

# AUTHORITARIANISM AND DEMOCRACY IN THE ANDES

## State Weakness, Hybrid Regimes, and Societal Responses

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*POLITICS IN THE ANDES: IDENTITY, CONFLICT, REFORM.* Edited by Jo-Marie Burt and Philip Mauzeri. (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004. Pp. 324. \$59.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper.)

*THE UNRAVELING OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA.* Edited by Jennifer L. McCoy and David Myers. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. Pp. 342. \$49.95 cloth, \$25.00 paper.)

*FUJIMORI'S PERU: DECEPTION IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE.* By Catherine M. Conaghan. (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. Pp. 311. \$29.95 cloth, \$25.95 paper.)

*THE ANDES IN FOCUS: SECURITY, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMIC REFORM.* Edited by Russell Crandall, Guadalupe Paz, and Riordan Roett. (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005. Pp. 235. \$49.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.)

*MARKET REFORM IN SOCIETY: POST-CRISIS POLITICS AND ECONOMIC CHANGE IN AUTHORITARIAN PERU.* By Moisés Arce. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005. Pp. 169. \$45.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.)

The Andes (a subregion comprising Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela) is in flux. In the last thirty years or so it has undergone significant demographic, economic, political, and social change. In addition to the establishment of electoral politics, the subregion is seeing a dramatic reduction in infant mortality and fertility rates, a rising life expectancy, and a gradual aging of its population (ECLAC 2005). The adoption of market reforms has had a particularly dramatic effect in the area. Unemployment and poverty have grown, income levels have shrunk, and social anomie in the form of crime has skyrocketed. It remains to be seen whether these indicators will improve as a result of the important economic growth that is taking place in the region (Inter-American Dialog 2005).

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Topping the list of region-wide trends is certainly political instability and unrest. In recent years, this subregion (with the exception of Colombia) has seen dramatic instances of regime instability, as governments were prematurely removed from office in Bolivia, Ecuador (multiple times), and Peru. In other cases, presidents with dubious democratic credentials such as Alberto Fujimori in Peru and Hugo Chávez in Venezuela faced significant opposition manifested in massive street mobilizations and strikes. Political violence too has affected at least two of these countries, and while it has subsided in Peru, it shows no indication of easing up in Colombia.

Scholarly interest has grown accordingly. In fact, we seem to be in the midst of an Andean academic "boom." In addition to the two books reviewed here that deal with the subregion as a whole, two other volumes devoted to examining politics in the Andes have just been published (Drake and Hershberg 2006; Mainwaring, Bejarano, and Pizarro Leongómez 2006); too late to be included in this review. These volumes join a mounting body of scholarship that deals with this dynamic subregion of South America.<sup>1</sup>

This growing interest is fitting. The Andean countries share more than a mere geographic proximity. They face problems and challenges that stem from common backgrounds: countries literally divided by a mountain range, crossed by ethnic divisions, plagued by poverty, and marked by legacies of political instability, violence, and authoritarianism. This commonality is apparent in the themes these books share: state weakness, authoritarianism, institutional fragility, and ambivalent societal attitudes towards democracy.

#### STATE WEAKNESS AND DEMOCRACY

Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996) have made the compelling argument that democratization requires "stateness." As they so eloquently stated, "Democracy is a form of governance of a modern state . . . without a state, no modern democracy is possible" (17). The implication is that weak states produce weak democracies, and many of the contributions reviewed here provide plenty of evidence of this assertion. But what the experience of the Andean case also shows us is that the opposite is not necessarily true: strong states do not always produce strong democracies. Linz and Stepan offer us a necessary but not a sufficient precondition for democracy.

Many of the contributed essays collected in *Politics in the Andes* show that the weakness of the Andean states has posed significant obstacles for successful democratization. In the introduction to their book, Jo-Marie

1. Some of the books published since 2000 include Alcántara and Freidenberg (2001); Comisión Andina de Juristas (2001); Lair and Sánchez (2004); Massal and Bonilla (2000); Montúfar and Whitfield (2003); Solimano (2005); Tanaka (2002).

Burt and Philip Mauceri describe an incomplete process of nation- and state-building in most of the subregion. Ethnic and regional conflict, especially in the Central Andes (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru), remains unsolved and has greatly hindered the governments' abilities to pursue effective policies. Despite their efforts to assert authority over areas where the indigenous population is predominant, "central states throughout the region had difficulty maintaining and establishing effective control in much of the countryside" (4).

State weakness is also partially to blame for the violence that some countries endure. For instance, the inability of the Colombian state to defeat guerrilla activity, the dramatic rise of political violence in Peru during the 1980s and early 1990s, and the extreme difficulties that governments in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru have in curtailing drug trafficking are clear manifestation of this debility.

The extent to which drug trafficking is related to the inability of the state to control its territory is nicely illustrated by Ricardo Vargas's chapter in the *Politics in the Andes* collection. Vargas writes that the Colombian state has a premodern structure manifested "in its weak capacity to control territory and exercise a monopoly of force in both the city and the countryside" (109), thus allowing the emergence of what he calls an *esprit Mafioso*—a willingness to confront authority and disregard the law. But his analysis goes further than simply stating that violence is bred by state weakness. He demonstrates how the specific consequences of this weakness are related to the social makeup of the regions that elude state control. He shows that the dynamics and the actors involved in drug trafficking in Colombia are largely determined by local conditions.

In his own chapter in the book, Mauceri also uses the notion of state weakness and its local consequences in order to compare state responses to insurgencies in Colombia and Peru. He notes that despite the fact that both countries had low state power, their differing responses to domestic political violence were determined by the nature of their state-elite configurations. Colombia followed what he calls a societal-centered policy of "abdication and privatization" while Peru pursued a state-centered policy of "authoritarian reengineering" (154–156). In Colombia the elite is fragmented and has weak links with the state. This fragmentation prevented "a common political project," (159) and given its traditional antimilitary sentiments, they opted to favor a society-centered strategy. In Peru, on the other hand, the elite is concentrated in Lima and has traditionally favored military intervention, and as a result they backed Fujimori's authoritarian project.

Reflecting on the issue of state strength in Ecuador, Liisa North comes to an unsettling conclusion: military dictatorships have tended to produce "the most coherent efforts to strengthen state institutions and address the 'social question'" (192). She contends that Ecuador's adoption of

neoliberalism has led the country's civilian administrations to engage in a gradual process of state dismantling. This has encouraged the emergence of crony capitalism, which reached extreme proportions during the Mahuad administration (1998–2000). Thus, the liberalization of the market led to a process of deinstitutionalization “that increased elite capacity to extract resources from the state, withdraw capital from the country for saving and investment in safer havens abroad, and eventually provoke a financial meltdown” (204). North's essay suggests that, in addition to the ethnic and regional cleavages that have traditionally weakened the state in Ecuador, the adoption of neoliberal policies has also enhanced the elite's ability to ransack the state, further undermining its strength.

While the adoption of neoliberal policies in Ecuador was causing a process of state dismantling, in Peru these policies were implemented in the midst of what Burt appropriately labels “the authoritarian reconstitution of the state” (256). In the 1980s, she says, the Peruvian state, already weak in terms of capacity and effectiveness, underwent a severe crisis as a result of growing political violence and a full-blown economic crisis that included fiscal collapse, hyperinflation, and deep recession. In this context, some members of the Peruvian bourgeoisie, the armed forces, and state managers, with the support of the U.S. government and multilateral financial institutions, “congealed under the regime of Alberto Fujimori . . . [to] reconstitute the Peruvian state” (255). This reconstitution had three key components: the marshalling of international financial support to stabilize the economy; the centralization of power in the hands of the executive; and the containment of the Shining Path (256–257).

The analysis of the Ecuadorian case indicates that the dismantling of the state can have negative repercussions in the quality of democracy. On the other hand, the Peruvian experience shows that the strengthening of the state under the conditions described by both Mauceri and Burt can also have deleterious consequences for democracy. Are we then to conclude that only a process of state building under conditions of democratic rule can sustain democracy for the long haul?

The Venezuelan case raises serious issues about the universality of this proposition and suggests that it is also important to consider the responsiveness of the democratic system to societal demands and its adaptability to change. This is one of the main conclusions that one can extract from reading *The Unraveling of Representative Democracy in Venezuela*. In this volume, a group of well-known experts discuss the main characteristics of the political regime inaugurated in Venezuela in 1959 as a result of the Pact of Punto Fijo, the reasons for its demise, and the conditions that led to the rise of Hugo Chávez. One of the main arguments in this collection is that the collapse of the party system that anchored the Punto Fijo regime can be partially explained by its excessive grip on society, which led to the party system's sclerotization. The

Caracas-based party leadership became “impregnable” and prevented the rise of young leaders. As a result, argue Jennifer McCoy and David Myers in the introduction, the “political institutions [of the Punto Fijo regime] remained exclusionary” (7) and the urban poor, intellectuals, and the middle-class civil society became marginalized.

The sclerotization of the pre-Chávez political regime is aptly described by Myers and José Molina. Myers identifies four “embedded vulnerabilities” in the Punto Fijo regime: its over-reliance on distributive policies, its poor attention to the regulative capacity of the state, its highly centralized nature, and its lack of attention to the urban poor and the middle class (24–25). The preference for distributive policies and the neglect of the regulative capabilities of the state had more to do with political calculations and the resources available to the Venezuelan state than with inherent state weaknesses. As Myers points out, “Punto Fijo elites sought to minimize the number of instances in which the application of coercion would be necessary” (27).

Molina shows that the collapse of the party system had both exogenous and endogenous causes. He identifies the traumatic devaluation of February 18, 1983 (known as Black Friday), as the starting point of this collapse. Further deterioration came in the wake of the stabilization package enacted by Carlos Andrés Pérez in 1989 and the ensuing urban riots known as El Caracazo that led to the killing of hundreds of demonstrators by the army. The two failed coups of 1992 uncovered as well as deepened the popular dissatisfaction with the two-party system. In addition to these external shocks, Molina argues that the party system was given its final blow when Rafael Caldera decided to abandon COPEI, the party he founded in 1946, to run successfully as an independent in the 1993 presidential campaign. Venezuela moved thus from a “moderate pluralist” party arrangement to a “deinstitutionalized” and “polarized pluralist” system (164).

Why were the traditional parties unable to cope with the growing economic crisis and the loss of popular support? The answer is multifaceted and is discussed in additional chapters in this book. First, the party organizations underwent a process of, to use a useful Spanish term, *anquilosamiento* (stiffening or sclerotization). They sought to politicize (or more appropriately, party-ize) civil society. As a result, as Luis Salamanca argues in his chapter, civil organizations in Venezuela that were not controlled by the parties (and they were increasingly less so) became anti-party (98). Second, the economic policy was overly reliant on the flow of oil money and was therefore unable to cope with the fluctuations of its international price. As Janet Kelly and Pedro Palma note, the decline in oil revenues combined with an overvalued exchange rate, massive capital flight, and rising inflation led to a significant devaluation that reduced per capita income. As expected, the urban poor were hit particularly hard by the

stabilization policies and the decline in income, and as a consequence they discarded their allegiance to the Punto Fijo regime (as Damarys Canache shows in her chapter). Third, the collapse of the model of state capitalism that the Punto Fijo regime had embraced led to the growing disaffection of the business interests that were profiting from cozy arrangements with the state. This led to rifts within the bourgeoisie, as Nelson Ortiz argues. Finally, public opinion at large, as Gil Yépez clearly illustrates, came to the conclusion that the culprits of the sorry state of affairs in Venezuela were the parties, the political elites, and the national government. In almost a perfect replay of the scenario discussed by Juan Linz (1978), Hugo Chávez, the representative of a disloyal opposition, offered himself as the only possible solution to an unsolvable situation. He promised in his 1998 presidential campaign to abolish the Punto Fijo democracy, dismiss the sitting congress, and hold new elections for a constitutional assembly to draft a new constitution. After being elected with 56 percent of the vote, he made good on his promises and reshaped the political regime to concentrate power in his own hands.

#### UNDERSTANDING HYBRID REGIMES

Hugo Chávez has now established an electoral authoritarian regime in his country, as Alberto Fujimori did in Peru in 1992 when he shut down Congress, dismissed the Supreme Court, and decided to rule by decree. The era of Chávez is still playing out, and some of the contributors chronicle the ways in which he has undermined democracy in his country while still keeping up appearances of the system. Electoral authoritarian regimes such as those of Chávez and Fujimori are of increasing interest to scholars. A number of works have been published in the last five years or so to discuss and explain the rise of these hybrid regimes (Carrión 2006, Diamond 2002; Levitsky and Way 2002; McClintock 2006; Ottaway 2003; Schedler 2006). Chávez's alteration of the democratic foundations in Venezuela is well documented by Juan Carlos Sainz Borgo and Guadalupe Paz in their contribution to *The Andes in Focus*, and by the chapters written by Harold Trinkunas, Rafael de la Cruz, and Jennifer McCoy in the *Unraveling of Representative Democracy in Venezuela* volume. What they basically describe is a government that centralizes power and uses the military as a political party. For instance, Chávez used his early electoral landslides to adopt a constitution that eroded checks and balances by greatly enhancing his presidential powers (including the ability to issue decrees). He has also expanded the mission of the military by assigning them the political tasks of fighting poverty and fostering economic development while enhancing their autonomy and power vis-à-vis civilians. Chávez has also reversed the process of state decentralization that was initiated in the last years of the Punto Fijo regime.

In many respects, the process of democratic erosion that these authors describe for Venezuela has an eerie resemblance to the presidency of Alberto Fujimori that Catherine Conaghan discusses in detail in her *Fujimori's Peru*. The elegant prose and journalistic flavor of her account add to the important theoretical points she makes. First of all, she argues that after his self-inflicted coup of 1992, the only category that is appropriate to describe this regime is authoritarian. In this, she follows Cynthia McClintock (1999) and most Peruvian social scientists (Cotler 1994; Cotler and Grompone 2000; Degregori 2000; Durand 2003; Tanaka 1998), who used this category to characterize the regime. Second, Conaghan contends that despite the existence of an opposition press, civil society organizations, and a healthy industry of public opinion polls, a central goal of the Fujimori regime was to render the public sphere irrelevant. She argues that the presence of an influential public sphere is defined not by the existence of open political talk and discussion but by "its relation to the state" (12). In other words, what matters is the extent to which the state heeds the demands of the public: "The existence of civil society per se does not ensure that the public sphere is influential; what makes for an influential public is the connection between political talk and institutional responses by the state" (12).

Under the Fujimori regime, the usual state responses were denial and deception. The public existed only when it was supportive of the regime, but it was invisible when it challenged the regime's policies and actions. As she writes, "Fujimori made ample rhetorical use of public-opinion polls when they show support for the 1992 coup or economic and counterinsurgency policies. But the same polls had to be discounted and rendered invisible when they ran counter to the administration's plans, especially on a fundamental issue like reelection" (6).

Her final point is that the establishment of this regime could not have happened without the complicity of significant sectors of Peruvian society: "To understand the sway of *Fujimorismo* and its staying power, we need to look for the answers higher up in Peruvian society—among the people that should have known better" (252). Among those "who should have known better" we find journalists, media executives, judges, prosecutors, technocrats, high-ranking military officers, and legislators. Moreover, the complicity extended to some members of the business community who took advantage of the economic opportunities offered by the regime and its privatization policies. Conaghan also indicts the international community (the U.S. government, the Organization of American States, and hemispheric leaders) for their timid approach to Fujimori and their reluctance to take stronger action against his reelection maneuvers in 2000 (254–255).

Conaghan's contributions highlight the usefulness of using precise regime categories. Her use of the term *authoritarian* to describe a regime

emanating from competitive elections is appropriate, for these elections were free but certainly not fair. The editors of *The Unraveling of Representative Democracy in Venezuela* seem reluctant to apply the same label to Chávez, and in fact they consider his regime as “a kind of gray zone polyarchy” (83). This reluctance might be explained by their conceptualization of hybrid regime: “political regimes that are not fully democratic but *which have ceased to be authoritarian* and which exhibit some democratic characteristics” (1, emphasis added). Regimes can be hybrid, but it is important to determine whether they are essentially democratic or authoritarian. The key for the classification is not only whether elections are free and fair but also the regime’s overall record of respect for democratic procedures and the rule of law (Diamond 2002; McClintock 2006; Schedler 2002).

Accordingly, I would argue that the most significant change taking place in Venezuela is that a democracy, however imperfect, was replaced by an authoritarian regime (however competitive or electoral based). Saying that one hybrid regime was replaced by a “more hybrid” one, as McCoy and Myers do, does not really convey the full significance of the change.

While Peru under Fujimori and Venezuela under Chávez descended into authoritarianism, the other Andean countries struggled to keep their imperfect democracies afloat. In the introduction to *The Andes in Focus*, Russell Crandall argues that the Andean countries face an “elusive trinity” as they seek to achieve national security, democracy, and economic stability. The problem, contends Crandall, is that “it is virtually impossible to keep these three forces in balance at the same time” (2). The chapters collected in this volume attest to this difficulty.

The chapters in this collection tend to focus on specific issues surrounding the “elusive trilogy” mentioned before. In the chapter on Colombia, Julia Sweig and Michael McCarthy center their attention on President Álvaro Uribe’s security policies and issues related to political violence and drug trafficking. This chapter raises a fascinating theoretical question: how to characterize regimes in which vast swaths of their territories elude the rule of law? As the authors put it, “If democracy and human rights are abrogated on a war zone but protected in different parts of the country, what is the net result?” (12). Indeed. A similar question could have been raised in Peru during most of the 1980s, when regions affected by the Shining Path insurgency were declared in a state of emergency and were put under *de facto* military control. These instances suggest that the hybridity of regimes can originate from different dynamics. Fujimori and Chávez sought to aggrandize their power and used their indisputable public support to reshape their constitutions for that purpose. Their regimes are considered hybrid because they have an electoral origin, hold relatively free although not fair elections, and they



honor the formalities, though not the substance, of democratic rule. In the cases of Colombia today and Peru in the 1980s, the hybridity stems from the inability of the elected government to assert control over the entirety of its territory and from its willingness to abdicate civilian authority in some portions of the country. The intention is not the perpetuation of power but the defeat of domestic insurgencies, in some cases through questionable means. While they can still be characterized as hybrid, they are *democratic* hybrids. Fujimori and Chávez, on the other hand, are *authoritarian* hybrids.

#### SOCIETAL COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY

A key issue emerging in both *The Andes in Focus* and the *Politics in the Andes* collections relates to the political role of the poor and the indigenous population. The advent of democratic politics has empowered them to participate in politics, but as Crandall notes, the paradoxical consequence of this empowerment has been an increase in political instability. This “democratic paradox” (2), as Crandall labels it, is manifested in the crucial role played by the poor and the indigenous movement in the political crises in Bolivia (discussed by Ramiro Orias Arredondo) and Ecuador (discussed by Fredy Rivera Vélez and Franklin Ramírez Gallegos in the *Andes in Focus* volume, and by Jennifer Collins in the *Politics in the Andes* collection). In the Bolivian case, a political pact laboriously worked out by the elites in the 1980s unraveled in the wake of popular opposition to a new batch of economic stabilization and privatization policies. According to Orias Arredondo, the growing mass mobilization ended the brief period of “broad political consensus that created conditions for governability” (45) in this country. In addition, the radicalization of the social movements has put into question the long-term stability of Bolivian democracy.

The indigenous movement’s ambivalent relationship with pluralist democracy is clearly appreciated in the Ecuadorian case. In Rivera Vélez and Ramírez Gallegos’s contribution to *The Andes in Focus*, they report that as part of the mobilization against “dollarization,” the Ecuadorian indigenous leadership pushed for the creation of People’s Parliaments in each province and “simultaneously, the indigenous leadership held meetings with the high military command in which they propose[d] the dissolution of the government” (133). More worrisome was the active participation of Antonio Vargas, leader of the indigenous organization, in the putsch that ended the Mahuad presidency and resulted in his inclusion in the triumvirate that replaced him. The surprising involvement of the indigenous movement in a coup adventure throws into high relief its precarious commitment to pluralist democracy. Subsequently, Pachakutik, the political arm of the indigenous movement, supported coup plotter Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez in his successful bid for the presidency.

The political evolution of the indigenous movement in Ecuador has not been without tensions. Jennifer Collins writes in *Politics in the Andes* that Pachakutik has been successful in organizational terms because the party has relied on three key resources: (1) the cultivation of a strong indigenous identity, (2) the provision of local development programs and projects, and (3) a democratic organizational structure (45). But she also shows that Pachakutik's involvement in national electoral politics has introduced new dynamics that have created serious tensions within the movement. One tension originates from the demands of engaging in national (i.e., nonindigenous) issues versus attending the indigenous local constituencies. The other stems from the debate about political strategy: should the party embrace a radical, even revolutionary agenda, or should it adopt a reformist stance? (54) So far, Collins contends, Pachakutik's electoral success "has dampened the power of the more radical sectors" (56), though she also recognizes that other indigenous organizations such as CONAIE continue to have a more radical outlook.

Lest we infer that this feeble commitment to democracy is present only among the poor, it is important to stress that Ecuadorian elites have been characterized by similar if not worse ambivalence. The parade of seven presidents in less than a decade illustrates the casual commitment of the Ecuadorian elites to the rule of law.

In *Fujimori's Peru*, Catherine Conaghan argues that this regime was impervious to any criticism or mass mobilization against its policy of *continuismo*, or its obsession to remain in office. In less crucial policy arenas, the regime seems to have shown a more pragmatic approach. In his *Market Reform in Society*, Moisés Arce develops a parsimonious model to predict when civil society (broadly defined) will engage in collective action to resist state reform policies, and to determine the probable consequences that this action will have on those policies. Drawing upon James Q. Wilson's typology of policy situations, Arce holds that the key variables to predict the emergence of collective action is whether the costs and benefits of reform are diffuse or concentrated. He argues that policies that have narrowly concentrated costs (or benefits) will provide incentives for collective action, whereas policies that have widely distributed costs (or benefits) will not tend to generate societal resistance (15). Moreover, Arce believes that "the final fate" (15) of reform policies is to a certain extent determined by this societal response. But there are two important constraints for this ability of society to influence the shape of reform policies. As he notes, "the feedback effects of these societal responses on reform process are generally constrained by the exigencies of the new market model, among them the fiscal health of national treasuries, as well as points of institutional access that are available to societal groups so they may 'talk back' to the state" (14). To test his model, Arce analyzes three sets of policies under the Fujimori regime:

tax reform, pension privatization, and social-sector reform policies. He finds that the final shape of these policies, as he expected, was “highly dependent on the initial distribution of gains and losses” (130).

He also convincingly shows that some societal responses were more important than others. As he demonstrates, business elites were much more successful in influencing the policy process than other sectors of society during the Fujimori regime, and as a result these policies ended up increasing their political leverage (130). Important members of the business community, as both Arce and Conaghan show, had a cozy relationship with Fujimori, helping him realize for awhile his dreams of *continuismo*.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

These books highlight some important challenges that the Andean countries face today. They also raise some general questions of interest for students of comparative politics. First, they suggest that while state weakness is a serious obstacle for the development of healthy democracies, the combination of strong states and weak societies is not conducive to democracy either. Second, they illustrate the need for a better conceptualization of hybrid regimes, one that takes into account not only the coexistence of largely competitive elections and authoritarian practices but also the juxtaposition of democratic and authoritarian territorial pockets. Third, they call our attention to the tenuous commitment to democracy that different societal and political actors exhibit. Finally, they illuminate the complex nature of the state-society relationship in the Andes, where societies are stronger than it is commonly assumed and states more responsive than generally accepted. Unfortunately, the Andean state is not always able to withstand the rapacious demands of the elites or the occasional outbursts of popular dissatisfaction.

The volumes reviewed here also highlight some important lacunae in the existing scholarship. Very rarely do scholars try to link, or at least explore, the possible connections between the significant economic, social, and demographic transformations in the Andean societies with current political trends.<sup>2</sup> For instance, to what extent have the changes in the class structure affected the party systems or voting behavior in the Andes? Or, how have the growing educational levels and participation of women in the marketplace affected their political participation and preferences? Is the aging of the population raising new issues or influencing political patterns? Is the middle class larger today than it was thirty years ago? These are some of the unanswered questions that should be part of any future research agenda.

2. An important step in this direction can be found in the chapter written by Margarita López Maya and Luis Lander in the *Politics in the Andes* collection

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