

PERU SINCE 1990

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- PERU UNDER FIRE: HUMAN RIGHTS SINCE THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY.* By Americas Watch. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. 169. \$25.00 cloth.)
- DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM IN PERU: POLITICAL COALITIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE.* By Maxwell Cameron. (New York: St. Martin's, 1994. Pp. 236. \$39.95 cloth.)
- PERU: A COUNTRY STUDY.* Edited by Rex Hudson. (Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1993. Pp. 422. \$23.00.)
- VIOLENCE IN THE ANDEAN REGION.* Edited by Felipe MacGregor, S.J. (Assen, the Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1993. Pp. 139.)
- THEOLOGIES AND LIBERATION IN PERU: THE ROLE OF IDEAS IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS.* By Milagros Peña. (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1995. Pp. 222. \$39.95 cloth.)
- UNRULY ORDER: VIOLENCE, POWER, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE HIGH PROVINCES OF SOUTHERN PERU.* Edited by Deborah Poole. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1994. Pp. 285. \$52.50 cloth.)
- BETWEEN REFORM AND REVOLUTION: POLITICAL STRUGGLES IN THE PERUVIAN ANDES, 1969–1991.* By Linda J. Seligmann. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995. Pp. 268. \$39.50 cloth, \$15.95 paper.)
- THE PERU READER: HISTORY, CULTURE, POLITICS.* Edited by Orin Starn, Carlos Iván Degregori, and Robin Kirk. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995. Pp. 530. \$55.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.)
- PERU IN CRISIS: DICTATORSHIP OR DEMOCRACY?* Edited by Joseph Tulchin and Gary Bland. (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner and the Woodrow Wilson Center, 1994. Pp. 208. \$11.95 paper.)
- THE MADNESS OF THINGS PERUVIAN: DEMOCRACY UNDER SIEGE.* By Alvaro Vargas Llosa. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1994. Pp. 173. \$32.95 cloth.)

Few countries in Latin America or elsewhere have experienced the political, social, and economic extremes that Peru has undergone since 1980. In that year, Peru returned to civilian rule by electing Fernando Belaúnde, the man who had been overthrown by the military when it began twelve tumultuous years of rule in 1968. The same year, Sendero Lumi-

noso launched its violent insurgent campaign. Five years later, Belaúnde's AP party (Acción Popular) was swept aside as APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana) and Alan García assumed power. But the initial euphoria surrounding the event soon disappeared as the nation's economy disintegrated and Sendero became ever more threatening. By 1990 Peru's gross national product had shrunk by 25 percent in two years, inflation had reached an annual rate of 7,600 percent, poverty had engulfed more than half of the population, the political party system was in shambles, and Sendero Luminoso had become an intimidating omnipresence.

In this context, the 1990 presidential elections produced one of the most unlikely political figures in Peruvian history. Alberto Fujimori, the son of Japanese immigrants and a complete political novice, came out of nowhere to challenge Mario Vargas Llosa, the internationally known writer backed by Peru's elites who was riding the neoliberal wave. Fujimori finished a strong second in the first round of voting and six weeks later won a stunning victory, defeating Vargas Llosa by a proportion of 3 to 2 in the popular vote.

Fujimori has become one of Peru's most puzzling and contradictory chief executives. For instance, after campaigning against Vargas Llosa's shock adjustment platform, Fujimori then implemented one of the most draconian readjustment policies in Latin America: prices rose, subsidies were eliminated, the state was downsized and privatized, and free markets and free trade became a mantra. In another example, after being elected in clean elections and garnering consistently high public-opinion ratings, Fujimori seized power in 1992 in an *autogolpe*. He shut down the Peruvian Congress, closed the Ministerio de Justicia, and instituted one-man rule until he held new elections that convened a congress to rewrite the constitution so as to allow direct presidential reelection.

Meanwhile, Fujimori's economic policies have yielded some major macro-economic successes. Inflation plummeted from 7,600 percent in 1990 to about 10 percent in 1995. The GNP recovered and recorded 12 percent growth in 1995, the highest in Latin America and perhaps the world. Domestic and international investment rebounded, as did capital flows. At the same time, Fujimori won a major battle against terrorism when Abimael Guzmán, the founder and leader of Sendero Luminoso, was captured in Lima in September 1993.

On the political front, Fujimori cultivated good relations with the military from the time that he took office, but he just as carefully saw to it that many state institutions fell into decay, to the point that many observers expressed concern over the widespread deinstitutionalization of the state. This trend was especially notable in the political party system, where the traditionally strong parties of the 1980s—Izquierda Unida, APRA, Acción Popular, and the Partido Popular Cristiano (PPC) had vir-

tually collapsed by the early 1990s. Such a state of affairs was to Fujimori's liking, given his aversive distrust of opposition of any sort.

The ten books under review here all examine some part or aspect of Peru in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Their specific themes vary significantly, yet all are concerned directly or indirectly with violence in Peru and its effects on Peruvian society. The topic of violence is unfortunately enormously apt for Peru, given the situation just sketched. First and foremost, the political violence engendered by Sendero Luminoso (and secondarily by the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru or MRTA), coupled with the response of the Peruvian state, especially the military, exacted a cost of some thirty thousand lives and an estimated fifteen billion dollars in damages in the 1980s. Depending on one's perspective, this political violence was accompanied by or caused by or perhaps caused extreme social and economic violence in the form of deepening poverty, social and political alienation, and desperation. How violence is conceived, described, and treated is a major theme of all the books to be reviewed here.

Yet despite this common theme, the books vary greatly in their purpose, their scholarship, and ultimately the degree to which they are useful or convincing to readers. Some offer a broad introduction to Peru, while others examine a specific aspect of Peruvian life. Some were written by a single author, others are edited volumes. Some are tightly focused, others much less so. Although they cannot all be compared with one another directly, the quality, rigor, and care that have gone into each are certainly comparable.

The easiest place to begin is with the books that are obviously introductory in nature. The plainest example is Rex Hudson's *Peru: A Country Study*, a member of the lengthy series of "area handbooks" that originated with the Department of the Army Handbook Program, going back at least to the 1960s. Contributions to this series have always been sturdy, useful introductions to a particular country, and this volume is no exception. Topics include the country's history (by Peter Klarén), society and its environment (by Paul Doughty), the economy (by John Sheahan), government and politics (by Carol Graham), and national security (by David Scott Palmer). The volume also includes twenty pages of tables (on demographics, economics, election results, and military hardware), almost forty pages of bibliography, a brief but informative glossary of terms, and a detailed index.

As *LARR* readers who are specialists on Peru will recognize, the contributing authors are all distinguished scholars of Peru, and their essays are models of their kind—comprehensive, useful, and to some extent dispassionate—accounts well suited for anyone needing a guide to Peru. None of the chapters pretends to be pathbreaking scholarship, although the extensive bibliographies provided for each offer entries to the literature. Rather, *Peru: A Country Study* comprises about as accessible an intro-

duction to Peru as is available in English today. The fact that the individual country studies in this series are updated every ten years or so means that the book is never totally out of date, and also that anyone with the previous volumes can track changes easily across time.

The Peru Reader: History, Culture, Politics, edited by Orin Starn, Carlos Iván Degregori, and Robin Kirk, is an altogether different sort of book yet still can be seen as an introduction. The editors have chosen a totally different means of "introducing" Peru in providing five hundred pages of readings (many translated into English for the first time) that start with precolonial times and continue through the colonial period, the nineteenth century, the 1930s, and on to Sendero Luminoso, political violence, cocaine, *el Fujishock*, and current cultural trends. An extraordinarily eclectic selection of readings are included: the Huarochiri manuscript and an essay by John Murra, selections from Ricardo Palma and Manuel González Prada, César Vallejo and Carleton Beals, Juan Velasco and Nico-medes Santa Cruz, Alfredo Bryce Echenique and Abimael Guzmán, Mario Vargas Llosa and María Elena Moyano, plus anonymous accounts by Senderistas, soldiers, soup-kitchen workers, gay activists, and itinerant photographers (each provided with a short but essential introductory note by the editors). I know of nothing like it on Peru (or any other country) in Spanish or English.

One potential problem with such an array is that it can offer fascinating and penetrating glimpses of facets of a country and its society, but the forest may be lost in examining separate leaves. A reader who knows nothing about Peru might well come away from this collection stimulated, intrigued, and determined to book passage on the next flight to Lima. Yet this reader would lack the fundamental knowledge of the nuts and bolts of Peru so ably provided in a work like the Hudson volume. At the same time, readers well acquainted with Peru will find gems in the collection unfamiliar to them, and students of Latin American history and culture in general can mine *The Peru Reader* endlessly.

The third book that can be reasonably classified as an introduction to Peru is Joseph Tulchin and Gary Bland's collection, *Peru in Crisis: Dictatorship or Democracy?* The title reveals the book's topicality but not necessarily its quality. Hot-button words such as *crisis* and dichotomous phrases like *either . . . or* imply that the book might be a spur-of-the-moment effort to cash in on headlines generated by the Fujimori administration. In that sense, the title belies the quality of the collection's contents (which originated from a conference at the Wilson Center in June 1993). The book's sections concern the Peruvian political system under Fujimori, the search for social peace, and economic policy and the debate over growth and redistribution. Each set of major contributions is followed by two or three commentaries. The contributors and the commentators are Peruvians or North Americans well known for their expertise on Peru, including among many

Carol Graham, Francisco Sagasti, Manuel d'Ornellas, Enrique Obando, Gustavo Gorriti, Julio Velarde, Efraín González de Olarte, and Carol Wise.

The overall quality of the book is high, not always the case in the edited proceedings of a conference. The major sections obviously required considerable thought and preparation, and the discussions, debates, arguments, and questions from commentators are focused and provocative. For example, the two chapters by González de Olarte and Velarde on Peru's economic performance since 1990 contain much economic data to buttress their analyses as well as conclusions on the Fujimori administration and long-term trends. When John Sheahan and Carol Wise as commentators disagree with or probe these chapters, they do so in a manner that clearly shows that their thoughts were formulated well in advance of the conference. The book assumes some prior knowledge of Peru and in that sense is not an introduction. But it provides enough background (at least indirectly) that the nonexpert can derive much from reading it.

The fourth book that belongs generally in this set of "introductory volumes" is Alvaro Vargas Llosa's *The Madness of Things Peruvian: Democracy under Siege*. It is the least satisfactory of the four. The son of Mario Vargas Llosa, Alvaro was much involved in his father's 1990 run for the presidency and is excusably partisan to some extent. The son provides some insights and anecdotes about his country and his father's campaign that are revealing, but overall his book is mainly a diatribe against Fujimori, the military, the Peruvian state, and anything else that is not free-market and neoliberal economics. Any individual or group or social sector that did not support his father or is less than rabidly anti-Fujimori comes in for harsh criticism. For example, Fujimori's election in 1990 is blamed on "blind and irresponsible voting" (p. 86). Enrique Chirinos Soto is characterized as "one of Peru's most rancid politicians" (p. 65). Alvaro Vargas Llosa ascribes to the Peruvian poor the same entrepreneurial qualities that Hernando de Soto credited them with but then criticizes them for not supporting his father. He even suggests the possibility that the "modus vivendi of the economy of the poor was something preferable to achieving real prosperity" (pp. 109–10), a rather breathtaking statement in its arrogance. He is also fond of positing absolute cause and effect, as in "the more the legislation, the greater the poverty" (p. 108), and of claiming endlessly that the competitive market and a broad democratic political culture are inextricably related. *The Madness of Things Peruvian* is not without usefulness and is certainly provocative, but its stridency, self-assuredness, and tunnel vision become overwhelming and tiresome in the end. Peru's conservatives need and deserve a more moderate and convincing spokesperson.

Two books that examine aspects of Peru over the last twenty years are Maxwell Cameron's *Democracy and Authoritarianism in Peru: Political Coalitions and Social Change* and Milagros Peña's *Theologies and Liberation in*

Peru: The Role of Ideas in Social Movements. Cameron's fundamental goal is to look at both micro and macro causes of the weakening and breakdown of democracy in Peru from 1980 up to the 1992 Fujimori coup. His sophisticated treatment employs several methodological tools, including game theory, class analysis, coalition theory, spatial electoral analysis, and a variety of statistical techniques. But Cameron does not apply these approaches mechanically or randomly. He explains and justifies why certain techniques are applicable for analyzing specific kinds of questions and data sets. For example, Cameron uses class analysis and census and household aggregate data to examine class structures and deteriorating social conditions but then employs coalition theory to analyze how elite actors responded to these conditions and how these elites made certain choices. He argues persuasively for "the centrality of class" (p. 187) in any discussion of Peru during the 1980s and 1990s. But Cameron insists as well on showing how institutional design and especially electoral rules magnified the political weight of Peru's immense floating electorate and led to party fragmentation and a proliferation of independent candidates.

Despite Cameron's determinedly eclectic approach, the book holds together well, although some readers might feel that each chapter has a tendency to stand by itself rather than forming an integral part of a whole. Cameron's intent is not to provide a seamless narrative account of the times, however, and readers searching for such an account should go elsewhere. Anyone who wants a meticulous, sophisticated, and innovative treatment of Peruvian politics and society will find reading (and rereading) Cameron's book rewarding and indeed necessary.

Peña's book might appear from the title to be another in a long line of studies of liberation theology in Latin American countries. But the title *Theologies and Liberation in Peru* means just what it says, with the plural form of *theologies* being essential for understanding the book's intent. Peña's major contribution is to examine the ongoing struggle in the Peruvian Catholic Church between the competing theological schools of liberation on the one hand and reconciliation on the other. Peña offers a detailed thematic and chronological discussion of the emergence of liberation theology in Peru, tracing its origins back to Acción Católica, a movement that preceded liberation theology by some thirty years. She then shows how dependent Marxism, Ivan Alice, Paulo Freire, and CCBs (*comunidades cristianas de base*) influenced the bishops' meetings in Medellín and its famous statements favoring the empowerment of the poor. She also discusses the impact of individual theologians (such as Gustavo Gutiérrez and the brothers Jorge and Carlos Alvarez Calderón) and institutions (like the Unión Nacional Estudiantil Católica and the Instituto Bartolomé de las Casas).

Peña then applies a parallel treatment to the conservative reaction to liberation theology in the form of a liberation of reconciliation, describing the leading roles played by groups such as Opus Dei and Sodalitium Vitae

in developing a coherent and (for many Peruvians) attractive counter to liberation theology with its Marxist undercurrents. She notes as well that the presence of Sendero Luminoso in the 1980s made liberation theology at least suspect in the eyes of many Peruvians. In analyzing the contents of various homilies and public letters from conservative leaders such as Luis Fernando Figari and Bishops Fernando Vargas Ruíz de Somocurcio, Oscar Alzamora Revoredo, and Ricardo Durand Flórez, Peña credits reconciliation's success to the strategy of not merely attacking liberation theology but offering an attractive alternative to it in reconciliation theology.

Theologies and Liberation in Peru is attractive in its accessibility and willingness to explore numerous aspects of extraordinarily complex Peruvian Catholicism. She notes throughout that both liberation and reconciliation theologies contain numerous factions, that sectarianism is present in both, and that the struggle between the two has been essentially non-negotiable. No individual or group or school of thought seems to be in a position to mediate the profound differences between them.

The last four books to be considered here deal specifically with violence in contemporary Peru, each with its particular definition or twist on the theme. It is not surprising that anthropologists dominate the discussion, or that most of the detailed parts center on rural, highland Peru. The absence of any urban focus in these books or in recent work on Peru is notable (two recent exceptions are Stokes 1995 and Parodi 1993).¹

Violence in the Andean Region summarizes a multinational project started in 1991 that embraced Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. This regionally broad study also adopts an all-encompassing definition of violence: "physical, biological, or spiritual pressure exerted directly or indirectly by human beings against human beings that, once a certain threshold is passed, reduces or eliminates their individual or collective potential for fulfillment in their respective society" (p. 135). This definition is operationalized for each country as including the relationships between violence and culture, the state, daily life, drug trafficking, and the media as well as regional and individual national efforts at pacification. Given this extraordinarily ambitious goal, this short volume (of 139 pages) can only limn the results of the entire undertaking. Consequently, anyone searching for the findings about one or more themes in a particular country or about one theme in all countries will necessarily be frustrated. This frustration will be compounded by the total lack of information on how individual studies can be obtained. The scope of this study is thus at once its strength and its major weakness, especially as a summary volume. Each of the chapters is intended to encapsulate the six original studies from each

1. See Susan Stokes, *Cultures in Conflict: Social Movements and the State in Peru* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995); and *Los pobres, la ciudad y la política*, edited by Jorge Parodi (Lima: Centro de Estudios de Democracia y Sociedad, 1993).

country but can barely hint at specific findings or content—or suggest similarities and differences across the six countries involved.

Peru under Fire: Human Rights since the Return to Democracy, the Americas Watch report on Peru, is carefully organized and written but blunt in its conclusions and accusations. The report was published in 1992, before Fujimori's autogolpe and the capture of Abimael Guzmán, when Peru may have been in its most desperate straits. The report provides detailed information on how, during the 1980s and early 1990s, Peruvian society at large and rural or poor members in particular faced extreme violence from insurgent groups (especially Sendero), from the Peruvian military and its police, and from other institutions of the state. The numbing litany of violence in Peru—Sendero's murder of peasants, community leaders, and elected officials; the torture, disappearance, and killing of suspected terrorists and sympathizers by the military; the conditions within Peru's penal system and the massacres in its jails; the abuses of special military and civilian courts—is related in quiet and matter-of-fact prose that renders the accounts all the more chilling.

Peru under Fire pays much attention to the weaknesses inherent in the Peruvian democracy during the 1980s, especially its inability to protect citizens from abuses by its own institutions as well as from insurgent threats and violence. The book also devotes some space to U.S. policies, to the reasons why U.S. and Peruvian perspectives on combating coca production in the Huallaga Valley opposed one another, and to how the United States could not at the time expect to remain aloof from abuses committed by a military that it trains and equips. All in all, the report offers more than ample evidence that Peru's return to democracy in 1980 has been anything but hospitable to human rights. Americas Watch blames all sides and in so doing recognizes the enormous difficulties for respecting human rights in any country where an insurgency that purposely violates them will be confronted by a state whose efficacy is suspect at best and whose legitimacy is worse.

The last two books considered here resemble most closely the standard academic monograph of cultural and social anthropology. Linda Seligmann's *Between Reform and Revolution: Political Struggles in the Peruvian Andes, 1969–1991* is a case study of Huanoco, a district in southern Cuzco. Seligmann argues that the emergence of Sendero Luminoso in the area was due to a combination of factors, most particularly "the unmet promises of the state" and the difficulties that the inhabitants of Huanoco encountered in confronting the agrarian reform laws of the Velasco period with "their moral principles" and "their . . . ethnic and class identities" (p. 21). But this statement is a fairly sweeping and vague claim, especially because Seligmann asserts that these factors "directly and indirectly" contributed to Sendero's "emergence," leaving the reader to wonder just what the boundaries of "indirect emergence" might be.

Yet as the book progresses, Seligmann refines her claim. By the end, the most notable conclusion is that different groups within the district were differentially attracted to Sendero. Teachers as a group were highly militant, as were younger and more educated peasants. But “few [other] peasants . . . [chose] the option of armed struggle” (p. 10).

Seligmann provides convincing descriptions of the heterogeneous and complex nature of Andean life (aided by numerous excellent photographs) and the misunderstandings and struggles that the inhabitants of Huanochaca faced as they were confronted by both the state and the insurgents. Again and again, the state comes across as unable to ensure even minimal internal order or to deliver on its promises of resources. Yet even though the state’s repressive and abusive activities have delegitimized it, Sendero’s “authoritarian and totalizing ideology cannot, and does not want to, account for the differences among peasants, their value systems, their economic positions, and their aspirations” (p. 203). As a result, neither the state nor the insurgents could claim victory, but both continued to fight one another, often by attempting to force the inhabitants to take sides.

Unruly Order: Violence, Power, and Cultural Identity in the High Provinces of Southern Peru, edited by Deborah Poole, features her own contributions as well as those of other anthropologists familiar with the *provincias altas* of southern Peru (specifically Chumbivilcas): Benjamin Orlove, Peter Gose, Daniel Gade, Christiane Paponnet-Cantat, and José Luis Rénique. Geographer Gade offers a detailed description of the setting, while Orlove’s reconstruction of a 1931 massacre of two policemen and several peasants provides some historical background. The rest of the contributions are more contemporaneous. All ponder the presence of violence in the area, whether internal to the region (as in peasant ritual battles) or exogenous (such as the state and Sendero).

This volume is the most theoretically self-conscious of all the books reviewed here. Poole is not alone in dedicating much of her introduction and her concluding essay to theoretical concerns. All the contributors make determined efforts to deal with their empirical discussions and data theoretically. Thus the theoretical links of race, ethnicity, power, domination, and conflict to violence in the Peruvian Andes comprise a consistent thread, whether the violence is associated with historical circumstances, *gamonalismo*, provincial elites, the aftermath of the Velasco agrarian reform, the state, or Sendero Luminoso. Given Poole’s previous work on the subject,² it is no surprise that she pays special attention to Sendero and how it fits into the intricate world of violence that she and her contributors portray. Like Seligmann, Poole argues that the complexity of the Andean world and the places and roles of violence within it doom any at-

2. See Deborah Poole and Gerardo Rénique, *Peru: Time of Fear* (London: Latin American Bureau, 1992).

tempt to impose an exogenous conceptualization of violence, whether by the state or by Sendero Luminoso.

These ten books offer something for everyone, whether novice or veteran when it comes to Peru. All present more than enough evidence to conclude that Peruvian reality in the last years of the twentieth century is endlessly complex for its inhabitants as well as for those who study it. Previously accepted shibboleths, such as those about supposedly clear-cut distinctions between *indio*, *mestizo*, and *blanco*, no longer serve any useful purpose (if they ever did). The multiple, paradoxical, and overlapping meanings that violence now represents in its political, economic, and social roles in Peruvian society, especially among the poor, can no longer be considered as aberrations or the exclusive product of insurgent groups or the state. Violence has played a major part in Peruvian society and doubtless will continue to do so. This conclusion may be the most sobering finding of all, except for its corollary: violence cannot be tamed or overcome or resolved until it is understood. All the volumes considered here make a worthy effort to do just that, but all would doubtless concede that they fall short of the goal.