

DRINOT, Paulo, 2016, *La seducción de la clase obrera: trabajadores, raza y la formación del Estado peruano*, translated by Óscar Hidalgo W., Lima, IEP, and Ministerio de Cultura. 325 pp.

La seducción de la clase obrera is one of the latest publications of the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos and a translation of the *The Allure of Labor*, published by Duke University in 2011. Since its publication in English, this study has been widely discussed in several book reviews in academic journals in Peru and abroad, and even featured in a debate in April 2014 between its author and Guillermo Rochabrún and Nelson Manrique about the changes to and continuance of racism in Peruvian society and the state. This debate was published this year (*Racismo, ¿solo un juego de palabras?*).

The thesis of the book is that the implementation of labor policy by the Peruvian government in the first decades of the 20th century had as its objective the formation of a working class as a model of progress and civilization for popular sectors that, in the countryside, would lead to the cultural elimination of indigenous communities; and in the cities, would keep popular sectors away from all types of radicalism (such as anarchism, communism, and the first stage of *Aprismo*). This labor policy was the basis of what Drinot calls the "worker state": one with a new role in society that paralleled similar phenomena in the western world during the same years.

Based on a solid understanding of sources and employing Foucault's theory, Drinot observes that during the first decades of the 20th century, the implementation of laws and state services that would aid in the shaping of a working class (the so-called "rationalities of government") led to a new phase in state-society relations: "governmentality." Thus, the first three chapters of the book seek to analyze the creation of the labor policy implemented through the promulgation of laws and the creation of government offices, which alternated with rationalities of discipline (the identification and elimination of radical or politicized factions inside the labor movement), whose purpose was to "domesticate" the working class. The next three chapters of the book analyze the implementation of state programs (workers' neighborhoods, popular sector restaurants, and a social security system for workers), called "governmental technologies," whose purpose was to create modern and peaceful workers.

Drinot's proposal marks a new approach to analyzing the development of the state in the 20th century. This approach makes it possible to interweave various themes that have been previously discussed in Peruvian historiography (such as racism, elite initiatives, and popular sector demands) but focusing on the state and, in the case of this book, labor policies. The state and its policies become a space for negotiation and conflict between elites and popular sectors in the formation of the project of the state and the nation.

Drinot clearly notes that racism played an important role in this process, and rather than a problem, it was tool to establish new discourses. As Alberto Vergara Paniagua notes in "La inclusión de la exclusión" (*La República*, February 5, 2012), in one of the first reviews of the English version of the book, this can be situated in a much broader discussion about the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that helped cement the restructuring of the Peruvian state in the first half of the 20th century.

In our opinion, another contribution of Drinot's study that is more relevant and deserves more discussion is the analysis of the negotiation between elites and popular sectors regarding this new scenario in which the state played a more active role in society. As Drinot demonstrates in the first chapters, the political elite at the beginning of the 20th century had already decided that the state should take on new functions relating to popular sectors. And, as Vergara notes, what is interesting in Drinot's contribution is that the author goes beyond the issue of the existence of a racist project of inclusion of indigenous people (based on their cultural elimination), to analyze why the state did not have sufficient capacity to implement this project. Nevertheless, here we can inquire as to whether this lack of capacity might rather signify the restraint of the state in committing itself to this strategy of the "worker state"? One might conclude that the state – still weak from the crisis of 1929 – did not have sufficient financial capacity to subsidize or pay for the expansion of the workers' project; but here we should note the limited process of industrialization in Peru during the first half of the 20th century, which leads us to reflect on the limited power of the industrial elite in comparison to their more resistant and more influential peers, such as hacienda owners on the coast and in the highlands. In addition, one must explore the existence of factions within the oligarchy itself, in which disputes – even during the height of their power – represented an obstacle to the implementation of the reform program of José Pardo, who was linked to a state that played a greater role in society.

It would seem that the economic elite was not entirely committed to the worker project, sometimes opting to play the role of reconverting popular sectors itself, rather than relying on the state. When Drinot speaks of the state viewing the working class as a way to "de-indianize" the country, he seems to be referring to a fraction of the intellectual and political elite that wanted the state to possess the rationalities of discipline and government, while the property-owning and business elite were themselves seeking to control some of the rationalities of government and to leave the rationalities of discipline in the hands of the state. Thus, the question of elites merits more discussion. While José Pardo's becoming president and his dispute with the old guard of the Civilista Party in 1904 represented a victory for that faction of *civilismo* that had a new view of the role of the state in society, this did not mean that elite hacienda owners, interested in having a small state and fewer fiscal expenditures, disappeared. Both sectors co-existed and

the latter represented an obstacle for Pardo's plan to expand schools in rural areas with a focus on education for work. These elites from coastal and highland haciendas, a very important sector of the economic elite, appear intermittently in the book – except in Chapter 3 – and one sees how they sought to “discipline” the working class on their own, attempting to keep it away from any state intervention.

All this took place at a time when the state was taking on new roles in society, which meant that its structure was branching out into new divisions and areas of interest. It remains to be investigated whether the other divisions of the state also focused on the so-called “worker's state” or if they sought to implement other strategies to redeem the Indian. For example, we are still lacking an exhaustive study about the role of public education in this process in the first decades of the 20th century: whether it contributed to the vision of a “worker's state” – which could be the case given the promotion of “education for work” and the expansion of public schools in rural areas with only two years of schooling (required in order to be a worker) – or whether it coexisted with other strategies of modernization of indigenous people such as, for example, model farms in the areas of Puno and Cusco (many of them associated with primary and high schools in the provinces). Rafael Drinot's book has opened up an enormous pathway that refreshes our outlook on the relations between the state and society. We hope that it will be explored.

Jorge Ccahuana Córdova*

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima

* Email: jccahuana@pucp.pe
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