



# Proceedings of the Third Annual Conference of the International Place Branding Association (IPBA)

Hosted by the Destination Branding & Marketing Group (DBM-VI)

Institute for Tourism Studies, Macao  
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Leonardo (Don) A.N. Dioko, Phd.  
Editor

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**Proceedings of the Third Annual Conference of the International Place Branding Association (IPBA)—  
Hosted by the Destination Branding and Marketing Special Interest Group (DBM-VI)**

Editor: Leonardo (Don) A. N. Dioko

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*Leonardo (Don) A.N. Dioko, Phd.  
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# The marginalized sounds of Peru: Peruvian music diplomacy

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## Abstract

Perú's musical traditions have not received the same international push from the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the same way Peruvian gastronomy has. In the following report, I place Peruvian Music as the logical counterpart to its cuisine and propose stronger Music Diplomacy efforts to be incorporated into the existing national brand.

I analyze the cultural importance of the sounds that in my opinion constitute the best exponents of Peruvian Music: Chicha (Peruvian Cumbia) and Afro-Peruvian music. For each style, I describe the marginalized communities (migrant Amerindian in one case and Afro-descendant in the other) these music styles originated from, as well as identify and compare the

independent players, both domestic and international, behind Peruvian Music's limited international exposure. The conclusion drawn from the analysis of the music diplomacy efforts behind both styles is that music diplomacy can address Perú's issues of poverty, inequality and racism in a way gastro-diplomacy has not been able to do.

Tourists visiting Perú attracted by gastro-diplomacy encounter a much more heterogeneous and underrepresented society than the one portrayed in the national brand. I conclude that the multi-racial nature of Chicha and Afro-Peruvian music, can help Perú mitigate this racism and inequality while at the same time create a more "well-rounded" image abroad.

For Music Diplomacy recommendations, I recommend the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to engage in stronger musical exchanges and musical education efforts. Musical and educational exchanges with countries like Ecuador and Colombia, countries that share similar cultures shaped by their Amerindian and Afro-descendant population, can find a common ground in their musical roots and collaborate through workshops, music festivals and recorded collaborations. I also recommend the Foreign Ministry to push the Peruvian government towards subsidizing efforts, like the ones in Cuba and Brazil, where communities get an economic support for promoting the music of their country.

## Full paper

The last 15 years have witnessed Perú's successful efforts of redefining its culture and identity abroad. Through its cuisine, the country has been able to create an internationally recognized national brand that has stimulated foreign

tourism in the region. Music has also played a role, on a much smaller scale, in attracting a foreign audience to the country. Although a niche one, this audience has shown an interest in the revival and new hybrid sounds of the previously marginalized music of the

Amerindian and Afro-Peruvian communities. The cultural richness of this music is comparable to that of the musical heritages of Cuba, Brazil and Colombia; but it does not receive the diplomatic promotion or active support from the Peruvian government in the



same way its culinary counterpart does. The purpose of this paper is first, to address Peruvian Public Diplomacy's challenge of a racist and unequal domestic reality at odds with the country's national brand promoted abroad. Then, to describe the music of migrant Amerindian and Afro-Peruvian communities and compare the domestic and foreign efforts of the non-governmental actors behind the limited music diplomacy and the growing international interest of Peruvian music. Lastly, to propose a stronger and smarter music diplomacy to the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations and Culture. A stronger music diplomacy of Amerindian and Afro-Peruvian sounds will empower marginalized communities and enhance the Peruvian national brand making it a more culturally diverse and socially conscious one.

*"Good music goes with good food."* - African Proverb

Peruvians have always been self-aware of their rich cultural heritage, sometimes to the point of taking it for granted. I am a Peruvian immigrant myself and, living abroad, I have experienced the cultural yearning that many other immigrants describe when they leave the country. A yearning for the sounds and flavors of a previous life in which food and music, even though we did not realize it at the time, played a leading role in our everyday activities.

Peruvian food and music are both the product of *mestizaje*, the cultural mixing of the Amerindian, European, Asian and African traditions that arrived in the country at different points in time. Both have been intertwined from inception and they are considered to be two sides of the same culture. Colonization and the Trans-Atlantic

slave trade had the biggest impacts on the music and food of the region. While Chinese and Japanese migration have had the strongest influence on Peruvian food during modern times; Andean/Amazonian, European and African traditions began their process of cross-pollination in the culinary and musical realms as far as the 15th and 16th century. Peruvian food and music that flourished from this *mestizaje* in the Sierra highlands, the Amazon jungle and the suburbs of the coastal cities, encompass the core of Peruvian identity. Their flavors and sounds have shaped the current Peruvian cultural pride that these days is serving as an engine for the country to attract foreign capital and effect economic growth. Presently Perú's diplomatic efforts revolve around its nation brand "Marca Perú", which has been successful in promoting Peruvian gastronomy abroad. The flavors behind the culinary boom have received their fair share of international attention thanks to food ambassadors like Gastón Acurio and strong public relations campaigns domestically and abroad. "Marca Perú" can be seen in buses of Los Angeles and New York promoting Peruvian food, and Peruvian chefs travel the world year round sharing their delicious plates. However, Perú's culinary diplomacy has failed to paint a full picture of Peruvian culture. Tourists who visit the country are shocked by the contrast between the image that "Marca Perú" is promoting abroad and the reality they encounter on the ground—a reality of poverty and inequality, where marginalized Amerindian and Afro-descendant communities are victims of systemic racism. Furthermore, the economic growth brought by the culinary boom has not trickled down to these poorest sectors of society where, incidentally, Perú's food traditions originated.

As such, throughout this paper I will be focusing on the multi-racial music and sounds of Chicha (Peruvian Cumbia) and Afro-Peruvian rhythms that were born out of these *comunidades olvidadas* (forgotten communities). Although their musical styles were victims of a prejudiced society that left them ignored in past decades, their sounds and rhythms are currently undergoing a process of revival and transformation that is gathering interest from abroad. Peruvian music can offer a solution to the social disparity. A stronger push towards awareness of Peruvian musical traditions' resurgence could help suture the wounds of inequality that gastro-diplomacy has not been able to address. The multi-racial and culturally-hybrid nature of Peruvian music can defy the racial stigmas their progenitor communities suffer from. Music's collaborative character can emphasize Perú's diversity and spirit of conviviality, and empower these communities by showcasing their culture to a global audience. The country's use of a more active and aware music diplomacy could lay the foundations for a more "well-rounded" image of the country; one that does not only revolve around its exquisite food but that also acknowledges its inequalities and provides a voice for the less fortunate by promoting their rich musical traditions. Much in the same vein as its neighboring country, Brazil, Perú can use its music as a cross-cultural platform towards better domestic and international relations.

### **Migrant Chicha and Amazonian Cumbia**

If there is a soundtrack to the urban migration from the Peruvian highlands to the coastal city of Lima, it is Chicha music. Chicha is a fermented corn-based beverage from the Andes and

the Amazon Basin in South America. In Perú, this drink plays a central role both as religious offering, but also as an alcoholic drink consumed during festivities and communal gatherings. Just like the term “salsa” for the Puerto Ricans in New York, the meaning of the word Chicha morphed from an ancient Incan beverage to a word that encompasses the popular culture and musical fusion of Perú’s Amerindian population in the 20th century.

**C**hicha music mixes the tropical rhythms of Colombian cumbia with the electric guitar of American rock n’ roll and the sad Andean melodies of the Sierra’s Huaynos. This sonic cocktail took root in the hills of Lima around the 1960s and exploded in the 1970s and 1980s, when the capital witnessed an enormous indigenous migration from the Sierras due to the political violence of leftist guerrilla groups like the Shinning Path and the centralization of the Peruvian economy in Lima. Chicha became what *Abya Yala News* calls “perhaps the most visible, most intense recent cultural phenomenon born of massive Indigenous migration to the city of any region in Latin America.” (*Abya Yala News*, 14) The Chicha culture became synonymous with the cultural adaptation of Andean traditions to the chaos and gray skies of Lima.

“Chicha music can be formally considered a concept that involves a specific musical sonority, an aesthetic, a choreography, a determined type of ritual and it implicates the social groups that produce it, appreciate it and consume it.” (Leyva, 25) Music groups like *Los Destellos*, *Los Shapis* and *Chacalón y la Nueva Crema* reached a cult following in the most marginalized shantytowns of Lima, the *pueblos juvenes* (young

towns), neighborhoods on the hills surrounding Lima where provincial migrants settled. Their makeshift sound systems used to play loud Chicha music until early hours of the morning at the now infamous drinking and dancing parties, the *polladas*. Many of the *polladas*, concerts and festivals that revolved around the music garnered a lot of money in the hands of promoters, performers and producers of Amerindian descent. Despite its massive popularity and the economic opportunities it opened up, Chicha music suffered from the indifference of a racist society that rejected the cultural heterodoxy of the lower economic sectors—“it was pooh-poohed by the conservative members of the provincial community, the puritans, the intellectuals, as well as the middle and upper classes.” (*Abya Yala News*, 14) During the decades before the change of the century, Lima’s elite paid no attention to the rich cultural phenomenon and rejected the music of one of the most important musical periods of Peruvian history.

**A** different branch of this same musical hybridization reached the Amazon basin around the same time. There, cumbia mixed with the sounds of the Amazon. The *Cumbia Amazonica* (Amazonian Cumbia) “developed in the oil-boom towns of Iquitos, Moyobamba and Pucallpa during the 1960s when certain bandleaders took a notion to modernize their sound by replacing (Colombian) cumbia accordions with *Farfisa* organs and adding garage-psych electric guitar to the tropical rhythms.” (Gehr, 71) This combination of danceable tribal beats from the jungle and fuzzy sounding organ melodies turned groups like *Juaneco y su Combo* and *Los Mirlos* into overnight musical sensations in the area.

These groups proudly flaunted their Shipibo Indian traditions during their performances on stage, showcasing their dances and clothes. Again, due to the centralized character of the Peruvian economy, migrants from the rain forests started to settle in Lima’s misery belts. Amazonian cumbia coexisted with Andean cumbia and eventually became part of the same Chicha culture described above.

Chicha was influential in the development of another cultural phenomenon in Perú’s neighbor Argentina, the *cumbia villera*. Chicha and Amazonian cumbia bands who toured Argentina’s version of the *pueblos juvenes*, the *villas miseria* (misery villas), planted the seeds of musical hybridization and through a kind of underclass music diplomacy, empowered their citizens to channel their musical expression and develop their own musical hybridization projects. 40 years ago, Chicha music managed, even if only slightly so, to penetrate an international market; nowadays this music (along with the culture behind it) is being discovered internationally.

**I**n recent years, Chicha has sparked international interest thanks in part to the new wave of tourism that Lima is experiencing as a product of its 21st century culinary boom. “As cool rulers of Perú’s underclass, ignored by critics and the upper crust alike, it’s unlikely that these fine artists ever expected Chicha to thrive outside Perú, especially insofar as many of its innovators are already dead.” (Gehr, 71) Surprisingly, Perú’s elite is also undergoing a shift into a new appreciation for the music. It is not clear if this shift is a product of the international interest or the domestic revivalist efforts but it is clear that Chicha is now a part of the mainstream culture. Jorge Olazo from the current Peruvian cumbia

band Bareto thinks it was the former—"as always, they started to notice abroad first" (Masias, 28), he says. He might be right; it is common for Peruvians to take our culture for granted and wait for an external shock from abroad to realize what lies in front of us.

The main actor behind exposing Chicha to an international audience has been the Brooklyn-based record label Barbès Records. In 2007 they released the compilation *The Roots of Chicha: Psychedelic Cumbias From Perú*. Olivier Conan, the head of the label, discovered the music on a trip to Perú in 2005 when he was searching for Afro-Peruvian sounds. He was able to track the master recordings of original Chicha songs and released a compilation that featured the aforementioned groups Los Destellos, Los Mirlos, Juaneco y su Combo, among others. Conan even started his own Chicha band, Chicha Libre, which has had an incredible reception in music festivals around Europe and the United States.

The most recent effort to bring Chicha to global notoriety has also come from abroad. In Spain, Peruvian expats are relaunching the previously defunct record label Discos Horóscopo, the label that in the 1970s and 1980s released the biggest names in the Peruvian cumbia scene. Their first release, a reissue of *Chacalón y la Nueva Crema*—considered by Peruvians to be the pharaoh of Peruvian Chicha—, is now unavailable due to the high demand.

Domestically, bands from Lima like Bareto and La Sarita have helped push the revival by recording covers of classic Chicha songs and touring all over the world. But probably the biggest exponent of Chicha in present time is the duo Dengue,

Dengue, Dengue and their digital cumbia productions. Dengue, Dengue, Dengue have placed electronic Chicha on the map. Digital Cumbia parties, or sometimes also called Ñu-Cumbia parties, are now big in New York and Barcelona music festivals like TOMA! beats psicotropicales and Sónar. Harvard observes, "undergoing a sort of digital renaissance, the country's rich tradition of cumbias and folklore are being transformed by the newer generations with all the splendor and psychedelia that made Perú a focal point of new sounds in [the] 60s, 70s and 80s." (Munoz, 72) This is an example of how the Lima elite, with their access to the internet and the old Chicha material, has managed to start independent projects that further shape the image of the country abroad. "A public from different parts of the world now enjoy this music, which has been popularized thanks to the internet and social media engines like YouTube and Soundcloud, where geographic, racial and language borders are not an obstacle." (Marquez, 61) In a way, Digital cumbia has been able to shorten a social gap in the country. It has managed to get Chicha music to reach a "Latin American public of middle and high class who before used to completely reject it, relating it to the lower classes and perceiving it as an aesthetically poor genre." (Marquez, 64)

The music diplomacy of international exposure to Chicha music has been a task mainly undertaken by independent actors such as record labels, bands and festivals. These actors have been predominantly foreign ones. Some of them have been of Peruvian origin but acting from abroad in order to reach a wider international audience. The domestic actors have had a huge domestic reach, which

has also resonated with a globalized public through social media and independent promotion and touring. Responding to the domestic interest in Chicha, "Perú's Instituto de Etnomusicología (formerly known as the Centro de Etnomusicología Andina) has enriched the field of Peruvian music studies with its many noteworthy publications and recordings. Their offerings previously focused almost exclusively on noncommercial rural indigenous and mestizo music traditions...the center's scope has broadened in recent years to include mass-mediated urban styles." (Rios, 307) This shows that the Peruvian state does recognize Peruvian Chicha as an important cultural heritage but in terms of state-driven diplomatic efforts, Chicha does not have the presence that it has in the private and independent sector.

### **Black Perú and Afro-Peruvian Rhythms**

The Transatlantic Slave Trade that took place between the 16th and 19th century deeply influenced the melting pot that is Peruvian culture. The slaves brought from Africa by the Spanish crown and the Viceroyalty of Perú belonged to a mélange of ethnic tribes, from Mandinka to Yoruba tribes, all with different religious traditions and belief practices. Slave-owners purposely separated families and communities in order to prevent uprisings and to make it harder for slaves to find a common ground to unite against their Spanish and/or criollo owners. Feldman explains, "black slaves tended to work in multi-ethnic groups on small haciendas and silver mines or (more commonly) in the urban homes of white slave owners, facilitating rapid assimilation into white Peruvian coastal society." (Feldman, 208) One of these haciendas was the Hacienda San José in the Chincha

Province, to the south of Lima. This hacienda housed a large number of the slaves that arrived in Perú to work the land. Even after slavery was abolished in 1854, the Afro-Peruvians of this region kept producing sugar and cotton in the same working conditions as their enslaved ancestors. It was in Chinchá, specifically in the district of El Carmen, that Afro-Peruvian slaves and their descendants managed to introduce their music and dances into the Peruvian cultural identity.

Despite having played a crucial role in the Atlantic slave trade (Perú served as the center for supplying slaves to Ecuador and Chile), Perú is not known abroad for its black population. Instead, Perú is known for being the land of the Inca Empire and more recently, for its cuisine of fusion flavors. Even domestically during the first half of the 20th century, Perú's black cultural heritage was erased from the collective memory. Feldman argues, "Perú's black population was commonly thought to have "disappeared" into Peruvian criollo culture by the twentieth century, and only a few families preserved African-descended music in private gatherings" (Feldman, 143) But, during a period between the 1950s and the late 1970s, there was a revivalist current of African consciousness. "Afro-Peruvian revival artists excavated the previously ignored and forgotten rhythms of black Perú, seeking to revalorize blackness (and the African heritage) and separate it from criollo culture." (Feldman, 210) Suddenly there was a clear understanding of what Afro-Peruvian music was and how the African contribution enriched the already established criollo music of the time. Guitarist/cajón player Porfirio Vásquez, poet Nicomedes

Santa Cruz, singer Chabuca Granda and hooper Amador Ballumbrosio among others, where behind the rediscovery and new appreciation of black Peruvian culture in the 1970s.

Afro-Peruvian music encompasses African rhythms that originated in the Pacific coast, like festejo, landó, panalivio, zamacueca, etc. These rhythms, rooted in tribal African grooves, eventually morphed into specific styles and dances unique to Perú. Just like most African music, Afro-Peruvian music revolves around the percussion and the main percussion instrument behind its sound is the cajón. The cajón is a wooden box assembled by the Afro-Peruvian slaves when the Catholic Church banned their traditional percussion instruments. "Beyond its rhythmic underpinnings, the Afro-Peruvian style is distinct for its melodicism. It fuses the folkloric strains of Andean music with a Spanish flamenco sensibility and African rhythms." (Verna, 48) By the end of the 1970s and throughout the 1980s the study of these rhythms, dances and melodies established itself in Lima. Schools started teaching them as part of their cultural curricula and political leaders from both sides of the spectrum encouraged the dissemination of Afro-Peruvian music domestically. Despite the strong domestic push for cultural awareness and the repatriation of "lost traditions", Afro-Peruvian music would not reach an international audience until later on.

It was in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s that the renewed awareness of Afro-Peruvian identity reached an international audience. "In the 1980s and 1990s, photographer Lorry Salcedo captured Chinchá on film, presenting it to the world as the Black face of Perú in an internationally touring photograph exhibition titled 'Africa's legacy'."

(Feldman, 177) This exhibit introduced the existence of a Black Perú into the international discussion. Later in 1995, American musician and lead singer of the rock band Talking Heads, David Byrne, released the record *The Soul of Black Perú* under his record label Luaka Bop, exposing the sounds of Black Perú to the western world. The label describes the record as follows, "This is secret music—a collection of beautiful songs and infectious grooves that has been hidden for years in the coastal towns and barrios of Perú. It's not the guys with flutes and drums in woolly hats—it's music of the black Peruvian communities." (Byrne, Luaka Bop website)

Once again, foreign exposure to Peruvian music was made possible thanks to a curious international audience that dug into Peruvian culture and not from the country's international efforts to spread the music abroad. *The Soul of Black Perú* had such a great reception that the label decided to release solo records of Susana Baca, one of the Afro-Peruvian singers featured in the compilation. Her fame skyrocketed when she won a Latin American Grammy in 2002 and was nominated for the Grammy under the "Best World Album" category. "Despite Susana Baca's success in the world music scene, both she and her New York benefactor David Byrne have publicly expressed their distaste for the confining labels 'world music'... world music is a way of dismissing artists or their music as irrelevant to one's own life. It's a way of relegating this 'thing' into the realm of something exotic and therefore cute, weird but safe..." (Feldman, 147) This is a continuous obstacle that Peruvian and non-western musicians face. Once their work is classified as World Music, it is harder for their music to reach a

younger, eclectic and more globalized audience that consumes music in a culturally involved way. By marketing Afro-Peruvian Music as World Music, it loses that unique identity that appeals to such a unique audience.

While the biggest Afro-Peruvian exposure came from international actors such as Luaka Bop and David Byrne, small domestic organizations like Perú Negro have been important players in the Afro-Peruvian music diplomacy of the country. Perú Negro is a music and dance ensemble now considered the most relevant cultural association disseminating Perú's African heritage. In 1969, Ronaldo Campos de la Colina formed Perú Negro with the mission of "using the language of music and dance to expand the understanding, knowledge and influence of Africa in Perú's culture, through workshops and performance art." (Ferreira, 1) Perú Negro joined forces with musical icons like Lalo Izquierdo, Caitro Soto and Lucila Campos during the 1970s and 1980s and toured Perú, Latin America and Europe. "However, it was not until 2002—seven years after Susana Baca first appeared in the United States—that the company made its US debut, billed, like Baca, as the cultural ambassador of Black Perú." (Feldman, 151)

Although a success—selling out performance venues across the United States—their tours were mostly attended by the Peruvian Diasporas abroad. One of the group's biggest struggles was translating its content for a North American audience. American's preconceived ideas of Peruvian culture required a stronger effort by the group to provide a historical context and to differentiate themselves from the African traditions of the Caribbean. Feldman analyzes, "once Afro-Peruvian musicians manage to

convince US listeners that they are not from Cuba or Brazil, they often begin with a blank slate... they step outside the box to reassess its parameters, striving to selectively translate their music in ways that are both meaningful to new audiences and consistent with their own aesthetic and political projects. At the same time, they are confronted by the need to hurdle new types of commercial and cultural limits." (Feldman, 143) An example of a cultural challenge and selective translation was Perú Negro's use of banana pickers and traditional masks that resembled "black face". These were deemed as racist to the foreign audience in the United States and were eliminated from their performances. The great effort by Perú Negro to spread the African heritage of Perú earned them Grammy nominations in the World Music category in 2005, 2008 and 2010.

Similar efforts have followed the steps of Perú Negro such as the musical project NovaLima who does a similar display of Afro-Peruvian culture, music and dances but also combines it with newer electronic music elements. NovaLima is a unique example of Afro-Peruvian music not falling under the World Music category (with a few exceptions) and creating its own space for appreciation. They managed to attract a younger global audience through performances on college and independent radio stations in the United States and Europe like KCRW, KEXP, NPR & BBC Radio 6 which have wide international audiences and document and store their performances online for easy access. Not surprisingly, all of the members of this musical collective are based in different cities around the world including major culture hubs such as London and Barcelona, making it easier for the music to move

organically through a network of musicians and music fans in those areas.

A more recent example of independent actors working towards Afro-Peruvian music exposure is a documentary by Red Bull Music Academy, an American institution that fosters creativity through music workshops and festivals around the world. The documentary, titled "Afro-Peruvian Beats", was released in August 2017 and it documents musical collaborations with the Ballumbrosio family, an Afro-Peruvian family of hoofers and musicians that preserves the traditions of their ancestors in Chíncha. The documentary is aimed at the younger, eclectic and globalized audience mentioned above and in it, the viewer can be introduced to Afro-Peruvian music through the lenses of electronic cumbia musicians like Perú's own Dengue Dengue Dengue, Portuguese electronic artist DJ Branko and Chilean producer Matias Aguayo. The short film exemplifies a fresh music diplomacy approach that not only portrays and advocates for Afro-Peruvian music, but also shows the human interactions and relationships built through musical conversations with different music styles and foreign performers. At the same time, the film promotes a big project that the Ballumbrosio family is undertaking—the building of a huge cultural center in El Carmen solely dedicated to the teaching and dissemination of Afro-Peruvian music and dance.

Despite the honest efforts behind the amazing work by these labels, organizations and musical groups, "interest in Afro-Peruvian music has not returned to previous levels. Some musicians attribute this to a lack of current institutional support to subsidize the performance of

their music. Others argue that young people are not taught to value the richness and diversity of Peruvian folk and popular music traditions. Still others feel that the institutionalization of Afro-Peruvian music and its reduction to commercially successful formulaic arrangements have left the Afro-Peruvian sound 'stuck in the 1970s,' irrelevant to younger generations of listeners." (Leon, 219)

Furthermore, racism in Perú is still prevalent. In 2011, Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr. worked in conjunction with the American public broadcaster PBS to explore the African influence in Latin America. In one of the episodes of his four-part series *Black in Latin America*, he explored the Afro-Peruvian legacy. The episode was titled *The Black Grandma in the Closet*, a fitting title that epitomized Perú's lack of embrace of their African heritage, despite the fact that African blood runs through the veins of its population. Systemic racism seems to be one of the reasons why a lot of the attention comes from the outside and not the other way around. The diplomatic efforts have been led by the black minority in Perú, while the Peruvian elite and the government's role in disseminating Afro-Peruvian music has been very limited. Even though Lima was considered at one point to be a "Black City", the discrimination of black Peruvians is ubiquitous. Unlike Cumbia, Afro-Peruvian music has not been embraced by the elite youth in Lima (Afro-Peruvian music is played at discotheques to clear the dance floors before closing). A major push towards Afro-Peruvian music diplomacy as a cross-cultural bridge can serve as a strong counter-narrative to the racist reality and the racist depictions of Perú's marginalized black communities in

television and media across the country.

*"To understand the discrimination that exists in Perú was something very important for my career. I understood that Perú is a country that completely excludes indigenous, Afro-Peruvian and Amazonian peoples. All the political power is concentrated in Lima. It's to Lima that all the benefits come, and Lima lives with its back turned away. To realize that, that that's what my country is, was incredibly important for me, for my struggle, for my path as a singer, to say what I say in my songs." – Susana Baca*

#### **Public Diplomacy Recommendations**

Food and music have a symbiotic relationship within Peruvian culture. One is not more important than the other is— they complement each other. They provide the smells, textures, the sounds and the colors of Peruvian conviviality between family and friends. Peruvian music is the logical counterpart to Peruvian food. Peruvians living in the country and abroad easily understand this concept (it is engrained in their genetic codes of culture), but the current efforts of Perú's national branding and the one-sided nature of "Marca Perú" do not reflect it. The Peruvian state has such an overwhelming fixation on promoting the country's cuisine that it has not utilized the diplomatic tools available to expose the international community to Peruvian music.

Stronger and more focused music diplomacy strategies need to be implemented by the Public Diplomacy wing of the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign

Relations and Culture. These efforts could take shape in cultural and educational exchanges with Cuba, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, the United States and/or Western Africa. All of these regions share a common past of struggle (they were all affected by the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade) and possess rich music rooted in African religious and tribal traditions that have evolved in different ways but that fit very well together. An example of such an exchange could be a musical collaboration/educational workshop between the Afro-Ecuadorian rhythms of Ecuador's coastal city of Esmeraldas and the Afro-Peruvian rhythms of the coastal city of Chincha. Such a strategy could emphasize a spirit of partnership and cultural collaboration between two countries that have had military disputes in the past. The same can be envisioned for Peruvian Chicha and the music of other fellow Amerindian countries like Colombia and Mexico with their unique variations on Cumbia. An example of this could be a cumbia music festival for peace in the Amazon basin, with Colombian cumbieros and Peruvian chicheros performing in the jungle of the Peruvian city of Iquitos or the Colombian Amazonian region of Putumayo, advocating for the protection of the rainforests from illegal mining, illegal logging and narco-trafficking activities. An interesting example of an educational approach (already in practice by independent actors in Western Africa) could be an inter-governmental collaboration in the development of a smartphone application that documents, breaks down and teaches the intricate rhythms of Afro-descendant communities in Perú and South American/Caribbean regions. An application like this could incentivize music educational

exchanges, ethnomusicological research and musical tourism in the country.

Music has a unique quality of identity empowerment. Music diplomacy, through the push of Chicha and Afro-Peruvian music, will empower the marginalized communities these sounds came from; sharing their talent, stories and humanity with the rest of the world. Countries like Cuba and Brazil already understand the cultural importance of their music and they treat their music and musicians as cultural relics. Black communities get subsidies in Brazil to promote Afro-Brazilian music and Cuba engages in musical exchanges both at home and abroad. Many consider Perú's musical heritage as important and culturally relevant to that of these countries. It would be great to see the Peruvian government subsidizing the Amerindian and Afro-Peruvian musical communities so they can keep enriching and promoting their musical traditions in ways that enhance the cultural image of Perú abroad. Alex Acuna, one of Perú's most famous percussionists living abroad asserted many years ago "one day our Peruvian music will be known just as Cuban and Brazilian music is known." (Feldman, 153) He was onto something. The international community has compared the record *Roots of Chicha to Cuba's Buena Vista Social Club* and musicians from around the world are interested in learning the intricate musical patterns of Perú's African rhythms. The Peruvian state needs to tap into this international market and use it towards the growth and development of these same groups who live in poverty and are victims of the racism engrained in Perú's colonial psyche. Perú can learn from the past mistakes of international and domestic actors

involved in music diplomacy, like Perú Negro's struggle to translate Afro-Peruvian traditions for an American audience or the promotion abroad of Susana Baca's music as World Music and not Afro-Peruvian Music. The trial and error experience gained from these actors' music diplomacy efforts, can pave the way for smarter strategies and programs.

Perú has acted symbolically in the past acknowledging its musical heritage at the OAS in 1987 and, following Brazil's steps with Gilberto Gil, naming Susana Baca the Minister of Culture in 2011 (if only for a short period of time). However, much more remains to be done. The world does not realize African traditions and Amerindian migrations hybridized and shaped the Peruvian culture and society of today. These cultures remain hidden to a large part of the world, the country remains greatly unequal and racism is very much alive. As a cultural co-ambassador, in partnership with Peruvian Cuisine, Peruvian Music has the power to work towards uprooting these racial differences and to promote communication, compassion, cultural awareness and understanding.

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