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Chapter 1

Introduction: Peru in Theory*

Paulo Drinot

Readers of this volume may well ask: “Why Peru in theory?” The ambiguity of the title, of course, is deliberate. After all, anyone who studies Peru will be familiar with the often-expressed belief that the country is not quite there. It is, many agree, a problema and a posibilidad as the historian Jorge Basadre suggested many years ago. It exists, in theory. But...in practice? The title reminds us that Peru has been and continues to be understood as a work in progress, as an idea or project that, somehow, and as yet, has not come to fruition. Much intellectual work has been expended in making sense of this theoretical, not quite there, character of Peru in the past. This volume contributes to, and builds on, this intellectual work. But the title also alludes to the more distinctive, specific, intellectual project of this volume: to bring Peru and theory together, to mix and mash them up, observe, and draw useful and, hopefully, original conclusions. Why do this? Is Peru amenable to theorization? Is theory amenable to Peruvianization? Can “theory” teach us anything new about Peru? Can “Peru” teach us anything new about theory? This is what this volume sets out to explore.1 But why do this now? As I discuss below, Peru has undergone very significant changes in the past 30 years. It is a good time to take stock and think about the problems and possibilities that the country faces. The contributors to this volume contend that “universal” or “grand” theory, or, more specifically, the analytical frameworks of a number of social and cultural “theorists,” can help us to do this.2 They also contend that Peru is, to paraphrase and distort the historian Joan W. Scott, a useful category of theoretical analysis.

In the past 30 years or so, two historical processes have had a decisive impact on Peru and on Peruvian social science scholarship. The first is, of course, the internal armed conflict that resulted from the
Shining Path insurgency that began in 1980. The second is the neoliberal “revolution” initiated during the regime of Alberto Fujimori in the 1990s. The internal armed conflict, the deadliest “war,” internal or otherwise, that Peru has ever experienced, is broadly viewed as the deepest crisis ever faced by the Peruvian nation-state. The capture of Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán in 1992 led to the rapid unraveling of the insurgency. However, the conflict put in sharp focus many deep, and unresolved, fissures in Peruvian society. The neoliberal revolution, meanwhile, and the various macroeconomic reforms associated with it (privatization, liberalization of trade, hollowing out of the state), is broadly seen as being responsible for the economic growth that Peru has experienced since the 1990s and particularly since the 2000s. However, many question whether this growth is sustainable in the long term and point to its social and environmental costs and its unequal impact on different sectors of the Peruvian population. These two processes overlap in time. But they also overlap in the sense that the two processes can be seen, and indeed have been read, as being interconnected. It was the depth of the crisis generated by the internal armed conflict (and the economic mismanagement of the governments of the 1980s) that created the conditions for neoliberal reforms to be implemented with little to no opposition in a context of competitive authoritarianism; indeed, as Fujimori’s reelection in 1995 showed, with extensive support from the population.

These historical processes have made Peru a uniquely interesting case for social scientific analysis in the Latin American context. The internal armed conflict erupted just as Peru transitioned to democracy after over a decade of military government. Although, in some ways, a product of the Cold War like other guerrilla insurgencies in Latin America, the Shining Path insurgency was sui generis. The most systematic attempt to make sense of this historical process was the final report of Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) published in 2003. In addition to sharply revising the number of victims of the conflict upward, to a total of 69,280, the reading of that conflict, and of the state’s response to the Shining Path insurgency, that coalesced in the report of the TRC produced an interpretation of Peruvian history that emphasized the deeply entrenched, and intersecting, inequalities that had in the past shaped Peruvian society, and that, in many ways, continue to shape it even today. The TRC’s analysis of the internal armed conflict homed in on the ways in which the conflict both reflected and in turn reproduced patterns of exclusion, expressive of racialized and gendered hierarchies, that structure (or, perhaps more accurately, destructure) Peruvian society.
As Salomón Lerner, the president of the TRC, explained in his speech of August 28, 2003, the final report revealed that Peru is “a country where exclusion is so absolute that tens of thousands of citizens can disappear without anyone in integrated society, in the society of the non-excluded, noticing a thing.”

At the same time, readings of the neoliberal turn in the Peruvian context have centered on the ways in which the apparent economic prosperity that this “revolution” has engendered has brought in tow a highly destabilizing political destructuring. This destructuring has involved not only a systematic deinstitutionalization of the political party system (admittedly the main focus of attention) but also, more broadly, of the polity itself, thus engendering a particularly toxic political culture. To be sure, a global commodity boom fueled by Chinese demand for raw materials, including Peruvian mineral exports, and an institutional framework established, and strictly enforced, by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Central Bank, have contributed to significant economic growth since the 1990s and particularly since the 2000s. Peru is now broadly seen as a “success story” in Latin America and regularly posts yearly gross domestic product growth rates of around 6 percent. This growth has produced important welfare gains, with a sharp reduction in poverty in the last decade or so. It has also contributed to the emergence of a new, largely urban, middle class and to the development of new consumption patterns that have transformed large parts of urban Peru. However, the gains of growth remain unequally distributed, with rural areas, particularly in the Andean highlands, benefiting only marginally from the recent boom. At the same time, mineral-led growth itself has produced a number of negative externalities, particularly on the social and environmental fronts, that pose difficult challenges to governance as Peru seeks to consolidate the gains from growth.

But the externalities have been not only social or environmental but also political. The economic transformation of Peru has occurred in a context of acute political deinstitutionalization. For some analysts, these two developments are linked; indeed, some argue that the latter is a consequence of the former. During the Fujimori regime (1990–2000), politics was gradually hollowed out. Following Fujimori’s self-coup in 1992 and the establishment of a new constitution in 1993, political parties progressively and, it would seem, inexorably lost ground to “movements” mobilized by political amateurs (some would say opportunists) whose commitment to democracy, or, more precisely, to institucionalidad, is at best questionable. Meanwhile, political institutions, foremost among them the legislative
and the judiciary, are increasingly perceived as irrelevant and ineffective in counterbalancing the power not so much of the executive as of a group of unelected bureaucrats, associated with the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Central Bank, who have emerged as the guarantors of economic stability and of “the model.” Peru has enjoyed free and popular elections since 1995. At each national election, political figures trumpeting alternatives to the model have triumphed. However, once in power, these figures have performed the famous bait and switch. As a consequence, the model remains unchallenged. A faltering, indeed failed, political system, observers suggest, appears increasingly functional to an economic model that brings growth but not inclusive development.

Thus, while in some ways Peruvian procedural democracy is more robust than ever (by 2016, there will have been four successive presidential elections without interruption—an unprecedented feat in the country’s electoral history), in other ways representative democracy is extremely weak (not to speak of other more substantive forms of democracy).

The chapters in this volume offer new vistas on these historical processes and on the broader questions they raise. While offering original interpretations, they are in dialogue with a number of recent mises-à-jour in the Peruvian social sciences. A number of publications in history, anthropology, political science, and cultural studies point to a common awareness among those who study Peru of the need to take stock of developments in Peruvian social science scholarship since, say, the 1960s and 1970s, and certainly since the 1980s, and consider where it may be heading in light of both the legacy of the internal armed conflict and the consequences of Peru’s neoliberal turn. Read together, such studies reveal the extent to which different disciplines share similar concerns. In particular, they reveal a convergent multidisciplinary, and occasionally interdisciplinary, attention to two key issues: the weakness of institutions (in the sense of the “rules of the game” that shape economic, political, and social, even cultural, relations) and the problem of exclusion (in its myriad iterations and as a reflection of entrenched and intersecting inequalities). These issues are connected: exclusion is broadly perceived as a by-product of poorly functioning institutions. Put differently, social science analyses in Peru converge on this: the extent to which the dominant institutional framework is expressive of a social order that is built on entrenched inequalities and exclusion from full citizenship. To be sure, these are not particularly or exclusively Peruvian concerns. But they are particularly resonant in the Peruvian case because of the way in which they express, in a highly condensed form,
the broader and multiple questions that both the internal armed conflict (exclusion) and the neoliberal turn (institutional weakness), and the connections between the two, have brought to light.

Around half the chapters in this volume focus broadly on the issue of institutional weakness while the other half focus broadly on the question of exclusion. In so doing, they address a number of subsidiary questions that are central to understanding what José Carlos Mariátegui famously called “Peruvian reality,” by which he referred to the problems that Peru, as a state and as a nation, faced (1997). These questions are familiar to many who study Peru, and, just to emphasize how important they are to understanding Peru, I would add that they would have been familiar even to Mariátegui in the late 1920s. They include the following: Why is Peru susceptible to authoritarianism? Why is conflict so prevalent in relations between different social actors? Why have dominant ideas of nationhood and citizenship been so exclusionary? Of course, others have addressed these questions. However, and here lies much of the originality of this volume, the contributors to this book approach these and other questions in explicit dialogue with “theory,” that is to say, in dialogue with the analytical tools, paradigms, or concepts of particular authors whose work has influenced, indeed, reoriented social science research at a number of critical junctures in different fields and in recent years. These authors, to the extent that they can be pigeonholed into a disciplinary category, are philosophers, sociologists, economists, anthropologists, and literary scholars. But their work has been influential well beyond the disciplinary field in which they primarily work.

In taking this approach, this volume takes inspiration from, and seeks to contribute to the general goals of The Other Mirror: Grand Theory through the Lens of Latin America (2001). Edited by Miguel Angel Centeno and Fernando López-Alves, The Other Mirror’s objective was to “[bring] universal theory into dialogue with specific history” in order to “consider what forms Latin American variations of classical themes might take and which theories are most useful for describing Latin America” (back cover). In other words, The Other Mirror was an attempt to demonstrate that the “theoretical” and the “empirical” work best when put to work together. But it was also a critique of both social theorists who paid little attention to Latin America in constructing their paradigms of, say, state-building, and of area specialists who failed to engage in a productive dialogue with theoretical perspectives that could inform their empirical material. The essays in this volume are informed by this agenda and inspired
by this critique. Its contributors have also looked “for inspiration to a group of authors who have asked large questions than can be universally established, but whose scope still allows for empirical investigation” (Centeno and Lopez-Alves: 5). However, the sources of inspiration in this volume are on the whole different to those that inspired the contributors to *The Other Mirror*.

The theorists that inform the studies in this volume constitute a highly heterogeneous group. But they have all, in different ways, helped to shift academic debate in new and productive directions in the last few decades. The work of Alexis de Tocqueville on the revolutionary societies of France and the United States in the late eighteenth century, which informs Alberto Vergara’s chapter, has been decisive in discussions among historians and political scientists about the emergence and development of distinct “political cultures.” Ernesto Laclau’s engagement with the work of Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci on hegemony has been crucial to, among other areas of scholarship, new work on the development of new political identities, as María Balarín examines in her chapter. Samuel Huntington and Albert Hirschman’s work, as explored in the chapters by Omar Awapara and Eduardo Dargent, and José Carlos Orihuela, respectively, has moved studies of political and economic institutions in increasingly productive directions. The work of Michael Mann and James C. Scott, which Matthias vom Hau and Valeria Bifì, and Cecilia Perla, respectively, take inspiration from in their chapters, has helped to transform discussions on the state and on state-society relations. The work of Georges Bataille, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler, which Daniella Gandolfo, Paulo Drinot, and Jelke Boesten discuss in their chapters, has been decisive in complicating our understanding of the nature of power, exclusion, and the hierarchical structuring of societies.15

As this suggests, the work of these “theorists” directly addresses the sort of questions that social scientists who study Peru are increasingly interested in (institutions, exclusion), and their work has been used by others to make sense of how these questions play out in particular geographical or temporal contexts. This is the reason that the contributors to this volume have chosen to dialogue with these theorists, rather than others (although others, such Norbert Elías or Elinor Ostrom, Bruno Latour or Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, to cite a few among many, could have been chosen). A dialogue with the work of Huntington or Foucault connects the social scientist who initiates that dialogue not only with the work of those “theorists,” but perhaps as importantly, with many other social scientists who also have established a dialogue with them. In this sense, Huntington or
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Foucault are points of entry into a much broader scholarship, as the chapters that follow show. Indeed, while these chapters are ostensibly “about Peru,” they should also be read as contributions, and indeed reflections on, a much broader scholarly enterprise that seeks to determine the theoretical purchase of Huntington or Foucault. In this sense, the “Peru” of this volume should be thought of not only as an empirical case study to be illuminated by universal theory but also as a means through which to assess the explanatory capacity of a particular analytical framework. In this sense, this volume is not only a volume of chapters on Peru. It is also a volume of chapters on Alexis de Tocqueville, Albert Hirschman, James C. Scott, Samuel P. Huntington, Ernesto Laclau, Georges Bataille, Michel Foucault, Michael Mann, and Judith Butler.

The contributors to this volume work in a number of different disciplines, but share a common interest in Peru, and in particular in questions that are key to making sense of Peru today. Some are Peruvians, all are Peruvianists to some extent. They all were trained, or are being trained, at graduate level, in the social sciences, including history, in the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s, in Europe and North America. Whether they constitute, or represent, a new generation of Peruvian social scientists, is unclear, possibly doubtful. Beyond a common enthusiasm for this project, and a shared belief in the broad goals of the project as set out in this introduction, they do not have a broader scholarly agenda, although their attention to institutions and to forms of exclusion that go beyond class forms the basis of an implicit dialogue with earlier “generations” (again the relevance of the term is doubtful) of Peruvianist scholars. In the case of the interest in institutions, this is due in part to a broader global interdisciplinary focus on institutions (prompted by the influence of Douglass North’s work and of the New Institutional Economics in several fields), and also, as suggested above, to the impact of Fujimori’s authoritarianism, which put institution building very much centre stage. Similarly, the focus on exclusion, while not as recent as the focus on institutions (research on gendered and racialized exclusion, as well as class-based exclusion, was a feature of scholarship in, say, the 1970s and 1980s), responds to a global trend in academia, and also, very directly, again, as suggested above, to the Shining Path insurgency and the state’s counterinsurgency response to it, which highlighted the extent to which the armed conflict reflected and reproduced myriad forms of exclusion.

Alberto Vergara, for example, considers the extent to which a Tocquevillean framework can help account for Peru’s fallback into
authoritarianism during the Fujimorato (1990–2000). Rejecting other theories that purport to explain this turn to authoritarianism by focusing on the immediate political conjuncture or on underlying social processes, or indeed, on a supposed cultural predisposition to authoritarianism, Vergara examines how Tocqueville’s concerns about democratic societies embracing tyranny, and about the tensions between equality and liberty, developed in the context of his study of the French Revolution, can form the basis for an analysis of the Peruvian experience. Vergara argues that the expansion of Peru’s state capacity, what Tocqueville referred to as “centralisation administrative,” from the 1960s onward, and particularly in the context of the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces (1968–1980) served to extend equality by incorporating a significant proportion of the population through the provision of education among other state services. Yet this expansion of state capacity came at the expense of the weakening of peripheral elites, or of Tocquevillean “pouvoirs intermediaires” that had in the past served as a counterweight to the power of the state centralized in Lima. The capacity of peripheral elites was further weakened by Peru’s internal armed conflict (1980–2000). Although Fujimori actively pursued the centralization of power during the Fujimorato, he was able to do so because Peru’s peripheral elites had already been severely weakened. Contra much received wisdom, Vergara identifies a degree of continuity and affinity between the Velasco and Fujimori regimes.

For José Carlos Orihuela, the work of Albert Hirschman provides a useful framework to assess the divergent experiences of Peru and its southern neighbor Chile with regard to state promotion of economic activity. Like Vergara, Orihuela takes a broadly historical perspective and contrasts the institutional development of Chile with that of Peru in the sphere of state promotion of economic activity, and seeks to understand why, in Hirschmanian terms, Peru favored exit over voice in the context of the neoliberal restructuring of the 1990s. In the post–Great Depression period, despite numerous obstacles, Chile succeeded in establishing a strong, and relatively autonomous, institution, CORFO, the national development corporation, which built on a strong technical class, drawn from a group of technical experts who had cut their teeth in Chile’s export sectors, and a solidifying bureaucratic culture, and played a key and largely successful role in channeling resources to productive activities. By contrast, the Peruvian experience was a failure: faced with an unstable political climate, and elites that were hostile to state intervention in the economy, Peruvian attempts at state promotion of economic activity
produced a plethora of local-level institutions but with no bureau-
cratic class and with limited technocratic expertise. Peru’s national
planning institute, meanwhile, developed grandiose projects that,
particularly during the Velasco regime, proved beyond its financing
possibilities or bureaucratic capacity. In the context of the paradigm
shift of the 1970s and 1980s marked by the Washington Consensus,
the two countries’ transition to neoliberalism diverged significantly,
with Chile exercising voice and maintaining (and reforming) CORFO
and a strong state presence, while Peru, where loyalty to a largely
dysfunctional system was weak, chose exit and dismantled its limited
developmental state structures.

Cecilia Perla shows that James C. Scott’s anthropological studies of
southeast Asia can help to broaden our understanding of Peru’s most
recent mining cycle, which has seen a massive increase in both mining
investment and in conflicts between mining companies and commu-
nities affected by mining. Whereas in the past conflict tended to arise
from tense labor relations, the mechanization of mining has altered
the nature of conflict. Today it usually results from the broader social
and environmental impacts of large-scale mining operations. Perla
argues that although mining conflicts account for almost 50 percent
of all social conflicts in Peru, only 20 percent of mining operations
have generated conflicts. Yet, most studies focus on that 20 percent
while largely ignoring the other 80 percent of cases where conflict
is absent. For Perla, paying attention to cases where conflicts do not
arise is as important as seeking to understand those cases that have
resulted in conflict. Scott’s work on peasant societies in Indonesia
provides a particularly apt framework for making sense of this quies-
cence. Perla shows that the same types of strategies, or weapons of the
weak, that shaped relations between the powerful and the powerless
in the cases studied by Scott are discernable in Peru. Open conflict
is replaced by a repertoire of action that falls short of what could be
called conflict but that, nonetheless, represents an active, and at times
effective, engagement with an overwhelmingly powerful actor. Such
weapons of the weak are deployed increasingly in combination with
global discourses on indigenous rights and corporate social respon-
sibility. These discourses, Perla suggests, are used to establish the
nature of the relationship between the mining companies and the
affected communities, and more specifically, to identify and regulate
the duties of the former toward the latter.

Omar Awapara and Eduardo Dargent examine political reform in
recent years in Peru in light of Samuel Huntington’s warning about
implementing reforms in institutionally weak political contexts.
Huntington’s criteria for assessing institutional strength, based on the institutional framework’s adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence, sharply illustrate the extent to which the Peruvian institutional framework is ill-adapted to effective reform. Awapara and Dargent argue that this weakness derives in part from the nature of the state bureaucracy, which is poorly trained and lacks motivation and from state weakness. Despite this institutional context, Awapara and Dargent diagnose a tendency to rush through reforms, which are then poorly implemented. Typically, their designers fail to take into account the potential impact that they will have because they ignore or disregard the social and political context in which they are being implemented. Moreover, most reforms are undertaken by the executive and imposed by decree, and lack consultation with key stakeholders. Too often, they are poor copies of reforms undertaken elsewhere, ill-adapted to the Peruvian context. Awapara and Dargent illustrate this situation by discussing three cases: electoral reform, the disaster prevention system, and the municipalization process. All three reforms produced outcomes that were the opposite of what had been intended: the electoral reform law weakened rather than strengthened the party system; the decentralization of competencies in the context of national disasters reduced rather than increased the capacity to respond to national emergencies as the 2007 earthquake demonstrated; the transfer of political competencies and economic resources to municipal authorities reduced effective local-level governance and increased the misuse of government revenues. Huntington’s prescription to be aware of reforms in institutionally weak contexts, Awapara and Dargent conclude, is borne out by the Peruvian experience.

In order to rethink earlier work on notions of citizenship among schoolchildren living in marginalized situations in different parts of Lima, María Balarín turns to Argentine theorist Ernesto Laclau’s engagements with Gramscian notions of hegemony. Balarín suggests that Laclau’s reworking of hegemony sheds light on how people in marginalized positions develop identities expressive of hegemonic social formations. Balarín traces the establishment of the current hegemony in historical terms, noting the shift in the second half of the twentieth century, and particularly, during the Fujimori regime, toward a hegemonic order based on Washington Consensus policies, and away from the timid developmentalist policies introduced in the 1960s. Overall, in terms of citizenship regimes, however, Balarín discerns a degree of continuity between current neoliberal configurations and earlier citizenship regimes. Such hegemonic citizenship
regimes are reflected in the individualistic and de-solidarized narratives of citizenship characterized by Balarin’s informants, some 30 young people of school-leaving age, for whom citizenship rights are goods to be purchased and who see the state as having no role to play in the attainment of well-being. Such narratives are consistent with a welfare architecture based on individual effort and the market and are expressive of long-term developments in Peruvian social formation and also, more specifically, of the neoliberal logic that was dominant in the Fujimori period, and, in some ways, still remains dominant. However, Balarin also identifies significant differences in notions of well-being among her informants, which are reflective of different levels of prosperity in subsets of informants. Thus, Balarin concludes that while Laclau’s discursive approach to hegemony can help account for the shared citizenship regime among her informants, and may tell us something about the difficulties faced by Peruvians in formulating counterhegemonic claims, it does not fully capture how material differences inflect ideas of well-being, or more broadly, the conditions in which citizens seek to engage with the state.

Daniella Gandolfo, meanwhile, draws on Georges Bataille’s discussion of taboo transgression to reflect upon the protests enacted by laid-off street sweepers in the second half of the 1990s. Written in an ethnographic mode, Gandolfo’s chapter is structured around a number of encounters between the author and different interlocutors, including Lima’s mayor Alberto Andrade; a photojournalist from La República, one of Peru’s major dailies; a union representative; and a former street sweeper who, during one of the protests, had stripped from the waist up to reveal her naked torso. It was the publication of a photograph of this woman in the Peruvian press that drew Gandolfo’s attention to the protest in the first place. These encounters are interspaced with reflections on several processes elicited by an analysis of the street sweeper’s naked protest inflected by Gandolfo’s reading of Bataille’s discussion of transgression. The protest, Gandolfo shows, must be understood in the context of Andrade’s attempts to “recuperate” Lima, to return it to a status quo ante, that is to say, to a time before Lima was transformed by internal migration and imagined itself as criollo. Andrade’s “recuperation” of the city is itself contained by a broader transformative process, the neoliberal reforms introduced by Alberto Fujimori, which brought about the widespread privatization of state services. Gandolfo also considers the protest in light of the politics of motherhood in Latin America and in particular of the transgressive use by women’s groups of conservative notions of motherhood and family in the context
of the development of strategies for progressive politics that seek to challenge authoritarian rule. The street sweeper’s naked protest, Gandolfo suggests, with Bataille, must be understood as expressive of the advantages and limitations of transgression as a means to political ends in a broader context of neoliberal restructuring and the hollowing of democratic politics, where formal political strategies have been deeply unsettled.

In his chapter, Paulo Drinot draws on Michel Foucault’s distinction between sovereignty and governmentality, and the many projections and critiques of this influential framework developed by scholars working in a number of disciplinary fields, in order to discuss the project of rule deployed by President Alan García during his second administration (2006–2011). Using García’s now-infamous series of “dog-in-the-manger” speeches as a point of departure, Drinot argues that this discourse illustrates well the character of García’s “capitalist revolution,” which mobilizes a primordial fear of an internal enemy constructed as both political and biopolitical. Drinot suggests that García’s dog-in-the-manger rhetoric, with its denunciations of environmentalists who oppose his capitalist reforms and of atavistic Indians, operated by creating an equivalence between such recalcitrant and backward Others and the insurgency of Shining Path. In so doing, García exercised his prerogative as sovereign to declare who is and who is not an internal enemy. More generally, Drinot argues, García’s dog-in-the-manger rhetoric illustrates how sovereignty and governmentality operate in Peru. Contra Foucault’s teleological model of power, which posits a progression from sovereign power to governmentality, the Peruvian case suggests that sovereignty and governmentality are commensurable forms of power. As in contexts of colonial forms of rule, in Peru governmentality, or a form of power that operates through the extension of freedom, is not universally applied, but is rather reserved for a minority. By contrast, the predominance of sovereign power, and the deployment of discipline as the main apparatus of biopolitical management, Drinot suggests, is expressive of the particular ways in which racism structures Peruvian society by framing a large proportion of the population as obstacles to national progress and therefore as unsuitable to governmentality.

Like Drinot, vom Hau and Biffi take Alan García’s dog-in-the-manger rhetoric, which the authors frame as being expressive of a liberal form of nationalism that constructs a binary view of Peruvian society as a struggle between civilization and barbarism, as a point of departure in their chapter. However, their chapter focuses on the reaction that this rhetoric elicited among Peruvian commentators; a
reaction that the authors see as being expressive of an alternative, and today hegemonic, vision of Peruvian history: popular nationalism. Drawing on Michael Mann’s social power approach, vom Hau and Biffi examine, through a focus on public education, public rituals, and archeology, the ways in which the expansion of what Mann calls “state infrastructural power” helped to spread liberal nationalism as a dominant discourse on Peru. Both during the Aristocratic Republic (1895–1919) and Augusto Leguía’s Patria Nueva (1919–1930), the expansion of state capacity, albeit geographically restricted, served to establish liberal nationalism as a hegemonic discourse. In the post-war period, during the governments of Bustamante and Odría, state capacity increased dramatically, particularly in the field of education, and started to reach parts of Peru where the state had previously been absent. However, the authors show that this process also enabled the emergence of a counter discourse, popular nationalism, which also spread through institutions such as public education and archaeology. During the Velasco regime (1968–1975), popular nationalism became hegemonic, with official rhetoric shifting dramatically away from liberal nationalism, although this was enabled by the prior expansion of state infrastructural capacity. The authors conclude that Mann’s theoretical framework illustrates well this historical process, by focusing attention on the interplay of ideological and institutional processes, on the spatial dimension of state capacity, and on the role of state agents in shaping state institutions. At the same time, they highlight a number of blind spots in the framework, particularly the role played by nonstate actors in shaping the shift from liberal to popular nationalism.

For Jelke Boesten, the work of Judith Butler offers a particularly relevant framework for discussing sexual violence in Peru in contexts of war and peace. Boesten revisits some of her own earlier work on how gender, and its intersections with race and class, shapes social and interpersonal relations in the Peruvian context. She argues that Butlerian concepts such as normative violence, precarious and grievable life, and Butler’s engagements with the work of other theorists such as Foucault and Agamben, as well as Butler’s highly influential reframing of gender as performance, provides a useful analytical perspective from which to examine the ways in which sexual violence at once reflects and in turn reproduces the hierarchies that structure Peruvian society. Both in the context of Peru’s internal armed conflict, where sexual violence was used as a means to subjugate indigenous populations suspected of sympathizing with insurgent groups such as Shining Path, and in nominally peaceful postconflict
Peru, where sexual violence is often viewed as a normal dimension of interpersonal relations, Butler’s theoretical discussions, Boesten suggests, shed much light on both why such practices occurred in the first place and on why they are neither sanctioned nor perceived as deserving of consideration. Both Butler’s discussion of how norms are established, determining the boundaries of behavior deemed acceptable, and what any one particular individual can or cannot be, and, in discussion with Agamben, of how certain lives are deemed livable and grievable, while others are not, tell us much, Boesten argues, about why in Peru women, and particularly indigenous women, could be raped in wartime and can continue to be raped in peacetime with impunity.

In addressing several important questions that shape contemporary social science scholarship on Peru, such as, to pick just two, how historical processes of centralization can help explain why the country is susceptible to authoritarianism or why perpetrators of sexual violence enjoy impunity in both peacetime and wartime, and, more broadly, in addressing the two key themes of institutional weakness and exclusion that have animated social science scholarship on Peru in recent years through the lens of the scholarship of particular social theorists, the contributors to this volume shed new light on the Peruvian case as the following chapters show. They also point to ways in which the approach favored in this volume, based on a productive engagement or dialogue with the work of social theorists from Tocqueville to Judith Butler, via Samuel Huntington or Ernesto Laclau, may inform other cases in Latin America and elsewhere. At the same time, the following chapters illustrate, from a number of different disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives, how the Peruvian case can inflect social theoretical approaches in ways that may both helpfully “stretch” a theoretical framework beyond its usual boundaries and establish the limits of its heuristic capacities in particular circumstances. The chapters do not merely apply Albert Hirschman or Michael Mann to Peru. They draw on Hirschman and Mann to think about Peru, and they use Peru, and specific empirical evidence derived from Peruvian case studies, to think about Hirschman and Mann. In this way, the chapters are best read as a dialogue between “universal” theory, or theory with a universal potential, and empirical cases specific to Peru that can serve as a point of departure not only for further reflection on Peru but also on the social theory under consideration. They suggest that in order to make sense of the big questions that social scientists who work on Peru must grapple with, it may prove productive to engage with big, indeed, grand, theory.
Notes

*I am grateful to Jelke Boesten and Alberto Vergara, and particularly to the anonymous reader, for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this introduction.

1. This volume deals with *Peru in theory* rather with *theory in Peru*, although it is worth noting, as Paul Gootenberg does in his “afterword,” that Peruvian scholarship has always had a fruitful engagement with universal theory, from Mariátegui’s reworkings of Marxism to Aníbal Quijano’s consideration of coloniality.

2. I write the word “theorists” in quotation marks since some of the theorists discussed in this volume did not consider themselves as such. On “grand” theory, see Skinner (1990).

3. Internal armed conflict is the term favored by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

4. Whether the reforms are in fact responsible for the growth is a matter of some debate in Peru. See Dancourt (1999).

5. On competitive authoritarianism, see Levitsky and Way (2010).

6. Studies that build on, and also depart from, this interpretation in interesting ways include Degregori (2003); Theidon (2004); Degregori (2010a); Heilman (2010); La Serna (2012); Theidon (2012); Portocarrero (2012); Wilson (2013); and Milton (2014). Earlier studies, which also shaped this interpretation, include Degregori (1990), Stern (1998), and Manrique (2002).

7. See [http://www.cverdad.org.pe/informacion/discursos/en_ceremonias05.php](http://www.cverdad.org.pe/informacion/discursos/en_ceremonias05.php). Although the TRC’s interpretation of the causes of the internal armed conflict and its recommendations have not found much support in either the political class or in the population more broadly, its report has proved influential in shaping broader research agendas, focused on exclusion and inequality, that seek to explain the sui generis nature of the Shining Path insurgency and the unresolved legacies of the internal armed conflict.

8. It is sensible to speak of the neoliberal turn *in the Peruvian context*, since neoliberalism, or Washington Consensus policies, were applied in a number of different countries with different outcomes at different times during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

9. See Cameron and Mauzer (1997); Tanaka (1998); Wise (2003); Kenney (2004); Carrion (2006), Arce (2006); Conaghan (2006), Degregori and Meléndez (2007); Grompone y Tanaka (2009); Degregori (2010b); Murakami (2012). A particularly interesting subset of this literature has focused on how this process of deinstitutionalizing (or, in some interpretations, neopopulist) neoliberal reform impacted specifically on women and gender relations. See Rousseau (2009), Boesten (2010), and Ewig (2010).

10. It is true, of course, that notable political figures, including former president Fujimori and his henchman, Vladimiro Montesinos, are in
jail serving a lengthy term but these examples of effective justice are extraordinary cases, exceptions to the rule of a judiciary system that is notably corrupt and inefficient, and perceived to be so by the majority of the population. See Burt (2009).

11. On negative perceptions of institutions, see Drinot (2006). On the persistence of the “model” in the context of electoral processes that see anti-model candidates baiting and switching, see Vergara (2012).

12. In anthropology, see Degregori (2000) and Diez Hurtado (2008); in history, see Drinot (2004–2005) and Gootenberg (2013); in political science, see Melendez and Vergara (2010); in cultural studies, see López Maguña, Portocarrero, Silva Santisteban, and Vich (2001); and Portocarrero, Ubilluz, and Vich (2010). See also Crabtree (2006) and Crabtree (2011).

13. On exclusion, see for example, Gootenberg and Reygadas (2010).

14. Less directly, it also engages with the project inherent in Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent’s pioneering Everyday Forms of State Formation, which drew on the work of theorists of the state, such as James C. Scott, Philip Corrigan, and Derek Sayer, as well as Gramscian hegemony, to develop an analytical framework that could account for the Mexican revolution “from above” and “from below.” See Joseph and Nugent (1994).

15. For a more detailed discussion of how these authors’ work has shaped particular fields of scholarship, see the chapters that follow this introduction.

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