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DOMÍNGUEZ FAURA, Nicanor, 2017, *Aproximaciones a la historia de Puno y del Altiplano*, Puno, Ministerio de Cultura-Dirección Desconcentrada de Cultura de Puno. 377 pp.

It is cause for celebration that there is now a series entitled “Puno Esencial,” and that it is aimed at academics and the general public alike. The essays in this book were originally published in *Cabildo Abierto*, a regional journal whose objectives included creating a space for debate and political analysis, including a section on history edited by Nicanor Domínguez Faura. Given that the publication and dissemination of regional history does not occur frequently and since history produced in the regions only rarely makes it to Lima, *Aproximaciones a la historia de Puno y del Altiplano* represents a milestone that we hope will be continued with more volumes of “Puno Esencial.”

Across the twenty-one chapters, the editor provides a selection of essays that were originally published in the journal and edited for this volume. They deal with a large variety of themes related to the past and the present of the region. In addition, the book includes various maps of different types whose value lies in the possibility of comparing how different institutional configurations affected the geopolitics of Puno, among other things. At the same time, the chronology at the end of the book allows us to easily visualize the richness of the events and the social and economic processes that affected the region from pre-Hispanic times to the present.

There is much that stands out in the varied essays in the volume. In principle, the inclusion of well-contextualized translations of articles by important foreign historians and anthropologists is reason to celebrate, given that access to them would otherwise be even more limited than it already is. Similarly, the inclusion of several transcriptions of colonial documents – such as a *repartimiento* valuation for Puno (which is located in the Archivo General de Indias), and passages from chronicles about the beginnings of the conquest – has enormous didactic and informative value.

Second, while they are not numerous, the essays that deal with the pre-Hispanic period contain a wealth of information that allows the reader to learn and value the region beyond the Incas. At the same time, the editor rightly includes contributions from archaeology along with those from anthropology and history, so that readers can expand their knowledge as well as appreciating how these disciplines provide different perspectives on the same subject. In addition, the concise explanations of the character of history and ethnohistory, how historical knowledge is produced, and other methodological issues are not only didactic but also completely on the mark,

demonstrating that one can provide simple explanations for complex issues without impoverishing knowledge.

Third, the inclusion of a set of essays related to climate and natural phenomenon – such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions – is very appropriate since environmental history is the area of global research that has expanded the most in recent years. These articles not only demonstrate the relevance of these phenomena in explaining the particular characteristics of life in Puno, but also the need for more studies on how they affected the region's populational and economic development. In the same sense, while for obvious reasons there are numerous studies about mining in Potosi, there are fewer studies about the development of the activity in Puno. Finally, the essay that analyzes the Laicacota rebellion is particularly valuable because it incorporates some of the conclusions of the doctoral dissertation of Domínguez Faura (in English), which is unfortunately still unpublished.

Without doubt, the greatest success of this compilation of essays is that it allows readers to expand their knowledge and understanding of the history of Puno in an instructive manner, without sacrificing rigor. There is also a clear effort to connect the past with the present to give it meaning in a historical context, something that is often not achieved in other analyses of this region. This motivation is apparent in the essays about the founding of Puno (p. 201), and in particular in the essay that proposes a reflection about so-called “Aymara violence” (p. 249). In the first case, the listing and analysis of the different existing versions of how Puno was founded is both a rigorous academic exercise and related directly to “local pride,” since it is a subject of current interest – as was evident in the fiery debate in the Casa del Corregidor in 2005. On the other hand, incidents such as the assassination of Mayor Cirilo Robles Ccallomamani provide inspiration for a detailed analysis of the outbreaks of violence in this region since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The author clearly and efficiently demonstrates that the motives behind the 2004 violence, far from demonstrating an “innate” characteristic of the Aymara ethnic group, possessed a logic and rationality arising from racial tensions that mark the history of the region like a hot brand.

Finally, it is worth mentioning some issues that receive little attention in this compilation. While the different essays do illustrate how the regional space evolved during the colonial period and the articulation of Puno with Cuzco and La Paz is easily discernable, there has been no comprehensive analysis of the articulation that currently exists with the Bolivian altiplano. This problem goes beyond this particular book since it is undeniable that historiography in general is constructed on the basis of the nation, and therefore does not usually take into account regions that have been arbitrarily

divided. Nevertheless, in the case of Puno, the analysis of both the social and the economic articulations between both altiplanos, as well as the process of institutional and administrative disarticulation (and its effects) that took place at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, deserve thorough treatment precisely because this is what occurred. Finally, the process of independence receives brief attention in the book, as do the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In these cases, the omission is understandable given that the author specializes in the early colonial period and therefore devotes greater coverage in the book to this era. However, the richness and complexity of this region deserves another volume that brings together the most up-to-date work on the republican era. It is hoped that this will come to pass, but meanwhile this volume exceeds all expectations and represents an enormous contribution not only to regional history but also to the history of Peru – which includes not only Lima, but also the altiplano of Puno.

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