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Incas Sí, Indios No: Notes on Peruvian Creole Nationalism and its Contemporary Crisis*

CECILIA MÉNDEZ G.

Abstract. This commentary article focuses on a crucial moment in the formation of Peruvian Creole nationalism: the 1836–9 Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation. Nationalist sentiments expressed through the anti-confederationist press, satiric poetry and pamphlets, glorified the Inca past while spurning the Indian present. During this period, a nationalist, essentially racist, rhetoric whose roots can be traced to the late eighteenth century, took shape. This rhetoric would provide the foundations of an ideology which has prevailed in Peruvian history. This rhetoric reached its peak in the twentieth century, while evolving into a historiographical discourse instrumental to the exercise of power and which is now in crisis.

‘Si alguien que me escucha se viera retratado, sépase que se hace con ese destino’ (Silvio Rodríguez).

‘Il faut croire pour comprendre’ (Paul Ricoeur).

This article is rooted in the present – the present in which it was written and the present in which it is to be read. It was conceived and written in Peru, between 1991 and 1992, under the very special circumstances of rejoining my country and discovering friends. Many

* The acknowledgements I made to friends and colleagues in the Spanish edition of this article (*Incas Sí, Indios No, Apuntes para el Estudio del Nacionalismo Criollo en el Perú*, Lima, 1993) remain the same. I also appreciate the comments of Brett Troyan, the JLAS readers, and the patience of Renzo Llorente, whose persistence and talent made the final translation as close to the spirit of its original as it could have been. The research conducted for this work was possible thanks to grants provided by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and the Social Science Research Council of New York. This version is dedicated to my friend and colleague Juan Carlos Estenssoro, whose enthusiasm for his own endeavours and unfettered passion for life and history made my own grow at many points, to the extent of giving birth to collective projects that I hope – together with many other friends back in Peru – will one day achieve concreteness.

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ideas, as they are outlined here, could have never come into existence without the latter; none of them outside Peru.

The present text is an updated and revised version of a text that circulated in Spanish as a working document (Lima, 1993) – major changes having been to the first section alone. Nonetheless – insofar as the shift in language allows – its basic structure and ideas remain in their original form. After three years the Peruvian situation might not look as dramatic as it is depicted at the beginning of this article. But if I have chosen not to alter this beginning it is because the diagnosis of the contemporary Peruvian situation proposed in it plays an important role in the structure of the article as a whole. But, above all, I have left – to borrow White’s phrase – ‘the content of the form’ intact because the ideas and historiographical quests that it conveys are still, I believe, pertinent for the current Peruvian situation and historiographical debate.

Preliminary ideas: history as self-recognition

Today’s Peru is steeped in blood. The death of citizens, children and adolescents at the hands of the police has become a routine event. A political party that proclaims itself to be popular murders unarmed settlers and peasants every day. These two factors, which are not the only ones unsettling us, vividly illustrate the reality in which we seem to be immersed: a ‘world turned upside down’. Those who ought to protect us are instead lying in wait, those who claim to represent the people humiliate and murder them. Everything seems to be at risk, even what is most valuable of all: life itself. One’s perception of reality is blurred in moments of such upheaval. For those of us who are drawn to the interpretation and analysis of the world surrounding us, the challenge is intellectual as well as human. The crushing density of reality casts doubt on even the firmest of theoretical convictions, jolting the very foundations of our conceptual apparatus. In the face of such circumstances there are two possibilities: either we seek to transform ourselves and creatively undertake to find in reality itself the nutrients that will replenish our thinking; or we conclude that this situation (country?) is beyond redemption: we succumb to pessimism.

Pessimism is an intellectual stance with a lengthy trajectory in Peru. More than half a century ago the historian Jorge Basadre astutely emphasised its conservative character: ‘from the first days of the republic the most genuine representatives of the colonial aristocratic class assumed an attitude of condemnation and protest. *The first literature of dissillusionment with things Peruvian was produced by reactionary figures*’ (my emphasis).¹ This

¹ J. Basadre, *Perú: Problema y Posibilidad* (Lima, 1979), p. 156. This, and subsequent translations from Spanish sources, are by Renzo Llorente.

verdict gains in authority since no one could label Basadre an extremist. What the author did not go on to say, however, was that the pessimism of the nineteenth-century aristocrats had less to do with their own class than with the rest of the country, made up of a people whom they regarded as well beneath them, uncouth and irredeemable. In our century pessimism was to be 'democratised' – without forfeiting its aristocratic heritage – as the upper classes were incorporated into the spectrum of disillusionment. From the days of José de la Riva Agüero onward intellectuals would denounce the dominant classes for their ineptitude and apathy. 'The greatest misfortune of Peru', according to Riva Agüero, was the absence of a 'true' ruling class.² Riva Agüero's legacy was again taken up, oddly enough, by the Marxist-dependency theorists of the 1970s in their condemnation of the '*comprador* bourgeoisie', who were allegedly unenterprising and anti-nationalist.

The fact is that pessimism tends, in its various manifestations, to entail a rejection of and disdain towards one's own features, and the country generally (because unredeemable), and hence takes refuge in an admiration for 'the other', 'the foreign', that which is supposed to have become what we cannot (could not?) be.³

Given the drama which we are living, pessimism is an understandable attitude in Peru. However, I prefer to opt for an alternative attitude,

² 'Our greatest misfortune was that our uppermost stratum never properly established itself. Who were the ones, indeed, who readied themselves to govern the newly born republic? Poor colonial aristocracy, poor silly Lima nobility, incapable of any idea or effort!' J. de la Riva Agüero, *Paisajes Peruanos* (Lima, 1969), p. 159.

³ The pretext for the famous question among Peruvian intellectuals '*¿cuándo se jodió el Perú?*' ('When did Peru get screwed?') – taken from a novel by Vargas Llosa – expresses well the pessimistic convictions to which I am referring. Whoever starts from this question in interpreting Peruvian reality obviously presupposes 'a screwed-up country' (for a literal example of this approach see Milla Batres (ed.), *¿En qué momento se jodió el Perú?* (Lima, 1990)). The criticism of Peruvian intellectual pessimism first issued from among the intellectuals themselves, for example as one of the concerns of Flores Galindo ('Independencia y Clases Sociales', in Alberto Flores Galindo (ed.), *Independencia y Revolución, 1780–1840*, vol. I (Lima, 1987), pp. 121–3). In this particular text Flores Galindo refers critically to these tendencies, in what we might regard as a self-critical fashion – bearing in mind that in his *Aristocracia y Plebe*, which he had just written, he had himself embraced Riva Agüero's scepticism towards the elite and the notion of 'un país sin salida' ('a country with no way out'). Nonetheless, the most devastating critical essay regarding defeatist visions in Peruvian historiography is to be found in Magdalena Chocano, 'Ucronía y Frustración en la Conciencia Histórica Peruana', *Márgenes* vol. 1, no. 2 (1987). Although I disagree with Chocano's treatment of Basadre (whose essayistic works she disregards), I know of no other historiographical essay whose innovation is of a comparable calibre. In a similar vein see Guillermo Rochabrún, 'Ser Historiador en el Perú', *Márgenes*, vol. 4, no. 7 (1991); see especially pp. 131–6. To appreciate more fully the theme of Peruvian intellectuals and their fixation with 'the elite' a useful source is J. Meisel, *The Myth of the Ruling Class: Gaetano Mosca and the Elite* (Ann Arbor, 1962).

which is not pessimistic. This is not only because it is less reactionary (in the Basadrian sense) to do so, but also because it is more necessary, and perhaps more creative as well.

The alternative possibility is that in the midst of the chaos, death and unredeemed appearance of our country, something new and rather positive has been emerging in recent years. Some have spoken of a 'cholification' of the country; others (with a hint of the old creole fears) of a '*desborde popular*' (a 'popular eruption'), while still others prefer allusions to the 'Andeanisation' of the cities. The fact is that we find ourselves faced with an unstoppable process of cultural fusion and integration – in which communications and migration play a predominant role – that would seem to signal the birth of a new nation. So serious an assertion would require an entire treatise to be satisfactorily defended. But that undertaking must await another occasion. For now, the very contemporaneity of the facts precludes more precise formulations, nor could it be otherwise in the present essay. Nevertheless, there are some indisputably clear facts which may serve us as clues.

One way of determining the new is by defining the realm of the old, of that which is in crisis. And what has for some time been in a state of terminal crisis in Peru is the oligarchical normative system. It is a crisis that became self-evident in Velasco's era, and which today is acquiring even sharper contours. The schemes of social classification applicable to oligarchical Peru no longer make sense. Naturally, this has to do with the extinction of the social protagonists of that oligarchical Peru (the landowners, the oligarchy as a governing class), but above all with the reconfiguration of the place assigned to those who were always supposed to remain below: the 'Indians'.⁴ For the Andean populations, too, have for some time simply refused, in an overwhelming and majoritarian fashion, to continue occupying the subordinate position to which the oligarchical order had relegated them. I wish to underscore the majoritarian character of this process, since of course there were always Indians who would not resign themselves to being simply 'the colonised'. Yet the very particularity of the changes taking place in Peru is due to their massive character. However one might characterise the new society now emerging, one must acknowledge that it is less hierarchical, less stratified and discriminatory than that of the Aristocratic Republic. Consider a significant example. The granting of the vote to illiterates barely a decade and a half ago may seem shocking for its belatedness, considering that Peru has been an independent republic for nearly two

⁴ In connection with the criteria of social classification for the oligarchical order see G. Nugent, 'El Laberinto de la Choleidad', manusc. (Lima, 1990), p. 42. [Published: Lima, 1992.]

centuries. But this delay is also very revealing in the context considered here. The illiterate peasant masses, who had always comprised a majority in the country, have only within the last 15 years won their right to participate formally in national political decisions.

This disturbance of the 'old order' also involves the collapse of old myths. One of the most enduring in Peruvian history is the creole myth of the Indian. The decline of this myth is concomitant with that of an ideology which we shall refer to as 'creole nationalism', and which prevailed as an ideology of power, with some variations, at least as late as the government of Velasco (1968–75). The following pages constitute an analysis of the early republican formulations of this creole ideology, which is now in disarray. It is not a detailed analysis of creole nationalism; that would require combing an impressive multitude of sources, beginning with the intellectual production of the last third of the eighteenth-century, where I believe the origins of this ideology must be sought out. Instead, this essay aspires merely to identify some of its salient features, which were already remarkably evident in a phase of Peruvian history that has received rather scant attention from recent historians: the beginnings of the republic. Specifically, it will analyse the elements of this ideology as they take shape in the political debates surrounding the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation (1836–9), and which tend toward a consolidation following its demise. It thereby aims to draw attention to this period's importance for any study of ideologies and prejudices in Peru.

It has been a commonplace in the Marxist-dependency theory historiography of the 1970s to underestimate the analytical value of the initial stage of republican history. This has been viewed as an incomprehensible, chaotic era; a succession of irrational confrontations between *caudillos* greedy for power: the 'dark age' of the Republic. For the Marxist-dependency theory writers nothing seemed to be worth analysing apart from the 'great economic changes' – which incidentally did not occur in this stage; hence most of the studies focused on the boom phase in guano exploitation and the subsequent period. The emphasis which the dependency school placed on the 'colonial continuities' shaping the young Latin American republics meshed well with the Marxists' economism (at bottom equally structuralist), and had perhaps its greatest repercussion in the overall indifference to this supposed 'age of shadows'. What nevertheless went unnoticed by these theories of the 'big truths' (i.e. economic truths) was precisely the impact of the changes that did in fact occur: the political changes and their potential implications for the study of ideologies. For example, it was as much a Marxist conviction as a dependency-theory tendency to posit the absence of nationalism among both the creole groups who participated in the independence process and

the so reviled *caudillos* (let alone the common people or peasants!). The upshot of such reasoning was a historiographical void: if there were no nationalisms, what ideologies could one speak of?⁵

The second obstacle to understanding the period arises from officialist historiography, precisely the variety which best embodies creole nationalism. The Confederation has been a taboo topic in official histories because it was taken to be an 'invasion' instead of what it really was: an alternative political project for Peru. This historiography sided with Salaverry (the tenacious opponent of Santa Cruz) who represented the aristocratic creole sectors of Lima terrified by a probable 'invasion by Bolivia'. This historiography neglected the fact that it was the Peruvian government itself, led by Orbegoso, which summoned Santa Cruz, and that distinguished liberals as well as broad sectors in southern departments supported the Confederation project. That is to say, this historiography failed to take into consideration the fact that for an important sector of Peruvians the Confederation was an alternative, not an invasion. The old creole disdain for everything provincial and the conviction that creole culture (i.e. the *limeño* in its nineteenth-century sense) epitomised Peru could not be better represented than in such an interpretation of this period of Peruvian history.⁶

I have referred to ideologies in crisis. The reference was to a crisis and

⁵ Among the Marxist-dependency interpretations causing the greatest impact in Peru had been H. Bonilla, *Gnaro Burguesía en el Perú* (Lima, 1974); J. Cotler, *Clases, Estado y Nación en el Perú* (Lima, 1978); and E. Yepes, *Perú: Un Siglo de Desarrollo Capitalista* (Lima, 1971). Regarding independence, see the essay by H. Bonilla and K. Spalding, 'La Independencia en el Perú: las Palabras y los Hechos', in Heraclio Bonilla (ed.), *La Independencia en el Perú* (Lima, 1972). An alternative interpretation to dependency theory for the first phase of the Republic can be found in the solid study by Paul Gootenberg, *Between Silver and Guano: Commercial Policy and the State in Post-Independence Perú* (Princeton, 1989), and his more concise *Tejidos y Harinas, Corazones y Mentes: el imperialismo de libre comercio en el Perú* (Lima, 1989). Both works transform the dependency image of Peru's 'dominant classes' in the early republic. For a critical approach to Marxism-dependency theory starting from the rural milieu, see Mark Thurner, '“Republicanos” and “La Comunidad de Peruanos”': Unimagined Political Communities in Postcolonial Andean Peru', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 27 (1995), pp. 291–318, and C. Méndez, 'Los Campesinos, la Independencia y la Iniciación de la República: el caso de los iquichanos realistas, Ayacucho 1825–1845', in Henrique Urbano (ed.), *Poder y Violencia en los Andes* (Cuzco, 1991), pp. 165–88.

⁶ Historians of the stature of Riva Agüero, Nemesio Vargas and Vargas Ugarte have shown themselves to be benevolent, when not openly sympathetic to Santa Cruz and the Confederation, in their respective works of broad historical synthesis. Basadre appears more balanced, or variable, depending on which of his texts is cited. Nevertheless, neither the scholastic texts of recent decades nor the national museum ordinarily include these perspectives in their reconstruction of the period, and they tend to reproduce the chauvinistic tones characteristic of Santa Cruz's contemporary detractors, finding inspiration, perhaps, in the nineteenth-century works of Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán or in the pro-Salaverrista tradition inaugurated by Felipe Pardo.

not to an extinction, for it is indeed true that ‘nothing every wholly dies’⁷ – still less in the matter of perceptions and ideologies. While it is plain that certain formulations of creole nationalism sound increasingly anachronistic in political discourses, I suspect that some of the prejudices inherent in it remain covertly operative in our daily opinions and in the assessment we make of the world about us. Accordingly, if what I say in these pages about Santa Cruz, Felipe Pardo, and the Confederation provokes some reflection on existing subjectivities, that is precisely the intention. For I should like the reader to approach the following pages not only as an exercise in knowledge, but also in self-knowledge, that is, self-recognition.

For a long time historians, starting from hypothetical and retrospective ‘should have beens’, have insisted on underscoring what we ‘are not’, ‘were not’ or ‘did not have’. Perhaps it is time to begin writing history in positive terms, a history of the things that did occur. It is quite probable that not everything thus discovered will be to our liking. Yet it is good to admit as much without undue alarm. For ‘doing history’ is also a way of coming to a recognition of ourselves, an attempt at self-definition. And if it is true that self-understanding, as a familiar discipline holds, is the first step towards a cure, then to ‘do history’ in Peru in these days of turmoil is nothing less than an urgent necessity.

At the same time, however, in conceiving history as admission and self-recognition we should contrast it with yet another way of doing history: one which tends to an idealisation of the past, and which has in recent years come to supplant the history of negations (more typical of the 1970s), while still containing some of its ingredients. For if the past, in this case the most remote past, is idealised or exalted, it is precisely in compensation for that which is perceived to be lacking in the present. Hence, while pessimistic historians regard Peru as a kind of inventory of historic frustrations, a hopeless chain of ‘missed opportunities’, where there remains little choice but to turn away; the utopians, finding the present equally discredited, search the past for the source of a compensation for today’s malaise, and more creatively, if not always with equal success, lay out in this idealised vein the elements for constructing a national identity which is supposedly wanting today. In this process the term *andino* is so widely exploited that one finds no two people who can reach an agreement as to its actual meaning. But whatever the meaning attached to *lo andino* and whatever may be proposed as the essence of that ‘utopia’, it invariably stands in opposition to the present. Precisely because the ‘Andean utopia’ is meant to be a reading of the past in terms

⁷ C. Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down. Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London, 1988), p. 379.

of the future, it overlooks the constructive elements that might be germinating in the present.⁸

Some additional clarification, conceptual as well as personal, may be in order here. The historian who most lucidly and insightfully proposed history as a utopian discourse in Peru was, in his last book, the celebrated Alberto Flores Galindo.⁹ No-one could call into question either the legitimacy of his preoccupation with Peru's problems or his enormous contribution to our intellectual life and to historiography. One might argue, to be sure, that his idealised conception of the Inca past and the preachers of its revival succeeded in doing justice to the relevant nuances. I wish to clarify, however, that I am not criticising a historian (whom I respect profoundly and to whom I am greatly indebted) so much as a way of doing history – a form of doing history that considers the historian responsible for preserving, articulating and delimiting the range of 'national identity' – for it entails an obvious risk of subordinating history to politics. I do not mean politics in the broadest sense, since no historiography, needless to say not even these pages, can – or should – avoid this risk. Rather, I mean politics conceived as a movement 'from the intellectual to the people', in which history is more an instrument than knowledge, a tool for a change vaguely desired by intellectuals, and in accordance with which heroes, myths and golden ages are invented, recreated or glorified. It is clear that such a model is not peculiar to the Andean utopia (or to what it could have become had death not deprived us of the incomparable Flores Galindo). The model transcends political orientations; it is the same as is adopted by official histories, in that they too are interested in delimiting the scope of national identity, though in their case it is not for the purpose of change, but to preserve the status quo. And precisely therein lies the danger of a historiographical defence of myth.¹⁰

The episodes discussed in the following pages are not glorious; they are not worthy of imitation or repetition. No Peruvian could take pride in the

⁸ I have developed these points in greater detail in 'Entre el mito y el objeto perdido: ¿Dónde está "lo andino"?', *Razón Diferente*, no. 5 (1992), pp. 13–14, and 'República sin indios: La comunidad imaginada del Perú', in Enrique Urbano (ed.), *Tradición y Modernidad en los Andes* (Cuzco, 1992), esp. pp. 15–17 and 41.

⁹ A. Flores Galindo, *Buscando un Inca, Identidad y Utopía en los Andes* (Lima, 1987).

¹⁰ Myth is the ideal system for the reproduction of an ideology, whatever it may be, and whatever the viewpoint from which the ideology would like to impose itself. The notion of a 'mobilising myth' which Mariátegui took from Sorel and in which Flores Galindo in turn found inspiration must, it seems to me, be reconsidered in post-*Sendero* Peru: a country far removed from that Aristocratic Republic in which Mariátegui and other avant-garde intellectuals of his time lived and wrote. Peru's recent experience has demonstrated that little separates a 'mobilising myth' from fundamentalism and an incitement to wholesale destruction.

exaltation of racism accompanying and contributing to the defeat of the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation, let alone in the fact that this racism was part and parcel of a form of nationalism that has long prevailed in Peru. In explaining these facts, however, I am not thinking only of the past or solely of an elite, just as the reader surely is not either. And this is precisely the point of self-recognition. To acknowledge and admit the good is easy; to idealise it, easier still. The difficult thing is to admit what we regard as negative; or, more precisely, to admit that the negative qualities which we criticise may belong not only to a distant elite or barbarous past, but to ourselves as well. Without question, history so understood requires a dose of self-reflection and openness to psychoanalytical insight. But rather than applying psychoanalysis to the past (and its figures) – an ever-seductive temptation and one much in vogue today – it is a matter of applying it to our own relation to the past. Reconstructing the past in this manner could be a means for liberating ourselves from everything in it that might offend, hurt or adversely affect us, whether as individuals or as a collectivity. A capacity for admission rather than denial, confrontation rather than evasion or regret. History as self-recognition thus implies a conscience at odds with defeatism, which is but one form of submission to the past. But it also invites us to transcend myth.¹¹

Marshall Santa Cruz and the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation: an Indian conquistador against the land of the Incas?

The Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation was a project rooted in pre-Hispanic and colonial history. Peru and Bolivia have a long history of commercial ties and are still linked by ethnic and cultural affinities even today. Santa Cruz's project envisioned the creation of a confederate state on the basis of an internal market integrating the historically united territories of Peru and Bolivia. The project aimed at restructuring the old trading circuits that had joined both regions during the Colonial period, while promoting a policy of free-trade with the North Atlantic and the United States. This plan, which was quite well received in the departments of southern Peru, proved much less attractive to the commercial elites in Lima and on Peru's northern coast, whose economic interests were closely linked to trade with Chile, via the Pacific.¹² And it was precisely this alliance between Chile and the commercial elites of Lima and northern Peru which ultimately prevailed in 1839 and defeated the Confederation.

¹¹ Over half a century ago (1938) Benedetto Croce wrote a beautiful book devoted to reflection on the liberating role of historical knowledge. 'Historiography liberates us from history', he wrote. We might add: and from myth as well. B. Croce, *La Historia Como Hazaña de la Libertad* (Mexico, 1971), p. 35.

¹² On the trade war see P. Gootenberg, *Between Silver and Guano* and *Tejidos y Harinas*.

The conflict, however, went far beyond that trade war so well depicted by the historian Gootenberg. It was also an ideological war waged in lampoons and newspapers which struggled to outdo one another in the virulence of their invective. The most aggressive tirades came from the opponents of the Confederation, and their most eminent architect was Lima's satirical poet Felipe Pardo y Aliaga.

During its brief existence (1836–9) the Confederation elicited from the Lima opposition what may well have been the most explicit expression of racist sentiments since the Republic's founding. It was a crucial moment in the elaboration of conceptions regarding what the Peruvian national identity was, and what it was not. The most outstanding feature of the anti-Santacruzista political discourse was precisely the definition of Peruvian national identity on the basis of an exclusion of, and contempt towards, the Indian, symbolically represented by Santa Cruz.

It is interesting to note some of the epithets used to attack Santa Cruz. First of all, he was reproached for being a foreigner ('*extranjero*'). Yet it is telling that this allusion seemed more forceful when it hinted at his ethnic identity (the 'Indian') than when it referred to his nationality. The regularity with which the enemies who branded him a foreigner availed themselves of his indigenous physiognomy to attack him reveals the real connotation of the term 'foreigner'. Santa Cruz was more a foreigner for being an Indian than for being Bolivian. The idea of Peruvian nationality, which appeared thinly veiled in Pardo's satires, implied a fundamental rejection of the indigenous element. Indeed, this rejection was a requirement of nationality. It hardly mattered to his opponents who called him a 'foreigner' that Santa Cruz's father was a Peruvian creole born in Huamanga and educated in Cuzco, or that Santa Cruz himself had fought for Peru's independence side by side with San Martín.¹³ The stigma derived from his mother, an Aymara Indian with the surname Calaumana, *cacica* of Huarina, with whom Pardo's racist pen also busied itself.

A second significant reproach was that of '*conquistador*' or 'invader'. Once again, however, these terms only acquired the intended disdainful connotation when followed by adjectives alluding to the indigenous origins of the *caudillo*. References to 'Alexander Huanaco', and to 'the conquistador's snout', both expressions of Pardo's literary inventiveness,¹⁴ confirm the point. The crime was not that of being a conqueror,

¹³ For a biography of Santa Cruz, see A. Crespo, *Santa Cruz, el Cóndor Indio* (Mexico City, 1944).

¹⁴ The allusions to 'Alexander Huanaco' appear in the rondeau 'La Cacica Calaumana', published in the newspaper *El Coco de Santa Cruz* (Lima, 25 Sep. 1835), later reprinted in the Salaverrista *Para Muchachos*. The octaves 'La Jeta del Conquistador' have been published in L. Monguió, *Poesías de Don Felipe Pardo y Aliaga* (Los Angeles, 1973). The newspapers cited are found in the Oficina de Investigaciones Bibliográficas of the

but that an 'Indian' had dared to be one. The accusation from the indignant revilers of the Bolivian *caudillo* spared all nuance:

Que la Europa un Napoleón
Pretendiese dominar
Fundando su pretensión
En su gloria militar
¿Qué tiene de singular?
Mas, que el Perú lo intente
un indígena ordinario
Advenedizo, indecente,
Cobarde, vil, sanguinario,
eso sí es extraordinario¹⁵

El Conquistador Ridículo, the title of one of the newspapers critical of Santa Cruz, and the analogies with William of Normandy – the 'barbarian' – are likewise significant.¹⁶ Whoever does not conform to the mode of conduct expected of him or departs from his supposed station may well make himself ridiculous. If Santa Cruz appeared ridiculous to Pardo and other opponents, it was precisely because, though being an 'Indian' (inferior or barbarian), he dared to flaunt his knowledge of French and to display medals received from the French government (the civilised or superior).¹⁷ Wrote Pardo:

De poder y metálico
vive tras este sólido
y de placer idílico,
ansioso un indio estólido,
que aspira a prócer gálico¹⁸

What troubled Pardo and the creole sector whom he represented is that an Indian (the dominated) was acting as a conqueror (the dominator): the

Biblioteca Nacional de Lima, with the exception of *El Comercio*, which has been consulted in the Instituto Riva Agüero, also in Lima.

¹⁵ *La Libertad Restaurada* (Cuzco, 7 July 1841; reprinted from *El Comercio*, no. 609). The composition corresponds to a phase subsequent to the Confederation's defeat, when an incursion by Santa Cruz from the north was discovered, and we cannot be certain that it belongs to Pardo. However, the verses' meaning is faithful to the idea exemplified by the Lima satirist's rondeaux produced during the era with which we are concerned.

¹⁶ See, for example, *La Bandera Bicolor* (Arequipa, 30 Mar. 1839), a Gamarrista newspaper which opposed the Confederation. Ramón Castilla likewise cried out against the 'new ridiculous Macedonian'. See the pamphlet *El General de Brigada Ramón Castilla a sus conciudadanos* (Quillota, 10 Oct. 1836).

¹⁷ In November, 1836 Santa Cruz received the insignia of Great Officer of the French Legion of Honour from a representative of the French government in Peru. Pardo made fun of the ostentation with which Santa Cruz supposedly displayed this decoration, insisting that it was one of little rank. Monguió, *Poesías*, p. 402.

¹⁸ Cited in A. Tamayo Vargas, *Literatura Peruana* (Lima, n.d.), p. 533.

inverted image of the conquest. Between his satires, and even prior to the Confederation's victory, Pardo's rondeaux were clamouring for the 'Indian' to return to 'his' station:

Farsante de Belcebú
 No ves que a tu madre aquejas
 ¿Por qué hombre, el Bolivia dejas?
 ¿Por qué buscas la Pirú?
 Mira la pobre señora
 Tanta derrota y carrera
 que el pimpollo que adora
 forman la gloria guerrera
 Esto su suerte le avisa
 más por vida del dios Baco!
 ¿tal ambición no da risa?
 Que este Alejandro Huanaco
 extiende hasta el Juanambú
 sus aspiraciones viejas!
 ¿Por qué hombre, el Bolivia dejas?
 ¿Por qué buscas la Pirú?
 La india dice: 'Huahuachay
 el balas vos no te gustas
 don Salaverry ay! ay! ay!
 pronto el clavijas te ajustas.
 La cosa no está sencillo
 vos tu suerte no conozco:
 ¿piensas bañar la Chorrillo
 porque ya entraste la Cozco?
 Vuelve a tu madre quietú.
 Andrescha, a ruina te alejas.
 ¿Por qué hombre el Bolivia dejas?
 ¿Por qué buscas la Pirú?'¹⁹

Nothing could have been more insulting for a creole like Pardo than to find himself subordinated to an Indian:

Santa Cruz propicio
 trae cadena aciaga
 El bravo Peruano
 humille la frente;
 que triunfe insolente
 el gran Ciudadano.
 Nuestro cuello oprima
 feroz el verdugo.
 Cuzco besa el yugo
 Humíllate Lima.
 Así nos conviene.

¹⁹ The version cited is as it appeared in *Para Muchachos* no. 1 (10 Oct. 1835). In later versions the word 'buscas' appears as 'boscas'.

Torron, ton, ton, ton!
Que viene, que viene
el cholo jetón!²⁰

The anti-Santacruzista discourse originating in Lima, so well exemplified in Felipe Pardo's journalism and literary output, was essentially racist. It reflected creole stereotypes, prejudices and fears about the Indian, rather than a real threat of a Bolivian conquest of Peru. Santa Cruz initiated his military campaign after a call from President Orbegoso and in agreement with the National Convention. The idea of the Confederation had been embraced beforehand by distinguished Peruvian liberals like Luna Pizarro and other *caudillos* from the independence struggles, such as Marshall Riva Agüero.²¹ They harboured a hope that the Confederation would put an end to the wave of anarchy convulsing Peru at this time. Moreover, Santa Cruz enjoyed the support of important sectors in Puno, Cuzco and Arequipa. These facts lay bare the highly ideological character of the accusations of invasion or conquest.

A third aspect also merits some attention. The anti-Santacruzista discourse, clearly scornful of everything indigenous, nevertheless sought to legitimate its self-defined nationalism (which found no contradiction in the alliance with Chile) through allusions to the memory of the Incas. Hence such verses as those of Pardo in his 'Oda al Aniversario de la Independencia del Perú' from 1828:

¡Oh sol, oh padre de la patria mía!
Cuanta hoy el alma siente
inefable alegría
al verte abandonando
el encendido alcazar de oriente
y tu luz en la esfera derramando!
...
Junín tus campos fueron
de su valor [los Peruanos] testigos;
en cadáveres vieron
tornarse inmensa plaga de enemigos
y pagar a la prole soberana
del sabio Manco-Cápac
el tributo primero en sangre hispana²²

Several years later (1835) the very same Pardo would cry out furiously from the pages of *El Coco de Santa Cruz*: 'He [Santa Cruz] had profaned the sacred land of the Incas.' Echoing Pardo, the *caudillo* Salaverry added: 'Away with the vandals whom Orbegoso has brought into the bosom of the *patria*, and to purge that plague from the soil of the Incas, let him

²⁰ 'Letrilla' in *Para Muchachos* (10 Oct. 1835).

²¹ See J. Basadre, *Historia de la República del Perú*, vol. II (Lima, 1983), pp. 2-3 and 17-35.

²² Monguió, *Poesías*, p. 306.

receive the decree of his future fortune from a general Assembly. I will be the first to attack him.'²³ Similar remarks were repeated *ad nauseam*.²⁴ The Indian is accepted, therefore, insofar as he represents a scenic milieu and distant glory. He is 'wise' if abstract and long-departed, like Manco Cápac. He is a brutish or 'stupid' (*estólido*) and 'impure' and 'vandal-like' if present, like Santa Cruz.²⁵ The memory of the Incas is invoked in order to spurn and segregate the Indian. The roots of the most conservative indigenist creole rhetoric, whose echoes are perceptible in our own time, must be sought here.

Pardo was by no means an isolated figure. His rondeaux were to achieve such popularity among the opponents of the La Paz *candillo* that some were even set to music and sung in theatres, public squares and 'commoners' dance festivals' (*jaranas arrabaleras*).²⁶ Thus, to a not inconsiderable degree, they contributed to moulding public opinion against Santa Cruz prior to his entry in Lima. But Pardo's ideological enterprise, so well represented in his literary and journalistic production, was complemented by political work. An out-and-out conservative, Pardo had severely censured the liberals assembled around President Orbegoso when the latter assumed power in 1833. And when Salaverry, a *candillo* from Lima and a tenacious opponent of Santa Cruz, obtained the presidency through a *coup d'état* (1835), he would find his prime intellectual ally in Pardo. Salaverry appointed him as a minister, charging him with diplomatic assignments in Spain, Bolivia and Chile. From the latter country Pardo would work incessantly to thwart each of Santa Cruz's projects. Later, after Salaverry's death, Pardo would continue his campaign against Santa Cruz at the side of president Gamarra (with whom, however, his relationship was somewhat strained).²⁷ Gamarra was, just like Salaverry, an openly authoritarian president, and was backed by

²³ *El Coco de Santa Cruz*, 25 Sep. 1835.

²⁴ See for example *El Limeño*, no. 5 (29 May 1834), an anti-liberal and anti-Santacrucista newspaper. Later, a similarly oriented and avowedly Gamarrista newspaper in Cuzco would praise those who had fought 'to contain and punish the invading imbecile who dared to tread upon the sacred soil of the Incas...' *La Libertad Restaurada* (23 May 1839). This very same organ denounced the despised *candillo* who, it was said, 'is in Guayaquil after having swamped the sacred land of the Incas with blood and tears, by dint of conspiracies and treacheries...' *La Libertad Restaurada* (18 May 1839; reprinted from a Guayaquil newspaper).

²⁵ For Pardo, Peru must not fall into 'such impure hands' as those of Santa Cruz. See *El Coco de Santa Cruz*, 22 Sep. 1835.

²⁶ Raúl Porras Barrenechea, 'Don Felipe Pardo y Aliaga, satírico limeño', *Revista Histórica*, no. 20 (1953), p. 269; J. Basadre, *La Iniciación de la República*, vol. II (Lima, 1930), p. 45.

²⁷ On this point see Basadre's references in his *Historia* and Monguió's 'Introduction' to *Poesías*. As regards Pardo, however, the brilliant essay by Porras cited above remains the crucial text.

an important faction of doctrinaire conservatives. Previously, from the pages of *La Verdad*, the Gamarristas had advocated the need for an aristocracy to govern Peru.²⁸ Similar propositions were endorsed, in no uncertain terms, by Felipe Pardo within a few days of Salaverry's revolution: 'We are convinced that a dictatorship exercised by an enlightened leader is the only means of salvation which remains for Perú.'²⁹ And just as openly as he had proclaimed his adherence to authoritarian doctrines, he castigated the liberals, whom both he and the rest of the conservatives tended to reproach for the prevailing anarchy as well as for their proximity to popular sectors. Once again, the logic behind this frame of mind took shape in satirical creations. Observe how, in the 'operations of satirical arithmetic' which follow, liberals are associated with all that is ugly, uncivilised, dirty and impure. These are all attributes which Pardo's logic of vilification invariably associated with the common people, and, as we have seen, it was an association from which Santa Cruz, as a most eminent foe, would not escape.

SUMAR

Veinte arrobas de.....ignorancia
Cuatrocientas de.....torpeza
Cero de humor ypureza
Veinte varas de.....jactancia
Ochocientas dearrogancia
Mil de sarna y otros.....males
Narices largas.....bestiales
Ni un adarme detalento
Propiedades dejumento
Suma totalliberales

RESTAR

De un quintal de estupidez
sacando tres de torpeza,
quedan cinco de vileza
cincuenta de impavidez:
Si esto restas otra vez
y en lugar de substractor
le pones un salteador
hallarás por diferencia
un pillastrón de insolencia
o un liberal y un traidor³⁰

The political enemy was not an equal, but rather an inferior being. Few could have claimed a greater genius for invective than Pardo.

On the other side of the political spectrum were Santa Cruz and his supporters. They, too, availed themselves of satire, the weapon par

²⁸ Basadre, *Historia*, vol. I, pp. 98 and 274-6.

²⁹ Cited in Porras, 'Don Felipe', p. 261.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 257. The phrase 'operations of satirical arithmetic' also comes from Porras.

excellence of political journalism at that time. However, their compositions were poorer not only in literary quality, but also in their capacity for expressing ideological motifs; which is by no means to say that they entirely failed in this regard.³¹ With respect to manifestoes and newspapers, on the other hand, they were hardly to be outdone. If some media, such as *La Aurora Peruana* of Cuzco, encouraged the Confederation's formation by explicitly stating the advantages accruing from a liberalisation of the customs barriers between Peru and Bolivia, others, like *El Perú-Boliviano*, displayed a greater interest in its social aspects. Shortly before the Confederation's triumph, one could read in its pages:

Our constitutions having been improvised in the midst of the dreadful din of arms, or in the bosom of revolutionary upheavals, by men educated exclusively by books, who took abstract notions or inadequate examples as a basis for our organisation, and regarded beautiful theories as the ultimate limit of political knowledge. Insufficient consideration was given to the two forces which propel society... Likewise neglecting the need to simplify legislation and adapt it for ourselves, so that *all would understand it*, and so as not to exhaust the time, patience and fortunes of the truly hapless men who must report before a tribunal, they thus left our civil condition remaining without improvement (emphasis added).³²

This text (by García del Río, the editor of *El Perú-Boliviano*), does not in fact express a doctrinaire liberalism, nor does it reject the intrinsic value of the 'new ideas'. Rather, it questions the lack of realism with which these ideas were to be applied, the urge to mimicry and the exaggeration in their application. The *caudillos* and legislators of the independence era 'forgot that every people contains within itself the germ of its legislation, and that the most perfect is not always the best... From then on a false direction was given to ideas and the most extreme democratic principles became the fashion'.³³

Yet what is most striking in García del Río's pro-Santacrucista proposal is his rhetoric in favour of change and the transformation which he envisions as resulting from the Confederation's victory. This victory is compared, in the most glowing terms, to a 'revolution': the moment in which the dreams of a 'new order', unfulfilled since 1824, could begin to be realised: 'A new order of things is taking shape... In short, the time has come for Peru to gather the ripe and plentiful fruits which humanity and philosophy are expecting from the American Revolution.'³⁴

The lack of clarity in the political project contained in this proposal does not obscure the impulse for a different future, and it presents a striking contrast to its adversaries' doctrinaire rigidity and panic-stricken conservatism. If these adversaries spoke of invasion and regarded Santa

³¹ For an example see the rondeau 'Por delante y por detrás', in reference to Salaverry, in *El Fiera-Bras* no. 5 (Cuzco, 29 Jan. 1836).

³² *El Perú Boliviano* (Lima, 18 April 1836).

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Cruz as a foreigner sully the native territory and imperilling the nation's integrity, it is because to their minds that national integrity already existed, it was already defined. The Confederation's adversaries frequently alluded to their eventual victory over the Confederation as a 'second independence'. Once this goal was in fact attained at Yungay, in Ancash, the terminology became official. The name of Ancash became analogous to that of Ayacucho.³⁵

It is true, as we have said, that the militancy of the Confederation's adversaries was rooted in economic motives: many saw in the Confederation the threat of a collapse of the trading circuits which guaranteed their prosperity. But none of this diminishes the strictly ideological thrust of the anti-Santacruzista discourse. Ever prominent in Pardo's *rondeaux*, this discourse took on a life of its own. Its most important expression was the consolidation of a creole, fundamentally racist conception of the nation.

Thus, whereas for some the nation was something set and well-defined, for others its identity remained open and indefinite, a new possibility. Whereas for some the Confederation set the civilised man against the barbarian, the coastal region against the sierra, the refined against the uncouth, for others it was a matter of an opposition pitting 'the old' against 'the new': those desirous of change versus those who resisted it. While some appealed to a rhetoric of Inca grandeur by way of spurning everything Indian, others, while making no use of this rhetoric, backed a project of a nation-state whose ethnic composition would be overwhelmingly indigenous.³⁶

³⁵ We find abundant examples in *El Comercio* and *La Libertad Restaurada*. Felipe Pardo would come to liken the decisive Chilean intervention in the Confederation conflict to the expedition of liberation in 1820. For, claimed Pardo, if in those years the armies 'went to break the yoke of a monarchy, [they] are now going to smash that of an obscure and vulgar petty tyrant, more intolerable, a thousand times more insulting for the peoples who must put up with him'. Cited in Porras, 'Don Felipe', p. 280.

³⁶ I should make it clear that my analysis derives exclusively from the press produced in what is today Peru. It is possible that from the Bolivian side some sought to legitimate the Confederation project by appealing to the Tawantinsuyu's *Altiplano* origins. As Teresa Gisbert observes, Santa Cruz was the son of a *cacica*, unlike all of the liberators (and, we might add, unlike all of the important *caudillos* of the time as well), and as such 'he enjoyed optimal conditions for carrying out the task...of a [territorial] reconstruction of the inca empire'; T. Gisbert, *Iconografía y Mitos Indígenas en el Arte* (La Paz, 1980), p. 180. In the same text, Gisbert states that during this period 'it was rumoured that Santa Cruz intended to make himself an Inca' (*ibid.* p. 107). However, I am unaware of any evidence proving this intention, nor does Gisbert present any in her book. What is most probable is that these rumours, if they did indeed exist, came from some of Santa Cruz's Bolivian sympathisers, rather than from the *caudillo* himself, whose imperial paradigm was closer to Napoleonic France than the Incan Empire. It is, thus, additionally significant that Santa Cruz, though well equipped to adopt the Incaist rhetoric so immensely fashionable at that time, should evidently have chosen not to do so.

It was not, however, a confrontation between two homogeneous groups. Profound disagreements separated the various *caudillos* who opposed Santa Cruz with equal vigour. At one extreme was Salaverry, the epitome of Lima's most aristocratic white sectors, which Felipe Pardo likewise represented. At the other extreme was the Cuzqueño Gamarra, incarnation of the mestizo *caudillo*, whose opposition to the Confederation appeared contradictory considering that the idea of annexing Bolivia to Peru always loomed among his own political ambitions (his death in Ingavi, in 1841, could not have been more symbolic). Moreover, Gamarra himself had been the object of racist ridicule before the Confederation.³⁷ But what united the anti-Santacruzistas beyond these differences was the ideological terrain: a doctrinaire conservatism, and a nationalist-authoritarian leaning which appealed to the glorification of things Incan as a means of legitimation. Santa Cruz, on the other hand, received the backing of the rather liberal sectors, and his plans for economic affairs envisioned free-trade treaties with major powers like England and the United States, while his legislative agenda drew its inspiration from the Napoleonic code. One should by no means infer, therefore, that the Confederation pursued the creation of an Indian republic isolated from contact with the 'west'. On the contrary, the mutual regard between Santa Cruz and France and England is well known. His admiration for French culture and his knowledge of French, which he never missed an opportunity to flaunt, were precisely the target of Pardo's scathing satires. Finally, Santa Cruz himself was not entirely free of authoritarian or Caesarist traits, as even his own sympathisers have recognised.³⁸ However, and this is the important point, doctrinaire authoritarianism was not a defining feature of support for the Confederation as it was for its adversaries.

There was moreover an additional difference, which was essential: if

³⁷ Regarding manifestations of racism towards Gamarra, see Basadre, *Historia*, vol. II, p. 291. Without question there existed a Gamarrista nationalism, one not always compatible with Pardo's nationalism. While it was obvious that for Pardo and other creoles nationality radiated out from Lima, for Gamarra the centre lay in Cuzco. Nuances aside, both of them contended for the legitimacy of the legacy of the Inca past. As a cuzqueño, Gamarra had greater rhetorical possibilities for laying claim to the cultural heritage of Manco Cápac and, therefore, to the position of 'founder' of 'Peru'. Lima's creoles encountered greater difficulties in legitimating this symbolic appropriation of the imperial past. But in response to these difficulties they produced a grander and more complex ideology. For this analysis the Gamarrista press produced in Cuzco turns out to be particularly rich, as does the entire range of newspapers published at that time in Lima.

³⁸ See, for example, J. de la Riva Agüero, 'La Historia en el Perú', in *Obras Completas*, vol. IV (Lima, 1965), p. 487. According to Basadre, 'Caesarism' was at that time one of the characteristic attitudes of 'caudillism': '...those colonels, those generals felt... the totemic influence of Napoleón'. Basadre, *La iniciación*, vol. II, p. 116.

something more separated the conservatives behind Salaverry and Gamarra from the liberals who supported Santa Cruz, it was the latter's greater readiness to establish alliances with popular sectors. Orbegoso had the support of the common people and the bandits on the Lima coast. It is even said that when the famous black desperado León Escobar and other bandits practically took possession of the city of Lima, in the midst of the anarchy of 1835, they made their entrance cheering Santa Cruz.³⁹ The analogies which Pardo and other conservatives made between liberals, 'vandals', 'bandits' and Santa Cruz seem not to be completely unfounded. The relationship between liberals, Santa Cruz and the peasants is less well known. Yet it is hardly insignificant that the Bolivian *Caudillo* was able to win to his favour a group of peasants who had fought vigorously against the Republic since its founding: the Iquichanos of Huanta, obstinate royalists who, nonetheless, would come to lend all of their support to Santa Cruz. Although his administration was not characterised by any distinctive legislation or particular policy with regard to the indian peasantry, Santa Cruz displayed more shrewdness than Bolívar by winning the political support of indigenous sectors whose reputation for bellicosity was already mythical.⁴⁰

Any analysis of the meaning of the Confederation's defeat must attend to all of these factors, for the defeat was followed by a wave of markedly authoritarian and conservative governments, first under Gamarra and then under Vivanco. The decade of the 1840s registered an unprecedented flourishing of conservative thought in Peru. From the restructured Convictorio of San Carlos, the ultramontane cleric Bartolomé Herrera began to impart his doctrines.

The process of restructuring the Peruvian state following the Confederation's defeat was called a 'restoration' in its day. But Basadre is correct in claiming that what occurred was in fact a 'consolidation'. 'For in 1839 it was clear that Peru would, in the future, be Peru. Until then the country had periodically lived with an acute awareness of the impermanence of its institutions.'⁴¹ It is, then, not insignificant that this process of 'consolidation' was brought about within the framework of a conservative resurgence. Beyond the disagreements and factionalisms, the victory at Yungay in 1839 consolidated the rise to power of an essentially elitist and authoritarian form of nationalism, whose most immediate promoter and political beneficiary was President Gamarra. As time passed,

³⁹ For relations between liberals and the *plebe* see C. Walker, 'Montoneros, bandoleros, malhechores: criminalidad y política en las primeras décadas republicanas', in Charles Walker and Carlos Aguirre (eds.), *Bandoleros, abigeos y montoneros: criminalidad y violencia en el Perú, siglos XVIII-XX* (Lima, 1990).

⁴⁰ See C. Méndez, 'Los campesinos, la Independencia'.

⁴¹ Basadre, *Historia*, vol. II, p. 119.

however, the legacy which was to prevail in this nationalism would be that of Pardo rather than of Gamarra, although both had been architects of the Confederation's defeat. That is to say, the definition of what was 'national' would henceforth be determined not so much in accordance with a xenophobic rejection of foreign elements (Gamarra) as by contempt towards, and segregation of, Indian elements (Pardo).

Two additional developments are important, at least at the symbolic level, in order to grasp the meaning of this consolidation. Both occurred in 1839, the same year as the Confederation's downfall. The first was the signing of a pact between representatives of the Iquichano communities and the Peruvian state, by means of which these peasants pledged their obedience and subordination to the Constitution and its laws: the so-called Pact of Yanallay.⁴² The second was the founding of *El Comercio*, the oldest, most stable and enduring newspaper in the history of Peru.

The Yanallay pact's significance was essentially symbolic, for the Iquichanos did not thereby abandon their defiant attitude in relation to the state. But it was important to secure their submission given what their rebelliousness had represented. Avowed royalists, enemies of the '*patria*', the Iquichanos had first revolted against Bolívar, and had subsequently fought against Gamarra, lending their support to the 'invader' Santa Cruz. The consolidation of Peru, therefore, implied not only the subjection of the symbolic Indian, represented by Santa Cruz, but also of actually existing Indians, epitomised by the Iquichanos.

The founding of *El Comercio* has an equally symbolic, though also an historical significance. It emerged as a commercially oriented newspaper, and was rather pluralist with respect to politics; it stimulated debate by serving as a forum for the most antithetical tendencies and opinions. Though its founders (Amunátegui and Villota) were both of a liberal bent they nonetheless struck up excellent relations with Felipe Pardo, to whom they dedicated highly favourable pages on the appearance in 1840 of the latter's own newspaper, *El Espejo de Mi Tierra*. But with time and a change in the editorship, *El Comercio* would assume a more purely political and partisan character. In 1871 it launched the candidacy of Manuel Pardo, founder of the Civilista Party and first civilian president of Peru.⁴³ Manuel Pardo was an illustrious exponent of the oligarchy which would govern Peru for 100 years. And he was the first-born son – no less! – of our famous satirist, poet and writer.

In a beautiful book Benedict Anderson has drawn attention to the role

⁴² F. García Calderón, *Diccionario de la Legislación Peruana*, vol. II (Paris, 1879). (See entry for 'Yanallay'.)

⁴³ For a history of *El Comercio* see H. López Martínez, *Los 150 Años de El Comercio* (Lima, 1989).

of newspapers in the formation of a 'national consciousness'. Nations, suggests Anderson, are above all 'imagined communities'. And the newspaper, along with the novel, were media that allowed for the representation of the nation as an imagined community.⁴⁴ Indeed, through *El Comercio* a group of Peruvians could, for the first time on a daily basis and in a systematic manner, enjoy access to news from the most distant provinces, and so on the basis of these fragments construct for themselves their own image of Peru.⁴⁵ At the same time, however, this newspaper also acquired importance as a means through which forms of class solidarity were being forged. It was, without question, a class influential in politics and one which would, in its turn, orient public opinion as to what it thought the country was, or should be – not that the other newspapers failed to do the same. Even so, the existence of such a stable daily newspaper in a country marked by political instability is significant. We should suggest, at any rate, that the founding of *El Comercio* may be regarded as an important milestone in the formation of a consciousness of Peru, contributing to the creation of a fixed image of what the country was, or what it should be. It undoubtedly played an important role in the process of consolidation that took place after the Confederation.

In the 1850s Peru underwent an opening to liberalism. However, the liberal state established by Castilla and – after some wavering (including Castilla's own drift to conservatism during his second administration) – subsequently strengthened by Manuel Pardo, could not free itself of its literally conservative origins. Castilla was a hero of the restoration, and Manuel Pardo the son of *don Felipe*. This genetic continuity in politics was no accident. It reflected what was occurring at the level of the state and society. The state's dominant class, now preponderantly liberal, had not been transformed. It had simply adapted to the new and favourable circumstances created by the guano trade.⁴⁶ And the state, as Trazegnies has rightly suggested, initiated a process of 'traditionalist modernisation'; that is, a capitalist modernisation constrained by a profound resistance, on the part of elites, to any modification of the traditional social hierarchies.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1990).

⁴⁵ A foreign observer eloquently described the popularity attained by the new newspaper: 'What do you think *El Comercio* contains? From distant provinces comes the bickering of the prefect, the governor, the customs officer; everything is allowed within it... Do not believe that only great men read it; the artisan, the worker of every class saves for *El Comercio* and the poorest looks for it on loan. He who does not know how to read listens, speaking up, like the rest, between commentaries.' Cited in Basadre, *Historia*, vol. II, p. 296.

⁴⁶ See Gootenberg, *Between Silver*.

⁴⁷ F. de Trazegnies, *La Idea de Derecho en el Perú Republicano del siglo XIX* (Lima, 1980), pp. 30–4 and 41–8.

It is probable that Peruvian liberalism (at least insofar as it held power) thereby lost the popular appearance in the second half of the century which it had been able to display during the first. The nineteenth-century ideas of progress, positivism and the development of biology in the service of racism, would, with the passing of the century, make themselves felt within our milieu, lending a 'scientific solidity' to that ideology of segregation and scorn for the Indian so well expressed by Pardo.⁴⁸ A 'republic without Indians' would seem to have been the slogan of progress, while white immigration appeared to be a solution to the country's problems. It was upon such ideological foundations that the so-called Aristocratic Republic (1895–1919) would later be established – that oligarchical state whose bases would not be severely shaken until the era of Velasco; the state from whose collapse a new reality is now emerging, which, along with its violence and fractures, seems to be registering the symptoms of a new nation's formation.

From rhetoric to historical discourse

I have privileged the figure of Felipe Pardo for several reasons. First of all, his work allows us to distinguish, in an especially fruitful way, the elements of an ideology which can be called 'creole nationalism', and which has prevailed during the greater part of our century. In Pardo one finds the bases of a rhetoric that the twentieth century would turn into a historical discourse instrumental to the exercise of power. Pardo is of interest to us, moreover, because he represents a significant current of opinion in a historical juncture to which recent historians have devoted little reflection, but which can nevertheless be considered crucial for studying the conceptualisation of what was held to be 'Peruvian' during the national period. The analysis of Pardo's discourse is particularly revealing for what it tells us about not only the historical importance of the events unfolding in this period, but above all their symbolic meaning.

Nor is it a coincidence that I have singled out a man of letters. Literary production not only expresses but also forms a part of the process of constructing personal and collective identities. Furthermore, the assimilation of literary works can have a weight in the formation and re-affirmation of such identities equal to or even greater than the assimilation of the historiographical discourses themselves. Let us take the simplest example. Between the recital of one of Pardo's racist rondeaux against

⁴⁸ Gerbi has expressed well the spirit of nineteenth-century thought: 'Progress towards civilisation, the dogma of illuminism, tends towards and then loses itself within biological evolution. The problem of the savage, a historical and philosophical problem, is transformed into the problem of man, understood in the naturalist sense as a species or race.' A. Gerbi, *Viejas polémicas sobre el Nuevo Mundo* (Lima, 1946).

Bolivians and a sermon delivered by Sucre to the patriotic troops, the former would produce a greater impact on a pupil who was to be inculcated with 'nationalism'. For, whereas Sucre speaks of an intangible *patria*, Pardo refers to the invading *cholo*, while also speaking of the *patria*. A literary text possesses the capacity to carry the reader's subjectivity to levels hardly attainable by means of a purely historical text. It renders the most abstract phenomena concrete. For an individual who identified with a *rondeau* by Pardo, the defence of the nation and the *patria* also entailed the definition of a sensibility in relation to the surrounding human and social milieu. In this instance, the defence of the *patria* was clearly associated with the rejection of the 'Indian conquistador'.

Pardo is of interest, therefore, precisely because the rich range of expression of his satirical works allows an expanded range of ideological analysis. Pardo jeers and laughs. It is important to reflect upon the meaning of this laughter. It is not a matter of carnivalesque laughter in Bakhtin's sense. His laughter does not have the meaning of popular, festive laughter, 'within which those who laugh are *included*...', a laughter that ridicules the mockers themselves and... is aimed at every notion of superiority'.⁴⁹ Instead, Pardo's laughter is that of the 'satirical author who only employs negative humour, placing himself *outside*, and in opposition to, the object of his humour...'⁵⁰ It is, accordingly, a laughter that reinforces the meaning of hierarchies. What it scorns and considers inferior, it ridicules. Pardo scorned not only all things Indian, but all aesthetic and political expression which might present a popular outlook: his racism towards blacks was no less overt. But his scorn towards the Indian has been stressed here because, in the context of Pardo's work, it acutely reveals one of the most disconcerting paradoxes of creole nationalism. As we have seen, it is not just any Indian who is despised, but one who has not remained in his 'rightful' place. And Indian subjection is necessary for the preservation of 'national integrity'. Here, it seems to me, no other interpretation is possible (one need only refer to the *rondeaux* cited above). This fact would not be so paradoxical were it not the case that Indians comprised the majority of the population of that nation whose integrity Pardo and his followers claimed to be defending.

Thus, Pardo is of interest not only because his writings embody an ideological discourse, but also because they give expression to a sensibility associated with it: contempt. And contempt, as Nugent points out, remains a part of our daily public life, constituting 'one of the most firmly rooted teachings of our socialization'.⁵¹ However, sensibilities have a

⁴⁹ M. Bakhtin, *La Cultura Popular en la Edad Media y el Renacimiento* (Barcelona, 1971), p. 17. (Both this and the following citation from Bakhtin are translations from the Spanish edition, R. LL.) ⁵⁰ *Ibid.* ⁵¹ Nugent, 'El Laberinto', p. 8.

history too. The sensibility stemming from contempt towards the Indian in Peru is neither so simple, nor so obvious, nor so remote as it may seem.

Contempt arises from the conviction that the one who is despised represents inferiority. It could be argued that contempt towards the Indian is as old as the creation of the concept of 'Indian' itself, a product of the conquest, in the sixteenth century. But this claim needs to be qualified, for if the Indian was always viewed by the Spanish as the colonised, he was not always regarded as an intrinsically inferior, debased or uncouth being. Once the polemics concerning the humanity of the Indians (polemics identified with the classical antithetical positions of Las Casas and Sepúlveda) had been left behind, the colonial administrators learned to recognise the indigenous populations' capacities for political organisation, even if it was to use these skills for their own ends. That is, a paternalist segregationism did not prevent the colonial state from recognising in the Indians certain qualities and skills. On the contrary, it was crucial to rescue, conserve and cultivate them in order to facilitate their exploitation. On the other hand, the very existence of an indigenous aristocracy precluded any exact equation of the Indian with an inferior being. If he was a noble, then he was deserving of a certain consideration among his class counterparts in the creole and Spanish world, and he even shared many of their cultural traits: food, dress, religion, language, access to a privileged education.

Things would change considerably, however, after the defeat of Túpac Amaru's revolt, in 1781, which was followed by the gradual extinction of the Inca nobility, and in the immediate aftermath, its delegitimation. These changes, which profoundly affected the indigenous society itself, also impinged upon the creoles' and Spaniards' perception of the Indians. On the one hand, since the indigenous population emerged bereft of its aristocracy, it would tend to be seen in a less differentiated fashion, as colonised or inferior. On the other hand, however, and this is the most important point, the perception of the Indian changed because Túpac Amaru's rebellion was a traumatic incident for the creoles. It left them with a profound fear and distrust of the indigenous populations, deepening the cultural abyss and nourishing fantasies of horror. The rebellion of Túpac Amaru, Monguió rightly remarks, 'would harden the attitude of an entire generation of enlightened Peruvians in relation to the Indian'.⁵² In other words, the disdain towards and unfavourable image of the Indian grew together with the fears of an 'outburst' and the resulting need for the subordination of these populations. While these fears and concerns were, to be sure, those of the colonial state after Túpac Amaru,

⁵² Luis Monguió, 'La Ilustración Peruana y el Indio', *América Indígena*, vol. 45, no. 2 (1985), p. 350.

they would stamp even more clearly the ideology of the creoles who had themselves participated in the emancipation process. For it was the creoles who had to contend with the Indians not only for the legitimacy of the leadership in the anti-colonial struggle, but also, and above all, for the status which each was to attain in a new, potential nation. The need to establish differences became more critical, and the consequent justification of the natural inferiority and incapacity of the Indians more necessary.⁵³ The ideas of the Enlightenment, with its zeal for classification, hierarchies and control, probably helped to mould the creoles' new perception of the Indians, paving the way for that theoretical rationalisation of fears which were the product of an unquestionably decisive historical experience.⁵⁴

Thus, the contempt shown by Pardo – a good example of an enlightened man of the early nineteenth century – had a history. And this contempt would grow more vivid in face of a real or hypothetical threat of an Indian invasion.

Let us now consider another trait typical of the creole nationalist discourse: the exaltation of the Inca past. We have seen how this element was present in Pardo's youthful 'Ode to Independence'. Even more important, however, it comprised a rhetorical device widely employed by *caudillos* and anti-Santacruzista politicians themselves in order to legitimate their nationalist discourse. Just as with the disdain towards the Indian, the exaltation of the Inca past already bore a history whose vicissitudes were likewise profoundly influenced by the Túpac Amaru rebellion. During the eighteenth century, as we know, colonial society experienced a cultural phenomenon which John Rowe called the 'Inca national movement'. This movement involved the resurgence and re-elaboration of various Inca traditions, and took shape in the theatre, painting, dress and other artistic representations. Led by the Incan nobility and culminating in the great uprising of 1780,⁵⁵ this movement had both a political form and motivation. The repression following the rebellion involved, among other

⁵³ We find this expressed with excessive clarity in an official opinion of the Sociedad de Amantes del País, in response to the letter from a reader suggesting the advantageousness of a union between the 'two republics': 'We have established... that we consider a union and common society of the Indian and the Spaniard impossible, for a great difference in characters and a most notable distance in the energy of souls militates against it...' Following other arguments, they add: 'all of these and some other distinctions, which can be seen in every Indian in one way or another, even if they adorn themselves and clean themselves up, are so many more differences that naturally obstruct that conceived or proposed union...' *El Mercurio Peruano*, vol. 10 (1794), p. 264 and 277 (facsimile edition: Lima, 1966).

⁵⁴ For an analysis of Enlightenment discourse on the American Indian see A. Gerbi, *La Disputa del Nuevo Mundo: Historia de una polémica 1750–1900* (Mexico City, 1982).

⁵⁵ John Rowe, 'El Movimiento Nacional de siglo XVIII', *Revista Universitaria*, no. 7 (1954). It is reprinted in Alberto Flores Galindo (ed.), *Túpac Amaru II, 1780, Antología* (Lima, 1976), pp. 13–53.

measures, the suppression of the rebel *cacicaezgos* (that is, the virtual extinction of the native aristocracy) and the explicit prohibition among the indigenous populations of any type of manifestation that could serve to revive Inca traditions. Indians were even forbidden henceforth to identify themselves as Incas in signing their names. From then on it would be the creoles themselves who would assume the task of reproducing the Incan traditions and system of symbols. Yet, as Estenssoro suggests, these manifestations would be ‘strongly stylised by the official rhetoric’, thus neutralising ‘the political content of the cultural elements of Indian origin’.⁵⁶ The creoles’ recourse to Inca symbolism and their appeal to a rhetoric exalting the imperial past became still more obvious in the independence era. Basadre has referred to the phenomenon as a first indigenism; others speak of ‘Incaism’. The Inca nobility received the final *coup de grace* with the degree, issued by Bolívar in 1825, which abolished the *curacazgos*. This reinforced the creole, or mestizo–intellectual, character of all subsequent rhetoric exalting the Inca past, right up to the present.

Yet the creoles’ appropriation of a rhetoric glorifying the Inca past existed side by side with a contemptuous appraisal of the Indian (or what the creoles regarded as such). This apparently contradictory situation did not, however, lack a certain logic. Appropriating and officialising a discourse that had originally belonged to the indigenous aristocracy, the creoles neutralised whatever political connotations Indian expressions might formerly have embodied. Moreover, to appeal to the real or imagined glories of the Incas so as to defend Peru from an invasion was a way of establishing the national character as something already set or given, and of denying the Indians, the mestizos and the *castas* any possibility of forging it on their own. This was a pitfall from which not even the best intentioned of *indigenismos* could extricate themselves in future.

As the republic matured, the elements already present in that early creole nationalist rhetoric would be rationalised and articulated within a historical discourse serving the interests of power, a discourse which contributed to the reproduction of an ideology that aimed at maintaining social hierarchies. Twentieth-century Peruvian historiography – certainly the most conservative neo-creole historiography – has played a decisive role in this process. It is most striking that in neo-creole historiographical

⁵⁶ Juan Carlos Estenssoro F., ‘Discurso, música y poder en el Perú colonial’, unpubl. MA thesis, Pontificia Universidad Católica (Lima), 1990, vol. III, p. 533. In another text Estenssoro shows how a typically Indian musical genre, the yaraví (or song for the death of the Inca), was divested of its original political connotations upon being adopted by the creoles after Túpac Amaru’s revolt. J. C. Estenssoro F. ‘Modernismo, Estética, Música y Fiesta: Elites y Cambio de Actitud Frente a la Cultura Popular en el Perú, 1750–1850’, in Urbano (ed.), *Tradición*, pp. 181–95.

discourse the Tupacamarista revolution is celebrated not for its indigenous content, but rather in spite of it.⁵⁷ Good intentions aside, the creole discourse, by failing to recognise in the Indians a capacity for self-expression and self-representation, denied them their real character, ascribing an imagined one to them instead. Whatever adjectives were applied – and they oscillated between derogatory descriptions like clumsy, brutish, and dim-witted, and more pity-inspired epithets like docile and submissive, or naïve and childish – the use of one label was constant, and quite obvious in twentieth-century historiographical discourse: archaic.⁵⁸ The creoles reserved the attributes of modernity for themselves.

Here we come to a further point that would require a more thorough study. As we have seen for the Limeño creoles, the ideological debate around the Confederation involved not only the opposition between whites and Indians, the superior and the inferior, but also the civilised and the barbarian; that is, the oldest way of expressing what today is more commonly dichotomised as modern and traditional. The Indian Santa Cruz was ridiculed for his Frenchified manners and pretensions, for his longing to assume the attributes of a ‘superior’ or modern civilisation; for, as is so clearly shown by the creole reaction, these were not, nor could they be, the attributes of an Indian. Once again, the need to establish the proper place for everyone. The establishment of social hierarchies thus correlated the necessity of establishing aesthetic norms – there was and had to be one for everybody. In this regard the creole discourse was not without ambivalence. For, from the time of the era which concerns us here, the various governments raised the banner of education in varying degrees as the best means of lifting the indigenous populations out of their prostration and backwardness. But those promoting this notion at the same time feared the consequences of such a process, and so in addition established parallel discourses expressing the need to maintain the Indians just as they were. It was a question of an unofficial record, one rather veiled in irony to be sure, but not for this reason any less valid or significant.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ ‘Recent studies on the revolution of Túpac Amaru confirm its nationalist significance, already admirably shown by Riva Agüero. For it included not only mestizos, but also creoles. It did not have the character of an exclusively indigenous rebellion...’ V. A. Belaúnde, *Peruanidad* (selections) (Lima, 1968), p. 94.

⁵⁸ ‘The Indian of the coast and the sierra... had, as an essential characteristic, a traditional instinct, a sense of adherence to acquired forms, a horror of change and sudden alteration, a desire for the perennial and a perpetuation of the past, which manifests itself in all of his actions and customs...’ R. Porras Barrenechea, *Mito, Tradición e Historia en el Perú* (Lima, 1969), p. 21.

⁵⁹ ‘It is worth noting that the subdelegates, priests, tax collectors and other functionaries did not permit the indigenous youths to dress with decency: one often saw that, with the pretext of any slight misdeed, they were ordered, after being savagely flogged, to

The theme of creole ideology and its identification with the modern, understood as the contributions due to western culture, is certainly more complex; an adequate analysis of it is beyond the scope of this essay. But I should like to suggest that the works of Felipe Pardo could be an important starting point. For this was the case of a conservative whose output nevertheless represented significant innovations in the aesthetic creation of his time (narrative and theatre). Pardo was in many ways also a modern. However, what should be underscored here is that Pardo's own interest in incorporating European contributions⁶⁰ into national aesthetic creation led him to embrace conservative positions when coupled with an explicit rejection of popular aesthetic manifestations. This resulted in his confrontation with Manuel Ascencio Segura which revealed his urge rigidly to establish the contours of that modernisation.⁶¹ It was a typical case of enlightened despotism, as Porras suggested; that is to say, of a modernity that tended to reinforce, and could only be achieved by, the maintenance of social hierarchies. A place for everything and everyone. In other words, his modernity as a man of letters was perfectly consistent with his conservatism as a politician.

Epilogue

At the outset I argued that creole nationalism is an ideology in crisis, and that this crisis expresses the end of a long cycle: that of an oligarchical normative system. I also argued that the best expression of this crisis is the emergence in Peru, over the last 25 years, of social processes which question and defy that very normative system. I should like to conclude with a play of images, followed by a set of questions.

When in 1835 the project of the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation was

remove their stockings and shoes and made to tread through mud, while being told that they must not dress like Spaniards, because the baize and rawhide sandals were reserved for them. On being asked the reason for such injustice, they replied that the indigenous folk who dressed like Spaniards became proud and disobedient: this was the common opinion of the leaders in the years around the time of independence.' J. Domingo Choquehuanca, *Ensayo de estadística completa ... del Departamento de Puno* (Lima, 1833), p. 69. In some places oral tradition has perpetuated this opinion of the elites, captured so well by Choquehuanca, at the time delegate from Puno, in phrases such as: 'indio de jerga buen indio, indio de paño, mal indio, indio de casimir Dios me libre' ('an Indian in sackcloth, a good Indian; an Indian in wool, a bad Indian; an Indian in cashmere, God forbid!'). I owe this information to Arturo Tineo and Jeffrey Gamarra, in Ayacucho.

⁶⁰ See especially Pardo's 'Opera y Nacionalismo', in *El Espejo de Mi Tierra. Periódico de costumbres*, no. 2 (Lima, 1840).

⁶¹ Regarding the Pardo–Segura polemic see the brief but penetrating observations of Ventura García Calderón in *Del Romanticismo al Modernismo, poetas y prosistas Peruanos* (Paris, 1910), pp. 11–12.

about to become a reality, the creoles in Lima announced a dreaded conquest of Peru by the Indian. They squandered energy, trips, ink, money, emotions and a good deal of talent to combat it. They also spoke of invasion. Although the difficulty of locating contemporary coordinates for an ideology of such endurance prevents us from freely using the word 'Indian', this term having been supplanted by that of Andean settler (*poblador andino*) or campesino, I believe that every Peruvian or reader acquainted with Peru will understand the analogies that I allow myself in saying that 'the conquest of Peru by the Indian' is precisely what has taken place in the last 25 years. And while, to be sure, the word 'Indian' has fallen into disuse, this has not been the case with 'conquest' or 'invasion', as is so clearly shown by the titles of two books devoted to the study of this process.⁶² Yet, perhaps what gives this process its revolutionary character (if, again, I may be allowed a dated expression) is that the connotation given to these terms today has become a positive one. One speaks of the conquest of citizenship, and of an invasion that is precisely the starting point for a process of constructing new identities ('from invaders to citizens'). It is a process in which these identities are indeed being shaped and constructed; they are not simply 'given'. Therefore, I believe that, once endowed with this new content, those old terms capture the process which they describe better than the more recent expression *desborde*.⁶³ For it seems that it is precisely the old creole fears evoked by such a word that have begun to retreat. But, as noted at the beginning, this essay has used terms like 'in crisis' and 'in retreat' because, let us not forget, 'nothing ever wholly dies'. And so, questions of self-recognition remain: Which elements have died, and which survive, among that ensemble of ideas, fears, prejudices, discourses, rhetoric, sensibilities and satirical gestures that we have recovered from history in these brief pages? What persists as an open, political discourse, and what as a hidden, intimately felt record? There can be almost as many answers to these questions as there are readers. However, there is no doubt that some of this past remains alive in contemporary Peru. For this reason, the work of research, reflection and debate remains as vital as ever.

⁶² C. I. Degregori, C. Blondet and N. Lynch, *Conquistadores de un nuevo mundo. De invasores a ciudadanos en San Martín de Porres* (Lima, 1986); J. Golte and N. Adams, *Los Caballos de Troya de los invasores. Estrategias campesinas en la conquista de la gran Lima* (Lima, 1990).

⁶³ See J. Matos Mar, *El desborde popular* (Lima, 1985).