

2002

The origin of Peruvian professional militarism

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THE ORIGIN OF PERUVIAN PROFESSIONAL MILITARISM

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Liberal Arts

in

The Interdepartmental Program in Liberal Arts

by

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B.S., Kansas State University, 1999

May 2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the commentaries, support, and patience of Professors Stanley E. Hilton and Karl Roider. I am also indebted to the personnel of the *Centro de Estudios Histórico-Militares del Perú*, especially Miss Rosario Dioses Bell from the hemeroteca, for facilitating my research. The *Centro's* director, Army General Herrman F. Hamann Carrillo, ensured my access to indispensable material supporting my efforts toward a better understanding of the Peruvian army.

This thesis could not have been possible without the constant support of my husband and the strength provided by the women in my family.

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ABSTRACT

The process of professionalization initiated by the Peruvian army in 1896 under French influence did not withdraw the military from political involvement. On the contrary, as the process of professionalization advanced, the army developed a “professional militarism,” that is, military political participation for reasons based on the institution’s professional ethos. The Peruvian army had traditionally claimed a broad military jurisdiction including extra-military roles. French instructors reinforced such claimed incorporating a broad military jurisdiction into the army’s professional ethos, which justified military coups during the twentieth-century as well as the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces (1968-1980).

Historians Frederick M. Nunn and Daniel M. Masterson do not take sufficiently into account the impact of nineteenth-century militarism on Peruvian military thought. These scholars argued that Peruvian officers were aping their French mentors when twentieth-century military magazines claimed nation building as a defense prerequisite or when “Francophile” officers declared a civilizing and social mission for the army.

However, in 1888, over 120 Peruvian officers established the *Centro Militar del Perú* and published the *Revista Militar y Naval*, which systematized the “military mind” born from the century’s military experience. The articles in the *Revista* demonstrate that before the process of professionalization initiated in 1896, the Peruvian military mind consisted of attitudes and perspectives stressing the necessity of a strong military, the supremacy of society over the individual, the destructiveness of civilian partisan politics, and a broad military jurisdiction, which included administrative, nation-building, civilizing, and constitutional guardian functions. Consequently, this thesis

focuses on nineteenth-century militarism and political culture arguing that by late 1880s the essential elements of the Peruvian military mind behind twentieth-century “professional militarism” had already come together.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In 1968 General Juan Velasco Alvarado, commandant of the army and the Joint Command, inaugurated the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces (1968-1980) after a so-called institutional coup had exiled the constitutional president. The self-defined mission of the new military regime was to find solutions for basic national problems as seen through the military ethos and with the consent and participation of the three branches of service.

Economic problems, demonstrations by land-hungry peasants, a demand from urban sectors for state services, denunciations of a petroleum contract harmful to national interests, and the failure of long-awaited reforms became the detonator of the 1968 coup. The military administration tried to alter the country's socioeconomic structures in accordance with a concept of national security that made economic development and modernization a necessary component of national defense against both internal enemies (i.e., Communists) and external enemies. The projected reforms included industrialization, a modern communication system, a redistribution of wealth, land reform, and the absorption of lower-class pressures by the political system – without direct popular participation or tolerance of political opposition.¹

The Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces has received widespread scholarly attention because it stands in opposition to the short-term personalistic or gendarme administrations established by military coups since independence in the early 1820s. Peruvian scholars like Henry Pease and Julio Cotler have emphasized the post-1945 era of accelerated industrialization and urbanization as the point at which the

¹ Henry Pease García, *El Ocaso del Poder Oligárquico: Lucha política en la escena oficial, 1968-1975*, 15-17.

interests of the Peruvian armed forces and those of the agro-export and landed oligarchy separated.²

Historian Frederick M. Nunn recognizes the importance of environmental factors in the 1968 coup, but stresses the evolution of military ideologically in the twentieth century. He argues that the French influence explains why dominant sectors of the Peruvian officer corps gradually developed the idea that it would be impossible to create a cohesive, disciplined social order and maintain a powerful military establishment under a civilian-dominated political system that generated only factionalism.³

Between 1896 and 1940, Peru contracted several French military missions and advisors to help modernize and professionalize the army not only to improve the country's military capabilities, but to end the intervention of military *caudillos* in national politics. According to Nunn, French officers transmitted to their Peruvian officer-students their own thoughts about State, nation, and politics, which included the notion that army officers should play a broad role in society. French military professionalism emphasized authority, hierarchy, social responsibility, and the supremacy of national interests, while it scorned the excesses of individualism, egalitarianism, factionalism, and materialism allegedly brought to civilian society by liberal democracy and capitalism. In this light, the army stood as the perfect link between nation and State because it was a microcosm of society upholding collective, rather than factional, interests. The army united past, present, and future, harmoniously blending tradition and modernity by combining hierarchy and democracy into a sort of

² Ibid., 21-41; Julio Cotler, *Clases, Estado y Nación en el Perú*, 318-326.

³ Frederick M. Nunn, *Yesterday's Soldiers: European Military Professionalism in South America, 1890-1940*.

corporate democracy. Any man could advance through the ranks due to merit being completely equal to those sharing his rank, obedient to those above him, and leader to those below him. The army was a school of patriotism and the officer corps a vanguard of civilizing agents.⁴

Examining the content of Peruvian military publications, Nunn establishes a correlation between the themes and topics they contained after 1904 and French military thought. He concludes that the pupils imitated the teachers. Absorbing French concepts, Peruvian officers became progressively disenchanted with the gap between republican political institutions, that supposedly should have guided the country toward progress and peace, and the country's economic, social, and political underdevelopment. Convinced of the vital connection between development and defense, their own broad role in society, and the unsuitability of civilian institutions, Peruvian officers turned French military professionalism by the 1930s into a "professional militarism," that is, the propensity to military-political action based on a professional ethos.⁵

Although Nunn indicates that the professionalization initiated in 1896 under French influence formed a military mentality that remained unchanged by American military influence in South America after WWII, he limits his study to the 1896-1940 period when French ideology took root in the Peruvian army.⁶ Historian Daniel M. Masterson extends Nunn's thesis to the late twentieth century by demonstrating the

⁴ Ibid., 22-23, 291.

⁵ Ibid., xi, 2,136-37, 285. This work defines militarism as the lack of civilian control over the military, which actively participates in politics.

⁶ Ibid., 251.

strength of French teachings in Peru's military literature, its military institutions, its officer corps, and the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces.⁷

Nunn and Masterson, however, do not take sufficiently into account the impact of nineteenth-century militarism on Peruvian military thought. Indeed, Masterson dismisses it as simply the result of an unprofessional officer corps,

By Samuel Huntington's classic definition of military professionalism, . . . the Latin American military establishments of the nineteenth century were woefully amateurish. Without a sense of corporate identity built upon tradition, discipline, and institutional self-esteem, Latin American military men lacked a sense of responsibility to their profession and to their nation.⁸

The central argument of this thesis is that the main elements of Peruvian military thought that underlay the 1968 movement had their roots in nineteenth century domestic conditions and had coalesced by the early 1890s. In other words, the nineteenth century witnessed the evolution of a "military mentality" that integrated the basic notions supposedly introduced by the French military missions. Explicitly espoused by over 120 military officers in the late 1880s and early 1890s, this mentality included the criticism of political factionalism, a disdain of civilian values, the perception of the army as the only truly national and democratic institution, and a broad social role or civilizing mission for the officer corps. These officers, mostly from the army and including the surviving heroes of the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), formed an organization called the *Centro Militar del Perú* and gave voice to their ideas in a new journal, the *Revista Militar y Naval*, the first issue of which appeared on 1 April 1888.

⁷ Daniel M. Masterson, *Militarism and Politics in Latin America: Peru from Sánchez Cerro to Sendero Luminoso*.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 11. Samuel P. Huntington defines a professional officer corps in terms of its corporateness, expertise, and responsibility, see *The Soldier and The State: The Theory and Practice of Civil-Military Relations*, 7-18.

The military mindset reflected in the *Revista* prior to the arrival of the first French military mission evolved out of nineteenth-century caudillismo and the political culture that encouraged it. Signs of an ideological debt to Europe do appear clearly in the pages of the *Revista*, where Peruvian officers regularly discussed French and German military. However, the essence of this military mind had been formed by decades of military political involvement fueled by the contradictory political culture established after the end of Spanish authority.

The republican political culture that emerged after the wars of independence - that is, the assumptions, expectations, and behaviors relevant to the handling of public affairs - harbored contradictory elements defining unclearly the concepts of the new language such as popular sovereignty, public opinion, representative government, reason, egalitarianism, and freedom. For instance, if reason should guide society towards happiness, how could sovereignty reside in the people at large, being most of them ignorant? In this way, elitist and authoritarian ideologies coexisted with egalitarian notions to form the new constitutional language.⁹ The ambiguity of the criollo elite towards independence, its subsequent ideological disputes, and the breach between constitutional theory and reality created a political vacuum after the crumbling of Spanish authority. In the midst of this crisis of legitimacy, violence became the other side of the political coin, allowing and encouraging caudillismo.

In this environment of institutional weakness and external military threat, army officers expanded the army's jurisdiction, "a legitimate claim to apply its expertise to specific situations," through three channels: (1) a legal channel, the law defining who could perform certain tasks, (2) public opinion, and (3) the actual performance of a task

⁹ Cristóbal Aljovín de Losada, *Caudillos y Constituciones: Perú 1821-1845*, 73-119.

or exercise of authority.¹⁰ Most Peruvian constitutions entrusted the armed forces with the protection of the political system, giving the military a constitutional political role.¹¹ Army officers, viewing themselves as agents civilization, also took on nation-building and administrative functions among their Indian troops or as appointed provincial prefects. Disgruntled urban sectors and political factions, moreover, often supported the seizure of power by different military caudillos, who thus could claim to be acting in the name of popular sovereignty and public opinion.

By the 1880s, the army, with a military mind nurtured by the national political culture, was a professionalizing institution attempting to establish a broad jurisdiction. Although the nineteenth-century Peruvian army was not a professional one according to Huntington's definition because of its lack of corporateness and expertise, as well as its interference in politics, the officer class regarded military service as a profession. After all, it was a full-time occupation serving society and was, too, a life-long calling - at least in the view of military practitioners. As recognized by different Peruvian governments of the 1800s in their attempts to established military academies, the career of arms required theoretical education and consisted of specialized knowledge.¹²

Nineteenth-century Peruvian militarism provided important elements that, in conjunction with the process of professionalization under French tutelage, and environmental factors during the twentieth century, transformed military professionalism into professional militarism, which stood behind the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces. Illuminating the origin of Peruvian professional

¹⁰ Don M. Snider and Gayle L. Watkins, "The Future of Army Professionalism: A Need for Renewal and Redefinition," *Parameters* 30 (Autum 2000), 16.

¹¹ Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny: Regimes of Exception in Spanish America*, 6.

¹² Snider and Watkins, "Army Professionalism," 13; Alfredo Muñoz, *Las Escuelas Militares del Perú*.

militarism provides a better understanding of the twentieth-century military behavior, which is crucial to any attempt to comprehend civil-military relations in that country.

CHAPTER 2. THE COMING OF INDEPENDENCE

The Inca Empire that Francisco Pizarro placed under Spanish rule in 1532 extended from southern Colombia to northern Chile and from the Pacific Ocean to the Amazonian rain forest including most of Bolivia and northwestern Argentina. Such vast territory became the viceroyalty of Peru with Lima as its capital on the Pacific coast. Thereafter, other expeditions conquered the rest of South America, except for Portugal's Brazil, expanding the viceroyalty.

Spanish authority in South America lasted almost three hundred years sustained by a civil administration, the Catholic Church, and a military force. However, in 1808 Spain fell to Napoleon, which ushered in a period of instability that would lead to the Spanish American wars of independence. A directive body called the *Junta Central* and later a smaller Council of Regency governed in name of the Spanish king, Ferdinand VII, defying French occupation. Liberal elements in Spain transformed the empire's absolutist government, where the monarch ruled without interference from society, into a constitutional monarchy and summoned a Cortes or parliament with representatives from all over the empire. Delegates from the Americas wanted equal representation for the colonies in the Cortes, equality of access to public office for colonials, and the removal of mercantilist economic restrictions on agriculture, industry, mining, and trade. But the Regency simply could not grant Americans equal representation or free commerce, which would constitute de facto independence. Although sentiment in favor

of independence manifested itself in Mexico, Buenos Aires, Quito, and Chile, Lima could not commit to revolution.¹

A sense of Peruvianism had existed since the late 1700s and found expression in certain organizations set up under Enlightenment influence and devoted to the study of practical aspects of local society. The activities of such organizations stimulated interest in Peruvian reality on the part of the criollo, or Peruvian-born white, elite and were an important step toward the development of patriotic sentiment. But there was no consensus about what form a Peruvian patria should take. Most liberals in Peru believed the patria would benefit the most from a constitutional monarchy within the Spanish Empire while others, a more radical minority, advocated complete separation from Spain with a republican model. Absolutists, on the other hand, argued that Peru's future depended on Spanish protection and the reversal of certain reforms introduced by the Bourbons. The only points of agreement among politically motivated Peruvians lay in their rejection of both freedom of religion and the participation of the racially mixed lower classes and indigenous peoples in politics. To complicate matters further, regional disputes between Lima and southern cities, Arequipa and Cuzco, flourished as possibilities of a political reorganization were considered.²

The lack of cohesion among the Peruvian elite before, during, and after the war of independence in the 1820s set the stage for the political instability of the early republican era, which gave way to and nurtured caudillismo - the intervention of

¹ J. R. Fisher, *Government and Society in Colonial Peru: The Intendant System, 1784-1814*, 201-203; Timothy E. Anna, *The Fall of the Royal Government in Peru*, 40, 47, 107; John Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808-1826*, 35-36.

² Lynch, *Spanish American*, 33, 162; Fisher, *Intendant System*, 233; Charles F. Walker, *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru, 1780-1840*, 85; Fredrick Pike, *The Modern History of Peru*, 41-44; Paul Gootenberg, "North-South: Trade Policy, Regionalism, and *Caudillismo* in Post-Independence Peru," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 23 (May), 273-308.

military chiefs in regional and national politics and resultant personalistic regimes.³ The sources of ambiguity and divergence within the Peruvian elite and the emerging national political culture that allowed the caudillos to thrive were diverse.

Peruvian *criollos* shared a strong fear of social upheaval, which prevented many of them from committing to independence until Simón Bolívar and the Army of Liberation delivered it in 1824. That fear steamed from the fact that the white population of Peru, mostly concentrated in coastal cities, was numerically small vis-à-vis the oppressed masses of Indian, African slaves, and mixed-blood.

Although whites, Indians, and blacks were segregated, the neat social divisions soon blurred due to miscegenation. As the number of mixed-bloods increased, social tensions sharpened. Several different social categories, recognized in Spanish law, attempted to define the degree of whiteness, “indianess,” and blackness in each mixed-blood individual. Nevertheless, cultural, social, and economic characteristics, in addition to race, determined the caste system. For example, an Indian who moved to the city and learned Spanish immediately became a *mestizo* - originally the offspring of an Indian and a Spaniard - and stopped paying tribute. A mulatto or free colored could buy a certificate of whiteness, which enabled him to join religious orders, schools, and marry whites. Thus, the possibility of social mobilization existed, fueling the masses’ pressure for social betterment.⁴

Indians composed the majority of the population and resided mainly in the highlands. The viceroy, the king’s alter ego in the colonies, along with other judicial,

³ During the late nineteenth and twentieth century, the meaning of caudillo expanded to describe civilian or military dictators.

⁴ Pike, *Modern*, 30; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 20-21; Julio Cotler, *Clases, Estado y Nación en el Perú*, 33-39.

treasury, and high ecclesiastical authorities lived in Lima, which meant that the authorities closest to the native population were the *corregidores* or Indian agents and the *caciques*, or traditional Indian chiefs who mediated between the Indians and the Spanish authorities. During the seventeenth century, the crown stopped paying salaries to these local authorities and authorized them to become traders and landlords. The *corregidores* utilized Indians, with the crown's acquiescence, as free laborers and coerced buyers of the pricey, useless goods - called *repartimientos* - sold in their jurisdictions; at the same time the agents circumvented colonial laws protecting Indian community lands and pocketed the extra money they collected from the Indian tribute.⁵

The annual Indian tribute or head tax, the *repartimientos*, and the *mita* - compulsory labor for the government at mines, haciendas, or factories - forced the formerly self-sufficient native communities into the market economy. Alliances soon developed between local authorities and socioeconomic elites, including priests, hacendados, and merchants, to turn Indians into serfs through the mechanism of debt manipulation. For example, a new worker at a hacienda would receive a loan against his future wages in order to buy tools at the hacienda's general store. Then he would receive most or all of his meager salary in chits redeemable only at the general store, a procedure that kept him in debt and at work since most haciendas had their own jail and enforced their own regulations.⁶

But not only the masses pressed for social betterment. Upper class mestizos and criollos lived in the Spaniard social world aspiring to the same privileges enjoyed by peninsular-born whites (*peninsulares*), but became increasingly embittered when denied

⁵ Lynch, *Spanish American*, 8; Cotler, *Clases*, 26-27.

⁶ Pike, *Modern*, 27-29; Rex A. Hudson, ed., *Peru: A Country Study*, 20-21, 102-103; Cotler, *Clases*, 23-24.

access to higher royal offices and other social distinctions because of their colonial birth.⁷ In this way, the criollo elite, although having some grievances of its own towards the Crown, had several reasons to fear a racial war if control over the masses weakened due to revolution. This fear increased as the minor, unorganized Indian revolts became more frequent and violent throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Economic reasons also weighted heavily in the lack of criollo commitment to independence. In the 1700 the French Bourbon ruling family replaced the Hapsburgs on the Spanish throne and initiated a series of administrative, economic, and military reforms to improve the economic and military position of Spain and her colonies so as to permit Spain to keep pace with the British. Bourbon worries about English commercial aggressiveness and possible territorial aspirations in Spanish America increased as Cape Horn's invulnerability decreased.⁸

In order to facilitate administration and improve the defenses of South America, the Crown created the viceroyalty of New Granada in 1739 and the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata in 1776 while Chile, as a captaincy general, became virtually independent from Peru. The addition of the silver-rich Upper Peru (present-day Bolivia) to the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata and the abolition of the fleet system jolted Peru's economy, which had revolved around a monopoly on direct trade between South America and the mother country. As Madrid opened more ports in South America to imports from Spain, the Peruvian harbor of Callao could not compete with those on the Atlantic and Peru's incipient manufacturing sector declined under the pressure of imported goods now coming through Buenos Aires and the loss of the Upper Peru

⁷ Lynch, *Spanish American*, 18, 159.

⁸ Leon G. Campbell, *The Military and Society in Colonial Peru, 1750-1810*, 9-10.

market. Peru, moreover, was forced to subsidize its new commercial competitors.⁹ The Peruvian criollo elite could not agree on a solution to the viceroyalty's economic decline. Some argued for a return to the pre-Bourbon reforms while others claimed the reforms had not gone far enough in the direction of free trade.

Most of the Peruvian elite, moreover, resided in Lima and did not own extensive properties, its status depending more on royal appointment. Consequently, although a small group of criollos had been influenced by the Enlightenment philosophers and sought political equality with Spaniards, economic autonomy, free trade, and better treatment of Indian, their socio-economic dependency on the Crown made them reformers and not revolutionaries.¹⁰

In 1777, the Crown initiated drastic tax reform, abolishing various special concessions and taxing formerly exempt sectors of the population and economic activities. Exploitation of Indian increased as economic elites and corregidores passed on to them the new burdens imposed by royal reform. Tax revolts soon exploded all over the viceroyalty with criollo, mestizo, mulatto, and Indian participation due to the all-encompassing effects of the measures. Several of the newly introduced provincial militia units showed themselves either ambiguous - by not restraining the local mobs - or clearly opposed to the Crown's interests by providing support to the rebellious citizenry. Consequently, a bitter debate about the loyalty and effectiveness of the provincial militia raged throughout the viceroyalty.¹¹

Hapsburg military policy had relied on regular or veteran Spanish forces and fixed fortifications as the first line of defense while keeping militias - mostly in the

⁹ Pike, *Modern*, 32; Anna, *Royal Government*, 4-7; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 13; Hudson, *Peru*, 18.

¹⁰ Anna, *Royal Government*, 24, 30-32; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 18.

¹¹ Campbell, *Colonial Peru*, 73-74, 90-91, 99; Hudson, *Peru*, 27.

coast and composed of mulattoes - as a manpower pool. The expense of sending regular troops and raising fixed regiments in the colonies forced the Bourbons to introduce provincial militias, raised and manned locally, as tactical units in addition to a small regular and fixed component working mainly as trainers and command staff.¹²

The command of these provincial militias went to the most prominent criollo families capable of outfitting and raising troops. Provincial militia commandants received in exchange several distinctions such as membership in a Spanish military order and the military *fuero* - or exemption from the payment of certain taxes, from quartering soldiers, from the payment of jail cell fees, and in some instances from payment of tribute for officers and sergeants. Despite the Crown's desire to fill all superior positions with noble elements that would balance the participation of Indians, mulattoes, and mestizos in the ranks, the creation of segregated units and the lack of enough white officers opened sergeant and lieutenant positions for mixed-bloods and colored people.¹³

Even before the tax revolts, geography and economy had defeated the provincial militia experiment. The wide dispersion of haciendas and towns where militiamen lived, the lack of available and sufficiently paid training cadres, and the Crown's inability to reimburse militia members' economic losses during training all contributed to the militia problem. Nevertheless, the Bourbon military reform transformed the army into a more Peruvian institution. Although Spaniards dominated the provincial militia upper echelons, criollo and non-white militia officers outnumbered peninsulares.¹⁴

¹² Lynch, *Spanish American*, 10; Campbell, *Colonial Peru*, 19, 23.

¹³ Campbell, *Colonial Peru*, 35-40, 59, 190.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 53-54, 66-67.

On November 4, 1780 a young mestizo cacique, José Gabriel Condorcanqui, took on the alias Inca Túpac Amaru II and seized the Spanish Corregidor of Tinta in Cuzco. Accused of extorting the Indians in his jurisdiction, the corregidor was tried, sentenced, and executed a few days later by the Inca without militia interference. Lima sent its provincial militia and regular army under Spanish command to crush the rebellion in Cuzco since the militias of that region could not be trusted. Túpac Amaru proclaimed his movement to be against only “bad government” and corrupt Spanish authorities, but he could not control the masses of oppressed Indians who saw in all whites their oppressors. In April 1781, a criollo accomplice betrayed Túpac Amaru. The following month, the Crown put the heads of Túpac Amaru, his family, and some of his lieutenants on public display to discourage other would-be rebels.¹⁵

In the wake of the rebellion, the Crown accelerated administrative reform, abolishing the repartimiento, establishing a high court of justice in Cuzco, and implanting in 1784 the intendant system. Eight salaried, Spaniard-born intendants, with extensive judicial, financial, and military authority, replaced the corregidores, many of whom had become financially independent, in order to centralize power, improve regional administration, and stimulate regional economies. Although the collection of taxes improved, the new system Heightened rivalries among public authorities, failed to supervise adequately the poorly paid subordinate officials who kept alive the illegal repartimiento, and, ultimately, could not reverse Peru’s economic stagnation.¹⁶

The participation or ambiguous behavior of some criollos and mestizos during the tax revolts and the Túpac Amaru rebellion resulted in the Crown’s removal of non-

¹⁵ Pike, *Modern*, 33-35; Anna, *Royal Government*, 29-30; Campbell, *Colonial Peru*, 111-115, 134-135, 145-146.

¹⁶ Fisher, *Intendant System*, 33-38, 47, 235-36; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 9; Pike, *Modern*, 31.

peninsular born whites from certain royal offices and the return to regular, fixed units as the first line of defense. In addition, criollos were passed up for military promotions and rewards. In this way, criollo loyalty was under suspicion and Peruvians saw their access to military and bureaucratic careers halted.¹⁷ Although this caused resentment among white colonials toward the Crown, the Túpac Amaru rebellion had stamped in their minds the violence that could be unleashed during a war of independence and the suffering awaiting whites who lacked the protection of royal troops. In 1814, another revolt with massive Indian participation aggravated criollo fears of a racial war.

After 1809 several independence movements sprang up throughout South America. Viceroy José Fernando de Abascal y Sousa (1806-1816) raised militias to fight revolutionary movements in and outside Peru. The viceroyalty's economic weakness and the lack of Spanish reinforcements forced him to give command to those criollos and non-whites contributing private funds to the war effort. Nevertheless, the army remained firmly in Spanish hands as Peruvians had limited access to field grade officer ranks, which inevitable deepened tension between peninsulares and criollos. Moreover, the mobilization was an additional blow to Peru's economy as its mining sector collapsed in 1812 and Lima became dependent on Chilean wheat and other imported foodstuff.¹⁸

The liberal Cádiz Constitution of 1812 introduced a new vocabulary and a new way of political participation into the colonies. Sovereignty emanated from the people to create a representative government - a constitutional monarchy -, the constitution was

¹⁷ Campbell, *Colonial Peru*, 154-158, 164-166, 172-176; Anna, *Royal Government*, 30; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 11.

¹⁸ Anna, *Royal Government*, 6-9; Campbell, *Colonial Peru*, 210-216, 223, 226; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 163.

an expression of a social contract established through reason rather than tradition, and all citizens were equal before the law. However, representation, popular sovereignty, equality, and liberty co-existed with socio-political hierarchies in corporate societies creating contradiction and unpredictability in times of revolution.¹⁹

Abascal's successor, Viceroy Joaquín de la Pezuela, did not survive the political confusion coming from Spain. In 1814 the restoration of Ferdinand VII had meant a return to absolutism, but in December 1820 liberal elements in the Spanish army mutinied reestablishing the Constitution of 1812, which would be again abolished by the king almost three years later. The Spanish political instability in Spain weakened Pezuela's absolutist position and after several military reverses culminating in the loss of Chile to the forces of José de San Martín, a young group of Spanish liberal officers bloodlessly deposed him on January 29, 1821 in favor of General José de la Serna. It seemed obvious for many criollos that the colonial government had started to crumble and that the independence was inevitable in view of San Martín's control of Chile. Consequently, important segments of the elite, as well as those aspiring to upward social mobility, decided that the time had come to bet on independence and ensure for themselves a position of future leadership.²⁰

From Chile, José de San Martín launched a costly Argentine-Chilean expedition towards Peru. San Martín wanted to rally Peruvians under the banner of freedom, which was the justification for separation from Spain, rather than occupy Lima and force it upon the citizens. He moved north of Lima besieging it with the help of the Chilean

¹⁹ Cristóbal Aljovín de Losada, *Caudillos y Constituciones: Peru 1821-1845*, 73-76; Fisher, *Intendant System*, 200, 206, 212-216; Anna, *Royal Government*, 76-77, 89.

²⁰ Campbell, *Colonial Peru*, 229; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 171-72, 178; Anna, *Royal Government*, 156-157, 170.

navy and Peruvian *montoneras*, which were spontaneous guerrilla bands led by mestizos, Indians, and even criollos seeking vengeance, boot, or perhaps independence. Such groups acted without much coordination among themselves and at times in opposition to one another because of personal or regional disputes.²¹

San Martín's idea of a constitutional monarchy for Peru eased criollos' fears of anarchy and social revolution. By May 1821 the north had pronounced itself for independence after the intendant of Trujillo, Marquis of Torre Tagle, joined San Martín. The viceroy evacuated Lima in July, deciding to concentrate royalist forces in Cuzco. The *cabildo*, or town council, invited San Martín into the capital after the viceroy left, primarily because they feared a slave revolt and the *montoneras*. San Martín officially proclaimed Peruvian independence on July 28, 1821, a pronouncement that roughed off an exodus of many loyal Spaniards and criollos, who abandoned property and family in Peru.²²

San Martín took care to involve the criollo aristocracy militarily and politically in the independence movement. In August 1821 he created the military unit *Legión Peruana de la Guardia* under the command of the Marquis of Torre Tagle, which is officially the founding unit of the Peruvian army.²³ San Martín also organized the *Sociedad Patriótica*, a select group of criollos charged with deciding on the most suitable type of government for Peru, which developed into a politico-ideological battlefield. Plans for a republic met with no major opposition in Peru, for most of the staunch absolutists fled or been expelled and those favoring a representative

²¹ Lynch, *Spanish American*, 173-176, 182-83; Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 85; Pike, *Modern*, 47-48.

²² Anna, *Royal Government*, 178-179, 183; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 177-179, 182-183; Pike, *Modern*, 49.

²³ Víctor Villanueva, *Ejército Peruano: del Caudillaje Anárquico al Militarismo Reformista*, 21.

government in the form of a constitutional monarchy could not produce a Peruvian king to ease nationalist concerns. Consequently, the political debate occurred within the framework of republican theory and language.²⁴

By the time the new Latin American republics were writing their constitutions, the notions of the Enlightenment and the French and North American revolutions shared the spot light with those of post-revolutionary thinkers who feared Jacobean excesses and despaired over the challenges presented by republican states. Most Peruvian political leaders agreed on the virtues of separation of powers and a representative government, which was considered a sign of progress and civilization, where the rule of law would protect society and constitutional guarantees, such as the right to own property and free speech. A few, however, advocated freedom of religion; indeed, opposition to that particular liberal measure united an otherwise divided society.²⁵ However, the divergent views of the proper relationship between state and society turned constitutional debates into ideological and civil wars.

On one end of the political spectrum, “liberals” aspired to a democratic federal republic, with strong restrictions on the executive power. They favored an open trade policy and insisted on the reduction of rights granted to corporate groups such as the church and the army. On the other side, “conservatives” or authoritarians claimed that Peru lacked the cultural and structural development - namely, homogeneous cultural groups, literate masses, and a communication network - necessary for the successful functioning of federalism and democracy. They usually favored protectionist trade policies. Since most preferred a constitutional monarchy, they settled for a strong

²⁴ Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 73, 96, 102.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 77-79, 112.

central government that would prevent the anarchy of partisan politics and believed that a separation of powers and a free press would successfully counterbalance the executive.²⁶

Still, most liberals and conservatives differentiated between active and passive citizenship stipulating the necessity of literacy and property requirements for voting privileges and office-holding, measures that would impede the participation of the lower classes in politics. In other words, they understood equality before the law - or civil equality - as separate from political equality.²⁷ They shared a negative vision of the Indians based on their reliance on a subsistence economy and their “wasteful” ways during their several festivities throughout the year. Defining them as backward, lazy, stupid, and superstitious people, criollos deemed necessary the intervention of the State to turn Indians into productive citizens. Although liberals had more faith in the possibilities of civilizing the Indians through educational reforms and their insertion into the market economy, neither the liberal nor the conservative political platform incorporated the majority of the population as active political agents.²⁸

By mid 1822 severe economic, administrative, and military problems forced San Martín to seek Simón Bolívar’s cooperation. After his unsuccessful interview with the Liberator of the north, San Martín convened the first Peruvian constitutional congress on September 20, 1822, renounced his powers, and sailed for Europe.²⁹ The electoral law stipulated that each of the nine *departamentos* -administrative units - should elect a number of representatives based on its population. Since four departamentos remained

²⁶ Pike, *Modern*, 53; Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 97-99, 101, 105.

²⁷ Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 118-19.

²⁸ Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 124, 155-56, 196, 199.

²⁹ Lynch, *Spanish American*, 184-187; Anna, *Royal Government*, 210-211, 193, 204-5; Pike, *Modern*, 52.

in royalist hands, their representatives were elected among the citizens born in those regions living in Lima. All male citizens over twenty-one could vote, including Indians, although they could not be elected. Despite the apparent openness of the political system, a restricted group of urban criollos and mestizos controlled the electoral process. Several irregularities reported by contemporaries stand out, such as the case of a man who took eight or nine Indians from an open market to vote for him, becoming one of the three representatives from the departamento of Huancavelica.³⁰

In congress, mostly composed of liberal clerics and lawyers, the ideological cleavage was obvious. Electing three of its members to form an executive junta to direct the war, the delegates turned to the task of drafting the country's first constitution. The military campaign directed by the Junta was a complete disaster and it was feared the viceroy would retake Lima. In February 1823 a group of officers headed by General of the Peruvian Army, Andrés de Santa Cruz, former royalist, forced congress to elect the aristocratic militia colonel and ardent separatist José de la Riva Agüero y Sánchez Boquete as the first president of Peru.³¹

These officers believed that the new republic needed a strong executive who could take secret and timely decisions during turbulent times instead of relying on a slow, indecisive legislative. With this bloodless coup, they bestowed upon the army a responsibility that reached beyond the military sphere. In the document by which these officers requested that congress elect Riva Agüero as president, they argued that the Junta had never gained the confidence of the population or that of the army. In addition to that document, a similar letter arrived from the militia garrisoned outside Lima, along

³⁰ Jorge Basadre, *Historia de la República del Perú*, I, 2.

³¹ Pike, *Modern*, 53-57; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 188; Basadre, *Historia*, I, 12.

with one signed by several citizens criticizing the activities of congress. The coup and a more authoritarian form of government thus rested, or so its creators maintained, on the newly introduced notions of public opinion and popular sovereignty - employed, however, in a context of direct democracy.³²

The Peruvian officer corps, which originated mainly out of defectors from the realist army and militia, was composed of criollos and mestizos convinced that Peru and they themselves would do better outside the control and restraints of Spain. Many higher officers had received land as rewards for military services and joined the criollo aristocracy in wanting political power to shape the new state according to their vision of what was best for the country and themselves.³³ The era of the caudillos had begun.

In June 1823 Spanish troops recaptured Lima briefly and congress took advantage of the confusion to depose Riva Agüero in favor of the Marquis of Torre Tagle. Congress then looked upon Bolívar's envoy, General Antonio José de Sucre, and his Colombian troops for protection. Although military officers and politicians feared Peru would lose its still feeble independence under Bolívar and his confederation dreams, the situation seemingly left the legislators no other choice but to invite him to assume supreme military and political authority. Bolívar did so in September 1823 as congress suspended the newly promulgated liberal constitution.³⁴

In early 1824 unpaid Argentine and Chilean troops in Callao mutinied, giving the fortress to the royalists who again took Lima while Bolívar lay sick north of the

³² The officers were General Santa Cruz, Colonel Agustín Gamarra, Colonel Ramón Herrera, Colonel Francisco de Brandsen, Colonel Félix Oyarzábal, Lieutenant Colonel Juan Bautista Eléspuru, and the chiefs Antonio Gutierrez de la Fuente, Angel Antonio Salvadores, Ventura Alegre, José Maria Plaza, Salvador Soyer, Eugenio Garzón, and Enrique Martínez. See Basadre, *Historia*, I, 12.

³³ Lynch, *Spanish American*, 180-182; Basadre, *Historia*, I, 132; Cotler, *Clases*, 79-80.

³⁴ Pike, *Modern*, 57-59; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 268-69; Anna, *Royal Government*, 218, 221; Basadre, *Historia*, I, 21-24.

capital. Torre Tagle, his ministers, many notable criollos, and three hundred officers of the Peruvian army went to the royalist side. Many Peruvians had not signed the Declaration of Independence willingly, but had been guided by instincts of self-preservation, so the same principle made it easy for them to change camps. Among the groups that willingly signed the Declaration were Peruvian-born nobles, criollo professionals, nonwhites championing reforms, and some import-export merchants advocating free trade. By 1824, the constant trade disruptions and demands for contributions from the patriot government had bankrupt most of them, while not bringing independence any closer – or so it seemed.³⁵

But Bolívar and his followers, including Peru's future military caudillos, refused to give up. Placing all civilian matters on the hands of one prominent criollo, Bolívar concentrated on raising and training an army. The Peruvian navy controlling the Pacific coast made possible the arrival of fresh Colombian reinforcements who were incorporated into Bolívar's multinational troops. Peruvians drafted from different northern areas, sometimes even twelve-year old boys, drilled constantly as new factories worked around the clock producing munitions by melting nails recovered from dismantled furniture. Gold and silver items obtained from the churches along with financial contributions imposed on the towns of the former intendancy of Trujillo produced by April 1824 an army of 8000 paid men and a sizeable great cavalry force.³⁶

The next month Bolívar crossed the Andes to reunite with Sucre's troops, the infantry unit under General José de la Mar (Ecuadorian), and the Army of the South under Generals Andrés de Santa Cruz (Bolivian) and Agustín Gamarra (Peruvian).

³⁵ Anna, *Royal Government*, 186-87, 222-224; Basadre, *Historia*, I, 39-40.

³⁶ Lynch, *Spanish American*, 269-271; Anna, *Royal Government*, 229; Pike, *Modern*, 59; Basadre, *Historia*, I, 51-52, 115.

Meeting Spanish forces at Junín, the superior patriot cavalry sent the royalist army fleeing. Bolívar then moved toward Lima, entrusting Sucre with the Army of Liberation. On December 8, 1824 the battle of Ayacucho defined Peru as an independent country.³⁷

Peru emerged from the long war of independence with a prostrate economy and a growing foreign debt. The loans contracted in the British stock market bought war materiel but did not revive the economy. The small internal market, the lack of ships, unavailability of capital, and disseminated labor force provided little incentive for investment in manufacturing. The high protective tariffs imposed by the commercial code of 1826 had, in reality, little national industry to protect. The weakness of the State, moreover, impeded the collection of such duties, thus encouraging corruption and contraband, which in turn undermined the protective and revenue functions of the tariffs. The new Peruvian oligarchy - including several high ranking military officers - contented itself with governmental positions and land, as the hacienda, utilizing inefficient and outmoded pre-capitalist ways of production but controlling people and territory, became the center of social, economic, and political power.³⁸

The Bolivarian Constitution, calling for a centralized and authoritarian form of government with a lifetime president, was promulgated in late 1826 as the first step in the creation of the Confederation of the Andes. Many congressional and military leaders despised the idea of a foreigner ruling Peru, especially one who had annexed Guayaquil to the Gran Colombia (present Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela). Growing

³⁷ Pike, *Modern*, 59-60; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 272-73.

³⁸ Lynch, *Spanish American*, 274, 344, 346; Basadre, *Historia*, I, 121-122.

opposition in Peru and political turmoil in Gran Colombia convinced Bolívar to abandon his confederation dreams as well as Lima.³⁹

The Constitution of Cádiz and the wars of independence brought into the colonies a modern republican language and praxis, which transformed the socio-political panorama. However, these modern ideas coexisted with traditional authoritarian and corporate values creating a political culture marked by contradiction. For instance, the new Peruvian elite began the construction of a republican nation-state that excluded the majority of the population from active political participation, justifying their project with modern rational discourses.⁴⁰ No faction of the ideologically divided Peruvian elite, uncommitted throughout the wars of independence and fractionalized along regional lines, could establish itself as the new ruling class nor support a State accepted by most as the legitimate successor of Spanish authority.

³⁹ Basadre, *Historia*, I, 84-86; Pike, *Modern*, 61-63; Lynch, *Spanish American*, 292.

⁴⁰ Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny: Regimes of Exception in Spanish America*, 40-45; Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 43, 73, 116.

CHAPTER 3. NINETEENTH-CENTURY CAUDILLISMO AND POLITICAL CULTURE

Nineteenth-century Peruvian caudillismo, a political system based on the leaders' use of violence and patrimonial alliances to achieve power, had two great periods: the first one evolved from the war of independence and the second one from the War of the Pacific (1879-1883).¹ During the first half of the century, economically weak ideological and regional factions fought alongside military caudillos to impose their view of the best organization for the new Republican State. By 1872, an economically strong social group, mainly coastal in origin and linked by family and business ties, established the Civilista Party, which successfully placed the first civilian in the presidency. The civilista platform consisted of a liberal economic program and a conservative political schema, settling the liberal-conservative debate. The War of the Pacific and the Chilean occupation ruined Peru's economy leaving a political vacuum. With the civilistas debilitated, regional and ideological disputes ensued allowing a group of military officers and civilians grouped in the Constitutional Party to control the State. However, a coalition of the most influential civilian groups won the 1895 civil war initiating a period of consecutive civilian governments, which shaped the Republican Peruvian State during the twentieth century.

The ambiguity of criollos during the war of independence, their economic weakness afterwards, the regional conflicts, and their ideological divergence impeded the formation of a ruling class capable of replacing the king's legitimacy with a constitution. The emergent political culture exploited the confusing notions of reason and popular sovereignty on the one hand, and popular sovereignty, public opinion, and

¹ Jorge Basadre, *Historia de la República del Perú, 1822- 1933*.

representative government on the other. The republican language in Peru supported an elitist, antidemocratic discourse and, at the same time, a logic of “direct democracy” specifically during revolutions and counterrevolutions.²

Popular sovereignty presumed equality of rights and obligations for all citizens while proclaiming reason, i.e., the capacity to think in orderly rational ways, to be the obvious propeller of a society towards social progress and peace.³ Most of the Peruvian population in the 1800s consisted of illiterate Indians and mestizos, the majority of whom did not speak Spanish but some variation of Quechua or Aymara. Peruvian Indians, with strong corporate values and engaging in subsistence economic activities, could not identify with the criollo minority or the liberal values upholding individualism and capitalism. The impossibility of allowing political sovereignty to reside in the Indian masses appeared obvious to many liberal and conservative political leaders alike.

On the other hand, electoral processes marred by irregularities and violence called into question the legitimacy of representative government, making its relationship with popular sovereignty and public opinion problematic; thus, creating an ambiguous notion of authority. Each contending faction claimed to represent public opinion, possessor of political authority, against the abuses of the group in power, using the notion of popular sovereignty as in a direct democracy to justify revolutions. Accusing the faction in power of representing private interests rather than those of the “nation” or of introducing chaos in pursue of their selfish aspirations, the revolutionary groups argued that force became indispensable to defend the notions of popular sovereignty, peace, and liberty - in other words, the spirit of the constitution. However,

² Cristóbal Aljovín de Losada, *Caudillos y Constituciones: Perú, 1821-1845*, 23-4.

³ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

the superimposition of the egalitarian republican notion over Peruvian corporate and hierarchical society eroded the possibility of developing democratic political discourses, which created a gap between the theoretical principles of government and the country's reality. Consequently, the idea of "nation," "the people," and "patria" did not involve a community of equal individuals, but incorporated, asymmetrical, different social groups.⁴

Politicians and caudillos easily justified their participation in civil wars through the manipulation of the new republican language. Most Peruvian constitutions entrusted the armed forces with the protection of the political system and the maintenance of internal order. Besides, liberal constitutions, such as the first one in 1823, attempted to protect the individual from an abusive government by declaring that any governmental infraction against individual rights would break the social contract and justify popular resistance to oppression. Consequently, military officers could appeal to the constitution to justify their political interventions.⁵

In addition, Peruvian constitutions provided for a state of emergency, or regimes of exception, "a legal and political order for times of crisis" such as natural disasters, rebellion, subversion, and war. During such periods, guarantees and liberties could be suspended. In fact, the war of independence inaugurated these temporary dictatorships when San Martín and Bolívar established them out of "the rule of necessity" or to protect the "public welfare." Interpreting the constitutional provisions for regimes of exception within a "direct democracy" logic and claiming faithful compliance with their constitutional mandate to defend the republic, caudillo-presidents resorted to

⁴ Ibid., 115-16, 279-80, 309.

⁵ Leon G. Campbell, *The Military and Society in Colonial Peru, 1750-1810*, 231; Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny: Regimes of Exception in Spanish America*, 213, 221, 224, 228.

authoritarian measures without congressional approval while caudillos organized revolutions and counterrevolutions.⁶

Although the constitution of 1828 declared that “the public force is obedient and cannot deliberate,”⁷ and the 1839 constitution stated that any attempts to legitimize revolutions by claiming to represent the “sovereign people” would be considered a criminal attack on “public security,” the interpretation of who represented the sovereign people inevitably lay with the triumphant caudillo.⁸ In this way, Peruvian constitutions, employing two competing set of principles, liberal and authoritarian, symbolized the contradictory Peruvian political culture.

Revolutions using the “direct democracy logic” followed these steps: first, caudillos justified their coup by accusing the group in power of threatening the nation’s interests; secondly, they declared the nation’s legitimate right to intervene through insurrection; thirdly, they claimed to represent public opinion, bearer of political sovereignty, during the national emergency; and finally, the caudillos arranged for elections to ratify the revolutionary actions and change their revolutionary status into a constitutional one.⁹

Nineteenth-century revolutionaries saw themselves as saviors of the *patria* and did not escape the constitutional discourse in which political legitimacy derived from a representative government. Thus, each revolutionary group hoped that its violent acts

⁶ Loveman, *Tyranny*, 6, 12, 17, 209, 211-13.

⁷ Basadre, *Historia*, I, 175. All translations are mine.

⁸ Loveman, *Tyranny*, 221.

⁹ Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 279, 282.

would inaugurate a legal and legitimate regime, based on a constitution representing the “spirit of the country,” and ending the political instability and the constant civil wars.¹⁰

A broad sense of social responsibility towards the country alongside desires for personal glory and power, as well as different concepts of what was best for the country, encouraged military officers to participate in politics.¹¹ The lack of a civilian group committed to independence turned the officer corps that supported San Martín and then Bolívar into the founding fathers of the Republic. The officer class saw itself as part of the only national institution incorporating all the different social sectors and presenting the perfect combination of tradition and modernity. The military’s sense of hierarchy and order coexisted harmoniously with the modern notion of equality, since every man was equal to those within his rank, leader to those below him, and obedient to his superiors. In this way, military officers stood as a source of order and stability with commitments that went beyond external defense to include an internal mission as well; the military man was called to protect the fatherland from anarchy.¹²

Such a sense of responsibility, however, did not preclude the flourishing of personal aspirations and interests since the army became an effective agent of mobilization for ambitious officers and soldiers from both upper and lower classes. Civilian factional leaders encouraged military intervention in politics because they lacked the force to gain access to, and remain in power. The possibility of a soldiers’ coup against their officer made the politicization of the troops important.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid., 286, 316.

¹¹ Fredrick B. Pike, *The Modern History of Peru*, 56.

¹² Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 299, 301.

¹³ Ibid., 169-170.

The political vacuum and crisis of legitimacy following the war of independence encouraged unregulated political competition transforming violence into an essential part of politics, which nurtured caudillismo and the formation of a hybrid state utilizing modern bureaucratic and traditional patrimonial practices.¹⁴

After independence, San Martín divided the country into departamentos, which in turn were subdivided into provinces, following the intendancy jurisdictions of the colonial era. Prefects and subprefects replaced the intendants and subdelegates. Political instability, constant border wars, and the economic weakness of the State promoted a high level of regional autonomy. The control of the State by a contending faction depended on the construction and maintenance of alliances that could provide capital, men, supply, and “popular support” during revolts and civil wars. Consequently, prefects, who led the departamentos and the resources, became key political players.¹⁵

Presidents appointed prefects who, in turn, appointed subprefects and the leaders of the militias as established by law. In the early republic, most prefects were military men since they needed to protect the region from internal disorder –or the opposition- and possible external invasions. These posts were given as rewards to loyal followers who could raise a political and military support base in the region. For example, Bolívar appointed Cuzco-born General Agustín Gamarra as the first prefect of Cuzco. Subprefects oversaw the tax collection, producing roughly 40 percent of the State’s revenue and a higher percentage of provincial income. They also recruited soldiers, provided supplies in times of war, and circulated information while checking upon

¹⁴ Ibid.,21.

¹⁵ Johnny Zas Friz Burga, *La Descentralización Ficticia: Perú 1821-1998*, 23-25.

political opponents. Militia leaders recruited and trained men while donating uniforms, horses, and arms.¹⁶

Prefect, subprefect, and militia officer positions carried several benefits. Prefects wielded extensive influence because of their control of resources and could bargain with national caudillos on favorable terms or become a caudillo themselves. Subprefects had access to substantial amounts of capital yielded by the tax collection, which could be invested or loaned out for interest before payment was made to higher administrative levels. Militia leaders encountered various open avenues for local power, financial opportunities, and even commissions in the regular army.¹⁷

Most of the military caudillos who ruled the country in the first half of the century had held a prefecture. Caudillos organized multiclass alliances linking the rural population with national political ideologies and events. Caudillos coexisted alongside governmental institutions, manipulating them but without completely controlling them. Their power, based on shifting alliances and in constant dialogue with different sectors of society, suffered constant challenges keeping the states they built extremely vulnerable.¹⁸

In this way, the State functioned through modern, rational, bureaucratic practices established by the constitution, but at the same time through traditional patrimonial ways, as in the selection of regional authorities, who performed roles established by the constitution and others emanating from caudillismo. Moreover, the constant elaboration of new constitutions in the early republic - 1823, 1826, 1828, 1834,

¹⁶ Charles F. Walker, *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru, 1780-1840*, 130-31, 137.

¹⁷ Zas, *Descentralización*, 37-39; Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 121, 137-140, 188.

¹⁸ Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 123, 224; Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 157.

1836, 1839 - that strengthened or weakened the executive branch, establishing a decentralized or centralized political administration, discouraged profound administrative reforms.

Relations between the republican State and the native population clearly showed the coexistence of modern and traditional institutions. In 1825, Bolívar tried to transform communal Indian peasants into independent farmers by distributing communal lands. This liberal decree intended to assimilate the masses of Indians into the market economy and a criollo national society.¹⁹ However, Indian communities successfully resisted the liberal “attack” due to the economic weakness of the State during the first half of the nineteenth century as well as their ability to insert themselves into caudillo politics. The Indian head tax, abolished and reinstated by Bolívar within a year, represented a huge percentage of State income while the leaders of Indian communities kept linking the payment of tribute to communal land rights as in colonial times. Tribute payment gave communal Indians certain assurances that their land would not be divided or lost to outsiders since regional authorities understood that the Indians’ ability to pay depended on their landed status. Thus, the maintenance of the colonial Indian head tax, crucial to the sustenance of the State and caudillo wars, gave Indians room for negotiation. However, at the same time, it kept alive perceptions of the social value of the native population dating back to colonial times. Criollos continued to describe Indians as lazy, drunk, and superstitious people who needed the intervention of the State to force them into the market and productive activities. Consequently, Indians

¹⁹ Basadre, *Historia*, I, 117, Pike, *Modern*, 67.

were not included within the politicians or caudillos' political platforms as active citizens.²⁰

Liberal and conservative political practices differed little. Both groups conspired, relied on force and caudillos to control the State, and used republican notions in a "direct democracy" sense. Once in power, both groups tried to exclude the opposition from participating in the conduct of national affairs by favoring their followers and exiling their political enemies.²¹ The liberal and conservative maneuvers through or against the caudillos Generals Agustín Gamarra, Manuel Ignacio de Vivanco, and Ramón Castilla serve as examples.

Agustín Gamarra joined the royal army in 1809, fighting the rebels of Río de la Plata, Upper Peru, and Peru. However, after a change of heart in early January 1821, San Martín placed Gamarra, the mestizo and then army colonel who was from Cuzco and spoke Quechua, in charge of a battalion departing for the Central Andes. Despite Gamarra's unimpressive military abilities, he participated in the Battles of Junín and Ayacucho, which sealed Peru's independence. Bolívar promoted him to general and appointed him to the Cuzco's prefecture in late 1824. As prefect, Gamarra utilized an authoritarian platform promising Cuzco its return to prominence. Although he could not establish complete local control because of liberal opposition, Gamarra astutely established a network of alliances in the region through his selection of subprefects and militia officers that enabled him not only to reach the presidency, but to become the first chief executive to complete his term on office.²²

²⁰ John Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808-1826*, 275-279; Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 132-134, 194, 203, 213; Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 163, 171, 178-79.

²¹ Pike, *Modern*, 89; Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 184.

²² Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 123, 126-27; Basadre, *Historia*, II, 254-55, 259.

In 1829, a territorial dispute plunged Peru and Gran Colombia into war. Despite Peruvian control of the sea, land reverses stabilized the war. Peru's weak economy suffered and support for the war and President La Mar, elected by the liberal-dominated congress, dissipated.²³

Gamarra dreamed of incorporating Bolivia into Peru and in 1828, while still prefect of Cuzco, he had invaded Bolivia during a time of political turmoil in that country, installing a Peruvian sympathizer as ruler. Gamarra had acted independently of President La Mar, a reflection of the weakness of the State in the early republic. When war broke out with Colombia the next year, Gamarra allied himself with the prefect of Arequipa, General Antonio Gutiérrez de la Fuente, to rid Peru of the weak La Mar. Gamarra accused the president, born in Cuenca, Ecuador, part of the Peruvian viceroyalty during the early 1800s, of forcing the country into a disastrous war due to his personal ambition of reuniting southern Ecuador with northern Peru. Thus, Gamarra accused La Mar precisely of what he himself desired for the south.²⁴

As La Fuente took charge of the government in Lima, Gamarra, also in charge of the Southern Army, enlisted the support of several military officers to force La Mar to resign his command and the presidency in June 1829. Gamarra and La Fuente justified the coup by invoking the right of the officer corps –or part of it- to represent public opinion in the execution of “necessary” actions to save the fatherland. Thus, military officers assigned to the army, a microcosm of Peru, and its officers a broad responsibility towards the patria. Thus, La Fuente took control of the State in the name of a “moribund nation” after listening to the “voices of the nation and the army.” In his

²³ Basadre, *Historia*, I, 171, 183-84, 196, 198, 202-03.

²⁴ Pike, *Modern*, 70-72; Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 240-42.

message to the newly installed congress the next month, La Fuente stated that his “mission had proceeded from an origin as pure and noble [as that of congress]: the public call, the national sentiment that pronounced itself for the salvation of the fatherland.”²⁵

Gamarra won the first popular indirect election of 1829, as established by the liberal constitution of 1828, becoming a constitutional president. Since congress waived the literacy requirement for voting, all adult males, including Indians, cast ballots. To resist the several revolts against his administration from domestic opponents and from the Bolivian president, Andrés de Santa Cruz, who wished to incorporate at least southern Peru to Bolivia, Gamarra resorted to caudillismo and patrimonialism.²⁶ In light of the weakness of the State, he strengthened Peruvian patrimonial tendencies. During revolts and civil wars, military strength depended on regular and militia units, as well as montoneras. Loyal military officers enjoyed promotions and rewards, while officers opposing him ran the risk of losing their commissions.²⁷ Militia officers gained access to army commissions or business opportunities since most militia commanders were also businessmen providing uniforms and arms to their units. Gamarra also rewarded loyal officers with prefectures, according them a great deal of autonomy in exchange for their support. Cuzqueño Indian communities received tax cuts in return for their military services in montoneras. As a result, the state Gamarra built did not fortify republican institutions and weakened the foundations of military discipline, encouraging the politicization and factionalism of the officer corps.²⁸

²⁵ Basadre, *Historia*, I, 203-206.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 173, 175, 207, II, 257, 259, 419.

²⁷ Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 160.

²⁸ Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 139, 142-43, 148.

Most conservatives supported Gamarra's authoritarianism without being necessarily *gamarristas*. Several periodicals in cities such as Lima, Cuzco, and Ayacucho defended the effectiveness of a strong executive. The editors, voicing their doubts about the efficacy of congress, claimed that the maintenance of order should supersede the importance of individual liberties. Conservatives such as José María de Pando and Colonel Manuel Ignacio de Vivanco argued that an authoritarian political system with an "aristocracy of knowledge" ruling the country suited Peruvian reality, whereas the liberal theories were utopian.²⁹

During his administration, Gamarra could not invade Bolivia because of opposition from a liberal congress. However, Bolivian president Santa Cruz ruled the Peru-Bolivia Confederation from 1836 to 1839. After the chaotic events defeating the Confederation, Gamarra ruled the country for a second time until his death in late 1841 while invading Bolivian territory.³⁰ During Gamarra's second administration the conservative constitution of 1839 replaced the 1836 confederate constitution. It reinforced the executive power by extending the presidential term to six years. Presidents could not be impeached for breaches of the constitution, a situation that Gamarra faced during his first administration, unless they attacked the independence or integrity of the country. The new constitution also suppressed the regional administrative organisms created by the 1828 constitution. The electoral law of 1839 maintained the indirect system and established both income and literacy requirements

²⁹ Basadre, *Historia*, II, 256-57, 260-61.

³⁰ Pike, *Modern*, 73, 79-83; Basadre, *Historia*, II, 273-335.

for voting, although it waived them until 1844 for Indians and mestizos. The law also set a minimum income for aspiring presidents and congressional representatives.³¹

The constitution of 1839, however, did not appear sufficiently conservative to some conservative groups. Colonel Manuel Ignacio de Vivanco, prefect of Arequipa, revolted in 1841 and, after attaining the rank of general, again in 1843 claiming the necessity of an even stronger executive.³² Successful the second time, Vivanco, an aristocrat and intellectual, became Peru's "Supreme Director." In February 1843, the "people" of Arequipa issued a public manifest calling for him to take charge of the government. The General replied, "Honor, patriotism, and responsibility forced me to listen to the population . . . I, Peruvians, will forget my personal goals to obey your commands." The Director closed congress, claiming it necessary to reduce disorder and disunity arising from "personal ambitions" of the legislators - that is, liberals opposing his authoritarianism. He wanted to establish, said Vivanco, the rule of a young, educated, and moral elite.³³

Despite Gamarra's conservatism, he tended to appoint moderate politicians rather than extreme conservatives. Military caudillos often mediated between extreme liberals and conservatives, who tried to remove all members of the opposition from governmental positions. General Ramón Castilla represents the best example.³⁴

Ramón Castilla, a mestizo from the southern region of Tarapacá, remained a royalist officer until 1822 when he joined San Martín, organizing the cavalry that delivered victory at the Battle of Junín. In 1834, Castilla became prefect of Puno.

³¹ Basadre, *Historia*, II, 252-53, 368-373, 419.

³² Pike, *Modern*, 84, 87.

³³ Basadre, *Historia*, II, 374-76, III, 721, 731.

³⁴ Brian Loveman and Thomas M. Davies, Jr., eds., *The Politics of Antipolitics: The Military in Latin America*, 21.

During the Peru-Bolivia Confederation, he escaped to Chile and joined Gamarra's effort to expel Santa Cruz from Peru. Castilla defeated Vivanco's authoritarian model in 1844 with liberal support, acquiring the surname "Soldier of the Law" and the presidency in 1845.³⁵ Although Castilla fought alongside liberals against extreme conservative groups, he employed authoritarian and conciliatory measures toward his political and personal enemies to remain in power, becoming the second president to complete his term in office. Even though Castilla claimed to respect the constitution, on occasion he broke the law, rationalizing his actions as necessary to preserve the most vital national interest of internal order.³⁶

Castilla and his liberal allies utilized republican notions within a logic of direct democracy to justify their revolutions. However, like Vivanco's group, radical liberals attempted to rid the government of any political opponents whereas Castilla recognized the necessity of incorporating the political opposition in the running of the country as a way to stop them from plotting constantly, a disagreement that soured Castilla's alliance with the liberals.³⁷

When General José Rufino Echenique succeeded Castilla, it marked the first peaceful succession in Peruvian history. In late 1853, however, tensions between Peru and Bolivia grew as embezzlement accusations shook the Echenique administration and the president himself. Sensing the moment ripe for revolution, Vivanco's followers in Arequipa revolted in January 1854, arguing that the corrupt central government did not listen to the popular demand to avenge Bolivian insults. Taking advantage of Vivanco's exile in Chile, Castilla shaped the Arequipa movement along liberal ideals, supervising,

³⁵ Basadre, *Historia*, III, 747-751.

³⁶ Víctor Villanueva, *Ejército Peruano: Del Caudillaje Anárquico al Militarismo Reformista*, 55.

³⁷ Pike, *Modern*, 92-94.

for example, the abolition of slavery and the Indian head tax during the civil war. Early in 1855, Castilla defeated Echenique's forces near the capital and established a provisional government. His liberal ministers suspended the citizenship status of all governmental officials and military officers who had not aided the "popular cause" and removed them from their jobs. The new government then issued a decree, as Gamarra had after defeating Santa Cruz and the Confederation, denying pensions to the dependents of military personnel who had died defending the constitutional government of Echenique.³⁸

Castilla's appointment of moderate liberal and conservative ministers created a schism between the executive and the triumphant radical liberals. Serious disagreements arose over the necessity of replacing the Indian head tax with a "personal contribution" by every male over twenty-one years of age and the Amnesty Law pardoning most officials and officers who had fought on Echenique's side. Meanwhile, congress promulgated the liberal constitution of 1856, which reinstated regional governments, annulled the private military and ecclesiastical fueros, and reduced the presidential term to four years. Although it canceled the electoral colleges, thus establishing direct elections, the vote remained restricted to the literate, those owning a workshop, or military personnel. Moreover, the constitution declared that congress would determine the size of the armed forces and approve the promotions from mayors up. It also proclaimed that the duty of the armed forces was to protect the constitution and not an arbitrary or despotic executive.³⁹ Castilla protested civilian meddling in military affairs, arguing that members of the armed forces owed obedience to military regulations, a

³⁸ Basadre, *Historia*, IV, 800, 822-24, 841; Pike, *Modern*, 103-04.

³⁹ Pike, *Modern*, 106-07; Basadre, IV, 845, 847, 849, 851-53.

stance that worsened his relations with the liberal congress. In November 1856, Vivanco revolted again from Arequipa. In the midst of the civil war, congress decreed that as soon as the government pacified the country, the provisional president should call for general elections. According to the new constitution, no one occupying the presidency could present his candidacy. In this way, the liberals attempted to rid themselves of Castilla. As Castilla fought Vivanco's forces in the south, Lieutenant Colonel Pablo Arguedas dissolved congress, arguing that Peru's fate depended on Castilla's control of the State. Arguedas insisted that, after listening to the "nation," he had "sacrificed" himself and used the army to act on behalf of the people. Although Castilla boasted that congress and the constitution could have been reformed peacefully, he conveniently accepted Arguedas' actions as a *fait accompli*. A new congress promulgated the moderate constitution of 1860, which kept the four-year presidential term, reinstated the indirect vote for males over twenty-one years of age who were literate, owned property, or paid taxes. Congressional authority over military promotions could involve only generals and the armed forces owed obedience to military laws and regulations. The appointment of prefects and subprefects remained the president's prerogative. After defeating Vivanco in 1858, Castilla won the presidential elections.⁴⁰

After mid-century, the characteristics that had defined the early republic changed. As the central State reduced its dependency on the Indian head tax due to the boom in *guano* production, a structured civilian group with its own ideology surfaced. Guano, an agricultural fertilizer rich in phosphates had accumulated for decades on Peruvian isles, acquired notoriety in Europe during the 1840s. Foreign commercial

⁴⁰ Basadre, *Historia*, IV, 863, 871, 879, 1145; Villanueva, *Ejército*, 56.

firms exported the product in consignment due to the absence of national capitals and the government's lack of funds. These consignees paid the costs of collecting, transporting, and marketing the guano, sharing the net profits with the Peruvian government. The substantial and steady guano profits had several consequences: increased State centralization, the preeminence of Lima, the birth of a strong new civilian group, a worsening of Indian conditions, and, paradoxically, the bankruptcy of the state.⁴¹

The guano profits reduced the central government's dependence on the Indian head tax, allowing for more centralization and less negotiation with regional interests. The abolition of the tax in 1854 during the liberal revolt against Echenique reduced local governments to economic dependency upon the Lima bureaucracy. The suppression of the tribute, coupled with the abolition of the curaca office –Indian chief, undermined the communities' ability to negotiate with local authorities when Indian communal lands became under attack during the second half of the century.⁴²

The first administration of Castilla initiated the consolidation of the internal debt, which included loans and damages incurred by private interests during the war of independence or civil wars up to 1845, as a way to encourage the formation of national capital. The vagueness of the consolidation laws resulted in illegitimate claims for millions during the Echenique administration as well as the collection of promissory notes by a few powerful individuals.⁴³

The consolidation of the internal debt and the manumission of slaves, decreed during the liberal revolution of 1854, resulted in compensatory payment to slave

⁴¹ Julio Cotler, *Clases, Estado y Nación en el Perú*, 87-92; Basadre, *Historia*, III, 557-644

⁴² Walker, *Smoldering Ashes*, 223; Cotler, *Clases*, 98-99, Pike, *Modern*, 112-13.

⁴³ Pike, *Modern*, 100-01; Basadre, *Historia*, III, 581-88.

owners, which created a moneyed class and strengthened the financial position of many existing groups. By the early 1860s, the families who benefited from government payments had become important investors in guano and coastal plantations of cotton and sugar. In 1860, congress enacted an earlier congressional resolution declaring the preference of Peruvian citizens as consignees, so new contracts replaced the old ones although Peruvians usually had foreign partners. The *Compañía Nacional de Consignación*, led by Manuel Pardo y Lavalle, took the English market in 1862. The newly formed plutocracy, coastal and Limeñian in origin, with interests in guano and agricultural exportation, also replaced the foreign consignees as the government's financier, participating in the opening of national banks by 1863. This plutocracy, linked by family and business ties, imposed the primacy of Lima over the northern and southern regions.⁴⁴

The elections of 1871 were significant because they saw the formation of the *Sociedad Independencia Electoral*, eventually labeled the *Civilista* Party. The party, formed by distinguished civilians and military officers, represented the merger of the old aristocracy and the new capitalists, and supported the candidacy of the ex-consignee Manuel Pardo y Lavalle to the presidency.⁴⁵ The Civilista Party, relying on a complex national organization and modern campaign techniques, overcame the liberal-conservative political dichotomy by formulating a moderate, practical program of national development that favored an agro-export economy, the supremacy of the coast and Lima, firm rule by the talented, a paternalistic view of the Indian population, and a small, professional army under civilian control. Civilistas differed from the liberals in

⁴⁴ Basadre, *Historia*, III, 610-11, 620-21, IV, 833-34; Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 139.

⁴⁵ Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 144.

their lack of obsession with such things as weakening executive powers, the extreme monitoring of the army by congress, and the supreme importance of individual guarantees. Pardo counted on vast popular support in Lima and other cities due to his 1868 work as president of the Charity Society and his 1869 performance as mayor of the capital. He also visited Lima's poorer neighborhoods and traveled outside the capital delivering speeches. He enjoyed also the support of the consignees, bankers, and merchants, as well as the majority of the capital's university youth and professors. The Civilista party represented in 1871 the young, the bright, the rich, and the poor; it was a new alternative to militarism and the old politicians.⁴⁶

The war of independence and the country's acephalous condition thereafter gave rise to the first militaristic moment, which died with its maximum representative, Castilla. By 1871, most of the heroes of the war of independence had disappeared and a new civilian group had emerged to control the State. The failed revolt by the Secretary of Defense, Colonel Gutiérrez, who asserted the necessity to defend the armed forces and the patria from an antimilitaristic civilian, had counted neither with popular support nor the backing of significant elements of the military.⁴⁷

In 1872, Pardo became the first civilian president of republican Peru. He endured several revolts and assassination attempts from conservatives, from Nicolás de Piérola and the southern interests, from Iglesias and the northern interests, and from some elements of the military. Pardo reduced the size of the military, leaving many former officers and soldiers unemployed. In addition, he launched a program of professionalization that reduced the possibility of enlisted men's becoming officers

⁴⁶ Pike, *Modern*, 127-131; Basadre, *Historia*, VI, 1379-86, 1450.

⁴⁷ Basadre, *Historia*, VI, 1391-1398.

without attending a military school while others saw their personal interests or those of the patria in danger if the armed forces withdraw from the political arena. Nevertheless, several military officers supported Pardo's attempt to professionalize the officer corps and the noncommissioned officers, defending his regime against the constant uprisings.⁴⁸

Despite the guano profits, the State remained unable to balance the national budget. The lack of an effective tax system, the constant internal wars, the debt burden, and a war with Spain in 1866 bankrupted the State, forcing different administrations to ask the guano consignees constantly for cash advances against future profits. During the civilista administration, the economic situation worsened leaving the party without realistic possibilities for the next presidential elections. Instead of placing itself in the opposition, the party decided to support a viable government while aiming for dominance in congress and other organizations. In 1876, General Mariano Ignacio Prado succeeded Pardo. As the economic conditions worsened, the War of the Pacific erupted.⁴⁹

The devastation brought on by the war and the imprisonment of the civilistas and other prominent leaders created a political vacuum, fueling regional disputes that were reminiscent of the war of independence. However, the second militaristic moment of the nineteenth century sprang from defeat rather than victory. The republican State had relied upon a succession of makeshift coalitions that had fostered political instability and socio-economic backwardness. The relative pacification and centralization achieved by Castilla in the 1850s and 1860s reduced the number of costly

⁴⁸ Pike, *Modern*, 131, 137-38; Cotler, *Clases*, 124; Basadre, *Historia*, VI, 1387, 1403-1418, 1449-52.

⁴⁹ Basadre, *Historia*, III, 607-612, IV, 1021-47, V, 1085-92, VI, 1455; Pike, *Modern*, 113-14, 133-34, 138-39.

civil wars but did not eliminate the constant conspiracies and revolts or the necessity to establish regional alliances with prefects and military commanders.

By 1879 Bolivia and Chile had long-standing boundary disputes. In addition, the coasts of Bolivia were rich in saltpeter, business in which Chilean capital was prominent. Peruvian interest in this conflict, besides upholding the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes, was very specific: protect Peru's territorial integrity against Chilean intrigue. Chile had tried to bribe Bolivia with the southern Peruvian territories in exchange for relinquishing most of the Bolivian coast to Chile. Bolivia had no navy and Peru feared a Bolivian-Chilean attack if no other option was there for Bolivia. In this light, Manuel Pardo had signed a secret alliance with Bolivia in 1873.⁵⁰

In February 1879, Chile invaded Bolivia provoking a declaration of war by La Paz. Chile demanded Peruvian neutrality and declared war in April when Lima balked. The lack of external credit and the state of war impeded the acquisition of armaments and vessels. During the civilista administration, congress had approved a credit of four millions for the construction of two armored ships in order to maintain naval parity with Chile, but the financial crisis prevented implementation of the plan.⁵¹ The naval campaign lasted from April to October 1879, with Peru using over twenty-year-old vessels. In November, the land campaigns started with the Chilean disembark in Peruvian territory. The southern campaigns, Tarapacá and Tacna, concluded in 1880 with the destruction of most of the regular army and the disintegration of the Bolivian-Peruvian combined front. Politically, both Bolivia and Peru changed leaders during these campaigns. Nicolás de Piérola became the Peruvian dictator after General Prado

⁵⁰ Basadre, *Historia*, VII, 1672-75, 1681.

⁵¹ Pike, *Modern*, 137.

left the country in secrecy to proceed with armament dealings in Europe while a popular uprising elevated General Narciso Campero to the Bolivian presidency.⁵²

In April 1880, the land campaign of Lima started with the blockade and bombardment of the port of Callao. Several bombardments along the central and northern coasts occurred since September. The Peruvian survivors of the southern campaigns joined the inexperienced units formed in Lima, which lacked weapons, transportation, and provisions. By January 1881, the Chilean army had captured Lima and Piérola escaped to the highlands to organize the resistance.⁵³

When Chile refused to deal with the Dictator, a group of Limeñian notables established a provisional government. As Piérola lost support, he left the country for Europe trying to avoid a civil war. However, Chile deported the provisional president due to his attempts to negotiate a contract that would allow Peru to offer Chile an economic retribution instead of territorial yielding.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, General Andrés Avelino Cáceres started a fierce guerrilla resistance against the Chileans in the central highlands. Cáceres had supported Castilla during the 1854 revolution, fought in the 1866 War against Spain, and stopped a sergeants' revolt against Pardo in 1874. When the War of the Pacific broke out, Cáceres, who participated in every campaign, was a colonel and prefect of Cuzco. Between 1882 and 1883, Chilean authorities tried unsuccessfully to capture Cáceres, known as the *Brujo de los Andes* (Andean Wizard), who gave hope to many Peruvians that a counterattack remained a possibility.⁵⁵

⁵² Luis Alcázar Mavila, *Historia Militar del Perú*, 77-185; Basadre, *Historia*, VII, 1689-1836.

⁵³ Basadre, *Historia*, VII, 1845-1871, VIII, 1879-80; Carlos Dellepiane, *Historia militar del Perú*, vol. II.

⁵⁴ Pike, *Modern*, 147-49.

⁵⁵ Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 1881-1915.

However, the northern hacendado, General Miguel Iglesias, who received his commission as colonel from Piérola after raising a military unit, considered peace at any cost to be indispensable to national reconstruction. Consequently, Iglesias in 1882 convoked a northern congress, which elected him “Regenerator.” Chile recognized and supported Iglesias, who consolidated his dominion in the north after Chilean troops defeated Cáceres’ montoneras in July 1883. Iglesias signed the Treaty of Ancón, permanently ceding the southern province of Tarapacá, rich in saltpeter, to Chile and accepting the temporary cession of the provinces of Tacna and Arica.⁵⁶

Cáceres, who considered Iglesias a Chilean puppet, emerged as the greatest living hero of the war. In 1885, The Wizard defeated the *iglesistas* troops in the central highlands and entered Lima with general popular support. Iglesias left the government in hands of a provisional cabinet, which convoked general elections in 1886. Cáceres won the elections, but he did not participate in politics as Gamarra or Castilla had. On the one hand, Cáceres organized the Constitutional Party, conformed by civilians and military personnel.⁵⁷ On the other, he attempted the transformation of the officer corps into a political pressure group.

Like Gamarra, Cáceres tried to control the army to solidify his power, but he maneuvered for an ideological control in addition to patrimonial practices. The Wizard wanted an effective army; thus, he reopened the military school for cadets and the center for noncommissioned officers established by Pardo before the war.⁵⁸ Cáceres, however, also wanted an ideologically homogeneous officer corps. The professionalization process that Cáceres envisioned would not stop military officers

⁵⁶ Ibid., VIII, 1931-69; Pike, *Modern*, 149-150.

⁵⁷ Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 1991-1993, 2026.

⁵⁸ Alfredo Muñoz, *Las Escuelas Militares del Perú*, 13, 21.

from participating in politics; it would stop them from caudillista practices. With an officer corps united under an independent ideology, an officer would never again lead his troops against another in support of partisan civilian political pursuits. The post-war officer corps should become a pressure group and its members should participate in politics through institutional channels, such as political parties. To accomplish these goals, Cáceres created the Constitutional party while his vice-president, Colonel Remigio Morales Bermúdez, presided over the *Centro Militar y Naval* founded in early 1888.⁵⁹ Cáceres' reconstruction project relied on authoritarian practices and the strengthening of the armed forces, always maintaining the constitutional façade. The war had witness the patriotism and heroism of soldiers and sailors; thus, several officers claimed for the military institution role of spearhead in the regeneration of the country. Cáceres and his entourage summed up the republican political culture and the military experience of the nineteenth century; they embodied the essence of the Peruvian military mind.

⁵⁹ *Revista Militar y Naval* 1, (1 April 1888), 2.

CHAPTER 4. THE MILITARY MIND

Whereas Peruvian defeat in the War of the Pacific set the stage for the beginning of the second militaristic moment of the nineteenth century, the war's greatest living hero took the leading role. Cáceres embodied military thought fashioned by the nineteenth-century political culture and caudillista experience. Like Bolívar and Castilla, Cáceres believed that republican and liberal institutions in Peru could flourish only within an authoritarian political system. Ironically, liberty needed the protection of an authoritarian executive capable of bending the law when necessary. Unlike any other caudillo, Cáceres had absorbed the lessons from the civilista experience of the 1870s and the War of the Pacific.

Throughout the 1880s, scholars, politicians, military men, and citizens in general attempted to understand what had made possible Chile's swift victory. Fingers pointed to Peru's republican history, that is, the lack of nation cohesion and state-building. The behavior of the oppressed social sectors during the war particularly impressed politicians and military officers. Several Indian communities refused the payment of forced contributions established by Chilean authorities arguing that they did not form part of Peru. Chinese laborers, enduring semi-slavery conditions, and part of the black population engaged in the destruction of property.¹ Some civilian sectors blamed the lack of national integration on the military and its constant involvement in civil wars, while military officers condemned civilian partisan politics. Cáceres' project for the reconstruction and development of the patria required his party's control of the state

¹ Jorge Basadre, *Historia de la República del Perú*, VIII, 1900; Julio Cotler, *Clases, Estado y Nación en el Perú*, 116-18; Manuel González Prada, *Páginas Libres*.

through a strong executive, the minimization of political opposition, and the support of an expert, united, and disciplined military institution.

The Constitutional Party's easy victory in the 1886 elections, a result of the Wizard's popularity, propelled Cáceres into the presidency. With the *civilistas* impoverished and Piérola's revolutions on hold, political opposition during Cáceres' first term of office remained low. However, his administration did not shy away from some "necessary" unconstitutional actions such as the replacement of some uncooperative congressmen before their term of office was over.²

In the 1890 elections, the Constitutional Party supported the candidacy of Colonel Remigio Morales Bermúdez, Cáceres' first vice-president, who had participated in Castilla's 1854 movement and Cáceres' resistance in the War of the Pacific. The *civilistas*, previously had supported the Constitutional party, but now presented their own candidate. Piérola, backed by the Democratic Party, organized six years earlier, and enjoying widespread popular support, represented a third option between a Lima-centered oligarchy and a military one. Just before the elections, Cáceres maneuvered to remove Piérola subjecting him to a military tribunal charged with poor direction of the war. After a controversial congressional revision of the votes, Morales Bermúdez assumed the presidency.³

Morales Bermúdez's administration also resorted to unconstitutional actions to remain in power and ensure the Constitutional Party's control of the state. In December 1890 a failed revolt led by Colonel Arturo Morales Toledo concluded with the summary execution of twenty-two individuals. In the 1894, the chief executive closed several

² Pike, *Modern*, 154.

³ Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 1984, 2089-2093.

weekly newspapers opposed to the Cáceres candidacy for reelection and nullified municipal elections because the Constitutional Party had lost control of them. “You have sacrificed principles and laws, which are the soul of a nation, not to placate a god but to please a man,” charged one congressional member against Morales Bermúdez.⁴ Early in 1894, Morales Bermúdez became ill and died. Second vice-president, Colonel Justiniano Borgoño, assumed the presidency, bypassing the civilian and *pierolista* first vice-president who resigned in light of several high officials’ refusal to recognize him as chief executive. In August, Cáceres initiated his second term of office.⁵

In addition to strong *civilista* and *pierolista* opposition, Cáceres faced an economic crisis in his second term, which forced the government to raise taxes, and suffered diplomatic setbacks regarding Chile’s occupation of Tacna and Arica. All that, combined with his increasing and obvious illegal actions towards the opposition resulted in dwindling popular support. By late 1894, several revolts had exploded throughout the country. The Civilista and Democratic parties formed the “National Coalition,” which Piérola led in a bloody civil war against Cáceres and the regular army. In March 1895, the Coalition’s army entered Lima to popular acclaim. During an armistice to assist the wounded and bury the dead, Cáceres agreed to withdraw. Although the regular army had not been defeated, he recognized the magnitude of the popular opposition to his regime. A junta governed the country until September when Nicolás de Piérola assumed the presidency.⁶

⁴ Ibid., VIII, 2102. All translations are mine.

⁵ Pike, *Modern*, 155-56; Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 2094, 2101-02, IX, 2215-19; Francisco José del Solar, *El Militarismo en el Perú*, 77.

⁶ Basadre, *Historia*, IX, 2219-25, 2247.

Cáceres believed, as Castilla did, in the necessity of a strong army to maintain internal order. Like many officers since the war of independence, Cáceres attributed to the army a broader role in society due to the weakness of republican institutions, believing that “military virtue, resting essentially on a foundation of authority, discipline, courage and occasional stubbornness, was adequate to solve the ills of Peru.”⁷ After the War of the Pacific, it became urgent to consider national defense in light of two complementary goals: the development of a modern nation-state and the creation of a well-armed, professional military. Cáceres saw himself as the unselfish patriot who could accomplish such goals with the support of the microcosm of society, the army.

By the 1880s, the army was a professionalizing occupation attempting to establish a jurisdiction, “a legitimate claim to apply its expertise to specific situations,” albeit a broad one.⁸ Since the early republic, several administrations had recognized the need to transform the military vocation into a profession, requiring full-time, trained officers and leaders who understood the rules and principles of the science of war. In March 1823, Riva Agüero, imposed by the first Peruvian military coup, approved the creation of the first military academy for cadets. The academy sought to end the custom that an officer would initiate his career without any prior training. The resolution that ordered its creation read,

The art of war is not only the result of valor as the masses consider erroneously. This art is regulated by laws and principles that are theoretical as well as practical and need to be studied. . . This is already well known in civilized nations, which trust their national security only to officers who had started their careers with methodic study of the military profession.⁹

⁷ Pike, *Modern*, 159.

⁸ Don M. Snider and Gayle L. Watkins, “The Future of Army Professionalism: A Need for Renewal and Redefinition,” *Parameters* 30 (Autum 2000), 16.

⁹ Alfredo Muñoz, *Las Escuelas Militares del Perú*, 7.

Since Riva Agüero's administration ended rapidly, this first academy never functioned. Santa Cruz' attempts to establish a technical school for the enlisted personnel and a military academy for cadets while in charge of the government after Bolívar's departure in 1826 suffered a similar fate. In 1830, Gamarra ordered the creation of a military academy for cadets that finally transcended the imagination of national leaders. The decree read that in the academy the youth with a military calling would "learn the principles and elements of the complicated science of war." Cadets already in the army, along with males between fifteen and eighteen years of age who wished a commission, should attend the academy. However, because of political instability, the academy in 1834 closed "temporarily" for fifteen years.¹⁰

When Castilla assumed the presidency in 1845, the armed forces remained regulated by the Spanish *ordenanzas* while cadets received from their unit officers "some theoretical instruction directed toward practical uses." Despite congressional and military clamor for new regulations, the Military Code did not appear until 1865, but even then revolution frustrated its application. In January 1950, the academy, renamed Military Institute, opened its doors offering instruction for army and navy cadets. Each cadet had to pass a Spanish test and provide all his needed utensils. The institute closed temporarily due to the 1854 revolution, re-opening during 1859-1867.¹¹

In 1872, the *civilista* Pardo re-opened the Military School, which began the instruction of students between fourteen and seventeen years of age early next year. Its 1878 charter established a three-year program for infantry and cavalry officers and a six-year program for artillery officers and those destined for the General Staff. Pardo

¹⁰ Ibid., 8-11; Basadre, *Historia*, I, 261-62.

¹¹ Muñoz, *Escuelas*, 11-12; Basadre, *Historia*, IV, 965.

also established the *Escuela de Clases*, which prepared young men between fourteen and sixteen years of age as enlisted men; courses would last two or three-year depending on the arm. Both institutions functioned until the War of the Pacific. Cáceres re-opened the *Escuela de Clases* in 1888 and the Military School in 1890 until the Coalitionist revolution of 1895.¹²

As the military institution struggled to professionalize, it formally claimed a broad jurisdiction after the War of the Pacific. Although the officer corps remained politicized and fractionalized during the nineteenth century due to caudillismo and patrimonial practices, army and navy officers shared a sense of broad military responsibility toward the country. The constitutional mandate entrusting the armed forces with the defense of the political system and the 1823 coup, which imposed Riva Agüero as necessary to the national conduct of the war of independence, gave to the armed forces an extra-military role in society. Whether patriotism, self-interest, or a combination of the two guided those 1823 officers and the later caudillos to revolt against constitutional or established authorities, by the 1880s military officers believed their role included political actions in defense of the nation's interests.

The lack of a civilian ruling class guiding the war of independence or establishing a state afterwards and the politicians' use of military leaders as caudillos expanded the officers' role. The weakness of civilian groups and institutions during the early republic facilitated the political intervention of military officers who justified their conduct in terms of national defense or military necessity, such as the 1823 coup. Besides, the people expected military officers to lead revolutions to protect the

¹² Muñoz, *Escuelas*, 14-17, 19, 21, 23-24.

“national” interest. Arequipa’s clamor for Vivanco in 1843 or Castilla’s support in 1854 served as examples.

The appointment of military men as prefects, which did not contradict the law, also propelled officers outside a strictly military sphere. As the highest authority in the departamentos, prefect-officers dealt with political, administrative, and developmental activities. In addition, the administration of the country, based on the Napoleonic model of organization, established a chain of command, that is, the lower official received his orders from his superior. In this light, “the prefect depended on the President of the Republic, the subprefect on the prefect, and the governor on the subprefect in a direct hierarchical relation.”¹³ The country’s administrative structure, paralleling that of an army, hinted, at least, at the appropriateness of military virtues in the conduction of national affairs.

The weakness of civilian institutions and the liberal desire to “civilize” the Indian masses through education induced congress in 1825 to order the functioning of an elementary school in every unit of the army. Pardo’s *Escuela de Clases*, entrusted with the training of the army’s enlisted personnel, was also responsible for the instruction received by temporary recruits fulfilling their obligatory military service. The *Escuela* provided the recruits with additional classes directed toward increasing their work opportunities when returned to civilian life.¹⁴ During the first Cáceres administration, the Ministry of War in 1888 ordered the establishment of elementary and secondary schools in every army unit to ensure basic literacy and mathematical skills, as well as teach basic geometry, Spanish grammar, Peruvian history, geography,

¹³ Zas, *Descentralización*, 37-38.

¹⁴ Basadre, *Historia*, I, 109, VI, 1519-20.

and government along with target practice, notions of topography, and basic concepts of fortification.¹⁵ “Today, each garrison is a school, where the soldier learns not only his duties toward the *patria* but to his family and God . . .,” the minister of war declared in an awards ceremony at the *Escuela* in December 1888. “The crude and ignorant soldier will be succeeded by the citizen aware of his obligations; by the soldier, that useful element in the defense of the nation, its rights and liberties, who will not be easily dragged by sedition.”¹⁶

Military officers had expanded the armed forces’ role through the channels of civilian approval or expectation of their involvement in politics, their actual performance of extra-military duties, and through a legal channel by the constitution entrusting the armed forces with the defense of the political system. The latter mechanism had led officers to accept political appointments as prefects and now, increasingly, it involved the establishment of military schools that performed the function of civilian elementary and vocational training.

Although the officer class shared a broad sense of responsibility toward the country, that is, they believed in the legitimacy of an expanded military role in society, nineteenth-century officers had embraced different ideologies, usually fighting against each other. Despite the officer class factionalism and the questionable promotion process, army officers grasped their belonging to one national army. However true that military officers raised militias and montoneras independently during revolutions, some of which were incorporated into the regular army, generally, these units stood clearly as something separate from, although complementary to, the regular forces. The removal

¹⁵ *Boletín Oficial El Peruano* (Lima), 27 July 1888.

¹⁶ “Escuela de Clases para el Ejército” *Revista Militar y Naval* 22 (1 February 1889), 502-11. Italics in the original.

of officers from the military roster after revolutions remained throughout the century as temporary setbacks since new revolutions, personal reconciliation, or amnesty laws reincorporated fallen officers.¹⁷

Cáceres attempted the professionalization of the officer class by improving its expertise, corporateness, and discipline. The unification of the officer class would result from its acceptance of a military ideology that summarized the nineteenth century military experience and posited a broad military jurisdiction. The *Centro Militar del Perú*, systematized such ideology, disseminating it through its periodical, the *Revista Militar y Naval*, and its members' control of the military schools.

Established in 1888, the *Centro*, aggregated over 120 army and naval officers.¹⁸ Its composition shows the connection of the *Centro* with Cáceres, his administrations, and his party. Colonel Remigio Morales Bermúdez, president of the *Centro* in 1888 and 1889, was Cáceres vice-president from 1886 to 1890 winning the 1890 presidential elections as the Constitutional party nominee. Colonel Justiniano Borgoño, first vice-president of the *Centro* in 1888 and 1889, had fought under Cáceres during the Wizard's resistance campaign. Borgoño formed part of the Cáceres' cabinet in 1886, 1887, and 1889 becoming Morales Bermúdez' second vice-president in 1890. After Morales' death, prior to the 1894 presidential elections, Borgoño assumed the presidency, maneuvering to get Cáceres elected for a second term.¹⁹

¹⁷ Aljovín, *Caudillos y Constituciones*, 196, 198.

¹⁸ *Revista Militar y Naval* (RMN) 1 (1April 1888), 2-5 and RMN 20 (1 January 1889), 463-64 published the members composing the Board of Directors for the respective years. Unfortunately, the *Revista* did not publish the *Centro*'s member list for subsequent years.

¹⁹ Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 2027, 2032, 2092, 2096, 2217-19.

Colonel Rufino Torrico, second vice-president of the *Centro* in 1888, participated in Cáceres' 1886, 1887, and 1894 cabinets.²⁰ Navy Captain Manuel Melitón Carvajal, treasurer of the *Centro* in 1888, its second vice-president in 1889, and director of the *Centro*'s periodical in 1893, formed part of the 1891 and 1894 Bermúdez' cabinets.²¹ Admiral Lizardo Montero and Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Eduardo Lecca were members of both the *Centro* and the Constitutional party. General Manuel Velarde also belonged to both the *Centro* and the Constitutional party and had participated in Cáceres' 1886 cabinet and Morales' 1893.²²

Colonel Guillermo Ferreyros, member of the *Centro* and the Constitutional party, held cabinet posts under Cáceres in 1889 and 1890. Ferreyros also functioned as secretary for the Borgoño transitional administration in 1894, between the death of president Morales Bermúdez and the election of Cáceres for a second presidential term. Another member, General Javier de Osma, was part of Cáceres's cabinet in 1884 and 1894.²³ Colonel Francisco de Paula Secada, member of the Constitutional Party and the *Centro* had been commandant-in-chief of Cáceres' resistance army during the War of Independence. In 1890, Paula y Secada became part of Cáceres' cabinet.²⁴

Other members of the *Centro* linked the *caceristas* with the professionalization of the armed forces. Colonel Nicanor Ruiz de Somocurcio, member of the *Centro*, directed the *Escuela de Clases* – school for the enlisted personnel - from its reopening in 1888, after the war, until 1893 when Morales Bermúdez appointed him Secretary of War. Colonel Ernesto La Combe, who had been Cáceres' engineer during the

²⁰ Ibid., VIII, 2030, 2219.

²¹ RMN 109 (January 1893), 516; Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 2096, 2103.

²² Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 2028, 2097, 2100.

²³ Muñoz, *Escuelas*, 21; Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 2033, 2097, 2218-19.

²⁴ Basadre, VIII, 2033, 2097.

resistance, and Sergeant Major Manuel Pío Alcalá, survivor of the Tarapacá campaign, both members of the *Centro*, functioned as sub-director and third chief of the *Escuela*, respectively. Colonel Juan Norberto Eléspuru, also member of the *Centro*, directed the Military School for cadets from its opening in 1890 until 1894, when Piérola won the civil war that deposed Cáceres.²⁵

The *Centro* published the *Revista Militar y Naval* from April 1888 to July 1893. Among the articles about new weaponry, improved vessels, military tactics, and foreign military organizations, the editors of the *Revista* dedicated many pages to defend the armed forces' broad role in society while attempting, at the same time, to establish the *Centro* as the formal representative of the military institution. In the *Revista's* first issue, the editors enunciated the mission of the *Centro* pledging "to represent the interests of the career of arms, make available modern professional knowledge, and encourage the practice of the military ethic" crucial in the betterment of the armed forces and the country's defense.²⁶ Two issues later, the editors argued that national stability and international prestige depended on the "efficient organization and development of the country's military institutions."²⁷

One of the recurring themes in the *Revista* was the identification of the armed forces with the nation's interests. This identification, claimed since the war of independence by military officers, intensified in the political context of 1888 when the Civilista Party and the Democratic Party initiated their campaigns for the 1890 presidential elections. In an article titled "Antimilitarism," Colonel Francisco de Paula Secada responded to those who called for the elimination of the army due to its cost,

²⁵ Muñoz, *Escuelas*, 22-4.

²⁶ RMN 1 (1 April 1888), 2.

²⁷ RMN 3 (1 Mayo 1888), 33.

questioned morality, and efficacy. After arguing the indispensability of the armed forces in matters of external and internal defense, Paula Secada rejected the idea of military responsibility for the disastrous War of the Pacific, blaming it on civilian politicians who allegedly had denied the funding and undermined military morale. “It is deplorable,” he exclaimed, “the way in which the congresses dealt with the army and the *salaries* of its members in the heated discussions about the national budget, the virulent diatribes and insults with which they overwhelmed the army and the military men, calling them *leeches* of the Nation.” He continued blaming congress and the country in general for Peru’s military decadence because once a revolutionary faction triumphed, the military officers who remained loyal to the legal government typically lost their commissions. Some military personnel had been part of the political turmoil, but they, he insisted, did not represent the army. In general, he concluded, military officers had played a progressive role as prefects and subprefects creating schools, dams, markets, roads, based on their diligence and zealous dedication.²⁸

As the political campaign for the 1890 elections heated up, the *Revista* defended the military’s indispensable role in society and the view of the army as a microcosm of society. The section “Eco del Ejército” complaint about a well-coordinated effort to reduce the army to impotence. “In no other place would acts destined to weaken the career of arms, devoted to the defense and security of the State, be tolerated; moreover, such acts would be interpreted as treason.” The army represented the defender of the basic principle of Peru’s political system, he asserted. “Is this maybe the reason why the army is seen as an obstacle to the establishment of the republic in an opposite set of

²⁸ Francisco de Paula Secada, “Antimilitarism,” RMN 9 (15 July 1888), 186; RMN 10 (1 August 1888), 209-12. Italics in the original.

principles, such as the predominance of some group or caste with an oligarchic tendency?”²⁹ Such commentary alluded to the elitist tendencies of the Civilista Party, which had lost its popular appeal of the 1870s.

In another issue, the “Eco del Ejército” conferred on the armed forces almost the same status as the other three branches of government. This interpretation of the military role resulted from the constitutional mandate that the armed forces should protect the political system by conserving internal order.³⁰ “The army, as the first and most noble institution of the republic after the three powers that exercise sovereignty, believes that it has the duty to warn, with patriotism and zeal for the honor of the *patria*, of the dangers that threaten the country . . .” And one of those dangers, the journal suggested, was a congress composed of “unprepared” individuals “openly hostile” to the armed forces.³¹

In following issues, the “Eco del Ejército” continued the warnings against civilian incapacity to deal with national security matters. “Those swindlers, shoddy acting politicians believe . . . that war can be undertaken without preparation.” However, the section also stressed the responsibility of the divided officer class in the weakness of the military institution. “If the officers and military leaders had remained united, understanding their duties toward the fatherland, the legal regime of the republic, and the military honor, as well as their personal interests, . . . those revolutions would not have triumphed, the constitutional regime would have been strengthened in the republic, and respect for the national institutions would have been followed by

²⁹ RMN 19 (15 December 1888), 419-20.

³⁰ Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny: Regimes of Exception in Spanish America*, 6, 28

³¹ RMN 23 (15 February 1889), 507.

prestige, credit, and power for the nation; and the army would be today surrounded of the respect and consideration it deserves as supporter of order, peace, and guarantees.”³²

The “Eco del Ejército” continued to call on the unity of the officer class, “[the army] should be constantly united, compact, solid, homogeneous . . . Our military men seduced by the compliments of the demagogues, the everlasting promoters of the civilian discords traduced in fratricide battles, in which the only blood running was the one of the military man in observance of bastard aspirations, of egotistical interests invoking social or political regeneration, these deluded military men helped the politicians to be reduced, before long, to the more complete oblivion, misery, and scoff.”³³

With such statements, the *Revista* attempted to stop caudillismo against the Constitutional Party’s control of the State. The armed forces should remain united under the chief executive. Cáceres, and the following military presidents, resorted to several authoritarian actions to suppress political opposition and win elections; however, they always kept the constitutional façade justifying their actions as necessary to maintain internal order. Consequently, Cáceres and his entourage manipulated the constitutional provision for regimes of exception while claiming legal and legitimate representation of the sovereign people.³⁴

Believing themselves the real patriotic sons of the nations, these military men engaged in a corrupt interpretation of the constitution to support increasing authoritarian measures. “Taking advantage of the peace it has procured to the country, [the army] is reorganizing and reinvigorating its discipline, morality, and spirit, establishing itself as

³² RMN 24 (1 March 1889), 529, 531.

³³ RMN 24 (1 March 1889), 532.

³⁴ Loveman, *Constitution of Tyranny*, 7, 14.

the strongest support and axle around which every regenerative movement has to rotate and what the competent, patriotic, and well intentioned men of state . . . will have to use to *save this vessel*, which the pusillanimous, those without temple of spirit or patriotic warmth in their hearts, cold by the contact with gold, and profoundly egotistical, believe to go to pique without remedy and are snatching its contents.”³⁵

Nevertheless, not all members of the *Centro* or the Constitutional Party agreed with the vision of Cáceres, Bermúdez, and Borgoño. In December 1890, during the Bermúdez administration, Colonel Arturo Morales Toledo, member of the *Centro*, led an unsuccessful revolt, which the government attributed to *pirolista* maneuvers. In 1893, Cáceres proclaimed his presidential candidacy for the following year, so Bermúdez cracked down on the press in an effort to undermine the political opposition. Early in 1893, the cabinet led by Carlos M. Elías, member of the Constitutional Party, abruptly resigned for reasons that remained unclear; then in May, Manuel Velarde, member of both the *Centro* and the Constitutional Party, resigned along with his cabinet, citing a conflict of opinions about “the way the official action should be guided.”³⁶

Late in 1891, the officer Gabriel Velarde Alvarez published two articles in the *Revista*, which formally attributed the army a civilizing role some five years before the first French mission set foot in the country.³⁷ Although Lyautey’s “Do Role social de l’officier,” which appeared in March 1891, might have influenced Velarde, the army had performed an educational role in Peru throughout the century. As Nicolás de Piérola put it, “the army had to be in Peru an important and efficient agent of civilization for the

³⁵ RMN 26 (1 April 1889), 579. Italics in the original.

³⁶ Basadre, *Historia*, VIII, 2094, 2099-2100.

³⁷ RMN 87, 89 (15 October and 15 November 1891), 2025-27, 2071-73.

great majority of our population.”³⁸ In 1904, then Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel Velarde Alvarez would write “Civil Instruction of the Soldier” in the *Boletín del Ministerio de Guerra y Marina*, offering a positive evaluation of the civilizing effect of the army in its Indian conscripts.³⁹ Frederick M. Nunn and Daniel M. Masterson cite this 1904 article as “early” proofs of Francophile Peruvian officers aping their teachers’ doctrines.⁴⁰

In 1891, Velarde Alvarez published in the *Revista* an article title “The Necessity of a Military Spirit in the Army.” The main task, he said, was the urgent professionalization of the army through education, unity, and discipline. And the nation should support that effort, he declared, because the military men were sentinels of Peru’s vital interests, a civilizing force within the national society. Indeed, “thousands have awoken from the lethargy caused by their ignorance as a result of the continued contact with comrades already civilized, the change of scenery, and the learning of the Spanish language and the elementary teachings given at the garrisons . . .”⁴¹

Velarde Alvarez took up that same theme in a subsequent article stressing the army’s contribution to the integration of the Indians into national society. “Is there any other corporation that contributes more to the education of the population?” he asked rhetorically. “Who has taken charge of their education and civilization? No one, only an institution slandered by those who fear it or do not understand it. If the army has been

³⁸ Basadre, *Historia*, IX, 2238.

³⁹ Gabriel Velarde Alvarez, “Civil Instruction of the Soldier,” *Boletín del Ministerio de Guerra y Marina* 7 (1 October 1904), 843-45.

⁴⁰ Frederick M. Nunn, *Yesterday’s Soldiers: European Military Professionalism in South America, 1890-1940*, 140-41; Daniel M. Masterson, *Militarism and Politics in Latin America: Peru from Sánchez Cerro to Sendero Luminoso*, 29.

⁴¹ Gabriel Velarde Alvarez, “The Necessity of a Military Spirit in the Army,” *RMN* 87 (15 October 1891), 2026-27.

corrupted sometimes, as any other, in exchange it has delivered great goods to the country.”⁴²

In this way, the military mind of the post-1879 war stressed the ever-present internal and external dangers threatening the nation, the urgency of developing a powerful military institution, the importance of order and hierarchy, the supremacy of society over the individual, and a role for the armed forces beyond strictly military affairs. The military broad jurisdiction included administrative, nation-building, and constitutional guardian roles.

It is thus clear that before the process of professionalization intensified in 1896 under French influence, the Peruvian military mind consisted of attitudes and perspectives that attributed to the armed forces a broad responsibility in society, including a civilizing one. Such broad responsibility originated in the nineteenth-century political culture, which interpreted constitutional notions through traditional lenses and a “direct democracy” logic. Expanded and refined during the twentieth century by French and North American influence, this Peruvian military mind remained essentially unchanged, justifying the military’s twentieth-century political interventions and the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces.

⁴² Velarde, “The Army as the Civilization School for our Indians,” RMN 89 (15 November 1891), 2072-73.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS

From 1896 until WWII, the Peruvian army underwent a steady process of professionalization under French tutelage. New regulations modernized the military institution while military schools elevated the personnel's level of expertise and corporate sense. French military doctrines, in tune with the nineteenth-century Peruvian military mind, incorporated into the army's professional ideology a broad social role.

Following nineteenth-century tradition, political factions turned to military support to remain in or gain power during the 1900s. However, the politicization and fractionalization in the officer corps did not reach the alarming levels of the prior century due, in part, to the development of an independent military ideology, which synthesized nineteenth-century military experience, French teachings, and North American "civic action" postulates. This military ideology linked national defense to nation-building, including economic development. It followed, therefore, that the army, which supposedly embodied all the civic virtues and was a reservoir of expertise, should play a leading role in that developmental effort. pending projects as intertwined with national defense. In the midst of economic decline, popular mobilizations, and denunciations of governmental actions against national interests, General Juan Velasco Alvarado, commandant of the Joint Command, inaugurated the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces in 1968. This long-term regime attempted to impose from above the structural reforms necessary for stability and progress, following the mandate of the contradictory Peruvian political culture: only authoritarianism can protect republican and liberal notions.

Nineteenth-century militarism is crucial to understanding Peruvian civil-military relations and military political involvement during the twentieth century. Indeed, it was the Era of the Caudillos that gave birth to the modern Peruvian military mind. The lack of cohesion among the Peruvian elite before, during, and after the war of independence along with the emergent political culture set the stage for the instability of the nineteenth century, which nurtured caudillismo. Criollo regional and ideological divergences impeded the formation of a ruling class capable of replacing the king's legitimating power with a constitution, while the republican language supported an elitist, antidemocratic discourse where the idea of "nation" and "people" asymmetrically incorporated different social groups.

The political vacuum and crisis of legitimacy following the war of independence encouraged unregulated political competition transforming caudillo violence into an essential part of politics. Each contending faction claimed to represent public opinion against the abuses of the group in power, using the notion of popular sovereignty within a "direct democracy" logic to justify revolutions. Political violence reduced the legitimacy of any representative government, leaving unanswered the question of who represented the sovereign people. Military officers claimed that the army was the best representative of the people because it was a microcosm of society upholding the perfect balance between equality and order, tradition and modernity.

Moreover, since Peruvian constitutions employed competing set of principles when establishing regimes of exception and designating the armed forces as defenders of the political system and internal order, president-caudillos and revolutionaries equally claimed to fulfill their constitutional duties when resorting to authoritarian

measures against political opposition or when leading revolts against established authorities.

A broad sense of responsibility toward the country, along with desires for personal glory and power as well as different ideologies of what was best for the country, encouraged military officers to participate in politics. Peruvian officers saw themselves as the founding fathers of the republic called to protect it from anarchy.

Caudillismo encouraged the formation of a hybrid state utilizing modern bureaucratic and traditional patrimonial practices. The control of the State by a contending faction depended on the construction and maintenance of alliances that could provide capital, men, supply, and “popular support” during revolts and civil wars. Consequently, prefects, controlling the departamentos, became key political players. Most prefects were military officers who obtained such posts from the president of the republic as a reward for proven or expected loyalty. Most caudillos who ruled the country had held previously a prefecture and, although they manipulated governmental institutions, they did not control them completely. In this way, caudillos’ power, based on shifting alliances, faced constant challenges keeping the states they built extremely vulnerable.

The War of the Pacific (1879-1883) weakened the civilian sectors, which had emerged in the 1860s and 1870s overcoming the liberal-conservative dichotomy, giving way to militarism reminiscent of the early republic. However, this second militaristic moment sprang from a defeat originating in Peru’s failure at nation-building.

General Andrés Avelino Cáceres, hero of the war, attempted to rule the country through his Constitutional Party and the support of the army, transformed into a

homogeneous political pressure group to deter caudillismo. The saviors of the fatherland's honor, the microcosm of society, should lead the country's regeneration process united under a military ideology that placed the nation above all else.

Although the Peruvian nineteenth-century military did not possess a strong corporate sense, a high level of expertise or an ideology placing it under civilian control, military practitioners believed their occupation to be in a professionalizing state. Moreover, they formally claimed a broad jurisdiction based on the century's military experience as prefects, educators, and guardians of the constitution and the nation's interests.

Cáceres and his entourage embodied the Peruvian military mind, systematized and spread by the *Centro Militar del Perú* and its *Revista Militar y Naval* (1888-1893). The *Revista* dedicated many pages to the defense of a broad military role in society, arguing that national interests were undistinguishable from those of the armed forces.

Before the advent of French instructors in 1896, the Peruvian military mind already consisted of attitudes and perspectives that stressed the necessity of a strong military, the supremacy of society over the individual, the destructiveness of civilian partisan politics, and a broad military jurisdiction, which included administrative, nation-building, civilizing, and constitutional guardian functions.

The roots of modern Peru's professional militarism thus lay deep in the country's nineteenth century past.

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