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Sergio Serulnikov, *Revolution in the Andes: The Age of Túpac Amaru*. Trans. David Frye. Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2013. Pp. xvi, 159. ISBN 978-0-8223-5498-7.

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The subject of *Revolution in the Andes*¹ is the series of rebellions by indigenous peoples of Peru and Bolivia that rocked Spanish colonial America in the early 1780s. In this compact volume, author Sergio Serulnikov² (Univ. of San Andrés, Buenos Aires) examines the motivations of those who rebelled, demonstrating two key points: first, the insurrection was an attempt, not to overthrow Spanish authority, but to reform Spain's colonial administration. Second, while the underlying causes of social and political upheaval throughout the region were linked, the turmoil of the time produced myriad localized rebellions fought for sectional rather than imperial reasons. The disunity and lack of coordination of these disparate movements ensured their ultimate failure.

The author lays the foundation for his case by looking at the origins of the two relatively isolated uprisings that ignited an already inflammable situation in the southern Andes. The first broke out near Potosí over the execution of an Amaya chief who had tried to reform colonial administration to benefit the indigenous people. The second originated in Cusco, led by a *cacique*³ who attempted to circumvent colonial middlemen by establishing himself as a ruler-in-place for the King of Spain. Serulnikov compares these movements, stressing that both arose from efforts to bring the indigenous peoples closer to the Spanish crown rather than separate them from it. The uprisings followed their own different paths based on their particular political and social contexts.

Tomás Katari aimed to reform the colonial system by appealing directly to the Viceroy of La Plata in Buenos Aires: he wanted to bring the indigenous population closer to the crown by reducing taxation of intervening bureaucratic levels.⁴ After initial successes, the Viceroy appointed Katari to investigate local colonial bureaucrats. Upon his return from Buenos Aires, the very authorities he aimed to bypass arrested Katari for circumventing their power.

The political culture of Spanish colonial society revolved around a fundamental dichotomy. For both ideological and material reasons, the Crown had a vested interest in protecting the native peoples from abuses by the Hispanic ruling and economic elites as well as their own ethnic chiefs. Hence, a large network of ... "protectors of the natives" (*protectores de naturales*) was very early on established across the core areas of the empire.... But at the same time, since no independent police force existed, no legal ruling by any higher court could be enforced without vigorous displays of collective force. As the plaintiffs themselves were the ones who had to hand rural colonial offices the judicial sentences, which were usually directed against the local power brokers, ... it was unlikely that local authorities would abide by the sentences unless they felt compelled do so.... Resorting to Spanish justice did not prevent popular revolts: rather, it granted them legitimacy. (26-27)

1. Spanish original: *Revolución en los Andes: La era de Túpac Amaru* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2010).

2. He has written two previous books on this subject: *Conflictos sociales e insurrección en el mundo colonial andino: El norte de Potosí en el siglo XVIII* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2006) and *Subverting Colonial Authority: Challenges to Spanish Rule in Eighteenth-Century Southern Andes* (Durham: Duke U Pr, 2003). He has also authored upwards of twenty articles and chapters on the sociopolitical history of the Southern Andes.

3. *Caciques* were members of the indigenous ruling nobility. Rather than decapitate this leadership hierarchy after their conquest of the Americas, the Spanish preferred to co-opt it to serve their own administrative needs.

4. Taxes were collected by *corregidores*, or provincial governors, who often purchased their positions as a means to acquire wealth, and by *caciques*, who varied in popularity and concern for the common population.

Katari's arrest and the continued disregard for the direction of the Viceroy triggered events that placed him at the head of a popular movement that opposed local colonial bureaucrats who (it was felt) no longer legitimately represented royal interests. This uncorked a growing torrent of upheaval.

A similar movement started near Cusco as a cacique, José Gabriel, took advantage of local discontent to capture and execute a corregidor attempting to enforce a system of taxation known as the *alcabala*.⁵ Gabriel falsified a royal edict demanding the corregidor's punishment for "harmful behavior" and eliminating the *alcabala* (37). Taking the name Túpac Amaru II, he led his followers through the region, destroying vestiges of colonial power and issuing edicts to rally indigenous people to his cause. Intending to bring the population closer to the King of Spain, Túpac Amaru unleashed forces he may not have fully understood. His inability to contain the passions of the people in his movement led to still more widespread violence.

The proclamations and edicts that the Tupamaristas issued to win over the people of Peru tended to revolve around some basic themes: theirs was a war against the Europeans, against corregidores, against trade monopolies, against the new customs houses where *alcabalas* were being forcibly collected, and against many other colonial burdens. It was not against the creoles,⁶ the Catholic Church, or the monarchy. But the Indian commoners ... tended to have a broader understanding of who their enemies were: great landlords, [factory] owners and administrators, tax collectors, caciques, and other local chiefs all became targets of popular violence.... It was their class position, not their birthplace, that counted. (46-7)

Having established the similar roots of both movements, Serulnikov next chronicles how they diverged from each other and from their original intent. As word of the uprisings spread throughout the Andes, indigenous peoples increasingly saw an opportunity to rise up in the name of Amaru or Katari, but they lacked manpower, material, and any official sanction.

Serulnikov argues here that local politics influenced the course of these micro-events, which took on lives of their own. The movement varied in places like Cusco, Oruro, and Chayanta according to "how native peoples interacted with government institutions, articulated their own notions of justice, and endeavored to establish mechanisms of solidarity and mobilization." To truly understand this requires "thinking of the place of the Andean peoples and their leaders not as somewhat passive agents of large economic trends and systems of thought, but as what they really were: political actors" (12). Expansion led to violence throughout the countryside that persisted even after the executions of Túpac Amaru and Tomás Katari, ultimately claiming some 110,000 lives before the rebellion was exhausted and defeated.

The strength of Serulnikov's argumentation stems from his comprehensive research and micro-historical scrutiny of the motives of the various factions within the uprising. He draws astutely on his prior work with both primary sources and secondary scholarship to flesh out his argument. Serulnikov proves his contentions by tracing the entire course of the revolution, highlighting milestones both chronologically and by region. His emphasis on local contexts avoids the pitfalls of reductive history and enables readers to distinguish and correlate seemingly dissimilar and violent events.

Geared to undergraduate and popular audiences, *Revolution in the Andes* features meticulous accounts of complex events in plain, lucid language. Serulnikov deliberately relates the various uprisings to the broader context of the rebellion, at the same time clarifying divergences in the movement as local political cultures muddied the waters. An included comprehensive glossary will greatly assist readers unversed in the technical vocabulary of Spanish colonialism.

Serulnikov builds upon a vast body of work produced since the 1980s that moves away from macro-regional studies toward "deep dives" into the lives of common citizens.⁷ He consistently reminds his readers

5. A tax on the sale of goods, levied on the seller and collected in customs houses at the entrances to towns.

6. Persons born in the Americas who traced their lineage to Spain. They occupied a rung lower in the colonial order than *peninsulares* (those born in Spain), but above *indigenes*.

7. E.g., Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (1980; Eng. trans. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U Pr, 1992), and Giovanni Levi, *Inheriting Power: The Story of an Exorcist* (Chicago: U Chicago Pr, 1988). This trend has extended to the Andes with a distinct ethno-historical slant: Serulnikov cites, e.g., Thierry Saignes, "Indian Migration and Social Change in the Seventeenth Century," in *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes: At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology*, ed.

that human events are complex and that movements driven by emotions or moral convictions acquire a momentum of their own. Low-level conditions matter and reductionist histories fail to appreciate the “motives that had driven hundreds of thousands of Indians to risk everything” (10). Individuals actively decide to participate in violent actions; to view them as simply swept up in the pitch of events robs them of responsibility for those actions.

With *Revolution in the Andes*, Sergio Serulnikov has achieved his goal of revealing the forces behind a pivotal event in South American history while giving a voice to the oft forgotten masses.

Brooke Larson et al. (Durham: Duke U Pr, 1995) 167–95, Karen Spaulding, *Huarochiri: An Andean Society under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford U Pr, 1984), and Luis Miguel Glave, *Trajinenantes: Caminos indígenas en la sociedad colonial siglos XVI/XVII* (Lima: Inst de Apoyo Agrario, 1989).