ciudad que hayan afectado su negocio?
10) ¿Cómo va el futuro económico del muelle? ¿Y su futuro en general?
11) ¿Cuál es su idea de futuro para usted y su familia? ¿Incluiría el muelle?

Para los jóvenes

1) ¿De dónde es usted? ¿Si no es de Lima entonces por qué llegó a esta ciudad?
2) ¿Cuándo fue la primera vez que vino al muelle? ¿Por qué?
3) ¿Ha trabajado en alguna otra parte? ¿En qué tipo de actividades?
4) ¿Cuándo aprendió a pescar? ¿Quién le enseñó?
5) ¿Qué le gusta de la pesca? Explique
6) ¿Qué tipo de pesca realiza usted? ¿Cuál prefiere?
7) ¿Cuál es su nivel educativo?
8) ¿Usted preferiría hacer algo diferente a la pesca? Explique
9) ¿Le gusta Lima? Explique
10) ¿A qué se dedica su familia?
11) ¿Cómo ve el futuro económico del muelle? ¿Forma usted parte de ese futuro?
12) ¿Cómo se ve usted en el futuro?

Para todos los entrevistados (especial énfasis en los pescadores)

The dock
1) ¿Usted recuerda sus primeras vivencias en el muelle y en la playa de Chorrillos?
2) ¿Cuántos años tenía? ¿Quién lo acompañaba?
3) ¿Por qué venía al muelle?
4) Cuando usted empezó a pescar ¿quién le enseñaba?
5) ¿Qué tipo de pesca hacía?
6) ¿Cuáles y cómo eran las herramientas que utilizaba? ¿Han cambiado? ¿En qué aspectos? ¿Por qué no se han modernizado/tecnificado?

The environment
7) ¿Qué significa el mar en su vida y en la de su familia?
8) ¿Alguien le enseñó a cuidar el mar? ¿Cómo lo hacían?
9) Actualmente ¿Qué hace usted para cuidar el pescado que saca todos los días? ¿Qué hace usted para cuidar el medio ambiente marino? ¿Qué hace la comunidad y qué cree usted que debería hacer en este sentido?
10) ¿Cuáles son las grandes causas de la escasez de pescado?
11) ¿Cuáles cree que son los grandes obstáculos para el cuidado de los ecosistemas marinos?
12) ¿Quién fuera de la comunidad de pescadores (actores externos) se ha interesado por el cuidado del mar de Chorrillos?
13) ¿Qué otros problemas relacionados con el medio ambiente le preocupan? ¿Por qué cree que son importantes? ¿Cómo sabe de ellos? ¿Cree que afectan al muelle directa o indirectamente? ¿Por qué?
The city
14) ¿Vive en Chorrillos? ¿Siempre ha vivido en Chorrillos?
15) ¿Antes de vivir en la casa donde vive actualmente vivía en arriendo, en invasión, otros?
16) Ustedes los pescadores pasan la mayoría del tiempo en el muelle pero muy rara vez van a la ciudad. ¿Cuáles son los motivos por los cuales van a la ciudad?
17) ¿Usted se ha enterado o tiene conocimiento de los cambios políticos, económicos, de infraestructura, movilidad, seguridad, etc. que ocurren en la ciudad? ¿Qué piensa de esos cambios?
18) ¿Usted vota para elegir sus representantes en la asociación? ¿Por qué considera que es importante votar? ¿Usted votó en las últimas elecciones para alcaldes o diputados de Lima?
19) ¿Pertenece a algún partido político? ¿Usted forma parte o apoya algún movimiento político o ciudadano?