

TIMEZONES LIMA TRANSCRIPT

Radical Archaeologies: Unearthing Lima's Sonic and Poetic Landscapes

a podcast by Ale Hop (Alejandra Cárdenas)

[0:40] Olga Rodríguez-Ulloa

Hi, my name is Olga Rodríguez. I'm assistant professor in the Department of American Studies and Latino Studies at Indiana University. So, the 1980s was a really important year in Peruvian history because it was the moment in which Perú returned to democracy. But it was also the moment in which this armed guerrilla, later known as Shining Path or Sendero Luminoso, started the war against the state in the Andes in the most impoverished areas of Perú. People started migrating more to the city of Lima. The very first responses of the government against this guerrilla were also directed to peasant communities. By this moment, 1983, it started emerging in the city of Lima. This first event of punk underground subculture of very young Limenian kids. Kids that were coming from middle lower classes, low-income families and kids that were raised amongst the elite. And they were all united by this sentiment of critique, right, of punk critique against the government, a critique about how the government was being extremely racist and anti-indigenous in its war policies.

[2:16] Wicho García

Y para el año 84 había habido mucho mas de cincuenta o sesenta atentados tanto en provincias como en Lima, coches bombas. Y nunca como antes la frase «punk no future», que se usó bastante en el 77 por lo grupos punks de Estados Unidos e Inglaterra, nunca antes se había vuelto tan, vaya, real para nosotros como jóvenes de entonces no veíamos una luz al final del túnel. Nos gustaba la música, nos gustaba la pintura, nos gustaba el cine, pero con una situación en la que al menos, a mí personalmente, me afectaba muchísimo porque yo había salido del colegio en el 76 creyendo que iba a ser ingeniero electrónico. Lo cual, obviamente, nunca estudié. Porque la carrera que yo quería seguir, en esa época no existía aquí, no había producción música, no había ingeniería de sonido y tampoco tenía los medios para estudiar fuera.

And by '84, there had been many more than fifty or sixty attacks in the provinces as well as in Lima, car bombs. And never before had the phrase «punk no future», which was used a lot in '77 by punk groups in the United States and England, never before had it become so, well, real for us as young people at that time. We didn't see a light at the end of the tunnel. We liked music, we liked painting, we liked movies, but with a situation that at least, for me personally, affected me very much because I had left school in '76 believing that I was going to be an electronic engineer. Which, obviously, I never studied. Because the career I wanted to follow at that time did not exist here, there was no music production, there was no sound engineering, and I did not have the means to study abroad.

[3:50] Wicho García

Fue lógico y natural que un grupo como Narcosis y un movimiento al que se le dio por llamar, subterráneo a los medios se diera de la manera que se dio. Salió Narcosis, ya existía Leusemia. Después hubo Guerrilla Urbana, Zcuela Cerrada, en fin, Autopsia y todos los demás grupos que hubo. Nosotros teníamos esa sensación de salir todas las mañanas o las tardes a nuestros ensayos, o a nuestros conciertos y no saber si íbamos a regresar o no, porque yo nunca he aprendido a tocar ningún instrumento. Yo no me considero ni siquiera un músico. Me considero un tipo curioso, nada más que le gusta la música, que es melómano, que de alguna manera aprendió a algunas, digamos, mañas musicales. Hacer punk este en medio de los ochenta, simplemente como una forma de sobrevivir a través de una actividad artística, una actividad creativa a una realidad aplastante.

It was logical and natural that a group like Narcosis and a movement that the media labelled as underground would happen the way it did. Narcosis came out, Leusemia already existed. Then there was Guerrilla Urbana, Escuela Cerrada, Autopsia and all the other groups. We went out every day to rehearsals and concerts with that feeling of not knowing if we would make it back home. I never learned to play any instrument. I don't even consider myself a musician. I consider myself a curious guy, who just likes music, who somehow learned some musical tricks. Doing punk in the eighties, as a way to survive through an artistic activity, a creative activity to a reality that was crushing.

[5:02] Fabiola Bazo

Hi, my name is Fabiola Bazo and I write about the politics of gender in Peruvian rock music. What is very interesting about the Peruvian punk scene is that they deny class differentials. So, the idea was music will unite us. So why do you have to talk about class? So as more youth join the scene, they came from different socioeconomic backgrounds. It was not all the middle-class kids who were unhappy with their families, with their schools, with the church, with the state, growing up with very traditional values. These new youth that join came from working-class backgrounds, and they saw that their families didn't have enough to survive. And they expressed that in their lyrics. Express that dissatisfaction with the other punks. There are some class divisions in our country. And the other punks were reluctant to accept that they were different scenes within their own scene and said that bringing that kind of distinction would break the unity.

[6:13] Fabiola Bazo

The other thing that was an issue for them is we don't care about the domesticity of women or that men occupy the public sphere. What we only care is that we make music. So here comes a woman, a Patricia Roncal called better known as Maria Tta. She wrote up and say: «Hey, I am a woman. These are the issues that are confronting Peruvian society and they intersect with class, they intersect with race.» And the fans responded very, very aggressively against her. Indicated that her music was not serious. Even today, they will say that her music was not serious.

[6:58] Fabiola Bazo

She conveyed her critique of Peruvian society and how badly women were treated at that time with humor. The punks didn't appreciate what she was telling. It was pretty bad. At some point, somebody screamed at her: «Hey, you whore!» And she said: «Yeah, whore. But not with you.»

[7:39] Olga Rodriguez-Ulloa

Domingo de Ramos is one of the very unique voices of contemporary Peruvian literature, and poetry in particular came to be known with this poetic group called Kloaca, which means sewer.

[7:55] Domingo de Ramos

El movimiento Kloaca nace en mil novecientos ochenta y dos. En pleno conflicto armado. Y entonces el discurso del Estado y el discurso de la insurgencia eran los motores de ese momento de la sociedad. Kloaca nace de esos dos discursos como si fuera un manifiesto pacifista. Describe la situación nacional, la situación que se vivía en ese momento. De violencia y barbarie, que cometía el Estado contra las poblaciones andinas.

The Kloaca movement was born in nineteen eighty-two. In the middle of the armed conflict. By then, the State and insurgency discourses were the driving forces of that moment in society. Kloaca was born from those two discourses as if it were a pacifist manifesto. It describes the national situation, the situation that was being experienced at that time. Of violence and barbarism, committed by the State against the Andean populations.

[8:40] Domingo de Ramos

Mi poesía es desde la calle. Es un proceso que yo este lo tengo bien enraizado. Es, a veces descriptivo, nunca es distante, siempre lo tengo ahí, impregnado en mi propio ser. No puedo, porque puedo estar en cualquier otra parte del mundo. Y yo este, obviamente siempre estará presente en mi poesía, no?

My poetry is from the street. It is a process that is well-rooted in me. It is sometimes descriptive, sometimes very oneiric. Is never distant; I always have it there, impregnated in my own being. I can be anywhere else in the world, but it will always be present in my poetry.

[9:13] Olga Rodriguez-Ulloa

Domingo Ramos, in a way, represents the poetry that comes from the slums, from the shantytowns of Perú, which we call Pueblos Jovenes, a desert city like Lima. The parts that are not developed are like sand dunes. And so migrants in the 1980s, but even before the 80s came to these areas of Lima to take land and also to develop their own neighborhoods.

One would have to imagine a city being built by the neighbors who were deploying also indigenous techniques of labor and solidarity and reciprocity in order to survive, a city that was really rough, a city that also discriminated them partly and Domingo de Ramos emerges from there. He is not more than that. He is not only a guy that comes from the slums, but his poetry does this very claim of universality. He's interested in poetry as a language in a country where some of our most incredible and famous poets come from the provinces, too. So he aligns with that tradition of Cesar Vallejo, for example. Domingo's first book, *Arquitectura del Espanto* (Architecture of Horror or Terror, I think I translated as), talks about how they are all living in a city that is horrendous.

[10:56] Olga Rodriguez-Ulloa

A city that is killing their young people, which was a lot of the themes that also the musicians explored. Lima. Lima is horrible. Lima it's a very violent city not just because of the war, but because of the social interactions too. A city that is really almost like a cast. A

city that is very misogynist, very racist. So *Arquitectura del Espanto* talks about that dichotomy between the traditional Lima that is built with cement. And the Lima of the shanty towns that is built with haze.

[11:46] **Olga Rodriguez-Ulloa**

He very much defies the idea that, oh, this is the developed part of the city and this is the poor part of the city, the underdeveloped part, and there is no continuity between the two. Domingo tells you no. In order for this place to be built, you have to have this poverty right next to it. Which is pretty much how scholars are understanding *modernity* now, right? Like we were never *modern*, but *modernity* was producing underdeveloped places, was producing spaces that were devoid of *everything*.

[12:26] **Ale Hop (Alejandra Cárdenas)**

Next is the poem «Banda Nocturna» from Domingo's *Architecture of Horror* poem collection.

[12:32] **Domingo de Ramos**

«Banda Nocturna» del libro *Arquitectura del Espanto*. A los guerreros del ochenta.

Bajo la noche transparente
arden las veredas
parpadean los faros sobre los sucios
blue jean de los jóvenes que se extravían entre esquinas
y parques clarosucios y negras casacas
entre brumas fosforescentes y blanquísimos cráneos
dientes rubios y dedos rubios escarchados por la yerba
Sus miradas brillan como hebillas de plata
llenen de tambores las plazas bañadas en aceite
y policías de felpa.
Por la noche salgo. En el día huelo a gases lacrimógenos,
la multitud me absorbe en sus paltas
pero me detengo en las claridades del mundo para respirar
sin un cigarrillo en los labios / el frío me congela los miembros
y no hay sitios donde descansar para ver
las rojas hormigas cargando huesos
migajas de pan / todo está cercado por fieras exhaustas
solitarias bancas / roto por el silencio y ese cascarón
azul que me separa de ti oh raquílica tierra
mi cuerpo es solo
fugaz y opaca estela de locura
En el orden natural
eterno polvo sin entierro

[14:00] **Wilder Gonzales Agreda**

I am Wilder Gonzales Agreda, an experimental musician. I have been making experimental, minimalist, and ethereal music since 1995. Lima has more than 11 million inhabitants. And the sector in which I was born and lived is a Northern area, or Cono Urbano, also known as Lima Norte or Cono Norte. Is basically made up of working people, proletarians, and

descendants of migrants from the Andes. My environment is that of an emerging lower-class neighborhood without museums, art galleries, or cultural centers.

[14:48] **Wilder Gonzales Agreda**

As Peruvian influencers Misias pero Viajeras (poor but trippers) sentenced: «The people in the cones just survives and that's it.» But, and they didn't realize that, is what the Lima people does. Growing up and living in the Northern Cone during the 80s and 90s informed my liking for transgressive experimental sounds. Making music in Perú and in Lima in particular, is acting in an environment where circle slurps and cronyism reigns. Symbols of colonial heritage that are more than alive. One can be talented and have a high resume, but if you don't smile at the key morons, then they marginalize you from concerts, calls, and instances of that type. That is Lima, Perú.

[16:22] **Frau Diamanda**

My name is Frau Diamanda, and I'm a travesty audio visual artist from Perú, living in Barcelona since 2016. I'm also a drag performer, I'm a cultural agent, independent curator, a writer, translator, DJ, and occasional actress. For me, it is clear that making art is a political stance. So, when I started to develop my career as an artist back in the late 90s, we had at the time the Fujimori regime. And it was very oppressive situation for artistic displacement in Lima. So, we managed to meet other people that were just, in this case, criticizing the regime, making activism at open air and also secret places like the underground scene, the underground scene, and focused on alternative music, alternative ways of live, alternative new wave scene, alternative noise scene and such.

[17:34] **Frau Diamanda**

My artistic work also deals with the encounter of the architecture, in this case heteronormative architecture and dissident sexual bodies. So, it isn't important for me to develop a way of how a body can liberate itself from the surroundings, heteronormative surroundings. In this case, it is also important to think about sexual dissidence groups, to think about strategies. In that sense, I'm making the same way. I was surviving in Lima, working with cultural institutions like museums, art galleries, and large artistic projects and also working in the underground. I put an action this way of surviving, going from the underground layer to the upper layer. So, this is nothing new also. And you get a design, your strategies and artistic projects in that sense.

[18:53] **Javi Vargas Sotomayor**

I am Javi Vargas, I am a visual artist. I live in Perú since the 80s. In Lima, Perú.

Bueno, yo me formé como pintor en la Facultad de Artes de la Universidad Católica, en Lima, en los años noventa. Hacia finales de mis estudios me unían a un colectivo llamado Aguaitones. Era justo los finales del gobierno del último gobierno de Alberto Fujimori. Todas las intervenciones y acciones que hicimos estuvieron vinculadas a hacer una crítica desde lo visual, desde las intervenciones a las cosas que estaban sucediendo. Por ejemplo, una acción que hicimos fue la primera manifestación que se hizo en contra de las esterilizaciones forzadas. Estoy hablando del año noventa y nueve, que nadie sabía.

I was formed as a painter at the Faculty of Arts of the Catholic University in Lima in the nineties. Towards the end of my studies I joined a collective called Aguaitones. It was right at the end of Alberto Fujimori's last government. All the interventions and actions we did were

linked to making a critique through visual arts and interventions to the things that were happening then. For example, one action we carry on was the first demonstration against women's forced sterilizations during the Fujimori regime. And this happened in the year ninety-nine, when this was an unknown topic.

[20:07] Javi Vargas Sotomayor

Cuando yo me involucré en algunas actividades del Foro de la Cultura Solidaria. Te estoy hablando del año dos mil cinco, en adelante, más o menos hasta el dos mil nueve, había organizaciones, colectivos, grupos, estos grupos es que provenían de distintas vertientes de la izquierda. Afirmaban ser críticos con las políticas del capitalismo, pero también tenían distintas discrepancias. Sobre todo, en ese entonces era, creo, que la realidad era muy distinta. Ahora, ahora nadie pone en duda de que las reivindicaciones o cuestionamientos desde la sexualidad formaban parte de ese cuestionamiento radical al capitalismo.

When I got involved in some activities of the Solidarity Culture Forum – I am talking about the year 2005 more or less up to the year 2009, there were organizations, collectives, groups, they came from different sides of the left. They claimed to be critical of the politics of capitalism, but they also had discrepancies. At that time, I think the reality was very different. Now, no one doubts that the demands or questions from sexuality were part of that radical questioning of capitalism.

[21:03] Javi Vargas Sotomayor

Diseñé una banderola para la actividad del grupo ContraNatura se llamado «Noches del placer». Puse ahí la imagen grande de Túpac Amaru travestido con los labios pintados y a la media hora apareció el patrullero de la policía, señalando en mano que está penado por ley el burlarse de los símbolos patrios y de los héroes. Recuerdo que Paúl Flores, un gran amigo que fue parte del colectivo ContraNaturas, dijo con mucha lucidez, que Villa Salvador había sido una cuna. Había sido, digamos, una zona muy relevante para para el MRTA y que había algunos que no les ofende que el MRTA haya usado la imagen de Túpac Amaru para matar gente, para hacer actos genocidas.

I designed a banner for the activity of the ContraNatura group called «Noches del placer» (Nights of pleasure). I put there the big image of Tupac Amaru transvestite with painted lips and half an hour later the police patrolman appeared, pointing out that it is punishable by law to mock the patriotic symbols and heroes. I remember that Paúl Flores, a great friend who was part of the ContraNaturas collective, said very lucidly that Villa Salvador district had been a cradle. It had been a very relevant area for the terrorist group MRTA, Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, and that there were some who were not offended at all that the MRTA had used the image of Tupac Amaru to kill people to carry out genocidal acts. However, they were very mortified that we simply put lipstick on his lips and shadows on his eyes. Y, sin embargo, si les mortifica mucho que simplemente le pongan lápiz labial en los labios y sombras en los ojos.

[22:09] Javi Vargas Sotomayor

El MRTA tenía entre sus lineamientos políticos la aniquilación de lacras sociales. Y en entre esas lacras sociales estaban los drogadictos, alcohólicos, homosexuales, travestis.

The MRTA had among its political guidelines the annihilation of social scum. And among those social scum were drug addicts, alcoholics, homosexuals, and transvestites.

[22:27] **Javi Vargas Sotomayor**

There have been many disappointments. Indeed, it's been hard working here in Lima. It's a very violent city. In all senses. Many times I... I've been eager to leave Lima in this. I spent some time in Ayacucho, for instance, just to go away from Lima. But however, I think the history of Lima is very interesting. Lima is a very old city. It's about 2000 year old city. There are many parts of the history of this city that is very interesting. There are many *huacas*, for instance, in Lima, there have been many pre-Hispanic cultures and many important layers of history to read, which are relevant to understand the actual state of things, which is very interesting. Maybe that's why I'm still here living in Lima, because there are many things to do, many things to change, to question. Yeah.

[23:56] **Domingo de Ramos**

Es lamentable, lo que sucede ahora, el golpe que ha hecho la derecha peruana contra los movimientos sociales, políticos de diversas regiones. Y que ha hecho que mueran mas de 60 peruanos. Y que este gobierno obviamente no tiene ningún respeto a los derechos humanos.

Algunos poetas, artistas, lo estan viendo desde un punto de vista crítico, desde una posición radical. Con movimientos y protestas en la calle. Esto no se va a detener, y los conflictos se van a agudizar. Este régimen va a caer por los movimientos sociales que hay. Eso es lo que yo veo actualmente.

It is regrettable, what is happening now, the coup that the Peruvian right wing has made against the social and political movements in different regions, which has caused the death of more than 60 Peruvians. And that this government obviously has no respect for human rights.

Some poets, artists, are seeing it from a critical point of view, from a radical position with movements and protests in the street. This is not going to stop, and the conflicts are going to become more acute. This regime is going to fall because of the social movements. That is what I see in moment.

[24:52] **Wicho García**

Sacar una voz, sacar la rabia, sacar la verdad a través del arte. O por lo menos cantarles en la cara a los dueños del país y del planeta, sacarles en cara su verdades.

To bring out a voice, to bring out the rage, to bring out the truth through art. Or at least to sing in the faces of the owners of the country and the planet, to shove their truths in their faces.