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COMMENTARY

Democracy without Parties? Some Lessons from Peru*

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Abstract. Thirty years on from Peru's return to democracy in 1980, the country's record with democratisation has been chequered. Not only was the process of 'consolidation' reversed in the 1990s under the Fujimori government, but the degree to which durable linkages have been established between state and society is very limited. More than in most countries of Latin America, the party system has failed to fulfil the representative role allotted to it in the literature, a role that cannot easily be assumed by other sorts of institution. It is therefore an important case study for those concerned with the more structural obstacles to the development of representative politics. The article seeks to look at some key issues affecting party development: the chimera of consolidation, the persistence of clientelism and patrimonialism, the interaction with social movements and the significance of political culture.

Keywords: Peru, party development, democratisation, clientelism, social movements, political culture

Introduction

Thirty years have passed since Peru restored civilian government, following the *docenio* of military dictatorship. Elected in May 1980, the Belaúnde government took office in July of that year, initiating a new period in Peru's political development, based on a constitutional disposition in which, for the first time, all Peruvians over the age of eighteen were eligible to vote. Belaúnde's election generated considerable optimism for the future at the beginning of that decade, as well as a belief that new institutional mechanisms could be created that would ensure participation by the mass of the population, much of it previously excluded. The process had begun two

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years earlier with the election of a Constituent Assembly. This had brought together most of the country's ideologically heterogeneous parties under the presidency of Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, the founder of the *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana* (American Revolutionary Popular Alliance, APRA), Peru's oldest mass party. As well as generating optimism within, Peru's transition was watched with interest well beyond its frontiers. It was one of Latin America's forerunners in the process of democratisation, but one where hopes for the future were tinged with understandable concern about how democracy would work in one of the region's most socially polarised countries, where democratic traditions and practices were notably absent.

Since that time, the record of democratisation in Peru has been chequered. Although there have been regular elections since 1980 and – with some notable exceptions – these have been deemed free and fair, the quality of Peruvian democracy has been repeatedly questioned.[1] The country has had to contend with extremes of economic and political volatility. On the economic side, it has undergone hyperinflation, balance of payments crises and wild gyrations in its pattern of economic growth. Politically, it has seen striking electoral volatility giving way to deep disenchantment with party politics. It has experienced the effects of a protracted and bloody conflict between insurrectionary groups and the country's armed forces, a conflict that resulted in some 70,000 deaths and hundreds of thousands of people displaced.[2] In the 1990s, under Alberto Fujimori, Peru underwent a decade of autocracy, with an open breach of the Constitution. It saw restrictions placed on the rule of law and it gained one of Latin America's worst reputations for human rights violation. Since the fall of Fujimori, there have been attempts to revive democratic institutions, but these have failed to instil in the voting population a strong sense of confidence and trust in either political elites or institutions. As we will see, Peru routinely comes near the bottom of the league tables that measure faith in democratic institutions in Latin America.

This Commentary concerns itself with the role played by political parties in a representative democracy such as Peru's, exploring the extent to which parties have been able to mediate and structure relations between the state and society in ways that provide fluid channels for communication and underpin democratic governance. Although Peru has never had a strong and vibrant party system, it has had considerable experience with political parties which, during the course of the twentieth century, sought to mobilise

[1] The 2000 presidential contest did not meet high standards of freedom or fairness.
[2] Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, *Informe final* (Lima, 2003).

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opinion and influence state decisions.[3] By the 1980s, a party system of sorts seemed to be establishing itself, not just providing for electoral competition but also achieving a degree of social insertion. However, in the 1990s, this fell victim to the volatility of political and economic conditions and the popular reaction that these engendered among voters. Although he based his legitimacy on an attack on what he called the *partidocracia*, Fujimori himself owed his election to an extraordinary implosion in public support for parties and their leaders. And despite the subsequent attempts to rebuild a functioning party system, Peru remains a country where the 'democratic deficit' is marked and most political parties are little more than personalist groupings with scant institutional life except at times of elections. They have virtually no structured existence over much of the country and, even where they have, they have shallow roots. They therefore fail to act as a channel for public participation in the decision-making processes of the state.

In highlighting political parties, I would argue that they have a special role to play in democratic societies in harnessing a range of social actors, processing their different demands and projecting an ideological message that encapsulates these demands. This is a role not easily abrogated to or assumed by other forms of political mediation. This is consonant with much of the writing on political parties, and picks up on Giovanni Sartori's view that parties are eminently 'channelling' organisations, channelling in two directions: from society upwards and from government downwards.[4] He argues that parties must be 'responsible' as well as 'responsive', performing an aggregating role as well as a representative one. When he pushes himself to saying which he believes to be the most important, Sartori says that 'a party system lends itself to expression from below far more than to manipulation from above'.[5] Writing a few years before Sartori, Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkam add another important dimension to the discussion of party systems, insisting that parties reflect social cleavages 'around which interests, identities and value systems emerge' in different historical contexts.[6] Other sorts of institution may mediate between state and society, but not as their prime function.

Referring specifically to the Peruvian context, Kenneth Roberts asks whether political parties 'matter', and concludes, to my mind convincingly,

[3] APRA was founded by Haya de la Torre in 1924, although the Peruvian Aprista Party (PAP) was founded only in 1930, two years after the Peruvian Socialist Party (which became the Communist Party in 1930). Two reformist parties, *Acción Popular* (AP) and the *Partido Democrático Cristiano* (Christian Democrat Party, PDC), emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. However, periods of open electoral competition proved fleeting.

[4] Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: Framework for Analysis* (Oxford, 2005 [1976]), p. 31.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[6] Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkam, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (New York, 1967).

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that they do.[7] Their functions cannot easily be replaced by other sorts of institution, and Peruvian democracy will continue to be precarious until such time as it acquires the institutional grounding that rooted political parties can offer. Roberts sees the political climate of the Fujimori period as being dominated by 'pseudoparties' that do not represent people or interest groups in any real sense, and arguably this is still the case today.[8] Pseudoparties contribute little to the mechanisms of accountability essential in underpinning democratic government and in providing regime legitimation. Although Peru is by no means exceptional in this respect in Latin America, it constitutes an egregious case. Its very marked social cleavages – not to mention its ethnic and geographical divides – are not adequately expressed in party political terms. In this respect, the Peruvian experience differs markedly from that of neighbouring Bolivia.[9]

Before looking at some of the main problems afflicting representative democracy in Peru, a short synopsis of the key literature follows as it relates to party formation, particularly since the 1970s. As will be seen, this synopsis follows a chronological sequence that reflects the various different phases of Peru's recent political development.

Some Literature on Parties and Democratisation in Peru

An abundant literature has emerged on parties and democratisation in Peru since the 1970s, but it is uneven and patchy. Firstly, a good deal of it is fairly episodic in that it relates to specific periods or instances over this time-span. The problem of dealing with narrow conjunctures is that their long-term significance is often difficult to assess and the implications are overly influenced by consideration of what turn out to be transient variables. The future is not easy to predict in countries like Peru, and what seems a common-sense projection at one moment often proves well wide of the mark when revisited later on with the advantages of hindsight. Secondly, academic interest in Peru has also tended to go in waves; it was a hot topic that attracted a great deal of scholarly attention during the military government between 1968 and 1980 – especially regarding the achievements and limitations of military reformism – but then much less so during the subsequent period of civilian rule in the 1980s under Belaúnde (1980–85) and Alan García (1985–90). There was a further bout of research and writing in the 1990s and immediately

[7] Kenneth Roberts, 'Do Parties Matter? Lessons from the Fujimori Experience', in Julio Carrión (ed.) *The Fujimori Legacy: The Rise of Electoral Authoritarianism in Peru* (University Park PA, 2006), pp. 81–101.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[9] On the significance of indigenous parties for deepening democracy in Latin America, see Raúl Madrid, 'Indigenous Parties and Democracy in Latin America', *Latin American Politics and Society*, vol. 47, no. 5 (2005), pp. 161–79.

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afterwards on the nature of the Fujimori administration (1990–2000), with particular attention being paid to the thin line between democratic and authoritarian regimes and the contradictions between economic and political liberalisation. The subsequent period under Alejandro Toledo (2001–06) and the return of García (2006–) have stimulated somewhat less interest, at least internationally. Perhaps authoritarianism has more appeal – to academics at least – than low-key democratic forms of government. Thirdly, Peruvian academic output has tended to be highly Lima-centric, reflecting the concerns of elites and policymakers in the capital rather than across the country as a whole. It is also indicative of the paucity of solid academic institutions and research centres in provincial Peru.

A good starting point for a review of the literature is Julio Cotler's now classic text *Clases, Estado y nación en el Perú*, although this needs to be read in conjunction with his earlier work, notably *La mecánica de la dominación interna*.[10] Cotler's work influenced a whole generation of students of Peruvian political sociology. He rightly argues that the reading of history is indispensable to an understanding of the politics of the present, and that Peru remains hobbled in its institutional development by a colonial heritage of profound inequalities broken neither during the Independence period nor since. He says that it is difficult to talk of Peru as a 'nation' or a 'demos', given the legacy of uneven development and the lack of political rights among a large swathe of the population. He also argues that the Peruvian political class has lacked the capacity to direct a process of change that would mobilise society or transform the social structure in such a way as to build the basis for a liberal democratic state. Peru, Cotler maintains, lacked what he calls a '*corte histórico*', a point of rupture that transforms traditional society and the state.[11] Peru in this sense differs from countries such as Mexico, Bolivia, Cuba and Nicaragua, all of which experienced 'new beginnings' with new actors helping to change patterns of traditional socio-political dominance. The attempts by new actors and interests, not least from outside Lima, to articulate reformist agendas in the period after 1930 were met by violence and repression rather than accommodation, thereby setting back Peru's institutional development.[12]

Most writers agree on the importance of the military government for what was to follow. Among the most cogent analyses of the shortcomings of the Velasco period is still that of Al Stepan.[13] Stepan concludes that the military

[10] Julio Cotler, *Clases, Estado y nación en el Perú* (Lima, 1978); Julio Cotler, *La mecánica de la dominación interna* (Lima, 1967).

[11] Cotler, *Clases, Estado y nación*, pp. 15–16.

[12] See, for example, James Payne, *Labour and Politics in Peru: The System of Political Bargaining* (New Haven and London, 1965). Payne details how political bargaining by unions reinforced authoritarian traditions in the decades prior to the 1960s.

[13] Alfred Stepan, *The State and Society: Peru in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton NJ, 1978).

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government conspicuously failed to create the systems of participation needed to build a new order, while others have blamed the military regime for failing to create channels for institutionalised negotiation in a variety of spheres, not least in subnational politics. Martín Tanaka has taken this further, arguing that Velasco compounded many of the changes already observable in Peru from the 1940s onwards, destroying aspects of the old hierarchical social order but without building a new order to replace it.[14] The military government closed off previously existing parliamentary channels through which provincial elites had been able to influence state decisions, reinforcing thereby the extreme centralisation of the Peruvian state.[15] While Velasco stimulated mobilisation by new sectors, he shied away from building channels for democratic participation. Nowhere was this clearer than in highland Peru, where the institutional dearth helped spawn and sustain *Sendero Luminoso* (The Shining Path) as it launched its 'prolonged popular war' on the very day in May 1980 that the first presidential elections in 17 years were held.[16] Even though Sendero was eventually subdued in the early 1990s, the record of building this sort of institutional presence in the *sierra* is still largely absent today.

The lack of a corte histórico, of course, has much to do with the history of APRA and its failure to take power and enact its reformist agenda in the 1930s and 1940s. Steve Stein stresses the continuities of paternalistic, patrimonial politics within a process of (ultimately unsuccessful) mobilisation.[17] Both *Aprismo* and *Sanchezcerrismo*, its ideological nemesis, evolved as vertical movements, structured around clientelism and lacking in internal democracy. The experience in the 1960s of Belaúnde's Acción Popular (AP), a reformist but paternalistic party, also failed to transform Peru's traditional structures, falling victim to Velasco's coup d'état in 1968.[18] Writing at the height of the

[14] Martín Tanaka, 'Las relaciones entre Estado y sociedad en el Perú: desestructuración sin reestructuración' (unpublished paper prepared for UK Department for International Development, 2002).

[15] Up to this point, the Chamber of Deputies had an important say in the distribution of government spending at the local level, affording representatives the ability to legitimise themselves by ensuring funds for specific local projects.

[16] Regarding the impact of agrarian change on the emergence of Sendero Luminoso, see Linda Seligman, *Between Reform and Revolution: Political Struggles in the Peruvian Andes, 1969–1991* (Stanford, 1995). For recollections of the agrarian reform and its consequences, many unintended, see Enrique Mayer, *Ugly Stories of the Peruvian Agrarian Reform* (Durham NC, 2009). Sendero emerged with particular force in those parts of the highlands where the institutional innovations created by the agrarian reform were absent.

[17] Steve Stein, *Populism in Peru: The Emergence of the Masses and the Politics of Social Control* (Madison, 1980).

[18] It is worth noting that both APRA and AP had a strong regional flavour to them. APRA grew up on the northern coast, an area which it has always considered to be its electoral stronghold. AP grew in the 1960s largely as a result of Belaúnde's attempts to appeal to opinion in the south of the country and in Amazonia.

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economic crisis of the late 1980s, Stein and Carlos Monge updated Stein's original state paternalism thesis. They drew attention to the hopes and disillusionment generated by the García government (1985–90), the first ever APRA-led government, which failed so conspicuously to engage with popular sectors, urban or rural, in any sustained way.[19] Other writers have drawn attention to García's clientelistic instincts and to his abject failure to build the base for a more genuinely democratic state concerned more with the recognition of rights than the distribution of favours.[20]

The electoral success of the parties of the Left in the early 1980s provided them with a major opportunity to build that organised link between the newly mobilised popular movements and the state. Although they never won presidential office, they exercised considerable power in other formally constituted spheres, notably in Congress and at the municipal level.[21] The restoration of constitutional government opened up new spaces for popular participation. The potential to develop this was noted by Eduardo Ballón, who examined the politics of a range of social movements – unions, slum-dwellers, peasants, women, and regional groups – and emphasised their quest for autonomy of action, as well as the incongruence between 'top-down' institutionality and 'bottom-up' mobilisation.[22] He highlighted the potential for a new form of politics, but at the same time the inability of political parties to engage with society – the Right out of preference and the Left out of incapacity. Ballón pointed to the culture of authoritarianism, patrimonialism and clientelism – points we return to below – that underlay the lack of party democracy and militated against the opening up of new, more democratic spaces at the sub-national level. Romeo Grompone, writing after the split within the *Izquierda Unida* (United Left, IU) in 1989, emphasised the failure of the Left to communicate with a wider public. He was strongly critical of the more radical parties of the IU, whose message of revolutionary change failed to find an echo among the more mundane concerns of the public they sought to mobilise.[23] Although in the mid–1980s the Peruvian Left had possibly become the most powerful electoral force anywhere in Latin America since *Unidad Popular* in Chile, with hindsight it

[19] Steve Stein and Carlos Monge, *La crisis del Estado patrimonial en el Perú* (Lima and Miami, 1988), pp. 217–32.

[20] See, for instance, Carlos Monge, 'La práctica política aprista como respuesta a la crisis de los 80', in Heraclio Bonilla and Paul Drake (eds.), *El APRA: de la ideología a la praxis* (Lima, 1989); and Carol Graham, *Peru's APRA: Parties, Politics and the Elusive Quest for Democracy* (Boulder, 1992). Also, on the García government more generally, see John Crabtree, *Peru under García: An Opportunity Lost* (Basingstoke, 1992).

[21] See Kenneth Roberts, *Deepening Democracy: The Modern Left in Chile and Peru* (Stanford, 1998).

[22] Eduardo Ballón, *Movimiento social y democracia: la fundación de un nuevo orden* (Lima, 1986).

[23] Romeo Grompone, *El velero en el viento: política y sociedad en Lima* (Lima, 1991).

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seems that the degree of social insertion it achieved was exaggerated; in reality its presence proved uneven and often superficial.

The demise of the parties of the Left was swift indeed in the early 1990s. This was, in part, a function of the actions and tactical decisions of their leaders and their lack of a clear line towards dealing with hyperinflation and the guerrilla challenge. However, the more structural explanation lies in the changes that were taking place in Peruvian society at the time, changes that also impeded the evolution of parties on the Right.[24] Maxwell Cameron sees the fast and furious growth of the informal sector in the late 1980s as the key explanation for the breakdown of the party system.[25] For him, the flight from the formal economy and the 'informalisation' of politics were two sides of the same coin. In the economic crisis of the 1980s, Cameron sees both Left and Right as 'trapped in ideological ghettoes' with the centre becoming 'dangerously vacant'.[26] The breakdown of a party-based democracy can thus be traced to the failure of parties to adapt and respond to rapidly changing identities and ideological preferences. It also has to be said that the war against Sendero had a devastating impact not just on the Peruvian Left but on the party system as a whole.[27]

The extent to which *fujimorismo* was cause or consequence of the party system breakdown is a moot point. Carlos Iván Degregori and Grompone, writing shortly after Fujimori's electoral victory in 1990, emphasise the former, arguing that the incipient party system had fallen into irremediable

[24] The main parties of the Right in the 1980s were AP, Belaunde's originally reformist party that had first ruled in the 1960s (1963–68), and the *Partido Popular Cristiano* (Popular Christian Party, PPC), a right-wing offshoot from Peru's original Christian Democrat Party (PDC). Discredited by their experience in government in the early 1980s, these two parties aligned themselves with Mario Vargas Llosa's *Movimiento Libertad* in the *Frente Democrático* (FREDEMO) coalition in the 1990 elections. AP's popularity was closely bound up with that of Belaúnde and has had difficulty surviving his death. The PPC is a more tightly organised party, with its support strongest in the business sector. However, business elites have traditionally tended to use channels other than political parties to influence government decisions, an important reason for the failure of strong right-wing parties to develop in Peru. On this, see Francisco Durand, *Riqueza económica y pobreza política: reflexiones sobre las elites del poder en un país inestable* (Lima, 2003).

[25] Maxwell Cameron, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in Peru* (Basingstoke, 1994).

[26] Maxwell Cameron, 'Political and Economic Origins of Regime Change in Peru: The Eighteenth Brumaire of Alberto Fujimori', in Maxwell Cameron and Philip Mauceri (eds.), *The Peruvian Labyrinth: Polity, Society, Economy* (University Park PA, 1997), pp. 37–69.

[27] In the short run, the counterinsurgency war in the Andes had a serious impact on the ability of peasant unions and left-wing parties to operate. In the longer run, the climate of fear and insecurity the war created helped to inculcate an aversion to parties and party politics and to generate support for 'strong' government. See, for example, Steve Stern (ed.) *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru 1980–1995* (Durham NC and London, 1998), especially pp. 377–470. On Sendero itself there is a large literature, of which probably the best work is Carlos Iván Degregori, *Sendero Luminoso: Los hondos y mortales desencuentros* (Lima, 1985) and his *Ayacucho: los raíces de una crisis* (Lima, 1986).

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decay by that time.[28] Others stress the manipulation of Alan García as a key factor in explaining Fujimori's victory.[29] Charles Kenney argues that it was Fujimori's ability to manipulate the rules and attract the support of business elites that explains the parties' demise.[30] With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that Kenney's argument that the party system 'died' to be 'reborn' after Fujimori's fall is perhaps a little exaggerated. Still, it is true that Fujimori made it very difficult for parties of either the Left or the Right to operate during his decade in power. Both structural causes and agency are important here and it seems to make little sense to plump for one at the expense of the other. Tanaka points out that Fujimori in Peru was unique in confronting the parties rather than converting them (as in Bolivia, Mexico and Argentina) to the new neoliberal message.[31]

How best to classify the Fujimori regime has given rise to considerable discussion. It certainly called into doubt some of the assumptions contained in the early consolidation literature, helping to generate appeals for more flexible and contextual measures of democratic advance.[32] The Fujimori government has been variously described as neo-populist, a delegative democracy, a 'plebiscitarian' democracy, a *democradura*, and the like, while some authors question whether it was in any sense a democracy at all, with or without adjectives. Conaghan, for example, opts for the term 'competitive authoritarianism', where democratic forms are devoid of any substance.[33] My own reading here is that it was a personalist regime which shifted its ground over time, starting off subject to (albeit limited) democratic

[28] Carlos Iván Degregori and Romeo Grompone, *Demonios y redentores en el nuevo Perú: una tragedia en dos vueltas* (Lima, 1991). The successful candidacy of Ricardo Belmont, a TV personality, in the 1989 mayoral elections in Lima is often taken as evidence that parties were in decline before Fujimori appeared on the scene a year later.

[29] See, for example Gregory Schmidt, 'Fujimori's 1990 Upset Victory in Peru: Electoral Rules, Contingencies and Adaptive Strategies', *Comparative Politics*, vol. 28, no. 3 (1996), pp. 321–54.

[30] Charles Kenney, 'The Death and Rebirth of a Party System, Peru 1978–2001', *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 36, no. 10 (2003), pp. 1210–39.

[31] Martín Tanaka, *Los espejismos de la democracia: el colapso del sistema de partidos en el Perú* (Lima, 1998). In Bolivia, President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada helped transform his party, the previously statist *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (National Revolutionary Movement, MNR) into the engine of neoliberal transformation. In Argentina, Carlos Menem did much the same with the old Peronist party, and Carlos Salinas likewise with the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI) in Mexico. Fujimori, by contrast, a political outsider, eschewed Peru's traditional parties and bolstered his own legitimacy by vilifying them.

[32] Laurence Whitehead has advanced the notion of democratic 'viability' as a more appropriate metaphor than consolidation in that it takes into account the possibility of democratic retreat as well as advance. See Laurence Whitehead, 'The Viability of Democracy', in John Crabtree and Laurence Whitehead (eds.) *Towards Democratic Viability: The Bolivian Experience* (Basingstoke, 2001), pp. 5–8.

[33] Catherine Conaghan, *Fujimori's Peru: Deception in the Public Sphere* (Pittsburgh, 2005).

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constraints but forced, by virtue of the need to perpetuate itself, into ever more brazen manipulation in ways that would ultimately lead to its downfall. It was neither fully authoritarian nor properly democratic, yet it was a regime that was unable to dispense altogether with popular validation and endorsement in generating legitimacy.[34] Fujimori's use of traditional clientelistic methods to legitimise his neoliberal project has also provoked considerable discussion. Roberts highlights the 'unexpected symmetries and affinities' between neoliberalism and old-style populism, arguing that populism reflects the fragility of popular organisation and mediating institutions.[35] Kurt Weyland defines populism as a political strategy that has little or nothing to do with economics but is more concerned with domination than with distribution; he argues for the 'autonomy of politics'.[36] But this sort of approach involves placing into the same conceptual basket regimes which represent very different sorts of project, Fujimori in Peru and Chávez in Venezuela for instance.[37]

With the sudden and largely unanticipated fall of Fujimori at the end of 2000, attention shifted from considering the structural conditions that sustained this sort of regime towards the concrete policy options available to create a more participatory and pluralist alternative. In the policy sphere, attention was focused on designing a Law of Political Parties, finally enacted in 2003. Consideration was also given to how to push ahead with creating a more decentralised administrative structure in ways that would potentially open up new spheres for democratic participation. However, this had to encounter the paucity of institutions at the local level capable of encouraging and channelling such participation. It is still probably too early to judge definitively whether these innovations have brought lasting change. Some authors have tended to highlight the importance of institutional design in determining changes in political behaviour.[38] Fernando Tuesta, for example, emphasises that, though institutional design and regulations need to be congruent with historical practices and customs, the rules matter a lot.[39] Others suggest ways in which the reforms initiated under the Paniagua and

[34] John Crabtree, 'The Collapse of Fujimorismo: Authoritarianism and its Limits', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2001), pp. 287–303.

[35] See Kenneth Roberts, 'Neoliberalism and the Transformation of Populism in Latin America: the Peruvian case', *World Politics*, vol. 48, no. 1 (1995), pp. 82–116.

[36] Kurt Weyland, 'Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics', *Comparative Politics*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2001), pp. 1–22.

[37] A comparison between the two cases is to be found in Steve Ellner, 'The Contrasting Variants of Hugo Chávez and Alberto Fujimori', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 35, no. 1 (2003), pp. 139–62.

[38] See, for instance, Carlos Meléndez, 'Partidos y sistema de partidos en el Perú', in Rafael Roncagliolo and Carlos Meléndez (eds.), *La política por dentro: cambios y continuidades en las organizaciones políticas de los países andinos* (Lima, 2007), pp. 213–72.

[39] Fernando Tuesta, *Representación política: las reglas también cuentan* (Lima, 2005).

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Toledo administrations needed to be complemented by further institutional changes.[40] However, powerful countervailing forces arguably remained that impeded the development of a more participatory political system, even where institutions to that end had begun to take root. While decentralisation and the regulation of party behaviour may be steps in the right direction, they require a strong political will to make them effective, a will at best intermittent and vacillating in contemporary Peru.[41] The elections of 2006 – presidential, congressional, regional and municipal – did not suggest that a new and more stable party system was emerging. Steven Levitsky and Maxwell Cameron, as well as Lewis Taylor, argue against the party 'resurrection' thesis advanced by Kenney, suggesting that both structural factors and the lack of agency on the part of party leaders weigh against the emergence of democratic and open political parties.[42] They maintain that strong parties are not just the consequences of electoral engineering; like Humpty Dumpty, once destroyed it is difficult to put the pieces back together again, no matter how much institutional engineering may be involved.

Some Key Issues

Having sought to provide a synopsis of some of the literature on the various stages of the Peruvian democratisation since the late 1970s, I now seek to identify a number of key and interrelated issues that seem relevant for analysing the problems that currently afflict that process and, in particular, the workings of the party system. A key theme running through this discussion is the importance of representative and embedded political parties in generating a sense of regime legitimation, especially given the social, ethnic and regional cleavages in Peru and the lack of a sense of effective citizenship among large parts of the population.

The chimera of consolidation

The Peruvian case, especially the experience of the Fujimori regime, casts doubt on some of the assumptions of the North American writing on

[40] Martín Tanaka, *Democracia sin partidos. Perú 2000–2005* (Lima, 2005).

[41] John Crabtree, *Making Institutions Work in Peru: Democracy, Development and Inequality in Peru since 1980* (London, 2006).

[42] Steven Levitsky and Maxwell Cameron, 'Democracy without Parties? Political Parties and Regime Change in Fujimori's Peru', *Latin American Politics and Society*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2003), pp. 1–33; Lewis Taylor, 'Politicians without Parties and Parties without Politicians: The Foibles of the Peruvian Political Class', *Government and Opposition*, vol. 40, no. 4 (2006), pp. 565–95.

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democratic transitions and consolidation, reflecting, as this has tended to do, the hopes and aims of the US policymaking community at the time.[43] Far from being a 'one-way street' in which the 'right' policies would lead towards the deepening of democracy, Peru under Fujimori showed that in certain circumstances the pendulum could easily swing back towards autocratic government, if not outright dictatorship. Equally, the Fujimori experience cast doubt on the assumption behind the Washington Consensus view that economic and political liberalisation ran in tandem and were mutually reinforcing. By the beginning of the new millennium, the scenarios contained in the original consolidation literature of the 1980s appeared rather optimistic and based on some wishful thinking, especially when compared with the research emanating from many Peruvian scholars at the time. Even in the 1990s, the tone had begun to change and some of the earlier assumptions about irreversibility were being revised. In 1996, Linz and Stepan set out their five interlocking 'arenas' which they saw as indispensable to any process of democratisation: a lively civil society; a functioning political society; the rule of law; a functioning bureaucratic apparatus; and what they called 'economic society'.[44] On any reading of these criteria for crisis-afflicted Peru at the beginning of the 1990s, the prospects for democracy appeared none too bright. While in themselves useful, such criteria seemed rather narrow and inflexible. More account needed to be taken of the anti-democratic forces present in specific societies, and more weight given to the determinants of the legitimacy of government (or the lack of it). Unless the majority of people in a democracy believe that government has the will and the ability to pursue their long-term interests, they will swiftly lose faith in democratic institutions, parties included.

Moreover, political parties in Peru had a long way to go before they complied with the fairly minimal conditions set down by Scott Mainwaring and Tim Scully as a precondition for party institutionalisation.[45] These highly influential authors argue strongly that institutionalisation is the prerequisite for consolidation and therefore stability, and they put forward yardsticks by which institutionalisation can be evaluated in different countries. In their 'league table' of institutionalisation, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Chile (fairly predictably) came out on top; Peru came out firmly at the bottom, lower even than Bolivia or Ecuador. Where the emphasis perhaps needed to

[43] This literature overstated the importance of elections in defining democratic outcomes and understated the structural obstacles to democratisation. See Thomas Carothers, 'The End of the Transition Paradigm', *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2002), pp. 5–21.

[44] Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore MD, 1996).

[45] Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully (eds.), *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford CA, 1995), p. 17.

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be laid was in addressing the underlying conditions (social and economic as well as political) that encourage institutionalisation – or the opposite – and the factors that lead countries to move up or down the league table. By the 1990s, the prospects for democratisation in Latin America as a whole looked far less rosy than they had a decade earlier, and the notion of democratic disenchantment (*desencanto democrático*), with all its attendant dangers for legitimation, were clear. Such desencanto can be particularly delegitimising in those countries where democratic values do not permeate society.[46]

Such problems were very evident in Peru, even in the late 1980s. In few countries in Latin America was such a lack of faith more palpable than in Peru at that time or, indeed, since. The findings of successive Latinobarómetro surveys placed Peru near to or at the bottom of a variety of indices construed to measure state legitimacy.[47] The Latinobarómetro numbers were corroborated subsequently by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The 2004 UNDP survey underscored the problems encountered in deepening the roots of democratic attachment in contexts where poverty is widespread, inequalities deep and entrenched, corruption abundant, justice inaccessible to most people, the ability to defend rights lacking, and the institutional mechanisms through which to express 'voice' largely absent.[48] An opinion poll conducted the following year by the UNDP in Peru provided clear evidence of the widespread view among poor people that democracy served the interests of the rich, not the poor.[49] This conclusion was of course consonant with opinion poll data showing public sympathy for more authoritarian modes of government. Such was the case with Fujimori, whose decision to close down Congress and sack the Supreme Court in 1992 was strongly influenced by his reading of the opinion polls at the time. His lasting popularity – notwithstanding his lengthy trial in 2008 and 2009 on human rights and corruption charges – stands as a testament to the fact that he is held by many poor people to have improved their living standards in tangible ways.[50]

Although the collapse of the Fujimori regime resulted in attempts to overcome some of the institutional legacies of top-down government, the results of the 2001 'Lima spring' proved disappointing. The reformist

[46] Larry Diamond and Richard Gunther, 'Political Parties and Democracy', *Party Politics*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 507–23.

[47] Latinobarómetro (Santiago), various years.

[48] United Nations Development Programme, *Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens' Democracy* (New York, 2004).

[49] United Nations Development Programme, *La democracia en el Perú: el mensaje de las cifras* (Lima, 2006).

[50] The continued popularity of the Fujimori 'brand name' was made clear in the 2006 congressional elections, in which his daughter, Keiko, received far more votes than any other candidate. She seemed a likely option for the 2011 presidential elections.

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impetus that accompanied the brief Paniagua administration (2000–01) carried on into that of Alejandro Toledo, but it then quickly ran out of steam. It became clear that there were strong obstacles to reform, not least within the business community, the Church and the armed forces, all of which had little need of political parties to bring influence to bear on government decisions.[51] The obstacles to democratic consolidation were also evident at the subnational level, where, in Peru as elsewhere, democratisation implies changes to long-established relations of power between local elites and empowered poor majorities. There were few examples in Peru of 'democracy from below' emerging in the way that it did, for instance, in Porto Alegre and some other large Brazilian cities.[52] In the absence of strong parties grounded in social organisation at the local level and in the face of a state bureaucracy unwilling to antagonise elites, the speed of change was never likely to be rapid.

The persistence of patrimonialism and clientelism

Julio Cotler long ago emphasised the patrimonial nature of Peruvian political institutions.[53] Notwithstanding the emergence of new actors, this patrimonialism was inherent in the process of state formation in Peru, blurring the boundaries between public and private interests. As elsewhere in Latin America, it proved a major obstacle to the development of a liberal democracy in which rights of citizenship were not only established but capable of being realised. In the 1980s, Cotler argued that the legacy of patrimonialism impeded the democratisation of parties and contributed to factionalism within them, thus undermining public support.[54] O'Donnell's discussion of 'delegative democracy' also helped bring the issues of patrimonialism back to the forefront of academic discussion about democratisation in the region.

[51] With the process of economic liberalisation in the 1990s, the business community, through its various lobby organisations, increased its sway over state decision making. This continued after 2000 under Toledo and García, whose policies sought to build on the economic liberalism introduced by Fujimori. See Francisco Durand, *Riqueza económica y pobreza política*, and his *La mano invisible en el Estado* (Lima, 2005). Both the Catholic Church and the armed forces had become increasingly conservative by this time. The Catholic hierarchy was led by Juan Luis Cipriani, the Cardinal Archbishop of Lima and a member of Opus Dei. The armed forces, whose power recovered from the debacle at the end of the Fujimori period, became particularly resistant to attempts to make them judicially responsible for human rights crimes committed in the war against Sendero. The more conservative elements of the business sector, the Church and the armed forces further tightened their grip on policymaking under García after 2006.

[52] While there were some cases of this happening, for instance in Limatambo (Cuzco), such cases were exceptional and subject to subsequent reverse.

[53] Cotler, *Clases, Estado y nación*, pp. 388–9.

[54] Julio Cotler, *Política y sociedad en el Perú: continuidades y cambios* (Lima, 1994).

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Although his emphasis was on Brazil, the same conditions could be applied to discussion of politics in Argentina or Peru.[55] Clientelism too, long a central issue in anthropology and sociology, became a major focus of study, describing as it does not only the asymmetries in power relations between those with political influence and their clienteles but also the ways in which political support is traded for material advantage between patron and client. It is a product not only of economic inequality but also of cultural and ethnic subordination in situations where notions of rights are absent. Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson have argued that clientelism is likely to be at its most pronounced where there are high levels of inequality and where political competition is weak.[56] They make the important observation that the precise workings of the electoral system are less significant in reducing levels of clientelism, since patrons usually find ways around the formal rules of politics when it is in their interest to do so.

As we have seen, both patrimonialism and clientelism are deeply ingrained as political institutions in Peru: their origins go back to the power relations that characterised colonial society, and they have been repeatedly reproduced in new guises since then. Such relationships are determined not just by socio-economic inequality but are also grounded in racial discrimination. The persistence of ethnic divides in Peru, despite the effects of urbanisation and the breakdown of semi-servile relations in the rural sphere, is a topic taken up by Paulo Drinot.[57] We have seen in the review of some of the literature the persistence of patrimonialism despite the modernising social reforms of the 1970s, the emergence of new social actors, and the restoration of pluralist government in the 1980s. Clientelism too has proved a difficult plant to eradicate, whether in the rural sphere or the urban one. The chapter by Beatriz Magaloni and colleagues in the Kitschelt and Wilkinson volume shows how clientelism emerged with new force in Mexico under the *Programa Nacional de Solidaridad* (National Solidarity Programme, PRONASOL) of the 1990s.[58] Much the same could be said about social spending programmes elsewhere in Latin America, not least in Peru under García in the later 1980s, Fujimori in the 1990s, and indeed under García again in the more recent past.

[55] Guillermo O'Donnell, 'Delegative Democracy', *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1994), pp. 55–69. O'Donnell addressed himself here to the first García government, but much the same could be said of the Fujimori administration.

[56] Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson (eds.), *Patrons, Clients and Politics: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition* (Cambridge, 2007).

[57] Paulo Drinot, 'Nation-building, Racism and Inequality: Institutional Development in Peru in Historical Perspective', in John Crabtree (ed.), *Making Institutions Work in Peru*, pp. 5–23.

[58] Beatriz Magaloni, Alberto Diaz-Cayeros and Federico Estévez, 'Clientelism and Portfolio Diversification: A Model of Electoral Investment with Applications to Mexico', in Kitschelt and Wilkinson (eds.), *Patrons, Clients and Politics*, pp. 182–205.

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Peru is therefore of particular interest to those concerned to study the ways in which clientelism perpetuates itself over time.

The concept of clientelism connects to that of populism.[59] Problems in defining what populism is are as old as the term itself, but here it is taken to mean challenges to the status quo in the name of 'the people', but based less on empowerment from below than direction from above. Populist movements seek to bring sometimes radical changes through mobilisation, spearheaded by charismatic leaders who create new clienteles which receive tangible benefits in return for the support they offer. The literature on populism gives ample consideration to the sorts of social relations that engender it, both in its traditional manifestations and its more recent variants (termed by some 'neo-populism'). A distinction, however, can be drawn between the sociological and cultural interpretations that provide the framework for populism and its more immediate political triggers. The latter tend to be periodic crises that produce challenges to the existing order, while the former consist of systemic weaknesses in which popular interests are expressed at the level of the state. Populism tends to operate to the detriment of representative democracy, exercised as it usually is by elites that seek to bypass representative institutions, building instead a direct rapport between a leader and 'the people'. Populism thus tends to thrive in conditions where concepts of rights and citizenship are ill-defined and muted.

The history of traditional populism in Peru found its main expression in the APRA party of Haya de la Torre in the 1930s and 1940s, although it was also characteristic of other parties and movements with different ideological positions, some of them notably right-wing.[60] Populist practices, for instance typified Sanchezcerrismo in the 1930s and the attempts of General Manuel Odría to build support for himself in the 1950s. But although the story of APRA paralleled that of populism elsewhere in Latin America, it differed in that APRA found itself blocked in its attempts to achieve presidential power – at least, that is, until García became the first *aprista* president in 1985. Thus there are some strong continuities running through twentieth-century Peruvian politics, with populist movements seeking to rally popular support, but many proved short-lived and failed to institutionalise themselves. Such populist traits have lived on into the more recent past, with both Belaúnde and especially García in the 1980s adopting arguably populist positions, and with Fujimori redefining the nature of populism, adapting it to

[59] Here is not the place to cite the large bibliography on Latin American populism, but it is worth mentioning Margaret Canovan, *Populism* (London, 1981); Michael Conniff, *Populism in Latin America* (Tuscaloosa, 1999); and Francisco Panizza (ed.), *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* (London, 2005), especially pp. 1–31.

[60] Stein, *Populism in Peru*. On the right-wing Unión Revolucionaria, see Tirso Molinari Morales, *El fascismo en el Perú* (Lima, 2006).

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the new emphasis on market-driven economics and rejecting state-led development.[61]

Elements of both patrimonialism and clientelism of course exist in most political systems, albeit at the margins of their formal modus operandi. It may be the case, as countries modernise and urbanise, that the more egregious aspects of these begin to disappear. However, the experience of some developed states – Berlusconi's Italy, for example, which bears some interesting parallels with Fujimori's Peru – suggests that such practices do not necessarily vanish in this way. Clientelism tends to dissipate when new sorts of social relationship emerge, generating new identities that challenge existing hierarchical arrangements. Patrimonialism should also diminish as new participative structures take root, since these bring with them higher levels of public accountability. But, equally, it is possible for the opposite to happen. The Fujimori period in Peru was one in which the previous class identities lost their political salience, making it easier for those in government to use the resources of the state to build up a political clientele. And though the fall of Fujimori brought with it a return to more open government, it did little to create a national popular movement capable of defining and defending notions of rights.

Engagement with society

At various points so far, emphasis has been placed on the need for political parties to engage with society and both to reflect and represent the social forces within it. This is a role that cannot simply be assumed by other sorts of institution, such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which have come to enjoy a close relationship with social movements in Peru in recent years.[62] Nor is this the case for Church-based organisations, which have played an important role in mobilising society over the years, or even parts of the state itself, such as the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Ombudsman's office), that fulfil a mediating function.[63] Social movements, of course, come in all shapes

[61] For a more detailed account of the continuities in populist politics, see John Crabtree, 'Neo-populism and the Fujimori Phenomenon', in John Crabtree and Jim Thomas (eds.), *Fujimori's Peru: the Political Economy* (London, 1998), pp. 7–23.

[62] Arguably, NGOs have come to perform some of the mediating functions between social movements and the state that would otherwise be the role of political parties. The range of NGOs that has emerged in Peru over the last 30 years is truly impressive, often articulating the interests of community groups, financing their activities and systematising their experience through studies and publications. Many of these NGOs adopt an overtly political stance and have become sources of employment for people who were previously involved in parties, particularly those of the Left.

[63] See Thomas Pegram, 'Accountability in Hostile Times: The Case of the Peruvian Human Rights Ombudsman', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 40, no. 1 (2008), pp. 51–82.

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and forms, not all of them particularly democratic in the ways they are organised or express themselves. And defining exactly what constitutes a social movement is not free of problems.[64] Still, in the process of democratisation in Latin America, social movements have played an important part, usually in conjunction with political parties, although this has been sometimes downplayed in the literature that gives pride of place to institutional engineering and the creation of elite pacts. Social movements were certainly not absent as a factor in the process of democratisation in Peru in the late 1970s; the Velasco government provided an important fillip to social mobilisation while helping destroy some of the traditional structures that had kept social mobilisation in check. It was the fact that this was getting out of control that led Velasco's successor, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez (1975–80), to seek to steer the country back towards a more open, constitutional system of government. The flurry of social mobilisation in the 1970s was also steered by the array of emergent left-wing parties which subsequently, after 1980, came together in the Izquierda Unida (United Left) coalition. Parties and movements evolved together.

The efficacy of this interaction between political parties and social movements, which depends on the relative strengths of each, is an important variable in the democratic process since it is a major factor in regime legitimation. The parts played by social movements in forcing the pace of democratic transitions in Latin America is documented by Joe Foweraker, who shines light on the ways in which the political system connects with the 'underworld' of social movements and grass-roots activism.[65] He argues against seeing social movements as isolated from their wider political context; and in common with other writers he emphasises the need for social movements to interact with the state through such intermediaries as political parties. But he also points to the sorts of problem that affect social movements: their susceptibility to cooptation, their focus on specific issues, their often temporary nature, their proneness to internal factionalism, and indeed their ambivalence towards political parties.

The Peruvian experience, like that of other countries in Latin America, demonstrates the role played by social movements in articulating the demands of those who previously had little or no voice within the political

[64] I would go along with the definition offered by Charles Tilly, whose many writings on social movements draw together different theoretical approaches. Tilly identifies three crucial elements: (i) a sustained public effort making collective claims on target authorities; (ii) the use of a repertoire of forms of political action, including demonstrations, vigils, rallies, etc.; (iii) the involvement of people who are 'worthy', act in a unified way, are numerically relevant and display strong commitment. See Charles Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768–2004* (Boulder CO, 2004). For a general discussion of the significance of social movements as a spearhead of change, see Alain Touraine, *The Voice of the Eye* (Cambridge, 1981).

[65] Joe Foweraker, *Theorizing Social Movements* (London, 1995).

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system. It was in the 1980s, more than any time before or since, that this interaction came closest to taking place in Peru. The parties of the Left, most of which between 1978 and 1981 chose to abandon insurrectionary politics in favour of involvement in the formally established political system, provided the main link between an array of social movements – trade unions, peasant federations, slum-dwellers' associations and the like – and the state. Left-wing parties and grass-roots activists played an important role at this time both in congressional and municipal politics, combining (to a degree) both the functions of administration and representation. In retrospect, of course, the swift demise of the Left at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s called into doubt some of the claims made at the time that the Left was the 'natural expression' of the popular movement.[66] The experiences of the Fujimori period and since have made such claims look more than a little premature and presumptuous.

The demise and fragmentation of powerful collective interests as a result of the twin economic and political crises of the late 1980s contributed greatly to the decline of mass-based Peruvian political parties at the time. Hyperinflation and political violence combined to create a climate of insecurity that reduced the salience of social movements, atomised them organisationally and placed them on the defensive. At the same time the weakening of the parties of the Left deprived social movements of a political apparatus capable of aggregating their different interests and representing these at the level of the state. Under Fujimori, the state turned its back on such collective interests, deftly bypassing most forms of political intermediation. The Peruvian case thus contrasted strongly with the rise of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (Workers' Party, PT) in Brazil, rooted as this was in a coming together of a variety of social movements for which the party provided a voice in national politics.[67] Peru also contrasts starkly with the more recent experience of Bolivia, where the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (Movement to Socialism, MAS) emerged in the first few years of the 2000s as an expression of a motley selection of different social movements, bringing them together, creating a unifying ideology and giving them a political influence that went far beyond the sum of their various parts.[68]

This is not to say that social movements have been absent from the scene in Peru, particularly since the fall of Fujimori. As in Bolivia, there have been protest movements that have been representative of substantial communities

[66] Roberts, *Deepening Democracy*. The degree to which the parties of the Left, mainly Leninist in inspiration and top-down in their praxis, managed to achieve real social insertion at this time is a topic that is worth revising more critically than was customary at the time.

[67] See, for instance, Margaret Keck, *The Workers' Party and Democratization in Brazil* (Ithaca NY, 1992).

[68] John Crabtree, *Patterns of Protest: Politics and Social Movements in Bolivia* (London, 2005).

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of interest. These have expressed themselves forcefully around such issues as privatisation, coca eradication,[69] mining development,[70] the defence of local interests, the land rights of indigenous peoples in the Amazon, and so on, but they have tended to act in isolation, have had a localised rather than a national impact, and have lacked the sort of institutional access to the state that parties could provide. Because of the disappearance of solid political parties, these movements have often looked for other sorts of mediation to exert political pressure (e.g. through NGOs, Church-based local organisations or the Defensoría). And, lacking effective political mediation and faced with an unsympathetic state, conflicts have frequently led to violent confrontation. Peru also differs from Bolivia, as well as Ecuador, in terms of the emergence of an indigenous politics capable of binding together individual communities of interest around a wider campaign for rights. There are many reasons why indigenous politics are less salient in Peru than in its Andean neighbours, but the effect of this has been to weaken the force of social movements, particularly those of the highlands and jungle.[71]

The importance of culture

This brings us to the question of culture and its importance in binding together communities of interest, whether at the local, regional, national, or even, in some cases, international levels. As in other countries, successful politicians are those who are able to understand and empathise with popular culture, or rather 'cultures' in the plural. Political survival depends not just on the ability to provide the material goods that a society may expect, but also on the ability to reflect or project certain cultural values that enhance legitimacy. The recent history of Peru shows how difficult this can be to achieve in a country where many cultures – or, more accurately, subcultures – coexist. Regional differences, heightened by stark inequalities of income and ownership, as well as a long legacy of racism on the part of elites, provide a cultural backcloth to the sorts of political cleavage made evident in recent national electoral outcomes.[72]

[69] Ursula Durand, 'El camino cocalero', in Eduardo Toche (ed.), *Perú hoy: nuevos rostros en la escena nacional* (Lima, 2006), pp. 89–116.

[70] Anthony Bebbington (ed.), *Minería, movimientos sociales y respuestas campesinas: una ecología política de transformaciones territoriales* (Lima, 2007).

[71] See Madrid, 'Indigenous parties'. Also see Donna Lee Van Cott, *From Movements to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics* (Cambridge, 2003); José Antonio Lucero and María Elena García, 'In the Shadows of Success: Indigenous Politics in Peru and Ecuador', in A. Kim Clark and Marc Becker (eds.), *Highland Indians and the State in Modern Ecuador* (Pittsburgh PA, 2007), pp. 234–49.

[72] In particular that of 2006, in which Ollanta Humala's support was concentrated in the *sierra* and *selva*, whereas support for Alan García was concentrated mainly on the coast and in

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Cultural explanations, of course, raise many definitional problems. What is political culture? How do we recognise it? How do we measure it? Culture is a nebulous concept; as Lucian Pye put it, 'we are dealing with clouds, not clocks'.[73] Notwithstanding such difficulties, the issue of culture has an importance in defining notions of identity and belonging, providing an explanation of what binds people together and makes them feel part of the same political community. It is less about a set of attitudes (which can be highly changeable) but more about underlying beliefs or what Eckstein calls 'orientations'.[74] These, he argues, are the consequence of 'cumulative' processes of socialisation. The political actions of individuals are deeply affected by sets of traditions, traditions that persist and can come to the fore even in periods of revolutionary change.

The increased salience of identity politics in Latin America has brought cultural explanations back into focus, based as these are on new senses of 'community'. As we have seen, social movements tend to cohere around a concern for identity, whether based on gender, locality, ethnicity or some other sense of belonging.[75] In most instances, it is not a case of one sort of identity or another, but a combination of a variety of identities that people use for different ends in different circumstances.[76] Identity, of course, is difficult to explain simply in institutional or rational choice terms. In many cases, it is defined by a view of history that backs up or justifies a particular identity.

The importance of ethnic politics in Ecuador and Bolivia contrasts with that of Peru, giving rise to parties, such as *Pachakutik* or the MAS, which have sought to mobilise around ethnic cleavages. However, this is not to say that such 'ethnic' politics is absent from Peru, rather that it has not been articulated in the same way in national politics. In recent times, there are clear signs of political divisions expressing themselves in ethnic terms. Such is the case of the Amazonian indigenous groupings that have become increasingly

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Lima. In 2001, support for Toledo was strongest in the sierra, whereas García similarly polled strongest on the coast.

[73] Lucian Pye, 'Asian Values: From Dynamos to Dominos', in Laurence Harrison and Samuel Huntington (eds.), *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (New York, 2000), p. 255.

[74] Harry Eckstein, 'A Culturalist Theory of Political Change', *American Political Science Review*, vol. 82, no. 3 (1998), pp. 789–803.

[75] In their book on political culture in the Andean world, Nils Jacobson and Cristóbal Aljovín de Losada put it thus: 'We understand political culture as a malleable ensemble of symbols, values and norms that constitute the signification linking individuals to social, ethnic, religious, political and regional communities'. Nils Jacobson and Cristóbal Aljovín de Losada (eds.), *Political Cultures in the Andes, 1750–1950* (Durham NC, 2005), p. 2.

[76] See, for instance, Diego Zavaleta, 'Oversimplifying Identities: The Debate over What is Indigena and What is Mestizo', in John Crabtree and Laurence Whitehead (eds.), *Unresolved Tensions: Bolivia Past and Present* (Pittsburgh PA, 2008), pp. 51–60.

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prominent on the national political map in their opposition to the concessions offered to foreign hydrocarbons companies and to the inroads by individual and corporate interests in the search for other raw materials, notably timber and minerals. It is also the case that organisations campaigning for the rights of peasant communities in the sierra have highlighted the ethnic dimensions of their struggle.[77] In practice, as throughout the Andean region, the demands arising from ethnic and class identities have always coexisted and cannot be regarded as mutually exclusive. Rather it has been the language of political intermediaries seeking to highlight one or the other in different circumstances that has differed. What appears to be missing in the Peruvian context is the existence of a party – such as the MAS in Bolivia – capable of articulating these various different interests in the language that is most effective.

The difference between Peru and its neighbours is also heightened by the scale of urban migration and the profound impact that this has had in the emergence of hybrid cultures and identities (e.g. among Andean migrants in Lima) and the creation of spaces in which new forms of political leadership are able to emerge. With nearly three-quarters of Peru's population now living in an urban environment, traditional political culture appears to be on the wane. The rapid and dramatic process of urbanisation in Peru over the last 30 years, accelerated by the migratory convulsions caused by Sendero Luminoso, has had a profound effect on the way people live and the strategies they employ to survive (and in some cases prosper) in the urban milieu. Whether in Lima or smaller provincial towns and cities, the process of migration has created a cultural melting pot in which old collective identities have been destroyed and new systems of values, beliefs and identities have emerged. This is a world typified by intense competition for jobs and one in which individualism and the quest for self-advantage count for more than social solidarity. It is also a world where democratic values and belief in democratic institutions have suffered in a context of widespread corruption, social insecurity and criminality.[78]

Peru is therefore not a country which easily lends itself to clear-cut cultural classification even with respect to democracy and democratic values. It incorporates many cultural characteristics, not just one. Its ethnic, regional and social heterogeneity does not lend itself to a national stereotype. This raises

[77] This is the case of *Confederación Nacional de Comunidades del Perú Afectadas por la Minería* (National Confederation of Peruvian Mining Communities CONACAMI), whose objectives are expressed in terms of ethnic demands that draw on the Bolivian and Ecuadorean experiences. See www.conacami.org.

[78] Julio F. Carrión and Patricia Zarate, *Cultura política de la democracia en el Perú, 2008* (Lima, 2009). This volume forms part of the Americas Barometer (LAPOP), edited by Mitchell A. Seligson.

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problems for those who seek to articulate social and ethnic demands at the level of the state, making it difficult for parties to emerge that can encapsulate that diversity, aggregate such a multiplicity of demands and translate them into a political message with broad appeal. In order to regain legitimacy, politicians and parties need to understand better the cultural topography of the land on which they seek to cultivate support. One way for those new cultural preferences to make themselves felt is through the development of new ways of doing politics that pick up on that cultural diversity.

Recent Trends and Research Needs

Ten years on from the fall of Fujimori, and despite attempts to breathe new life into Peru's democratic institutions, Peru's party system is still far from being one which rises to the standards required by democratic theory. Parties are little more than electoral vehicles. They lack any real presence in society. Most are inchoate, personalist groupings that reflect more the interests of their leaders than any ideological posture. Leading politicians glide easily between party labels according to their convenience.[79] The 'political class' does not enjoy the confidence of most of those it purports to represent. Dissidence is difficult to mediate and often ends in violence. Even the country's most important single national party, APRA, is now a much diminished force in terms of its organised grassroots presence.[80] The left-wing parties that seemed to promise so much in the 1980s are but scattered remnants of their former selves, able to attract only a tiny proportion of the vote in recent national elections. The parties of the Right, notably the PPC, lack any strong electoral base beyond the more affluent suburbs of Lima, and elites tend to find other ways to influence state decisions than working through parties. However, political competition between *personajes* remains strong, and in spite of the institutional weakness of their various 'parties' there is no shortage of those who aspire to compete for public office.[81] Among the more electorally significant is probably Ollanta Humala, a former

[79] Taylor, 'Politicians without Parties'.

[80] Due largely to the protagonism of its presidential candidate, APRA polled 24 per cent in the first round of the 2006 presidential elections. However, in his second government, García gave scant priority to the institutional development of his party. APRA's lack of a solid regional organisation was made clear in the subsequent regional elections in November 2006, in which the party won only two regional presidencies. Due partly to the selection of an unpopular candidate, the party even failed to win the mayoralty of Trujillo on that occasion. Haya de la Torre surely would have turned in his grave.

[81] Typical are figures like Luis Castañeda Lossio, the mayor of Lima; ex-president Toledo; and Keiko Fujimori (Alberto Fujimori's daughter). All are likely to contest the next presidential elections in 2011.

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military officer, whose first-round victory in 2006 led to a prominence on which he subsequently found it hard to build institutionally.

The 2003 *Ley de Partidos Políticos* (Law on Political Parties, LPP) was designed to engender a robust, transparent and accountable party system in which the multiplicity of minor parties would be reduced to two or three major ones that would provide voters with some real political choice. Three rounds of elections in 2006 – two rounds of presidential elections in April and June, followed by municipal elections in November – were contested by a mass of parties, few of which could reasonably have complied with the ostensibly tough requirements for registration laid down by the LPP. This is not to say that there are not deep cleavages in Peruvian politics. Recent presidential elections (both those of 2001 and 2006) have seen a polarisation between the political preferences of the more prosperous coast and those of the poverty-stricken highlands and jungle regions, where opposition to neoliberal policies and antipathy towards the capital have been most in evidence. However, such a cleavage has yet to coalesce into an effective and durable political force.

Measures taken by the Toledo and García governments to decentralise decision making to the level of departments (now known as regions) have also had an impact on parties, especially regional parties.[82] The November 2006 elections saw the appearance of a number of regional groupings with apparently more solid electoral foundations than some of their national counterparts. Regional parties, it should be said, fall outside the mandate of the LPP, and it is perhaps ironic that it is here that we find some more robust and socially rooted groupings beginning to appear. The 2010 regional and municipal elections will provide an important test as to whether these formations prove electorally durable, as will the 2011 presidential and congressional contests. Of the 25 regional presidents elected in 2006, eleven had a past in the various parties that had made up the United Left in the 1980s. The truth is that the experiences of regional parties have been very variable, but in some places they have accomplished an important degree of social insertion, building on ties with social movements of one sort or another and mediating with a local state presence with considerably more money than in the past. The emergence of new elites at the provincial level, coupled with the transfer of both fiscal resources and public responsibilities to the regions, has also helped breathe some new life into local politics for the first time in many years.[83]

[82] See Carlos Monge, 'Decentralisation: An Opportunity for Democratic Governance', in John Crabtree (ed.), *Making Institutions Work in Peru*, pp. 45–65.

[83] The experiences of some regions, such as Lambayeque in the north and Arequipa in the south, have proved quite successful. However, the degree of social participation in local government has been limited and the spaces for dialogue between regional and local

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Writing on party politics has been undertaken almost exclusively from a national perspective, and I argue that it suffers from an overly *limeño* bias. Much less attention has been given, particularly in recent times, to the study of subnational politics, unless – as in the case of Sendero Luminoso in Ayacucho – it suddenly became a matter of urgency to gain a better understanding of political dynamics outside Lima. This needs to change. Already, with the impact of decentralisation and greater regional assertiveness, fiscal decentralisation means that more money is available to expand the capacities and programmes of chronically underfunded regional universities and research centres. The growing effervescence of regional politics is also giving rise to greater awareness of the need to study politics in a more decentralised way.[84] New actors are appearing with their own regional or local agendas. Often regional disputes are poorly understood or deliberately misinterpreted in Lima, where the media has a tendency to sensationalise and distort local conflicts. The restiveness of provincial Peru has been made clear in the two last national electoral contests, and may well assert itself again in upcoming elections this year and next. Regional assertiveness against a still centralised state seems set to continue.

What are needed, therefore, are comparative studies of regional politics that focus on some of the general preoccupations outlined in this article. They need to assess the strengths and autonomy of new regional movements, to evaluate the obstacles to a new and more democratic form of local politics (such as the persistence of clientelism), to examine the ways in which party formations interact with social movements and others in civil society, and to evaluate the extent to which such politics connect with political culture, and in particular notions of ethnic identity. The focus required, I would argue, is multidisciplinary, and the approach one of locating current politics within its changing historical dynamic. Research on Peruvian politics needs to decentralise.

Spanish and Portuguese abstracts

Spanish abstract. Treinta años después del retorno de Perú a la democracia en 1980, el desempeño del país en cuanto a la democratización ha sido accidentado. No solamente el proceso de 'consolidación' se revirtió en los años 90 bajo el gobierno de Fujimori, sino que hay pocos puentes estables establecidos entre el Estado y la sociedad. Más que en la mayoría de países de América Latina, el sistema de partidos

government have proved disappointing. See Bruno Revesz, 'Descentralización, la reforma inconclusa', *Perú Hoy*, July 2009, pp. 35–50.

[84] A welcome, albeit incipient, move in this direction is Julio Cotler (ed.), *Poder y cambio en las regiones* (Lima, 2009). This document, sponsored by the UNDP, looks at politics and patterns of social change in four regions: Piura, La Libertad, Arequipa and Puno.

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ha fracasado en llenar el papel representativo que se le ha dado en los textos, un papel que no puede ser asumido fácilmente por otros tipos de instituciones. Es por lo tanto un caso de estudio interesante para aquellos preocupados con los obstáculos más estructurales para el desarrollo de una política representativa. El artículo busca enfocarse en algunos asuntos clave que afectan el desarrollo partidista: la quimera de la consolidación, la persistencia del clientelismo y patrimonialismo, la interacción con los movimientos sociales y el significado de la cultura política.

Spanish keywords: Perú, desarrollo partidista, democratización, clientelismo, movimientos sociales, cultura política

Portuguese abstract. Seguidos trinta anos do retorno peruano à democracia em 1980, a experiência do Peru com a democratização é ambígua. Além do processo de 'consolidação' ser revertido nos anos 1990 sob o governo Fujimori, o estabelecimento de conexões de longa duração entre o Estado e a sociedade é extremamente limitado. Mais do que em outros países latino-americanos, o sistema partidário fracassou na tentativa de exercer o papel representativo destinado a ele em tese, sendo este papel difícil de ser desempenhado por outros tipos de instituições. É, portanto, um estudo de caso que importa àqueles preocupados com obstáculos estruturais ao desenvolvimento de políticas representativas. O artigo pretende examinar algumas das questões-chave afetando o desenvolvimento partidário: a ilusão acerca da consolidação, a persistência do clientelismo e patrimonialismo, a interação com movimentos sociais e a importância da cultura política.

Portuguese keywords: Perú, desenvolvimento partidário, democratização, clientelismo, movimentos sociais, cultura política

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