

Wageningen University - Department of Social Sciences

MSc Thesis Chair Group Knowledge, Technology and Innovation

---

# Cycling through social changes and counter movements

New materialities around bikes and a women's collective facing a social context of exclusion in Quito.

August 2015

Msc. Programme:  
**International Development Studies**

Author:  
**Daniel Larrea Robalino**  
**800709-503-100**

Specialization:  
**Communication, Technology and Policy**

Supervisors:  
**Stephen Sherwood**  
**Alberto Arce**

Thesis code:  
**CPT-80833**

Examiner:  
**Gerard Verschoor**



WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY  
WAGENINGEN UR

## Abstract

Cycling is commonly seen as leisure or sports activity. In recent times, it has gained recognition as a valid transportation means, leading some cities to adapt their mobility programs so they could use the bike as a key component. However, it has not been fully analysed for its possible contributions regarding other purposes and practices.

This research, performed in Quito, Ecuador, had addressed this issue focusing on the ongoing interactions among cyclists' groups and with the context where they perform their daily practices. Particularly, the main research group were the Carishinas en Bici, a women's collective who use the bike as a mean and an enhancer for their goals and objectives. The bike is always present in their activities as individuals and as a group; creating new materialities that mediate their practices within them and with others.

However, they cycle in a wider and complex context and that is the first step of this research. In order to develop a better understanding of the group, it has been described the specific context of cycling in Quito; the conditions that cyclists face every time they ride their bikes through the streets of the city, an account of the diverse origins that this practice has and the past and current situation of the cyclists' movement and organizations. The perception of the bike as part of something bigger for society will emerge there.

A second step is to take a closer look to the Carishinas en Bici. Which values makes them what they are, is an introduction to understand their dreams and struggles as a group; this analysis is constructed from their own words and with the contribution of other cyclists representatives. To get a better insight of the group, it was conducted a description of their main practices in order to assess how their values and knowledge are constructed.

The final piece of the puzzle will be found on the stories of three Carishinas. The description of their daily practices will be told at the same time that their individual connection with a bike. Besides the interaction with the previous context (the movement and the group), it will be accounted at what extent the bike created new and particular materialities for each of them and how that interaction is expressed in their lives.

Finally, a set of conclusions regarding the previous descriptions will shed some light over a never-ending process of deconstruction and reconstruction of the reality for Quito's society.

## Keywords

Materiality, cycling, social groups, practices, values, women, embodiment

## Dedication

*To Susi,  
my greatest love, my biggest fan and support*

*To Rafaela y Manuel,  
because everything I do  
is for you to have a better place to live*

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my eternal gratitude to Susi, for her support during all this time, in Wageningen and Quito. To my mother and brother and all of my family who have been there always.

A big thanks to Stephen Sherwood and Alberto Arce; I completely loved to work with them. Their guide, ideas and most of all, their questions were very important for the development of this thesis and my learning process in general. It has been an incredible time of discussions and reflections over many interesting topics for my research and even my life. Moreover, more than my supervisors, they have been two amazing friends.

Special thanks to Gerard Verschoor for taking the duty of examiner in this thesis; what a nice coincidence that my first class was with him and now he will be in my final presentation as well.

I would like to thank everyone at SENESCYT and IECE for their support in all the matters related to my scholarship. With it, it would be impossible to begin this challenge.

A special thanks to everyone at Wageningen, Wageningen University and the School of Social Sciences with whom I had the chance to share many incredible things and that have been always supporting me. Sudha, my professors, classmates and friends that I have met from all over the world. All of them made my stay in the Netherlands an incredible chapter in my life. I will never forget them.

I would like to thank to all the people that I had the chance to meet in Quito who are involved in the cyclists' movement. Mariana, Alexa, Crosty, Gandhi, Diego and Frank. It been a real pleasure I hope to meet them again in our quest of a better society for cyclists and everybody else.

Big thanks for all the Carishinas, particularly Sofy. They received me as one of them and let me spend great times while talking and cycling together. They have been the inspiration for this research and now, their dreams and struggles have become mine too. Ecuador needs you girls.

Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to Xime, Jacky and Dani, for open up their minds and hearts in every route we take together. I hope all of them will keep cycling for their dreams, which are never big enough.... I take my hat off to them.

## Table of contents

Chapter 1: Come and take a ride .....	7
Introduction .....	7
Problem Statement.....	8
Theory and concepts.....	9
Research objectives .....	10
Research questions .....	11
Main research question .....	11
Sub research questions.....	11
Literature review.....	11
The connection between public space, policies, social groups and change.....	11
Cycling as a practice for social change.....	12
Cyclists –and women as excluded groups in Quito.....	13
Research method .....	13
Type of research set-up .....	13
Research methods .....	14
Information sources.....	15
Scope.....	16
Limitations.....	16
Chapter 2: Movement? What movement?.....	18
Cycling in Quito .....	18
A story without a beginning.....	20
Drawing a line over cyclists collectives and organizations .....	22
BiciAcción .....	22
Ciclópolis .....	23
Andando en Bici Carajo - ABC .....	24
Turning points: before and after for cyclists groups.....	25
Viernes de pedales.....	25
Ciclopaseo .....	26
...or no milestone at all?.....	28
“Faith divides us – Death unites us” .....	28
Chapter 3: Carishinas en Bici.....	32
What? A woman riding a bike in Quito? .....	32
To be or not to be a Carishina en Bici .....	33
Struggles and future of cyclists women.....	36
Memories from alley cats and fairies.....	37

Carishina Race .....	38
Cycling fairy godmothers program .....	40
Chapter 4: Three women, three lives .....	43
What a bike can do .....	43
Jacky – Gary Fisher mountain bike.....	44
Xime - Unbranded mountain bike.....	46
Dani – Tacuri urban bike .....	48
Chapter 5: A final sprint .....	52
Conclusions .....	52
Humanity’s same old story: How easily we forget.....	52
Cyclists’ movement and the transgressive nature of the bicycle .....	52
The never ending story of Carishinas’ values and world views .....	53
The bike as an object-subject for embodiment .....	54
The bike and the mediation of change .....	54
Practice and discourse have to live together.....	55
Exist instead of resist .....	55
Some many questions yet.....	56
References .....	57

## Chapter 1: Come and take a ride

### Introduction

Change: such a simple word but at the same time, such a complex concept. However, one thing is for sure, society needs changes in order to tackle the harmful effects produced by the current development around the world. Moreover, a key problem in many societies is the way its individuals interact between them in a time where those interactions are supposed to be democratic. Therefore, “how to achieve those changes?” is the big question. Nowadays, the common path is the implementation of structured processes that generate new values, behaviours and worldviews on people; so structured sometimes that it reassembles a factory producing bottles out of plastic, or even worst, meat out of children<sup>1</sup>.

Then, how people could achieve a social change in a different way? Due to personal interests and previous experiences, I wanted to perform a research about the possibilities that a common object might develop a different way in this case: the bicycle.

At first sight, a bike might be seen only as two wheels attached to a metallic structure and a bunch of pieces and cables. If you go deeper, it is possible to develop ideas related to the actual chances that this object has when it comes to the use given by a person that wants to move himself over some distance maintaining a critical equilibrium at the same time. Next, picture this person using a bike for more complex purposes, such as commuting through a city on a regular basis or enjoying recreational trips with an astonishing view straight ahead.

However, are those the ultimate possibilities that this object could deliver to society? Every time that a person rides a bike, a new materiality<sup>2</sup> is created around this practice; which produces at the same time a set of emotions and sensations at an internal level. Moreover, this materiality -or even materialities- has an impact on society as well, an impact that could be referred as an action of social movements<sup>3</sup> looking for a change.

Some of those changes related to the practice of cycling<sup>4</sup> have been addressed by Marc Augé (2009) in his book “Elogio a la Bicicleta” (Praise to the bicycle). There, the author explore the interaction of

---

<sup>1</sup> This image is courtesy of Pink Floyd and the video of their song “Another brick in the wall”.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Miller (2014) develops a broad discussion over what is materiality. As summary, he establishes that, given the complex and diverse sources of the concept –even the word itself, it is difficult to determine a simple definition. However, from a personal understanding of the discussion, it is possible to infer that materiality is a part of the conceptualization of culture as sets of ideas and concepts developed by its individuals related to the practices performed by society.

<sup>3</sup> Social movement, as stated by Bilton et al., is defined as “a broad alliance of people with common interests or goals acting collectively to promote or prevent some form of social change” (2002, p. 5).

<sup>4</sup> Cycling or biking? The question is far from settled. Even if in English both terms might mean the same, in many specialized forums cycling is referred as the sport and biking as just riding a cycling for any porpoise. Nevertheless, when it comes to discussions related to the use of both terms in grammatical or literary contexts, it seems that the ideas are the opposite: cyclists ride bikes while bikers ride motorcycles. Some comments even state, “cyclists form pelotons and bikers form gangs” (Grammarist, 2014). This discussion has been approached in sites as quora.com (2014) bikeforums.net (2014), grammarist.com (2014), bikenoob.com (2014) and english.stackexchange.com (2014). Additionally, as expressed on Quora’s site (2014), “cycling is used in discussions of transportation policy and safety issues. In those contexts, a cyclist is anyone on a bike (and a “motorist” is anyone operating a motor vehicle)”. For this research, the cycling term will be the one to be used because it seems the more adequate given the latter explanation.

cycling and society through an socio-historical analysis, starting from his own memories, the analysis of the Tour of France and the construction of the myth surrounding it, until the social integration processes developed by cycling which the author call as the “discovery of the others”.

Since 2009, a social countermovement has started to develop some actions in public spaces that could be seen as the “discovery” presented by Augé. Yet, what is interesting regarding these actions is that they are producing changes within the group itself and the ones related to it. They are the “Carishinas en Bici”, a group of women who use the bike as a means to enhance their practices and beliefs, and even constructing –deconstructing and reconstructing- some myths as well. In the end, constructing social change.

In order to put their actions in context, it has to be said that commuting through Quito, the capital of Ecuador is a great adventure and a huge risk at the same time. Located in the highlands, the city lies over a long valley with fifty kilometres long and eight kilometres wide and it has a height variance of 200 meters. Quito has been growing unceasingly since the beginning of the last century due to many political and social processes (related to modernization and a shift to specialized, urban-based models of living and production) that shaped the city in three distinctive poles: north, centre and south poles (Carrión & Espinosa, 2012).

According to the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (2014), there were 2.23 million inhabitants in Quito on 2010, an additional 22% in comparison with the previous census (2001). Most people live in the south and north poles and the commercial and productive activities are located mainly in the centre of the city<sup>5</sup>. There is the saturation<sup>6</sup> of 32% of the road network; and -if things remain unchanged, the projection for 2025 is 55% (Municipality of Quito, 2011, pp. 24-25).

Nevertheless, commuting using a bike has its own issues too. As it will be exposed later, many social ideas about this practice and the inherent conditions related to it had made cycling in Quito a complicated activity. Despite of these risks, every year more people use a bike for their daily commuting and every year more groups develop activities to enhance the use of bike. As M. Landazuri mentions, “You would not expect to have some many thing going on related to cycling in a city like Quito” (Personal communication, July 20, 2015). Something is happening.

This research is focused on understanding the relationships and social processes that are built around a bike by describe them as they are. A deeper understanding of these processes could be crucial in the construction of a society that would embrace new values (e.g. sustainability) concordant to our current needs. As McMichael (2012, p. 1) stated, “development today, is increasingly about how we survive the future, rather than how we improve on the past.”

## Problem Statement

As it is stated above, despite the current situation related to cycling in the urban context of Quito, there are many collectives and social groups developing a diversity of actions and activities using the bike as their centrum. People keeps cycling and by doing it, they are engaging a variety of practices

---

<sup>5</sup> Other services are located as well close to the centre; such as most of the schools and high schools. This situation is also part of the urban evolution of the city and the location of public infrastructure as analysed by Carrión & Espinoza.

<sup>6</sup> The term “saturation” is used to state a given condition of a track that is occupied on its full capacity and where each vehicle has an average speed of 9 km/h (Municipality of Quito, Plan Metropolitano de Ordenamiento Territorial 2012-2022, 2011, p. 25).



that might produce new individual and collective experiences through the materiality generated by the bike. The use of “might” in the previous sentence denotes a lack of information and theory regarding the issue in this particular context; this could be a first step on the quest for creating a wider range of possibilities to tackle the harmful effects of development. This problem is the subject of my research.

My proposal is to describe and analyse the ongoing practices of the social movement “Carishinas en Bici” and their effects on networks of individuals and groups with whom they interact and transact their values and worldviews as they fight for physical and political space in Quito. Additionally, the context of the research will be the social movements and collectives related to cycling.

As a final remark –and as a step beyond, what should be done with the results of this research? As a possible answer, Arce (2015) states that in the construction of social processes, it is necessary “to go beyond the vision of the system”. The problem, Arce says, is that there are too many systems in the world. What we should do is to take different elements from previous systems so it might be possible to **reassembling** them into something new, where any kind of knowledge would be present.

With this research I hope to contribute by identifying some of those elements or some hints that would enable the Ecuadorian society to reassemble and reshape itself into something new – personally, I hope something better, through cycling as a strong practice.

## Theory and concepts

As it was stated above, one of my concerns is how it could create possibilities for social change by learning how social groups interact between them within multiple spaces. In this matter, Bourdieu proposed a relational analysis in order to understand the dynamic relationship between structure and action, where “tastes and practices are organized by actors' relative locations in social space”. As a key guide to his analysis, Bourdieu developed the concept of **habitus**, given that positions (the place of an actor related to others) and the position-taking processes (the actions taken or practices developed by an actor in order to express his position to others) were not directly connected. Therefore, Bourdieu established the existence of “habitus” as the site of the “interplay between structure and practice”.

As Calhoun et al. state, habitus “refers to systems of dispositions that are shaped by the experiences of actors in particular positions in the social structure” (2002, p. 261). They might be seen as a set of guidelines (values, lifestyles and dispositions) that “generate and organize practices and representations”. Given its loose nature, they open a large chance to improve or discover a completely new set depending on the social context and needs. This concept was mainly applied to describe the practices of the “Carishinas en Bici”.

Another key concept on Bourdieu’s relational analysis of society is the **field**. This concept is defined by Calhoun et al as “a domain of social life that has its own rules of organization, generates a set of positions, and supports the practices associated with them” (2002, p. 262). Bourdieu considered fields of great importance for his work because the positions occupied by the actors of a given field would define the field itself. However, at what extent are those positions fixed once they are set? Could this be a constraint to find new positions, or even new habitus? This is a concept that was

applied to develop a better idea of the social context where the Carishinas en Bici perform their practices.

In addition, the **standpoint theory** was used as a tool to complement the ideas developed by the application of the concept of field. According to Kokushkin (2014), the standpoint theory is a methodological tool, that beside its strong connection with feminist studies, that can be very useful to any other field in social science where knowledge is a key factor. He states “standpoint approaches allow the creation of alternative knowledge that destabilizes the dominant knowledge. The need for such alternative knowledge is crucial when the mainstream knowledge is organized around ignoring or excluding unprivileged groups. Standpoint then stresses the importance of material experiences and identities of unprivileged groups in reorganizing discourses” (Kokushkin, 2014, p. 16).

This concept is very important when it comes to the understanding of the practices and discourses developed by either the Carishinas en Bici and any other collective related to bike. At the same time, and as a part of the reflection developed by (Kokushkin, 2014, p. 16), it was useful to determine how knowledge within these groups is used in exclusion processes affecting those very groups as well.

A final concept used during this research was **embodiment cognition**. According to Carolan (2011), the way that people understand the world, and the way people create knowledge, is shaped by the experiences lived through our bodies; by experiencing the world through a physical perspective, a new set of ideas and conceptions are developed, transforming them in the current knowledge related to that specific experience. As stated by Carolan (2011, p. 11), “what we call mind, thought, cognition, and knowledge are all effects of active bodies, of bodies-in-the-world”; even more, he stated, “we think with and through our bodies”.

Particularly, Carolan uses this concept in his attempt to develop a deeper understanding on how these lived experiences affect and influence the current discussions of food quality; he considers that our current understanding of what is food quality is highly conditioned by products that we eat the way they are cooked. Equally important for Carolan, and an intriguing questions as well, is how at the same some knowledges disappearing due to the “vanishing of material practices” (Carolan, 2011, p. 3). This concept was used to understand how the construction of knowledge by the cycling collectives is constituted through relationalities, as a way to, as Carolan stated, “change understandings of what is and what ought to be” (Carolan, 2011, p. 14).

## Research objectives

This research is expected to:

- Contribute to the improvement of the individuals and social groups related to cycling by describing and identifying new perspectives for concrete actions in our quest for a better society.
- Acquire insight into how a given materiality related to a social issue affects- produces-enhances the processes related to social change.

- Develop a complementary theoretical framework regarding the processes produced and enhanced by cycling as a social practice.
- Improve my skills as a social scientific in order to contribute to the development of new ways of practice and social interaction.

## Research questions

### Main research question

- What and how are shaped the interactions produced within the countermovement “Carishinas en Bici” by the experience of a new materiality mediated by the practice of cycling in the urban context of Quito?

### Sub research questions

- What are the characteristics of the social context where the Carishinas en Bici perform their practices and interact with other groups and individuals?
- What are the practices of the Carishinas en Bici and how do they establish their positions related to other individuals and social groups?
- How are shaped the daily practices of individual members of the Carishinas en Bici by the materiality produced due to the use of a bike and the group itself?

## Literature review

Given the topic of this research, literature review was focused on some particular issues:

### The connection between public space, policies, social groups and change

This study was performed on open air or as it is said by cyclists, on open traffic (streets, parks and sidewalks). Therefore, it is logical to be began addressing what is understood as public space.

Given its wider conception, the public space can be seen as a geographical ambience where people come together to interact in many possible ways, regulated by social norms –implicit and explicit (Tonnelat, 2011). It has grown from a planning concept into a social construction where society expresses, construct and develop new values and world visions (Worpole & Knox, 2007).

However, the problem with this conception is that it becomes quite complex to define who is accountable for what occurs in those spaces. Moreover, in the specific context of this research – democratic use of public spaces, the analysis is related precisely to values and world visions of society. Is the government –national and local, accountable for the issues occurred on public spaces? If it is, at what extent can it solve them? Individuals and social groups might have a word about this.

Looking at news, articles and reports related to cycling in Quito, there are hints showing that individuals and social groups have developed many outcomes as an attempt to overcome those issues. We might call those actions as policies but it could be a wider definition to describe them. Therefore, in order to develop a proper understanding and description of those processes, the term “policy” should be taken, as stated by Sherwood *et al.* (2013, p. 2), from a “critical social perspective” and seen as ‘courses of action’.

From this perspective, it is possible to go beyond the conventional<sup>7</sup> definition of policy and use this idea to understand “how actors in civil society internalize, inform, organize and influence the use of resources in favour of certain purposes – even when undesirable, expensive and arguably self-harmful, at the cost of other possibilities” (Sherwood, *et al.*, 2013, p. 2). Furthermore, Sherwood *et al.* (2013, p. 2) indicate that such courses of action, which are outcomes of the work from individuals and collectives as well, could move people towards “processes of enactment, in which the self, lifeworlds, agendas and interests are inseparable, for example, from the incorporation of technology in people’s everyday lives”.

In this context, the existence of the social movements could be seen as a response to the inability of current public policies to satisfactorily overcome the issues expressed above. Furthermore, social movements could play a key role in this process by developing new courses of actions, practices, values, world visions... a new society.

### Cycling as a practice for social change

Regarding the use of bike as a material object in a social context, some social changes related to the practice of cycling have been addressed by Marc Augé (2009) in his book “Elogio a la Bicicleta” (Praise to the bicycle). There, the author explore the interaction of cycling and society through an socio-historical analysis, starting from his own memories, the analysis of the Tour of France and the construction of the myth surrounding it, until the social integration processes developed by cycling which the author call as the “discovery of the others”.

An interesting example of these interactions is the reflection that the author presents about how specifically the daily use of public bikes in the French cities of Paris and Lyon are forcing new practices among their inhabitants. Due to this new materiality, an imposed meeting with this reality occurs within their inhabitants, enabling them to “socialize the streets, rebuild places of life and dream the city” (Augé, 2009, p. 19).

In addition, as a final remark, Augé even developed a metaphor of the effects of pedalling -the pedalling effect, in reference to the butterfly effect (2009, pp. 93-94). By using this applied idea of the chaos theory, the author expresses how a small idea like setting up bikes for a free use, can decant in wider social changes and even public policies.

---

<sup>7</sup> By this, I am trying to address the generalized perception that public policies are developed, institutionalized and implemented by the state; when ‘policy’ most commonly extends well beyond the boundaries of government bureaucracy. As Sherwood *et al.* (2013, p. 2) state, “policy is not limited to the explicit, deliberative bureaucratic processes of organizations or government (e.g., public policy)”.

## Cyclists –and women as excluded groups in Quito

In the particular case of Quito, as Gordón (2011) has expressed in her analysis about mobility and vulnerable groups in Quito, many social issues are exposed, developed and reinforced (regardless their positive or negative nature) through the actual practice of the inhabitants of the city related to the use of public spaces. Lack of respect among the users of those spaces (pedestrians, cyclists and drivers), inappropriate use and occupation of the infrastructure and violent forms of interaction between them are some of the problems analysed.

In the Quito's pop culture, cycling is mainly seen as an activity to be performed in parks or natural areas surrounding the city. Car drivers have typically shown little respect to urban cyclists; traffic accidents on 2013 related to pedestrians and cyclists were 40 in Quito (Aguirre, 2014).

Even in recent times, the risk of an accident is considered as part of the game. As stated by Yépez (2014), "the city is designed for cars; many people say that to venture through the winding streets of Quito in a bike is practically suicidal... the coexistence between cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles is far from realized. Maybe it's impossible, [that is] at least while the car is the symbol of social success". This is a hint about how cars have colonized part of the public space of the city, specifically those spaces intended to commute through the city.

In the long term, this situation has marginalized inhabitants from being active actors in those spaces, where they can express their opinions, feelings and ideas in any possible way they might develop: art, sport, meetings, etc. As Gordón (2011, p. 18) mentions when she refers to the mobility context, women are part of the vulnerable groups of persons in the city.

Finally, it is pertinent to recall what Harding (1994) calls strong objectivity regarding the situation of women in the former context; that is to perform any social activity stating that it cannot be value-free or completely neutral regarding the issues around power relationships based on gender. It is necessary to acknowledge that the problem exists; therefore, women are a marginalized group that is currently struggling to access better opportunities within society.

## Research method

### Type of research set-up

For this specific research topic, I performed an Exploratory Research, as explained by Rap & Boon (2005, pp. 4-5,11). As stated above, the research topic seems to be an open field to work on, contrast ideas and develop new hypothesis. There were many possibilities regarding the interpretation of the research outcomes, given that it was performed in its "daily (or natural) circumstances and not in artificial or experimental settings" (Rap & Boon, 2005).

Given that the objectives of this research are mainly related to acquire, improve and develop new ideas (concepts and theories perhaps), this research design can be considered as ideal. During the research, some of the concepts and theories stated above required an adjustment in order to redefine and improve the focus on the topic. As Rap & Bonn stated, I began to "develop hunches" when analysing different situations and in which way they were related to one another based on existing literature and my previous experience in the topic (2005, pp. 12-13).

By doing so, it would seem that the research will begin biased. However, as Hill Collins (Harding, 1994) has pointed out while researching black feminism, a dialogue through differences is a key aspect to achieve the very objectives of marginalized groups. Yet those differences can be found when the research is performed from the issue itself. The challenge is to use the constructed knowledge to bridge gaps between social groups, rather than develop exclusion processes. This is something that I am already taking into account.

As a methodological variation, I incorporated some ideas related to Participatory Action Research as exposed by Rap & Boon (2005, p. 6). Specifically, it was possible during the fieldwork to develop a joint construction process of knowledge with the identified individuals and groups within the research. During some of the activities performed with informants was interesting the developing of dialogues; as mentioned above, the absence of a significant discussion about the matter enabled reflections based on the information gathered. The intention with this methodological choice was to improve my approach to some of the activities of the fieldwork, but at the same time, to contribute to the change process as stated above.

## Research methods

Due to the research nature, the methods were mainly focused on gathering qualitative data from primary and secondary sources from an ethnographic perspective.

The first step was the gathering secondary information. I performed an analysis of documentary and media sources related to the topic, mainly news and reports about cycling activities in order to identify individuals, groups and activities and their relevance to the research. Additionally, during this step I identified some practices as a basis for questions and inquiries.

The second step was gathering primary information. To do so, I used the following methods:

- Observations, mainly on the practices and interactions related to cycling: meetings and discussions, competitions and individual and collective bicycle rides. Some of the observations were performed from an active perspective, given my explicit intentions to be part of the process. The use of this method enabled me to gather more information regarding the interactions mentioned above. Additionally, I got more insights about the individuals and groups on who I focused my research.
- Interviews to specific individuals and social networks related to them. Through this method, I obtained first-hand information related to the research main questions. The interviews had some basic structure but they were performed with some degree of freedom given that some interesting facts and hints began to appear during the conversation. This situation in some cases made me make changes on the structure and the questions in order to go deeper into certain information. Finally, this method was very useful to triangulate the information previously gathered.

Additionally, I applied a mixed method in certain cases. That is performing an observation at the same time that I was conducting an interview. This particular case occurred when I was cycling alongside some of my informants while we were talking; this activity was very interesting because it let me to observe in real time some of their practices and attitudes at the same time that we were discussing about them.

## Information sources

The primary sources for the research were divided according their significance and relation to the specific research questions.

The observations were defined over the preliminary definition of the main practices performed by the social groups related to the research, mainly the Carishinas en Bici. As stated above, the observations were conducted over:

- Meetings and discussions:
  - Graduation of the Fairy Godmother Program, edition 2014.
  - Coordination meetings for fairy Godmother Program, edition 2015
- Competitions:
  - Carishina Race 11<sup>th</sup> edition, held on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014
  - Carishina Race 12<sup>th</sup> edition, held on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015
  - Jesús del Gran Pedal alley cat 2015 edition, held on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Individual rides:
  - Performed by Jacqueline Hernández, Ximena Paltán and Daniela Borja, through May until July 2015.
- Collective rides:
  - Graduation test of the Fairy Godmother Program, promotion 2014
  - Weekly public ride in Quito “Ciclopaseo”, June 2015.

The interviews were conducted on key informants, depending on the topic. Taking the Carishinas en Bici as my centrum, the key persons were identified according their connections with the collective and then with the whole movement. The first contact were one of the cofounders and senior members of the Carshinas en Bici; from then on, I choose three specific members of the collective to perform a deep analysis of their practices as individuals and as part of the group. Later on, I chose some representative members of other cyclist collectives and organizations to develop a broader perspective of the context where the Carishinas en Bici perform their practices.

The informants were:

- Carishinas en Bici:
  - Ximena Paltán, cofounder and active member. Interviews performed through December 2014 until July 2015. Information related to perspectives of cyclist movements in Quito, the Carishinas en Bici and her own story on a bike.
  - Jacqueline Hernández, active member. Interviews performed through June until July 2015. Information related to perspectives of the Carishinas en Bici and her own story on a bike.
  - Daniela Borja<sup>8</sup>, active member. Interviews performed through June until July 2015. Information related to perspectives of the Carishinas en Bici and her own story on a bike.
  - Sofía Gordón, active member. Interviews performed through June 2014 until July 2015. Information related to perspectives of the Carishinas en Bici.
- Additional informants<sup>9</sup> related to the Carishinas en Bici
  - Beatriz Obregón, Ximena’s mother. Interview performed on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Borja was an informant over Jacqueline Hernández as well

<sup>9</sup> These informants were selected given their close relation to Ximena, Daniela y Jacqueline

- Gabriela Jácome, Ximena's friend. Interview performed on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
  - Isabel Ricuarte, Daniela's grandmother. Interview performed on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
  - Jean Paul Kasin, Daniela's uncle. Interview performed on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
  - Lina Camacho, Jacqueline's partner. Interview performed on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
- Cyclists movements and local context:
    - Cristian "Crosty" Medrano, current member of the collective "Andando en Bici Carajo" and former member of other collectives and organizations such as BiciAcción and Ciclópolis. Interview performed on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015.
    - Gandhi Zurita<sup>10</sup>, cyclist activist and former member of Ciclópolis. Interview performed on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
    - Frank Fuentes, cofounder and active member of the collective Cicleadas El Rey. Interview performed on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015.
    - Diego Puente, cofounder and active member of the organization Ciclopolis and spokesperson of BiciUnion; former member of BiciAcción. Interview performed on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015.
    - Alexa Velasco, current Recreation Director on the Sports Ministry and former member of BiciAcción. Interview performed on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
    - Mariana Landázuri, social researcher and cyclist commuter. Interview performed on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
    - Carlos Tacuri, local entrepreneur and cyclist activist. Interview performed on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

The secondary sources used in this research were mainly official sites of the collectives and organizations mentioned above, specialized forums, local newspapers, social media portals such as Facebook and Twitter.

## Scope

On a geographical scope, the research was performed on the urban limits of Quito. This is the area where the collectives develop most of their practices.

On a temporal scope, most of the events described on this research dates from 2005 with a few mentions referred to a decade earlier.

## Limitations

Given my previous condition to this research, I did not have significant limitations. I was already an urban cyclist and Spanish is my native language.

It is true that I did not have previous contact with any of the groups but fortunately, there is still a good support and solidarity between cyclists. Additionally, due to the internal story among the cyclists movements in Quito, not to be part of one was important in order to maintain an objective image for my informants.

---

<sup>10</sup> Zurita was an informant over Ximena Paltán as well.



However, I had a personal concern about the support and openness of the Carishinas en Bici because, due to their nature, there are no men on the collective. Nevertheless, this was not the case as they were fully supportive to my work and we even develop a strong relationship given common objectives and interests.

## Chapter 2: Movement? What movement?

The first step for this research is a description of the specific context where the Carishinas en Bici perform their practices. Many elements and issues such as the city, its geography, its inhabitants and their culture shape this context. Additionally, there are stories, attitudes and practices that are part of it as well. They are presented below.

### Cycling in Quito

As indicated in the first chapter, Quito is quite a particular city. But for this particular research, this is what make it most interesting as a place where cycling has become a larger social process. When it comes to a historical review, the beginning of cycling in Quito –and in Ecuador in general is very diffuse; there is no a visible starting point that could define when or how the activity became what it is now.

In an analysis of the bike in Ecuador, Pinto Alvaro et al. (2015) indicates that the bike was introduced in the country back in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and since then there has been a constant evolution process regarding its use for transportation and recreation. It is the former the one that is the interest for this research.

Regarding a shift between the uses previously stated, Pinto Alvaro et al. give a hint: “At first it was an option to transport correspondence, and eventually became an instrument of recreation due to the force with which the car was inserted in cities, particularly in the capital, which has since imposed a transport model. However, from the obvious problems caused by a huge amount of cars, the bicycle emerges as a viable transportation alternative that now also takes on a strategic role in raising public awareness about the problem of mobility, but also on the use of public space and the city architecture” (2015, p. 3).

In 2011, the Municipality of Quito conducted a household mobility survey that provides data on the reasons for the citizens to commute through the city. The results show that 31.1% of trips are made to get to study activities, closely followed by working related trips reaching 32.5% (2014, p. 46). To reach their destination, 73% of the city’s inhabitants use public transport. An additional fact: according to the Instituto de la Ciudad, Quito inhabitants make an average of 1.89 trips per day, exceeding the average of Mexico City inhabitants’ travels, corresponding to 1.66 (2014). Pinto Alvaro et al. (2015) conclude that this information has two major implications: first, a major risk to the sustainability mobility system due to the frequent use of all types of transportation resulting in heavy consumption of energy, which comes mainly from oil. Moreover, a great challenge over urban planning processes in order to achieve an adequate distribution of the activities that are currently concentrated in certain areas of the city, causing a deterioration on the inhabitants’ comfort and agility to commute.

Regarding the mean of transportation, the household mobility survey in 2011 informs that in Quito about 4.3 million average trips are made on a weekday; of this total, 15.3% of the population walks, and just 0.3%<sup>11</sup> commute using a bicycle<sup>12</sup>. In the last 15 years, 31.1 km of dedicated lanes have been

---

<sup>11</sup> To have this percentage into context, the number represents 13,206 trips on a weekday

<sup>12</sup> The survey was applied prior to the star up of the public bicycle system by the Municipality of Quito; this surely are affecting the data currently, however, this has not be done yet.

built and enabled and there are additionally 30 kilometres of shared lanes (Quito sobre los pedales, 2014); most of those lanes

Since 2012, The Municipality of Quito implemented the public bicycle system BiciQ<sup>13</sup>, offering 425 bikes distributed over 25 stations (Diario El Telegrafo, 2013). The systems begun with 9.228 registered users (Municipio de Quito, 2013, p. 34) and latest reports state around 12.000 registered users (Diario PP El Verdadero, 2014) but from daily observations at some of the busiest stations, the number is growing; there are times where are in queue waiting for an available bike. Nowadays, the system as 800 operating bikes.

Regarding the use of bikes, Biciacción (2014) presented a report about bike trips in July 2014 based on a photographic counting. The study was performed on a business day on the stretch of Amazonas between Avenue, between Carrion and Veintimilla streets; a stretch located in one of the most important business areas in the city. Over that period, 1,697 bicycle trips took place with 37% of them made on public bicycles; additionally, 85% were men and only 15% were women.

Another important characteristic in the conditions inherent to cycling in Quito are the dedicated public activities. Particularly, the implementation of the Sunday Public Cycling Ride in Ecuador from 2003 in Quito has been an important practice in the city (Diario El Universo, 2003) (Diario El Hoy, 2005) (Diario El Hoy, 2009).

However, there is still a negative perception regarding the safety that the bike has as a transportation mean. Puente (2014, p. 11) identifies some of the main reasons<sup>14</sup> that prevent or discourage people to use the bike on a daily basis. The main reasons are unsuitable routes (23%), risk of accidents (22%) and inappropriate geography (14%). These issues can be reflected in the fear that some people have when it comes to picture themselves cycling through the streets of Quito; as I. Ricaurte mentioned during an interview (Personal communication, June 11, 2015). Risk of death is always present, but even worst, is the certainty that justice related to traffic accidents will not come if something happens. Back in 2013, only 10% of trials related to that kind of accidents had verdicts according to Diego Abad, representative of the NGO "Justicia Vial"<sup>15</sup> (La Televisión, 2013).

Additionally, Quito's inhabitants still perceive cyclists as strange actor when it comes to mobility issues. Some of these aspects can be seen in documentaries (Ajenjo Producciones, 2014) (Aguirre S. , 2007) about cycling where pedestrians, car, bus and taxi drivers, an even buses users use terms such as lazy and vandals against cyclists. Furthermore, it is not only a lack of visibility or respect through cyclists; other excluded groups, such as disabled people in wheelchairs are disrespected as well by cars invading their spaces or dedicated access to sidewalks in the city. As stated by an interviewee in the documentary Dale al Pedal<sup>16</sup>, this entails that disabled people exclude themselves by having obstacles to those spaces. (Aguirre S. , 2007).

---

<sup>13</sup> BiciQ comes from the merging within the terms Bike (Bicicleta in Spanish) and Q, where Q stands for the city's name. It was part of the then local administration's marketing strategy to use a letter "Q" on every official programme or project. The name of the system under the current administration now has changed to BiciQuito.

<sup>14</sup> The data was collected from the users of the Ciclopaseo in 2011. That would explain why the inability to riding a bike is not presented as one of the main reasons.

<sup>15</sup> Vial Justice, in Spanish.

<sup>16</sup> Hit the Pedal, in Spanish.

## A story without a beginning

Even if it were possible to have a vague idea regarding the introduction of the bike in Quito, it is more difficult to identify when or when collectives or movements related to biking arose to become identifiable social groups as stated above by Bitlon et al. One the reason, beside a historically-fact based account, is how is history written and as an extension, by whom.

On a critical review about the history of the bike in Quito, Herrera (2011) denotes the existence of some sort of “disproportionality” in the facts and milestones related to it. He reflects over how the ideas of Eurocentrism and colonialism have a deep impact on the way the society tends to take and evaluate everything, particularly in Quito. In his reflection, Herrera spot the light on the invisibility over the ones who use the bicycle as a daily means of transport<sup>17</sup>; the actual urban cyclists are those who go to work by bike, to college or school by bike, “the ones committed to the bicycle”.

Particularly, Herrera mentions that it is important to reflect over the bike “from the recognition of the people who are riding it”, instead of the bike as an object related to mobility. The later, according to Herrera, has carried to a social process that has silenced many tradesmen and artisans who commute by bike: bakers, ice cream sellers, icemakers, knife sharpeners, messengers, fruit and vegetable sellers, gardeners and tricycle vendors in general. As mentioned by Herrera, many of these jobs are a pillar within the family economy; however, this social group is the most despised and so is their use of a bike in the city.

Herrera states, “cycling has always been present in the popular classes, in poor urban areas; the working class of this country has always fostered part of its economy on a bicycle, unlike the middle class that has always been self-recognized on their modern fantasy of driving a car”. Furthermore, he reflects over how the working class has never stop using the bicycle in the countryside and in the city on the coast, highlands and Amazon.

From a similar point of view, Landázuri (2012) ask herself if anyone recognizes that the first urban cyclists in Quito were gardeners. Amid the relatively low traffic of 1970s and 1980s, they came and went from working with their tools attached to their bikes, pedaling who knows from where. She states, “Without knowing they were setting a precedent and without intending to do so, they simply responded to the need to travel. Surely, the crowded city buses did not accept them with their heavy machinery; additionally, the use of bike represented a saving money in tickets” (2012, p. 5). According to Landázuri, they were not considered as an example worthy of imitation, mainly due to their poor acceptance in the city. This group has been constantly marginalized –as all the poor population; therefore, no one wanted to resemble them in an era where the oil boom was improving the economic standards of society. Even more, M. Landazuri argues that this marginalization “has hidden the democratic origin of the bike; democratic because it was not dependent on the economic capacity of people” (Personal communication, July 20, 2015).

Furthermore, Landázuri reflects that gardeners who are moving on their bikes in this century are not considered the image of the urban cyclist: “There are no routes or competitions organized for them; nobody recommends them the use of helmets”. Even more, “they are not represented in the cycling associations or state offices on any photo that illustrates how to go to work by bike”. This same analysis is applicable to other jobs performed with the use of a bike.

---

<sup>17</sup> In his review, Herrera mentions as well that analysing cycling as a sporting activity could distort the reflection over the actual meaning of daily cycling.

Going deeper in his critique over the current paradigm of urban cycling, Herrera analyses the focus of official programs and interventions, from a social and geographical perspective. He presents the case of the city sector located in the south of Quito known as El Carmen; the main market is that area and it produces a great commercial activity including the transportation of food and other goods from there to other places of the city in order to sell them to retailers or directly to households. Hundreds of people using tricycles carry out this transportation. Here, according to Herrera, it is the place where you should have bike lanes and designed traffic lights for cyclists due to the presence of 350 tricyclers who perform their activities there –and from there on a daily basis. C. Medrano reflects over this fact and states, “they are actually preventing a bigger chaos on the city traffic by transporting all that food by their tricycles. Would you imagine how might it be if they do it using cars or trucks?” (Personal communication, June 22, 2015). For his review, Herrera performed what he calls a simple exercise of observation on the dedicated bike lane situated over the Amazonas Avenue. There, he states, “we can count about 25 cyclists in an average of six hours; that is, passing four riders per hour. Doing the same exercise in the area of El Carmen where there is no safety conditions, proper signs or programs that encourage bicycle use, in 6 hours it can be seen 50 cycling around and without counting the tricyclers<sup>18</sup>”. Even if the data might have change nowadays<sup>18</sup>, it is still relevant to assess the focus of the programs and interventions promoted by states offices and other groups, as mentioned by Herrera.

As Herrera argues, the case of El Carmen has shown that “current public policies regarding mobility and alternative transport in Quito were developed over the basis of studies focused on the new history of the bicycle. A story that is told by office bureaucrats and the petty bourgeoisie where there is a contempt and a criminalization of poverty” (2011).

Additionally, Landázuri makes a complementary critique on this regard. She states, “It seems that an urban cyclist is a healthy young man, who has the economic capacity to buy a good bike with all the necessary implements and is also strong enough to face all mobility obstacles that Quito presents” (2012, p. 5). She then concludes that given this image, “most people stays out of the prototype”. C. Medrano, in a similar trend of thought, recalls his own experience of becoming an urban cyclist when he was a young boy attending to high school: “Cycling in Quito by that time<sup>19</sup> was a really rare activity; there were no many urban cyclists. So, when you arrived to the school on a nice bike and wearing some specialized clothes, you felt really cool” (Personal communication June 22, 2015).

A question arise: at what extent the social imaginary back then prevented that more people to take a bike to commute through the city? I. Ricaurte gives a hint when she recalled her own experience related to a bike: “we had a single bike for the whole family because by that time we used it only for recreational purposes”. (Personal communication, June 11, 2015).

As a final thought, there is no historical account on the actions of these groups (gardeners, bakers, etc.) aside the ones related to their daily jobs. There are some level of organization among them but it is not possible to claim or infer that they performed social action as associations or collectives in order to improve the conditions that affected them.

---

<sup>18</sup> The observation was performed on 2011.

<sup>19</sup> This refers to the mid-1990.

## Drawing a line over cyclists collectives and organizations

After trying to define when the inhabitants of Quito began to look at to the bike as an option to commute through the city, the next step is to establish when and how those people started to organise themselves into social groups that seek a change in the conditions that the city presented to their new adventure.

Since the late 1990 and early 2000, many social movements and organizations related to cycling arose in in Quito. The account of them is quite complex given that historical tracing over counter movements tends to be a trend on these kind of social groups. Their history is mainly oral, transmitted from one cyclist to another with the typical risks of losing or distorting some fact. Nowadays, Internet and the social media have become very helpful as a tool to search for more information; many of the collectives and movements have at least a website or an account on social media sites. Nevertheless, that can be misleading too; a Facebook profile with a nice name and some interesting pictures could be just a *façade* for a single person with an unknown motivation and with no real activity

Thus, in the following paragraphs, the focus will be over the most representative organizations and collectives. The selection was based on their activities through the years, their presence on iconic moments of the cycling story and their influence and agency on other cyclists groups, social organizations and state dependencies. There will be many others missing in this recollection and this is not a misrecognition of their work and potentiality; however, as stated before, the following are the ones which made possible a “logical” reconstruction of the history of social organization around cycling. Finally, the following description is a brief resume of many years of dreams, achievements struggles and hopes.

### BiciAcción

According to D. Puente (Personal communication, July 2, 2015), a milestone in this story was when Acción Ecológica<sup>20</sup>, an environmental Non-Governmental Organization, as part of their work to prevent the forest fires that menace many areas surrounding Quito. One of their actions was the development of a holiday camp for young people on the early 1990 in order to sensitize and organise them around the environmental care and other social issues. “They gave us a good foundation regarding ecology and a political vision of the problems in Ecuador” (A. Velasco, personal communication, July 13, 2015). However, the group eventually developed their own interests and concerns. According to A. Velasco, “Acción Ecológica was mainly focused in topics such as petroleum, rain forest and that kind of things. They lacked a vision regarding the city; something close to us” (Personal communication, July 13, 2015). Hence, one of the main questions back then was how to perform actions oriented to improve the environment on the city? Eventually, the group found in the bike an “interesting mean to achieve their objectives” and so they began their work to promote cycling as a commuting alternative (D. Puente, personal communication, July 2, 2015). However, the group’s objectives and goals were strong enough and decided to work on their own.

After parting ways with Acción Ecológica around the late 1990, some members of the group decided to establish themselves as an independent collective: BiciAcción<sup>21</sup>. During their first year they developed many actions regarding environment and cycling promotion; one of them was “Viernes de Pedales” and later they organized the first Ciclopaseo, a weekly ride that congregates around

---

<sup>20</sup> Ecological Action, in Spanish.

<sup>21</sup> Cycling Action could be a close translation from Spanish

50.000 people per ride (Comercio, 2015). They were legally constituted in 2003 and since then, they define themselves as a Non-Governmental Organization, “made up of professional people and urban cyclists. Our mission is to promote and create new ways of mobility, through the use of the bicycle as a mode of transport, sports and recreation” (2014). The Ciclopaseo was a milestone for this organization because it put it on the public spotlight: “BiciAcción gained a great public exposure. That attracted many people who wanted to join us, but it also attracted critiques as well” (A. Velasco personal communication, July 13, 2015).

Even if they do not operate the Ciclopaseo anymore, they still have other activities and projects focussed on the promotion of urban cycling. Their mainly projects and activities are: Bicipaseos Patrimoniales (Heritage Bike Tours), tours that promote the use of bike while experiencing the material and immaterial heritage of Quito’s Historical Downtown<sup>22</sup>; Vía Activa (Active Way), a recreational activity, not motorized, developed within an urban village, which streets and avenues are shortly closed to people to make sport and to interact with their community; and A clases en bici (To clases on Bike), it aims to sensitize young students of primary and secondary school and university about the need to build more sustainable cities and to promote the use of bicycles as a mode transport, recover public spaces and combat excessive car use (Biciacción, 2014).

### Ciclópolis

Due to internal problems, some members departed from BiciAcción and formed Ciclópolis<sup>23</sup>. They constituted as Non-Governmental Organization in 2008 and since then their main activity is the implementation of the Ciclopaseo. Their aim is “to promote the use of bicycles in the country. We want the bike to be seen as an alternative means of transport and effective for use in our cities”... and “to improve urban dwellers' quality of life and wellness through cycling” (Ciclópolis, 2014). They also develop other projects beside the Ciclopaseo; their additional projects are Rutas y ritos (Routes and rites), Todas en bici (Every women on bike), Guaguas al pedal (Kids on a ride), Copa Urbana (Urban Cup) and Al trabajo en bici (To the work on bike) (Ciclópolis, 2014).

Recently, in a joint effort with other organizations and collectives, they promoted the use of bike as an alternative means of transportation during the official visit of Pope Francisco to Ecuador. The Municipality of Quito decided to restrict the circulation of private vehicles in a large area and even the public transport on a smaller area around the zone where the religious mass took place. This was seen as an opportunity to enhance their ideas, so they implemented, in coordination with the Municipality of Quito, the Ciclopaseo for two days within the restricted area, rented bikes and set up dedicated parking lots for bikes. For a communicational porpoise, they named this campaign “A la Bici Ponle Fe”<sup>24</sup> making a clear connection with the Pope’s visit.

By having a legal constitution, both organizations –and others in a similar situation beside them have the chance to develop activities in other spectrum of work with state offices and private companies. Applicative projects and consultancies are some examples of this kind of cooperation, which have enabled them to finance other activities of their own while at the same time positioning themselves as representatives of the multiple needs from cyclists. However, the last idea is under big debate from other collectives and individuals; this will be discussed later on.

---

<sup>22</sup> This project is implemented jointly with Quito Eterno, which is “a cultural and educational project that, through performing and research tools, proposes a building citizenship from a historical and heritage reflection” (Quito Eterno, 2015).

<sup>23</sup> The term comes from the merging of cycling and the Latin term polis (state cities in the old Greek society).

<sup>24</sup> Put on your faith on a bike, in Spanish.

## Andando en Bici Carajo - ABC

Following with the story –and actually, the trend of social groups related to cycling, some members of Ciclópolis parted ways with the organization and formed other collectives such as Andando en Bici Carajo<sup>25</sup> and Carishinas en Bici. Some others had preferred to keep involved to actions related to cycling with being part of any movement.

In the case of Andando en Bici Carajo, formed on 2006, they define themselves as an “active non-profit minority that promotes cheerful, irregular, clandestine, irreverent and critical activities related to the use of public space”. They consider that the real work for influencing and changing the reality that cyclist face has to be done with, what they call, the cycling grass roots. “Our work seeks to create and bring together every day urban cyclists (workers, athletes, students) in order to generate and build an imaginary related to the everyday cyclist in Quito. We believe in the need to see the bicycle as a tool for change to a model and social structure that build and contribute to an understanding of the good living (Sumak kawsay<sup>26</sup>)” (Andando en Bici Carajo, 2008).

An important difference with the other organizations mentioned above, is that they do not have a legal constitution as an organization. About this, they state, “the working logic of Andando en Bici Carajo responds to a horizontal work; it has no hierarchy and positions are autonomous depending on the coordination of the various projects and activities that the organization performs consistently in Quito”.

They performed many activities in previous years, such as cycling urban races, piques (short races in closed public streets), public rides and protests, urban art related to cycling and the colocation of white bikes in memory of cyclists killed on streets among others. Other groups see them as a radical collective due to their unnegotiable positions regarding some social issues (social justice, poverty); nevertheless, they are considered by many other groups and individuals as key opinion leaders and activists. As mentioned by C. Medrano (Personal communication, June 22, 2015), in recent times, they did not develop many actions due to their own occupations but also due to an important lose; in 2013 Sebastián Muñoz, one of the founder members was hit and killed by an unidentified car when he was cycling close to his home.

However, in 2015 they returned to public light by organizing one of their trademark cycling urban races: the alley cat “Jesús del Gran Pedal”<sup>27</sup>. An alley cat is an unofficial and illegal cycling race – sometimes, even suicidal, which is performed on “open urban traffic” on a city; that is with no secured paths or support from the police or traffic agents and the only rule is to attend all the checkpoints following any possible route. They were first organised by bike messengers in Toronto in 1989 as a response to the increasing friction between cyclists and car drivers on the streets (Slonetsky, 2013). Since then, they have become popular in many countries and sometimes they are

<sup>25</sup> Riding on Bike, Damn it, in Spanish.

<sup>26</sup> Sumak kawsay refers to an Andean Cosmo vision that states that Living Well or Good Living is the fullness of life. According to Huanacuni Mamani (2015), Sumak kawsay “it is knowing how to live in harmony and balance, in harmony with the cycles of Mother Earth, the cosmos, life and history, and in balance with all forms of existence”.

<sup>27</sup> This term is based on an iconic religious image in Quito from the colony times: “Jesus del Gran Poder”. The devotion to the image is so strong in the city that it is the centrum of the annual procession held during Holy Week. The replacement of the word power by pedal intends to connect the two main ideas of the race: Quito and cyclists.



organized by cycling related groups. Its current goal, and how is its conceived nowadays by Quito's cyclists, is to make visible the presence of everyday urban cyclists in the city while participating in reflection activities related to social issues<sup>28</sup>.

In addition to social groups, there are initiatives which are not performed by established collectives but still constitute interesting practices that promote the use of a bike. One of them is called "Pinta tu línea"<sup>29</sup> and it is intended to perform those actions that the local government does not do, such as painting bike lines in some streets of the city. They do it during the night and paint bike lanes on key streets that crosses the Downtown on the city; these lanes resemble the ones painted by the Municipality of Quito. They perform their activities using self-founding<sup>30</sup> and communicating through social media. In this particular case, a cyclist who almost died in a car accident leads this initiative. Another interesting fact is that everyone is invited to paint (X. Paltán, personal communication, December 5, 2015).

The list of other groups and initiatives is long and diverse. However, as a common aspect, all of them –including the ones mentioned above use media websites and radio to promote their actions and related projects and as a tool to achieve their goals.

As a final thought, what is interesting about cycling groups nowadays is the fact that their discourses and practices<sup>31</sup> are becoming broader; topics such as human rights, inclusion processes, mobility problems and sustainability are recurrent on interviews, manifest and documents from those organizations, their members and even from non-movement people.

### Turning points: before and after for cyclists groups

After the difficult task of trying to define a starting point for cycling in Quito and describing the history of local cyclists groups, a topic that will shed more light into this research is identification of the milestones or turning points in cyclists' organizational processes. From the research performed over this issue, it is possible to identify two main milestones over time: Viernes de Pedales and the Ciclopaseo.

#### Viernes de pedales

Since late 1990, cyclists groups began to promote the development of their own "Critical Mass" in Quito. This activity was held for the first time on September 1992 in San Francisco, USA. There were no leadership, promoters, publicity, founding or specific agenda; people just went to ride in "a monthly 'spontaneous coincidence' that is rare in these days of corporate- sponsored fun" that took place every Friday since then (Garofoli, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> This activity can be seen on public videos in Youtube. 2009 edition: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ll4uObPWjY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ll4uObPWjY) and 2015 edition: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=yr2BDopxRXA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yr2BDopxRXA).

<sup>29</sup> Draw your line, in Spanish.

<sup>30</sup> The name of the lane is "Choclo vía" (corn lane) due to the way they obtained their resources: by selling baked corn on cyclists' events (X. Paltán, personal communication, December 5, 2015).

<sup>31</sup> The documentary "Ciclismo Urbano en Quito" (Urban Cycling in Quito) shows many of those topics (Ajenjo Producciones, 2014)

As Garofoli (2002) states, “this monthly guerrilla theater on wheels has inspired a handful of bike-friendly laws and bike lane, and changed the bike-motorist relationship. Sometimes for the better -- although there are still a lot of motorists who hate stewing in traffic as the Mass rolls by”. Leah Shahun, executive director of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition states, “Critical Mass has definitely brought attention to bicycle issues, and we wouldn't have been able to do it without them” (Garofoli, 2002).

In the following years, this activity was reproduced in many cities all over the world; Quito was not an exemption. The cyclists groups look this as a good opportunity to promote the use of bike and make visible the problems related to mobility in the city. They named this activity “Viernes de Pedales”<sup>32</sup>. However, at that time the assistance to the rides were low, “around one hundred people at its most” (D. Puente, personal communication, July 2, 2015).

Additionally, according to C. Medrano, Viernes de Pedales had a weak side by then. “Because behind this activity there was institutional support; it was not a self-summoned thing. It had support from NGOs, the Netherlands and the Municipality Quito”. Nevertheless, as C. Medrano continues, “after the budget was over around 2004, the activity continued; that was a turning point in urban cyclist matter” (Personal communication, June 22, 2015).

As G. Zurita mentions, “Viernes de Pedales was the boom for collectives and groups related to cycling” (Personal communication, June 24, 2015). In the beginning there were around 15 or 20 people that gathered in a leisure zona of Quito the last Friday of every; later on, around 2004, they were 100 people. “There was a time when the activity was held on the same Friday that was celebrated the International Bicycle Day; we were more than 500 people! We had a mega ride in Quito, taking over the main streets in the city; many people were talking about it. That was a milestone. Before that, there were only sporadic rides of groups of friends. Since then on, the people started to take the bike as transportation mean, as a lifestyle (G. Zurita, personal communication, June 24, 2015).

This idea is upheld by C. Medrano who states, “Viernes de Pedales marked a more likely urban fact; it is about taking into the street and use the bike, sometimes is just following a trend” (Personal communication, June 22, 2015). This gave an example and developed a trend over the emergence of cyclists' organizations.

An interesting fact about critical masses in Quito is that it was meant to be “a celebration, rather than a protest”. Thus, that promotes the presence of other activities besides just riding a bike. The documentary “Dale al Pedal” (Aguirre S. , 2007) shows the development of one of those activities: music, urban art and juggling among others.

In addition, as it mentioned by some interviewees in the documentary, it is not only about riding a bike; to ride as group is an opportunity to create community by showing to car drivers that cyclists are part of the city and the streets as well while they interact in real time on open traffic (Aguirre S. , 2007).

## Ciclopaseo

The Ciclopaseo is a weekly public ride held every Sunday during 6 hours that congregates 50.000 people approximately every ride. Its main characteristic lays over the fact that the designated route

---

<sup>32</sup> Pedalling Fridays, in Spanish

is totally dedicated to bicycles; no other vehicle is authorized to use it even pedestrian performs many activities there as well, such as walking and running.

It started back in 2003 as an initiative promoted by cyclists organizations under the leadership of BiciAcción (D. Puente, personal communication, July 2, 2015). The first ride took place on April 23, 2003 with a route of 10 kilometres crossing one of the city's main avenues, starting at Cruz del Papa (north of the city) and finishing in the Historic centre. According to D. Puente, there have been two key aspects for the success of the first Ciclopaseo; the first one, the help from close collaborators of the mayor who instructed the persons in charge of the traffic and the police to give full support to the activity. The second one was the fact that the mayor of that time assisted to first ride: "We (the promoters) went to one of the starting points with a bike for the mayor and we started to ride along with him; it was a nice experience for him because he was able to ride the whole route without any problem. Even more, the people wave him and salute him as we passed by; many of them congratulated him while at the same time that we were telling him our ideas; that made him see the huge impact that this activity could have" (D. Puente, personal communication, July 2, 2015). From then on, the Ciclopaseo was institutionalized from May of the same year and with support of the Municipality of Quito.

The support supposed, not only a help in the development of the Ciclopaseo, but a change in the perspective that the promoters had over the government as well. "In the beginning we tell them 'thanks a lot for gave us the posters and your support' but we discovered that the Municipality is not something strange to the people; it belongs to us and we must exercise our power over it... We are giving a social benefit through this activity; we are not taking the money for our own benefit. The municipality's resources belong to us so it is a must their support". Nevertheless, it was not that easy to do so; "in the end, we realise that it all came to the political support, a higher order to overcome all the barriers and difficulties" (D. Puente, personal communication, July 2, 2015).

From 2005, the Ciclopaseo took place every two weeks (Diario El Hoy, 2005) and from 2009 until now, it is weekly (Diario El Hoy, 2009). Regarding the route. From 10 kilometres, it grew progressively to the north and south of the city until completing 25 kilometres. Finally, the Ciclopaseo of Quito spread up further to the north and now the route is 29 kilometres since 2009. The schedule has increased as well, from four to six hours per day (Salud Vital, 2012).

For all the mentioned above, D. Puente underlines that the Ciclopaseo is the turning point for the cyclists organization. "The first Ciclopaseo is an important milestone and a qualitative leap in the cyclists' global social struggle; it let us destroy some myths related to the state, the police, the cars, the city's geography... all the things that people created as barrier to the use of bike in the city" (Personal communication, July 2, 2015). F. Fuentes upheld this by stating, "The Ciclopaseo ended the myth that it was no possible to commute through the city using a bike" (F Fuentes, personal communication, July 1, 2015). In addition, A. Velasco mentions that the Ciclopaseo, but especially the work developed by the founding organizations and their exposure, gave an example to others (Personal communication, July 13, 2015).

The Ciclopaseo, D. Puente states, "is an experiment about the bicycle and the culture in the city; in that space the bike does not longer belong to the 'bicycle community', the ecologist or activists... the established groups do not go to the Ciclopaseo. They have their own dynamics". "Everyone, the common citizen has the same chances of exercising the use of a bicycle... the ciclopaseo is simple, it does not matter which bike you ride and everything is developed on a horizontal way. We hope that they (the users) will gain interest in cycling in Quito in a daily basis" (Personal communication, July 2, 2015).

From field observations on the Ciclopaseo, it is possible to observe some of the hints related by D. Puente. The diversity of the users is huge; their bikes, clothes, riding pace. However, sometimes there is reproduction of the current city's culture. Some cyclists act in a manner to show if they ride faster than others do; others show no respect for pedestrians trying to cross from one sidewalk to another. There are intersections where cars and rides concur and many cyclists do not stop at the red lights. The same attitudes that some cyclists neglects are present in their own behaviour (D. Larrea, observation, July 5-19, 2015).

C. Medrano states as well, "the Ciclopaseo is a worthy space; a valid space where is possible to take the public space. It is a civic space. From its nature is very beautiful" However, he goes on, "it is difficult to analyse whether it (the Ciclopaseo) helped to consolidate the cyclists' movements. It is difficult to observe and analyse all the cyclists at the Ciclopaseo... Are they Sunday cyclists? Are they 'fish tank' cyclists that will never leave that segregated space (the Ciclopaseo)? Do we seek that segregation?" (Personal communication, June 22, 2015).

C. Medrano concludes, "I would not say that the Ciclopaseo marks a before and after for cyclists' organization. the Ciclopaseo is more related to citizen inclusion... it marks a citizen's right to use a public space is different way once a week... and an opportunity for people who do not dare to ride the city with traffic" (Personal communication, June 22, 2015).

...or no milestone at all?

There are different points of view as well. As C. Tacuri mentions, "there is no a clear turning point for the cyclists organization process. From an infrastructure perspective, there is not a before and after either. The bicycle remains unprotected, and we still do not have representatives in political spaces". For him, this is evident daily in the streets. "I do not feel that security has improved in the street, although there are more cyclists and people riding and car drivers begins to accept that they will have to share the way with the bike. But still there is a vast majority of people who confronts you (while riding a bike in the street)" (personal communication, July 29, 2015).

C. Tacuri points to different approach. "The 'before and after' is an individual process. The use of a bike came from individual choices, but not from the collective ones; there are people who use bicycle totally convinced that is a good alternative" (personal communication, July 29, 2015).

Finally, C. Tacuri does establish a sadly reflection, "the milestones are when cyclists die on the streets" (personal communication, July 29, 2015).

"Faith divides us – Death unites us"<sup>33</sup>

The question remains... is there a cyclists movement in Quito? To answer this, it will be done using Tilly's (2010, p. 28)<sup>34</sup> ideas about social movement who claims that is a social movement is a political construct that combines three elements: claims collective campaigns against the authorities

---

<sup>33</sup> Taken from the name of the twelfth studio album by the British goth metal band "Paradise Lost".

<sup>34</sup> In the references list this book is credited jointly with Lesley Wood who made some revisions and included a completely new chapter to it after Tilly's death. However, as the same Wood recognise it in the preface, this book is still Tilly's work.

concerned; a range of actions to carry out these demands<sup>35</sup> and public demonstrations of worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment of the cause.

From this description, C. Medrano states, "It is complicated state something about a cyclists movement; sometimes there is one and sometimes it does not exist" (Personal communication, June 22, 2015).

As expressed by D. Puente, "most of the cyclists' organizations had their origin in BiciAcción. From there you have Ciclópolis, Andando en Bici Carajo and many others. Most of us come from this common branch" (Personal communication, July 2, 2015). However, this not necessarily means common visions, values and objectives. In fact, those differences are the cause for a constant distancing between the organizations and collectives as F. Fuentes, C. Medrano, D. Puente and A. Velasco recognise (Personal communication, June-July, 2015).

One of their main differences lays over the perceived objectives and coherence between the discourses and practices among cyclists' organizations and their members. For C. Medrano, one of the main problems is "many that those involved in cycling issues do not have a political position. The bicycle has always had a 'green'<sup>36</sup> flag and that is a mistake; to focus the bike within an environmental discourse is terrible. The flag should be multi-coloured... the bicycle should flow into other social issues". He continues the idea and states, "Many people say 'do not mess with the bike' or 'bike is fun'. I agree with that, but there must be some social, political and theoretical inputs to support any speech and to construct the social imaginary that cyclist in town by right and presence". He adds, "The bike necessarily addresses the issue of public space, the issue of (social) class. There is a class struggle related to your position in the pyramid of mobility. Your position in the city, your position due to your means of transport is a matter of class because it clearly shows that when you cycle, you are less and the car is more than you" (Personal communication; July 2, 2015).

Even more, C. Medrano states, "The bicycle is a political, non-electoral tool; for a transgressive struggle. It is not within the law as such, it is only recognized as transportation means. However, the bicycle also has a most revolutionary and subversive side, an anarchist one. The bike has a transgressive nature, an individualistic nature. It is a tool that allows you to develop your own physical skills, your own experiences and in that sense it never had any law". "The bicycle is a risk to capital", he infers (Personal communication; June 22, 2015).

At this respect, D. Puente makes a clear differentiation. "You cannot be a total anarchist, claiming the need that the Ciclopaseo should not have fences. They question the authority and the power. Others question that work with the municipality". He states, "We should work with those actors (state ones), not against them...why not? We need close politicians who could help us. We need the bike lanes... If you want a solution, you need to intervene that reality too... They (other collectives) get offended when someone decides to lead that political struggle" (Personal communication, July 2, 2015).

C. Medrano reflects, "The issues related to the bicycle become a political arena where interests and strategies are woven to benefit just a few. It is sometimes used as a political and even electoral step. Many people enter into this (cycling activism) as promoters of social change but ultimately is a chance to get a public office. It is not bad the participation in public office, but must be connected to a political ideology; it must have a social base to support the job and stand firm with your ideals". He concludes, "there are some mistakes that people make regarding the bike and that hurts the

---

<sup>35</sup> This include partnerships with a specific purpose, public rallies, media statements and expressions

<sup>36</sup> In reference to an environmental approach.

movement... a movement that is not palpable yet, that remains ethereal" (Personal communication, June 22, 2015).

There are also some questioning regarding the collectives' internal organization. D. Puente states, "We should no deny the institutionalization among us. Voluntarism is insufficient when it comes to bigger activities. That is why the leap (institutionalization) is important to raise funds... to support the actions such as the Ciclopaseo" (Personal communication, July 2, 2015).

However, there might exist a pitfall about this. A Velasco states, "It is possible that you became just a project designer or that your actions only focus in getting projects without influencing public policies". Additionally, she remarks, "To become and NGO or not should not immobilise you. But you should have a clear idea about to whom you ask funds" (Personal communication, July 13, 2015).

These differences are long and strong enough to have an impact in the 'yet to be' cyclists' movement. Due to the many breakups, several organizations were created with each of them wanting to work on their own objectives and even develop an "identity construction process". However, it has not been a clean process, since as D. Puente mentions, "we seem to have inherited the hatred between us to new generations" (Personal communication, July 2, 2015). In addition, as A. Velasco states, "It meant an atomization of the movement. There are less leading voices that could create a group to influence in public policies. There is a loss of the political vision" (Personal communication, July 13, 2015).

An evidence of the effect of this "atomization process" can be seen in the several, but failed, intentions to promote and consolidate a larger gathering of cyclists' collectives and organizations. As F. Fuentes recalls, "First there was the 'Everyday Cyclists'<sup>37</sup> meeting, from there was the idea of creating the 'Coalición de Ciclistas Urbanos de Quito'<sup>38</sup> but it did not work. Later on, we tried to form the 'Red de Organizaciones Ciclistas'<sup>39</sup> but again it failed. Even though, there is a new intent called the 'Unión de Ciclistas del Ecuador – BiciUnión'<sup>40</sup>, formed with 22 organizations working on thematic groups. (Personal communication, July 1, 2015).

Still, to get together all the collectives and organizations seems to be very difficult. As C. Tacuri stated above, they only reunite when tragedy knocks the door. M. Landazuri comments on this regard, "one day I was cycling through Amazonas Ave. and suddenly I saw a large amount of cyclists. I did not know what happened but I joined them and then I found out that it was a meeting in honour of a cyclist (Sebastián Muñóz) who was killed not far from there. Someone said a few words and then I realize that we were not alone. That we are a large community... There I felt 'I am with my people'" (Personal communication, July 20, 2015).

Three years ago, Salomé Reyes, an elite cyclist was hit and killed by a bus. It was a huge tragedy due to her connections and relationships with many of the organizations and collectives and not only urban cyclists. That led to a massive protest that included hundreds of cyclists laying over one of the main streets of the city (El Universo, 2012). As a result, the Commission of Cyclists and Pedestrian of Quito in order to promote stronger changes regarding safety issues and state duties to promote a good use of the public space in the city. However, it failed yet again. As F. Fuentes mentions, "It is difficult to maintain processes due to the unsustainability of things, people remain interested for a couple of months but then they leave" (Personal communication, July 1, 2015). As A. Velasco concludes, "We lost a great opportunity with the campaign related to Salome Reyes; we were

---

<sup>37</sup> Ciclistas cotidianos, in Spanish.

<sup>38</sup> Coalition of Urban Cyclists – Quito, in Spanish.

<sup>39</sup> Cyclists' Organizations Network, in Spanish.

<sup>40</sup> Ecuadorian Cyclist Union, in Spanish.

together but nothing happened. The ones in charge maybe got tired... who knows" (Personal communication, July 13, 2015).

Another key point could be the diversity among those who are part of the movement. As Gordón mentions, "There are social groups, collectives, individuals and bike stores as well. So when we gather to organise bigger events such as the 'Mobility Week' the discussions became pointless. It is more about activities rather than the bottom issues. There is no a big dream. There are many ideas but no concretion at all. Others use your ideas and make profit of it" (Personal communication, June 8, 2015). Even more, among cyclists there are differences depending on their personal practice with a bike. In the current municipal administration of Quito, many dedicated bike lanes were removed. Disregarding any technical discussion about how effective was the geographical distribution and the cyclists' traffic on them, there were some debate in some social media sites –like Facebook between those who rejected the removal and those who supported the decision. What was interesting is that some of the supporters where sportive cyclists.

According to A. Velasco, "the lack of an organic structure does not enable a chance to monitor and follow-up compromises. What happens in the cycling world is just a reflex of political immaturity of the country. The (cyclists') movement needs a political vision" (Personal communication, July 13, 2015). D. Puente states, "We should learn from the route cyclists, they help each other to overcome every obstacle. A strong cyclists' association is a social debt; we need it in order to construct a better society. For example, a roundabout for cars costs 50 million (US Dollars) and one for bikes costs four... to who are you giving the money? To the most expensive solution, to the riches. To demand over these kind of issues should be our aim, not fight against each other. Let's solve our problems privately but we should have a common and joint position to the outside" (Personal communication, July 2, 2015).

In any case, as C. Medrano concludes, "If the (cyclists') movement fails to ground their ideas and organization into a structure that could have a political influence, there will always be the possibility to accept agendas of political parties in power. We will remain a marginal social movement that is a 'check' in a box on their list of citizen participation" (Personal communication, June 22, 2015). Again, the irreverent and transgressive nature of the bike would have something to say. Or maybe not. This is something that would be analysed further on.

## Chapter 3: Carishinas en Bici

As mentioned above, between the late 1990 and the early 2000 there was a “boom” on the creation and development of cyclists social groups (collectives, organizations, etc.). One of those groups were the Carishinas en Bici. This chapter is dedicated to analyse them from their practices in order to identify values, ideas relationships and processes relevant to this research.

### What? A woman riding a bike in Quito?

As in any modern city in the world, Quito has become a large stage where social issues related to the current model of development have started to arise to the spotlight. One of them is social inequity that women suffer from the city's inhabitants and its culture.

In Ecuador, 6 out of 10 women had suffered some kind of gender violence and in the case of Pichincha 7 out of 10 women had suffered the same issue, (Instituto Ecuatoriano de Estadísticas y Censos, 2012). Even if this problem is mainly present within the home context, in public spaces women are victims of gender violence as well.

According to UNIFEM (2011), 7 out of 10 women from the south of the city said that they have suffered at least once from sexual harassment or abuse in public spaces. The use of hurtful expressions, intimidation based in superficial aspects such as clothing and public fondling are part of the wide range of physical and psychological violence that affect women. Some of them are fearful about being in public spaces where they feel unprotected to those acts of violence, as expressed above.

To put the reality exposed above into the context of this research, here is another fact: from 1.697 cyclists spotted over one of the high traffic zones in Quito, only 15% are women (Biciacción, 2014). If someone wants to talk about disparity, exclusion and inequity this is a fine starting point. Not to mention, the way they are perceived by common citizens; during one Carishina Race, a local middle-aged female peddler stated, “Look at them, those girls riding a bike are the Carishinas en Bici... and all of them are lesbians” (Observation, May 16, 2015).

Since 2010, a social countermovement has started to develop some actions in public spaces in order to tackle this issue among others (e.g. environment pollution and mobility). These actions are producing changes within the group itself and the ones related to it. They are the “Carishinas en Bici”<sup>41</sup>, a group of women who use the bike as a means to enhance their practices; which is something different to the regular methods used by other feminist groups. They define themselves as group formed only by women who “use the bike as a tool for safe and fun mobility” and through their activities, they “want to encourage women to be more free and autonomous mobilizing in the streets of Quito” (2014).

Their origin lays on the alley cats performed in Quito in the late 2000. As mentioned earlier, this race on open urban traffic attracts dozens of cyclists; even if alley cats are supposed to have participants from any gender, commonly there are more men than women. Quito is not an exemption, and even if there is no a statistical account, most of the participants are men. This trend was possible to observe in the recent alley cat “Jesús del Gran Pedal” which was held in this year. From around 50

---

<sup>41</sup> The closest translation could be Butches on Bike



teams<sup>42</sup>, there were only three conformed exclusively by women with a few others with at least a woman as member (Observation, June 26, 2015).

In 2010, an alley cat exclusively for women was held under the leadership of Charlotte Fagan; she was a foreign student who decided to spend in Ecuador a couple of months and was working with some of the cyclists' collectives back then. It was the first Carishina Race. This was a milestone for the collective, the seed that started all. After the race, some of the participants decided to carry on with the organization of future races; they eventually realized that it was possible for them to do other kind of activities to promote the daily use of bike by women. Furthermore, they decided to organize themselves in a more concrete space that is now known as the collective "Carishinas en Bici" (X. Paltán, personal communication, June 19, 2015). The main group of carishinas began with eight members and now they are around 15 women. During these years, many members has come and gone, as well as other women who are not part of the decisional group but still support them and take part on their activities. Nevertheless, the group is growing in numbers and ideas.

All of their activities are related –or, should it be said, performed on a bike. The "Carishina Race" and the "Hadas Madrinas en Bici"<sup>43</sup> are their most important actions and will be explained later on. Besides them, the collective perform other regular activities such as "Rodadas de altura"<sup>44</sup> which is a ride performed by women wearing dresses, skirts and high heels around the streets of Quito; this activity is usually seen by many women as very difficult due to the physical constrains of that kind of clothing. Another activity is the one called "Salidas rurales"<sup>45</sup>, rides performed in rural areas of Quito; they represent a challenge, as the routes are located over dirt roads covering long distances, something very different from the urban reality.

Finally, The Carishinas en Bici had performed or participated in other non-regular activities such as a trip Quito - Tulcán with a 240 kilometres route and a trip through the northern amazon of Ecuador from El Coca to Pomona in a 270 kilometres route; just to mention two of those activities (Carishinas en Bici, 2015).

### To be or not to be a Carishina en Bici

One of the main questions in this chapter remains: What is to be a Carishina? In the following paragraphs it will be described their main ideals, values and struggles in order to identify the shapes and edges of this social group.

According to X. Paltán, "essentially, any women who I spot on a bike is a Carishina" (Personal communication, June 19, 2015). This statement makes a clear relation with the very meaning of the group's name as X. Paltán reflects, "our goal is to open up a debate about the meaning of the word. There is was a wrong appropriation of the term. (Personal communication, December 5, 2014). "In the beginning, I did not understand the purpose of using that word... When we called each other "carishina", we started to think and reflect about it. It was strange at the beginning due to the (common) conception of the word. Then we decided that we should change its meaning... The essence of being a Carishina is the feeling of being free when you ride a bike". (Personal communication, June 19, 2015).

<sup>42</sup> In this alley cat, each has three participants.

<sup>43</sup> Cycling Fairy Godmother Program, in Spanish

<sup>44</sup> High Riding could be a close translation in English

<sup>45</sup> Rural rides, in Spanish.

Elena Romero, a member who passed away in 2013, stated, "What excites me the most about the Carishinas is the chance to make friends. However, most off all, And when women take a bike and lose their fear; when they discover freedom... Freedom is my favourite feeling... (On a bike) I do not need of a bus, money, parking lots. I feel free" (Fagan, Elena - Woman on a Wheel, 2012). Additionally, X. Paltán reflects upon the ongoing process of constructing the meaning of the term; "It (the process) is something that is constructed every day because people come and go from the collective" (Personal communication, June 19, 2015).

Concerning the organizational structure, D Borja states, "The manifesto is clear enough for us regarding formalization of the collective" (Personal communication, July 14, 2015). "In addition, we have a horizontal organization which means that everyone's opinion is important.... We accept each other the way we are because everyone bring something into the group this might a reason for the group (carishinas) to be solidary" (D. Borja, personal communication, June 18, 2015). S. Gordón has a say in this regard as well, "I think democracy is more lived on the Carishinas because it is an experiment that is constantly constructed: flexible leadership which depends on what we do. It is an interesting exercise of participation. It has it flaws but the discussion about how do we open up the space is something important for us" (Personal communication, June 8, 2015).

There is not a formal recruitment or induction process; about this D. Borja states, "We are the ones that have the chance to go the meetings and show interest in attending in first place and then contributing to some of the activities". Nevertheless, given its voluntary nature, as she reflects, "it is not possible to reinforce duties or responsibilities to other members" (Personal communication, June 18, 2015). X. Paltán agrees on this view by stating, "Sometimes, the lack of participation, interest and commitment from others to keep working had affected the Carishinas. The fact that now were are a larger group might be a reason as well" (Personal communication, June 19, 2015).

At the same time, D. Borja acknowledges, "Some people left the group due to personal and ideological differences. Some of them wanted a stronger focus on other issues; environment for example, which is Ok. However, we have to be very clear that we have to maintain our key ideas: women and bike... For instance, sometimes I do environmental activities but outside the collective". Still, even if a member left the group, "they never stop being a Carishina, as long as they ride a bike" (D. Borja, personal communication, June 18, 2015).

Regarding some characteristics, the do not have a specific musical preference: "We listen to different things" and they do not have a dressing code: "Some of us wear skirts, others use jeans and we even have a rocker among us who always dresses in black. Sometimes we wear our official jackets at meetings or special activities (e.g. races)... But there is no a specific characteristic that would enable you to spot a woman riding a bike and say 'she is a Carishina'!" However, they do share a common saying: "The only thing that could stop a woman is the brakes of her bike", with a special variant... "If the has brakes in the first place!" (D. Borja, personal communication, June 18, 2015).

To be Carishina has become part of their life, or as X. Paltán mentions, "part of their essence" (Personal communication, December 5, 2014). As J. Hernández states, "to be a Carishina is not something private, no. When they ask about it, I tell them the whole story and discourse, particularly to my female students. To my male students I focus it from a "women respect" point of view" (Personal communication, June 5, 2015).

Not only the meaning of the term is important; their commitment to the group plays a role as well as she reflects: "When I hear the term 'carishina', I think about the collective. You have worked so hard for it that it becomes part of you" (Personal communication, June 19, 2015). In addition, J.

Hernández states, “I am not in charge right now of anything within the collective due to my time but I do attend to some of the meetings and most of the times I do it because I miss them. I feel very happy just to know that they exist. I love their diversity. If I ever leave, they will be what I would miss the most” (Personal communication, June 1, 2015).

From an outside perspective, C. Tacuri thinks of the Carishinas as “a collective with a great respect because it is the only one that has shown evidence of its work with the results that we have seen, and what they are generating”. He continues, “They are the only group that has been maintained over time, has a good connection with the people and has managed to transcend. I have come to love them because they make people to give a chance to bike”. Then, he concludes, “It is important to have people who can transfer that knowledge of the bike, the habit and the love for the bike; it is very important to have people with that conviction” (Personal communication, July 29, 2015).

G. Zurita establishes that the Carishinas are well positioned among cyclists’ organizations. “They are doing things without expecting anything in return... They have not let to be tempted by money or politics. They remain independent doing their stuff. The fairy godmothers is a great contribution to society and now you see women on the street when before it was impossible because of harassment issues... They have managed to position the issues of gender and equality. There are tangible results of their work” (Personal communication, June 24, 2015).

In addition, C. Medrano states, “The Carishinas are “a group that has a clear idea of their actions on the bike; they are backed by gender issues and criticize the patriarchal system, machismo and the role that has been given to women in society... The carishinas are opinion leaders regarding their ideals and they have concrete results, such as fairy godmothers... They have raised a political discourse anti sexism gender and do things that transgress and distort the reality of this ‘macho’ city. They have a background of social struggle and solidarity”. He then concludes, “The Carishinas are a sort of social thermometer that shows how the patriarchal society behaves ... One thing is being a woman on a bike and another is to be man in the same position” (Personal communication, June 22, 2015).

The former statement is one of the key points for the Carishinas; it is not the same thing being a woman than a man cycling in Quito. That is one of the main reasons to have a group of women only. As D. Borja mentions, “The collective is my first only women space... In my case, I feel that by the fact of being surrounded only by women, people are more accessible to talk about their feelings, fears, expectation and dreams... And we share and stay together due to a strong and common objective: more women cycling in Quito”. She continues, “In the collective we have questions about mixed or mixed collective but we realize that those spaces already exist and they are not necessarily fulfilling our goals.” She concludes, “A member has to believe that a group of women can make a difference. It does not have to be necessarily feminist... There are many girls who do not believe in only women groups; we respect that but they should try the dynamics of the group and see how it feels” (Personal communication, June 18, 2015).

Finally, there is also other things regarding the group that make it what it is. As mentioned above, it is not only what the Carishinas have done for themselves but for other as well. Here, there is love too; as L. Camacho reflects when asked about the impact that collective had over her partner Jacky, “Most of my friends were men than women. The carishinas helped me to get along better with other women. They showed how love could be present in other kind of relationships. I have learnt a lot from them so I can be with Jacky” (Personal communication, June 20, 2015).

## Struggles and future of cyclists women

D. Borja invitation to get to meet the collective has a story behind; the one related to their vision of future and the struggles they face every day to get there. As mentioned previously, women in Quito are victims of many forms of violence and harassment in public spaces. Even more, the fact of riding a bike seems to amplify that situation as they become more visible and perhaps more vulnerable. As X. Paltán recalls, "one day, I was cycling back to my home when I felt a strong hit on my bottom; it was a guy in a car that was passing by. I was so angry that I cycle as fast as I could and I almost got him but he missed the red light so he could scape... In other occasion, some men on a van yelled at me many horrible things; they wanted to intimidate me just because I was riding my bike" (Personal communication, December 5, 2014).

Hence, gender related issues are one of their main motivations but discussions as well. Regarding their practices, they perform many activities focused on improve the current situation of women in Quito, and particularly of the ones who dare to cycle in the city. As J. Hernández states, "Even if we do not declare ourselves as feminists, we do many more things (to improve women current situation) that many others NGOs or women's rights activist". She then reflects, "By riding the bike, we all are making a change. If a woman cannot leave her home to visit their relatives because his husband does not give her money, now due to the fairy godmother program she is able to it... Is not feminism to give the chance to this woman to go wherever she likes without permission of her husband?" (Personal communication, June 1, 2015).

In April 3, 2015, one of the main newspapers of Quito published a reportage about the Carishinas reviewing their work in Quito. It also included a video with the comments of some of their members. This gave lots of publicity the group, particularly in social media sites where it was published. Despite almost 1.900 likes, 150 shares<sup>46</sup> and very positive comments and cheers on this story in the newspaper's Facebook page, it generated some negative comments over the Carishinas. They included debate criticism over the name of the group by using term "carishina", arguments against women riding bikes in Quito and even some pejorative expressions against the group such as "go back to the kitchen", "idlers", "haters", "you should tidy up your houses" and "feminazis" (El Comercio, 2015).

Eventually, they issued a public statement about the comments and debates posted regarding the article in order to make clear their point about the topics exposed (Carishinas en Bici, 2015). As Gordón states, "It seems that is very natural that the term is perceived as a pejorative term". She goes beyond and establishes, "We should not answer those things; those people cannot understand what are be talking about by to a comment on Facebook... They have strong mental structures, so strong that enable them to say that kind of things it in public". Asked about the chance to cycle along with those persons in order to enhance a better debate, she reflects, "Who knows if they would change. A bicycle change the way you live, but sometimes it reproduces what you are" Personal communication, June 8, 2015).

In any case, this event just enhanced the feminism discussion among the Carishinas. J. Hernández reflects over it; "I think that the current patriarchal system has demonized 'feminism' so women neglect from it because is not nice to be rejected; it is like being a witch in the middle age. Therefore, your friends would only be other feminists. This is a victory for machismo". In addition, she states, "Within the collective there is a conflict due to the lack of difference between the feminism that fights for equality that the radical one. We lack of a theoretical discussion about it"

---

<sup>46</sup> These numbers are used to assess the "popularity" of a post among Facebook users.

(Personal communication, June 1, 2015). In addition, X. Paltán states, “(due to the article reactions), many of the girls realised that there is a miscomprehension of the term. That led us to deeper reflections” (Personal communication, June 19, 2015).

At what extent do they consider feminism a key aspect of their discourse? “I do not have an answer”, states D. Borja. “We do live in a macho society... but some girls (members and non-members) rejects the discussion because they are scared about, they feel that they do not have enough background for a discussion... and that would prevent more women to join... I would love to get to a moment where it would be possible to talk about equality and rights” (Personal communication, June 2, 2015).

As M. Landázuri reflects, “Their struggle is to have the right to be respected; the right to the public space”. However, the roots for this struggle are more complex than it seems, as Landázuri angrily states, “The ideals behind a car is not only machismo, is capitalism. ‘I have the money so I give a damn about your space, the city space. I have the economic power to do so’... The public spaces belongs to the strongest... Spaces where everyone, in especial women, should be protected. That is something the Carishinas has to fight for... Because it is my space, because I have the right to it!” (Personal communication, July 20, 2015).

Regarding the cyclists’ movement, they had some thoughts as well. “We (the Carishinas) tend to stand apart from actions or groups that are motivated by others’ political agendas or that use aggressive or invasive means” (D. Borja, personal communication, June 18, 2015). “It is not as if we have enemies or something but we disagree with people that make a profit out of the bike or the cyclist’s organizations. In special, when those actions led to a division of the (cyclists’) movement. Still, we try to keep our differences aside in order to not affect our work and others’ too” (X. Paltán, personal communication, June 19, 2015). In addition, Gordón states, “We do not go to some rides because some people attend because they looking for girls. Some women look at it (to be harassed) as something normal” (Personal communication, June 8, 2015).

When it comes to think about their future as a collective, there is a long way to go. First and logical step in any social group is to strength the collective and then enhance and improve their actions. As D. Borja mentions, “It is easier to be a volunteer when you have a clear idea of what are you going to do” (Personal communication, July 14, 2015).

However, there are new discussions among the Carishinas. What should be the scope of their actions? Again, as a collective there is no clear definitions about it. Gordón reflects over it, “The Carishinas are the real stuff; you can count them, look at them. You can see women cycling in Quito... Still, I believe that from the public policy you can influence more people... We want to influence other groups... However, if we want to influence public policies we would attend meetings that sometimes meaningless. And that is something that we are still discussing within the collective” (Personal communication, June 8, 2015).

## Memories from alley cats and fairies

As mentioned above, given the rotation of members among the decisional group, the goals, visions and practices are not fixed. Nevertheless, some core ideas and values are present in the group that tries to pass them from one Carishina to another. In the following paragraphs, two of their main actions and practices will be described in order to get an insight on how the Carishinas –and others

are living the experience of being a woman riding a bike in Quito, and by doing so I will attempt to identifying what is happening with them.

### Carishina Race

A Carishina Race is a “typical” alley cat as described previously. Teams of cyclists –two participants, in this case, ride over an undesignated route with the mission to complete a diversity of challenges on a set of specific checkpoints. So far, nothing special nor different from other alley cats. However, some specificities make a Carishina Race a special event.

Its origin is the first one. As mentioned above, in 2010, Charlotte Fagan, a foreign student who decided to spend in Ecuador a couple of months, decided to organize the first alley cat exclusively for women. Her idea was to increase the participation of women in these spaces by give them an opportunity to compete among equals. She named it “Carishina Race”. The term “carishinas” is a quechua<sup>47</sup> word used in a pejorative way to refer a woman who is unsuited for housework, idle or that looks like a man. The closest translation in English would be “butch”. The term and its use was something that attracted Fagan so she decided to use it to make a statement regarding the way women in Quito are commonly perceived. The first edition of the race was held on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010 with 66 participants and it was great success. When Fagan left the country, some of the participants of the first race decided to continue organizing the Carishina Race “because it was a really cool activity” (X. Paltán, personal communication, June 19, 2015).

Since then, there has been an average of two races per year with more participants every time. The race held on October 25, 2014 attracted more than 160 participants. On the last race from May 16, 2015, there were only 70 participants; however, the main reason for this drop was a change on the area where the race was held. Commonly, it is raced in the north of the city but this was the first time that the race was situated in the southern part. This is not a usual area for this kind of activities, so it is possible to infer that this affected the participation of more women.

Another topic regarding this characteristic is the reaction that other people have over it. For the city is still a new view to see dozens of women riding bikes on open urban traffic. During the races of October 2014 and May 2015, it was interesting to observe how spectators were surprised by the presence of the participants, their competitiveness or by the simple fact of see that quantity of women riding a bike in the middle of the city streets (Observation, October 25, 2014 and May 16, 2015).

Furthermore, many people stared at them for another fact. They were wearing costumes and some of their bikes were decorated as well. There is an explanation to this situation; every race have has a theme that guides the challenges at every checkpoint. For example, in the October 2014 edition, the theme was food; the nickname of the race was “Carishina, más come que cocina” (Carishina eats more than she cooks). All the challenges were focused on food topics and so does the costumes; it was possible to spot women looking like typical Ecuadorian food (Arroz con huevo, Chulpi y tostado, Guagua de pan y colada morada<sup>48</sup>) or food related items (Mama cucharas<sup>49</sup>) (Observation, October 25, 2014). The May 2015 edition was dedicated to music and it was called “Carishina Race, al son del

---

<sup>47</sup> Quechua is one of the original languages of Ecuador; nowadays is still used by indigenous populations. It has an influence in the daily oral communication where other quechua terms are commonly used.

<sup>48</sup> Rice and fried eggs, toasted sweetcorn and bread with dark purple beverage, in Spanish.

<sup>49</sup> A merging between the term mother and spoon, in Spanish.

sur!”<sup>50</sup> The challenges included dancing, singing and performing; the costumes were related to songs, musical writing and instruments (Observation, October 25, 2014 and May 16, 2015). Creativity plays a big role for the organizer and the participants; it is a shared value transmitted between them and enhanced by the practice.

Another key practice perceived during this practice is solidarity. As Fagan recalls from the first race, “I loved that all participants supported each team that arrived and they waited for all of them to finish before partying in the bar” (Carishinas en Bici, 2014). This is a hint of another special characteristic of this practice. During the field observations, it was possible to identify that these kind of practices were present during many moments of the race. Even if it is an event of competitive nature, the teams supported each other; during the ride by sharing shortcuts or tips related to the route at the checkpoint during the performance of challenges and at the end of the race where some participants helped other to get home or fix mechanical issues on their bikes (Observation, October 25, 2014 and May 16, 2015). The fact of competing in teams enhance solidarity among participants as well; the challenges are about doing some activity together rather than alone. This exercise is intended to increase the perception among the participants that they can rely into another, as cyclists and as women (Observation, October 25, 2014 and May 16, 2015).

Effort recognition is important as well. During the award ceremony held at the end of the race, there are prizes for many categories as a recognition to creativity, effort and outstanding facts. There are awards for the teams that arrived in top three, for the team that came at last place, for the three best costumes (which is decided by all the participants); the older and the youngest team; the youngest participants<sup>51</sup>; and, to teams formed of mother and daughter, just to mention the most recurrent categories. Due to the increasing support to the race by local sellers and retailers of cycling articles, there are considerable quantity of prizes. Because of this, the award ceremony could last for 30 to 45 minutes (Observation, October 25, 2014 and May 16, 2015).

In addition, the race produces an evident empowerment of their participants. During the whole event, they are cheered and motivated by the organizer, volunteers at the checkpoints and by other participants as well. As mentioned earlier, cycling in Quito is not so easy for the geographical and cultural constraints that cyclists face every day. Therefore, as some of the participants mention, the simple fact of take part of the race is a personal achievement itself. It gave them confidence to ride on the streets, proving them that they are capable to do it. (Observation, October 25, 2014 and May 16, 2015).

All this characteristics, besides the fun and excitement that the participants mention, has helped the Carishinas to attract more people to the collective. As X. Paltán mentions, “After our activities, mainly the races, we invited everyone to be part of the collective or to help us in other activities that we have. Others just came in without any formal invitation and become part of the collective. As you see, this is an open space” (Personal communication, December 5, 2014). From conversation with other members, the race is the main motivation to become a Carishina. Moreover, to perform urban cycling as well. Nowadays, most of them commute through the city on a daily basis; sometimes, the bicycle their only transportation means. And the race has not only motivated the Carishinas; as mentioned in their Facebook page (Carishinas en Bici, 2015), sometimes they meet other women cycling on the streets who mention that the Carishina Race was one of their motivation to take a bike ride the city as often as possible.

---

<sup>50</sup> Carishina Race, moving by the South sound, in Spanish. The name refers to the area where the race was held as well.

<sup>51</sup> I proudly have to state that, to date, my daughter is the youngest participant ever with 7 years old when she raced on the Carishina Race of May 2015.

Finally, the Carishina Race as practice has effects on the members as well. Due to the need and actions that results from organising this event, the Carishinas had developed a stronger connection between them and an enhancement in the identification with the collective itself (X. Paltán, J. Hernández, D. Borja, personal communication, December 5, 2014; June 1, June 2, 2015). The organization of a race demands many things: brainstorm to define the theme, design of challenges, selection of checkpoints, negotiation with sponsors for prizes or support in specific challenges, search and organise volunteers, negotiation of specific spots, communication duties, calling for participants and organise the award event (which includes music and food for every one); just to mention the most important ones. The time required to fulfil all the former activities is estimated in two months minimum. In an immediate description of her experience –without too much reflection as she mentions, as an organizer for a Carishina Race, D. Borja states, “there are many reasons to be sad, angry and happy... it was not perfect..., a few girls cheated..., some volunteers left earlier..., I received at least 40 complaints..., my camera felt and broke... Still, we do it and we will keep doing so... Are we masochists or foolish? Or is it that we just fall in love with it (the race) as we spot the pack of cyclists arriving (to the checkpoints) to get their passports stamped (challenges record), all of them filled with adrenaline and smiles?” (Personal communication, June 2, 2015).

### Cycling fairy godmothers program

An obvious statement is the fact that not everyone learns in the same way. That is totally true when it comes to ride a bike. From colloquial chats with among a diversity of persons, it is possible to infer that this learning process is mainly held during childhood; however, it is not always like that, especially when you gave circumstances related to women and cycling in Quito as mentioned above. This is the main reason for the Carishinas en Bici to implement the “Hadas Madrinas en Bici”. Its original goal, as stated by Fagan, “is to reach women who have been traditionally ignored by the bike community in Quito” (2012, p. 1).

The origin of the program lays over two sources: a need and an opportunity. The need is present in every woman who has not had the chance to learn how to ride a bike when “they were supposed to”. There are many reasons that could explain this situation. As Granda (2014), a former goddaughter, recalls, “since I was I child, I tried many times to learn to bike but I was very vain and did not try it again because I did not like the bruises on my legs. Then it got very scary because I fell one time very really hard”. Pavón (2014), the first goddaughter who finalized successfully the program, makes a reflection of the various tries she attempted to learn to bike: “I never learned to ride a bike, well I did but using training wheels when I was a child. Then comes the inevitable transition point where people of certain age take off the training wheels but not me. So I did not learn... My first try was with my father when I was 14 years old but I did not work. We argue very hard and I did not try for the next 5 years... My second try was with a cousin of mine and it did not work either. He was holding me so I was not able to gain equilibrium and I fell again... then I wanted to get a boyfriend because they are supposed to help you in anything (yes, I used to think that) but I did not even got one”. The stories are many a very similar each of them.

The opportunity came in the form of an idea developed by the Carishinas. They realized, as explained above, that most of the women who do not know how to bike did not have an adequate space or companions that would enable them to learn. So they decide to create those conditions by “lend out bikes, helmets, locks, and reflective vests to women in low-income communities in Quito, Ecuador” (Fagan, 2012, p. 1); therefore, improving the mobility skills and opportunities of this group. As an anecdote, a popular belief among the Carishinas is that the persistence and insistence by Pavón was a key motivator for them (Pavón, 2014) (Personal communication, X. Paltán, J. Hernández, D. Borja, December 5, 2014; June 1, June 2, 2015).



The main founding came as part of the support from Fagan who obtained financial resources to build the first 20 of the program (Fagan, *The Bike Library for Carishinas, Quito, Ecuador - Proposal*, 2012). The methodology of the program is relatively simple “we paired a goddaughter, who was an inexperienced cyclist, with a godmother, who was an experienced urban cyclist, to create a one-on-one mentoring relationship” (Fagan, 2012, p. 1).

The Carishinas organized themselves in order to fulfil all the required activities: recruitment of the godmothers, calling of goddaughters, searching of the bikes to be lend and the definition of basic contents of the program but most of all, as Fagan states, “agree on the structure of the program so that it would sustainable” (Fagan, 2012).

Since the program began in 2012, many women have attended as godmothers or goddaughters. There is no official statistics about it but there a recollection of life stories, that shows the contribution of the program in the fulfilment of the Carishinas’ goals.

Magdalena Aulestia, goddaughter: “I learned to bike as a grown up; it took a lot of falls, bumps and shocks. However, I persisted to learn due to my desire to ride alone. For me it was a very special to achieve it; I bought my bike and cycle whenever I have time, in the day or night. Sometimes, I mike in the afternoon to release some stress” (Carishinas en Bici, ¡Logros! - Article, 2104). Her case is even more interesting given her age (around 60 years) and her personal history. As J. Hernández recalls, “she decided to learn because her husband does not give her money so she could not leave her home to visit their relatives (Personal communication, June 1, 2015).

Cristina Granda (2014) reflects over her own experience as goddaughter: “This experience has helped me to improve as mother and as a person. Whenever I cycled, I felt I could apply this learning to everything in my life. Everything seems impossible until you succeed. Everything in my life has been like riding a bike; a matter of letting go the fear, practice balance and cycling freely. This program helped me to fulfil one of my yearnings: to show to son that to achieve what you want regardless of how insignificant it may seem to others, one has to fight and never surrender”.

Some words from a godmother: “It's beautiful to see new carishinas in the streets. It is a little frustrating to spend the time on the program and that some goddaughters do not show commitment... it (the program) allowed me to see another side of the city, to tolerate the traffic and enjoy the ride... It made me believe more in myself and not to be afraid; it was also an exercise of patience, tolerance and acceptance... Now I am not afraid to walk the streets and defend my rights as a cyclist” (Borja, 2014).

The one that started all, Pavón (2014) states: “I was the only goddaughter who graduated from the first edition, but many more carishinas emerged from it. That is why this story has no end. Because the program is under permanent construction; because each one comes with its own past and build her own story. This story goes on because through a bike we find an excuse to remember that we are alive, we discover how free we can be, we see so many things that do not work but we also have the chance to break apart perverse structures with simple acts that in a silent way keep reproducing them”.

Regarding the previous statements, the Carishinas consider that still there is margin for improvement. D. Borja states, “The desertion numbers at the program are high, that is why we are reformulating the program. We are defining what should be its objective so we can to take strategic choices... we have spotted some critical points: time, commitment, available bikes. Additionally, there is a discussion about the geographical area, north south; anyway, until now we develop the

program in the central part of the city. Additionally, we want to develop a support mechanism so the godmothers would get more involved in the social issues that the program tackles” (D. Borja, personal communication, July 14, 2015). Time is a critical point for the program.

During a meeting previous the kick start of the program, it was possible to see some of those changes. The most important are reduced time of the program (3 months<sup>52</sup>), an improved mechanism to “geographically” locate and match godmothers and goddaughters and a new curricula that integrated topics related to the current social issues that women live everyday while cycling in Quito. (Observation, Coordination meeting for Fairy Godmother Program, promotion 2015, July 19, 2015). As X. Paltán concedes, “The program is a chance to replicate and spread our emotion and ideals. In this space is possible to put together many of our ideas with other topics” (Personal communication, December 5, 2014).

This program is considered the most effective mean to fulfil their goal: more women on bike in Quito (D. Borja, personal communication, July 14, 2015). It does not depend on any outside funding, but, as Fagan mentions, it relies “on the time and effort of the women who volunteer to mentor young, inexperienced cyclists. It also depends on the women who volunteer to organize the Carishinas en Bici collective”. (Fagan, 2012)

Nevertheless, Fagan expresses her confidence over the future of the program. “The women who organize the Carishinas en Bici collective are committed and excited about the project, and there is an ever-expanding base of volunteers who are willing to put in their time to make it happen” (Fagan, 2012).

---

<sup>52</sup> The time was relative and highly dependent on the godmothers and goddaughters’ time; some edition lasted over a year (Personal communication, D Borja, July 14, 2015).

## Chapter 4: Three women, three lives

As final step for this research, the materialities produced by a bicycle and their effects will be described from the point of view of three women, members of the collective Carishinas en Bici. The focus was over their individual interactions with a bike in order to describe how this relationship influenced their daily practices. First, it will be described from a general perspective what a bike can produce in people every time we ride.

### What a bike can do

“The bike helps you to develop many capacities and skills. It makes think fast. You have to take decisions every second. And sometimes, it makes you to go beyond every possible choice to assess their consequences” (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 1, 2015). As simple and straightforward as that, J. Hernández describes what a bike can produce on a person.

D. Puente mentions, “cycling activates people; we tend to have bigger sensibility about what is going on around us. Your adrenaline is high! But it also make us more vulnerable; we are in a smaller vehicle with not many protections”. In any case, he concludes, “those changes will depend on what you are; on the psyche of people” (Personal communication, July 2, 2015).

C. Tacuri reflects over the attitude produced due to cycling. “When I am on my bike mood is very different more relaxed, in comparison with people who use car for commuting. You see them upset, angry. A cyclist do not behave like that with other cyclists and pedestrians. Many times, I want to wave them and try to say hello. Your perception of life does change when you ride a bicycle” (Personal communication, July 29, 2015).

From a Carishinas’ point of view, J. Hernández states, “A woman by riding from her job to home, realizes that she is capable of anything. She will know that she is capable to go beyond her limits. Cycling will make you smarter, stronger... more capable than you thought. (Personal communication, June 2, 2015).

In addition, beyond psychological and physiological topics, the bike could enhance other kind of “awakenings”, as Tacuri reflects. “If people were well aware of what a bike could generate, then it should be linked many actions that would enhance democracy... But the bicycle, as a positive thing, is mainly seen only as a way to move or commute... Nobody thinks about bicycle when it comes to generate change, because in fact it does generate it”. He concludes, “In a bike you are able to actually live things such as coexistence, respect and democracy. Personal communication, July 29, 2015).

Even more, the bike has another key characteristic regarding the mentioned above. “What is interesting about a bike is that you can easily become a pedestrian” (D. Puente, personal communication, July 2, 2015). C. Medrano concludes, “At the end or the beginning of the day, we are all pedestrians and that should change our approach to the use of public spaces” (Personal communication, June 22, 2015).

In my particular case, besides of all the things mentioned above, the bike has helped me to maintain my capacity to be amazed about everything that surrounds me. Supposing that for a second we are able to forget everything we know about physics, if we look at a bike, do we really think that it would

be possible for us to obtain an keep equilibrium on two wheels of 3 centimeters wide each?. Even more, that it will be possible to go ride as far as we could to any possible place in the world? It just keeps me amazing every day.

### Jacky – Gary Fisher mountain bike

4 pm. I am waiting outside the university where she is a professor in the music faculty. Jacqueline “Jacky” Hernández just finished some classes and now we will ride back to her home while we talk little bit about her life and the bike.

My first impression is very clear when she tell me: “You know, I ride fast. Is that a problem for you?” “Not at all” is my reply. We hit the road to take one of Quito’s main avenues, from north to south. Most of the time one of us leads the way, either on the right or on the middle of the street; dodging cars, buses and motorcycles every time that we could. Respecting the traffic lights. At sometimes, we cycle next to each other and talk. We discuss about the traffic in the city, the way car drivers behave towards cyclists and pedestrians. I feel anger and disillusion when she talks about it; however, those feelings are gone once the light turns green and she hits the pedal again of her lovely unbranded purple “fixie”<sup>53</sup>, called “Capulina”, the one that previously belonged to Elena. We do cycle fast; we cover around 8 kilometres in 20 minutes on open traffic during the evening rush hour with no big effort. Then, a cup of tea. (Observation, June 1, 2015).

“I have being cycling since I was very young, back in Chile (her native country). When I came to Ecuador, I wanted to keep doing it so a search for places or groups involved in cycling tours or rides”, she recalls. “One day, I went to a Carishina meeting in behalf of another group but actually it was not meeting but a ride. It was too slow for me, so boring... until I started to work as a cork<sup>54</sup> at the streets corners for the group; there I had some fun. After that, some of the Carishinas began to invite me to other activities but I was not interested... they (activities) were so slow, so boring... eventually, I began to attend to their invitations” (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 1, 2015).

A close friend corroborates this attitude. “When I first met her by a common friend (a Carishina) in a ride, I thought that it was so cool to meet someone who loves to sing, just like me... she did not even care about it... she just wanted to cycle... my first though was ‘what an irritating girl’...”. In addition, a Jacky’s friend recalls, “She was really straight forward and cursed a lot (using Chilean expressions)... she did not let you get close to her.... And, she was so competitive; she wanted to win all the time... once (she starts to laugh), during a Carishina Race, she pass beside me on her bike yelling at me ‘I am going to win you, I am going to win you!’... I was shocked! haha” (D. Borja, personal communication, June 18, 2015).

Even if Jacky began to attend to some of the Carishinas’ activities, a particular issue bothered her. “Once, after a trip that I made, I invited a bunch of people to see some pictures... but when I realize it, it became a Carishinas meeting... they began to talk about their activities, their ideals, their goals... Some of them were discussing about women’s rights and feminism... that made feel uncomfortable”.

<sup>53</sup> A fixie is a single-gear bicycle that has no freewheel, so that its wheels cannot move unless power is applied to the pedals and accordingly, it brakes by decreasing the cycling cadence. This bike is highly appreciated among urban cyclists all over the world.

<sup>54</sup> Corking is an activity performed by some members of a ride were some cyclists put themselves in front of other vehicles at street intersections in order to maintain a the cohesion of a group during a ride. Usually, they tend to be the most experienced or bolder cyclists.

She continues, "I resisted talking about those issues because I did not have a struggle flag... Although I am a lesbian, I never identified myself with pro rights movements... My only flag is the music. During a conversation with one of them (Elena), I made my point very clear about it: 'I do not need a different flag, I do not want one!'" (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 1, 2015).

Still, she remain involved in the Carishinas activities. "I felt very good at their rides instead of others... At the same time, a friend of mine began to show me some things about machismo, things that I began to see and realize on the rides that I attended before... I began to wonder why do I have to move aside when a bunch of men were coming my way on the side walk, even when I was carrying my groceries, at the extent of stepping down into the street, putting my life in danger? Just because I was a woman? Why do I have to stand some comments and that some men keep staring at me while I was cycling? That made think a lot about the things that we (women) were living in a daily basis in the streets... That made enjoy even more to be with the Carishinas... to be comfortable in the Carishinas' rides... to lead the group" (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 1, 2015).

Another event took place that made her reflect even more about other aspect of her life. "I was organizing a Carishina Race along with other girls; it was really intense and stressful! So, after it was finished we began to party and particularly I began to drink a lot. At some point, we had to go home and no taxi wanted to take my bike and me so I decided to cycle back home...And when I was just a block away from home I fell and broke my collar bone..." (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 1, 2015). "She was so drunk! ... we decide to cycle with her in order to get her safe to home but she did not listen to us; she wanted to go first and fast... she missed some red lights and all of us were just following her trail... and then she fell... I wanted to kill her... Jacky feels so embarrassed every time when we recalls the event..." states laughing D. Borja (Personal communication, June 18, 2015).

However, it was not embarrassment which had an impact on her life. Due to her accident, Jacky had to change some of her daily dynamics. She moved to another house, give her dog away so somebody else could take care of it and most of all, she was not able to fully take care of herself. "I was alone in Ecuador, no family at all. Then, some of the Carishinas organized themselves in order to help me... to cook, to take care of my dog, to be with me so I would not be alone during this time". Then, she reflects, "that experience has a huge impact on me... To see all these women taking care of me, helping me... I am very grateful to them... With them I found solidarity... something that I carried on to my activities with the Carishinas... I learned to be solidary with the group, to ride at the same pace that everyone else" (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 1, 2015).

Finally, Jacky reflects, "I do not care about a group's flag. I care more about their values. And solidarity is the most important one for the Carishinas" (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 1, 2015). The cup of tea is over.

8 am. This time we will be cycling from her home to the university. Again, fast and taking turns in the lead but we cycle next to each other more often. We talk about the feelings she had when she cycles. No stress, relaxed, joy, peace, adrenaline.

She tells me that sometimes she argues with car drivers who disrespect her space on the street, "They do not realize that, in fact, we are occupying less space for them by not using cars... besides, some of those people are just too violent and if you want to talk to them, they just ignore you or even insults you". In that moment, a driver honk behind us and he passes by yelling that the street is not a bike lane. We stare at each other with Jacky and with a naughty smile, we start the chase of that man. We almost got him at one traffic light but it turned green a couple of seconds before we arrived. We had a second chance at the next one where we surely will chat him... and he knows we

are there by looking on his mirrors. Then, we just pass by and begin to laugh at him. It was a nice little sprint.

We arrive to the university's bike rack where she locks her bike (a "classic" one, a Gary Fisher mountain bike called "La Gary") and double checks that it is well done. Now to her classroom (Observation, June 6, 2015).

"In Ecuador I have become softer, I do not look for confrontation; people here just say yes even if they are thinking the opposite... I had to adapt myself so I would be easy for me" (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 5, 2015). D. Borja agrees with Jacky, "Now, she is less confrontational but still convinced on her beliefs" (D. Borja, personal communication, June 18, 2015).

In the classroom, the bike has a utility as well. "I had one student who used to cycle to the university too; sometimes she saw me pass by. At classes, she was always wondering how it was possible for me to do it that fast... Then, I use the bike as an example to show them (her students) that training is very important to any activity. I tell them that if they practice everything is possible, that some skills are developed by personal effort; it is not we just born with a special gift, it requires dedication... My best example is my trip on bicycle to Tulcán" (J. Hernández, personal communication, June 5, 2015).

For now, the class is over.

### Xime - Unbranded mountain bike

10 am. I am in the middle of mi ride of 18 kilometres to get to Ximena "Xime" Paltán's house. Right now, I am arriving to the top of one of many hills that are part of Quito's trademark landscape. It is a medium intensity climb but still requires a good effort despite cycling at a moderate pace. During this moment, all that I think about is Xime cycling over this route during the day or night, coming and going countless times. The nice thing about hills is when you descend. A few more kilometres and I finally made it. Now a glass of juice.

As her mother recalls, "She cycles since a child. She used to take her bike and disappear on the streets of our neighbourhood for hours. I was very afraid because people do not respect cyclists in the city" (B. Obregón, personal communication, June 24, 2015). Even though, she was not alone in her games, at least as a child. However, when people grow up, some of them changes, "We used to play a lot with my childhood's best friend... later, she got married, I invited her many times to cycle around our neighbourhood but she did not want to". "Women get married and something happen to them", she reflects (X. Paltán, personal communication, June 19, 2015).

Then the university time came. Because where she lives, mobility is a big issue. Her home is located around 25 kilometres away from Quito's downtown and the public transport system capacity is not enough for the population living in her sector. Additionally, due to the city's increasing traffic jams, time is another critical problem. "She always had troubles to get to classes on time... She told us that sometimes it took her around two hours to get to the university... Personally, I did not believe it until I worked in a project at that area and then I realized she was not exaggerating about the time". (G. Jácome, personal communication, June 30, 2015). As G. Jácome states, "that situation started to affect her performance at some classes... In addition, she was not able to participate in some extracurricular activities like expositions or even party with us because she have to leave early; otherwise, she would lost the few buses to her home" (Personal communication, June 30, 2015).

One day, Xime decided to use the bike as her main transportation means. This was a big change for her. "She told us (her university friends) 'Why can I not do it!'... And so she did..." recalls G. Jácome. Since then, she was not only cycling to get to the university; she began to attend to many other activities, during the day or night. As Xime reflects, "To buy a bicycle is to buy a new life (Personal communication, June 19, 2015).

However, despite Xime's own believe in her decision, this created some doubts among some of their close friends and relatives. As her mother mentions, "I was more very afraid every time she leaves... I am even now. I give her my blessings all the time" (B. Obregón, personal communication, June 24, 2015). G. Jácome agrees, "At the beginning, we were afraid that something might happen to her... But she has shown us what she is capable to... She just felt in love with the bike". Then, she concludes, "Xime has become more independent and determined. She has gained confidence due to the use of the bike... but, also by the collective..." (Personal communication, June 30, 2015).

About the Carishinas, Xime states, "Before the collective, I wanted to be part of something..... At the previous cyclists' organization where I worked, I meet many friends, but still I wanted to ride a bike with girls... Then I went to the first Carishina Race" (Personal communication, June 19, 2015). She became one of first Carishinas and had keep working with them since then.

During her time at The Carishinas, Xime has learned many things, but there are some special ones to reflect on. "In comparison to my previous experience, with the collective I realized the importance to listen to others... Due to the bike, I have learned to be patient... to let go personal interests in favour of the others... to respect others' processes... It is not only because of the collective... All the experiences and moments that I have lived on a bike, as 'ClimaCleando'<sup>55</sup> contributed too... I think it could not be possible to live the same experiences without the bike" (Personal communication, June 19, 2015).

Nevertheless, things have never been easier with the Carishinas. "During some time I parted ways with them because we were discussing political stuffs while others just showed interest about the way we would dress in some of our activities... Some women who were my friends got bitten and arrested; they asked for our support but only Elena replied to me... Sometimes, the collective tends to stay away from those things" (X. Paltán, personal communication, December 5, 2014). Still, she returned due to her commitment to the "cause", her newly gained patience and respect to others' processes. She feels that the collective can do many more things.

As G. Zurita, a self-proclaimed Carishino<sup>56</sup>, reflects, "She has matured a lot... she has become irreverent... Yet, all is due to the bike... because it gives you authority over yourself... It has strengthened her leadership; it has helped to raise her voice". He concludes, "The Carishinas has a say to it too. Xime is more responsible; even though she is young, she has plenty of things to do" (Personal communication, June 24, 2015).

Still, there is a long way to go for her –and the Carishinas purposes of getting more women cycling in Quito. The general conception of this idea from others remains, as mentioned earlier. Xime's case is not an exemption. "At the beginning, some guys called her 'carishina' or 'hippy'". (G. Jácome, personal communication, June 30, 2015). "When she was a child, many of her relatives used to call her 'carishina' because of her love to cycle. I think that since then that term has being close to her...

<sup>55</sup> ClimaCleando (Climate-cycling) was project developed in 2013 by a group of young people who decided to travel 3.200 kilometres around Ecuador by bike. Their objective was to recollect information and get to know people who were working on climate change at a local level, while at the same time, raising awareness about this issue (ClimaCleando, 2015).

<sup>56</sup> The male variant of the term Carishina.

Once, a neighbour told me if I was not embarrassed her. She even told me ‘As a mother, you should not allow her to cycle’... Sometimes I just hope that she would stop cycling; I am always afraid, due to all the news about accidents involving cyclists... But she is brave and free. I am proud of her and so is her family now” (B. Obregón, personal communication, June 24, 2015).

1 pm. Time to hit the road. She has two bikes; a mountain bike used during her time at ClimaCleando and an unbranded mountain bike with a mixture of pieces from other bikes, the one she loves the most: “La Negrita”<sup>57</sup>. It is almost impossible trying to trace some origin of that bike; however, Xime knows everything about it, brakes, gears, and tyres so her confidence on it is high. The ride: get to her current university to get a book for her thesis; another 20 kilometres ... piece of cake.

We begin to climb the hill that will take us to Quito’s main valley; suddenly, some familiar noises: honking and shouting reminding us which should be our position into the mobility pyramid. This time those lovely persons can leave in peace, we will not chase them; the hill is hard enough and we just want to enjoy the ride. During the climbing there is no chance to talk; there are heavy traffic with many buses on our side and there is no sidewalk to make a slightly invasion for safety reasons, so we cycle in line.

From the top, from time to time we have the chance to cycle next to each other but still is dangerous. Even if we are within the city limits, some cars reach 80 km/h easily. Although we do not like it, we are used to it so we take no chances; especially when a white bike at one side of the road (the one placed in memory of Sebastián Muñoz) remind us how risky remains nowadays our decision of commuting in Quito by bike. She respect all the traffic signs, she tells me “we have to think about of the others as well”.

During the ride, she spots the straps attached to rear rack of my bike that I am using to carry my backpack. I see the bright in her eyes and I propose to change our route and head to some bike stores nearby. She totally agrees. We spend the rest of our meeting among lights, tools, straps and bikes, like children playing with their toys. (Observation, June 19, 2015).

The book can wait.

### Dani – Tacuri urban bike

11 am. I meet with Daniela “Dani” Borja at her office/workshop inside her house. There are a sewing machine, a drawing board, pencils, some fancy bike bags, her computer and a guitar. The, a glass of water and we begin. She gives me an answer to my first logical question: “I used to walk a lot... I did not like to drive a car or to take the bus. The nice thing of where I live (northern centre of the city) is very convenient; everything is within a distance easily reachable by foot... When university moved to a campus a little bit more far away, I kept walking to get there but it took me too long so I need to find a faster way to commute... I was 19 years old and I only rode a little bit in the Ciclopaseo. Still, I took my uncle’s bike and one day I tried to get to my university by bike... and that was it! I thought ‘this is very practical’... From then on, it become my transportation means” (Personal communication, June 2, 2015). As her uncle recalls, “She was not the kind of athlete or sporty girl... She started late to cycle and I thought that she would not make it. But she hooked up with the bike really quick and there was no turning back for her”.

---

<sup>57</sup> The little black one, in Spanish. Even though, its current colour is orange with red, the bike was painted black some years ago.



Dani also reflects over other reasons, "The ecological motive was already implicit; that is why I walked... But the bike is different because it lets you understand or perceive new things about mobility" (Personal communication, June 2, 2015).

About her feelings on a bike, Dani states, "I was afraid; some things were a mystery, like all the mechanical stuff or even get in and get off a bike adequately" She continues, "The bike gives you freedom. I felt in love with the adrenaline; since I bike, I take more chances... I love the fact that I am able to keep in mind the timing, my own timing regarding commuting from one place to another". Dani concludes "In a bike you have to be very present... conscious" (Personal communication, June 2, 2015).

Regarding possible changes since Dani is cycling, "It is difficult to identify them because I already have changed my mind set and is focused on the bike... It is possible that the collective have an influence too". In any case, the bike has developed some thoughts of her own, "I do think about how a bicycle creates a bubble around you and how a car or a pedestrian invades your space and vice versa. It makes me think about how everyone share the public space". She continues, "It is interesting how the bike enables you to talk from a different perspective... Sometimes, I come close to a car driver how does not behave properly; I stand at the same level and with a smile, I try to establish a proper argument. Most of the people react nicely... I think that if you sing to a driver, he will be shock by the use of weapons of love". Despite this, Dani concludes, "It bothers me when somebody honks at me; I do not take personal because they are not honking at me... They (car drivers) just honk because they are like that... Sometimes I am angry, but then I think that is just way the culture of our country is" (Personal communication, June 2, 2015).

In the end, Dani states, "Independence is my most important change; I cannot think my life without the bike... With it, you are capable and able to do whatever you want" (D. Borja, personal communication, June 18, 2015). Her grandmother, with whom Dani share her home, agrees about it, "Every time she rides on a bike, she is free" (I. Ricaurte, personal communication, June 11, 2015). Nevertheless, she concludes, "Every time that you ride a bike, you remain the same... There are topics (e.g. environment) that interest me disregarding the bike" (D. Borja, personal communication, July 14, 2015). Her grandmother reflects over it, "She already had big social awareness but the bike has enhanced it... Perhaps due to the people she meet and the things she does" (I. Ricaurte, personal communication, June 11, 2015). Her uncle states, "Her social awareness is not just a trend. It is strong enough so she can take the risk of riding a bike in Quito" (J. Kaisin, personal communication, June 26, 2015).

Her love to the bicycle is so strong that it gave her an idea to establish a local business related to bike accessories, mainly bags. About his, Dani states, "My idea is to promote in all the women in Quito the idea that cycling is possible by producing articles that would help them to tackle some practical issues regarding carry her goods... Many say that this is a concern for them... Where do they carry their stuff? Now we are looking at the chance to create and sell comfortable clothes but fashion enough too" " (Personal communication, June 2, 2015). As his uncle mentions, "The bike is already part of her... She is starting to think to take cycling into a new dimension... to ride farther, to compete" (J. Kaisin, personal communication, June 26, 2015).

However, like in the previous cases –and in all cases in Quito, her choice is not absent of concerns to persons close to her. Her grandmother states, "I am always afraid since the first day she took the bike until now; I do not sleep waiting for her... There is a lack of respect culture related to mobility in this city" (I. Ricaurte, personal communication, June 11, 2015). Her uncle share the same view, "We (her family) are all worried (about Dani cycling in the city); she perceives it as well but she has shown

us that she is responsible and aware of what happens around her too". He concludes, "I admire her because she is not scared. She does not depend on anyone else. She has become fully independent" (J. Kaisin, personal communication, June 26, 2015).

Dani became a Carishina in the "regular" way, "I take part in a Carishina Race, but I got involved with the collective after a Rural Ride... One of the members (Elena) was inviting for a meeting and I went... At the beginning, I look at this as an opportunity to make my presence clear in the road to others... Later I realised that this was bigger" (Personal communication, June 18, 2015). Her uncle reflects over her activism with the Carishinas, "All the carishinas are fully convinced on their beliefs and goals... Just like her (Dani)... There are more women cycling in Quito... Yet, I consider that a woman cycling in the city is a more thoughtful action. They (women) are more respectful of traffic rules... Now, I am more careful driving and aware of cyclists because I think that one of them might be her". Finally, he concludes, "We (her family) have not been 'evangelized' by her but now we do reflect about many issues related to cycling" (J. Kaisin, personal communication, June 26, 2015).

2 pm. A week later, we leave from her home in a ride for her to meet with the manufacturers of her bike bags. Dani will be collecting their latest production batch and some leftovers. She rides her Tacuri urban bike, called "Aura Disyuntiva"<sup>58</sup>; it is her second bike. We will take another of the main avenues in city all the way north until it is over; then a few ups and downs in the road and finally, as usual in Quito, a really nice hill... 13 kilometres until we get there, to one of the newest but poorest sectors of the city. The trip is quite smooth, perhaps is the time of the day; no rush hour. We have the chance to cycle next each other and as we have the chance due to the low traffic, we do it as often as we could. Just to make a point.

After 30 minutes we are almost there; a woman driving a car let us pass in an intersection; we smile back to her. "That is the way it should be, always", she convincingly states. Now, the hill. A couple of blocks away from our destination she gets tired and jumps out of her bike and begins to walk. "What is the point of getting totally exhausted?" she reflects while pushing her bike.

The manufacturer's place is a humble but improving house; they are women who had decided to go to a state training vocational program and buy their own machinery in order to have the chance to cover some expenses at their home; by doing so, they expect to gain more recognition and respect from the men of their families. "I found them through another Carishina who works for the Welfare Ministry, she told me about the training program; it is a way to enhance their self-esteem and to promote local producers" she argues. Dani discusses with them some small aspects to improve for the next production batch, while at the same time mentions how proud she is of their job. They make some numbers with them in order to keep their accounts clear and then she collects the last bags and the leftovers. She packs everything in the bags of her bike showing great skills at it so there will not be a chance of something falling from them; it shows how confident she is on her designs and how skilled she has become at using them.

The return is as eventful as our initial trip. She cycles with no problem at all, despite carrying of those things on the back of her bike. I have to say it, those bags look really nice and strong. I will get a pair for Susi for sure. As we return to her home, I insisted on her about my idea of a water-resistant backpack that could be attachable to the rear rack of my bike; something that I was not able to find in Quito yet. She tells me, "for sure, we will figure it out". (Observation, June 9, 2015)

As mentioned above, her current bike is the second one. The first bike was stolen a couple of years ago but it was a huge shock for her. As her uncle recalls, "She did not feel reflected in my brother's bike; so she decided to go to a local bike store which builds bikes using its own brand... It was a reflexive

---

<sup>58</sup> Disjunctive Aura, in Spanish.

decision and she accompanied the whole building process, so it would be completely of her like” (J. Kaisin, personal communication, June 26, 2015).

During an activity downtown, somebody broke the lock and stole it. As Dani recalls, “It was really hard for me... I was so depressed that I did not wanted to leave home”. Her uncle recalls, “She was in a denial process... Stating that we were living in a sick world not because of the material stuff but for the idea that there could be so much harm outside... the bike is so deeply connected with her... to an extent that I am not able to understand. (J. Kaisin, personal communication, June 26, 2015). Her grandmother agrees, “She loved her bike; they take something close to her” (I. Ricaurte, personal communication, June 11, 2015).

Eventually, she got a new one with the support of their family following the same process. Her grandmother continues, “The bike give her something that she was missing... I do not know what... She created a strong relationship with it... It was the first thing that she could call of her own” (I. Ricaurte, personal communication, June 11, 2015).

Sometimes, her grandmother concludes, “I think she dreams about that bike”.

## Chapter 5: A final sprint

After a long bike trip, the following paragraphs will give some ideas about the reflections produced during this research and at the same time, some possible courses of action are presented for the yet-to-be-consolidated cyclists' movement, the Carishinas en Bici and all us who take a bike for commuting in the streets of Quito.

### Conclusions

Humanity's same old story: How easily we forget...

... Yet at the same time, how difficult is for us to recognize those things that makes uncomfortable regarding our history. In this particular case, the story described above is not about the bicycle; it is about Quito and a specific edge of its inhabitants' culture. During the historical account of events related to the bike and to cycling, it was possible to assess at what extent some actors and practices have been vanished from the annals of social groups' struggles and vindications. The fact that for most of urban cyclists in Quito their origins go beyond some recent events in the city shows how hard it is for us as a society to recognize the humble beginnings of many social processes.

By using the bike as a lens to read and tell the story, many of those roots had emerged; gardeners, bakers, guards and messengers among others are waiting for social vindication in a silent attitude. The problem is that they do not recognize themselves as groups with enough historical power to demand it; their humble professions are an anchor that do not allow them to come to the public surface and take their rightful place in the history of the social processes where the bike is an enhancer.

Social movements are supposed to lack a clear story of their origins and their actions; however, it should not be an excuse to keep invisible to the ones who started a social change, without knowing that their personal struggles were a reflection of others' and a seed for new realities. Nevertheless, slowly they are getting present in discourses and practices. There are many things to be "discovered" and to be told yet. I hope this research would be a contribution to their recognition.

Coming back to the bike, it does not have a history of its own. Maybe it would be possible to account some facts of it as machinery. However, the story of the bike as a social actor, if it is ever possible be told, is not lineal... it is parallel and bounded with the society that rides it.

### Cyclists' movement and the transgressive nature of the bicycle

By cycling through Quito and discussing with others cyclists about it, I have concluded that a cyclists' organised and unique movement, more than a utopia, is a paradox.

A utopia in the sense that we, the cyclists, do not have somebody that could speak for all of us. Someone –person or organization that could stand and fight for our needs and rights, which are not only in our benefit but also for all society. Needs related to respect and democracy.

A utopia in the sense that the internal struggles among collectives and organizations had made it difficult to achieve. It is not only ideology playing a role here; there are personal differences that had

been putted aside in specific moments (like when cyclists die on the streets). Yet, those differences, particularly the ideological ones, remain as described in previous chapters. However, some of the actors interviewed during this research have faith on new generations of leaders and representatives to overcome this situation.

Nevertheless, as mentioned above, given that a movement has no an accountable history, there are no individuals who could count as representatives. The multiplicity of origins that a movement has makes it very difficult to determine which voices should be the ones to be heard. In addition, it is not only those peoples' origins the main complication; their values, world visions and perspectives of future have an impact on their discourses and practices. This only creates more possibilities about opinions and points of views. We might be cyclists but we have others things in life that define us (what we eat, where we live, what kind of music we listen to, what we believe). Therefore, it would become almost impossible to choose someone who could actually represent us. That is the paradox produced by the bicycle.

However, due to the "transgressive nature" of the bike –and by extension, cycling, there is hope for all of us. Transgression in the senses that a bike could easily change a given path for another. A bike rides over a street, a sidewalk, a mountain, a beach, a highway and in each of those it has the chance to change of path again. It is more than resistance; the bike's transgression precisely resides in its ability to produce joy, commitment and equality. Its irreverence could overcome the differences of many groups and movements. Rather than generating structures, a bike could create spaces where a diversity practices (in the context of Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and fields) could coexist and give to society the chance to transcend into a new reality. Spaces where, for a little moment in time, cyclists could discuss about their issues, a space where they could –and should join other struggles as well. A space where all of us are equal, a gardener and a president alike.

### The never ending story of Carishinas' values and world views

As described above, the Carishinas en Bici perform many practices with other women and by doing so they create –consciously and unconsciously processes where values and world views are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed over and over again. What it is interesting about this collective is that those processes occur in a diversity of unexpected variants of those practices and the spaces, rather than on highly regulated structures.

As result of the description and analysis of the Carishinas' practices, it is possible to infer that their foundational values are democracy, creativity and solidarity. Values that, as previously mentioned are constructed permanently by their members every time that a new activity is carried out by the regular group or/and by other women.

In addition, an interesting finding is the fact that the Carishinas en Bici promote these values as a way to improve not only the experience of the participants in their activities, but their daily lives as well. By the testimonies and statements of fairy godmothers and goddaughters, the change of reality of those women seems very tangible. Changes that required effort, sacrifice and commitment from members and participants alike. These requirements have been enhanced by those values. Is it possible to talk about respect without a democratic space where everyone's opinion counts? Could it be possible to hit the streets of a city filled with prejudices against cyclists and women without a touch of creativity to ease and transform angry sights into smiles? Would it be possible to overcome situations of disappointment and abuse without the solidarity of others?

The Carishinas en Bici' story seems to clearly state "no". What is interesting is that those values will be lived, reinterpreted and told every time when a Carishinas' practice is performed. In concordance with standpoint theory, this alternative knowledge would help to destabilize and create new realities for all of them. They surely need it.

However, I cannot stop wondering about one thing: should they take a clear ideological –even political stand regarding some of their internal discussions? I consider that at some point they should issue a clear statement about them; feminism for instance is an example. I keep thinking about what Jacky reflected over the fact that by the neglecting of this term by many women, the patriarchal system has won. I am confident that they will find an answer, as many other cyclists' collectives will with their own struggles. It would be a shame if such great values become useless when a time for a strong definition comes.

### The bike as an object-subject for embodiment

The stories of Jacky, Xime and Dani are quite revealing for this research regarding an embodiment process where the bicycle is fundamental. First of all, a reflection: is the bicycle just an object or is it something else? Do we just use the bike or is it actually using us at the same time? Could it be that the bike is a subject too? The interactions with its materiality have shown that without us, the bike is just a bunch of metal and rubber with no life at all.

At the same time, without a bike we would be missing a set of experiences –some common and other unique, which can only be lived by the use of a bike. It is true, there are other objects that could share the same property but none of them would produce a similar materiality or practices as a bike. It seems that it needs us as much as we need it.

Then, the embodiment processes experienced by those three women gain more sense. The way Jacky's cycling pace reduce in order to be the same with the group, the empowerment experienced by Xime when she arrived at her university by bike and the strong connection between the bike and Dani's feeling of independence are examples of it. The dual relationship of being a subject and an object for the bike and vice versa could lead to different and exiting processes for everybody else.

In addition, there is more going on at the same time. As the three cases exposed, there is a construction and reinforcement of the identity of each of them; something to keep on mind that could shed more light over the conformation of groups and the establishment of values among those individuals and groups. This has to be taken into account in our search for new ways of change.

### The bike and the mediation of change

Jacky, Xime and Dani's stories keep adding important reflections for this research because they have shown how other changes in values and practices were produced in each case, besides the ones mentioned above. A given material object –the bike in this case, is not enough for the development a change process. This does not mean that it does not produce anything at all; the three cases describe some of those women emotions and feelings while riding a bike. The point here is the discussion about the role that material object could have; even more, it is about the role that the materiality produced around this object could have.

The starting point for this discussion is the almost accurate certainty expressed on the research that states, "If you ride a bike, you are still basically the same". The reproduction of certain practices as

mentioned earlier in some cycling spaces shows that the former expression has some foundation. Not to mention the discourses of some sports cyclists when it comes to reflect on the effect of that urban cycling has on the city's traffic.

As the three women tell in their own stories, internal and social change came when their personal experiences were mediated with others' –individuals and groups values and ideals by the materiality produced due to the practice of cycling. The confrontation of different and diverse realities and the identification of the multiple fields, could produce on those women actual changes of their practices. By living their experiences in the context of a group –The Carishinas, their reflections and changes were more significant in comparison with possible process developed by on their own.

The reconstruction and reproduction of some values is another example of a different type of embodiment. One where lively experiences in practices such as a Carishina Race and the fairy godmothers program affects all the women intervening in those activities and ideals while riding a bike.

### Practice and discourse have to live together

During the research, it has become evident the existence of a dichotomy among cyclists –individuals or movements alike. At what extent is practice more important than discourse and vice versa? Is the discourse generating new practices or are those practices constructing new discourses? To be honest, it is just an epistemological waste of time. They cannot be separated because those processes coexist and are developed at the same time in a continuous struggle.

As soon as you hit the street, you are already part of the movement; you are performing the practice of cycling through Quito. Alley cats are a good example of it; you put yourself in danger in order to demonstrate to others that, among many other things, commuting by bike is feasible and doable. To take those streets to proclaim our needs is a political act. Nevertheless, at the same time, due to the lack of a strong discourse, we are putting our lives in danger that very minute we hit the road due to the lack of official regulations and interventions. A discourse that could demand from others, that would enable us to guarantee some minimal safety conditions. What do we obtain by promoting the use of bike if a woman who just learnt to cycle now has to deal with the horrible traffic of Quito without any guaranties of a safe ride? This is a tough question for collectives and state alike.

However, at the same time we have to be careful regarding the discourses, the flags that we promote. The chance that some social organization begin to take care of some state's responsibilities is a risky move. Some discussions had questioned this relationship due to the chance that this might lead to institutionalization of activities, programs and collectives. Therefore, a shrinking of the scope of action outside these new regulated spaces or even worst, following others' agendas is a more than probable risk for every collective and organization... As some would say, a collective implementing ideas outside their needs or the institutionalization of grass root initiatives is a probe that in modern times that neoliberalism is becoming a response to counter movements, rather than the opposite.

### Exist instead of resist

As concluded above, the bike could create some interesting and necessary spaces where we could have the chance to dialogue and debate. However, it should not be a discussion focused only on the bike or cyclists; that has being the recurrent error among cyclists' movement. We should not forget

that those spaces are a chance of a dialogue that would include other points of views, struggles and dreams. A dialogue between a diversity of practices. The bike is not the end; what we have here is a practice mediating other practices and discourses.

Nevertheless, these practices and spaces could have a turn on their focus. Until now, most of the counter movements have been working towards the resistance against that “something” which is considered harmful for a given group or collective. The struggle has been mainly oriented on how to stop that harm and how to punish the ones who are producing it. All these practices had required a huge amount of effort placed on “negative” perspective of an issue.

What would it be if instead of a negative attitude, we should work towards positive practices and discourses? Would it make sense to begin existing rather than resisting? Is it possible that this positive display of energy could achieve in a better way our goals, not only as cyclists but also as a society? This is something to reflect on.

In this moment, I would like to recall the initiative “Pinta tu línea”. A bunch of cyclists who are drawing bike lanes not because they are against the presence of cars on a street; what they are actually doing is promoting the chance to share this space with those cars. A silent revolution that could create awareness regarding the presence of other practices and views about the city. Moreover, this positive appropriation of the space is strong enough to bring many individuals that would love to take a brush instead of breaking rear view mirrors.

#### Some many questions yet

As final statement, a recommendation actually, I would suggest the development of further research on many of the topics mentioned during this research.

The fairy godmothers practices alone, for instance, requires a deeper understanding; there could be some interesting exchange processes between the fairy godmother and the goddaughter that would contribute con social change theory. The “no flag at all” organizations that perform practices seems might prove useful to identify and describe the dialogue spaces discussed above. In addition, as a final example, a description of dialogues where the bike stands for other struggles, such as food sovereignty and pro LGBT rights discussions among others. The road is long enough for many more bikes.



## References

- Aguirre, C. (2014, 06 01). *Bicis Quito - Reportajes*. Retrieved from <http://www.bicisquito.com/#!en-blanco/c14zt>
- Aguirre, S. (2007). *Dale al Pedal - Documentary*. Retrieved from Youtube:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_FMWfxnzMFo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_FMWfxnzMFo),  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38crHZY2DrQ>,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zylXoy9KB8c>
- Ajenjo Producciones. (2014, 05 23). *Ciclismo Urbano en Quito - Documentary*. Retrieved from Youtube: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gz\\_mi3ngHL8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gz_mi3ngHL8)
- Andando en Bici Carajo. (2008). *Andando en Bici Carajo - About*. Retrieved 06 03, 2014, from <http://andandoenbicicarajo.wordpress.com/about/>
- Arce, A. (2015, 01 13). *Cambio social y cultural e intervenciones de Extensión Agrícola - Exposition*. (Facultad de Ciencias Agronómicas Universidad de Chile, Editor) Retrieved 02 10, 2015, from Simposio "Extensión y transferencia tecnológica efectiva: desafío para el desarrollo rural".
- Arce, A., & Long, N. (1994). Re-Positioning Knowledge in the Study of Rural Development. In D. Symes, & A. Jansen (Eds.), *Agricultural Restructuring and Rural Change in Europe*. Wageningen University.
- Augé, M. (2009). *Elogio a la bicicleta*. Barcelona: Editorial Gelisa S.A.
- Biciacción. (2014). *Biciacción - Quienes somos*. Retrieved 05 25, 2014, from [http://www.biciaccion.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=731&Itemid=35](http://www.biciaccion.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=731&Itemid=35)
- Biciacción. (2014, 04). *Conteo Fotografico de Viajes en Bicicleta*. Retrieved from [http://archive-org.com/org/b/biciaccion.org/2015-06-02\\_5979343\\_11/Conteo\\_Fotografico\\_de\\_Viajes\\_en\\_Bicicleta/](http://archive-org.com/org/b/biciaccion.org/2015-06-02_5979343_11/Conteo_Fotografico_de_Viajes_en_Bicicleta/)
- Bike Forums. (2014, 06 01). *Biking vs Cycling... Is there a difference?* Retrieved from <http://www.bikeforums.net/general-cycling-discussion/440298-biking-vs-cycling-there-difference.html>
- Bikenoob. (2014, 06 01). *Are you a cyclist or a biker?* Retrieved from <http://bikenoob.com/2010/04/20/are-you-a-cyclist-or-a-biker/>
- Bilton, T., Bonnett, K., Jones, P., Lawson, T., Skinner, D., Stanworth, M., & Webster, A. (2002). *Introductory Sociology*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Borja, D. (2014, 08 08). *No es solamente aprender a pedalear - Article*. Retrieved 06 05, 2015, from Carishinas en Bici - Blog.
- Calhoun, C., Gerteis, J., Moody, J., Pfaff, S., & Virk, I. (2002). *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Carishinas en Bici. (2014, 05 06). *¿Quiénes somos?* Retrieved from Carishinas en Bici - Blog: <http://carishinaenbici.blogspot.com/p/quienes-somos.html>
- Carishinas en Bici. (2015, 08 07). *Carishinas en Bici - Community page*. Retrieved 08 08, 2015, from Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/carishinaenbici.quito>
- Carishinas en Bici. (2015, 04 04). *Las carishinas promueven un nuevo estilo de convivencia - PARTE II - Article*. Retrieved 05 05, 2015, from Carishinas en Bici - Blog.

- Carishinas en Bici. (2104, 03 19). *¡Logros!* - Article. Retrieved 06 05, 2015, from Carishinas en Bici - Blog: <http://carishinaenbici.blogspot.com/2014/03/logros.html>
- Carolan, M. S. (2011). *Embodied Food Politics*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company.
- Carrión, F., & Espinosa, J. E. (2012). La forma urbana de Quito: una historia de centros y periferias. *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Études Andines*, 41(3), 503-522.
- Ciclópolis. (2014). *Facebook Official Page - About*. Retrieved 06 02, 2014, from <https://www.facebook.com/pages/cicl%C3%B3polis/182676750614?sk=info>
- ClimaCleando. (2015, 07 01). *¿Qué es ClimaCleando y Quienes Somos?* Retrieved from ClimaCleando - Blog: <http://climacleando.blogspot.com/>
- Comercio, E. (2015, 03 15). *Cinco peticiones de los usuarios del ciclopaseo*. Retrieved from El Comercio: <http://www.elcomercio.com/actualidad/ciclopaseo-quito-ciclismo-hidratacion-velocidad.html>
- Diario El Hoy. (2005, 01 14). *Los ciclopaseos serán cada 15 días* - Article. Retrieved 06 02, 2014, from <http://www.hoy.com.ec/noticias-ecuador/los-ciclopaseos-seran-cada-15-dias-195571.html>
- Diario El Hoy. (2005, 01 14). *Los ciclopaseos serán cada 15 días* - Article. Retrieved 06 02, 2014, from <http://www.hoy.com.ec/noticias-ecuador/los-ciclopaseos-seran-cada-15-dias-195571.html>
- Diario El Hoy. (2009, 05 01). *Ciclopaseo es semanal desde el domingo* - Article. Retrieved 06 02, 2014, from <http://www.hoy.com.ec/noticias-ecuador/ciclopaseo-es-semanal-desde-el-domingo-346287.html>
- Diario El Telegrafo. (2013, 08 06). *Las ciclovías, un mecanismo de inclusión* - Article. Retrieved 06 03, 2014, from <http://www.telegrafo.com.ec/noticias/quito/item/las-ciclovias-un-mecanismo-de-inclusion.html>
- Diario El Universo. (2003, 04 27). *Ciclopaseo por 10 kilómetros de calles quiteñas* - Article. Retrieved 06 02, 2014, from <http://www.eluniverso.com/2003/04/27/0001/12/7EC5FCFC3D8E4AB7A7AFBA33ED0CD6CF.html>
- Diario El Universo. (2003, 04 27). *Ciclopaseo por 10 kilómetros de calles quiteñas* - Article. Retrieved 06 02, 2014, from <http://www.eluniverso.com/2003/04/27/0001/12/7EC5FCFC3D8E4AB7A7AFBA33ED0CD6CF.html>
- Diario PP El Verdadero. (2014, 01 25). *BiciQ cuenta con 12 mil usuarios*. Retrieved 10 25, 2014, from <http://www.ppelverdadero.com.ec/mi-quito/item/biciq-cuenta-con-12-mil-usuarios.html>
- El Comercio. (2015, 04 04). *Las 'carishinas' promueven un nuevo estilo de convivencia* - reportage. Retrieved 05 05, 2015, from El Comercio - Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/Diarioelcomercio/posts/988736171150145?comment\\_id=988763057814123&notif\\_t=comment\\_mention](https://www.facebook.com/Diarioelcomercio/posts/988736171150145?comment_id=988763057814123&notif_t=comment_mention)
- El Universo. (2012, 05 01). *Ciclistas protestaron por muerte de la deportista Salomé Reyes*. *El Universo*. Retrieved 06 10, 2015, from <http://www.eluniverso.com/2012/05/01/1/1445/ciclistas-protestaron-muerte-deportista-salome-reyes.html>
- English Language & Usage Stack Exchange. (2014, 06 01). *Cyclists, cyclers, bikers, and bike riders in modern day AmE (american English)*. Retrieved from <http://english.stackexchange.com/questions/159200/cyclists-cyclers-bikers-and-bike-riders-in-modern-day-ame>

- Fagan, C. (2012). *Elena - Woman on a Wheel*. Retrieved from Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/44329239>
- Fagan, C. (2012). *The Bike Library for Carishinas, Quito, Ecuador - Proposal*. Retrieved 12 12, 2014, from Davis Projects for Peace: <http://www.davisprojectsforpeace.org/media/view/2082>
- Fagan, C. (2012). *The Bike Library for Carishinas, Quito, Ecuador - Report*. Retrieved 12 12, 2014, from Davis Projects for Peace: <http://www.davisprojectsforpeace.org/media/view/2309>
- Garofoli, J. (2002, 09 26). *Critical Mass turns 10 / A decade of defiance / Cyclists celebrate 10 years of clogging streets en Mass*. Retrieved 05 02, 2015, from SF Gate: <http://www.sfgate.com/politics/joegarofoli/article/Critical-Mass-turns-10-A-decade-of-defiance-2767020.php>
- Gordón, S. (2011). *Movilidad sustentable en Quito: una visión desde los más vulnerables*. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala.
- Gordón, S. (2011). *Movilidad sustentable en Quito: una visión desde los más vulnerables*. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala.
- Grammarist. (2014, 06 01). *Cyclist vs. biker*. Retrieved from <http://grammarist.com/usage/cyclist-biker/>
- Granda, C. (2014, 05 08). *Pedalea y ¡no te rindas!* - Article. Retrieved 06 05, 2015, from Carishinas en Bici - Blog: <http://carishinaenbici.blogspot.com/2014/05/pedalea-sigue-y-nunca-te-rindas.html>
- Harding, S. (1994). Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: what is strong objectivity? In L. Alcoff, & E. Potter (Eds.), *Feminist epistemology* (pp. 49-82). New York: Routledge.
- Herrera, L. (2011, 04 20). *¿Quién cuenta la historia de la bicicleta en Quito?* Retrieved from Andando en Bici Carajo: <https://andandoenbicicarajo.wordpress.com/2011/04/20/%C2%BFquien-cuenta-la-historia-de-la-bicicleta-en-quito/>
- Huanacuni Mamani, F. (2015, 03 18). *Sumak Kawsay: El Buen Vivir y sus 13 Principios*. Retrieved from Ecoportal: <http://www.ecoportal.net/Eco-Noticias/Sumak-Kawsay-El-Buen-Vivir-y-sus-13-Principios>
- Instituto de la Ciudad - MDMQ. (2014). *La Movilidad en Quito: un proyecto transformador. Boletín Estadístico Mensual ICQ, Municipio del Distrito Metropolitano de Quito, 1(21)*.
- Instituto Ecuatoriano de Estadísticas y Censos. (2012). *Encuesta Nacional de Relaciones Familiares y Violencia de Género*. Quito.
- Kokushkin, M. (2014). Standpoint Theory is Dead, Long Live Standpoint Theory! Why Standpoint Thinking Should be Embraced by Scholars Who Do Not Identify As Feminists? *Journal of Arts and Humanities, 3(7)*, 8-20.
- La Televisión. (2013, 04 01). *Egon One LaTv - Reportage*. Retrieved 05 03, 2015, from Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlrqT14U3X4#t=662>
- Landázuri, M. (2012, 07). *El punto de quiebre en la bicicleta urbana*. Retrieved from <http://www.marianalandazuri.com/El%20punto%20de%20equilibrio%20en%20la%20bicicleta%20urbana.pdf>
- McGee, R. (2004). Unpacking Policy: Actors, Knowledge and Spaces. In K. Brock, R. McGee, & J. Gaventa (Eds.), *Unpacking Policy: Knowledge, Actors and Spaces in Poverty Reduction in Uganda and Nigeria* (pp. 1-26). Kampala: Fountain Press.
- McMichael, P. (2012). Chapter 1 - Development: Theory and reality. In *Development and Social Change* (pp. 1-24). London: Sage.

- Medrano, C. (2015, 06 22). Fieldwork interview. (D. Larrea, Interviewer)
- Miller, D. (2014, 06 21). *Materiality: An Introduction*. Retrieved from [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/people/academic\\_staff/d\\_miller/mil-8](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/people/academic_staff/d_miller/mil-8)
- Municipality of Quito. (2011). *Plan Metropolitano de Ordenamiento Territorial 2012-2022*. Quito.
- Municipality of Quito. (2014, 08 01). *Encuesta Domiciliaria de Movilidad del Distrito Metropolitano de Quito - (EDM11)*. Retrieved from [http://www.metrodequito.gob.ec/web/pdfs/Presentacion\\_EDM11\\_Taller\\_v02.pdf](http://www.metrodequito.gob.ec/web/pdfs/Presentacion_EDM11_Taller_v02.pdf)
- Municipio de Quito. (2013). *Informe de Gestión 2013 - Alcalde Augusto Barrera*. Quito: Municipio de Quito.
- National Institute of Statistics and Censuses. (2014). *Ecuador en cifras*. Retrieved from <http://www.ecuadorencifras.gob.ec/censo-de-poblacion-y-vivienda/>
- Pavón, D. (2014, 08 16). *Jodí tanto que crearon el Hadas Madrinas en Bici - Article*. Retrieved 06 02, 2015, from Carishinas en Bici - Blog: <http://carishinaenbici.blogspot.com/2014/08/jodi-tanto-que-crearon-el-hadas.html>
- Pinto Alvaro, N., Fuentes, F., & Alcivar, D. (2015). *La situación de la bicicleta en Ecuador: avances, retos y perspectivas*. Quito: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES-ILDIS) Ecuador & CER Promotora de Ciclismo.
- Puente, D. (2014). Quito: ¿Ciudad sostenible? . *LA CALIDAD DE VIDA EN EL DMQ – Percepciones y datos*. Quito: En Quito Vivo, CEDA.
- Quito Eterno. (2015). *¿Quiénes somos?* Retrieved 06 15, 2015, from Quito Eterno: <http://www.quitoeterno.com/cgi-bin/wd/?pg=2>
- Quito sobre los pedales. (2014, 12 10). *La ciudad*. Retrieved from [http://quitosobrelospedales.com/?page\\_id=2473](http://quitosobrelospedales.com/?page_id=2473)
- Quora. (2014, 06 01). *Is there any difference between biking and cycling?* Retrieved from <http://www.quora.com/Is-there-any-difference-between-biking-and-cycling>
- Rap, E., & Boon, A. (2005). MAKS Thesis Path. *Exploratory Research: A guideline for the design of a research proposal for MAKS students*. Wageningen, The Netherlands: Wageningen University.
- Ricarte, I. (2015, 06 11). Fieldwork Interview. (D. Larrea, Interviewer)
- Salud Vital. (2012). *9 años del ciclopaseo*. Retrieved from Salud Vital: [http://www.saludvital.ec/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=207:9ciclopaseo&catid=28:vidaactiva&Itemid=65](http://www.saludvital.ec/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=207:9ciclopaseo&catid=28:vidaactiva&Itemid=65)
- Sherwood, S., Arce, A., Berti, P., Borja, R., Oyarzun, P., & Bekkering, E. (2013). Tackling the new materialities: Modern food and counter-movements in Ecuador. *Food Policy*(41), 1-10.
- Sherwood, S., Arce, A., Berti, P., Borja, R., Oyarzun, P., & Bekkering, E. (2013). Tackling the new materialities: Modern food and counter-movements in Ecuador. *Food Policy*(41), 1-10.
- Slonetsky, L. (2013, 08 02). *A brief history of the Alleycat in Toronto*. Retrieved from Mess Media: <http://messmedia.org/2013/08/22/a-brief-history-of-the-alleycat-in-toronto/>
- Tilly, C., & Wood, L. (2010). *Los movimientos sociales, 1768 - 2008. Desde su orígenes a Facebook*. Barcelona: Editorial Cítrica.
- Tonnelat, S. (2011). The sociology of urban public spaces. In S. M. WANG Hongyang (Ed.), *Territorial Evolution and Planning Solution: Experiences from China and France. Proceedings of the first Sino-French urban, regional and planning symposium*. Paris: Atlantis Press.

UNIFEM, U. N. (2011, November). Estudio Diagnóstico Preliminar - Quito. *Ciudades Seguras Libres de Violencia contra las Mujeres y las Niñas*.

Worpole, K., & Knox, K. (2007). *The social value of public spaces*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Yépez, D. (2014, 02 02). *Recorrer Quito en bicicleta y sobrevivir en el intento - Article*. Retrieved 06 03, 2014, from <http://www.planv.com.ec/historias/urbano/recorrer-quito-bicicleta-y-sobrevivir-el-intento>