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Peruvian Trajectories of Sociocultural Transformation

Dan Paracka and Ernesto Silva

The story of Peru presents a continuous trajectory of sociocultural transformation where one civilization appropriates, borrows, and builds on the accomplishments of the previous often creating something new and unique. During the Year of Peru program KSU's faculty and students had the opportunity to learn in depth about Peru's rich history, culture, and modern society. They learned about a country rich in archeological discovery and human history, a story that does not simply begin with the Inca Empire, as the Inca were just one in a long line of powerful ancient civilizations (Chavín, Wari, Nazca, Moche, etc.) that previously ruled the Andean and coastal regions of where modern Peru lies. The Inca ruled over a vast territory and the empire comprised numerous ethnic groups who had been subjugated by either treaty or war.

The Year of Peru went far beyond the sensational story of the Conquest when Pizarro and his brothers invaded Peru in 1532, took the Inca ruler Atahualpa hostage and held his empire ransom, forcing his followers to fill a room full of gold and then killing the ruler anyway (Thomson, 2001, p. 13). Ortega's opening presentation for the lecture series highlighted the challenges and failures of intercultural communication that characterized this epoch encounter. As noted earlier, much about Inca society and culture was purposely destroyed, removed, or stolen during the Spanish Conquest. In particular, the gold and silver treasures of the empire were collected, melted, and converted into bars, and sent back to increase the treasury in Spain. In the words of José Carlos Mariátegui (1894-1930), "The Conquest most clearly appears as a break in continuity. Until the conquest, an economy developed in Peru that sprang spontaneously and freely from the Peruvian soil and people....All historical evidence agrees that the Inca people—industrious, disciplined, pantheist, and simple—lived in material comfort" (Mariátegui 1971, p. ³).

Throughout the Year of Peru, those attending the events and presentations learned about the devastating effects of not only disease (especially smallpox and measles) and exploitation that accompanied colonial rule but also the more complicated story of cultural loss and the often prejudiced hybrid mestizo identity of the Hispanic and Indian. Again, as Mariátegui (1971, p. 37) argues, "the Spanish established a system of forced labor and uprooted the Indian from his soil and his customs." Indigenous values were lost, denigrated, or appropriated. Only recently indigenous traditions have begun to be reclaimed, especially in terms of understanding the deep cultural, spiritual and natural values, connections, and reciprocity that humans have with the earth. Peru's human ecology is only recently being reinterpreted in light of threats to the biodiversity of the region.

On the other hand, the Incas had their own expansionary and oftentimes cruel tactics of empire-building which also contributed to their downfall. It is estimated that the enemies of the Incas were the architects of the empire's demise; smaller, regional groups supported the invading Spaniards. To be sure, there was considerable indigenous resistance to colonial rule and most chroniclers of the conquest—native and Spanish-born—reported on that. It is said that since the Pre-Columbian inhabitants of South America did not have writing, history begins with the arrival of Europeans, who wrote about their experiences. Hence the utmost importance of the writings of the chroniclers, who though biased as a result of their perilous position vis-à-vis the Indians, wrote about a very important period in history. Their writings represent the best source of information of the period, as argued by the Peruvian historian Franklin Pease (1995).

The view that the Spanish were unusually cruel towards the indigenous people they encountered in the New World is widespread, and it involves an age-old argument for experts and students alike. Undeniably, the Conquistadors were the product of their age, a time of undeniable ruthlessness in terms of plundering conquered lands and people. Yet, the Spanish cannot be said to be better or worse than the other European powers also engaged in the brutish task of colonizing the world. Arguments go back and forth as to what was the right or wrong way that colonizing missions should have approached their goals. Some view the coming of the Europeans to America as something positive; others disagree. The version of those who criticize how the Spanish treated natives is named the Black Legend; the opposing view has been called the White Legend. The origins of the former version of things can primarily be ascribed to the relationship Spain had with their land possessions in northern Europe, namely in what today is known as the Netherlands. It refers to the atrocities perpetrated by the Duke of Alba (1508-1582) and his army while controlling insurgencies. It includes the radical mandates of the Inquisition in its anti-Protestant fervor, which was in vogue at the time as part of the ideology promulgated by the most powerful Catholic nation in the world. Emerging Northern European powers like the Dutch and the British tried to thwart Spain's imperial designs, since the 16th century was the time for territorial expansion. As a result, the Spanish were besieged by negative publicity that came in the form of pamphlets and books, as well as in the infamous engravings of Theodorus de Bry (1528-1598), particularly those that were made to illustrate the book by De las Casas, which was printed in the Netherlands more than in any other European area at the time.

Such ideological skirmishes have not let up through the centuries; in fact, they are very much current nowadays. A key point in the debate occurred at the time of the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the Spanish, led by Christopher Columbus (c. 1451-1506), in the New World. To highlight the controversy, attention should be given to the public pronouncements of two outstanding South American writers. The Argentinean writer Ernesto Sábato wrote an opinion piece on Wednesday, January 2, 1991, for *El País*, one of the most important newspapers in Spain. In this essay, he explains why there should not be room for either a Black or White Legend, since all Latin Americans are in many ways descendants of the mixture between Spanish and indigenous blood. Something similar is said in 1992 by Mario Vargas Llosa, who elaborates on the issue in his essay commemorating the momentous occasion.

Indeed, several of the essays included in this volume focus on nationalist tendencies and their meaning both historically and in the contemporary globalized society.

The trend towards a reevaluation of the presence of the Spanish in the American continent, what may be called a historical revisionism, attained a watershed moment with the publication of *Reading Columbus* by Margarita Zamora, in 1993, followed by *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* by Tzvetan Todorov, in 1999. Their views about the effects of the conquest have been dealt with in post-Colonial studies and have attracted considerable attention in the United States at least since the publication of *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843) and *History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847), written by William H. Prescott (1796–1859), who was considered the utmost expert in the field even though he never set foot in Latin America. Given the controversies, there is no doubt that the debates are anything but over, particularly in the current antagonistic climate surrounding the issue of immigration, which affects millions of Latin Americans living in the United States.

The Year of Peru at Kennesaw State University coincided with the 100th anniversary of the arrival of Hiram Bingham (1875–1956) at the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu, one of the most spectacular archaeological sites and tourist destinations in the world. Bingham came across the site while searching for Vitcos, the last Inca capital (Bingham, 1952). KSU was honored to host the exhibit *Machu Picchu: A City Uncovered to the World*, which featured photographs from Bingham's Expeditions from 1911–1915 and was developed by the National Geographic Museum and made available through the auspices of the Embassy of Peru in Washington, D.C.

Bringing all of the elements discussed above into focus at KSU within the framework of a celebration of Peru became the guiding principle for the concerted efforts from the part of the organizing committee to insure that nothing was left out, and that the series of presentations, exhibits, films, performances, and so on, would not leave any aspects of Peru untouched. Qhapaq Ñan, Peru's famous Inca Trail, is actually part of a much older and longer network of roads that connected Andean civilizations stretching 23,000 kilometers from Colombia and Ecuador through Peru to Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile. This great Andean highway and supply chain formed the backbone of the Inca Empire's political and economic power enabling vast cultural, commercial, agricultural, and productive exchange. The inaugural presentation of the Year of Peru Series was offered by a group of KSU students who walked to Machu Picchu following the Inca Trail. Their exciting experience reminded those in attendance of the Indiana Jones-like characteristics of such adventures. Indeed, one can hardly ignore that the character of the screen phenomenon is said to be based on that of Hiram Bingham himself a university professor and a scholar-turned-politician.

The Inca were obsessed with the beauty of mountains, which they considered sacred, positioning some of their cities of landscape architecture on precarious slopes with phenomenal views. For them, the stones were alive. As Maria Rostworowski de Diez Canseco relates, "They situated their temples and palaces so they would harmonize with the environment, and their structures followed closely the contours of the land" (1998, p. 59). The craftsmanship and skill employed in engineering their cities and roads was both an expression of the peoples' religious and aesthetic worldviews as well as incontrovertible evidence of their knowledge and ability to live, adapt, and thrive in the complex ecosystems within an expanse that included mountains, coasts,

deserts, and jungles. At their height during their consolidated empire in pre-Columbian times, the Incas controlled the largest territory in the Americas.

Pre-Columbian Andean societies thrived by linking the unique biodiversity of the numerous microclimates and microenvironments of the region and by developing elaborate eco-technologies and hydraulics for managing water, soil erosion, and agricultural production. A couple of interesting and poignant examples of Peru's biodiversity highlight this point. The first example is the potato, an essential part of Peruvians' diet for millennia. Archaeological evidence indicates that potato was cultivated in the Peruvian Andes 8,000 years ago, and recent research suggests the potato's center of origin lies in Peru, just north of Lake Titicaca. Today, Peru's farmers cultivate as many as 3,000 varieties and four species of potato. Peru is also Latin America's biggest potato producer and annual consumption is a high 80 kilograms per capita. The potato is produced mainly by small farmers, at altitudes of from 2,500 to 4,500 meters in the central Andes.

During the Year of Peru, KSU's premier dining facility, The Commons, featured fine Peruvian cuisine each Friday throughout the academic year. In October as part of the Year of Peru Day, KSU hosted two of Peru's finest chefs, Roger Arakaki and Luis Herrera as chefs-in-residence. As noted, Peruvian cuisine is steadily conquering the palates of the best chefs worldwide. The unique blend of indigenous food varieties and traditions as well as immigrant culinary influences such as Spanish, African, Chinese, and Japanese have contributed to one of the world's most delicious cuisines. On that occasion, Peruvian music was performed by the group Apu Inka, which featured the heartfelt songs and dance performances of Wilma Ceballos.

A second example of Peru's biodiversity relates to the vast deposits of bird guano found off Peru's southern coast on the Chincha islands. The period between the 1840s and the 1890s was marked by a veritable frenzy for this nutrient-rich commodity—one ton of guano is the equivalent of 33 tons of farm manure and is also high in nitrates, a key ingredient in the manufacture of explosives. The Inca were well aware of guano's uses and put to death anyone who killed guano-yielding birds. The word guano is derived from the Quechua word *wamu* (guano in Spanish) meaning dung. The Paracas civilization thrived in the desert long before the Inca making use of the rich marine life of the area. Peruvian guano deposits were estimated at 11 million tons in the 1840s and a brisk trade quickly developed accounting for as much as 80% of Peru's annual revenues, although at a time when foreign capital controlled most of Peru's mining, commerce, and transportation interests. So valuable was guano for agriculture and weapons production that Spain and England came into conflict for control of this lucrative resource in what came to be known as the Guano Wars that later provoked the War of the Pacific (1879-1883) between Peru and Bolivia against Chile. This war proved disastrous for Bolivia and Peru. In the end, Chile occupied all Peru's guano islands and even imposed a war indemnity upon the defeated nation to be paid for by guano revenues. Today, guano mining is controlled by the Peruvian government, and exploitation of this resource is carefully controlled and regulated.

As Rubén Berrios emphasizes in his article titled "Extractive versus Productive Economy," Peru's abundance of natural resources has generally resulted in growth without development, as the government has relied too much on natural resources to the detriment of developing its human resources and economic policies. Also focusing

on economic development, Gregory Scott and Ian Chaston's piece on "Culture and Innovation" takes a different perspective focused on understanding the Peruvian context and attitudes towards fostering innovation.

KSU's celebration of Peru also corresponded with the 100th anniversary of the birth of José María Arguedas, one of the most influential Peruvian writers of the 20th century. A novelist, poet, and anthropologist, he wrote in Spanish and Quechua. He was one of the first novelists to write from the perspective of the indigenous peoples in a literary style known as *Indigenismo*. His works include such stories and novels as *Agua* and *Yawar Fiesta*. Arguedas also served as a public official in the Ministry of Education, the House of Culture, and the Museum of History. In February 2012, KSU hosted a residency and two standing-room-only performances by the group Cuatrotablas. Their original interpretation was based on Arguedas' novel *Los Ríos Profundos/Deep Rivers*. Dedicated to research, pedagogy, and creative activity in theater, and led by Mario Delgado, Cuatrotablas has been involved in experimental theatre for more than 40 years.

In this volume, we are privileged to include a detailed analysis by Vincent Spina of *Deep Rivers* revealing important cultural symbols that aide in understanding the underlying values of the Andean world. The performance by Cuatrotablas anchored the Year of Peru Conference, which also included the presentation of the documentary film *Soy Andina* (2007), directed by Mitchell Teplitsky, and a live performance by the film's central character, the dancer Nelida Silva. Peru's outstanding literary tradition, exemplified also by the awarding of the 2010 Nobel Prize for literature to Mario Vargas Llosa, served as a primary focus of KSU's Year of Peru by providing the material for a couple courses taught based on the works of the Nobel recipient.

The first article in this volume by Julio Ortega highlights the rich abundance of Peru that the Spanish explorers encountered on their arrival in the new world and adroitly portrayed by Guamán Poma de Ayala in his early intercultural attempt to introduce the Inca Empire to the King of Spain. Like Arguedas, Poma de Ayala tried to reconcile or make sense of the dual world where he lived by writing in Spanish and Quechua, and including pictograms of what he saw in his travels thorough the territories controlled by the Spaniards. His interpretation of the notion of abundance, from a plausible European genesis to its interpretation in the New World, is what the essay promises to elucidate.

One of the major highlights of the Year of Peru was an exhibit in January 2012 titled "Engaging History: Continuities of Textile Traditions in the Andes." This included a residency featuring Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez, the founding director of the Center for Traditional Textiles in Cuzco. Her lecture and demonstration titled "Luminous Threads: Preserving a Living Tradition of Andean Textile Weaving" expressed how these weavings are tied to a traditional sacred landscape and to the contemporary global issue of cultural preservation and environmental conservation. Co-presenter Catherine Joslyn has also contributed to this volume with her work focusing on "Representations of Nature in Andean Textiles."

During the Year of Peru, KSU sent several groups of faculty and students to Peru. They had the opportunity to see firsthand some of the differences between coastal and cosmopolitan Lima with places such as Cuzco, Arequipa, and Iquitos. They participated in service learning projects and met with fellow students and colleagues to exchange

ideas. Examining modern day attitudes towards environmental conservation, the article by Nancy Hoalst-Pullen and her study abroad students Matt Lloyd and Melony Parkhurst compares the views of both Peruvians and Americans. Still, as most of our faculty and students are unable to travel abroad, the most important role of the Year of Peru was bringing Peru to campus through the many lectures and events offered throughout the entire year. The article by Sabine Smith and Miriam Bley titled "Streets in the Sky: The Balconies of Lima and the Road to Intercultural Competence" describes how they integrated the Year of Peru lecture series into their learning goals and course assignments to enhance the intercultural learning experience of students. KSU benefitted greatly by having Fulbright scholar Oswaldo Gavidia from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú teach on our campus. He is also a contributor to this volume with an essay focusing on the theatrical representations of events inspired by the catastrophic effect of the fight against terrorism: "*Ayacucho, Goodbye* and the Portrayal of a Nation's Contradictions." Gavidia centers his interpretation on a novella written by another contributor to this volume: Julio Ortega. That work of fiction, titled *Adiós Ayacucho* in Spanish, became the genesis of the concept brought to the stage by Miguel Rubio Zapata, founder and director of the Peruvian group Yuyachkani (word that means "I am thinking; I am remembering" in Quechua).¹ Another contributor, Luis A. Ramos-García brings much-needed attention to the origins and ramifications of the theater in Peruvian society. His essay "Peruvian Political Theatre and Its Connections to Human Rights Movements" evaluates the contributions performance arts have made in how Peruvians have dealt with the atrocities of the anti-terrorism period, which left over 70,000 dead and scores of missing persons.

One of the most interesting articles in this volume is the work of Victor Vich titled "The Retablos of Edilberto Jimenez." This work tells the story of an artist who adapted a traditional religious art form to express the horror and tragedy of Sendero Luminoso/Shining Path and the Peruvian government's response. This dark period in the national life of Peru also figured prominently in the campus's attempt to better understand the complexities and disparities of a diverse society. Another essay in this volume that focuses on understanding such complexities emphasizing the historical process involved with the development of a national cinema is Sebastián Pimentel's "A Brief Historical Account of Trends in Contemporary Peruvian Cinema." The final essay in this volume written by Ernesto Silva, co-organizer of the Year of Peru, provides an overview of the changing social contexts of Peru through history and serves as a valuable reference for scholars interested in delving deeper into such issues.

All of the contributions to this Special Issue of the *Journal of Global Initiatives*, entitled "*Peruvian Trajectories of Sociocultural Transformation*" enrich, overall, the understanding of Peru and Peruvian society, which is not only multi-ethnic but has overcome tremendous challenges while aiming to ameliorate internal and external conflicts in its long history of economic disparity. Today, Peru shines as a beacon of hope, just as it focuses on making wealth distribution more equitable throughout the territory. It is a dynamic place with great energy and creativity to find new solutions to

¹ Arguably, Yuyachkani and Cuatrotablas, founded in 1971 by Miguel Rubio Zapata and Mario Delgado, respectively, are the best known theater groups in Peru, with an artistic trajectory that spans over 40 years.

old problems. It is amply evident that the Year of Peru provided an excellent platform to learn about the changing social contexts, complex identities, and unique communities of the nation. We hope this volume adds significantly to the understanding of Peru.

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Acknowledgements

There are many outstanding moments to remember and people to thank for the success of the Year of Peru that attempting to be all-inclusive would extend this introduction to an unreadable length. Instead, the purpose of this section is to recognize a few individuals and institutions for their invaluable support as well as portray and contextualize some of the interdisciplinary and intercultural learning highlights of the program and finally to highlight the essays included in this volume.

Many at KSU, from President Dan Papp to Provost Ken Harmon, from Vice Provost Barry Morris to the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences Richard Vengroff were exceedingly helpful throughout. Chairs and professors from every department, particularly Bill Griffin, Chair of Foreign Languages; Harry Price, Chair of the School of Music; Sharon Pearcey, Chair of Psychology; William Rice, Chair of English; Susan Smith, Chair of Geography and Anthropology; Karen Robinson, interim Chair of Theater and Performance Studies; and Jesse Benjamin, Coordinator of African and African Diaspora Studies were instrumental in providing support. Special thanks are due to Linda Johnston, Director of the Siegel Institute, and Michele DiPietro, Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) for their encouragement and support. A special recognition is due as well to KSU Chef Gary Coltek, who traveled to Peru to experience the marvels of Peruvian cuisine at the Food Festival of Mistura, and assisted two Goizueta Foundation Latino students to take part in a culinary internship that allowed them to meet and train with top Peruvian chef Diego Alcántara, who works for the highly regarded food entrepreneur Gastón Acurio. Also, as part of this visit, the artist Javier Sequeiros from Cuzco was commissioned to make several works of art to be on display at KSU. On a subsequent visit to Cuzco, Ambassador Carlos Zapata took KSU representatives to visit with Silvia Uscamaita, Vice-Mayor, and to meet Lauro Enciso, Vice President of the University San Antonio Abad. Such hospitality was repeatedly extended to KSU faculty and staff in an effort to promote collaboration and understanding. During the Year of Peru, the following Peruvian colleagues welcomed KSU delegations to their respective universities: Marcial Rubio Correa, President; Efraín Gonzales de Olarte, Vice-President; Krzysztof Cezary Hanula, Dean of Humanities, all of PUCP; Edward Roekaert Embrechts, President, USIL; Patricia Herrera Velit, Dean of Sciences, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia; Marco Gerardo Martos Carrera, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Marcel Vázquez Castro, Associate Professor, both at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos; and Fina Camet, Director of International Office, Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas.

Professor Rafael Vivanco and his graphic design students at the Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola were instrumental in the creation of the Year of Peru logo. Marianne Tweddle graciously provided two traditional dresses from Cuzco to be put on display at the Interdisciplinary Studies Department. Critical to the overall success of the program, the Office of the Consulate General of Peru and the Peruvian community in the greater Atlanta area were always ready to help out and attend the events planned as part of the Year of Peru at KSU. This help went beyond local arrangements in Georgia. For example, Julio Alvarez, the Vice-Consul General of Peru recommended Elva

Pérez of Express Travel, to help out with all our faculty, staff, and student travel plans. CETL, the Institute for Global Initiatives, and their respective colleges and home departments made possible the Faculty Learning Community travel to Peru in March 2012 to seek connections with counterparts to work in mutually beneficial teaching and research projects: Sandra Bird, Linda Hightower, and Jeanette Wachtman, Art and Design; Heeman Kim, Communication; Emron Esplin, English and Interdisciplinary Studies; Miriam Bley, Neysa Figueroa, Ernesto Silva, and Sabine Smith, Foreign Languages; and John Gentile and Karen Robinson, Theater and Performance Studies. No to be missed are also the noteworthy contributions of students who worked as assistants and in various other capacities during the Year of Peru: Oscar González Aguayo, Sean Fleming, and Juan Trejo.

Many in Peru, from the Minister of Foreign Trade and Tourism, José Luis Silva Martinot, to the General Secretary in the Palace of Government, María Elena Jusca-maita, as well as several officials at the Ministry of Foreign Relations, where the Year of Peru was prioritized and supported by several ministers and their teams, were indispensable for the success of the Year of Peru: Jaime Pomareda, Iván Pinto Román, Ricardo Morote Canales, Carlos Zapata, and Jeanne Hauser. The help received from PromPerú was truly invaluable, particularly the efforts and enthusiasm of Isabella Falco and her wonderful team. Presidents of universities and many professors and staff were also quite welcoming to KSU delegations. Among them, the extraordinary work of Lorenzo Zolezzi, Pontificia Universidad Católica (PUCP); Ramiro Salas Bravo, San Ignacio de Loyola (USIL); and Clara Roselló, CENTRUM Católica Alianzas must be highlighted. It should be especially noted that we received the auspicious support of two sitting Ministers of Culture: Juan Occio Acuña and Susana Baca, and of Luis Peirano Falconi, the person currently holding that position.

Importantly as well is the work done by the Consulate General of Peru in Atlanta and the Embassy of Peru in Washington, D.C. A special recognition must be highlighted for the contributions of Gonzalo Voto Bernales, Vice-Consul General of Peru in Atlanta, Vanessa Valencia Kukurelo, Luis Chang, and Malena Aguilar. A special mention is in order highlighting the myriad contributions made by the Honorable Consul General of Peru, Francisco Rivarola, whose help at all times was generous and invaluable, including his laudable speech at the Spring 2012 Commencement Ceremonies at KSU.

Last but definitely not least in this list of acknowledgements are the contributions of the presenters in the Year of Peru Lecture Series who came from near and far to campus to share with colleagues, students, and the community their knowledge and experience about Peru and all things Peruvian. The same is true for the presenters at the Year of Peru Conference: Understanding Peru through Visual, Culinary, and Literary Culture, the year-long Film Series, and the professors who taught courses related to Peru through the year. At the same time it is worth underscoring the opportune collaboration of the weekly newspaper *La Vision: El periódico de los latinos/The Vision: The Newspaper of Latinos*, headed by Victoria Chacón, which reaches a widespread Latino audience in Atlanta. *La Vision* was responsible for advertising and promoting all the events related to the celebration of the Year of Peru.