

## PEASANTS AND AGRARIAN CHANGE IN THE ANDES

- THE KINGDOM OF THE SUN.* By LUIS MARTÍN. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974. Pp. 287. \$12.50.)
- INDIAN INTEGRATION IN PERU.* By THOMAS M. DAVIES, JR. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974. Pp. 204. \$7.95.)
- REVOLUTION IN PERU: MARIÁTEGUI AND THE MYTH.* By JOHN M. BAINES. (University: University of Alabama Press, 1974. Pp. 206. \$7.50.)
- LAND OR DEATH: THE PEASANT STRUGGLE IN PERU.* By HUGO BLANCO. (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1974. Pp. 192. \$2.45, paper.)
- STRUGGLE IN THE ANDES.* By HOWARD HANDELMAN. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974. Pp. 303. \$10.00.)

As the world plunges headlong into an era of growing food shortages and crop shortfalls, agricultural planners and technicians—from government agronomists to agribusinessmen—stand poised for a renewed effort to transform and modernize archaic agrarian systems around the globe. Already one can perceive new signs, particularly in the private sector, of a rush to introduce new economies of scale and big technology to backward regions, ostensibly to ward off the apocalyptic spectre of the four horsemen ravaging the Third and Fourth Worlds. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that such efforts are fraught with potential problems and may well, in the end, be largely counterproductive. For one thing, economies of scale have often produced massive disruptions in traditional rural life and work patterns, as during the Porfiriato, when the peasantry of Southern Mexico were brutally uprooted from the land and converted into rural and urban proletarians. Their violent reaction to the process was, of course, a well-known component of the Mexican Revolution.

In addition to these human costs, it seems that such scale economies cause considerable societal and environmental harm, often outweighing the seeming benefits of higher production. Natural and human resources are often plundered while peasants are summarily forced off the land into the ghettos and slum belts of industrially poor cities where governments are hard pressed to provide minimal infrastructural services. Fortunately, there seems to be a growing recognition that big technology is not always better and that smaller scale production is not wholly anachronistic in the modern world, either from an economic or social point of view. This seems particularly true when intermediate technology can be intermeshed with small-scale agriculture, the welding as it were, in E. L. Schumacher's words, of the tractor and the hoe.

Although from differing perspectives, each of the books under review here, in one way or another, touches upon the fundamental historical dimensions of the current and indeed endemic agrarian crisis in Latin America. Luis Martín introduces us to that stark world of the Andes in *Kingdom of the Sun*, an elegant

and stylish, if largely traditional, narrative of Peruvian history. Martín will have no truck with the "scientificism" of the new history that he feels has obscured the general reader "in a cloud of academic dust" and jargon. His objective is to reinfuse history with "feeling, imagination and personal insight," laudable goals that unfortunately and too often, in Martín's dashing pen, become mired in clichés, distortions and, at times, downright bias.

Nevertheless, the man obviously has a gift for expression, even if one does not come away from the book with any really deep understanding of the historical discontinuities and societal fragmentations that have been the hallmark of the Andean world since the Spanish "invasion" of the sixteenth century. Martín, like other writers, effectively illustrates the geographical, racial, and philosophical fissures that have so profoundly shaped and related Andean man to his natural environment. Yet he does not show how the fifteenth-century Inca dynastic struggle and ensuing civil war, or the sixteenth-century Spanish invasion and the subsequent establishment of Spanish imperialism in the heart of another empire, all conspired to produce a further fracturing of Andean society by shattering the cultural homogeneity and unity of vision and purpose of the Incaic world. The resulting racial, linguistic, and cultural divisions and agglutinations, born out of the seemingly blind dynamics of black African, Spanish Caucasian, and vanquished Indian cultures, remained a continuing source of disunity and disharmony over the years and, indeed, persist today. Unfortunately, Martín's rendering of Peruvian history fails to highlight this central feature of Andean society. Despite the book's readability, it is unlikely to replace Pike's standard, though seriously flawed, one-volume history of Peru.

Davies's book examines the rural and agrarian question from the decidedly different, and in some ways more successful, perspective of the Indian peasantry. What Davies does best is chronicle Peru's mainly legal attempts since independence to grapple with the major historical legacy of the Conquest-ethnic fragmentation and alienation. Even the racially biased, decidedly European-oriented Creole elites of the Republic were well aware of the political dangers to the new nation of a completely marginalized and alienated Indian peasantry. Consequently, from time to time during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the more progressive elements of that elite attempted to take some steps, however feeble and halting, towards integrating the Indian masses, at least juridically, into the evolving, but still fragile and incomplete body politic. Moreover, someone like Castilla saw the need to alter the Indian's situation, if for no other reason than to facilitate the coastal plutocracy's more efficient harnessing of his services to the capitalist commonwealth that was beginning to transform the countryside. Yet in the end these efforts amounted to very little in concretely improving the real situation of the Indian and probably served only to salvage what little remained of the Creole's moral frame of mind and conscience.

Whether or not we really need to know about all these laws, designed to deal with this problem and the Indian's tortured existence, is problematical. In my view, given the traditional disparity in Hispanic society between theory and praxis, the detailing of such laws down through the years without any analytical framework or goal is, as it were, a good deal of sound and fury in the end

signifying nothing. Davies's effort, I believe, would have been more profitable had he focused more on the actual social and economic fabric of Indian life in relation to his juridical condition.

Outside of González Prada, perhaps, the person who best analyzed and laid bare before the world the Indian's social condition was the great Peruvian essayist and journalist, José Carlos Mariátegui. It was Mariátegui who persuasively argued that the way to release the Indian serf from bondage and thereby integrate him into society was not through law or by education, but rather by shattering the "feudalist" structure of the Andean countryside by means of an agrarian revolution. Writing profusely and with great insight on the subject, during a career that was tragically cut short by illness, Mariátegui, along with other members of that prolific generation of 1919, helped forge a new national consciousness during the years following World War I—one that would, for the first time, focus the spotlight on the nation's agonizing social problem.

Unfortunately, Mariátegui does not fare well at the hands of Baines, whose largely unsympathetic and in some ways unfair study thoroughly pillories the man and his ideas. Baines is no proponent of the idea of revolution, and, wherever he can, he criticizes Mariátegui for the supposed inconsistencies and illogicalities of his ideas. Not that there were no inconsistencies in Mariátegui's thought. He was, after all, not what we would call a systematic philosopher or political thinker, but rather a professional journalist, with all of the intellectual pitfalls that characterize that trade. Baines takes delight in pointing out Mariátegui's "misreadings of history," his supposedly "idealized and romantic pre-conceptions" and the "meanderings" and repetitive nature of his prose. Some of this is certainly true. There was indeed a mystical and spiritual side to Mariátegui's intellectual formation and Baines, to his credit, effectively points this out, although he would like us to believe that this mysticism, in and of itself, constitutes an intellectual flaw. Nevertheless, to carp constantly on the seeming or real contradictions in Mariátegui's style and ideas, written under the pressures of daily deadlines and the heat of everyday politics, serves to reveal more about the author's personal bias than to illuminate the significance of the man and his work.

Both Blanco and Handelman, one wearing the hat of guerilla participant and the other of scholar, focus on the campesino revolt that swept the central and southern sierra in the mid-1960s. For the differing insights and perspectives that they bring to bear on these events, as well as the way the two books complement one another, they should be read in tandem. Blanco, the mestizo son of a Cuzco lawyer who spent his life defending Indian causes, writes as the passionate, totally committed guerrilla revolutionary, at every turn justifying his actions (particularly for his critics on the left) and constantly inquiring, in a self-critical manner, into the reasons for the ultimate failure of the peasant movement.

He begins with a compact, incisive analysis of the social and economic forces stirring the peasantry towards unrest in the Covención and Lares Valleys of Cuzco. The movement took shape among the region's tenant farmers as landlords, adopting more efficient and modern capitalistic methods, moved to alter traditional work patterns and to evict long-time holders from hacienda lands. Then, in a process of diffusion, it spread from the eastern slopes back up into the

highlands, carried by recently organized migrant workers who also held grievances against the lords. The account goes on to detail Blanco's efforts to harness the movement to the Trotskyite organization; the opposition he encountered not only from the State, but also from the Communist party itself; the ideological and tactical differences that characterized the split; and, finally, the circumstances of his own capture and subsequent trial by the authorities. While at times difficult to follow because of the lack of precise dates and the back-and-forth chronological flow of the narrative, the book, together with a long appendix of documents comprising a third of the text, is an absorbing account of the revolt and a historical document of major significance.

Handelman's focus ranges considerably beyond that of Blanco's field of action in Cuzco Department to include both the central (Junín and Pasco) and southern (Puno) sierra. Not unlike Blanco, he too sees capitalism as a new force reaching up into the Andes and triggering broad societal changes. Using a variety of printed and newspaper sources, some of them well known, together with a series of interviews from peasant leaders in some forty-one Indian communities, Handelman has skillfully reconstructed the historical circumstances of the peasant mobilizations. His most original contribution to this enterprise is the revision that he introduces to the now well-travelled theory of modernization. Here Handelman challenges the idea that the forces of modernization produced, in a linear fashion, peasant radicalization and mobilization. Rather he postulates a curvilinear process in which "mobilization and radicalization are least likely to occur in fully traditional and isolated villages. Transitional communities are the most volatile and potentially radical. And highly integrated communities are somewhat less likely to mobilize or to be highly alienated from the [local and/or national] political system" (pp. 191-92).

Thus, Handelman theorizes that the more traditional, backward, and isolated communities in the South, that he believed had reached the transitional stage (or zenith point on the curve), became more radical in their demands for land during the 1960 uprisings. On the other hand, he observed that the more modernized and societally integrated villages in the central sierra were decidedly less militant in demanding redress for their agrarian grievances. Unlike their southern counterparts, that continued to be cut off from and ignored by the central government, these communities were becoming for the first time an integral part of the national political system and consequently capable of exerting effective pressure and influence on the Lima government through regular, "legitimate" political channels. All of this, according to Handelman, explains Belaúnde's policy of acceding to village demands for land in the "mestizo" central highlands while intrinsigently crushing the *comunero* revolts in "la mancha India" in the South.

For this reviewer, Handelman's thesis is a particularly appealing one. Whether it has a broader historical applicability would depend on how it might compare to other peasant rebellions that have erupted in the Andes since the Republic. Once the French historian, J. Piel, has completed his long-awaited study of such rebellions, we will have a good basis for comparison.

Somehow, despite the good intentions of these and other books, Andean

man and his relation to the land and an alien society remain strangely elusive. Perhaps this will always be the case when Western urbanites grapple with the complexities of the agrarian world, while at the same time trying to exploit its resources. Certainly no one has wholly succeeded in stripping away the multifaceted layers of the Andean mask, a mask that has been shaped and molded in a profound way by the demands for survival in the midst of historicocultural discontinuities and even hostility. These works all help to illuminate some small corner of that world which, hopefully, one day will find its Braudelian interpreter.

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