

MODERN PERU'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE BECOME CAMPESINOS

The Rural State: Making Comunidades, Campesinos, and Conflict in Peru's Central Sierra.

By Javier Puente. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2023. Pp. 312. \$45.00 cloth; \$45.00 eBook.

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Modernity came to the Central Sierra of Peru in ways dissimilar to the classic colonial struggle and defeat of Indigenous peoples. Digging into rich regional archives and oral histories, this monograph explains how Indigenous peoples became campesinos during modern state building.

Villages recognized how state-imposed capitalization of the Central Highlands could shatter a ruralized nation. As with other countries and their desire for fast capitalization of their nation, they saw Indigenous lands as being open for the taking. This displaced unsuspecting villages. However, the Central Sierra in Peru exerts a different model. A historian who examines what he terms the “Internal Armed Conflict,” Javier Puente sheds light on rebellion and negotiation by focusing on a historically dismissed landscape in Peru. The author gives readers insight without a focus central to the rise of the violent organization *Sendero Luminoso* in the 1980s. What were the origins to rebel anger and the scorched earth method of violence throughout the countryside? This monograph answers the question of why. A move away from the moral economy model to a political model of organization between Indigenous villages and the state offers an explanation for the slow burn of terror in 1980. Puente uncovers stories of measured conflict before the 1980 political state crisis where Indigenous populations reimaged the meaning of community as global change moved toward the Central Sierra. Listening to silences between the 1940s to the 1960s, Puente offers a model centering the ecological relationship between family and land; this book weaves stories of Indigenous empowerment, offering a unified thread between corporate land ownership and Peruvian capital government. Unlike other nations, Peru’s forward-looking political strategy identified Indigenous communities as legal components within the state, allowing advocacy organizations to negotiate land reform on their own terms. Instead of rebellion, we see granular stories of how Indigenous communities were active in the political economy. Indigenous people demonstrated that they would like to “live and die on their own terms” as they fully submitted to the state’s idea of modernity. Puente offers a study of an overlooked gap in the story between disenfranchised Indigenous peoples. Opposed to attempts to bulldoze to make space for capital, villages and their advocacy organizations clashed with private land holders, particularly the owners of mines.

Importantly, this book offers an understanding of how Indigenous peoples transitioned to campesinos through a new understanding of submission. A strong point of this work is how the state attempted to modernize the countryside. After much effort, the state failed to turn Indigenous communities, particularly individual peoples, into a pool of faceless, “civilized” labors. Instead of being swept aside, villages chose the idea of *cooperativización*

over *campesinización* through state-given rights to negotiate as citizens. This crucial point demonstrates how Indigenous peoples in the Central Sierra engaged global changes without losing their identity. What unfolds is a mid-twentieth century triumph of empowered of corporate Indigenous communities moving beyond the bisecting trope of violence and Indigenous loss. Despite the eruption of well-covered political violence beginning in 1980, this study shows an inspiring model of Indigenous empowerment. Alas, the successes in the middle of the century could not foresee how radicals would interpret submission and land reform. *Sendero Luminoso*'s misunderstanding of village-state relations destroyed the hard work of Indigenous individuals who stood up for themselves, their villages, and their collective identities. The era of *Sendero Luminoso* tantalizes historians all the while overlooking the era proceeding nationwide violence. Puente shifts the lens to an era full of state negotiations and village successes. Recapturing this history, this book is an essential reading for those who study indigenous struggles offering new questions about short-lived triumphs.

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CATHOLIC ACTIVISTS COMBAT GUATEMALA'S GENOCIDE

Blessed are the Activists: Catholic Advocacy, Human Rights, and Genocide in Guatemala.

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Today, Guatemala is considered one of the most violent countries in Central America and the Western hemisphere. But today's violence and security practices are a product of the 36-year genocidal civil war (from 1960 to 1996) in which hundreds of thousands of Indigenous people were murdered or disappeared. Scholars have written much about the civil war, the atrocities, and the survivors, but mostly absent from those analyses have been the allies, supporters, and people who tried to remember the humans in the middle of such terrible, violent conflict. Michael J. Cangemi's provides an analysis of the Catholic activists who were important allies for the war's survivors and victims.

Cangemi questions how Catholic activists collaborated to combat the violence of Guatemala's genocide, often attempting to protect the country's Indigenous populations. The book focuses on how Catholic activism intersected with US foreign policymaking, diplomacy, and the Carter and Regan administration's policies regarding Guatemala and the Central American region. Chapter 1 investigates what Cangemi calls "Guatemala's church-state rupture" in the 1960s and 1970s. The chapter establishes the historical roots of Catholic Action, particularly in Latin America, and how the Church's activism became