Article

Urbanization, Touristification and Verticality in the Andes: A Profile of Huaraz, Peru

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Abstract: Mountain cities specializing in tourism increasingly aim at valorizing cultural and natural heritage to compete for global attention. In this context, the postmodern urbanization of mountains plays a decisive role: driven by touristification processes, it alters the sociospatial and economic configuration of mountain cities and their hinterlands, which are becoming vertically arranged "operational landscapes", and profoundly changes city–mountain interactions. To foster sustainable development in urbanizing mountain destinations, it is crucial to understand these settlements' embeddedness in both (1) nature and culture and (2) space and time. The Andean city of Huaraz is a case in point: an intermediate center in highland Peru, it is characterized by a strategic location in the Callejón de Huaylas (Santa Valley), influenced by Hispanic and Quechua culture and dominated by the glaciers of the Cordillera Blanca. Combining (1) a theoretical framework that considers planetary urbanization, touristification and vertical complementarity and (2) a case study technique inspired by urban environmental profiles, we trace the development of the city–mountain relation in Huaraz, focusing on the way in which the material and non-material dimensions of the surrounding mountains influence urban development. We conclude with a call for overcoming a set of three persisting dichotomies that continue to impair sustainable development.

Keywords: mountain cities; urbanization; tourism; agriculture; Latin America

Citation: Branca, D.; Haller, A. Urbanization, Touristification and Verticality in the Andes: A Profile of Huaraz, Peru. *Sustainability* **2021**, *13*, 6438. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13116438

Academic Editor: Juan Miguel Kanai

Received: 18 May 2021
Accepted: 3 June 2021
Published: 5 June 2021

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1. Introduction

> No region, no locality in the country can be described today without noting its close dependence on or connection to every other place in the country. If that is the case, then all the regions that we once categorized as "nature" have ultimately become part of the city. [1] (p. 103)

Mountain areas across the globe are undergoing land use changes driven by physical, demographic and sociocultural urbanization. Owing to abundant natural and cultural heritage, tourism development and touristification processes have become major drivers of urbanization, which not only concentrates on the built-up areas of the valley floors but reaches up to the highest peaks—a fact that presents planners and policy makers with new challenges to sustainability. While the postmodern integration of mountains into urban life already characterizes many city regions in European mountains (e.g., Grenoble, France or Innsbruck, Austria) [2,3], these developments are rather new and poorly understood for mountain areas in the rest of the world. The tropical mountains of western South America in general [4], and the Peruvian Andes in particular, are a perfect case in point to better understand the past, present and future of mountain cities in the Global South, and to reflect on requirements for successfully attaining Sustainable Development Goal 11 in urbanizing mountain areas. Given the current challenges in intermediate mountain cities like Cajamarca, Cusco, Huancayo or Puno [5–8], this is a much-needed endeavor.

Adopting an idiographic and problem-oriented case study method, the present paper explores how the material and non-material dimensions of the mountain ranges in the central Peruvian Andes of Áncash have influenced the location, substance, form, structure, function and genesis of the mountain city of Huaraz over time. From a theoretical point of view, we draw on three interrelated concepts: (1) planetary urbanization; (2) touristification; and (3) verticality and vertical complementarity. These notions are put together under the umbrella of the montology approach oriented towards sustainable development [9]. In sum, we explore how a settlement location in such a particular natural and cultural setting influences urbanization, environmental conservation and tourism development, induces processes of touristification in the city and its hinterland at different altitudinal zones and ultimately alters the materially manifested nature/culture *Gestalt* of the Santa Valley or Callejón de Huaylas.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. The Case Study Method

This paper is based on a review of the scientific literature, our own field observations and the interpretation of promotional materials of local real estate developers, tourism and mining companies and regional and national institutions promoting regional development. Our research method is inspired by the urban environmental profile/city profile approach [10–12], which goes back to a UNDP/UNCHS initiative from the early 1990s and shares a number of characteristics with the problem-oriented *Länderkunde* approach developed in German-language geography [13]. Moreover, selected principles of Sauerian "Romantic imagination", as described by Gade [14], are reflected in the present type of case study method: (1) the historicist vision; (2) the focus on the particular; (3) the characterization of place; (4) the interest in landscape form and content; and (5) the rejection of the notion of a universal "human nature". In sum, we can call this approach a case study technique in the sense that a "case study is here defined as an in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon. The study is conducted in great detail and often relies on the use of several data sources" [15] (p. 2). This approach shall pay tribute to recent claims to (re-)accentuate the regional [16,17].

2.2. Study Area: Geographic Location and Character

Situated between the Cordillera Blanca and Cordillera Negra in the Andean valley of the Santa River, usually referred to as Callejón de Huaylas, Huaraz is an intermediate mountain city and capital of the Department of Áncash, located in the transition area of the Huascarán Biosphere Reserve of northern central Peru, about 300 km north of Lima. The Plaza de Armas of the district of Huaraz is situated at 09°31′48′′ southern latitude and 77°31′44′′ western longitude, at an altitude of 3052 m a.s.l., on the alluvial fan of the Quillcay River, a tributary of the Santa River (Figure 1).

To define the study area, we first manually delimited the contiguous built-up area [18] in high-resolution satellite images from Google Earth (5 km viewing height). Next, we identified the districts that make up the contiguous built-up area in a geographic information system (using geodata provided by the Peruvian Ministry of Environment). The total area of these districts was then defined as the metropolitan area. Although for the national statistics office, Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI), the Huaraz metropolitan area still consists only of the districts of Huaraz and Independencia, our definition takes into account that the contiguous built-up urban area has already reached into the districts of Taricá and Jangas, north of Independencia, with a total metropolitan population of 157,545 inhabitants [19].

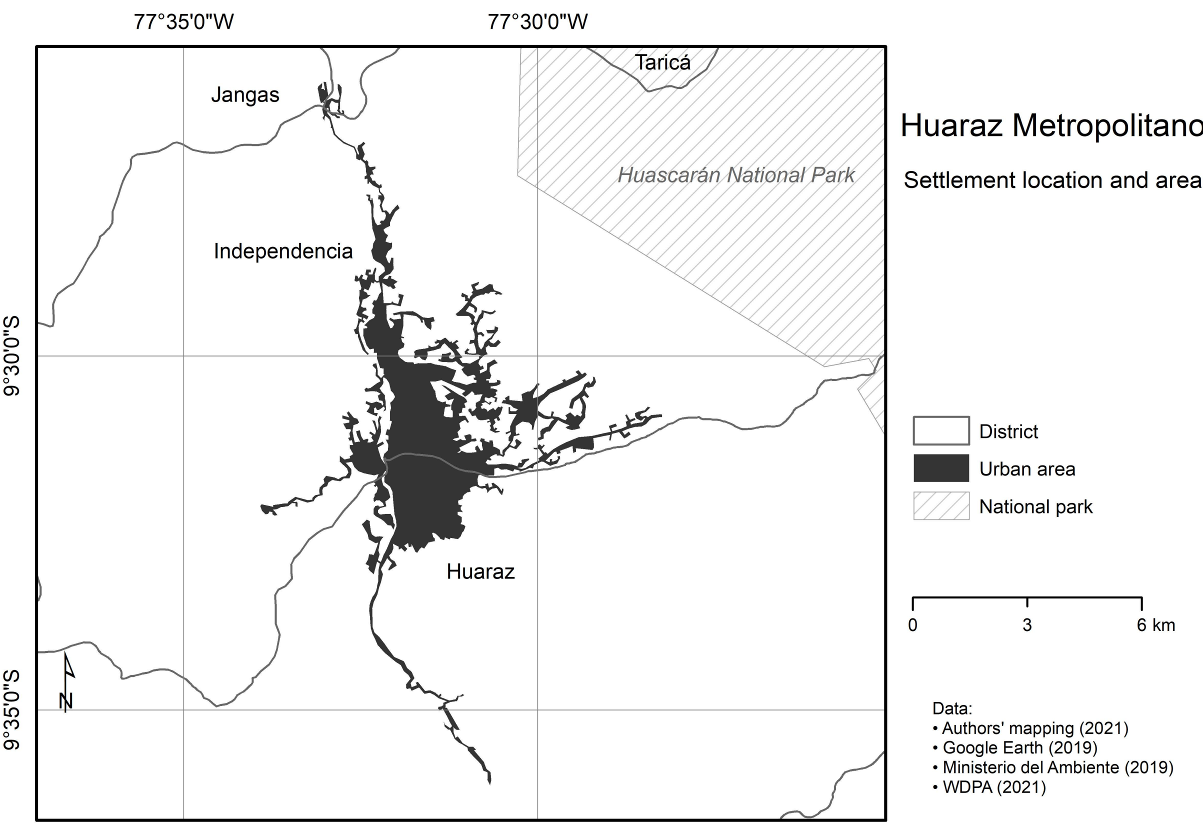

Figure 1. The settlement area of Huaraz Metropolitano in the Callejón de Huaylas of Peru. Source: Authors.

Most of the built-up area is in the Quechua natural region (2300–3500 m; [20]), which roughly corresponds to the *tierra fría* altitudinal zone [21] of the Central Andes. Yet, the hinterland stretches over different altitudinal zones: via the steep slopes of the Suni region (3500–4000 m) to high-Andean Puna plains (4000–4800 m) and the zone of ice and snow (Janca; above 4800 m), which all play a role in urban development in the Andes [18,22]. In terms of temperature, Huaraz has a diurnal climate typical of tropical high-mountain regions. Measurements at the Santiago Antúnez de Mayolo meteorological station in Independencia (3079 m) between 1 January and 31 December 2018 show a daily maximum of 26.4 °C (30 January) and a daily minimum of 2.6 °C on 8 July [23]. The multiannual average (1971–1991) of precipitation around the airport of Anta near Huaraz reached approximately 666 mm [24]—an important factor for the discharge of the Santa River and its tributaries, which provide essential water resources for human land use—just one example of the many vertical interlinkages between the center of the city and the glaciated peaks of the Cordillera Blanca.

3. The Relevance of Verticality: Urbanizing Archipelagos and Touristification

Our analysis of the city–mountain interaction in Huaraz, Peru, is based on a conceptual framework that includes three main theoretical notions: that of (1) verticality and vertical complementarity [25]; (2) planetary urbanization [26–28]; and (3) touristification [29]. We consider this theoretical framework helpful for exploring a set of interrelated phenomena of Huaraz Metropolitano: (1) the verticality of its settlement structures; (2) the complexity of urbanization processes that reach up to the glaciated peaks; and (3) the embeddedness in touristification processes, which influence the Santa Valley and its population.

The notion of vertical complementarity and vertical archipelagos was first developed by John Murra [25] on the basis of Carl Troll's *Landschaftsstufen* ("landscape steps";

a term he proposes to use instead of *Landschaftsgürtel* or "landscape belts"). It reflects Humboldtian thoughts on verticality [30,31] and refers to a model of ecological adaptation and control of different ecological levels that was widespread in the Andean region in pre-Columbian times and can even be applied today—although with different features. In the central Andes, the types of crops one can grow is mainly conditioned by the climatic and geomorphological characteristics of each zone. Given these limitations, the Andean populations have harnessed the specific characteristics of different natural regions over time, adapting to the environment and constructing systems of land use that imply vertical mobility. The vertical archipelago model foresaw, in most cases, a nucleus—as a general rule, located in the Quechua or Suni regions [20]—from which a given ethnic group took advantage of the products of different ecological floors and "islands" located at different altitudinal levels, where they established additional peripheral settlements. This model allowed the exchange of goods and people, and led to social and ethnolinguistic relations between places more or less distant from each other (between one or two days on foot, sometimes even up to 11 days), resulting in an ecological pattern of full adaptation to the environment and to the vertical characteristics of the geographical setting. Of course, the classic model referring to the years 1460–1560 has undergone dramatic changes as a result of the sociospatial rearticulation imposed during the Iberian colonization and the early Republican phase thereafter. In any case, this model has been quite influential in the social sciences and has been discussed and applied to both historical and contemporary cases. Brush, for example, has shown three cases of contemporary geographical relations in the northern highlands of Peru, distinguishing between the "compact", "archipelago" and "extended" types, each related to different patterns in the exploitation of ecological niches and in the form of mobility and temporary or permanent settlement [32,33]. Fioravanti-Molinié, in a review essay, has investigated its contemporary configuration, showing the vitality of this pattern—although, of course, greatly modified in comparison with the past [34]. Forman, summarizing several case studies, has emphasized the importance of the vertical model for the sustainable development of the Andean region, particularly at the local and regional levels [35]. More recently, the notion of vertical archipelagos and verticality has been applied to spatial mobility, often linked with social mobility [36–38], as well as to the development of agriculture and sustainable rural or peri-urban areas [39,40]. Applications of the vertical archipelago model in the 1970s and 1980s attempted to show continuities and changes compared to the past, and particularly from the perspective of rural communities. Recent studies, such as those of Hirsch [36] and Stadel [39], focus instead on the interconnections between different rural and urban spaces and their interconnections with flows of goods, people, ideas, capital and symbols that connect the region with national and international spaces [5,41]. The latest conformation of this pattern is undoubtedly more urban than in the past and follows the development of the urban system of the central Andean countries and of processes occurring all over the planet. In the case of Huaraz Metropolitano, the notion of vertical archipelagos can be applied to a series of sites and events that occur at high altitudinal levels, interconnecting distant and "rural" places (even "wilderness") within the "urban", showing a local outcome of what Brenner and Schmid [26,28] have defined as "planetary urbanization".

The concept of planetary urbanization was developed in response to what the authors call the "urban age" thesis [27], a formulation that, according to them, has become a *cliché*, stating that more than half of the planet's population now lives in urban contexts. Brenner and Schmid's critique is directed at the empirical and theoretical bases for this thesis and they point out problems such as (1) the fetishism of settlements, that is, the idea that there is a series of urban categories that can be replicated everywhere; (2) the supposed dichotomy or continuum between "urban" and "rural" worlds; (3) the model of population (re-)distribution (or mobility transition [42]), according to which, in the course of time, people move from rural to urban areas (and *vice versa*), depending on contextual variations. To these criticisms, Brenner and Schmid offer some possible strategies to overcome this impasse. First, abandoning the notion of an urban population threshold (UPT), while

continuing to investigate the construction of more appropriate and meaningful world population statistics. Second, the use of geospatial data for the delineation of urban settlements, using the vast array of geographical tools available. Third, the need to abandon existing theoretical categories to explore new conceptualizations that map the current conformation of the urban [27]. Brenner and Schmid's research on planetary urbanization is an attempt to construct an alternative epistemology to analyze the phenomenon of urbanization. It should be noted that the term "planetary urbanization" does not refer to the assumption that the whole world is urbanizing in the same way [28]. Rather, the authors refer to a set of issues that have to do with an uneven capitalist spatial development; the main issues are related to the need to get out of the idea of the "medieval" enclosed and finite city. The urban is not only a structural unit but also a process of sociospatial transformations mediated by capitalist forms of industrialization [28]. In fact, for the authors, urbanization processes are multiple and different in each place, so there is no single morphology of the urban. This relates to the Lefebvrian idea that the urban/rural dichotomy has been overcome, considering that "outside" there is nothing that is not urban. It is in this sense that the authors argue that not everyone or everything is becoming urban nor going through the same processes everywhere, but that a process of urbanization with its own characteristics is underway in different parts of the world. Here, the distinction between "concentrated urbanization" and "extended urbanization" is of importance [28]. According to Brenner and Schmid, we should speak of a dialectic rather than of a dichotomy between concentrated urbanization (aggregation and concentration) and extended urbanization [43], the transformation of contexts and environments as supports for agglomeration. In other words, instead of relying exclusively on old classifications of places as "urban", "non-urban" or "rural", it is necessary to think about processual connections. In this sense, they refer to extraction zones that become part of the urbanized area, which, in this way, is not only the city, but the whole broader sociomaterial context of connections between different places that provide goods to the concentrated area. This vision goes beyond the traditional consideration of the big city or the region, thanks to infrastructures and the flow of goods—for instance, on the oceans, railways, roads or cable cars. In this way, places such as high mountains, rainforests or deserts, historically considered non-urban or "outside" the connection networks, also become urbanized. To summarize, Brenner and Schmid understand planetary urbanization as the processes of (1) intensification of land use; (2) intensification of infrastructural connection; and (3) socioenvironmental transformations; all these being mediated by a dialectic between concentrated and extended urbanization [26–28]. In the case of Huaraz Metropolitano, this model is reflected in the connections between the zones characterized by a concentrated urbanization and those influenced by an extended one, including the surrounding different altitudinal zones of the Cordillera Blanca and Cordillera Negra, which both serve as spaces and places for the extraction of ores and for sports and/or religious events. Through the economic importance and the social and material weight of recreation and tourism, the mountains of Huaraz have become an urban asset that is rapidly changing the face of the city.

The impacts of urbanization and tourism on mountains are manifold, including what has been termed "tourist gentrification" or "Alpine gentrification" [44]; concepts that have developed around debates on postmodern (non-dualistic and anti-hierarchical) forms of tourism. In its original sense, "gentrification" refers to the substitution of one social class by a group of supposedly higher social status in a certain area, including related "upgrades" of the built environment [45]. While tourism doubtlessly plays an important role in the gentrification and urban reconfiguration of mountain areas, we should consider some important arguments by Sequera and Nofre [29], who claim that applying the gentrification concept to tourism cities is not always appropriate. Instead, the authors propose to focus on the concept of "touristification" (that is, the structural and functional (re-)production of society, economy and/or environment for the sole purpose of tourism), which goes beyond the "speculation–expulsion" and "gentrification–displacement" model to account for changes driven by "large transnational forces" in the urbanization of tourism [29,46]. In the case

of Huaraz Metropolitano, we argue, it is better to speak of touristification, a process that (1) affects diverse social classes of the resident population, (2) includes non-residents (i.e., tourists) of different social strata, and (3) leads to what has been defined as "disneyfication", the transformation of the environment into a kind of postmodern recreational park [47]. This often goes hand in hand with a decrease in population driven by the conversion of residential buildings into structures for tourist services. Moreover, the touristification of cities and their "operational landscapes" often triggers conflicts about the commodification of space and place (e.g., through heritagization processes). Examples include rising prices for building plots driven by the construction of tourist accommodations, such as hotels or second homes, and other tourism-related infrastructure. For the present case, the concept by Sequera and Nofre [29] has to be adapted by two important notions: first, more than other tourist cities, mountain cities depending on tourism, like Huaraz Metropolitano, present close rural–urban interaction, for their attractiveness as destinations often rests on impressive mountain landscapes and "rural" cultures outside the core city, rather than on purely "urban" centers; hence, the notion of verticality is crucial. Second, in the course of postmodernity, a planetary urbanization process is currently underway everywhere, even on the highest glaciated peaks of the Cordillera Blanca. The study of urban touristification processes should thus not be limited to inner cities, but include even more remote sites functionally meshed with the urban center. This becomes clear when the development of a mountain city like Huaraz is tracked along both (1) space *and* time and (2) nature *and* culture.

4. Nature and Culture in Space and Time: Towards an Urbanizing Center of Tourism

4.1. Foundation and Colonial Period

During the Horizonte Temprano (Early Horizon) (1050 BCE–200 CE), before the Incan expansion, the Chavín culture developed in present-day Huaraz [48], while the settlement of Waras developed around the ceremonial center of Pumacayán, in the Quechua altitudinal zone of today's Áncash. The Recuay cultural phase is now recognized for the Horizonte Medio (Middle Horizon), with the main center a few kilometers from the present city [49]. What follows this period is, undoubtedly, the main pre-Inca state, the Wari empire (800 BCE–1100 CE). It extended across a large area, from the north of Peru to the border with Cusco, where the Tiwanaku empire began [50]. Inca expansionism around 1200 CE encountered strong opposition. However, the Wari were defeated and became part of the Chinchaysuyu (one of the four main administrative divisions of the Tawantinsuyu, the Inca empire), which extended from the south of present-day Colombia to the center of present-day Peru, bordering the Cuntisuyu to the south and the Antisuyu to the southeast [51]. At that time, Huaraz was probably one of the towns west of the Qhapaq Ñan, the Andean road system connecting Cajamarca and the capital of the empire, Cusco.

In 1533, with the death of the Inca Atahuallpa and the capture of Cusco, the Spanish conquered the territory of Tawantinsuyu, creating the Viceroyalty of Peru. The first mentions of Huaraz are found with Spanish chroniclers like Pedro de Sancho, the first to describe the place in 1533, and the *veedor* (inspector) Miguel de Estete [52]. De Estete states that the expedition reached a valley and went to eat "at a large town called Guarax". According to Porras Barrenechea [53] (p. 116), this is the first geographical description of this area and includes many details of the geographical setting [54] (pp. 126–127). About 20 years later, Cieza de León also describes the road connecting Piscobamba and "Guaraz", crossing "very rough mountains" and a flat and wide valley, as well as inhabitants that exploited silver mines in the high mountains and paid tributes to the Incas [55] (p. 221). The interrelation of urban development, mining and traveling thus goes back a long way. The Spanish foundation of the city of San Sebastián de Huaraz is due to Captain Alonso de Santoyo in 1572 [56], within the framework of the Toledo Reforms. During the colonial period, the sources on the history of Huaraz are scarce and mostly administrative. In particular, they record the earthquake of 6 January 1725, which destroyed the town of Áncash (killing its 1500 inhabitants) and caused damage to the city of Huaraz [57]. At the end of

the 18th century, during the tense decades that preceded Peru's independence, there were various indigenous and mestizo rebellions. In 1784, with territorial reorganization and the creation of the intendant system, San Sebastián de Huaraz—elevated to *Villa* status in 1788—became part of the Intendencia de Tarma and capital of the Partido de Huaylas [58].

In sum, these developments, from the pre-Columbian ceremonial site to the colonial administrative and mining center, laid the groundwork for the growth of an Andean mountain city that should become a gateway for national and international explorers and entrepreneurs interested in the "natural richness" of the surrounding mountain environment of the Quechua, Suni and Puna altitudinal zones; deepening an already existing city–mountain interaction based on the exploitation of "the rural", "the indigenous" and "the agrarian".

4.2. From Independence to Disaster

In the 19th century, Huaraz is described again in more detail, already within scientific paradigms. Two years after Peru's declaration of independence, the town was elevated to the rank of city by law on 18 January 1823 (called the "very generous city") and to the capital of the Department of Huaylas (later named Áncash) in 1835 [58]. Among those who spoke of the city in this century, we must mention Milan-born Italian geographer Antonio Raimondi [59] and, above all, the German anthropologist Ernst W. Middendorf whose description tells of a town that, despite its relative importance, lacked lodging for travelers, forcing them to stay at the homes of acquaintances. Middendorf describes the urban morphology as typically Spanish-American, centered around the Plaza de Armas, with straight street grids forming blocks (Figure 2).

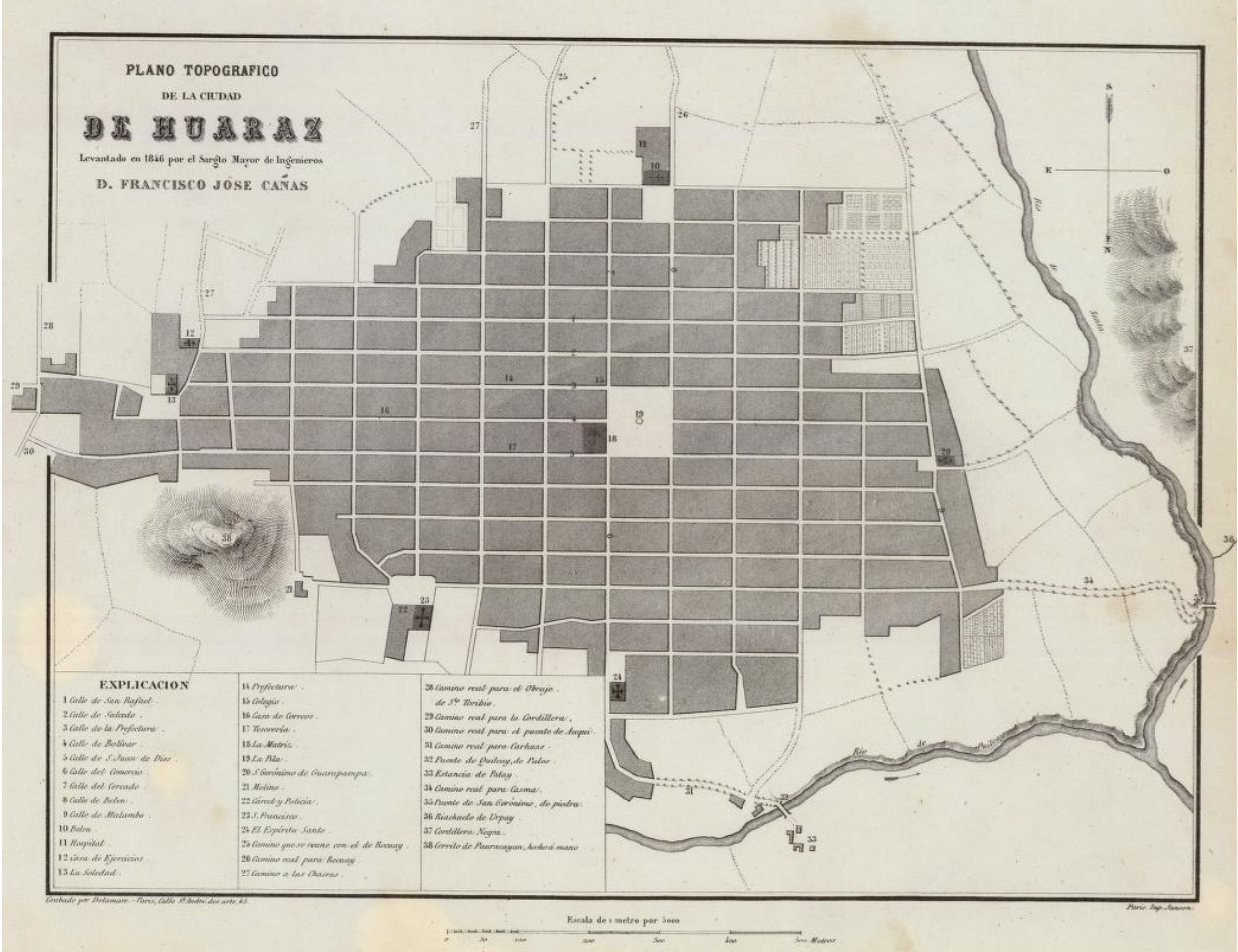

Figure 2. Map of Huaraz in 1846 by D. Francisco José Cañas. The separation of built-up ("city") from agrarian parcels ("countryside") is clearly visible. Source: David Rumsey Map Collection (www.davidrumsey.com, accessed on 22 February 2021).

There were no electric lights and the houses, except for a few near the plaza, were generally one-storied [60] (p. 63). According to Middendorf's estimate, the town had about 14,000 inhabitants, mostly "Indians" and "mestizos", with a large part of the (female) population who "does not understand Castilian or understands it only with difficulty" [60] (p. 64). The *huaracinos* continued practicing agriculture, cultivating wheat and barley in the Quechua altitudinal zone; a small number of cattle were raised due to the war with Chile some years before, horses and mules were scarce. Being the departmental capital, Huaraz had the Prefecture and the Superior Court, as well as several schools. However, despite its relative centrality, Middendorf highlights that the market was mainly internal, although there were some commercial relations with the city of Lima [60] (p. 64).

During the 19th and 20th century, Huaraz underwent a sustained modernization that resulted in an increasing urbanization of the surrounding valley floor of the Quechua region, which then was predominantly agricultural. In the second half of the 19th century, large estates were under the control of often foreign *hacenderos*, such as Aloys Schreiber, a Bohemian-Austrian merchant and Huaraz-based consul of Austria-Hungary, who owned/leased the *haciendas* of Collón, Lúcuma and Vicos [61,62]. In addition, mining activities higher up in the Suni and Puna altitudinal zones—for long an important part of the region's economy—intensified, driven by European entrepreneurs, and played an ever more important role in city–mountain interaction. For example, at the end of the 19th century, Juan, José and Jorge Serkovic, emigrés from Austria-Hungary (in present-day Croatia), settled in the Department of Áncash. In the city of Huaraz, they founded the trading company Serkovic Hns. SA and in the peripheral town of Chacas, on the other side of the Cordillera Blanca, they owned several silver and lead mines (called Austria, La Riqueza, Iris, Descubridora, La Deseada, Huancuy, Santa Sarita, Isabel and Esperanza). With earnings from the mining business, they then built the modern Hotel Monterrey north of Huaraz, near thermal springs. In fact, urban expansion was towards the north, with the first nucleus being the neighborhood of Centenario (named in honor of the anniversary of the independence of Peru in 1821). Urban expansion was accompanied by the development of road infrastructure, including the construction of tree-lined avenues [58].

In sum, the "parasitic" nature of the small colonial city, which developed at the cost of the surrounding mountain people and environment in different altitudinal belts (e.g., through intensive agriculture, livestock farming or mining), continued, in part, until the early 20th century. The investment of revenues from mining in the hotel business, however, should mark the beginning of a new phase of city–mountain interaction.

4.3. From Disaster to Heritagization

In the 1930s, Austrian geographer and glaciologist Hans Kinzl, together with colleagues from the German and Austrian Alpine Clubs, carried out an expedition to the Peruvian Andes and conducted a series of studies on the glaciers of the Janca altitudinal zone of the Cordillera Blanca, drawing attention to the risk that high-altitude glacial lakes could pose with glacial retreat. Kinzl was right in his concern; on 13 December 1941, a devastating flood, caused by the rupture of the moraine dam of Lake Palcacocha, near the upper limit of the Puna altitudinal zone, "produced the largest alluvium of glacial origin that had ever passed through an urban area", killing a great number of people [63] (p. 3). The flood hit the city fully, but just a few years later it managed to grow again, expanding into areas considered safer from floods.

In the 1950s and 1960s, mountain tourism started in Huaraz, particularly due to the interest of German, Austrian, French, Italian and Swiss mountaineers in the Cordillera Blanca, which at the time was called "Peruvian Switzerland" [64]. This led to an improvement in Huaraz's tourist infrastructure, as well as to a renewed interest in the mountains, not only as a sacred entity from a cultural point of view, but also as a "natural" area to be protected and valorized for tourism. As the *New York Times* put it,

> The fertile valley is gentle. Fields of potatoes and yellow grains cover the low hills in a quilted landscape. The pungent smell of eucalyptus permeates the clear

> air, and the bell and bleat of the grazing sheep can be heard for miles. The Indian peasants who inhabit the valley are a colorful people. The women thresh wheat in their homespun skirts, tossing the chaff high in the air. There are frequent processions with trumpet and drum through the streets of Huaraz, the main town and marketplace of the valley. A two-day tour up and down the valley affords the visitor a view of life in the interior of Peru that contrasts strikingly with the modern urban life of Lima. The 20-room Hotel Los Pinos at Huaraz, managed by a French couple, offers fine lodging with good food. [65]

While the city was still recovering from the tragedy of thirty years earlier, an earthquake measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale destroyed Huaraz on 31 May 1970. The earthquake also triggered a flood that killed about 15,000 people, while the death toll from the combined events in the Callejón de Huaylas is estimated at around 70,000 [66]. This tragedy made the Cordillera Blanca even better known [67], and many international volunteers came to Huaraz to contribute to the reconstruction of the city, which from then on was nicknamed the "Capital of International Friendship" [64]. To facilitate the flow of goods and people needed for reconstruction, better transport infrastructure connecting Huaraz and Lima was implemented, ensuring a fast route from the country's most important airport to the Callejón de Huaylas. By 1972, the Commission for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the Affected Zone (CRYRZA), created in Lima to manage the reconstruction of Huaraz, moved to Vichay [68,69], a peripheral place north of Huaraz between the neighborhoods of Centenario and Monterrey. Over time, this camp of Soviet chalets, together with nearby Palmira, developed into a new, more residential, site. As the city attracted more and more people in search of help and new opportunities, the destruction triggered a new phase of growth, both in terms of people and the built-up area. This post-disaster development was soon accompanied by a new rise of mountain tourism, which experienced rapid growth in mountaineering expeditions [67,70], and urban and mountain tourism development went hand in hand.

One such example of tourism-driven city–mountain interaction is the establishment of a protected area in the Cordillera Blanca. In 1975, the Peruvian government created Huascarán National Park [71], already proposed back in the early phase of mountain tourism of the 1960s. In 1977, it was recognized by UNESCO as a Biosphere Reserve and, finally, in 1985, as a Natural World Heritage Site [64]. However, the heritagization of the landscape included not only the "natural" landscape, but also the "cultural" landscape, i.e., archaeological sites (notably the pre-Hispanic site of Chavín) and the ancient Inca roads. On the one hand, these heritagization processes could be explained by a planetary trend toward the recognition of outstanding places as world heritage sites; on the other, on a more local scale, it might be interpreted as a consequence of the destruction of the built environment, an intention to recreate a shared urban identity [72]. In sum, the destructive events of 1941 and 1970 did not stop the tourist development of Huaraz. Quite the contrary, as in the case of the earthquake of Cusco in 1950 [6,73], the post-disaster situation seemed to open up new ways for urban and tourism development, redefining the city–mountain interaction by including the mountains in the process of urbanization and touristification at different altitudinal zones, from the valley up to the peaks.

5. A Postmodern Present: Peaks as Peri-Urban Parks?

5.1. The Horizontal View: Key Figures on Population, Settlement and Tourism

Census data of the last four decades clearly reflect urban growth, both in demographic and physical terms. As shown in Table 1, the resident population in Huaraz Metropolitano has more than doubled since 1981. In the intercensal period 1981–1993, the population increased by 29%; the subsequent period saw an increase of 28%, and 2007–2017 recorded an increase of 22%, reaching a total population of 157,545. In the latter period, it is interesting to observe that the districts of Independencia (+28%) and Taricá (+29%) had growth rates above the total metropolitan increase. As in other Andean intermediate cities of Peru, like

Cusco and Huancayo [6,7], the "new" metropolitan districts grew faster, some of them having a larger population than the core districts.

Population growth, mainly due to rural–urban migration [74], also led to an increase in the number of dwellings, which has more than tripled since 1981 (Table 2; see Figure 3). In both intercensal periods of 1981–1993 and 1993–2007, the number of dwellings increased by 57%; 2007–2017 recorded an increase of 28%, reaching a total of 48,718 dwellings. In the last intercensal period, Taricá experienced an extraordinary increase in dwellings (+43%), while Independencia is slightly above and Jangas and Huaraz are somewhat below the total metropolitan growth of +28%. Again, the less dynamic core district (Huaraz) contrasts with the more dynamic northern districts of Independencia, Jangas and Taricá. The latter is a unique case, given that the number of dwellings has risen much more than the number of inhabitants; a fact that could have to do with the construction of new residential projects by local developers (e.g., Constructora La Libertad) and supported by the public Mivienda fund's "Techo Propio" program (examples include Residencial Los Ángeles de Pashpa or Residencial Montecristo) [75].

According to the most recent census, Independencia, Jangas and Taricá are also districts with a clear majority of people self-identifying as Quechua; even the core district of Huaraz, with 50% Quechua, is not far behind (Table 3). These figures contrast with common dichotomic understandings of white/mestizo "urban" and indigenous "rural" areas in the central Andes. More recently, local scholars have highlighted the increasing visibility of the Quechua identity in the city, not only in media and education, but also in the names of tourist facilities like restaurants, hotels or laundries. They ascribe this fact to the strengthening of rural–urban relations and growing bilingualism that set in after the 1970 earthquake [76]. In this light, one could also hypothesize that the growing influx of postmodern tourists interested in Andean nature and culture since the 1970s has not simply led to acculturation, but has given the local population greater self-esteem and strengthened local identities.

Given a lack of long-term and consistent tourism data at the district level (e.g., arrivals and overnight stays), the increase in the number of tourists coming to Huaraz Metropolitano can only be estimated. Appealing to personal communications, O'Hare and Barret [77] mention that in 1996 almost 95% of tourists visiting the Cordillera Blanca stayed in accommodation in Huaraz. If one assumes that almost all tourists visit Huascarán National Park at least once, the number of visitor entries to the city's main point of attraction can be used to get a first impression of tourism development in Huaraz. The figures show a clear drop during the Great Recession of 2007–2008 (preceded by the burst of the US housing bubble of 2005–2006), and steady growth after 2009. While the total number of visitors from 2007–2017 grew by 95%, the number of incoming visitors increased by 154%, a fact underlining the inclusion of Huaraz in international visitor flows in recent years (Table 4).

Table 1. Population numbers of the districts of Huaraz Metropolitano. The 2017 figures do not refer to the censused population but to the total population. The Independencia district was created in 1992 [19,78–80].

District	**Population (Count)**			
	1981	1993	2007	2017
Huaraz	70,001	44,771	56,186	65,005
Independencia	0	47,614	62,853	80,610
Jangas	3268	3569	4403	4971
Taricá	4533	4743	5394	6959
Total	77,802	100,697	128,836	157,545

Table 2. Number of dwellings in the districts of Huaraz Metropolitano. The Independencia district was created in 1992 [19,78–80].

District	Dwellings (Count)			
	1981	1993	2007	2017
Huaraz	13,579	10,564	15,294	18,888
Independencia	0	11,049	19,177	25,182
Jangas	792	1323	1592	1985
Taricá	1036	1279	1860	2663
Total	15,407	24,215	37,923	48,718

Figure 3. Settlement expansion due to rural–urban migration changed the peri-urban interface of Independencia. Source: Andreas Haller.

Table 3. Self-identification based on ancestry and custom [19].

District	Quechua (%)	Aymara (%)	White (%)	Mestizo (%)	Other (%)	Total (Count)
Huaraz	49.77	0.15	3.41	43.94	2.74	48,911
Independencia	58.77	0.15	3.05	35.49	2.54	60,060
Jangas	72.81	0.03	3.22	21.72	2.22	3821
Taricá	67.78	0.04	3.18	27.36	1.63	4898
Total	55.86	0.14	3.21	38.21	2.58	117,690

Table 4. Number of visitors to Huascarán National Park in 1987 and from 2007–2017. Figures for 1987 only consider the entries at Llanganuco and Carpa. *Source*: INRENA/SERNANP compiled in ParksWatch (2005) and Dircetur (2021).

Year	Incoming Visitors (Count)	Domestic Visitors (Count)	Total Visitors
1987	6000	62,536	68,536
2007	33,782	111,200	144,982
2008	23,998	84,932	108,930
2009	31,071	66,278	97,349
2010	32,067	79,852	111,919
2011	33,185	93,635	126,820
2012	33,950	103,584	137,534
2013	35,758	112,818	148,576
2014	38,799	139,063	177,862
2015	48,971	200,189	249,160
2016	66,264	194,887	261,151
2017	85,773	197,596	283,369

5.2. The Vertical View: Touristification and the Urban Reproduction of Complementary Archipelagos

Today, the national and international image of Huaraz Metropolitano is mainly that of a rather small Andean tourist city: backward and cosmopolitan at the same time. Although it is the capital of the Áncash region, Huaraz is economically in the shadow of the coastal "economic capital" Chimbote. Settlement growth in recent decades has come primarily from self-help housing. Large investments in the real-estate sector are rare, and smaller projects are pushed forward mainly by local actors; this also applies to the hotel sector, where international chains are absent (with one recent exception), and most accommodations are family-run. In this respect, Huaraz clearly differs from larger, more vibrant Andean cities like Cusco [6] and Huancayo [7], and this is reflected by external perspectives on the city. However, even in the present Andean context, there are signs of sociospatial segregation on the Quechua valley floor, increasingly leading to a fragmented urban and peri-urban development first described in several large Latin American cities [81,82]. What makes Huaraz Metropolitano an interesting case is the city–mountain relation and the integration of the mountain environment of the Suni, Puna and Janca altitudinal zones as an "operational landscape" [28], which reflects the role of touristification and rural drivers of peri-urban expansion.

On the Quechua valley floor, the construction of peri-urban gated condominiums set in at the beginning of the new millennium and has played a crucial role in the re-configuration of peri-urban form and function. At first glance, two "company towns" of large mining enterprises stand out: Antamina's El Pinar (District of Independencia) and Barrick's La Alborada (District of Taricá). El Pinar is located a little above the center of Independencia, in a sector called Huanchac. While the mine is located quite a way off in the District of San Marcos (east of the Cordillera Blanca), the company decided to build this condominium in Huaraz Metropolitano, which offers better transport connections and a range of tourism and recreation amenities, instead of building its own urban center close to the mine (a strategy that can also be observed in the case of Yanacocha/Cajamarca [83]). Its topographic location was carefully selected by experts in search for a safe place naturally protected against potential gravitative mass movements from the Cordillera Blanca. The standardized two-storied US-style terraced houses are arranged around a circular central plaza, clearly breaking with the Hippodamic grid patterns known from Hispanic-American

urbanism (see Figure 2) [84,85]. The settlement structure conveys social homogeneity and connectedness with nature, clearly reminiscent of the US society's "rural identity" that paved the way for infinite suburbanization [86]. The whole settlement is administrated by Antamina (owned by BHP, Glencore, Teck and Mitsubishi), offering security guards and an international bilingual school (Colegio El Pinar). Employees and their families rent the houses from the company. Beyond the walls of El Pinar, allochthonous pine forests were planted, giving locals and visitors the feel of the Rocky Mountains. The function of this peri-urban settlement, however, goes far beyond housing and education: in recent years, El Pinar has developed into a development hub for more affluent and leisure-oriented social groups. The pine forests are being cleared for new condominiums (e.g., El Nuevo Pinar), developed by local real-estate enterprises that try to benefit from El Pinar's semantic space—economic wealth, social order and environmental quality—and from new recreation complexes, built by actors from the city's hotel sector (e.g., El Bosque). Moreover, the area around El Pinar is gaining importance for tourist events like the Antamina-sponsored Festival del Andinismo, which includes international trail running races from Huanchac to the high-mountain environment of Huascarán National Park.

The *urbanización* of La Alborada was built to host some employees of the nearby Pierina mine, which stopped its operations recently. It is located on the fluvial terraces of the Santa River in the District of Taricá in the peri-urban interface of Huaraz Metropolitano. The standardized two-storied terraced houses are arranged in four parallel rectangular street blocks. One street block contains a small park reminiscent of a traditional Plaza de Armas. Apart from housing, La Alborada includes facilities for sports and education (former Colegio Robert Smith, now Colegio Santa María de la Alborada) and has security guards protecting the gated condominium. Compared to El Pinar, La Alborada is much smaller, with only a third of the number of houses. Although built by Barrick, La Alborada was never administered by the Canadian mining company and the houses were sold to the employees. Perhaps because of its size and rather peripheral location, La Alborada does not have the same impact on urban development as El Pinar. Despite the presence of some tourist accommodation and countryside restaurants in Jangas and Taricá, there is no clear spatial clustering of condominiums or recreation and tourism projects around La Alborada, nor an imitation/appropriation of the settlement's name. However, it is interesting to observe the beginning of a functional change of the condominiums, as houses are increasingly offered to tourists on internet platforms for short-term vacation rental.

The trend towards short-term vacation rental of houses in (gated) condominiums (or their use as second homes) is likely to increase in the Quechua altitudinal zone of Huaraz Metropolitano. A recent real-estate project currently under construction is Mirador de Quinchup (Figure 4; District of Huaraz). This project consists of serviced lots located at 3500 m above the valley floor of Huaraz, a short way past the well-known *mirador* (viewpoint) of Rataquenua, which was planned to be linked with Huaraz by cable car [87]. It is being developed by the local Kern Bau enterprise and promoted as rural condominiums with pleasant views and a tranquil natural environment. Given its relatively remote location, Mirador de Quinchup appears to be designed as a place for second homes and/or short-term vacation rental rather than a home for people working in the city center of Huaraz Metropolitano.

Above the Quechua valley floor, where the continuous built-up area of Huaraz Metropolitano is concentrated, urbanization extends to the Suni region and the subsequent Puna and Janca zones. The Suni region east of Huaraz also serves as an interface between the city and Huascarán National Park. It roughly coincides with the buffer zone of Huascarán Biosphere Reserve. Here, ecotourism lodges and other alternative tourist accommodation (e.g., a "glamping" or glamorous camping site) have been developed in recent years, all promoting the connection of a "natural" or "rural" environment with amenities known from more urban areas. Examples include the Lazy Dog Inn, established by an immigrant couple from Canada, and the Churup Mountain Lodge, founded by an English immigrant family. In line with postmodern tourism and its trend towards

individualization and flexibilization, they usually offer access to "world-class trekking" spots, "authentic inter-cultural connections", "wellness treatments and soul-cleansing", as well as opportunities to support local indigenous communities. What is interesting here is the location between "city" and "mountain": while the Suni is clearly an "operational landscape" supporting the urban economy [28], from a tourism point of view, the Quechua valley floor (the "city") also serves as an "operational landscape" for the ecotourism lodges and other alternative tourist accommodation. While tourists appreciate the Suni as a tranquil place of accommodation, they use the city to arrive and depart by public transport, as a site to dine out or party in one of the restaurants and bars, or to supply themselves with essential goods.

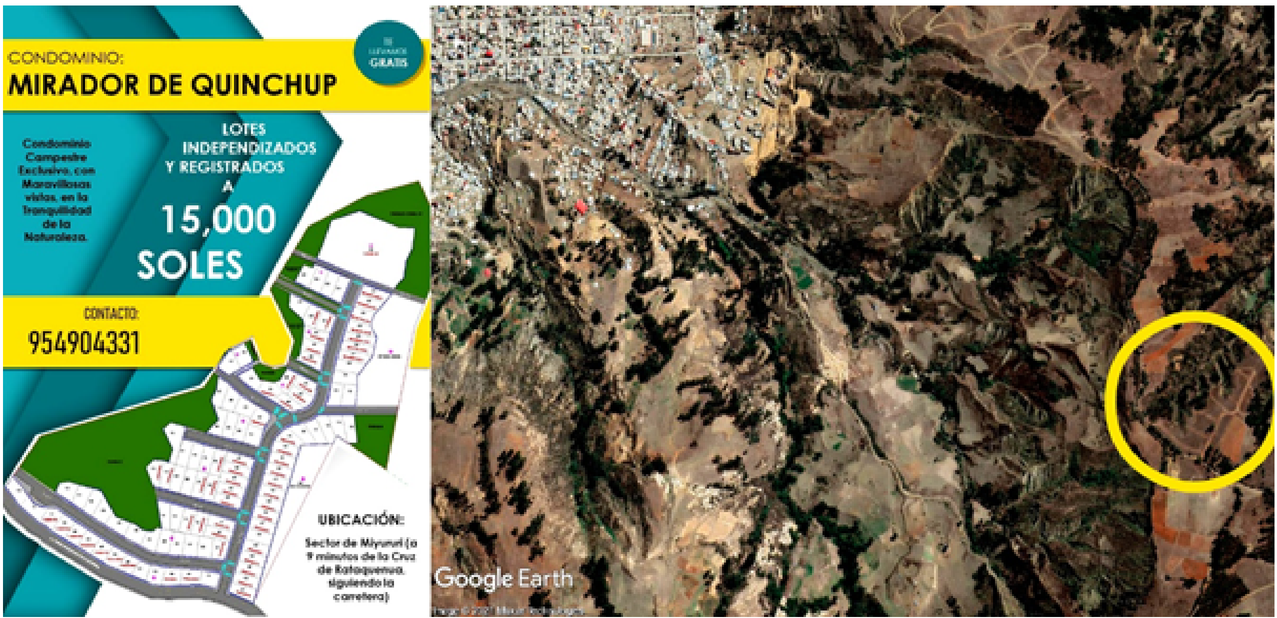

Figure 4. The peri-urban Mirador de Quinchup, a planned "exclusive countryside condominium, with beautiful views in the tranquility of nature". Source: Authors' compilation, based on images by Kern Bau and Google Earth.

The subsequent Puna and Janca zones also show signs of extended urbanization, serving, for example, as "operational landscapes" for both the Quechua and the Suni. Huascarán National Park is the main attraction for Peru's tourism and, in recent years, some high-mountain huts (e.g., Refugio Ishinca) and chalets have been developed by the Catholic non-profit organization Mato Grosso from Italy. During the dry season from May to October, they serve as "base camps" for trekking and mountaineering tourists, offering services such as toilets and hot showers and electricity and breakfast, lunch and dinner in Alpine-style buildings just below the glaciers of the Cordillera Blanca. Through these processual connections, it becomes clear how "wilderness" and "the rural" continue to be part of an urban development that not only concentrates on the Quechua valley floor but extends to the Suni, Puna and Janca zones. During postmodernity, even the highest peaks of the tropical Andes have become kind of a peri-urban park. The traditional model of vertical and complementary archipelagos has become urbanized through a dialectic relation between concentrated and extended urbanization processes that questions simplistic conceptualizations of the hinterland of cities.

In sum, all these connections show peculiar spatial structures and functions of the different altitudinal zones in a vertically complementary way. Places located in different altitudinal sectors are now part of a wider space that is undergoing interesting reconfigurations of the traditional indigenous land use patterns, the vertical archipelagos, under strong influence from contemporary phenomena such as planetary urbanization and touristification. The concentrated nucleus of Huaraz, in the Quechua zone, acts as an articulating axis. The areas in the subsequent Suni present an extended urbanization type and a postmodern

leisure-oriented function, while the mountain huts in the Puna and Janca zones—also characterized by an extended urbanization—are devoted to trekking, mountaineering and other outdoor sports (see Table 5).

Table 5. Selected elements of the peri-urban city–mountain interface of Huaraz and Huascarán National Park.

Element	Example	Function	Altitudinal Zone	Type of Urbanization
Gated condominiums	El Pinar (District of Independencia)	About 280 rental houses (3250 m) for employees of the mining company Antamina. Point of attraction for further real-estate projects like El Nuevo Pinar and recreation centers (e.g., El Bosque). Includes services, e.g., an international school.	Quechua	Concentrated
	La Alborada (District of Taricá)	About 100 freehold houses (2800 m) originally built by the Barrick mining company for some of its employees. The former school has a new operator. Today, dwellings are also used for short-term vacation rental.	Quechua	Concentrated
Ecotourism lodges	Churup Mountain Lodge (District of Independencia)	Ecotourism lodge (3680 m) built by European immigrants, specializing in wellness treatments (incl. "soul cleansing") and trekking in Huascarán National Park.	Suni	Extended
	Lazy Dog Inn (District of Independencia)	Ecotourism lodge (3620 m) built by North American immigrants, offering inter-cultural experiences, trekking and social responsibility/sustainability through close economic links with local communities.	Suni	Extended
Mountain huts	Refugio Ishinca (District of Independencia)	Andean hut (4600 m) for trekking and mountaineering tourists, built and operated by the Catholic non-profit organization Operazione Mato Grosso from Italy. About 60 beds, also offers breakfast, lunch, dinner, toilets, hot showers and electricity.	Puna	Extended
	Vivaque Longoni (District of Taricá)	Andean hut (5000 m) for trekking and mountaineering tourists, built and operated by the Catholic non-profit organization Operazione Mato Grosso from Italy. About 18 beds. No staff present and no other services offered.	Janca	Extended

As highlighted by Graham and Keil [88], "nature" has become a dominant element in the discursive production of postmodern urban space. Drawing on planetary urbanization, touristification and new forms of vertical complementarity, Huaraz, like other mountains cities around the globe, is undertaking its first attempts to position itself as an authentic place of Andean nature and indigenous Quechua culture in order to "survive" in the postmodern "battle for placefulness" [89]—triggered by the shift from "managerialism" to "entrepreneurialism" in urban governance *sensu* Harvey [90]—to attract visitors and investors alike. However, no consistent place branding *sensu* Kavaratzis [91] seems to have set in yet. Activities by local authorities like provincial or regional governments are still rare, and those in place appear, in part, fragmented or even "accidental". The nexus between public governments of the region/province/districts and private enterprises from the mining and tourism sector seems significant. Some projects or events were supported by Antamina and its non-profit organization Asociación Áncash as part of corporate social responsibility (e.g., the mountain film and sports events Inkafest and Festival del Andinismo, or the International Congress on Climate Change and its Impacts). Obviously, the mining companies also aim at "greenwashing" their image through sponsoring mountain

tourism events. In addition to the subnational governments, the Peruvian state also contributes to shaping the city image through international promotion within the framework of PromPerú (Figure 5).

In sum, the image of Huaraz is clearly the result of the interplay of Andean nature *and* culture in space *and* time. In this, both mining and touristification play crucial roles, driving planetary urbanization in a vertically complementary fashion. This observation fits perfectly into the age of post-tourism, which

> provides an account of a change in status of tourist practices and destinations in the context of globalization and post-modernity; amenity migrations [. . .] and new residential practices [. . .], a calling into question of the tourist utopia and uchronia, a search for continuity between holiday practices (recreational, social, cultural, spatial etc.) and everyday practices [. . .], the touristification of ordinary places, experimental tourism and neo-situationism, new relationships between town and mountain in the context of metropolization. [92] (p. 84)

Figure 5. Photo used by PromPerú to promote the tourist destination of Huaraz: the peri-urban areas and Mount Huascarán in the background. Source: © Christian Vinces (www.christianvinces.com, accessed on 20 April 2021).

6. Conclusions

The initially quoted observation by Meili [1], who rightly interprets Swiss mountains as parts of cities, can also be made in selected mountain regions of the Global South, for instance, in Huaraz, the "Peruvian Switzerland". With its special geographic location in the middle of the fertile Santa Valley, nestled between the Cordillera Negra and the highest tropical glaciers on Earth, the Cordillera Blanca, and because of the extensive cultural heritage that spans from the pre-Incan period through the Inca Empire and the colonial and republican era, the mountain city of Huaraz has rightly become an important tourist destination of Peru. Its identity as an Andean metropolis, where people and mountains interact closely, makes Huaraz a unique place between (1) space *and* time and (2) nature *and* culture. As in other mountain cities around the world, the processes of planetary urbanization have led to the integration of the high mountains into the city of Huaraz. Together with processes of touristification, we can thus see a "new" vertical complementarity of land use that, originating in the agrarian age, finds its way through urbanization into an increasingly globalized leisure society. In the age of postmodernism,

Huascarán National Park has become an "operational landscape", even a constitutive component of the city of Huaraz.

In our "modern" imagination, following old dichotomies, cities are still separated from mountains, as if a distinct boundary separated "the urban" from "the rural". Many continue to think of studies on mountain environments as necessarily non-urban, neglecting interactions and urbanization processes that go far beyond what we commonly call a "city". Understanding "postmodern" planetary urbanization, touristification and new forms of vertical complementarity is crucial to fostering sustainable development in the tropical Central Andes. A postmodern mode of thinking about urbanization in mountain cities like Huaraz also requires awareness of the ongoing dissolution of outdated center–periphery models, which assume that higher-up "rural" areas are dominated by the "urban" centers of the valley floors, as if the parasitic nature of cities, well-known from the feudal colonial period, continued until today. In post-suburbanization processes, the former peripheries have emancipated themselves from the once dominating city centers and now compete with the latter for investors and visitors (visible to some degree in the development of the District of Independencia, which both structurally and functionally approximates the core district of Huaraz). In the same way, a new emancipation has now set in vertically, for instance, in the Quechua, Suni, Puna and Janca zones of Huaraz Metropolitano. However, rather than competing, the vertical zones seem to complement each other both structurally and functionally. To successfully achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11 ("Sustainable Cities and Communities") in the tropical Central Andes, it seems necessary to:

1. bridge the urban–rural divide, considering mountain agriculture and *campesinos* ("peasants") as integrated parts of past, present and future "urban development" and as pillars of tourism,
2. beware of outdated center–periphery juxtapositions, for Huaraz Metropolitano and the Santa Valley are developing into a polycentric urban area and tourism destination and
3. overcome the valley–upland dichotomy, acknowledging that Huaraz Metropolitano is turning into a postmodern, vertically organized tourist city that integrates the "operational landscape" of Huascarán National Park up to the highest peaks.

If these calls for more environmentally integrated, economically viable and socially inclusive solutions beyond common dualist thoughts were successful, the "nature" of Huaraz could lead to a new "culture" of sustainability in the Andes, from the valley floors up to the glaciated peaks.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, D.B. and A.H.; methodology, D.B. and A.H.; validation, D.B. and A.H.; investigation, D.B. and A.H.; resources, D.B. and A.H.; writing—original draft preparation, D.B. and A.H.; writing—review and editing, D.B. and A.H. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded in whole, or in part, by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) (P 31855-G). For the purpose of open access, the authors have applied a CC BY public copyright licence to any author accepted manuscript version arising from this submission.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

IGP	Instituto Geofísico del Perú
INEI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática
UPT	Urban Population Threshold

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