

Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

PAUL W. DRAKE and ERIC HERSHBERG (Eds.), *State and Society in Conflict: Comparative Perspectives on Andean Crises*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006, x + 314 p., index.

During the last two decades or so, popular alienation from the political systems in the Andean countries has not gone unnoticed. Public skepticism about political and economic policies, whether on the grounds of weak institutional systems, international political commitments or market failures, has created a feeble socio-political environment in this region. In the midst of the growing literature which articulates a concern for the unique character of the Andean region, Paul W. Drake and Eric Hershberg's edited volume gives us insight into the roots of the current crises and a distinctive methodological approach for understanding this region. Unlike most contributions to the study of the Andean region, the breadth of this volume distinguishes it from the case study approach of so much Latin American scholarship. The editors' decision to employ a historical-comparative framework in analyzing the sources of contemporary socio-political upheavals underscores how comparative studies ought to be conducted. Each case study reveals a parallel set of historical and contemporary commonalities that have triggered the current state of socio-political conflict in the Andean countries.

Beginning with a cursory glance at Latin American history in this century, Drake and Hershberg suggest that much of the observed predicament could be explained as a result of economic disturbances. The editors carefully evaluate the different models of economic development and the subsequent peculiar character of the Andean region which has been determined precisely by disruptions in the contract between state and society. Much of the analysis in this volume regarding the internal politics of the Andean countries begins with the economic downturn of the 1980's. The justification is obvious. The emphasis of liberal democracy as the only way to achieve economic development was reinforced after the exhaustion and failure of the hegemonic model of development in Latin America. In the 1980's, academics, elites and common citizens began to embrace the idea of democracy as a model to correct the inefficiencies of authoritarian political models which compromised sustainable economic development. The ideals of liberal democracy espoused by the "Washington consensus" have signified a drastic change in state structures, the market and civil society relations. The advent and consolidation of democracies also signified, at least rhetorically, the opportunity to create spaces for traditionally excluded groups less likely to participate in the decision-

making process. Free and, to some degree, fair elections based on universal suffrage, freedom of expression and association are now continuous and established practices in Latin America. However, more important than functional electoral democracies is democratic pluralism, which has not yet fully evolved. Democracy has, undoubtedly, increased the number of actors engaged in the governance process; however, citizen involvement and their empowerment are still very marginal.

By briefly describing the shared commonalities among the Andean countries, four interconnected dimensions of the current crises emerge: lack of a national project, absence of alternative economic models, unmediated forms of participation, and institutional weaknesses. These dimensions are the central themes which integrate the wide-ranging contents of this volume. Jeremy Adelman's contribution presents an insightful analysis of the republican legacy and the unfinished condition of the Andean states. The political upheaval of the independence movement and its eventual triumph disrupted old patterns and relationships by challenging the dominance of the mother land, but did not alter the social structures of society. The formation of new republics committed to values more in tune with the feudal system not only brought a rigid class system with few possibilities of social mobility but also resulted in fragile states where citizens interact without the rule of law. Having documented political projects addressing issues of state competence and legitimacy (in Venezuela with Punto Fijo, Colombia with the National Front, and Peru with Beulande's projects), Adelman concludes that despite the fact that these political advancements were aiming to address the old issue of statehood, they only resulted in the exhaustion of the political systems and the continuation of peripheral capitalism.

Without overemphasizing the economic elements which provoked some of the most devastating episodes in the history of this region, the chapters by John Sheahan and by Eric Hershberg address issues of economic development and institutional change. Sheahan does a superb job summarizing the pattern of development in the Andean region. This author points out that the lack of opportunities, the high levels of inequality, poverty and social exclusion have resulted in political instability, loss of confidence in the democratic system and crises of governance. This general account paves the way for the chapter by Hershberg. Despite the fact that Hershberg uses Colombia as a single case study for the analysis of second generation reforms, the experiences of the other Andean countries have not been so distant from that of Colombia. Hershberg argues that market-oriented policies may not be in tune with democratic practices which could lead to governability issues in this region. The adoption of the "first generation" policies theoretically attempted to maximize socio-economic welfare for the vast majority of citizens under free-market conditions. In Latin America, the adoption of these policies was part of the response of economic and fiscal crises which hindered the state's capacity to govern. With the introduction of first generation reforms came a turning point in the social contract. First generation reforms brought economic policies which resulted in governments' inability to fully comply with free-market recommendations while not responding to the demands of their own

citizens. The motivation for the second generation reforms, unlike the first generation, was to recreate the state in order to service the newly created market reforms. This new set of policies emphasizes the role of law and institutions in the economic process. Thus second generation reforms were about rearranging the relationship among state, market and strong civil society and its capacity to fulfill new functions.

The most interesting part of this book may be the discussion of the political newcomers in the region. Donna Lee Van Cott and Deborah J. Yashar follow the historical and economic implications of the previous chapters in terms of what the future holds for the political participation of non-traditional groups. In explaining the reasons for the momentum of the marginal groups, Lee Van Cott argues that the institutional changes and declining support of the political parties have contributed to this phenomenon. Despite political limitations, and in the midst of conflicts, many countries in Latin America have managed to initiate decentralization processes. It is from this initiative that local governments started a process of enhancing their authority and pondering mechanisms to make them more efficient and more available for their people. Also, the precariousness of the work of political parties has been largely observed and often lamented. The broad shape of this underside is very familiar throughout Latin America, the problem of legitimate political parties and citizen disengagement is associated with clientelism, poor linkages with society, and weak organizational structures for citizen participation beyond voting. Not surprisingly in the Andean countries, parties have been confronting the loss of people's trust as agents of representation. The public's dissatisfaction has not only led to popular mobilizations across the region, but has also made it possible for ethnic groups and non-traditional actors to gain formal political representation. A supplementary theme here is the emergence of indigenous movements in Ecuador and Bolivia.

Deborah J. Yashar argues that the emergence of these groups was anchored by the desire to create a meaningful concept of citizenship, especially for disempowered groups; by the development of networks which brought an intensification of interaction with other remote groups; and that the current stage of the liberal democratic governance has accommodated the inclusion of a more active civil society in pursuit of their demands. Despite the fact that Yashar does not fully develop the argument that the indigenous movements are not the cause of political instability, this argument is well supported during the last decade by the case of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) with two presidential overthrows, political unrest and national strikes. Some may argue that these disruptive and at times vociferous movements have fractionalized the already weak political stability. The confrontational activities of indigenous movements in the Andean countries have ordinarily been, to some extent, envisioned as a response to problems created by the dominant power of the state. This is not to say that these movements encourage dissonance and political disarray. The significance of this concept was stressed more forcefully by the unrepresented groups within society which encountered a "popular sector" to express their dissatisfaction with the political system in general and incumbent governments in particular.

Despite this, indigenous movements as part of the civil society realm have functioned as a legitimate voice in the democratic process, but its contributions have been continuously scrutinized.

Overall, this volume is admirably up to date in terms of covering most of the current heated topics under scholarly scrutiny. It deals with important characteristics of the region, often neglected when treating Latin America as a whole. The book is divided into ten chapters, each one successfully contributing to the framework clearly laid out by the editors. Of particular interest to scholars researching Latin America is the special treatment of issues which have gained international attention. Readers who are primarily interested in the socio-political dynamics of security in the Andes with an emphasis on Colombia or the democratic project under the tutelage of Chavez will not be disappointed by two chapters which devote all their attention to these issues. However, the strength of the book does not lie in the single case approach but in comparative analysis. The approach makes this edited book an extraordinarily consistent endeavor. It is a solid contribution to the field of Latin American Studies and comparative politics, despite the fact that some important topics have been treated tangentially. Most surprising is the neglect of the role of the military and its influence as a broker of democracy as well as the work of nongovernmental organizations as intermediaries between unorganized populations and the state. Despite these minor limitations, this is probably the best book to date on the Andean crises. It will not disappoint regional specialists, and would also be a great reference for those new to Latin American Studies.

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