

Chapter Eight

***Anda, corre, vuela...* (Augusto Tamayo 1995): Identity, agency and social development**

Section 1: Introduction

Anda, corre, vuela ... rediscovers two of the most familiar characters from Peruvian cinema of the 1980s and places them within the context of Lima in mid-1992, when insurgent violence was at its peak in the capital city. The period depicted coincided with the beginning of the new Fujimori regime that prompted yet more social change, but came just before the capture of *Sendero* leader Abimael Guzmán. In April that year, the President arbitrarily closed down Congress and sacked the Supreme Court in the face of resistance to his ‘government’s desire to grant far-reaching new powers to the military, ostensibly to fight the war against guerrilla subversion’,¹ and thus reaffirmed the prominence of the armed forces in national political life. *Anda, corre, vuela ...* is thus situated temporally between the *autogolpe* and the arrest of Guzmán, a significant period when daily life in Lima was profoundly affected by violence, fear and oppression from all sides of the conflict. While showing how the daily lives of marginalized young people were affected by such events, thus rooting itself in a topical reality, the film also tackles such perennial themes as friendship, loyalty and love, and strikes an affirmative note about the need for dreams and ambitions, whatever one’s circumstances.

Moreover, like most of the films discussed to this point, and especially Durant’s *Alias la gringa*, it suggests that the abandonment of personal plans to work on collective projects is more desirable and fulfilling for both the individual and society, and is indeed the only long-term and sustainable way to make change for the better. It is also similar to the other films in that it highlights an ineffective state infrastructure that is so

¹ John Crabtree and Jim Thomas, eds, *Fujimori’s Peru: The Political Economy* (London: University of London, Institute of Latin American Studies, 1998), p. 18.

engaged in broad counter-insurgency and economic shock policies that, ironically, it is unable to protect its citizens from the very violence and poverty it seeks to erase, and indeed intensifies their impact on them. On the other hand, the film celebrates the solidarity and resilience of those communities that find creative ways not only to defend themselves from physical attack and economic decline, but also to give them hope for a brighter future. In this sense, it offers an optimistic solution to the breakdown of traditional social order, by way of calling for a new type of solidarity that allows individual and collective desires to co-exist. This analysis explores the film's approach to these themes and discusses its portrayal of Peruvian society in the early 1990s. The various reactions to the scenes depicted in the film at the time of its commercial domestic release are also explored. Finally, it focuses on the connections between violence and national identity, and on the possibility for new forms of political agency and social development.

Section 2: Context

Although directed by Augusto Tamayo, this film was really a producer's project in that it was Stefan Kaspar, the Swiss founder of Peruvian production company Casablanca Films and a former co-founder and director of the film-making collective known as the *Grupo Chaski*, who drove the plan to complete what he envisaged as a trilogy which had begun with *Gregorio* (1984) and *Juliana* (1989), two of the most popular national films of the 1980s.² These feature films, and their sympathetic prototypic protagonists,

² Bedoya suggests that this combination of popular characters should have been a winning combination, given that *Gregorio* (1985), which tells the story of one indigenous boy's adventures and difficulties when he is forced to leave his community for Lima, was seen by a million spectators in Peru, and *Juliana* (1989), about a young girl who dresses as a boy so as to join a group who earn a living in the capital by singing and pick-pocketing on the buses, was the fourth most successful film in 1989, with 630,000 spectators. See Bedoya, *Un cine reencontrado*, p. 317. This should be compared with, for example, the mere 80,637 spectators for Lombardi's *Sin compasión*,

were thus already very much a part of the collective memory of life for street children in the poorer districts of Lima during that difficult decade. With them, the *Chaski* collective had begun its cinematic-sociological mission to document the marginalized communities of Peru through feature and documentary film-making and to provoke the social conscience of the spectator.³ Bedoya describes the intentions of the group by suggesting that in *Gregorio*:

Eran perceptibles ... tanto la intención de captar las manifestaciones del maremagnum social causante de la fisonomía actual de Lima y de su inmenso desorden, como la avidez por capturar, con la inmediatez del testigo ocular, algo del sentimiento de nuestra experiencia cotidiana.⁴

Thus they aimed to give a sense of the general chaos in Lima by drawing attention to the everyday experience of many of its more invisible citizens. It must be borne in mind, however, that many would have regarded their portrayal of street children as anachronistic: by the mid-1990s, such groups of young people were regarded more as *pirañas* that they associated with a new wave of delinquent violence in urban areas.

For this reason, although the approach of these successful films of the 1980s is again adopted here, the changing social context and a subsequent shift in audience

Peru's most successful national film in 1994. See Wiener, 'El cine peruano en los noventa: la historia sin fin', *La Gran Ilusión*, 5 (1995), 96-104.

³ As well as Kaspar, the *Grupo Chaski* consisted of Fernando Espinoza, Alejandro Legaspi, Rene Weber, Oswaldo Carpio, Susana Pastor and María Barea. They made various shorts (fiction and documentary) and a medium length documentary, *Miss universo en el Perú* (1982). They also concentrated on distributing independent films around Peru. Their work drew on Italian neorealist principles in terms of style and philosophy, using non-professional actors from the *barrios* and a range of familiar locations to demonstrate compassion for the plight of their marginalized characters and aiming to provoke the social conscience of spectators. See Bedoya, *Cien años de cine en el Perú*, pp. 274-9 for a fuller discussion.

⁴ Bedoya, *Cien años de cine en el Perú*, p. 275.

interpretation led to complications on its release. Furthermore, while the same actors are used to reprise their characters from the earlier films, and even though similar themes are developed, the representational style of *Anda, corre, vuela ...* is different and the tone of immediacy and urgency, so compelling in the first two, is subordinated here to sentiment and spectacle. In fact, the unashamedly political imperative of the earlier works gives way to the demands of entertainment. *Anda, corre, vuela ...* is more clearly a fictional (melo)drama in which action-adventure (Tamayo's cinematic speciality) vies for position with social realism (the preferred Kaspar/Chaski approach).⁵ In fact, the film intertwines and draws on a range of generic forms. Hence, there develops a sentimental love story between the two protagonists; a heart-warming tale of survival-amidst-adversity on the streets of Lima; and an action-packed series of scenes of explosions and escape attempts. Romance, adventure, crime and social realism are thus mixed to create an ambitiously hybrid cinematic concoction, in which the cinematic-sociological mission is downplayed.

Section 3: Synopsis

As the film begins, Gregorio (Marino León de la Torre) is depicted working at a petrol station and taking his entrance examinations in an attempt to achieve a university place to study electrical engineering. Juliana (Rosa Isabel Morfino) lives in a shack on the cliffs on the margins of the affluent Miraflores district of Lima, within walking distance of the plush hotels and shopping centres, and has ambitions of eventually living in the US. Both hail from similar ethnic backgrounds, are marked racially by their dark skins,

⁵ Before this film, Tamayo had directed numerous shorts, one part of the episodic feature *Cuentos inmorales* (1980), and a feature of his own, *La fuga del chacal* (1987) that was described by critic De Cárdenas as an 'intento de trasladar a contexto nacional ese expeditivo cine de género "a la Americana", con personajes estereotípicos e inmersos en un universo de acción y violencia'. Federico De Cárdenas, 'Demasiados desencuentros: *Anda, corre, vuela ...*', *La Gran Ilusión*, 5 (1995), 93-95. (p. 93).

and take care of younger children who work as shoeshine boys and flower sellers respectively. Juliana meets Gregorio by chance one day when she is out pick-pocketing, and reports back to her drug-dealing acquaintances on how they can break into the safe at the petrol station where he works.

The dramatic turning point of the film takes place with the bomb attack at the petrol station. This occurs just after Juliana has warned the manager of the impending robbery as her conscience had been pricked by an argument with Gregorio about honesty, ambition and responsibility. However, the police go in search of both Juliana and Gregorio as suspected accomplices of the bomb attackers, while the drug dealers also pursue the pair of them for apparently having sabotaged their planned break-in. Juliana and Gregorio escape and then hide with the help of the children, but Juliana is eventually captured by the police. Eventually the police captain (Carlos Danós) is forced, by the children's ingenuity, to admit he is holding the wrong suspect and she is freed. At the end, Gregorio and Juliana put their own personal ambitions to one side and instead use the money they had been saving to help them escape life in Lima to build the neighbourhood music venue that is desired by their young friends. The film concludes with a jubilant long shot of a community rock concert opened by the recently liberated Juliana.

Section 4: Analysis

This film shares with its *Chaski* predecessors a similar vision of the Peruvian social infrastructure as chaotic and dysfunctional. Moreover, blame for this is placed on state institutions such as the police and the judiciary and their failure to look after all of its national citizens. The breakdown of family life due to economic hardship, and the overwhelming atmosphere of fear, resentment and prejudice after a decade of political

conflict are also referred to throughout. The nation was in a situation of crisis that some commentators believed could end in total atomisation.⁶ The subsequent weakening of social bonds and lack of coherent, consistent moral guidance that, according to Durkheim's vision, could lead to privileging of the individual over society, were direct consequences of ineffective government.⁷ Indeed, in *Anda, corre, vuela ...* the young protagonists struggle with their lack of any sense of belonging to a dominant social structure that denies them access to those very systems that are designed to promote the notion of a collective bond: education, judiciary, employment, and so on.

Juliana and Gregorio are at first presented as victims of this social chaos, unable to pursue their dreams within Peru, nor to envisage a possibility of escape through education or travel. As the producer, Kaspar, points out: 'Los personajes protagónicos son jóvenes marginales que tienen que enfrentarse a un mundo urbano que no les brinda las condiciones necesarias para realizar sus sueños y proyectos'.⁸ Gregorio persists, and repeatedly fails to gain access to and recognition by conventional society through his diligently carrying out his low-paid job at the petrol station and through his thwarted efforts to gain a university place. Meanwhile the others, even the smallest children, all survive on the fringes of society by working in the informal service sector as shoeshine boys and flower sellers, while Juliana supplements this by resorting to the more criminal activity of pick-pocketing and assisting drug-dealers. While the younger characters display a stoic acceptance of their lot and enjoy each other's company, Gregorio and Juliana long for escape. The film's opening establishing shot shows

⁶ Crabtree, *Peru under García*, p. 185.

⁷ See Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, trans. by George Simpson. (New York: The Free Press, 1960), pp. 70-110.

⁸ Kaspar in Bedoya, *Un cine reencontrado*, p. 317.

college students celebrating news about university entrance, while Gregorio is devastated to discover that he has missed out yet again. Meanwhile, Juliana is frequently shown staring out to sea – that is to say, away from Peru and Lima – in despair at her wasted youth, with nothing to look forward to. Their sense of failure is compounded by the signs of western-style progress that surround them, indicative of the nation's western-inspired ideas of development more broadly, and their treatment as invisible by fellow Peruvians of a higher economic status.

In a leading study of Peru's so-called informal economy, undertaken at the end of the 1980s, Hernando de Soto argued that the very existence of such a high proportion of activity taking place outside the law was evidence that the state was generally deemed not to be a protector of the poor, but a 'systematic obstacle' to progress.⁹ He described the state as unresponsive to the needs of the majority of its citizens and hence responsible for the kind of structural poverty and violence that arises from a lack of social cohesion, that becomes engrained in everyday life and that results in routine violation of laws.¹⁰ De Soto's study concluded that activities contributing to the burgeoning informal economy might be more fruitfully considered as creating an alternative route to national development, rather than simply denounced as falling beyond the legal limits of governmental authority. Indeed, Tamayo's film reminds its audience that there are many Peruvians who have had little choice but to survive by ignoring or violating laws, and by putting up with a range of violent situations, some of which might be blamed on state neglect. At the same time, the motivations, decisions

⁹ Hernando de Soto cited by Skidmore and Smith, p. 215.

¹⁰ Skidmore and Smith report that 'as of the mid-1980s, it was estimated that 48% of Peru's economically active population and 61.2% of the total work hours were devoted to informal activities which contributed nearly 40% of the gross domestic product recorded in national accounts'. Skidmore and Smith, p. 215.

and actions of his characters suggest that different ways of considering social structures, community development and a more cohesive sense of identity might be possible, and that violence as means through which to enact such change is not inevitable.

For example, *Anda, corre, vuela ...* depicts new social bonds as emerging in spite of the lack of a relevant and acceptable framework of guidance, and goals are achieved through collective efforts rather than individual ambition. Gregorio and Juliana are not left as individuals to find their own way in the world. As well as finding each other, their eventual strength and survival comes from the formation of a new type of community held together by a Durkheimian 'mechanical solidarity'.¹¹ This structure is adapted to the Peruvian context of informality, and represents a rejection by the young characters of state-sponsored corruption and abuse. Rather than responding to any legal structure of punishment, Juliana comes to realise with the help of friends and her own experiences that criminal deviance is not the way towards sustainable fulfilment. Juliana risks freedom and her life by choosing to remain with her new family rather than taking the chance to escape. Moreover, when they realise that the judicial system has failed them, the younger characters use their initiative to find an alternative way of proving their friend's innocence that circumvents the need for money or knowledge of an overly bureaucratic legal system.¹² Instead they rely on the more old-fashioned values of honesty and integrity, persuading the police to listen to the eye-witness account of the petrol station manager, once he has recovered from the injuries he suffered from the bomb attack. There is a child-like optimism to the film's exposition of the determination

¹¹ Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, pp. 70-110.

¹² Cotler and Grompone describe how the divisions within Peruvian society have restricted the chances of universal application of a single legal framework, suggesting that many citizens 'sienten que existe un vacío legal o que esta misma ley, finalmente, no importa'. Cotler and Grompone, p. 89.

and creativity of a new generation working together for common goals that eschew the cynicism and apparent acceptance by the older generation of violence as an inevitable feature of national life and image. This, after all, is a utopian socialist, pacifist and humanitarian vision for Peru that reveals the influence of the *Grupo Chaski*'s philosophical legacy that leans towards social solidarity and rejects violence in all its forms.

The narrative of *Anda, corre, vuela ...* is not based on particular real events but is rooted nevertheless in the context of mid-1992 when the conflict between *Sendero* and the military seemed to be spiralling out of control, with reports of murders, car bomb attacks and blackouts on a daily basis. As Peralta confirms: 'Entre junio y julio de 1992 Sendero Luminoso intensificó su ofensiva sobre la capital peruana a partir de la colocación de coches bombas, asesinatos selectivos y paros armados'.¹³ He further explains that the distinguishing feature of these fresh attacks was the widening of the target to include not only the poorer districts but also middle and upper-class areas of Lima, generating fear amongst an even wider portion of the population. The bombing in May of one of the main TV stations, *Frecuencia Latina-Canal 2*, which resulted in the death of one journalist and two security guards, caused particularly grave and widespread concern. Stringent anti-terrorist legislation was by then in place that restricted many of the freedoms expected within the framework of a democracy, and which led to human rights abuses, as articulated by the disillusioned lawyer (Carlos Gassols) in this film.¹⁴ Skidmore and Smith describe the new Fujimori regime as 'a

¹³ Peralta Ruiz, p. 207.

¹⁴ This was, as mentioned briefly in the introduction to this analysis, the year of Fujimori's infamous *autogolpe* when, irritated by parliamentary opposition to the extreme nature of his economic and anti-terrorist plans, he aligned himself with the military, 'suspended the constitution and shut down congress, the judiciary, and regional governments'. Hunefeldt, p. 258.

textbook case of “illiberal democracy” – a regime that combines free elections for political office with systematic disrespect for the political and human rights of citizens’.¹⁵ Even so, the dominant press was critical of the government ‘por mostrarse éste incapaz de diseñar una estrategia que incorporara la prevención de los ataques senderistas contra objetivos públicos y privados’.¹⁶ Newspaper headlines reporting on attacks and blackouts are shown in the film and commented on by the lawyer as contributing to a heightened sense of social hysteria. The pressure on the government to produce results intensified, and the film reflects this sense of urgency through the portrayal of a police force that is desperate to identify and lock up terrorist suspects, however flimsy the evidence. Meanwhile, the lawyer, representative here of Peru’s disempowered and ineffective legal system, becomes so disgusted at his inability to protect the innocent and prevent further violence that he turns to drink and eventually kills himself. He advises Gregorio simply that there is no hope for Juliana, and that she is better off going into hiding to avoid imprisonment for a likely twenty years.

In fact, as in most of the films discussed so far, neither side of the conflict is presented sympathetically and yet violence is presented as virtually inevitable and as the only response on the part of both state and insurgents. Anonymous, hooded *Sendero* attackers shoot indiscriminately at Juliana and the petrol station manager, and scatter ideological pamphlets bearing the group’s sickle-and-hammer logo as they leave having positioned their bomb to cause maximum destruction. Meanwhile, the police captain is depicted as a man determined to clamp down on terrorism and delinquency using any means necessary, and willing to lock up both protagonists as suspected accomplices to

¹⁵ Skidmore and Smith, p. 217.

¹⁶ Peralta Ruiz, p. 208.

the attack. The need for visible results appears to justify the violence deployed to achieve them, with the clear implication that the imprisonment of marginalized young people who are flirting with criminality is far easier than dealing with experienced insurgents and drug-dealers. That the younger children are shown to have the courage, wisdom and moral determination to reject violence and look for different ways of changing their circumstances further reinforces the point made about the ineffective nature of violence that pervades the state system and defines the national image.

The situation for Peruvians without identification documents, such as the youngsters in this film, is further complicated since it implies a lack of recognition by the state and the possibility of misinterpretation of their social status. Migrants from the Andes to Lima in the early 1990s were particularly vulnerable to accusations of terrorism, especially if their skin colour was noticeably dark and their economic status poor. This was seen with Jeremías in *Ni con dios* and again here, as Gregorio and Juliana, also migrants, are caught in the crossfire of delinquent and political conflict largely as a result of misrecognition that was common at that time. For, as Flores Galindo points out, the *Sendero* phenomenon as well as a general rise in violent crime, deepened the distrust between different social groups.¹⁷ The victimization of Gregorio and Juliana draws attention to a deep-rooted racism in Peruvian society that considers indigenous peoples as inherently and inescapably violent – as savage, uncivilised and primitive. As Víctor Vich, in his study of violence and culture in contemporary Peru, suggests, the military's counter-insurgency strategy seemed to be conceived as an extermination plan 'donde salieron a la luz muchas de las principales tensiones culturales que estructuran a la

¹⁷ Flores Galindo, p. 189.

sociedad peruana en general'.¹⁸ He further points out that the problem of racism 'como un terco sustrato cultural' was a key feature of Peruvian society that was simply highlighted by the *Sendero* conflict.¹⁹ Such tensions are made evident here by the police captain's assumption that Juliana and Gregorio must be guilty of being part of the terrorist campaign, by virtue of their dark skin and their lack of official documents. Even the drug-dealers, white-skinned *criollos* who exploit and humiliate Juliana despite her efforts to help them out, are quick to distance themselves from her and label her *terruca* when their plan to rob the petrol station is thwarted by the *Sendero* attack. The cultural antagonism between them simmers away during earlier scenes, including one of attempted rape, that brutally emphasizes their assumption of macho cultural dominance. Blaming her for their misfortune they then inflict further sadistic pain on her body and leave her to die. This episode illustrates the acute cultural distance between Juliana and the men: the visible difference of her skin colour combined with her status as a poor young female from a rural background make her, in their eyes, an object to be feared, reviled, punished and destroyed. Diversity is positioned here as dangerous. As different social groups battle for control, misunderstanding, intolerance and violence develop.

On the other hand, the film draws attention in a more utopian way to the heterogeneity of the underclass of Lima in the 1990s, who themselves are represented as more broadly symbolic of the nation. The younger actors in particular have been selected for the range of faces that they give to the marginalized population of the capital, further highlighting a view of the city as a metaphoric microcosm of the diversity of the nation and national identity. As in the Chaski Group's earlier feature films, however, these children are portrayed as survivors rather than victims, finding a social niche for themselves by

¹⁸ Vich, p. 36.

¹⁹ Vich, p. 76.

providing unofficial services to the middle and higher classes of the city as shoeshine boys and flower sellers. They are depicted variously as wise, self-sufficient, and resilient and, above all, aware that only by caring for each other will they be able to improve conditions for themselves. They also provide a link to a more traditional culture that underpins much of Peruvian society but which, in the early 1990s, was in danger of being erased from urban life. One of Gregorio's young shoeshine friends seems to possess magical powers that cannot be explained by the rationality that dominates a more western approach. His interpretation of the sound of a whale at various key points during the film as an omen of good fortune and hope contrasts with the attitude of the North American marine biologist who needs to find the whale to achieve a scientific understanding of the workings of the ocean. The whale indirectly brings the youngsters money which in turn enables them, once they have decided collectively how to spend it, to construct their own music venue which they name *La Ballena*. As with the reading of the coca leaves in *Ni con Dios*, this element of the film appears to serve as a reminder of the value of alternative, non-western ways of understanding life, and as a warning not to disregard them as primitive and irrelevant. In particular, it draws attention to Andean culture and its emphasis on the interconnections between nature and man. As Vich points out:

... en la mayoría de comunidades rurales del mundo, en los Andes, la naturaleza es integrada al mundo social y comparte infinidad de características con los hombres pues ahí el universo es concebido como un ente viviente en el que la separación entre humanos y naturaleza, individuo y comunidad, comunidad y dioses no es modernamente dicotómica.²⁰

For those whose culture is rooted in Andean beliefs, animal and plant life is considered an ecological and a quasi-spiritual concern rather than the object of scientific research.

²⁰ Vich, p. 41.

Moreover, the Quechua magico-religious philosophy insists that the human and the natural worlds are interlinked in harmonious union.²¹ The constant reference to this core feature of Andean cultural life applied to a coastal context through, for example, the mystical aural motif of the whale's call, points to the way in which such customs might still be relevant in offering means for dealing with social problems. It reminds the viewer of the existence of a world-view that by its very nature challenges the divisions and hierarchies that form the foundation of westernised societies. For, as Rowe (explaining Arguedas's vision) suggests, whereas on the one hand rapid modernization has led to hybridization of cultural forms and the fragmentation and dispersal of Andean culture, on the other hand, the subsequent 'loss of traditional coherence for such modern hybridization gives Andean culture a new capacity to penetrate into the social fabric'.²²

Anda, corre, vuela ..., perhaps more than any of the films discussed so far, constantly draws attention to its development of themes of nation and identity through casual and

²¹ See, for example, William Rowe's discussion of the work of José María Arguedas in various sections of Rowe and Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (London: Verso, 1991). In this he applauds Arguedas's work for shedding light on the creative potential of Andean culture to direct 'the transformative power of twentieth century technology towards the making of a new civilization, a task in which the various national governments have spectacularly failed'. Rowe and Schelling, p. 60. In a later discussion of the importance of magic to Andean culture, he further suggests that 'to legitimate magic can be a vindication of pre-capitalist culture, against the logic of capitalist accumulation and positivist social engineering'. Rowe and Schelling, p. 214. Such an understanding helps to explain the persistence of tension between the westernized and traditional elements of Peruvian society. Rowe points to this tension again in his discussion of Arguedas's *Los ríos profundos* (1958) in 'The Limits of Readability: El Inca Garcilaso, José María Arguedas and Shamanic Practices', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2 August 2006, pp. 215-229. Here, he highlights the importance of a key scene of contemplation in the first chapter, and suggests that the scene 'is iconic because through its concern with the visibility of the "Inca past" there runs the antagonism of colonial and republican society in Peru'. Rowe, p. 215.

²² Rowe and Schelling, p. 213.

indirect reference to a range of elements of that are ‘constitutive of everyday life’.²³ As Bedoya argues, the aesthetic principles of the Chaski group were founded on ‘la expresión de lo real, lo auténtico, lo “social”’, and for Kaspar and his colleagues it was most important to depict ‘lo banal, lo menudo, la experiencia social compartida de todos los días’.²⁴ First of all, the use of non-professional actors, of children from the streets and market-traders all talking directly to camera about their lives, creates the impression of a generalised, prototypic face of a marginalized society, ‘signos de una Lima que es resumen de todo el país’.²⁵ An apparently neutral reportage style is used to film the latter group as they give details of their lives that divert attention from the central narrative. Rather than advance the narrative, this section exploits more apparently truthful documentary methods of representation and serves as a powerful testimonial of the harshness of life in the city. It thus further reinforces the idea of the film as sociological allegory and strengthens the impression of violence as an endemic feature of national Peruvian identity and a core element of everyday life.

Again, as part of a body of work that is influenced by the methods of the Italian neorealists, location shooting is important. However, distinct spaces of regular social gathering, such as the national football stadium and the central fruit market, are used as the backdrop for key dramatic scenes that contribute to the establishment of a national image rooted in everyday life rather than institutions. Juliana is often shown walking purposefully through the streets of various districts of the capital, at one point passing the yellow-painted walls of the colonial buildings of the city centre, for example, as she visits her drug-dealing acquaintances. For Bedoya, this very act of navigating the streets

²³ Hjort, p. 108.

²⁴ Bedoya, *Cien años de cine en el Perú*, p. 278.

²⁵ Bedoya, *Cien años de cine en el Perú*, p. 277.

of Lima is suggestive of a kind of metaphysical merging on her part into the way of life in the city. Referring to the earlier films, he likens these small journeys to a 'tránsito hacia esa inserción en la ciudadanía, es decir en las formas, modos e inclemencias de Lima'.²⁶ Meanwhile, familiar restaurants and hotels of the fashionable coastal area of Miraflores come into view as the flower sellers conduct their business amongst their wealthier neighbours. On the edge of this district are the clifftops where the girls live, the beach and the ocean, which forms a recurring backdrop to many of the film's more reflective moments. These clifftops, which are also the scene for the most dramatic chase and escape sequences, hold particular significance for the domestic spectator. As well as being familiar in themselves to most inhabitants of Lima, they had also already been used several times in national cinema, most famously in Lombardi's award-winning *Caídos del cielo* (1990). Moreover, the location provides a discrete reference, as did Lombardi's work, to the well-known short story about life on the Lima cliffs, 'Al pie del acantilado' by Julio Ramón Ribeyro, whose work in general tackled themes of conflict, poverty and the effects of migration on cultural identity in the Lima of earlier decades.²⁷ This link seems to suggest that although the context has changed, social conditions based on division and prejudice remain much the same. Finally, it seems that the racial and socio-economic connotations of the different districts of Lima that are depicted make the journeys, especially of Juliana, symbolic of a much larger and longer journey through the whole of Peru.

In a similar cultural vein, but with an eye to a more positive future, the choice of musical soundtrack to accompany the visual element of the film is important, since it

²⁶ Bedoya, *Cien años de cine en el Perú*, p. 279.

²⁷ Ribeyro, Julio Ramón, 'Al pie del acantilado', in *Ribeyro: cuentos completos* (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1994).

serves to emphasise the producers' desire to draw attention to the creative potential of marginalised young people. The main theme tune is titled *Sarita Colonia*, after the most famous 'folk saint' in Peru. With this overt reference to the national protector of the "informals," taxi drivers, maids, job seekers, homosexuals, [and] migrants',²⁸ the lyrics further underscore the film's intention to focus on the lives of the 'hombre (el niño) común, [el] personaje ordinario, [el] ciudadano normal' from the whole of Peru.²⁹ An original composition, it was written and performed by a new local rock band *Los Mojarras* that went on to enjoy international success. As well as providing a non-diegetic soundtrack of protest to support the story of Juliana and Gregorio, the band and their energetic rhythms enter the narrative world and provide it with its jubilant closure. As in the earlier Chaski projects, grass-roots music is used here to reflect an atmosphere of resistance, and to help generate the solidarity missing from the children's lives in the early part of the film. Furthermore, it becomes another way of reinforcing a sense of everyday life that was so vital to the Chaski approach in their depictions of the hybrid mix of Lima culture.³⁰ Indeed, the ever-present "chicha" soundtrack, with its 'flagrante hibridez melódica de los ritmos tropicales urbanos, andinos, o la fusión de ambos' becomes, as Bedoya noted in his commentary on *Gregorio*, '... expresión del mestizaje urbano'.³¹ But it both represents and helps to shape that new sense of identity; it plays

²⁸ Starn et al, *The Peru Reader*, p. 466.

²⁹ Bedoya, *Cien años de cine en el Perú*, p. 278.

³⁰ A website devoted to Peruvian rock music describes the music of *Los Mojarras* as 'una fusión de "hard chicha", música rock y sonidos auténticamente peruanos'. It further informs us that their original compositions 'se convierten en documentos etnográficos de las metrópolis peruanas'. See 'Los Mojarras', <<http://www.chicama.com/mojarras.htm>> [accessed 15 November 2005]. Theirs was also the first CD soundtrack to be released with a national film.

³¹ Bedoya, *Un cine reencontrado*, p. 257.

its part in the experiential process of identity and not only reflects the people, but also ‘produces them, creating and constructing an experience for them’.³²

Music, as Frith argues, ‘is the cultural form best able both to cross borders – sounds carry across fences and walls and oceans, across classes, races and nations – and to define places’,³³ and the final scene’s wide overhead shot that pulls back to offer a view of the neighbourhood demonstrates the extent to which the music resonates across the whole *barrio*. Through the desire for a suitable venue in which to listen to and share the hybrid rock music that has emerged locally, new social bonds begin to be established that offer an alternative to dominant structures, and that help to redefine the space they wish to transform. This group of disparate and apparently marginalized young people are brought together by a mutual determination to improve their lives without relying on an ineffective state system that attacks rather than protects them. What is more, Juliana’s position on stage as redeemed heroine of the drama, the bearer of the admiring and affectionate gaze, provides her with the status and self-respect that she has long desired and changes her self-perception as the film draws to a close. As she jumps off stage and mingles with the crowd, joined by Gregorio, her acceptance as part of a new social group is complete.

Section 5: Concluding Thoughts

Anda, corre, vuela ... was heralded as marking a new stage in national cinema production since it was one of the first to be released after the announcement of a new cinema law. In fact, however, it was made during the period when no law existed at all

³² Simon Frith, ‘Music and Identity’, in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. by Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (London: Sage, 1996), pp. 108-127 (pp. 109-10).

³³ Frith, p. 125.

and relied upon transnational support, mainly from German co-production partners, to raise the budget of \$320,000.³⁴ It should have appeared on screens two years earlier, but delays in the Venezuelan processing laboratories meant that it took longer than anticipated to reach its audience. The importance of this is that, according to the producer himself, the film in effect lost much of its intended audience in the intervening years. Kaspar notes that ‘a pesar de estrenar la película con ocho copias en un circuito con las mejores salas, el público no fue a verla y los exhibidores tuvieron que sacarla de la cartelera’.³⁵ The portrait of a 1980s Peruvian society in crisis offered by the story of Gregorio and Juliana was barely palatable a decade later when Fujimori’s neoliberal regime had been in place for five years and introduced developments which are not accounted for in the narrative. It presents itself with the immediacy and urgency of a contemporary tale and yet the vision of Lima under attack was no longer deemed as appropriate. Kaspar himself seemed to realise the problem of a changed political climate that did not allow for memories of a violent national past. He insists that the narrative and thematic focus on the marginalized youth of Lima remained valid, but suggests that he had not taken sufficient account of the way public interest had shifted with changes in social context. ‘En estos momentos la gente no quiere mirar atrás’ he claims, realising that his film had become a historical piece but that at the time it was perhaps too early for audiences to be confronted with images of a nightmare that had only just ended.³⁶ Peru remained violent and issues relating to national identity were far from resolved, but the specific events and character types portrayed belonged to the past.

³⁴ *Zweiten Deutschen Fernsehen*, the major German TV network, is credited in the opening titles as the main co-production partner, while several German church and human rights organisations are acknowledged as supporters in the closing credit sequence.

³⁵ Bedoya, *Un cine reencontrado*, p. 317.

³⁶ Bedoya, *Un cine reencontrado*, p. 317.

While most critics pointed to other weaknesses in the film that had more to do with the film's stylistic approach,³⁷ Bedoya himself acknowledges that the mismatch between the period of production and date of release was a major problem.

Por ejemplo, los atentados terroristas urbanos, usuales en el momento de la redacción del guión y en el del rodaje de *Anda, corre, vuela ...*, eran ya no tan frecuentes en 1995, cuando la cinta llegó al público. (1997b: 318)

On the other hand, the film was selected for screening at a number of international film festivals and won several awards, all of which suggests that distance, whether cultural or geographical, if not temporal, might be required when viewing scenes of social chaos.³⁸ Wiener controversially insists that the film was made with a European audience in mind, describing it as 'una cinta de acción trepidante que incluía al terrorismo urbano como parte de un *dossier* donde se combinaban ecología, marginalidad y jóvenes. Temas "políticamente correctos" de cara a Europa'.³⁹

This point is given some credence by the fact that the co-production agreement with ZDF included an obligation to screen the film as part of a German TV season on marginalized children around the world. It also fits with the accusation of paternalism and sentimentality directed by national critics at the earlier work of the *Grupo Chaski*,

³⁷ For example, both Isaac León Frías and Rafaela García de Pinilla argued that the style of social protest characteristic of the Chaski Group projects in the 1980s, that drew on Italian neo-realism and Peru's own Cusco School of the 1950s, is not apparent in this film which, for them, is little more than an unconvincing love story set amidst violence and persecution. See León Frías, '*Anda, corre, vuela ...*', *Caretas*, 21 October 1995, p. 3 and García de Pinilla, '*Anda, corre, vuela ...*', *La República*, 20 October 1995, p. 16.

³⁸ For example, it was screened at festivals in Biarritz, Uruguay, Huelva, Havana, Berlin (children's section) and Montreal, where it won the Best Film award.

³⁹ Wiener, 'Miedos de guerra', p. 20.

who dismissed the image of nation offered in their films as excessively and unhelpfully sympathetic to and focused upon those living in poverty.

Bedoya, however, suggests another problem. He argues that the archetypal characters of Juliana and Gregorio, now adolescents, ‘habían perdido la capacidad para representar a los “tipos” sociales, mezcla de marginalidad y resistencia ante la adversidad’ as they had done in the Chaski films of the 1980s.⁴⁰ In an earlier analysis of these films, he had argued that both characters ‘buscaban diseñar la ruta en la que se va formando la identidad compleja y mixta de los peruanos de estos tiempos’.⁴¹ Here, however, they seem locked in a time warp, and of far less relevance to society than their younger selves had been, as if their search for identity has stagnated for several long years. Furthermore, public perceptions of street children have always tended to differ from those of street teenagers, who are viewed as far more threatening, especially in the wake of *Sendero* activity in the shanty towns.

Meanwhile, Peru – and Lima in particular – was in the process of becoming a more integrated and pluralistic nation, more accepting of the diverse communities that together formed its national image. As the 1990s progressed, although many problems remained, there was a gradual movement towards a much greater level of participation by a wider range of social groups in the affairs of the nation. President Fujimori was also active in trying to include and address these traditionally marginal sectors during his first term in power, such that aggression based on a simplistic binary ‘white/rich versus the rest’ model of society was less easy to sustain. The multiracial and multicultural character of Peru was on its way, according to Wood, to finding ‘una

⁴⁰ Bedoya, *Un cine reencontrado*, p. 318.

⁴¹ Bedoya, *Cien años de cine en el Perú*, p. 279.

plena expresión y un mayor reconocimiento en el nivel nacional',⁴² none of which is acknowledged in this post-Chaski production. Instead, the young characters remain on the margins of society, excluded from the official national image.

⁴² Wood, *De sabor nacional*, p. 33.