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# Illuminating Distinction: Rural Modernization and the Invention of the Countryside in Cajamarca, Perú

Jade Severson
*Linfield College*

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Severson, Jade

**Advisor's Name**

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Printed Name Jade Severson

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Go Team Thesis!

**Introduction**

Contrary to the scientific luster typically accorded to it, the enactment of modernization has become more closely attuned to the mythologies that it forswears as traditional and backward. Just as mythologies order experience and knowledge in terms of a dualistic framework, so too does modernization polarize space into sectors of tradition and modernity. As Claude Lévi-Strauss has written, this dual quality inherent in mythologies proceeds from the opposition between nature and culture, or – in his words – from the opposition between the raw and the cooked (1983). The opposition between the traditional and the modern wrought by the discourses of modernization can be interpreted as a variation on this fundamental binary. Notions of traditionalism summon to mind images of bands and tribes dwelling in the raw expanses of nature, while modern clichés tend to conjure up visions of towering cities of cultural achievement. In a torrent of such variations, this basic opposition reaches an apotheosis in the two notorious symbols of modernization, Weber's iron cage and the Crystal Palace: the iron cage ensnares individuals within "a polar night of icy darkness," while eternal daylight streams unfettered through the transparent walls of the Crystal Palace (Lassman & Speirs 1994: 368). Within this mythology of modernization, darkness and light become aligned with the oppositions of the old-fashioned and the enlightened, the traditional and the modern, and, ultimately, the natural and cultural. The presence or absence of light thus becomes a sort of metonymy for the larger process of modernization.

Even in the unmapped *centros poblados* of the province of Cajamarca, Perú, this mythology has found a fertile niche. During a January 2011 celebration in the village of Las Gardenias that inaugurated the electrification of forty-nine rural localities in the province, it found voice in a speech given by Dr. Alejandro Rabaza, President of the Regional Government

of Cajamarca:

> *Tenemos que agradecer que ha cambiado el paisaje de nuestros pueblos porque transitando cada uno de nuestras provincias y distritos, en la noche se nota que efectivamente ya no es un campo con tinieblas de oscuridad; ya no son caseríos que parecen abandonados y olividados; ya no sean centros poblados que tienen que alumbrarse con velas o con lamparín; son realmente pueblos que han comenzado a desarrollarse porque junto a la construcción de locales escolares [...] pues vinimos entonces impulsando con esa fuerza, con esa capacidad, el desarrollo de todos los pueblos de Cajamarca y del Perú* (TV Perú 2011).
>
> We must be thankful that the landscape of our villages has changed, because passing through each one of our provinces and districts at night, it is no longer a country in the darkness of ignorance; they are no longer hamlets that seem abandoned and forgotten, no longer communities lit by candles and kerosene; they are, in fact, villages that have begun to develop, for along with the construction of schools, we continue to stimulate the development of all the villages of Cajamarca and of Perú with this force and ability.

At the core of this conceptualization of modernization lies the fundamental opposition of nature and culture. Electrification and education become conflated, a blurring of boundaries that derives from the imagery of enlightenment inherent in both processes. Opposing this literal and figurative enlightenment are the "tinieblas" – a term meaning both "darkness" and "ignorance" – that smother unelectrified villages and communities in the province's hinterlands. The coming of electrification, according to Rabaza, should thus signify the lifting of the blanket of darkness from the "campo", or countryside, gradually allowing hamlets to develop in the manner of cities proper. Within such a schema of binary oppositions between culture and nature, city and countryside, light and darkness, and enlightenment and ignorance, it must nevertheless be recalled that the definition of one opposite depends upon the articulation of the other. There can exist no countryside without the notion of a city, no darkness without light, no ignorance without enlightenment, and no iron cage without a Crystal Palace.

That the casting of such "tinieblas de oscuridad" upon a countryside is contingent upon electrification itself is particularly evident in the everyday experience of communities in the

district of La Encañada, located in the mountainous Andean zone north of the city of Cajamarca. As the beneficiary of a 2006 collaborative project between ITDG-Soluciones Prácticas and the European Union, nine of the district's communities received a solar panel stipulated for placement on each community's local *centro educativo*, a school serving students at both the primary and secondary grade levels. Investment in solar panels was intended to complement a much more integral project designed to harness the resources available in the district and to thus empower peasant men and women and their way of life (Bonfiglio & Fuertes 2007: 5). Three years after the completion of the project, the installation of solar panels appeared to have granted the project an ironic degree of success. Peasant men and women and their way of life had been empowered in an unintended sense: concomitant with the introduction of the solar panels, their livelihood, environment, and particular culture had been ushered into a new field of power relations. The placement of solar panels specifically on schools represented an impetus for the construction of a new *nomos*, which Pierre Bourdieu has defined as a "common principle of vision and division" (1998: 66). What follows is a discussion of the way in which the electrification of schools has transformed the vision of enlightenment and imposed new principles for the division of reality into city and countryside in the nine communities of La Encañada. Or, in other words, how the introduction of light has cast a shadow over these communities, throwing previously taken-for-granted distinctions of life into relief and inventing a countryside therefrom.

**Contextualizing modernity**

Though the invention of a provincial, backward countryside might seem a counterintuitive outcome of a transformative impulse such as rural electrification, it is perhaps the most likely one, given a context in which the mythology of modernity and its attendant constellations of

binary oppositions pervade discourse. Marshall Berman has identified such contradiction as the fundamental characteristic of the experience of modernity. In an endeavor to more concretely operationalize this contradiction that inheres in modern life in terms of shared human experience, he describes the voice captured in a diverse array of literary and theoretical works ascribed to the modern canon, ranging from Marx and Nietzsche to Whitman and Dostoevsky:

> "What is distinctive and remarkable about the voice is…its fast and drastic shifts in tone and inflection, its readiness to turn on itself, to question and negate all it has said, to transform itself into a great range of harmonic or dissonant voices, […] to express and grasp a world where everything is pregnant with its contrary. This voice resonates at once with self-discovery and self-mockery, with self-delight and self-doubt (1982: 23).

Berman's description of "a world where everything is pregnant with its contrary" suggests that concepts and assumptions become delimited only through opposition, which constructs significance in negative terms. For instance, the conceptualization of a countryside depends to a large degree upon the articulation of what it is not, implying the simultaneous invention of an other – say, a city – capable of absorbing everything to its contrary, thus surrounding and demarcating it. Every countryside, in other words, is pregnant with the notion of the city.

Contrary to the oppositional patterning of human thought, social experience in reality encompasses both the extremes of city and countryside and all intervening forms of settlement and organization, from suburbs and edge cities to shanty towns and favelas. Though such intermediaries between city and countryside belong to a readily apprehensible reality, they nonetheless do not possess a significance powerful enough to dispel the tendency toward oppositional thought. City and countryside remain fundamental categories of human thought and experience, as Raymond Williams has convincingly argued. In his analysis the imagery of the city and the countryside in English literature dating from the sixteenth century onward, Williams has argued that the distinction between city and countryside is essentially a political invention

that masks social conflict. The coalescing of traits such as innocence, simplicity, backwardness, and ignorance around the countryside – in opposition to which stand the ambition, enlightenment, and worldliness of the city – constitutes not a natural process, but rather the intentional crafting of "a myth functioning as a memory" (Williams 1973: 1, 42-43). This myth has projected an invented golden age of the countryside into history, contrasting a happier past with the tumultuous present and instilling an object of historical aspiration in the minds of the rural landless. When this lost pastoral paradise – like the innocence forsaken in the Garden of Eden – was to be regained, however, inevitably postdated any landless man's allotted years on Earth. In this manner, the mythical golden age has served to dissimulate the complaints of the landless against the land-owning class and to inaugurate a lasting period of stability (Williams 1973: 45). Williams thus demonstrates that the countryside is an invention of land-owning elites that has maintained and perpetuated a particular configuration of power.

Through the continual projection of an invented golden age deep into time, the countryside takes on a semblance of great antiquity. A formulaic depiction of the loss of the countryside can consequently retain its potency across generations, losing none of its significance due to changes in historical conditions and perspectives, as in this example: "A way of life that has come down to us from the days of Virgil has suddenly ended. A whole culture that had preserved its continuity from earliest times had now received its quietus" (Williams 1973: 9). The way in which such inventions come to acquire the guise of antique traditions has been posited by Eric Hobsbawm as a general mechanism of power maintenance, thus elaborating upon Williams' particular investigation of the subject. According to Hobsbawm, invented traditions – such as the golden age of the countryside – serve to establish social cohesion among members of classes and communities. Social cohesion in turn affirms the purpose of those

invented traditions, legitimizing the authorities and relations of power accountable for their establishment. A means of socialization and of inculcating beliefs, values, and norms of behavior thus comes into being (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1988: 9). Predictably, traditions are more frequently invented in periods of rapid societal transformation, when the social bases of other traditions have been weakened or completely swept away (Hobsbawn & Ranger 1988: 4).

Even as social context thus stipulates their particular manifestation, all invented traditions share a characteristically deep genealogy that traces their origins to an early stratum of history. Regardless of any sort of historical precedent or justification, as Hobsbawm writes, the contextual novelty of invented traditions still endures: "In all such cases novelty is no less novel for being able to dress up easily as antiquity" (1988: 5). The significance accorded to the construction of genealogies is entirely contrary to the novelty and innovation associated with a modern context in which "all that is solid melts into air" and the trappings of tradition are wont to be profaned (Marx & Engels 1998: 38). In accordance with Berman's description of modernity as a whirlpool of contradiction, this process of historicization could be said to be in opposition to modernity and its liquidation of tradition and thereby to be an integral part of it.

Put differently, historicization is central to the reification of modern social structures. Reification entails the internalization of social structures by individuals through the incorporation of those structures into their personal biographies, creating the overlap between individual and collective experience that provides the basis for inclusion in a social sphere (Berger & Luckmann 1966: 45-92). Since the historicity of invented traditions is contrived rather than self-evident, it is essential that it be internalized during the process of early socialization, namely in educational institutions. Educational institutions inculcate a particular school of thought that includes such invented traditions, which Ivan Illich has designated the

"hidden curriculum of schools" (1971: 2). Illich contends that obligatory schools commodify the hidden curriculum and generate an equal demand for it, but as with all other products, patterns of consumption inevitably become differential. When groups fall behind a certain standard of consumption fixed by authorities, they are then defined as being impoverished. Those bereft of education and classified as impoverished in turn generate demand for and dependence on modern welfare institutions, which deprive individuals of agency in their own learning and development. Illich deems this process "the modernization of poverty" and identifies it as the contradiction responsible for contemporary underdevelopment (1971: 3). The products of education contradict its professed goal of enabling social mobility, polarizing society into sectors of the academic and the non-academic, of haves and have-nots (1971: 9, 24).

On this basis, Illich questions the emphasis placed on obligatory schooling in development projects. Others that have addressed the relationship between schooling and development have tended to hold fast to the notion that "the man who questions the need for school is immediately attacked as either heartless or imperialist" (Illich 1971: 59-60). The World Bank, for example, reports that that there is now a firm consensus that investment in education leads to high returns in terms of economic growth and equity (Jiménez & Lockheed 1995: ix). Lawrence E. Harrison likewise argues in his noted monograph that the roots of Latin American underdevelopment lie in the "culture" of the region, by which he means "the values and attitudes a society inculcates in its people through various socializing mechanisms," such as the school (1985: xvi). The emphasis on education that pervades development literature also structures the praxis of organizations and governments that implement modernizing courses. Projects that result in an input of energy into a community – be it in the form of solar panels, an electric generator, or a connection to an electrical grid – often stipulate that energy be channeled

into schools in the belief that the skills acquired through education will eventually stimulate income generation and social advancement (Smith 2000: 3). Education's taken-for-granted status as a means of development and modernization in itself calls for a significant input of skepticism. Such skepticism, as the sociologist Andre Gunder Frank has contended, should above all address the historical and ongoing relationship between regional cities and the countryside in Latin America and its impact upon modernization efforts (1969: 5-7).

**Developmental and ethnographic methods**

The following ethnography developed from a two-month long collaboration in 2009 with the Cajamarca branch of ITDG/Soluciones Prácticas, an organization linked to the UK-based development charity Practical Action. Through the diffusion of appropriate technologies – a concept derived from E.F. Schumacher's 1973 book *Small is Beautiful* – ITDG endeavors to satisfy human needs through the development of local resources, thus directly empowering the communities in which their projects are implemented and eschewing the development of a dependency relationship between project locales and extra-local charity. This alternative vision of development is grounded in ITDG's dual commitment to people and to technology. *"No ponemos en primer lugar a la tecnología,"* begins the organization's statement of institutional identity, *"sino a las personas"* (ITDG-Soluciones Prácticas 2011). Considerations of people and technology accordingly shape in equal measure the efforts undertaken by ITDG in actualizing its mission of "defying poverty".

Though the linkage of people with technology figures vitally in the texts circulated publically by ITDG, that linkage often tended toward unintended interpretations in the implementation and aftermath of the *Proyecto Integral Yachan*. Rather than linking community members to appropriate technologies, the PV panel subproject further crystallized the link

between technologies and their appropriate mediators: ITDG staff – which encompasses engineers, GIS experts, secretaries, and grant-writers – had alone evaluated and determined the pathways into which resources and energy would be channeled in project communities. The acceptance of extra-local visions of development in project communities stems from the taken-for-granted deference of ITDG staff and community members alike to education gradients. Those with academic degrees are mutually acknowledged as being better qualified to designate areas for development and to thus define rural development, which is observable in the community members' constant address of any ITDG staff member as *"ingeniero,"* or engineer. Such acceptance and humility on the part of community members by no means precludes their ability to contest the precedence of formal education and an imposed vision of development. Resistance, in fact, electrifies the atmosphere of such communities and is consequently a guiding theme of this study.

From this disjuncture in ITDG's development theory and practice emerged a partnership between engineers and ethnographer. Through this partnership, a survey of nine communities in the district of La Encañada that had been impacted by the Yachan Project was undertaken for sake of reestablishing the community-oriented aspect of the project. In 2006, ITDG and the European Commission had cooperated in actualizing this project, which sought to develop the *cajamarquino* trinity of water, grasses, and livestock in the upper basin of the Llaucán River in accordance with Schumacher's philosophy. Between August and December 2006, a subproject of Yachan had funded the purchase of solar panels and their installation on the *centros educativos* – aggregate primary and secondary schools – in those nine particular communities. During the three years following the installation of the panels on the nine schools, neither the functional status of the panels nor the effects of the panels upon the recipient communities had

been evaluated. When the technical survey of the systems in each community undertaken by engineers and ethnographer in July 2009 revealed dwindling battery life and the impending obsolescence of the panels, it then became a matter of interest to research the *gestión* – or social management strategies – of the systems. A structured attempt to collect and record each community's intended approach to panel management and maintenance in the event of disrepair instead resulted in an outpouring of both gratitude for ITDG and unbounded frustration over the sociocultural effects wrought by the installation of the panels. The thickening of the research process from structured survey work to the unstructured interviews and conversations that witnessed these impassioned outpourings eventually produced ethnographic portraits of four of the nine communities: San Juan de Corralpampa, Yanacancha Grande, La Florida, and Negritos Bajo.

With the panels having been specified for installation on the common primary and secondary educational institution in each community, key informants were found in the seven teachers that had been posted either individually or in pairs to the four schools. Equally important insight, though derived from shorter and less intensive interviews, was also gained from the members of each community's *asociación de padres de familia*, a type of parent-teacher association, and from members of *rondas campesinas*, the village-based vigilante groups indigenous to the highlands of Cajamarca (Gitlitz & Rojas 1983: 163-197). Given the extremely remote location and the closed membership structure in the communities, rapport-building figured vitally in securing interviews from villagers. The appearance of an outsider – especially of one not employed by the nearby Minera Yanacocha, the world's second largest gold mine – inevitably sparked immediate reactions of incredulity, causing even the boldest of *ronderos* to shy away. The presence of an outsider even stifled the curiosity of community schoolchildren,

who would flee when approached and seek safety behind classroom walls. Such fear and silence bespoke the otherness perceived by the children in the ethnographer. They themselves embodied all the qualities opposite those of the ethnographer: a rural upbringing and a different stance toward education derived from that upbringing, amongst others. That this silence remained unbridgeable, even after multiple visits to each village, is by far the greatest shortcoming of this study.

Conversely, rapport was established almost instantaneously with the teachers. This camaraderie was generated by a combination of isolation, frustrated educational endeavors, and the need for an empathetic ear on the part of the teachers and by the unabashed interest and the voltmeter wielded by the ethnographer. Possession of such a technical instrument signified a particular form of cultural capital: it represented the engineer's vocation and the education requisite for its practice. The fervor for education symbolized by the voltmeter thus assured common interests and cemented rapport between the ethnographer and the teachers, even as education itself emerged from its taken-for-granted trappings to become the subject of critical consideration.

**Doxa, distinction, domination**

The concepts of knowledge and practice – or of thought and action or of theory and praxis, in other discourses – often find representation and connection solely in binary oppositions, which order them in mutually exclusive terms. Knowledge, that is, encompasses everything not subsumed by the field of practice. In outlining a theory of practice, Pierre Bourdieu has nevertheless contradicted this traditional opposition and synthesized a means of examining knowledge. This theory subjects all fields of practice, from objectivist anthropology to the objects of the anthropological gaze themselves, to an identical epistemological critique.

Bourdieu identifies knowledge in itself as a form of practice: rather than existing in nature and simply awaiting classification as either phenomenological and objectivist, knowledge actively produces and is produced by a particular set of social conditions (1977: 2-4). Knowledge of this production process is variably termed praxeological knowledge, the theory of practice, the science of practice, or practical knowledge (Swartz 1997: 56).

According to Bourdieu, the production of knowledge – particularly of knowledge of society and its structures – is taken for granted. Such social knowledge appears entirely natural and self-evident to its bearers, be they peasants in the Andean villages of Cajamarca or academic anthropologists. In so appearing to exist prior to the blossoming of reflexivity, the genesis of social knowledge is obscured, and the reconstruction of that genesis becomes hindered (Bourdieu 1994: 3-4). In other words, the accumulation of practical knowledge – meaning an awareness of how knowledge produces and is produced by the practices of the social order – is consequently prevented. Bourdieu thus classifies social knowledge as belonging to the domain of doxa, or the taken-for-granted. The doxic quality of social knowledge derives from its sheer fundamentality to everyday existence: it simply warrants forgetting (Bourdieu 1977: 165-166).

Given its doxic quality, social knowledge lies outside the realm of the readily contestable and thus figures in the stability of social structures, particularly class distinctions. Doxic knowledge of society, Bourdieu argues, maintains class distinction. During the course of everyday life, individuals unconsciously make choices that demonstrate taste, defined as the selection of particular cultural goods for consumption. Defined as such, taste represents a taken-for-granted enactment of the knowledge of social class: it signifies the chain of capital implicit in the valorization of one good over another (Bourdieu 1984: 13). The natural, almost pre-reflexive judgment of taste points to its doxic character and thus to its role in maintaining the social order.

Within the framework outlined by Bourdieu, doxa constitute the natural objects of practical knowledge. An attempt to trace the chain of capital inherent in the judgment of taste back to a moment of genesis exemplifies the production of practical knowledge. While capital most noticeably takes on financial, material, or symbolic form, its most doxic form is educational, which automatically places it beneath the lights of inquiry. Bourdieu has maintained that education is fundamental form of capital that enables the allocation of other forms of capital, thus determining social class (1991: 43-65). The genesis of social knowledge is then situated within the school. Schools inculcate a *nomos,* or a principle of vision and division that is cast in pre-reflexive, doxic terms and consequently determines the bounds of the "commonsense world" (Bourdieu 1994: 13). Since the nomos appears as an extension of nature, the invented nature of the nomos and the principles of vision and division born of it – such as the distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate forms of knowledge, the valuable and the worthless, and social classes – become cast in shadow. Any challenge to the nomos is thus characterized as defiance of the natural, commonsensical order, even though the nomos merely stands for "a particular point of view, the point of view of the dominant, when it presents and imposes itself as the universal point of view" (Bourdieu 1994: 15). The school, in other words, is taken for granted as an institution of social liberation and movement, which obscures its use as an instrument of elite domination and of the legitimation of that domination (Bourdieu 1996: 5).

Contrary to Lévi-Strauss' conceptualization of binary oppositions, the nomos and its principles of vision and division are the products of active domination and legitimation and not simply natural categories that universally structure thought. The vision of a world divided into city and countryside, for instance, neither inheres in the mind nor can claim universality, despite its ubiquity. The distinction between city and countryside should rather be viewed through the

lens of practical knowledge and interpreted as a product of a nomos learned within the walls of a particular school.

**An Ethnography of Contradiction**

The instituto educativo of San Juan de Corralpampa lies on one of the rare patches of flat ground in the Llaucan River *cuenca*, a basin located within the boundaries of the district of La Encañada just north of the city of Cajamarca. That such a topographic designation – which suggests gently curving, sheltering slopes that converge on some meandering stream or lake – should have been given to this tract of Andean terrain that rises to altitudes upward of thirteen thousand feet is only the first of many contradictions observable in the district. Just outside the open double doors that lead into the main school building, high winds and a peculiar sunlight that magnifies the burning sensation brought on by the cold beat down on the *jalca*, the short-stalked, yellowed grasses that cover what seems like a limitless expanse of treeless, undulating sierra. San Juan de Corralpampa is one of the countless *caseríos* hidden behind the mountainous folds of this landscape, hardly visible from the one gravel road that traverses much of the district. A caserío, or hamlet, is the term that has been applied to settlements composed of ten to fifty families since the development of a classificatory system by state officials in Lima in 1959 (Ministerio de Agricultura 1959). According to this system, only the nucleus of the settlement is officially recognized by municipal authorities, even though the majority of residents likely dwell in dispersed clusters removed from the sight and immediate purview of the nucleus. The nucleus consistently centers on an instituto educativo and forms the primary space for social interaction (Wolfe 1966: 9). In the case of San Juan de Corralpampa, all domestic dwellings belonging to the caserío's thirty families lie outside the officially recognized nucleus, which contains the instituto educativo. This gross discrepancy between officially recognized space and actual

spheres of residence has been maintained and sanctified by national development schemas that designate the caserío as a "transitional stage in rural resettlement" in the aftermath of agrarian reform and the elimination of a centuries-old social structure based on latifundia and debt peonage (Wolfe 1966: 9).

Although the nucleus of San Juan de Corralpampa finds itself set apart from the minifundia landholdings that have come to characterize the province of Cajamarca since the land reforms and thus distant from the sphere of everyday life, the instituto educativo is nonetheless an active locus of social interaction. Approaching this particular instituto educativo for the first time, an angry yet pleading voice could be heard inside the main schoolroom, even at a distance and above the unrelenting beating of the wind. *"Me da rabia,"* cried a woman out of frustration, "It makes me furious." To contextualize that statement required stepping into the darkened schoolroom, a windowless structure made of adobe, straw, pebbles, and tin that resembled a typical caserío dwelling apart from the fading blue paint on its exterior walls and the solar panel on its roof. Inside, a group of roughly twenty-five *campesinos* – a term meaning "peasant" that is applied to residents of all caseríos – had gathered to listen to Alma and Isabel, the school's two teachers, speak about their children's schooling. With tears streaming down her face, Alma begged the peasant men and women to support their children in their educational endeavors by invoking the third-grade education possessed by most peasant men to aid the children in completing homework rather than beating them when they attempt to struggle through arithmetic. These impassioned words, as Alma would later tell, hopefully had *"tocaron el corazón de la comunidad,"* had touched the heart of the community. The peasants, however, simply filed out of the schoolroom, failing to exchange a single word with either of the teachers, their expressions obscured by the white, wide-brimmed hats worn by every campesino in the

province. Above it all, a single light bulb shone dimly, and in the space directly behind the teachers was an array consisting of two batteries, a controller, an inverter, and a bundle of wires leading to the solar panel on the roof. That one hundred-watt photovoltaic system framed the scene, electrifying the obvious divisions between teachers and peasants.

As an employee in the civil registry of the nearby *centro poblado* of Yanacancha Baja, a populated center slightly larger than a caserío, depicted it, the current situation in many caseríos such as San Juan de Corralpampa can be captured by a well-known idiom: *"Pueblo chico, infierno grande,"* meaning "small town, big hell." This idiom highlights another contradiction of life in the Llaucan Basin. Just as the still waters of the lagoons in the basin supposedly harbor otherworldly forces, so do the small, unassuming façades of caseríos conceal great conflict. According to Huaman, such conflict stems in large part from the district's institutos educativos. Materials purchased specifically for the construction or repair of schools are stolen or merely disappear, willingly left unaccounted for in community ledgers, and the solar panels that had been installed on the institutos educativos in Baños Chanta and Quinua Baja had gone missing as well, most likely sold in the urban markets of Cajamarca and Bambamarca. Logic alone points to the caserío residents themselves as the perpetrators of these crimes: the locations of institutos educativos and the mere existence of the panels are unknown to outsiders. Even if an outsider had managed to glean those vital pieces of information, theft would still require the salutary neglect of the local *rondas campesinas*, the peasant-organized vigilante patrols that prevent cattle rustling and assure that even a single snatched chicken will be returned to its owner. To reinforce the vigilance of the rondas, each panel had additionally been enclosed in an anti-theft iron enclosure immediately after installation that – though not completely impregnable – would easily draw the attention of the rondas in the event of a breach.

As a means of combating the general community complicity evident in the undermining of school improvement efforts in San Juan de Corralpampa and in the wider basin, Alma and Isabel planned to boycott the caserío's upcoming fiesta. Their marked absence from this gathering, they both hoped, would most effectively communicate their anguish to the parents, giving them the impetus to reinstall the school's tile flooring that had been removed months before for cleaning, to repaint the school building, and to begin considering how the community would raise funds to replace the PV system's two soon-to-be-obsolete batteries. This strategy illuminated the ambiguous status of teachers in San Juan de Corralpampa. On the one hand, the two teachers and their pursuit of educational improvements in the caserío suffer under blatant community hostility, but they simultaneously find themselves invited to partake in community festivities. Invitations to a caserío fiesta are only extended to individuals possessing *comunero* status, or full membership in the community. Given the closed nature of caseríos in the basin, the presence of the teachers' names on fiesta attendance lists and their participation in the preparation of meals, gossip, soccer games, and the general process of social effervescence during those celebrations represents the surmounting of a social barrier that is rarely transgressed.

The granting of comunero status to teachers stems in large measure from their residence patterns. Teachers typically reside in either Cajamarca or Bambamarca, the two largest cities in the province, but due to the unreliability of transportation and the length of the journey between their cities of residence and the schools of the Llaucan Basin, they live in the caserío during the five-day school week, returning to the city only on weekends. Though this pattern holds for all of the teachers whose schools received solar panels as part of the Proyecto Yachan, it is most vividly articulated in the lives of Pepito and Carlos, the two teachers at the instituto educativo in

the caserío of La Florida. In spite of its designation as a caserío, La Florida consists only of the yellow instituto educativo and its surrounding schoolyard that are perched on a mountaintop far from any road or domestic settlement. Children come to the school daily on foot from distances of up to six kilometers, while the distance of Pepito's and Carlos's commute necessitates that they remain there for the duration of the school week. At three a.m. on Monday mornings, they make the two-and-a-half hour trek via *combis* – the Volkswagen buses that ply the distances between cities and caseríos – to a small outpost in the vicinity of La Florida, then walk the remaining five kilometers of impassable road to the school once the sun rises, all the while carrying a crate bearing a week's worth of provisions. They reside in a single-room apartment located directly above the schoolroom that has access to the energy provided by the PV system in the form of a radio and a single light fixture, which allows them to continue preparing lesson plans after sunset. The mere fact of their isolation and their full-time presence at the school invests them heavily in the lives of their students. They become intimately familiar with the trampled-down routes wending through the jalca that each student traverses daily, the labyrinthine network of caves that snakes beneath them, and the details of the domestic lives that await each student at the end of those pathways.

In light of this intertwining of teachers' routines with the lives of their students and the caseríos from which they hail, it would seem that any form of collaboration between teachers and other comuneros would simply represent an outgrowth of the habits of everyday life. Yet with regard to the school PV systems, the connections between teachers and caseríos become cast in the shadows of conflict. While the signing of contracts in each caserío just prior to the installation of the PV systems in 2006 had stipulated that each community adhere to a policy of collaboration in all matters related to the system, those terms had been flouted in the ensuing

three years. The exact wording of the contracts had drawn on the language of courting ritual, sanctifying community cooperation by pronouncing them *"comprometido collaborar,"* or "engaged to cooperate". In a very literal sense, this stylistic feature foreshadowed the divorce that would slowly emerge in the communities following the installation of the PV systems. Teachers in four of the caseríos – Liriopampa, Yanacancha Grande, San Juan de Corralpampa, and El Alumbre – clearly voiced their awareness of this divorce in declaring that the *"paneles funcionan mejor que deben."* Their claim that "the panels function better than they should," defying both ITDG's instructions for the management of the PV systems and a moral standard, underscores the divisions that have arisen in the caseríos.

Although this outcome of the PV system installation ironically challenged the contractual terms guiding the transfer of equipment to the caseríos, the contradiction of the collaborative strategy pursued by ITDG had been unknowingly facilitated even prior to installation. In the hopes of preventing a dependency relationship between caseríos and ITDG from arising, ITDG had attempted to avoid patronizing potential recipient caseríos by making gifts of the PV systems and had instead sought to create feelings of local empowerment by encouraging caseríos to apply for them. Rather than urging comuneros proper to apply, however, ITDG delegated the responsibility for the application process to the teachers at the instituto educativo in each caserío. Successful application required that teachers collect funds from caserío residents for the purchase of a television and a DVD player to be powered by the PV system, prescribing and proscribing the possible uses of the energy derived from the one hundred-watt panels. Application additionally entailed teachers to devise a plan for the long-term *gestión social* of the PV systems. Such plans for the social management of the systems detailed the distribution of the financial burden in the caserío for the maintenance and repair of the equipment and usually consisted of

both a flat annual tariff on each household and a small fee collected from the charging of comuneros' cell phones at PV outlets.

Even following the installation of the systems, teachers retained their initial position of privilege in the management of the equipment and in the allocation of its energies to various tasks. Maintenance of that authority and of the PV systems alike depended upon education: one teacher at every recipient instituto educativo had been selected to participate in a technical training course convened by ITDG engineers, which addressed topics ranging from the color-coding scheme on the control panels to the proper soaps to be used in scrubbing the panels free of the dust blown from the eroding adobe walls of the school buildings. Upon completion of this course, trained teachers alone received the keys to the building in which the panel equipment was housed.

That all comuneros proper possessed of rank, age, and authority – such as those belonging to the rondas campesinas and to the *APAFA*, an association comprised of the male heads of household in each caserío – should have been summarily passed over in selection for the training program generated a more potent electrical charge than could the PV panels in the often clouded sierra. Such a management model directly contradicted ITDG's specific commitment to community empowerment. Teachers possessed both symbolic and practical control over the panels, ironically contradicting the effort to avoid the projection of the systems' management to a source external to the caseríos and thus to circumvent the establishment of a dependency relationship. In the case of Yanacancha Grande's PV system, this management structure had even periodically caused damage to the equipment. When the lone trained teacher returned to Cajamarca for the weekend, the key to the equipment room always accompanied him, leaving comuneros unable to access the systems to prevent batteries from becoming overcharged

and causing control panels and inverters to overheat and even become non-functional.

More notable than such instances of technical failure, however, was the social dysfunction consistently motivated by the empowerment of teachers in each caserío. In possessing symbolic control of the PV systems in the form of keys, teachers thus also maintained functional control over the systems, determining the allocation of energy to various tasks. In five of the seven caseríos still in possession of panels, teachers diverted energy exclusively to school-related activities, most commonly to the devices required for playing audio recordings and films for students. The majority of the energy channeled for school-related purposes, however, was consumed by the teachers themselves following the conclusion of the day's classes. After sunset, teachers would switch on the single light bulb and radio in their quarters for sake of warding off the drowsiness normally induced by the early onset of darkness and the cold, taking advantage of the light and their lifted spirits to prepare the coming day's lesson plans. With the wider caserío not benefitting from a piece of technology whose installation had been intended to empower full-time comuneros, muted conflict had become manifest in any discussion related to the institutos educativos or to ITDG. Comuneros expressed anger intermingled with jealously when relating how teachers had taken advantage of their technical training to run cables from the control panels to their own private rooms, siphoning off any surplus energy to power laptops. Comuneros' ire was additionally stoked by talk of ITDG's development strategy in the Llaucan Basin and its emphasis on the development of the school environment: they would much rather have witnessed the installation of micro-hydro systems capable of producing a small amount of energy for every caserío household, investment in potable water sources, the improvement of pasturelands through irrigation, and the funding of reforestation. In relating their personal experiences and perceptions of this development process and the installation of PV systems in

schools, comuneros often employed the trope of the *forastero*, or outsider, when speaking of the caserío nucleus, with its officially recognized buildings and institutos educativos. Being an outsider within the heart of the caserío contradicts the novelist Ciro Alegría's famous characterization of the Peruvian comunero as only experiencing a feeling of belonging in their native Andean community. *"El mundo es ancho y ajeno,"* Alegría wrote, referring to the wide and alien world comuneros encountered beyond the horizons of the Andean caserío in twentieth-century Perú. A century later, the bringing of a single object from that wide, alien world – a PV system – had begun to reinvent the Andean caseríos of the Llaucan Basin in its image.

Two cases that contradict this pattern still further demonstrate the fundamental changes wrought by the electrical empowerment of schools in caseríos. The institutos educativos in the caseríos of Negritos Bajo and La Florida double as the meeting places of rondas campesinas, which has allowed comuneros belonging to the ronda to access the energy provided by the panels. The light afforded comuneros the opportunity to postpone community meetings until after dark, enabling their work to go unpunctuated until sunset. Ronda members also opened the school room to general caserío use during meeting times by showing a film every two weeks. In these caseríos, tension between teachers and comuneros was neither observable nor a topic of conversation, and of the seven caseríos possessing PV systems, those in Negritos Bajo and La Florida were the most well-maintained after three years. Even at the instituto educativo in La Florida – where José, the principal that had received ITDG training, projected an upright, gentrified image that otherwise would have alienated him from students and comuneros – rapport and good relations between school and caserío were maintained by allowing the ronda to access the PV system and its energies whenever requested. The success of that particular PV system and of its social management could even be perceived in the total midnight darkness at thirteen

thousand feet: somewhere beyond the reach of the light powered by the panel in the teachers' quarters, the ronda could be heard crunching through the jalca as they made their rounds near the instituto educativo, upon which the PV panel had rested for the past three years, undisturbed by theft or open social conflict.

**The Illumination of Distinction**

In his writings on the genesis of state power, Pierre Bourdieu has argued that educational institutions possess a monopoly on informational capital. Informational capital – which encompasses every domain of knowledge, from particular skill sets to the essentials of language and grammar – is in turn sanctified by the state as the only legitimate currency of cultural exchange (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 119). Through state educational structures, the state not only designates certain forms of knowledge legitimate and others inferior, but also molds the fundamental cognitive structures that underlie a student's recognition of the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate forms of knowledge. This seemingly pre-reflexive agreement on the vision and division of knowledge is deemed by Bourdieu the nomos (1994: 7). According to Bourdieu, this common principle of vision and division is the product of the state's active symbolic domination and not simply a natural category of thought, as Claude Lévi-Strauss has argued. The placement of solar panels on the nine institutos educativos of La Encañada constitutes such an act of symbolic domination that has begun to produce the vision that state schools are the only sources of legitimate knowledge. In this process, the educational pathways of rural life – such as cattle-herding, the cultivation of potatoes and olluco, and domestic tasks such as weaving – are divided from the school proper and devalued, rendering campesino knowledge backward, outdated, and provincial.

Though symbolic domination operates actively and continuously, that by no means

implies intentional causation on the part of either ITDG or the teachers entrusted with directing the technical and social management of the PV systems. Teachers themselves, in fact, do not conceive of themselves as standing in opposition to the campesino lifestyle and its educational pathways. All but one of the teachers in the nine institutos educativos had been born and raised in caseríos very similar to the ones in which they found employment and expressed a genuine hope to contribute to the vitality of the communities that recalled their native surroundings.

Evidence of teachers' fierce defense of the caserío coalesces around poles of historical integrity and future development. Since the mid-1990s, the very existence of the minifundia landholdings that unofficially comprise caseríos has been threatened by the expansion of Minera Yanacocha, a sprawling open-pit gold mine located an hour's drive north of the city of Cajamarca. As the mine's sphere of operation has gradually encroached on the Llaucan Basin, converting the sierra into a complex of stepped pyramids devoid of jalca or any other life, runoff containing heavy metals has seeped into the watersheds that provide nourishment for crops, cattle, and comuneros alike. When representatives of the mine approach the caseríos – usually with the intent of obtaining comuneros' consent for the further destruction of their environment or of appropriating their minifundia landholdings in exchange for petty sums and offerings of shoes for the children of the caserío – they receive an emphatic denial of their right to do so from the teachers. The vision of teachers provides an alternative to this insidious variant of economic development. César and Iván, the two teachers stationed at the Instituto Educativo San Martín de Porres in Yanacancha Grande, have outlined their own plan for the economic development of the caserío, which would entail that the community *"dinamizar el proceso de aprendizaje"* and facilitate ecotourism. This "energizing of the educational process" would depend upon the realization of an assessment by the Spanish firm Bascotecnica solicited by César and Iván, which

would satiate any potential energy need in the school with PV panels. As a direct result of the total electrification of the school, they continued, children would more successfully develop their communication skills and mathematical logic, increasing the number of students that continue their education at the university level from the current average of three of every ten instituto graduates. University-educated comuneros would in turn apply their new-found knowledge of engineering and agriculture to "the development of the base of the community": the proper channeling of water and the resulting improvement of pastures would spur the development of cattle farming and in turn enhance the quality of dairy products and augment the income generated from the sale of milk, cheeses, and yogurt. That income would additionally enable the community to "take advantage of the traditional knowledge of women" by funding the purchase of the equipment necessary for the production of textiles and the construction of artisan markets. Such reinvigorated caseríos would then qualify as destinations for ecotourists, a conclusion supported by a similar progression of development at Granja Porcón, a Protestant cooperative in the Tumbaden district just north of the city of Cajamarca.

Such a modernization strategy, however, is fundamentally predicated on the return of university students to their caseríos of origin. Speaking for the group of twenty-one teachers from throughout the Llaucan Basin that had gathered at the instituto educativo in Quengo Río Bajo to discuss pedagogy and student progress, Alma justified the validity of that expectation: *"La sangre no se puede negar. Los peruanos siempre regresan al lugar donde nacieron. Son muy pegados a la familia."* Peruvians always return to the place where they were born, she explained, revealing in their homecoming a profound attachment to their families and an inability to deny bloodlines. At the same time, though, each teacher had to grudgingly admit that those students that continue their educations in the state universities in Cajamarca, Trujillo, Chiclayo,

and Lima never again return to permanently reside in the caseríos that witnessed their formative years. School-based education, in other words, is a formula for rural exodus. Any improvements to the implementation of the curriculum – such as PV panels – thus increase the likelihood of rural exodus, which accounts for the comunero hostility displayed toward teachers in caseríos. The bonds of kinship exert an irresistible pull only for those that prove to be exceptions to that rule: teachers.

The comuneros' and teachers' identification of this pattern of rural exodus assumes an already-existing distinction between city and countryside, yet this distinction is only just in the process of being constructed in Cajamarca. Residents of Trujillo and Chiclayo as well as the smattering of Peruvian tourists and Cajamarca residents that wander the heights of Cerro Santa Apolonia consistently depict Cajamarca as a pre-Columbian Eden, where internal colonialism never managed to segregate an urban center from its surrounding countryside, as occurred throughout Perú and other Spanish holdings on the continent. With images characteristic of any historically-represented past before a fall from grace, they envision *cajamarquinos* as "innocent", "unambitious", and "of good word". Even the most casual observations of the cajamarquino landscape lend credence to those words that claim the lack of distinction between city and countryside in the province: smoke from breakfast fires drifts up from the heart of the elegant colonial quarter; cattle, oxen, and donkeys clatter through the cobblestoned *jardínes* radiating from the *plaza de armas*, while traffic signs exhort automobiles to share the road with livestock; and comuneros divide their time between the urban markets of Cajamarca and their minifundia, spending the afternoon hours selling produce and returning to the caseríos before dawn to perform domestic tasks. Perhaps most telling, though, is the lack of a named distinction between city and countryside in the province. "Cajamarca" refers both to the regional capital

and to the expanse of caseríos, centros poblados, and agricultural land encompassed by the borders of the province.

Though the more obvious material traces of an indigenous, pre-Columbian past have been obliterated in Cajamarca, patterns of settlement and livelihood in the province retain the flavor of Inca period. The Cápac Ñan – the main route of the network of Inca roads converging on Cusco – still wends through the sierra adjacent to the Llaucan Basin, and caseríos throughout the province preserve the indigenous division of settlements into upper and lower halves. The most monolithic remnant of the Inca period, the *Cuarto del Rescate*, nonetheless remains hidden behind the colonial and more recent façades of the city of Cajamarca. Contact-era documents suggest that persevering indigenous educational practices in Cajamarca are similarly obscured by a modernist discourse of education. Chroniclers present at the first meeting of Spanish and Inca armies in Cajamarca have immortalized the reading of the Requirement, Atahualpa's response to which instigated the ensuing massacre of the Inca armies:

> "Atahualpa told him [the priest Valverde] to give him the book to examine. He gave it to him closed. Atahualpa did not succeed in opening it and the friar extended his arm to do so. But Atahualpa struck him on the arm with great disdain, not wishing that he should open it. He himself persisted in trying to open it and did so, more impressed, in my opinion, by the writing itself than by what was written in it. He leafed through [the book] admiring its form and layout. But after examining it he threw it angrily down among his men, his face a deep crimson" (Hemming 1970: 41).

Atahualpa's dropping of the book has come to represent – mostly incorrectly – the indigenous rejection of Western literacy and education, but that such a rejection of Western schooling occurred during the colonial period has been corroborated by Garcilaso de la Vega's seventeenth-century account of the educational laws enacted by the Inca emperor Roca:

> *Que convenía que los hijos de la gente común no aprendiesen las ciencias, las cuales pertenecían solamente a los nobles, porque no ensoberbeciesen y amenguasen la república. Que les enseñasen los oficios de sus padres, que les bastaban* (de la Vega 1609).

> He advised that the children of common people not learn the sciences, which belonged solely to the nobles, so that they not become arrogant and diminish the republic, and that they teach them the trades of their fathers, which would suffice for them.

Roca's advice seems to remain in force in Cajamarca, where rates of overall literacy, female education, student performance in four major subjects at the primary and secondary levels, and average annual public spending per pupil amount to only half the statistic totals for Peru as a whole (Región Cajamarca 2010). Extrapolating from a trend first measured over the six-year period from 1998 to 2003, however, education has dramatically begun "to ruralize" in Cajamarca province. During those years, school enrollments increased forty-four percent in rural areas, while enrollments in urban areas grew at only half that rate (Echeverría, Blanco & Cueva 2006: 38-39).

In the seven caseríos in the Llaucan Basin, increasing enrollment numbers in institutos educativos and improvements in pedagogy brought about by the installation of PV panels have caused a break in the educational practice described by de la Vega. School-related conversation and gossip in the caseríos inevitably comes to mention the arrogance, haughtiness, and community decline of which he writes. Comuneros accuse teachers of abandoning their classrooms in order to pursue the single women of the caserío and of causing children to fall asleep with ineffectual lectures and rote memorization, while teachers portray comuneros as greedy, incapable of displaying cariño – or affection – to their children, violent, ignorant, and traitorous to their kin and ken.

Such stereotypes are common to the heavily indigenous south of Peru and much of Latin America, where the binary split between cities and countryside is notoriously gaping. In those regions, the rural has historically become aligned with the indigenous population and backwardness, while the urban has become synonymous with European urbanity and its

attendant intellectual enlightenment. Liberation from the city-countryside paradigm has thus become dependent upon the political revalorization of indigenous identity, which assumed the form of *indigenismo* throughout Latin America. In contradistinction to those regions, the population of the northern Peruvian sierra is characterized overwhelmingly by racial *mestizaje*, or the biological and cultural mixing of European and indigenous lineages. Within the Cajamarca province, the caserío of Chetilla and the Granja Porcón collective alone still preserve the indigenous Quechua language, and clear-eyed, light-haired individuals of European descent are rarely seen outside the vicinity of Celendín. Rather than rallying around the banner of indigenismo, cajamarquinos residing in the urban areas of Cajamarca and Bambamarca and in rural caseríos alike have thus taken pride in their identity as campesinos, or peasants, that work and act as the stewards of the productive soils of the province.

Within the seven institutos educativos in the Llaucan basin of Cajamarca, however, the rural lifestyle of the campesino is devalued by virtue of prying children away from domestic work and preventing the accumulation of knowledge related to subsistence agriculture and herding. The placement of PV panels on those schools signified an act of symbolic domination and violence. PV panels legitimate particular forms of education and knowledge both symbolically and practically, particularly in enabling students and teachers to study and prepare lessons at night, further removing them from the domain of rural life. In accordance with Bourdieu's description of state educational institutions, these schools thus function as "the site of *consecration* where lasting and often irrevocable differences are instituted between the chosen and the excluded, in the manner of the medieval dubbing of the knights" (1994: 13). The sanctioning of irrevocable differences between legitimate, school-based knowledge and an inferior variant of rural wisdom produces a nomos that envisions distinct urban and rural schools

of thought, dividing the city from the countryside. Through the "culture contact" that occurs within the instituto educativo as urban-educated teachers interact with student emissaries of highland peasant culture, distinctions between city and caserío life are illuminated and lose the self-evident quality common to doxa. This "practical questioning of the theses implied in a particular way of living" on the part of teachers, students, and the peasant parents of those students in the Llaucan Basin has not only generated conflict within the microcosm of the caserío, but has also challenged the traditional construction of the campesino identity within Cajamarca (Bourdieu 1977: 168).

More specifically, it is in schools that children are taught the legitimate language – as Bourdieu has written – of great Latin American urban educators and intellectuals, among them Domingo Faustino Sarmiento and José Carlos Mariátegui, whose works emphasize the distinctions between civilization and barbarism, centralism and regionalism, and city and countryside (Sarmiento 2003; Mariátegui: 126-129). By imparting such a knowledge base that comes to appear as pre-reflexive, young students are taught to make and internalize distinctions between illuminated, enlightened cities and a dark, backward countryside. In this way, the cajamarquino *campo* – which in the Spanish language means both a "countryside" inhabited by campesinos and "field" more generally – becomes a field in the sense that Bourdieu has described, an arena in which identities, class, and social arrangements are reworked, restructured, and even invented.

**Modernization without enlightenment?**

Even as teachers unintentionally and even unconsciously develop a countryside that stands in opposition to the enlightened city in Cajamarca, they cannot help contradicting their actions in the course of everyday life. When *"Serrano de Bambamarca"* – a cajamarquino *huayno*, or

peasant ballad, that functions as the unofficial anthem of the province – plays on the radios powered by ITDG-installed solar panels, teachers inevitably sing along with gusto: *"Sus campos son preciosos / y muy productivos, / donde se cobijan / todos sus nativos."*[1] In giving voice to those verses, teachers ironically praise the very rural pathways and lifestyle that their curriculum denigrates as backward and anti-modern. Yet in dislodging the conceptualization of the countryside from its place in the cajamarquino consciousness by performing their teaching duties, they simultaneously invent and reify the romantic portrait of rural life depicted in such huaynos. Place, after all, only truly attains full reality with its destruction (Oakes 1997: 509-531).

The role of education in this contradictory oscillation between the destruction and denigration of the countryside, on the one hand, and between its reification and preservation, on the other, is a topic that should find itself at the forefront of anthropology. It engages contemporary debates on the nature of theory and practice from the perspectives of both the ethnographer and the observed by illuminating the genesis of knowledge and its conversion of shared, learned information into natural, self-evident categories of understanding that influence further thought and behavior. Heeding Bourdieu's call to produce "practical knowledge" that penetrates to the heart of this process of knowledge genesis, anthropology can begin to evaluate, reconsider, and even rewrite traditional narratives of modernization that assume the central role of schools in the trajectory of rural development. With the combination of particularity of detail and holism offered by the discipline's ethnographic methods, it becomes possible to observe how such a small input as a single solar panel can cause a complete revision of a community's nomos, rearranging such doxic elements of life normally taken for granted as education, economy, and

[1] This verse of "Serrano de Bambamarca," meaning "the mountain dweller of Bambamarca," translates as follows: "Your fields are beautiful / and very productive, / where your natives / all find refuge."

the relationship between city and countryside.

The question that perhaps most begs the insight of anthropology is represented precisely in the microcosm of the Llaucan Basin. Does the ever-expanding nightly glow of the lights of Minera Yanacocha produce the same vision and division of city and countryside as the installation of solar panels on educational institutions? Do alternative pathways of development that professedly evade detriment to ecological and social environments actually forswear the dominant narratives, outcomes, and typical vagaries of modernization? In Perú, the Shining Path movement attempted to provide answers to these exact questions in critiquing the educated, progressive left of society during the early 1980s, triggering a bloody civil war whose reverberations are still felt today. Anthropology, however, might very well succeed where social movements have failed.

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