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Atusparia and Cáceres: Rereading Representations of Peru's Late Nineteenth-Century "National Problem"

MARK THURNER

In the midst of the terrible storm in which the Republic is enveloped, the uprising of the indigenous race and its combat against the white race, which barely forms one-sixth of [the population of Peru], threatens to lend formidable proportions to the national problem. The movement in Ancash appears to obey most purely an indigenous agitation. Since its appearance we have been able to do little else but follow the story with uneasy interest, trying to discover its real character and tendencies. In it lies the fate of the Republic.

El País, May 7, 1885

A BOUT the Indian alcalde Pedro Pablo Atusparia little, or rather next to nothing, is known; the same cannot be said for the creole general Andrés Avelino Cáceres. Atusparia is credited with leading the great "uprising of the indigenous race" in highland Ancash, Cáceres with the military leadership of the heroic national resistance against Chilean occupation between 1881 and 1884. They met for the first and last time not in the Andean highlands, where both had fought, but in Lima, the coastal capital of Peru, on June 1, 1886. It was two days before Cáceres, having defeated his rival, General Miguel Iglesias, would take the oath as the new president of the Republic of Peru, and it

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Archives consulted in the research include the Archivo Departamental de Ancash, Huaraz (ADA); Archivo General de la Nación, Lima (AGN); Archivo Histórico Militar del Perú, Lima (AHM); and Biblioteca Nacional del Perú/Sala de Investigaciones, Lima (BNP/SI).

was by all accounts a historic moment. Apparently the two “chiefs” were even photographed together, although, perhaps significantly, the image has been lost.¹

It was the sort of “national moment” that few, if any, postcolonial creole caudillos had been able, or willing, to stage: meetings with rough Indian “chiefs” were sometimes necessary in the course of backland campaigns, but they appear not to have been part of the official protocol in Lima (in the case of Atusparia, as we shall see, this pattern was inverted). Indeed, the meeting of June 1, which symbolically marked the end of a disastrous series of wars international, civil, and social (or “racial”) that scourged Peruvian soil between 1879 and 1885, may be seen as the embodiment of the postwar era’s heightened but ultimately ambivalent consciousness and discourse on the “Indian problem,” which many then considered to be the fundamental “national problem” of Peru.² At least two of the capital’s daily newspapers saw fit to report and interpret the significance of the meeting, which apparently took place in Cáceres’ home, in such terms as these:

The *indígena* don Pedro Atusparia, *alcalde ordinario* and Chief of numerous Indians, who after defeating the [pro-Iglesias] forces commanded by Coronel Noriega, implanted constitutional order in the Department of Ancash, paid a visit to General Cáceres today. . . .

[Atusparia] . . . said that when the General passed on his way to Huamachuco the authorities had not taken care to make [the Indians] comprehend what the international war [with Chile] was about, and that if they had known they would have mobilized thousands of lancemen in a single day.

He also spoke of the poll tax and asked that it be reduced. And last [Atusparia] lamented the shootings and assassinations committed against his race. . . .

During the whole conversation they spoke only in Quechua, both the General and Atusparia.³

A second version, longer than the first, is also noteworthy for the following passages:

A very significant conversation took place today between the Señor General Cáceres and the Indian Pedro Atusparia, Chief of the Indian communities of Huaraz. . . .

Atusparia . . . said that he was sent by all the citizens of the indigenous race that form the communities of Huaraz, personally to convince

1. Ernesto Reyna, “El amauta Atusparia,” *Amauta* 28 (1930), 43.

2. On the widely recognized, critical postwar turn, see Efraín Kristal, *The Andes Viewed from the City: Literary and Political Discourse on the Indian, 1848–1930* (New York: P. Lang, 1987).

3. *El Nacional*, June 1, 1886.

himself that General Cáceres, EL GRAN REPUBLICANO, as they call him, would finally assume supreme power. [Atusparia had heard] that [Cáceres] had been forced to consent to a betrayal by a part of the current Government that would have put power in the hands of Iglesias, against whom they had fought very hard, and to whom they had never submitted, always denying recognition to General Iglesias as President of Peru. . . .

General Cáceres offered to busy himself with all those matters that at this moment preoccupy the Indians, and with those things about which Atusparia had spoken. He told Atusparia that he would send a commission to Huaraz to demarcate all the properties of the Indians and that, guaranteed by the Government, they would henceforth be religiously respected. The General also said that one of his first projects would be to establish schools in those regions so that the Indians could enjoy the benefits of enlightenment, and advance themselves, through their knowledge, to the level of all the rest of the free and independent citizens. On the theme of taxes, General Cáceres promised to Atusparia that he would reduce them until they had gotten on their feet well enough to make payments, so that the Indians would not consider them a heavy burden. . . .

It would be difficult to describe the joy of the representative of Manco Capac's race when he heard the trustworthy and serious word of the future president. Atusparia left convinced that henceforth the Indians—until now the slaves of authoritarian abuse and violence—will be [treated as] Peruvian citizens like everyone else, and that they will occupy a preferential place in the considerations of rulers.⁴

There is nothing particularly truthful or authentic about these printed words, although not for that reason do they cease to ring “historical.” They pass in the masquerade of print journalism or historiography as reporting or sources, naive or perhaps painfully aware of the layer on layer of ventriloquism (putting words and gestures in muted mouths and bodies), translation, and faulty transmission that lies just beneath the surface of the text. We cannot tell what Atusparia said, what the general said, how they said it. And even if we did know what words came out of Atusparia's mouth, to claim that these were truly “his words,” we would have to profess faith in a sovereignty of speech that contemporary linguistic theory would never allow.

The anonymous journalist, at once the voice and conscience of the tiny creole “nation” that then read newspapers, speaks for Atusparia and Cáceres: but we may imagine him not understanding one word of the exchange (perhaps even Atusparia and Cáceres did not readily understand one another's

4. *El Comercio*, June 2, 1886. Both these newspaper reports are reproduced in William W. Stein, *El levantamiento de Atusparia: el movimiento popular ancashino de 1885, un estudio de documentos* (Lima: Mosca Azul, 1988), 272–76. Translations are mine.

speech), in a language he does not know, relying on someone else's summation in translation (in other words, like most *New York Times* reporting on Latin America today). But this is the textual stuff of which any history attentive to the cultural messiness and political deployment of "the paperwork of the poor" and the "excess of words" is written.⁵ Besides marking the event as newsworthy, these (and other) print accounts structured the reception of the meeting of Atusparia and Cáceres among the lettered elite of Lima by resorting to certain keywords or phrases weighted with political and cultural presuppositions, and by invoking tropes or modes of discourse developed in the nineteenth century to reflect on, and prescribe solutions to, Peru's "national" and "Indian" problems.

In this paper, I wish to historicize and decode (not "filter out" or "see through") certain of those elements of late nineteenth-century creole discourse on the Indian that burden the reading of the words between Atusparia and Cáceres. This analytical task, it seems to me, requires at least two related operations. The first includes historicizing the context and content of the words, and the second involves rereading relevant elements of the structuring discourses of the period against my (I hope critical and plausible) construction of events, which has been aided by local archival reading of "the paperwork of the poor" Andean peasant, in order to make transparent, finally, the ambivalent irony of the words. This situated and ambivalent irony of words, I will suggest, may be made to speak to, or inform, contemporary apprehensions of Peru's postcolonial "national problem."

Historicizing the Context and Content of Words

Atusparia . . . said that he was sent by all the citizens of the indigenou race that form the communities of Huaraz, personally to convince himself that General Cáceres, EL GRAN REPUBLICANO, as they call him, would finally assume supreme power. [Atusparia had heard] that [Cáceres] had been forced to consent to a betrayal by a part of the current Government that would have put power in the hands of Iglesiasistas, against whom they had fought very hard.

It was not, after all, surprising that the medium of exchange between the veteran soldier from Ayacucho and the inquiring *varayoc* (staffholder, village headman) of Huaraz should be some lingua franca manner of mediated Quechua speech, despite the marked differences between regional dialect forms. Cáceres, who descended from the landed creole elite of colonial Huamanga, found it natural to appeal to his Indian compatriots (and peons)

5. Jacques Rancière, *The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1994).

in the highland tongue. Quechua, moreover, was then the overwhelmingly dominant spoken language in Huaylas-Ancash, as it was in Ayacucho and most of the rest of Andean Peru. Atusparia's political and linguistic predicament back in Huaraz may well have compelled him to witness the transfer of power in Lima (from Iglesias to Cáceres). Perhaps he needed the rhetorical ammunition afforded by the Quechua language's personal witness-validation suffix (*-mi*) to convince his doubting, Quechua-speaking compatriots back in Huaraz, particularly the more radical elements among them, that El Gran Republicano had indeed come to power and, more important, that he was on their side.⁶

In Huaraz, Quechua-speaking peasants, who then constituted the great majority not only in Ancash but in Peru at large, had good reason to be suspicious. The once uncompromising nationalist hero of the resistance (which has since become known as the *Resistencia de La Breña*) was now surrounded by his former political enemies, the *Iglesistas* and *civilistas*, who had broken ranks with the resistance to seek peace with Chile. Some of these same "traitors," against whom the Indians of highland Ancash "had fought very hard," had actually colluded in the shadowy negotiations that carried the wily general to the presidential palace of the once prosperous but now broken and bankrupt Republic. Chile had defeated the Peruvian navy, seized the Atacama nitrate mines, and then occupied much of coastal Peru between 1879 and 1881. With the occupation of Lima in 1881, Cáceres and others had fled to highland Ayacucho, where the nationalist resistance was organized.

After fighting the Chileans for nearly three years from his highland lair, during which time he garnered considerable support from the Andean peasantry, Cáceres had found himself engaged in a civil conflict with the supporters of General Iglesias. Iglesias, who mainly represented the interests of landlords from the northern highlands and coastal regions, had, under pressure from the Chileans, defected from the resistance and called for peace and "national regeneration." When the enraged Cáceres sought to punish Iglesias for betraying the cause (briefly, an honorable peace without territorial concessions), the occupying Chileans came to Iglesias' aid. By 1883, Cáceres and the nationalist resistance movement, which now directly or indirectly involved tens of thousands of Andean peasants in the northern and central highland regions, had Peruvian as well as Chilean enemies.⁷

6. The *-mi* suffix in the Quechua language, or *Runa Simi* (in Atusparia's dialect, *Nuna Shimi*) indicates that the speaker has eyewitness validation of an event.

7. Nelson Manrique, *Campesinado y nación: las guerrillas indígenas en la guerra con Chile* (Lima: Ital Peru, 1981); Florencia E. Mallon, *The Defense of Community in Peru's Central Highlands: Peasant Struggle and Capitalist Transition, 1860-1940* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983).

Subsequently, the Chilean occupation force recognized Iglesias as provisional president of Peru. After Chile's withdrawal from Peru in 1884, Cáceres and the nationalist resistance, then represented politically by the Calderón-Montero government and the National Congress exiled in Arequipa, carried on the war, now exclusively aimed at removing the "illegitimate" Iglesias regime. A civil war between Cacerista Reds and Iglestista Blues raged throughout the country. The 1885 "uprising of the indigenous race" was the single most violent episode during the civil conflict. In 1886, Cáceres finally overcame Iglesias, but by then the nationalist movement, in its search for social legitimacy with the ruling class, had shed much of its radical, peasant-based edge.⁸ Cáceres, moreover, had not won a clear military victory; his ascent to power was marred by compromise. The political definition of the new regime, particularly for those far from the centers of power, was therefore not yet clear.

Back in Huaraz, provincial or departmental officials could still act as if the indigenous peasantry, or rather its uncivilized customs, were the worst enemy of the nation, a dangerous "barbarism" of "savage hordes" pounding at the gates of creole "civilization." Had they not heard that *Tayta* Cáceres, for whose patriotic cause the Indians had so fiercely fought, was about to become president of the Republic? And now that El Gran Republicano had finally taken Lima from Iglesias, as indeed he should, did he not owe the Andean peasant *republicanos* of Ancash something for their unflinching support? For peasants in highland Ancash had been known, since at least the late colonial period, to refer to themselves as good "republicans" as well. Calling the new chief of the nation "the Great Republican" therefore had particular local meaning, for "republicans" upheld the community and its inalienable "indigenous rights."⁹ Their claim to being "republicans" and "the true citizens of the nation" had been demonstrated, or so they thought, in the recent international and civil conflicts to which Atusparia now referred, and to which Atusparia's successors in the rotating post of *alcalde ordinario*, Apolinario de Paz and Nicolás Granados, would continue to refer in the coming years of the Cáceres presidency.

8. Manrique, *Campesinado y nación*.

9. On the genesis of the term *republicanos* among the Andean peasants of Ancash, see Mark Thurner, "'Republicanos' and 'la Comunidad de Peruanos': Unimagined Political Communities in Postcolonial Andean Peru," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 27:2 (May 1995), 291–318. *Tayta*, both a nickname and a title, meant father or patron.

[Atusparia] said that when the General passed on his way to Huamachuco the authorities had not taken care to make [the Indians] comprehend what the international war [with Chile] was about, and that if they had known they would have mobilized thousands of lancemen in a single day.

Atusparia and Cáceres had nearly crossed paths once before, although the general was then in rather a hurry. Atusparia may even have had a glimpse of him mounted on his horse, although Cáceres would not have noticed Atusparia. It was only weeks before the decisive Battle of Huamachuco (July 10, 1883), which marked the strategic end of the national resistance against Chilean occupation, and only two years before the uprising of March through May 1885 that now carries Atusparia's name. With superior Chilean battalions in hot pursuit, General Cáceres and his Central Army beat a desperate zigzag retreat from the main theater of the resistance in Junín, marching to Huanuco and then across mountainous terrain to Huaraz, where Cáceres had hoped to join forces with Colonel Isaac Recavarren's Northern Army. But Recavarren's unsuspecting force was then stationed well to the north of Huaraz, near Atun Huaylas, poised for the march on Iglesias.

We do not know if Atusparia held a local *alcalde* or *varayoc* post in his village of Marian at the time, although it is possible; we do know that other Indians carried the staff of *varayoc* leadership in Huaraz. Perhaps they would have admitted that the statement "the authorities had not taken care to make [the Indians] comprehend what the international war [with Chile] was about" was not entirely true. Colonel Recavarren had made such efforts (albeit with less success than he would have liked) in the months preceding Cáceres' unanticipated arrival. Under Recavarren's loose command, patriotic peasant guerrillas and montoneras were organized in the northwestern parts of highland Ancash; but these units were recruited in, and operated in, the northern Cordillera Negra region, far removed from Huaraz, as it was there that Recavarren, following strict orders from Cáceres, most needed defensive units to ward off Chilean incursions and to prepare the way for his planned march on General Iglesias in Cajamarca.

That march was suddenly curtailed as the theater of conflict quickly shifted to the central valley of Ancash, the Callejón de Huaylas, between Huaraz and Yungay. The Chilean invasion came swiftly on the heels of Cáceres' retreating Central Army. Local members of the Cacerista elite who remained in Huaraz (most were with Recavarren) were left largely defenseless, having failed to mobilize the peasantry. They would now welcome Cáceres' force, which rapidly passed through town on its way north to meet Recavarren. At the same time, however, Iglesiasista elements quickly emerged in Huaraz to embrace openly the superior Chilean force chasing Cáceres.

Still, Atusparia's line, "had we known, we would have raised a thousand lancemen in a day" was not an exaggeration of the peasantry's ability to mobilize rapidly.

After the debacle at Huamachuco, in which most of the combined forces of Recavarren and Cáceres were either killed by bayonet, maimed by gunshot, or scattered, Cáceres and what was left of his battered cavalry escort limped into Atusparia's territory. (Recavarren could not limp; he lay with a gangrenous leg in an isolated hacienda near Sihuas.) In Huaraz, however, the defeated General Cáceres was unexpectedly greeted "by the *indiada*, which had formed guerrilla bands to harass the enemy."¹⁰ Atusparia's kinsmen, it would seem, had mobilized after all. Although some errant Chilean troops were ambushed by Indian peasants as they plied the Quebrada Honda pass directly east of Huaraz, most of the Chilean forces had already abandoned the mountain valley several days before Cáceres' return.

Thus, the come-lately Indian mobilization of Huaraz welcomed the Peruvian general of the national resistance at a moment when he could not use them. The peasants of Huaraz would not, at least for now, come to know their enemy in battle. We do not know where Atusparia was at the time, or how he acted in the face of these events. But of this there is little doubt: the poorly timed encounter of 1883 would herald the violent clash of 1885. In 1885 the enemy did present himself before Atusparia's mobilized legions. Only now, as history would have it, he was wearing a Peruvian uniform.

[Atusparia] also spoke of the poll tax and asked that it be reduced.

Apparently Atusparia had made this same request, albeit in the form of an urgent petition to the prefecture, once before. Perhaps he now recounted that previous instance to the general; it was in late February 1885 when the moneyless Prefecture of Ancash, then under the command of the Iglesiasista colonel Francisco Noriega, posted broadsides around town announcing that all "contributors" (most of whom were Indian peasants, peons, and sharecroppers) must immediately pay two semesters of the poll tax (the semester rate was one Peruvian sol).

It was the district governors' duty to order the subordinate Indian *alcaldes ordinarios* to update the required *matrículas*, or tax registers, of their respective jurisdictions. The Blue governor of the "first district" of Huaraz, La Independencia, at the time was José Collazos, leader of a coup on October 9, 1884, that had restored the Iglesiasistas to power in Ancash. Atusparia was the *alcalde ordinario* of this first and most extensive district of the

10. Jesús Elías to Isaac Recavarren, Chilia, July 29, 1883, AHM, Archivo Recavarren, cuaderno 10, fols. 40–43v.

province of Huaraz; his counterpart in Huaraz' "second" district, La Restauración, was Pedro Guillén.¹¹ Starting with Atusparia, each of the two leading *alcaldes*, or *varayoc* authorities, in turn requested lists from the *alcaldes pedáneos* and *alcaldes de campo*, their subordinates at the *parroquia* (parish or subdistrict) and *estancia* (hamlet) levels. The pending collection of this hurried poll tax was greeted with trepidation by the 24 or 25 hamlet-level *varayoc* authorities of Atusparia's extensive district. When these authorities let it be known that they could not comply with the request, Atusparia, who was functionally illiterate but could sign his name, sought legal counsel to draft a petition to the prefecture.¹²

The petition requested, among other things, that the poll tax be reduced by half (to the customary one semester instead of two) and that additional time be granted to deliver the village tax registers.¹³ The district governors, however, along with several unsympathetic "notables," or local elites who advised the prefect, announced with indignation that the petition harbored thinly veiled threats. Given, however, the relentlessly formal tone of all subsequent and previous petitions, which were composed with all due respect and decorum for the authorities, this claim, which appeared in letters written by local elites and was printed in Lima's newspapers, was probably only the first in a series of alarmist reports intended to justify repressive measures.¹⁴

In any case, the normal avenue of legal petition was abruptly cut off when Atusparia, obliged to sign the petition in his legal capacity as *alcalde ordinario*, was jailed for contempt of authority, then interrogated under torture. Collazos ordered that Atusparia be made to confess the name of the petition's *redactor*. In the interrogation process, Atusparia's long braid, then the mark of age and political rank among males of certain peasant communities, reportedly was chopped off. When Collazos' frenzied, counterinsurgent search for the authorial conspirator failed to turn up the desired suspect, all 24 of the lesser *varayoc* authorities of Atusparia's district were captured, and "those who still wore long hair" were reportedly subjected to the same humiliation.

11. Contemporary historiography on the uprising repeats Ernesto Reyna's initial error, which misidentified Atusparia as the *alcalde pedáneo* of La Restauración District. On the dual colonial-Andean organization of districts in Huaraz, see Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided: Contradictions of Postcolonial Nationmaking in Andean Peru* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1997), chap. 3 and p. 169, n. 4.

12. Contrary to the historiography, which claims that Atusparia signed with an X, Huaraz' notarial records demonstrate that Atusparia learned to sign his name, albeit shakily, sometime between 1879 and 1886. He was otherwise illiterate and unschooled. His signature appears in ADA, Fondo Notarial Valerio, Civiles, legajo 48, Libro de Juicios verbales, fol. lv, Feb. 4, 1886.

13. Although this petition has not been preserved, rough descriptions of it are given in the June 22, 1885, edition of *El Comercio*. On the basis of these, the petition would closely resemble surviving petitions presented by the *alcaldes* of Huaraz in 1887.

14. *El Comercio*, Apr. 9, 1885.

The following day, March 2, 1885, a sizable crowd of Indians—probably converging around Guillén and the 12 or more lesser *varayoc* authorities representing the hamlets of his district—approached the plaza of the town of Huaraz.¹⁵ Troops garrisoned there were said to have panicked and opened fire on the “Indian rabble.” As dawn broke the next morning, townspeople peered up to behold the surrounding hills crowned with the silhouettes of four thousand to five thousand peasants. Aware of the dire meaning of this gathering, town notables and officers of the Lima Artisans’ Battalion, then stationed in the plaza and charged with upholding the collection of the poll tax, apparently released some of the *varayoc* authorities, offering what must have been seen as bad-faith promises of reconciliation.¹⁶

By three o’clock in the afternoon, the Artisans’ Battalion, which consisted largely of young mestizo recruits from Lima, was completely routed. The *misti* (the Indian collective term for mestizos and whites) Blue governor of La Restauración, Luis Maguiña, was beaten to death during the attack. The fleeing survivors were driven out of the highland valley, down toward the Pacific coast. The prefecture office and the treasury archive, which housed the new tax registers, were set ablaze, and many homes and shops of Iglesiasista sympathizers were sacked. The so-called *indiada* and the freed *varayoc* authorities now controlled Huaraz.¹⁷ But behind them, and ready to move into positions of leadership, stood Red *misti* conspirators.

Once the tremors set off by the dance of thousands of Indian feet had begun in the hills around Huaraz, its movement rushed, as one observer put it, “like an avalanche” down the well-worn social channels of the densely populated Callejón de Huaylas. In a matter of days, more peasant combatants were fielded than General Cáceres and Colonel Recavarren together could have dreamed of in 1883. Soon peasants had laid siege to all the major towns of the valley.

Just downriver from Huaraz, the town of Carhuaz was rapidly taken by its peasantry, who responded to the persecution, and leadership, of their own *alcaldes*. The small-time Indian miner Pedro “Uchcu” Cochachin appears to have led a band of guerrilleros, or combatants, from Ecash (or Ecas), the northwestern half of the province of Carhuaz. Cochachin was not *alcalde pedáneo* of Ecash or of Rupas (the other, southeastern half of Carhuaz) in 1885 but, in recent popular memory at least, he had previously held the *vara*, or staff of office.¹⁸ As with Atusparia in 1883, at this point it is unclear whether Cochachin held any consensual or appointed posi-

15. Reports range from four hundred to two thousand Indians at this protest. The lower figure appears more likely.

16. *El Comercio*, Apr. 29, 1885.

17. *Ibid.*, May 2, 1885.

18. On Cochachin as *alcalde pedáneo*, see oral account in Stein, *El levantamiento*, 245–48.

tion, political or military, in March 1885. The Indian hamlets of Rupas were apparently mobilized by their *alcalde pedáneo*, Juan Cebrino.¹⁹

Farther downriver, the locus of mobilization was (Uma) Mancos, a small village (and hacienda) just to the south of Yungay. Yungay was then the second-largest town (after Huaraz) in the fertile Callejón de Huaylas. Still farther down the valley, related revolts were staged in (Atun) Huaylas and Macate.²⁰ In late March, the concentration of peasants in Mancos, initially led by Simón Bambarén, prepared to attack Yungay and its urban guard. Like the scene in Huaraz at dawn on March 3, the hills around Yungay now were crowned with haranguing peasants from all the surrounding hamlets. This massive mobilization in Mancos caused Blue elites huddled in Yungay to sound the first alarms of an ominous “race war.”²¹ Fearing for their lives and possessions, Yungay’s “families” fled downriver to the nearby town of Caraz.

On Palm Sunday, 1885, the assault on Yungay began. The first attack faltered, and Bambarén was killed in action. At this point, the recently appointed Cacerista prefect, Manuel Mosquera, a lawyer and former representative to the National Congress held in Arequipa in 1883, set out from Huaraz—apparently with Atusparia and Guillén, among others—to take command of the siege. Prefect Mosquera and the Indian leaders, like everyone else present, was well aware that Yungay’s notables had publicly declared allegiance to the government of Miguel Iglesias.²² On Holy Saturday, Mosquera, accompanied by Indian guerrilleros from the many hamlets of Huaraz and Carhuaz, stormed Yungay with four thousand to eight thousand combatants. By now poorly munitioned, the urban guard of Yungay was driven out of its positions. Many were killed as they scrambled downriver in the direction of Caraz, including the despised guard commander, Manuel Rosas Villón. The victors proceeded to burn or confiscate the booty of war, which consisted mainly of the property and possessions of guard members and the more prominent, pro-Iglesias Blue notables of Yungay.²³

Before taking Yungay *a sangre y fuego*, Prefect Mosquera had addressed an ultimatum to Commander Villón and “the notables of Yungay.” Mosquera had demanded “an Act signed by all the notables of Yungay recognizing the Government of General Cáceres”; also “40 rifles that have been offered and 100 more equipped with the respective ammunition” and “five thousand

19. See *ibid.*, 282–84.

20. Telegrama oficial no. 1, L. Haza to the Prefect, Chimbote, Apr. 3, 1885, AHM, Correspondencia General, legajo o.1885.7.

21. The alarm appeared first in official correspondence and later in the press. See Subprefect J. Yandavere to Prefect Noriega, Apr. 1, 1885, Caraz, AHM, Correspondencia General, leg. o.1885.7.

22. Subprefect Yandavere to the Prefect of Ancash, Apr. 1, 1885, Caraz, *ibid.*

23. *El Comercio*, Apr. 23, 1885.

soles in coin for the mentioned widows and for the army.” Last, he warned Villón that he had “three hours to meet the remissions requested. If by 12:00 the Commission that you should name, and whose safety I will guarantee, has not handed over the request I will find myself in the painful necessity of having to take that plaza unconditionally.”²⁴

After taking Yungay, the peasant guerrilleros led by Prefect Mosquera set their sights on Caraz, the last stronghold of the pro-Iglesias faction in the northern Callejón de Huaylas. The notables and clergy of Caraz and Yungay persuaded the rebels to spare the “families” that had taken refuge in Caraz, however; the triumphant rebels agreed, and they marched into Caraz in peaceful procession. All the major towns of the Callejón de Huaylas were now in Red hands.

The actions of the “Indian rabble” that had seized Huaraz in early March betrayed certain tactical objectives: to free the *alcaldes* and restore them to their rightful positions of peasant leadership; to remove the abusive *Iglesista* authorities, particularly the district governors, and replace them with *Cacelistas*; to punish the “notables” and other Blue collaborators and sack their properties; to burn the archives of the prefecture and the *Caja Fiscal*, or departmental treasury, which contained the tax registers and receipts Prefect Noriega had begun to collect in January; and to pillage the stores of Chinese merchants, who had also collaborated with the regime and sold basic goods at exorbitant prices. The torching of the *Caja Fiscal* archive especially revealed, as one observer put it, the “cierto sistema” of the insurrection.²⁵

That “certain system,” however, could be (willfully or not) misread. The loss of the archive gave rise to rumors, among them the notion that the *indiada* had burned Huaraz’ *escribanías públicas* as well, thereby destroying all public records of private property.²⁶ This rumor reinforced subsequent *Iglesista* charges that the revolt was not only “barbaric” but “communist.”²⁷ Apparently, however, only the archives of the *Caja Fiscal* and the prefecture office were burned.²⁸ The complete contents of those archives as they stood in March 1885 are uncertain, but the general nature of the collections is clear.²⁹

The burning of the fiscal archive was also ready evidence for the contemporary historiographical contention, first advanced by Wilfredo Kapsoli, that

24. Iraola to War Ministry, Yungay, Apr. 29, 1885, AHM, Prefecturas Ancash.

25. *El Comercio*, Apr. 9, 1885.

26. See *ibid.*, Apr. 29, 1885.

27. *El Campeón* (Lima), May 12, 1885.

28. Expediente relativo al incendio del archivo de la *Caja Fiscal* del Departamento de Ancash, 1885–86, AGN, O.L. 561–416. In addition to the prefectural archives, it appears that some private archives, stored in the sacked homes of suspected *Iglesistas*, were also lost.

29. See Expediente de inventario de las existencias de la *Caja Fiscal* del Departamento de Ancash, June 22, 1881, ADA, Fondo Notarial Valerio, leg 45.

the Atusparia Uprising was an “antifiscal movement.”³⁰ Complementary evidence for the antifiscal reading was derived from newspaper accounts, which often blamed Prefect Noriega’s personal excesses for inciting the Indians of Huaraz to revolt in 1885. But this reading fails to acknowledge that Noriega’s vilified actions (and discourse) were not substantially different from those of nearly all other Ancash prefects of the period. Like his colleagues, Noriega would find the department’s coffers empty. He would vigorously apply the poll tax to raise revenue; he would raise a motley military force to collect the tax and otherwise “maintain order”; he would reopen the lapsed Superior Court of Ancash to settle festering disputes, funding this, too, with the anticipated poll tax revenue. He would investigate squandered state properties and order them leased at a profit; and to carry all this out, he would replace the opposition’s officials with his own. Noriega’s routine fiscal measures, reapplied countless times in late nineteenth-century Ancash, did not in themselves cause the revolt of 1885.

Noriega’s own defense, also printed in Lima’s newspapers, raised another antifiscal reading of the events of 1885. The ex-prefect countered that it was not he—after all, he was only following orders from Lima—but rather the scheming landlords of Huaraz who were behind the revolt. Noriega claimed that certain landlords, possibly of the Cacerista persuasion, had appropriated state lands without paying due rents; these same delinquent landlords had fomented the revolt because they did not wish to pay the poll tax for their peons. Noriega’s case, however, was ultimately based on misrepresentations like that of the Hacienda Jimbe affair, in which Noriega had tried to hide the truth that he himself had backed Jimbe’s landlord by sending troops to collect rents from Jimbe’s sharecroppers.

Noriega supported his case by referring to popular motifs in contemporary creole discourse on the Indian, which sustained the Indian’s “natural repugnance” for the poll tax and his “certified simplicity” or “ignorance” when confronted with the otherwise obvious political manipulations of elites. In reality, it was the tenants, most of whom were community peasants and sharecroppers, and not the landlords who ultimately paid rents to the departmental treasury. Indeed, Cacerista landlords clearly favored the poll tax because it helped procure the labor they required. Of course, ministry officials in Lima would add that it was the landlords’ illegal *gabelas*, or access fees, against which the peasants had rebelled, not the state’s legitimate poll tax. Once again, these very same charges were rerun in 1887 by ministry officials and by Ancash prefect José María B. Sevilla. Similar arguments appeared in 1888 and 1893–95, ending in similar irresolution.³¹

30. Wilfredo Kapsoli, ed., *Los movimientos campesinos en el Perú, 1879–1965* (Lima: Delva, 1977). Kapsoli’s “antifiscal” notion has also found its way into Stein’s *Levantamiento*, 73.

31. See Thurner, *From Two Republics*, 85–92.

All such arguments, and the echoing “tertiary discourse” of those historians who uncritically relied on them as sources, reproduced the elitist bias of what Ranajit Guha has called “the prose of counterinsurgency.” This prose routinely denies the subjectivity and collective agency of subalterns by searching for the causes of revolt in the *redactors* of petitions, in wicked landlords who dupe “ignorant” and “innocent” peasants, and in other conspiratorial elites or subversive agents who may be identified and (sometimes) readily apprehended by the police. As Guha has argued in the South Asian context, this “primary” counterinsurgent prose is then transposed into “secondary” accounts like those appearing in Lima’s newspapers, which in turn are read by historians, who, in their “tertiary” accounts, argue that peasants are sociologically incapable of leading their own revolts.³²

Historical analysis of the local “paperwork of the poor” that documents nineteenth-century state-peasantry fiscal relations reveals that the poll tax of 1885 was abusive for conjunctural, that is, historically contingent, reasons, and not for structural or sociological ones; that is, not because of some innate “antifiscal” or “antistate” propensity among the peasantry. The emergency wartime *contribución personal*, or poll tax, which was decreed by dictator Nicolás de Piérola in 1879, was abusive because it carried no tributary legitimacy. It was not accompanied by legally mandated state protection of Indian access rights to usufruct parcels and commons, as the *contribución de indígenas* had been before 1854, the last time the tributary head tax, or *contribución*, had been legally collected in Huaraz (with the possible exception of 1866). The tributary legitimacy of the *contribución* had been dissolved in the intervening decades by landlord enclosures of commons. Since mid-century, landlords had privately levied the extralegal *gabelas* on landless or land-hungry peasants who needed access to the highland commons that the landlords were now intent on fencing.

The poll tax of 1885 was thus a “double tax” levied on top of the *gabelas*, and it could not mediate or guarantee access to commons. This poll tax could be legitimate only for political or national reasons; that is, for the defense of *patria* (concretely, the sustenance of one or another caudillo’s army). But in 1885, the poll tax was hastily imposed in a moment of severe economic duress by an illegitimate, collaborationist regime installed by the Chileans and opposed by most of the highland Peruvian population. The *patria* rationale for the tax was thus also lost.³³

Nevertheless, and contrary to “antifiscal” readings (unwittingly aided

32. Ranajit Guha, “The Prose of Counter-Insurgency,” in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, ed. Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988), 45–87; and Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983).

33. On taxation and enclosure, see Thurner, “‘Republicanos’ and ‘la Comunidad’” and *From Two Republics*.

by reactionary, “anticommunist” predecessors), it was not simply the compounded economic pressure or the political repugnance of the tax but the violent repression of alcalde mediation and negotiation that appears most directly linked to the mass mobilization of 1885.

And last [Atusparia] lamented the shootings and assassinations committed against his race.

The reception in Lima of the alarming news of a “great indigenous uprising” in Ancash (letters written by besieged Iglesias began to appear in the newspapers), which some took to be the long-feared “race war” of creole nightmare and political discourse, was quickly translated into action. General Iglesias, the provisional head of state, moved to name the trusted Colonel José Iraola as the new prefect of Ancash, with orders to march swiftly on Huaraz and crush the insurrection.³⁴

The Northern Pacification Force disembarked on the Ancash coast at Casma on April 12. The next day, Iraola informed the minister of war in Lima of an unanticipated turn of events: “The news I have received from the interior is favorable, and I believe that there will be very few obstacles to overcome to obtain the pacification of the Department.”³⁵ Although Iraola was wrong about the obstacles, it is likely that in addition to news of aid offered by local Iglesias in Yungay, he had learned of the hushed and cowardly assassination in Huamachuco of José Mercedes Puga, northern military chief of the national resistance, just when Puga was readying his triumphant forces for a march on Ancash.³⁶ The ambush of Puga, most likely carried out under the orders of Iraola’s field commander, Callirgos Quiroga, removed the most serious military threat to the counterinsurgency expedition and, in all probability, altered the course of the uprising of 1885.³⁷

With Puga’s considerable forces removed from the scene (they retreated north to bury their caudillo on his hacienda in Cajamarca), the movement in Ancash, which responded to the political contours of the ongoing civil war between Iglesias and Cáceres, was more readily cast as an “indigenous uprising” or “race war.”

Even with the threat of Puga removed, however, Iraola’s pacification

34. Prefect José Iraola to Ministry of Government, Lima, Apr. 8, 1885, BNP/SI, Prefecturas, Ancash, 1885 (1).

35. Iraola to War Ministry, Puerto de Casma, Apr. 13, 1885, AHM, Prefecturas, Ancash.

36. A point missed by the historiography. See Mariano José Madueño to Ministry of War, Lima, Apr. 4, 1885, AGN, O.L. 560–13.

37. Callirgos Quiroga was later sentenced to prison as the responsible commanding officer in Huamachuco when Puga was assassinated. See C. Augusto Alba Herrera, *Atusparia y la revolución campesina de 1885 en Ancash* (Lima: Atusparia, 1985), 203–5.

force still reached Yungay “fatigued and bootless,” after having sustained “five tenacious . . . battles with the Indian rabble that had crowned the heights and harassed us with boulders and firearms.”³⁸ After the warm reception secretly organized by the town’s pro-Iglesias *gente decente*, Iraola reported, “we were surprised by a rude attack from the indigenous forces commanded by Dr. M. Mosquera. I calculate that they were about 5,000, and of these about 200 were perfectly armed [that is, with firearms]. After about four hours of tenacious fighting we had them on the run.” But on the 28th,

we began to note that from all the hills surrounding Yungay, as well as at the bridge leading into town, there descended infinite masses of Indians, that I calculate in more or less 12,000 hailing from all the provinces of this Department. The attack was tremendous . . . Indian casualties on this day were numerous, but on our side we lost only two officers and 30 soldiers. . . . [W]e took a few prisoners, and they declared that the Alcaldes Atusparia and Granados had, according to some, been killed, and according to others, wounded.³⁹

With Prefect Mosquera in only precarious control, the tide had now turned, and the exemplary killing of “savage hordes” had begun. We cannot know what would have happened with Puga at the helm, but in the case of Prefect Mosquera and subsequent Cacerista military officers, such as Colonel Miguel Armando Zamudio, the answer is fairly clear. Closing ranks with Iglesias alarmists, the local Cacerista command distanced itself from the “savage hordes.” Mosquera soon appealed to Iraola’s patriotic conscience while absolving himself of personal responsibility in the conflict.

As a Peruvian first, and before your allegiance to Señor Iglesias . . . you should look after the Pueblo [of Yungay] that has received you with such hospitality. . . . I am only responding to the blind tenacity of a group of bad Peruvians who perpetuate the Rule of [the Chilean admiral Patricio] Lynch in this disgraced land. . . . [T]he valiant warriors who commit themselves to such a favorable cause will be responsible for its consequences before the country and before history. You and I will safeguard the principles of Humanity and Civilization, even if it is over our dead bodies.⁴⁰

When Mosquera saw that his “valiant warriors” had suffered heavy losses in several unsuccessful assaults on Iraola’s well-munitioned positions in Yungay, he quickly sought an honorable resolution that might save Iraola, Yungay, and himself from the ignominy that would befall them if they were held

38. Iraola to War Ministry, Yungay, Apr. 29, 1885, AHM, Prefecturas Ancash.

39. *Ibid.*

40. Mosquera to Iraola, Mancos, Apr. 27 and 28, 1885, *ibid.*

responsible for “spill[ing] sterile torrents of blood in a dishonorable manner before the country.” Mosquera now confessed that, like his Iglesista counterpart, he, too, wished to avoid the “demolition of property that has always served as a source of vitality and progress.” Iraola, now firmly in command of the military situation, arrogantly replied that he would inflict a terrible lesson on “the savage hordes.”⁴¹

Iraola’s rifles and artillery mowed down wave after wave of charging peasants, then his soldiers pursued and shot countless more: the “lesson” would be written in blood. The killed and maimed included Atusparia, Granados, Bambarén, and the local Cacerista journalist Felipe Montestruque, Mosquera’s secretary and the probable author of at least some of the comunicués sent to Prefect Iraola.⁴² In his last comunicués to Mosquera, Iraola noted that “after three attacks by your forces on this city all you have achieved is to blanket the fields with cadavers and spill torrents of blood, whereas I have not a single fatality to lament.” The scene was repeated in Huaraz in early May, when Iraola’s field sergeant, Isidro Salazar, repelled the siege led by Pedro “Uchcu” Cochachin.

We engaged in renewed hand-to-hand combat of unequalled butchery . . . but we did not long hesitate, for all it took was to see the enemy [for us] to throw ourselves on him and vanquish him with a heroism worthy of every eulogy, leaving the fields sown with cadavers . . . and an incalculable number of dead and wounded lay scattered about in the brambles. In this manner they paid very dearly for their temerity.⁴³

While it was happening, the bloody counterinsurgency campaign directed against Atusparia’s “indigenous race” in highland Ancash was—and, curiously, was not—the subject of commentary in the Lima press. That creole discourse on “the indigenous race” could be blissfully oblivious, or perhaps tactically resistant, to events on the ground is evidenced by the erudite essay by the physician, geographer, and editor Luís Carranza, himself an active Cacerista sympathetic to the Indians’ plight, which appeared in *El Comercio* on May 29, 1885, and which historians in subsequent decades frequently cited as an authoritative piece of Peruvian ethnology.⁴⁴ That this discourse could be read against current events reported on the same pages, however, was made very clear in a letter to the editor, signed by an any-

41. Mosquera to Iraola, Carhuaz, Apr. 27, 1885; Iraola to Mosquera, Yungay, Apr. 28, 1885, *ibid.*

42. See Callirgos Quiroga to Estado Mayor del Ejército, Yungay, Apr. 27, 1885, AHM, Estado Mayor del Ejército, leg. 0.1885.6.

43. Sergeant Isidro Salazar to Iraola, Huaraz, May 12, 1885, AHM, Prefecturas Ancash, leg. 0.1885.1.

44. Among those who cited Carranza approvingly were Sir Clements Markham, Javier Prado, and Carlos Wiesse.

mous “Mestizo” and printed in the next day’s issue. Carranza’s essay owed much to both liberal historiography (particularly the influential reflections on the Inca state written by the U.S. historian William Prescott) and positivist physical anthropology, which had several followers in Peru. The essay ranged freely over such subjects as craniometry, social psychology, aesthetics, and the lasting effects of “oriental” (Inca) and Spanish despotism. The “*indígena* of the cordillera,” Carranza wrote,

is a robust being, strong to resist the fatigue of long journeys on foot, and capable of carrying heavy loads on his back for great distances. . . . In the eyes of a doctor he offers a lymphatic temperament, accentuated in his physical constitution as much as it is in the attributes of his character. His sad and severe physiognomy, with a certain strange mixture of malicious distraction, is that of a being who revels in a paralyzed intellect in the midst of a slow but certain progress. Craneologically, he belongs to those races in which the anterior lobes still have not reached the plenitude of their development.⁴⁵

After an analysis of Indian aesthetics, or rather the lack thereof, Carranza argued, in the characteristically Lamarckian logic of late nineteenth-century creole racial thought, that cranial-intellectual development in “the indigeneous race of Peru,” previously hindered by Inca despotism, was brought to a halt by a historical event: the profound trauma of the Spanish conquest.

It is above all else necessary to keep in mind that the Indian of today is in intellectual capacity the same as [he was] in the age of the [Inca] Empire. The Conquest, far from communicating a new impulse to the intelligence of the Indian, actually paralyzed it. The spirit of this race appears to have suffered a trauma so profound that it left it immobile at a point in its progressive evolution, and since then it has remained in complete immutability, such that psychologically the Indian of our day is in the order of moral types what the mammoth preserved in the snows of the Siberian Sea is in the order of organic types.⁴⁶

Carranza then turned to yet another diagnostic theme or presupposition of late nineteenth-century creole discourse on the Indian, that of Indian passivity in the face of misfortune. The cowed Indians could not express but only swallow their rage.

If at some time the sentiments of hate and revenge torment the soul of the Indian, he is not capable of giving himself over to the transcendence of virile fury, in which man finds in himself unknown strengths with which to challenge humanity and his destiny. . . . The idea of resistance,

45. Luís Carranza, “Apuntes sobre la raza indígena,” *El Comercio*, May 29, 1885.

46. *Ibid.*

the sentiment of struggle, appears foreign to the character of the people dominated by the Incas.⁴⁷

Yet counterinsurgent and local “white” images of “the indigenous race” in highland Ancash in 1885 contrasted sharply with the images recapitulated by Carranza. The Indian in restless Huaraz was not the *indio manso* of the educated creole imagination but rather the *indio bravo* who collectively was known as “the savage horde” or “the barbarian,” now unleashing “race war” on the *gente decente*. Peruvian historian Nelson Manrique has argued that Chilean soldiers, drawing on their recent experience in Chile’s Indian wars against the less sedentary Araucanians or Mapuches, carried the *indio bravo* image with them to Peru. The result, says Manrique, was the brutal massacre of Peru’s largely defenseless indigenous peasants in acts of perverse violence.⁴⁸

The same could be said, however, of the untimely massacres suffered by the Atusparia insurgents at the hands of Peruvian “pacification” forces. On June 11, 1885, the notables of Huaraz staged a decorous ceremony of gratitude in honor of Prefect Iraola and his victorious forces. In it the “indigenous uprising” was described as a contest between the “barbarism” of the “Indian rabble” and the “civilization” and “humanity” of the “decent people” of the towns. Iraola, echoing statements made in his correspondence with Mosquera during the bloody siege of Yungay, declared that his battle and that of his brave soldiers had been waged “to defend a sacred principle of humanity.” The mayor of Huaraz, in his ceremonious eulogy to Iraola, “compared the blind masses . . . with the Barbarians of the North,” adding that had the Indian rabble been victorious, it would have brought, “in addition to Barbarity, the Reign of Darkness.”⁴⁹

This rhetoric justified the exemplary lesson inflicted on “the blind masses,” who, as Sergeant Salazar had put it, “paid very dearly for their temerity,” and it implicitly waved aside the anticipated accusations of genocide that would soon appear in letters printed in Lima’s newspapers. No one knows exactly how many peasants died in Ancash in 1885, but the number was probably in the thousands.⁵⁰

Although the uprising of 1885 was not a “race war,” the persecution of alcaldes, the massive fatalities suffered by the “savage hordes” at the hands of Iglesiasista troops, and the ready collaboration of significant segments of the town population tipped the scales of political protest toward social and

47. Ibid.

48. Manrique, *Campesinado y nación*, 105–10.

49. Prefect Iraola to War Ministry, Huaraz, June 11, 1885, AHM, Prefecturas Ancash.

50. Newspaper reports ranged from one thousand to three thousand Indian casualties, although Iraola’s official reports admitted far fewer. For the upper estimate see *El Comercio*, June 22, 1885.

ethnic rage. That rage continued after the end of May, when Pedro Cochachin's prolonged and tactical resistance, which had raised the racist ire of local elites, met with the rampaging posses organized in the towns, which razed peasant villages suspected of harboring rebels. Cochachin's guerrilleros responded in kind. In the end, Cacerista and Iglesias elites would, as William Stein correctly argues, cut their losses and close ranks against the threat of "social" and "race war" from below (both phrases were used between 1883 and 1885, but "social" gave way to "race" thereafter).

Beyond serving as a convenient cover-up, however, the "race war" rhetoric reflected historically deep fears among both local and national elites. Worried prefects repeatedly expressed such fears in the tense decades after 1885. The Ancash priest Fidel Olivas Escudero's reflections on the "indigenous uprising," written in 1887, reveal that the *indio manso* and *indio bravo* images could, at least in Huaraz, be two poles of a continuum that now haunted elite consciousness.

The race war [of 1885] . . . a horrible picture splattered with blood and covered with hundreds of cadavers, and perpetually oscillating in our memory, [should] give us lessons in prudence, justice, and discretion in our domestic and social relations with a race that, although noble and timid by nature, has the astuteness of a serpent and the ferocity of the savage whenever the limits of order are transgressed.⁵¹

These binary, or bipolar, images of *indio manso* and *indio bravo* lived on in the literary and historiographical memory of the Atusparia insurgency. The indigenista writer and Huaraz native Ernesto Reyna, whose "novelized chronicle" of the uprising, *El amaúta Atusparia*, appeared in José Carlos Mariátegui's socialist cultural and political review *Amaúta* in 1929–30, picked up on newspaper accounts and local legend, representing the personages of Atusparia and Cochachin as bipolar archetypes. In Reyna's canonical portrayal, Cochachin is the essential *indio bravo* who threatens to bring race war down on the heads of exploiting whites: an untamed, rude, anticlerical "skull crusher" and "drinker of [white] blood." Meanwhile, Reyna's Atusparia, noble messiah of the Incas and wise *amaúta* (learned sage), has much of the compromising *indio manso* in him as he seeks peace and dialogue with creoles, and thus represents the future spiritual mestizaje of Peru. Some of the historiography reproduces similar bipolar images of these two figures.

In his detailed study of the events of 1885, William Stein argues that the image of that conflict as a race war was fabricated after the fact in the partisan pages of Lima's newspapers. There is little doubt that the race card was

51. Fidel Olivas Escudero, *Geografía del Perú* (Lima, 1887), 123–28.

played to deny the political intent of peasant actions and to disabuse Cacerista participants of responsibility “before history and the nation.” But such denials of peasant political intent are common among elites everywhere. In this case, racist images of Indians in print were by no means limited to ideologized fabrications, as Carranza’s timely text illustrates. Notions of an inferior, passive race, well disposed to backbreaking work, lacking in intelligence, frozen in time by the Spanish conquest as sentimental vestiges of Inca despotism, politically inept, and without ambition for a higher destiny agreed with much pre- and postwar creole discourse on “the indigenous race of Peru,” which held that the “race” was incapable of rising to the test of patriotism in the face of “wars of conquest” like that just suffered at the hands of the Chileans.

Yet this rationalized, creole racism that depicted Indians as sullen and immobile was itself haunted by a shadowy, historical fear of “race war.” This fear was larger than the Atusparia Uprising, and it frequently found its way into print in nineteenth-century Peru. Philanthropic indigenistas associated with the Sociedad Amiga de los Indios, for example, in the late 1860s had raised the rhetorical specter of “race war” in the pages of *El Comercio*. They had predicted an Indian siege of the coastal cities if relations between “the races” did not improve, in the hope of scaring complacent creole elites into supporting reforms that the Friends of the Indians believed would help “redeem” the *desgraciada raza indígena*.⁵²

Indeed, nineteenth-century creole discourse on race war is traceable at least as far back as the Túpac Amaru II insurrection of 1780. The Atusparia Uprising—particularly the initial reports from Iglesiasistas that appeared in Lima’s newspapers—could still recall the specter of that conflict. *El País*, which followed “the story with uneasy interest, trying to discover its real character and tendencies,” noted that

the simultaneity of the uprisings in the provinces and a certain mark of barbarism . . . have served as grounds for those who judge things based on appearances . . . that the numerous bands spread all over [Ancash] are the race-hating legions of extermination, and [that] their chief [is] the Inca-King, another Túpac Amaru, restorer of the old empire.⁵³

The *El País* editors, however, who were mostly of the Pierolista persuasion (that is, partisans of a demagogic indigenism), added that “none of that is serious.” But it was serious for the Iglesiasista newspaper, *El Campeón*, which attacked the *El País* editorial on May 12. Atusparia, *El Campeón* agreed, was certainly no Inca (that claim was no longer serious), but he was nevertheless

52. See, e.g., “Indios en el senado,” *El Comercio*, Sept. 16, 1868.

53. *El País* (Lima), May 7, 1885.

a “criminal” who wrought “race war” on whites; and he was also a “communist” for having led “the hoards” who pillaged and destroyed property. Those things were serious, and they called for military repression. That “Túpac Amaru” was synonymous with “race war” was a widely held historiographical assumption at the time, despite the evidence to the contrary.⁵⁴

The last word on this discourse, however, must go to “Un Mestizo,” who slyly responded to Carranza’s essay in a letter to *El Comercio*. One may speculate that the anonymous writer sympathized with the more radical elements of the Cacerista cause, but also with the attention that Carranza’s essay bestowed on the plight of Indians.

We have much of the Indian [in us]: that is why we are grateful and faithful as a dog to those who love us and give us affection. The notes on our race published yesterday in *El Comercio*, which we read with much pleasure, deserve our gratitude to the author, and we publicly manifest it here, discharging a sacred duty. It consoles the soul that while writers here generally occupy themselves with Russia, Turkey, or the Sudan, there is someone in Peru who is interested in the Peruvian Indians. We must acknowledge this exceptional preference of the author of these notes for the love it reveals for our race, and because today they brag about killing us by the thousands at the same time that they go to great lengths and expense to import a few hundred Chinese coolies because of a lack of manpower. How could we not be grateful to our incognito benefactor, when a few days ago one of those big capitalists, overhearing someone read the military report from Huaraz [printed on the same page], in which it was said that they had shot and killed two thousand Indians, said: “all the better, there are too many Indians in Peru.” Without the Indians, does this Señor think that Peru could govern itself, or defend itself from wars of conquest? If they kill us all, how many will remain of the other castes? You count them.

*Un Mestizo*⁵⁵

General Cáceres . . . told Atusparia that he would send a commission to Huaraz to demarcate all the properties of the Indians and that, guaranteed by the Government, they would henceforth be religiously respected. The General also said that one of his first projects would be to establish schools in those regions so that the Indians could enjoy the benefits of enlightenment, and advance themselves, through their

54. Most influential was Sebastian Lorente’s reading of the Túpac Amaru insurrection, as in *Historia del Perú bajo los Borbones, 1700–1821* (Lima, 1871). Although it was not the first such attempt, Clements R. Markham’s *Historia del Perú* (Lima: Imprenta “La Equitativa,” 1895) rejected the “race war” reading, depicting Túpac Amaru II as “Peru’s last great patriot.”

55. *El Comercio*, May 30, 1885.

knowledge, to the level of all the rest of the free and independent citizens. On the theme of taxes, General Cáceres promised to Atusparia that he would reduce them until they had gotten on their feet well enough to make payments, so that the Indians would not consider them a heavy burden.

The meeting of Atusparia and Cáceres, and particularly the pledges made by the president-elect, seemed to promise a brighter future for Atusparia's "race." But the postwar period in Ancash was marked by uneasy tension, not reconciliation. Atusparia died an undocumented death in 1887; some say he was poisoned, others that he contracted disease. The general's welcome promise temporarily to reduce the poll tax "until Indians got back on their feet" was still only a promise, and it remained the most contentious issue of the day. The pledged reduction materialized only after Atusparia's (and Guillén's) successors, the *alcaldes ordinarios* Nicolás Granados and Apolinario de Paz, firmly resisted repeated attempts by provincial officials, acting under orders from Lima's Treasury Ministry (Hacienda), to proceed with the collection of the poll tax. Indeed, it was only after Huaraz' *alcaldes*—following the well-worn, litigious political customs of the Andean peasantry—sought literate legal assistance to compose several notable petitions to President Cáceres himself in 1887, and then stood firm until they got his reply, that Cáceres actually kept his word, two years later (1889). Meanwhile, as one of several tactics deployed to resist the poll tax, and aided partly by the paranoid consciousness and rhetoric of local elites, the *alcaldes* raised the bloody specter of 1885 over the heads of provincial officials.

Contrary to the historiographical claims of William Stein and Jorge Basadre, after 1885 the poll tax was essentially uncollectable in Huaylas-Ancash (as it was in much of the rest of central highland Peru).⁵⁶ The Atusparia rebels had burned the tax registers, successfully resisted drawing up new ones, and otherwise avoided the collection of the tax, which Huaraz authorities repeatedly attempted during the Cacerista decade (1885–95).⁵⁷ The reports of Ancash's prefects to the ministries in Lima make it clear that the tax was uncollectable, that the fear of revolt was perennial from 1887 to 1895, and that the Indian *alcaldes* knew what they were up to. The words of Prefect José María Rodríguez, written in 1893, merely reemphasize those of earlier and subsequent prefects.

We have done everything in our power to regularize the collection [of the poll tax] despite all the difficulties that confront us . . . in this Department, where the great majority of inhabitants are *indígenas* who do not comprehend the obligation they have to pay. They procure by a variety

56. Jorge Basadre, *Historia de la República del Perú* (Lima: Universitaria, 1968), 10:221.

57. See Thurner, *From Two Republics*, 105.

of means to evade it, even to the point of armed resistance, as in 1885, when they committed such savage and horrible acts that even today, panic in the civilized part of the population has not disappeared.⁵⁸

The *indígenas*, however, did comprehend their obligations and rights; this had been made quite clear in a petition signed by the *alcaldes* of Huaraz and addressed both to prefectural authorities and to President Cáceres, six years earlier. One year to the day after the meeting of Atusparia and Cáceres, the *varayoc* authorities had declared, “we are aware of our sacred duty as true citizens to contribute to the sustenance of the nation.” The petition went on to clarify, with a historical acuity notably absent in most contemporary creole historiography, why the fulfillment of that obligation was at the moment unjust. Not only had the recent ravages of the war left the Indians penniless, but the caudillo-ridden postcolonial state, again and again, had failed to uphold its own obligation to protect “indigenous rights and property.” As a result, the Indians could not be expected to fulfill their duties as indigenous citizens and taxpayers. They therefore asked Cáceres, as they knew Atusparia had, to extend a reduction or temporary exoneration of the tax to the Indians of Huaraz until the conditions of state-peasantry relations improved. Beyond this stopgap measure, however, the solution they recommended and struggled long to defend was that the state recognize and uphold the relevant articles of the colonial Laws of the Indies that protected their “indigenous rights and property.”⁵⁹

The petition of the *alcaldes* of Huaraz met with initial success: the access rights and community lands they claimed were momentarily upheld by the Cáceres regime and, after considerable debate, by the prefecture as well. Finally, two years later, Cáceres granted the pledged reduction. But the Indians of Huaraz now had other inclinations. Relations with the departmental authorities had not improved much, so they would find ways to avoid paying even the reduced poll tax.

Indeed, the general’s pledge to Atusparia that he would send a commission to Huaraz to survey and “guarantee” Indian lands, which would thereafter be “religiously respected,” was now unveiled in Huaraz for what it was: a liberal project intended to abolish Indian communities altogether. The project had been floated by the intelligentsia of Lima in 1887, via an editorial in the pro-Cáceres cultural weekly, *La Revista Social*. The essay recycled liberal arguments heard in Peru since at least 1821, albeit now with the piquant spice of positivist discourse. The Peruvian Indian, that

58. Prefect José María Rodríguez to Treasury Ministry, Oct. 20, 1893, AGN, O.L. 609–852.

59. Expediente iniciado por los Alcaldes Ordinarios de los Distritos de Restauración y Independencia de Huaraz, June 1, 1887, AGN, O.L. 571–240; Thurner, “‘*Republicanos*’ and ‘*la Comunidad*,’” 314–16.

sad and unfortunate . . . race . . . loves the community in the manner of the oriental races; he maintains an arduous, savage, and unproductive agriculture, because it is a transhumant agriculture, contrary to the grand principles of property. . . . The community has devoured everything in the Indian . . . he doesn't sell . . . buy . . . or inherit . . . nor does he fence, because today's fence will not belong to him tomorrow. . . . In the name of *patria*, humanity, and civilization it is urgent that we redeem the Indian. How? By extinguishing the community, and making the Indian an owner of a piece of land that he shall fence, cultivate and make fertile with the sweat of his brow. . . . We have said it: property is civilization. Let us civilize our Andes.⁶⁰

In 1889 the commission drew up its *proyecto de ley* for the subdivision and privatization of Peru's remaining community lands.⁶¹ Because of a lack of funds, the commission never arrived in Huaraz, but in 1888 it requested a detailed report from Ancash prefect Leonardo Cavero. Cavero attempted to fulfill his duty but responded in August 1889,

lacking a decent land survey or statistics . . . to complete the requested report, it was necessary to consult the *indígenas* themselves about the quantity and value of their community lands and production, with which a result completely contrary to the desired one was obtained. The *indígenas* . . . studiously hide all that is of interest, fearful of being dispossessed or newly taxed, or of having hopes deceived once again with the promises that are always made, but seldom kept.⁶²

The handful of schools Cáceres promised but never established were more heraldic signs of the civilizing mission than commitments to rural education. The liberal discourse on schools and "enlightenment," intended to raise Indians "to the level of all the rest of the free and independent citizens," was as old as, or rather older than, the Republic. It had always been a primary ingredient in indigenista recipes for the "redemption of the indigenous race," whether drawn up by Bolivarians in the 1820s, by Castilla's liberals in the 1850s, by the Friends of the Indians in the 1860s, or by positivist Caceristas in the 1880s.

Such was the legacy of Cacerismo in highland Ancash: "enlightened liberal" projects deflected by wary peasant resistance and dysfunctional provincial administration, combined with repeated and futile attempts to make the new regime of fiscal decentralization, based on the illusory poll tax, work. Cáceres would leave office in disgrace, unceremoniously removed by

60. "La propiedad," *Revista Social*, May 24, 1887.

61. Proyecto de ley sobre repartición de las tierras de comunidad, Tarma, July 11, 1889, BNP/SI, D12842.

62. Prefect Leonardo Cavero to Ministry of Government, Aug. 16, 1889, BNP/SI, Prefecturas Ancash V.

Nicolás de Piérola's "revolution" of 1894–95. During that upheaval, Piérola, the previously self-proclaimed "Protector of the Indigenous Race," abolished the poll tax he himself had created in 1879; but in Ancash it had long since been abolished by the actions of peasants and the petitions of *alcaldes*.

It would be difficult to describe the joy of the representative of Manco Capac's race when he heard the trustworthy and serious word of the future president. Atusparia left convinced that henceforth the Indians—until now the slaves of authoritarian abuse and violence—will be [treated as] Peruvian citizens like everyone else, and that they will occupy a preferential place in the considerations of rulers.

The nature of Cáceres' word and the meaning of being treated as "Peruvian citizens like everyone else" should now be more or less clear. The "preferential place" Indians would occupy "in the considerations of rulers" was marked by the sign of "race," and this sign would be turned against Indian leaders in ways that echoed the colonialist discourses of the past. These "considerations" nevertheless were also marked by the sign of "war"—the other half of the recurring phrase "race war"—which would be invoked during the painful postwar period to underline the patriotic nature and promising national potential of "the Peruvian soldier," who, some critics now recognized, had fought heroically in the war against Chile.

Some creole intellectuals, elaborating on the patriotic discourse of shared victimhood in the face of an aggressive Chilean imperialism, would now identify with the Indian soldier. In many ways, their discourse was strikingly similar to that developed by creoles after the wars of independence against Spain. That discourse made the Indian soldier, particularly when disciplined and acculturated by the corps of creole officers, a symbol of the victorious nation; now he would be the symbol of the struggling but ever victimized nation. It was no coincidence that the pro-Cáceres creole cultural weekly *La Revista Social*, which carried articles praising "the Peruvian Soldier" in the war with Chile, also frequently published accounts of heroic exploits during the independence wars. War was the one sphere in which Indians—despite the dominant discourse on Peruvian Indian docility, exemplified by Caranza's enduring 1885 essay or by Ricardo Palma's reflections on the war—could be granted historical agency.⁶³

It is perhaps not coincidental that Peru's most "national" institution, and the one in which Indians were most likely to participate, albeit for the most

63. Ricardo Palma, *Cartas a Piérola sobre la ocupación chilena de Lima* (Lima: Milla Bares, 1979), 20. See also Kristal, *Andes Viewed*, chap. 3; Manrique, *Campesinado y nación*, 105–10.

part involuntarily, was the army. It was the sphere, after those consigned to the taxpayer and laborer, in which the Republic was most willing to cede Indians a place in the nation.

Perhaps the fullest postwar statement on the Indian soldier was editor José Antonio Felices' essay "El soldado peruano," which appeared in *La Revista Social* on August 1, 1885. The editorial was written to commemorate Peru's Independence Day, July 28, in the spirit of a patriotism that in other times and places might be expected to honor "the Unknown Soldier."⁶⁴ In this case, that spirit, informed as it was by the fears and discourse of race, could not yet be anonymous, for "Peruvian" here meant "indigenous." Felices began by praising "the qualities of the indigenous soldier and the great services he has offered in the cause of national independence and the reign of its fundamental institutions," and by rejecting prevailing stereotypes about the cowardly *indio manso*.

The fact of the Spanish Conquest, realized by a fistful of daring Europeans, has served to cast the verdict of cowardice on the sons of the Sun [that is, Indians]; and based on this verdict—without closely examining its causes—that race is looked on with a disdain more accentuated by each passing day, despite the fact that this race constitutes the immense majority of the Nation.⁶⁵

Felices deployed the creole nationalist historical discourse that tended to see all Indian resistance to Spanish rule either as a precursor of independence or a "race war." The outlines of this discourse had been established in the preceding decades by, among others, such historians as the prolific, Spanish-born liberal Sebastián Lorente; the creole biographer and conservative general Manuel de Mendiburu; and the creole essayist Félix C. Zegarra.⁶⁶ These writers noted that Indians "were never tranquil under Spanish despotism," having shown signs of "virility" and resistance, particularly in the insurrection of Túpac Amaru II in 1780, until "the Sun of liberty finally surged over the horizon of the entire continent, and its majestic evolution illuminated the brilliant light of the *patria* of Manco Capac."⁶⁷

This "Sun of liberty" was, of course, embodied by Simón Bolívar and the creole *libertadores*, but it was "those slaves once judged incapable of liberty" who were "the legions of that Apostle" in the war of independence. The Republic, however, had sold them out, and Indians were sentenced to suf-

64. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), chap. 2.

65. José Antonio Felices, "El soldado peruano," *La Revista Social*, Aug. 1, 1885.

66. See esp. Zegarra's essay "Yo el rey: ensayo histórico," which appeared in *Revista Peruana* 1 (1879), 49–65, 118–23, 195–204.

67. Felices, "El soldado peruano."

fer the military despotism of postcolonial caudillos. Despite the exploitation and neglect under the militarized Republic,

the war which has just desolated our *patria* brings to memory many episodes in which the valor inflamed by patriotism has left the name of the Peruvian soldier inscribed in the fields of battle. . . . The resistance that Chile always met in the [highland] interior proves without a doubt that love of *patria* was a powerful sentiment prevailing among its inhabitants.⁶⁸

As an illustration, Felices singled out the well-known example of the Indian village of Chupaqa, situated in the Mantaro Valley of Junín Province, where the local inhabitants resisted Chilean forces in a fight to the death.

Thus, although the discourse on the valor and potential of Indians as soldiers was not new, it received renewed emphasis in the postwar period. Nor was Felices now alone in taking this position. Besides Carranza, Manuel González Prada, and other positivist thinkers, the sociologist Carlos Lisson placed much faith in the military role of Indians “when they are submitted to severe modern discipline.”⁶⁹ This hope had been expressed in the 1850s by the liberal reformers, including Lorente, who backed the regime of General Ramón Castilla. It had also been an important element of the reformist program forwarded in the late 1860s by the Sociedad Amiga de los Indios, founded by Juan Bustamante.⁷⁰

The argument, which in policy terms boiled down to an enlightened but obligatory military service, was usually framed by describing the need to acculturate or “civilize” the Indian via military training. Indians, it reasoned, would forget Quechua and would be forced to speak Spanish, would eat off tables rather than the floor, and would learn the necessary patriotism of which they were certainly capable but which, for reasons having to do with ignorance and exploitation, they often failed to demonstrate. Not all arguments that pointed to the Indian’s fighting potential were institutionally oriented, however. González Prada’s unfinished, half-positivist, half-anarchist manifesto on the Indian, written in 1904 but published only in 1924, wanted to put a rifle in every yeoman Indian’s hut.⁷¹

Still, the patriotic discourse on the Peruvian soldier that could recog-

68. Ibid.

69. Carlos Lisson, *Breves apuntes sobre la sociología del Perú en 1886* (Lima, 1887), 13. See also Carranza, “Consideraciones generales sobre los departamentos del centro, bajo su aspecto económico y etnográfico,” *Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica de Lima* 3:1–3 (June 30, 1893), 33; Paul Gootenberg, *Imagining Development: Economic Ideas in Peru’s “Fictitious Prosperity” of Guano, 1840–1880* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1993).

70. See “Sección Indios,” *El Comercio*, Sept. 15, 1868.

71. Manuel González Prada, “Nuestros indios,” in *Obras* (Lima: B. Gil, 1986), tomo 2, vol. 3, 195–210.

nize the valor of the Chupaqueños who, in the name of *patria*, had fought to the death against the Chileans recognized the heroism of Atusparia's legions, who had fought patriotically against Peruvian soldiers, somewhat less easily. In the Ancash case, the discourse on race would remain intact even as that discourse shifted toward liberal indigenismo, and it would be turned against the alcaldes who had inherited Atusparia's *vara*. In the same year that González Prada wrote his unfinished notes on "Our Indians," the liberal Ancash prefect Anselmo Huapaya, citing clerical meddling and "cacique" despotism, declared the abolition of the Indian alcalde authorities themselves.⁷²

Huapaya's decree, which branded the alcaldes as caciques and, echoing González Prada, charged that they were "the worst exploiters of their race," essentially repeated Simón Bolívar's foundational republican decree of 1825, delivered in Cuzco, which cited cacique despotism to justify the abolition of the remaining colonial kurakas (hereditary Andean chiefs).⁷³ But the republican discourse on cacique despotism also had Spanish colonial precedents. Viceroy Toledo had used the argument of "tyranny" in the 1570s to rob Inca nobles of the legal status of "natural lords," which would have justified greater autonomy for Andeans; he had also used it to justify the quartering of the last "rebel" Inca, Túpac Amaru I. Viceregal Inspector Areche, whom Bolívar considered an exemplary colonial despot, had used the same arguments as those of the Liberator to repress "rebel" kurakas in the 1780s, when he had Túpac Amaru II (José Gabriel Condorcanqui Thupa Amaro) quartered for sedition. After that, Areche had suppressed the principle of hereditary chieftainship (making exceptions for loyalist chiefs) and banned the cultural symbols and language of what ethnohistorian John Rowe has called "Inca nationalism."⁷⁴

Both Areche and Bolívar deployed the discourse on cacique despotism to abolish indirect rule through ethnic chiefs. Huapaya pronounced the same intent. But the prefect did not have to read colonial *ordenanzas* or independence-era decrees to learn the right words; they were on the lips of contemporary liberal reformers, positivists, and indigenistas (and would remain so for decades to come). Such luminaries as Manuel González Prada and Clorinda Matto de Turner would cultivate the same discourse among the lettered creole elite by simply substituting "clase" (kind) for "raza." Uppity Indian leaders who managed to "rise above their kind" were, according to the

72. Prefect Anselmo Huapaya to Ministry of Government, Mar. 11, 1904, AGN, Ministerio del Interior, leg. 95, mesa de partes no. 73.

73. For the decree, see Pedro Emilio Dancuart, *Anales de la Hacienda Pública del Perú* (Lima: C. Stolte, 1902-26), 1:272.

74. John H. Rowe, "El movimiento nacional inca del siglo XVIII," *Revista Universitaria* (Cuzco) 107 (1954), 17-47.

indigenista rhetoric, “the worst enemies of their kind.” To González Prada’s “trinity of brutalization”—the parish priest, the wicked landlord, and the provincial official—Matto de Turner added, in her indigenista novel *Aves sin nido*, “the caciques and alcaldes.” As their own worst enemy, Indians, it seemed, could never get it right; others would have to save them from their plight.⁷⁵

In 1904, Prefect Huapaya wrote to his superiors in Lima, exclaiming, “the alarm in this Capital has . . . been widespread, because the threat of an Indian uprising has reminded [the decent people] of the horrible acts committed by the Indian rabble in 1885.” Following the well-worn counter-insurgent discourse Prefect Noriega had deployed at that time, Huapaya argued that conspiring landlords—in this case, the would-be congressman Manuel de la Vega and the current leaselord of Hacienda Vicos—had driven the Indians of Huaraz to revolt against his authority. De la Vega had, in the prefect’s conspiracy theory, urged the Indians to defy the new *contribución rústica*, or rural property tax, which had replaced the poll tax abolished in 1895. De la Vega had also “incited,” and drawn up, the petition signed by the “caciques” or “varas.”⁷⁶

Huapaya, like Noriega in 1885, could not conceive of the possibility that Indians were capable of organized political protest. All they were capable of was being duped or committing “horrible acts” of “race war.” Huapaya wrote that the “horrible acts” of 1885, when “the brutal and savage . . . domination of the towns . . . converted each and every Indian into an authority without any organization or idea of administration . . . to exterminate all those who did not belong to the indigenous communities,” could happen again if swift measures were not taken.⁷⁷ But the alcaldes of Huaraz once again, as peasants were wont to do, had merely followed the appropriate legal procedures by petitioning the prefecture for a reduction or exoneration of the tax.

As in 1885, on delivery of the petition, the alcaldes were jailed and abused, this time by the president of the departmental junta. Fearing a repeat of the events of 1885, Prefect Huapaya took preemptive measures. He blocked a meeting of Indians in the plaza of La Soledad and ordered that all *chicherías*, or canteens, where Indians frequently gathered, be closed. The urban guard was called in to enforce the order prohibiting all Indian assemblies. The prefect then held an apparently amicable meeting with the Indian alcaldes, in which he later claimed to have persuaded them to desist

75. See Kristal, *Andes Viewed*, chap. 3; Manuel González Prada, “Discurso en el politeamo,” in *Pajinas libres* (Paris: P. Dupont, 1894), 72–73; Clorinda Matto de Turner, *Aves sin nido* ([1889] Lima: Peisa, 1973), 9.

76. Prefect Huapaya to Ministry of Government, Mar. 11, 1904, AGN, Ministerio del Interior, leg. 95, mesa de partes no. 73.

77. *Ibid.*

from their plans to revolt. The prefect promised that the government would attend to their petition. Then Manuel de la Vega was captured. De la Vega, however, declared that the unrest was caused by Prefect Huapaya's decree "that the chiefs of the Indians not be recognized in the character of authorities, and that they be obliged not to carry the *vara*, which they consider to be a sign of authority and representation."⁷⁸

The explosive situation, put on hold by Huapaya's negotiations and the ensuing national elections, was diffused months later when Huapaya's abolition was reversed by the new prefect, Eulogio Saldías. Saldías re-recognized the offices of the *alcaldes ordinarios*, he said, "for reasons of legality and practical prudence." The Indians, he argued, "have been exercising these offices since time immemorial; and apart from the fact that they are not expressly forbidden by law, they tend to be just one more set of agents who carry out the orders of the constituted authorities, thus consulting in the harmony and subordination of the classes that they represent."⁷⁹ Prefect Saldías' practical stance, which sidestepped liberal dogma and the official policy of the Ministry of Government in Lima (which later declared Saldías' recognition void, holding that the Constitution prohibited the offices), recognized the *alcaldes* as indispensable mediators of republican rule in the Andean provinces. Saldías knew that without the *varayoc* authorities he would not be able to govern the Indian communities.

Perhaps Cáceres recognized the same reality when he decided to receive Atusparia in his home on that June morning in 1886. Atusparia, the largely illiterate *alcalde ordinario* of humble peasant extraction, was no cacique; nor was he the proclaimed "chief of the indigenous race," and rather less "the representative of Manco Capac's race," which is to say, someone of noble Inca descent.⁸⁰ He was also no *amauta* (Quechua for scribe or learned elite; figuratively, sage) as Reyna depicted him. Perhaps the indigenista desire to represent Atusparia as an *amauta* responded to the same creole nationalist need to identify with the heroic Indian victim (as seen in the discourse about the Peruvian soldier). Such identification could have reformist or even revolutionary potential when cast in the public sphere; but it could also simply serve the purposes of political posturing.

78. Ibid.

79. Prefect Saldías to Ministry of Government, Oct. 18, 1904, AGN, Ministerio del Interior, leg. 95, mesa de partes no. 424.

80. The "indigenous race" and "Manco Capac's race" were not usually synonymous in nineteenth-century creole discourse. The former usually referred to Indian commoners, the latter to Inca nobility; it was scientifically respectable to think of these classes as separate "races" with distinct origins until circa 1895.

Closing Reflections

Peru's late nineteenth-century "national problem" has recently been revived as the subject of historiographical debate. Henri Favre and Heraclio Bonilla have argued that ethnic and class divisions characterized the fragmented social world of the period, that the bourgeoisie had not yet consolidated itself as a national class, and that therefore any true nationalism was impossible. Nelson Manrique and Florencia Mallon have suggested that Andean peasants of certain parts of Junín Province, under the threat of Chilean invasion, developed a "protonationalist" awareness of their predicament, but that this class-informed yet community-based regional consciousness did not find allies elsewhere in Peru.⁸¹

The purpose of this essay has not been to address this debate directly.⁸² Instead, it has been to contribute some alternative means for thinking about how Peru's "national problem" could have been represented and addressed by the actors involved. The textually represented meeting of Atusparia and Cáceres has been read against some of the events and discourse that informed it and gave it meaning. Creole debate and discourse on the "national problem" was wide-ranging and acute in the postwar period (this has not been, by any measure, an exhaustive survey of that discourse).

Much of that discourse, often liberal and critical, was, perhaps not surprisingly, markedly colonialist and racist when it came to Indians. Still, the meeting of Atusparia and Cáceres reflected an opening, particularly in the patriotic military sphere, in which the actions and voices of Indians could be (mis)represented. The limitations of this mode of representation are readily apparent when we consider the several postwar petitions signed by the alcaldes of Huaraz, which probably echoed some of Atusparia's unpreserved words and in which, informed by a different historical experience, the alcaldes claimed a somewhat different place in the nation and protested against the criminality of actual military service. Those limitations are also apparent when we consider the broken pledges of Cacerismo or the essentially colonialist implications of indigenista formulations of "the Indian

81. See Henri Favre, "Remarques sur la lutte des classes pendant la Guerre du Pacifique," in *Littérature et société au Pérou du XIXe siècle à nos jours: actes du 1er colloque* (Grenoble: Université des Langues et Lettres de Grenoble, 1975), 55–81; Heraclio Bonilla, "The War of the Pacific and the National and Colonial Problem in Peru," *Past and Present* 81 (1978), 92–118; idem, "The Indian Peasantry and 'Peru' During the War with Chile," in *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18th to 20th Centuries*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 219–31; Manrique, *Campesinado y nación*; Mallon, "Nationalist and Anti-State Coalitions in the War of the Pacific: Junín and Cajamarca, 1879–1902," in Stern, *Resistance*, 232–79.

82. For a direct examination, see Thurner, *From Two Republics*. For a summary of the debate, see Stern, *Resistance*, 268–69.

problem,” which sought the abolition of the consensually chosen *alcaldes*. Enough cracks in liberal-colonialist discourse were beginning to open in the postwar era, nevertheless, and it is along these cracks that this rereading has traced notable, if forgotten, fragments of Peru’s late nineteenth-century “national problem.”

If Atusparia’s words with Cáceres were not what they were manifest to be, at least they have reappeared here, in yet another translation, to interrogate the past of a problem that for many Peruvians remains unresolved. This irresolution may find some consolation in this critical rereading, considering that the limits and ambivalence of the discursive representations of the period, here exemplified in the cross-referenced layers of meaning attached (and mostly not attached) to the meeting of Atusparia and Cáceres, invite several possible readings. Perhaps this is why Atusparia’s ambivalent fate was to quickly disappear as an *alcalde*, to be killed by the discourses that labeled Indian leaders “the worst enemies of their kind,” only to reemerge later as an indigenist icon; and why Cáceres should ride the horse of an “enlightened liberal” militarism toward its inevitable political bankruptcy, only to become enshrined as official nationalism’s foremost hero. And why, finally, these two larger-than-life figures of the Peruvian indigenist and nationalist imaginations are not remembered sitting together in a photograph (in this case, long since lost), as Zapata and Villa still are in Mexico.