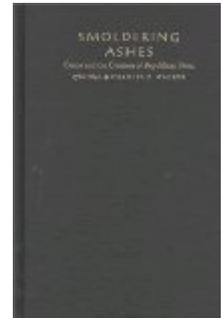




**Charles F. Walker.** *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru, 1780-1840.* Durham: Duke University Press, 1999. xiii + 330 pp. \$89.95, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8223-2261-0.



**Reviewed by** Roger P. Davis

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This well written and challenging study by Charles F. Walker is the latest and possibly the best-to-date of an emerging Latin American historiography constructed upon the foundations of subaltern studies, peasant studies, and imagined nation-states.

Blending impressive archival and secondary research with lyrical analysis, Walker presents three basic theses regarding Peruvian history from 1780 to 1840. First, there were a variety of options to Spanish colonialism besides the republicanism which ultimately won out. Second, that the caudillismo which flourished in the aftermath of independence did not represent the failure of republicanism, but rather a distinct form of representative government with its own form and internal logic. Finally, Walker effectively argues that the Indigenous Andeans were neither passive nor indifferent to the changes in the state from 1780 to 1840, but rather succeeded as active agents negotiating a course they charted.

Walker begins with a substantial Introduction, outlining his thesis and providing an overview of the coming material. The following six

thematic chapters each deserve some particular attention, as does his Conclusion, which suggests an intriguing and controversial outcome.

In "The Tupac Amaru Rebellion: Protonationalism and Inca Revivalism" Walker argues that the rebellion was a true rebellion aimed at overthrowing the colonial state. Through the process of discourse analysis, Walker demonstrates that while the language of the rebellion suggested goals of negotiation and reform, the actions demonstrated a true anti-colonial movement. Rejecting the argument of nostalgia for a lost Hapsburgian pact, Walker concludes that Tupac Amaru and the other leaders created an "invented tradition" of an Inca led utopia which could encompass all native peoples of Peru, Indian and non-Indian. This utopian vision was the first of the post-colonial options that would be available following independence.

In "Smoldering Ashes," it is clear that the dramatic end of the rebellion did not usher in a second conquest of the Indigenous Andeans. Reviewing over 200 court cases, Walker argues that the Indians effectively used the courts and the Haps-

burgian notion of state and society to defend themselves against abuse of authority. He contends however that this strategy neither signified Indian submission to colonial patterns of negotiation nor an endorsement of the colonial system.

In "The Arrival of Saint Patria: The Long War of Independence in Peru," Walker rejects the idea that those who did not fight for a republic or for the crown were apolitical. Focusing on the Pumacahua revolt in and around Cuzco, Walker credits the re-emergence of the Inca utopia as a legitimate option to Spain or republicanism. This option would distance many of the Cuzco population from both Lima and the republican patriots. Cuzco's insurgent groups represented an alternative ultimately too radical to attract support from Peruvian creoles.

The following two chapters, "Cuzco's Black Angel: Agustin Gamarra and the Creation of the Republican State," and "The War of the Words: Urban Political Culture in Postcolonial Cuzco," focus upon the region of Cuzco from 1821 through 1841 and the creation and dynamics of caudillo government. Walker demonstrates that Gamarra, as with all caudillos, built his power through the state rather than around it. The caudillo insured his support through a coalition of local subprefect officials, militia officers, and the regular military. Beyond this base Walker further contends that there existed what he terms a "Gamarrista Ideology" (145). As a native of Cuzco who spoke Quechua, Gamarra bolstered his authoritarian style with a "Cuzco-centric nationalism." (159) which assured those of the region that only the native son could represent their best interests at the national level. Analyzing the influence of the 34 newspapers which appeared in various forms in Cuzco, Walker contends that in the public sphere political news flowed freely and was debated among literate and illiterate alike. In those discussions Gamarra supporters expressed an ideology anchored in regionalism and Inca symbolism. In what Liberal press there was, the insis-

tence on European themes and a rejection of Inca images as too monarchical and colonial insured their failure in Cuzco.

And what of the Indians in the midst of caudillismo in Cuzco? In the chapter "From Colony to Republic and from Indian to Indian: Cuzco Rural Society," Walker concludes that the Indians once again successfully defended themselves against the encroachments of the state. The failure of Liberals in Cuzco removed the threat of any assault on Indian communities from liberal decrees or legislation. The continuation of the Indian head tax cemented Indian ownership of property while at the same time declining as an economic burden, due to the growth of the Indigenous population. The Indigenous Andeans adroitly used republican language and law to maintain leadership in their communities. Finally, in terms of the myriad of civil wars which accompanied caudillismo, Walker asserts they effectively decided not to participate. While Gamarra was able to raise numerous montonero units for his battles, these units often fled the scene. The Indians saw through the promises of the caudillo state, which Walker asserts, never ultimately accepted the Inca utopian vision but rather shared the same disdain of the Indians held by the Liberals and those from Lima.

In his Conclusion, Walker notes that after 1840 the political epicenter moved from Cuzco to Lima. Caudillismo now relied upon the coastal upper middle classes, and the Liberals, abolishing the head tax in 1854, began their assault on Indian communities. Two fundamental weaknesses then marked the legacy of state formation. Regionalism, which maintained the national state always in a fragile balance of coalitions, and more significantly, the failure of the state to incorporate the Indian majority into any of its national designs.

As the preceding chapter synopsis indicates, *SMOLDERING ASHES* is a provocative work that will generate much discussion and further ques-

tions. Walker effectively presents the emergence of Peru from the perspective of Cuzco, but other questions remain and some aspects of the study rest upon a weak foundation.

While the coalition of state officials, militias, and the regular military are central to the caudillo state, these groups are not sufficiently treated given their significance. A discussion of the coalitions of other caudillos would further an appreciation for Gamarra's ability at caudillo statecraft. While Gamarra is a national figure, it is unclear how he fashioned a national coalition or how he functioned in Lima. The study would benefit from the perspectives from other communities, like Arequipa, and a clearer picture of the broader national discussion.

With regard to Gamarra and the Indigenous community it appears that the general effectively builds his base in Cuzco with a teluric appeal and local coalitions that included Indian communities. However, it is also made clear that control of the Indigenous countryside was always precarious and that the Indians saw through the promises of the caudillo state. Gamarra is credited with understanding the appeal of the Inca utopian vision, at least sufficiently to effectively use the symbols of that vision, but Walker ultimately concludes that Gamarra and the Conservatives shared with the Liberals a basic disdain for the Indians. Was the Cuzco-nationalism of the caudillo a unique fleeting chance to incorporate the Indian into society or something indistinct from that which preceded it and that which would follow.

Finally, an intriguing dichotomy emerges around the issue of the incorporation of Indians into Peruvian society. Walker implies that if that incorporation had taken place it would have been, and would still be, a benefit for Peru. The failure appears to be that of the non-Indigenous population. They either can not or refuse to find a way to bring the incorporation about. Yet, at the same time, and in the tradition of peasant studies, Walker presents Indian resistance and survival as

a praiseworthy legacy of these communities. However, the details of the strategies for survival indicate an Indigenous choice to remain the other, to not participate. Walker alludes to this when he observes in his conclusion, "The sociological messiness continued in the republic. Homogeneous, unified Indians did not confront a monolithic non-Indian 'elite.' Not only were (and are) dominant political groups divided about what to do with the Indian population, but the lower classes themselves took advantage of and contributed to the fluid definitions of racial categories in the Andes." (p.229)

Charles Walker has written a masterful work that should find its place among the classics of the new analysis.

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