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En nombre del Gobierno: El Perú y Uchuraccay: un Siglo de Política Campesina

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Del Pino, Ponciano. *En nombre del gobierno: El Perú y Uchuraccay: un siglo de política campesina*. Lima, Universidad Nacional de Juliaca, 2017.

Decades removed from the heights of violence and revolution in Peru, Ponciano del Pino returns to the infamous murders of eight reporters in the Andes. Unlike the normalization of daily bloodshed, village massacres and other atrocities that culminated in the loss of over 69,000 lives, these deaths managed to interrupt the numbness to the destructive war machine driven by the insurgent political party *Partido Comunista del Perú—Sendero Luminoso*, the Communist Party of Peru—Shining Path, and the Peruvian Armed Forces. At home and abroad, many puzzled over the community that had mistaken the eight reporters for insurgents—killing them publicly in self-defense and in support of the nation. Perhaps, the motives that drew Mario Vargas Llosa to oversee the presidential investigation are the same that intersect with del Pino's work so many years later. The village, Uchuraccay, situated at the figurative and geographical heart of the war, offers a unique microcosm of the tensions, motivations and fears that continue to complicate our understanding of such unthinkable actions during a time of social chaos.

Distanced from both real and imagined repercussions of war, del Pino's continued presence in the community challenges the uniform historical representation of Uchuraccay. Diverging from Vargas Llosa's published report "Inquest in the Andes" in the *New York Times*, a historical archive and reinforcement of narratives of subaltern groups, this book addresses the narrow approach to social complexities and Andean epistemologies in a period of war. Through a combination of new and previously silenced voices, the peasant community in Uchuraccay (re)tells a new past in *En nombre del gobierno: El Perú y Uchuraccay: un siglo de política campesina*. What occurred in the Andean village is more than just a point of departure; it is a point of return and reflection. Juxtaposing memory and history, this book revisits the individuals

in Uchuraccay from the original investigation. Outside the context of war, del Pino broadens the significance of what interviewees offer as his work uncovers the use of silence as a tool of power, protection and oblivion.

As the author of the text, del Pino offers a unique expertise for Andean studies, and more specifically, research situated in the Internal Armed Conflict in Peru. The historical production dominated almost exclusively by coastal intellectuals and academic institutions concentrated in Lima, offers a background that cannot overstate the importance of del Pino's command of Quechua enough as rural Andean spaces are largely composed of monolingual populations. Likewise, long-held relationships in Uchuraccay qualify the contents of this book as the author has maintained and established a unique ability to underscore even the most difficult and dark sides of the war-time politics.

Similarly, the lessons from Uchuraccay offer a framework for revisiting the politics of rural peasants throughout various time periods in the twentieth century. The paradox of the Andes captures rural state-making as a process occurring from outside the limits of citizenship and representation—a paradigm that del Pino addresses by asking: where do peasant politics stand in relation to modern politics one century later? Even though each chapter offers comprehensive answers to this concern, certain occasions arise in which these time periods appear disconnected from one another. Agrarian reform, internal war, and Andean ontology exhibited through environmentalism all relay distinct methods of peasant politics; however, each area drastically differs from the next. Despite the singular nature that several chapters take on, *En nombre del gobierno* successfully overcomes the hegemonic concept of a peasantry and Andean space frozen in time. Narrating a century of history in Uchuraccay, while carrying a

unique set of challenges, constructs and historicizes the evolution of peasant politics and state-making in the Andes.

The two dominant themes in *En nombre del gobierno*—forms of silence and the dualism between visibility and invisibility of subaltern subjects—interconnect all five chapters. In the first chapter, “**Silencios, secretos y verdades: El caso Uchuraccay**,” by facing inquiries led by Vargas Llosa, the members of the community recount and recognize intercomunal relations as initiatives behind violence. Amongst several critiques of methodologies and actions of the “Inquest in the Andes,” del Pino underscores the epistemological difference between Western and indigenous worlds—a set of hyper-focused approaches concerned with the individual that fail to account for collective action. Despite political differences and festering grudges, the community would remain united when faced with representatives from the State. At great length, del Pino dialogues Michel Foucault regarding various forms of silence—strategies that recur throughout the following chapters of the text.

Beyond the political or juridical ramifications, del Pino utilizes an ethnographic approach to illustrate the ways in which peasants manipulated stereotypes and race through silence. Highly racialized, the stigmatized image of indigenous peasants was fulfilled when faced by the investigative commission. This chapter argues that both sides successfully confirmed preconceived objectives by projecting an illiterate and isolated community. On the one hand, by reaffirming the hegemonic narrative of *backwards Indians*, the commission absolved the nation from responsibility in this tragedy; and on the other, rural peasants achieved their purpose in occulting the growing presence of the Shining Path in their community and intercommunal conflicts that led to the miscalculated assassinations.

Without leaving the region surrounding Uchuraccay, the second chapter, “**Se perdió el respeto: Reforma Agraria, política y moralidad, 1969-1983,**” covers the social changes stemming from the Agrarian Reform of 1969. The outcomes from expropriating land and dissolving the hacienda system trickled down to affect the moral, political and social aspects of rural life. The following decade illustrates a power vacuum left in villages already lacking strong local governments in the wake of the land reform. Analyzing the concept and communal value of *respect*, del Pino highlights the ways in which social chaos originated from a loss of respect.

Intercommunal conflicts, cattle rustling, unequal repartition of lands and *gamonales* (local strongmen) represented the disintegration of local leadership and authority in the 1970s. Overall, the crisis illustrated in these chapters offers another time period of historical memories, which return to the theme of state-making. Intersections between national and local politics underscore colonialism at the heart of land reform, political violence and the administration of power at all levels of society. Much like underlying motives of peasants in Uchuraccay, the decade following the agrarian reform draws attention to the continuous indigenous struggle to achieve access to avenues of (auto)representation and to gain greater integration into the political system.

The third chapter, “**En busca del gobierno: campesinado, Estado y la ley del hacendado, 1920-1940,**” explores the relation between Andean communities and the central government in the beginning of the twentieth century. Diverging from the production of memory when juxtaposed with history, this section employs a spatial analysis of the breaks and limits of Andean space. Due to the *ley del hacendado*, a legal system amalgamating local leadership with semi-feudal landlords, indigenous peasants began to seek justice outside of rural spaces. Years of dysfunctional and corrupt regional legal systems ultimately resulted in political pilgrimages. The

following visualization and performative nature of being physically present in Lima allowed opportunities for strategic (de)construction of the Peruvian *Other*. Furthermore, the spatial displacement caused through pilgrimages forged new political connections, offered training with sympathetic allies, and more than anything, fostered a growing knowledge of experiences that revealed the secrets and strategies for navigating the national legal system.

If the previous chapter captures the shift of accessing legal representation and citizenship, the fourth chapter, “**La insurgencia de la memoria: Política, ciudadanía y etnicidad en las luchas por la tierra, 1950-1960,**” illustrates the historiographical invisibilization of the origins of one of greatest peasant movements in the twentieth century in Latin America. The first government of Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1963-68) counteracts the geographical borders set by colonialism in what del Pino terms an *inverse pilgrimage*—a political agenda that intentionally departs from urban centers of power towards the countryside. The recognition of rural subjects implies a shift in tactical state-building, as the struggle for land no longer appears as the sole issue at stake. Through the agrarian platform, indigenous groups ultimately consigned questions of citizenship, literacy and political representation through the recognition offered first by president Belaúnde.

The last chapter, “**El avión de Rasuwilka: Territorio, poder y soberanía,**” evaluates social conflicts in regard to the presence and disposition of the government for the indigenous population. Unlike other areas of this book, del Pino explores alternative approaches to understanding land and nature as potential means for better grasping Peruvian power relations. By reallocating authority from government to geographic spaces, such as the Andean mountain Rasuwilka, del Pino subverts modernity’s source of centralized power. As one of the more ambitious parts of the project, Andean epistemologies create an important ontological discussion

that delves into the consequences of the neoliberal market and melting glacier reserves due to global warming. These obvious concerns fall within the greater discussion regarding what modern science classifies as the ecological deterioration of the Andes, capitalism and the Anthropocene; nevertheless, this chapter delves more specifically into the ways in which these methods fail to account for the entirety of Andean realities.

With this overview of the twentieth century, *En nombre del gobierno* traces the recurring strategies of silence and memory employed by Andean peasants. Rereading the past and returning to oral sources through an ethnographic perspective casts new light upon indigenous peasants. Villagers no longer solely occupy the role of victims but rather appear as political actors who participate in the outcome of land reform, internal war, and now, environmental struggles that coincide with the future of indigenous epistemologies. Segments of over one-hundred years of conflict in the Andes provide new meaning to specialists working in the aforementioned fields. From the Peruvian Internal Armed Conflict, to twentieth-century *campesino* politics, and ongoing ethnographic readings of the intersection between Andean epistemologies and environmental discourse, *En nombre del gobierno* offers an engaging and meaningful collection of complicated histories representative of the Andes and of broader issues in Latin America.