

ANARCHISM AND THE PRESS IN LIMA: THE CASE OF "LOS PARIAS"

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the relationship between the anarchist press and the nascent labor movement in the Republic of Peru in the beginning of the twentieth century. The first anarchist newspaper that appeared in Peru in 1904, titled *Los Parias*, provides a detailed look into the ways in which this communications medium, thanks to its timely message and firm social commitment, was able to forge an alliance with the workers of Peru in order to work towards a more socially egalitarian society in an era often recognized as the "Aristocratic Republic;" a historical period where old aristocracies and new bourgeoisies controlled the nation. By analyzing this material, this thesis hopes to delve deeper into how anarchists and all those who became supporters of this ideology (i.e. workers' associations, guilds, students, intellectuals, etc.) conceptualized their social condition and the solutions they championed in order to achieve a libertarian utopia. The collaboration between anarchists and the nascent labor movement resulted in the formulation of an anti-establishment rhetoric that served as a precursor to new radical social trends that appeared in Peru as the twentieth century marched along; trends that had a profound effect in the social landscape of the nation. We find in these pages a call for social redemption; a radical and revolutionary alternative to elite control.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the twentieth century was a dynamic and volatile time in Peruvian history. Traumatic memories of the defeat in the War of the Pacific, as well as the various internal conflicts for control of the nation that took place during the late nineteenth century, had contributed to a growing discontent by certain sectors of the population against the oligarchic and paternalistic governments that attained power. These sectors would come to form part of the labor movement in Peru who, along with a significant number of influential freethinkers and sympathizers, charged themselves with the important task of remedying their situation. The turn of the century also saw the rise of new ideological and social trends that began to manifest themselves in society; trends that saw the emergence of particularly combative and utopian visions of Peru that would gain continuous attention as this new age marched along.

The burgeoning labor movement that began to gather significant strength during the last decades of the nineteenth century was a movement imbued with discontent and antagonism owing to the social and economic changes that the country underwent during this period. Various guilds and, later, mutual aid societies present in Peru during the late 1800's had already begun to challenge the government in matters of economy and social representation, mainly due to policies that tended to compromise Peru's local economy in favor of attracting foreign imports and foreign investments.¹ These changing conditions contributed to creating an atmosphere of mounting frustration within the nation, mainly for the *jornaleros*, factory workers, bread makers, maids, dockworkers, jewelers, shoe makers, servants, carpenters, in short, the workers of the nation whose situation continued to deteriorate towards the end of the nineteenth century. It would not be until the new century that the worker's movement found an ideological ally capable

¹García-Bryce, Iñigo. *Crafting the Republic: Lima's Artisans and Nation Building in Perú, 1821-1879*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 68-69.

of offering a profound change to their situation, mainly because of its potential to unite and offer more dynamic and tangible solutions than previous organizations had been able to offer. That ally was anarchism.

Anarchism was by no means a new trend during the twentieth century. This political philosophy had already found fertile ground in Europe and many other countries around the world thanks to men such as Pyotr Kropotkin, Mikhail Bakunin, and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. In Latin America, this imported ideology also found new territory to conquer and it became an important ally in the crusade of many worker and peasant movements around the continent.² In the case of Peru, the rise of the working class movement was intimately tied to the anarchist ideals articulated by intellectuals, artisans, and literary figures at the turn of the century who found in anarchism a galvanizing force for the disconnected masses.

Anarchism found its way to Latin America thanks to European immigrants, mainly from Italy and Spain. This ideology found fertile ground in many Latin American countries, prominent examples being Argentina and México, where it forged alliances with the respective labor movements of the continent.³ Anarchist ideology (aside from the influence of Spanish and Italian immigrants) found its way to Peru from neighboring countries like Brazil but, mainly, from Argentina.⁴ In the Peruvian case, anarchism became an influential component of the nascent labor movement for a number of reasons.

Chief among them was the lack of official attention the workers movement had received from the government. The political parties that battled for control during this time had given the

²Cappelletti, Angel and Carlos Rama. *El anarquismo en América latina*. (Venezuela: Ediciones Ayacucho, 1990).

³See Alba, Víctor. *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*. (Stanford, California: Stanford University press, 1968), and Gómez, Alfredo. *Anarquismo y anarcosindicalismo en América latina*. (Spain: Ediciones Ruedo ibérico, 1980).

⁴Alexander, Robert J. *A History of Organized Labor in Peru and Ecuador*. (Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2007),

workers' plights very limited attention, attempting to please this group only by engaging in dealings with mutual aid societies and not with other guilds and workers' associations who had begun distancing themselves from the state. This was because the government felt that, by fostering the development of these organizations, they could put them to good use for state purposes.

The mutual aid societies had shown that they were willing to work within the system, and not challenge it. This was of great importance for government officials, since they could establish a strong connection to the workers through these societies and, in this way, help counter some of the more militant movements that were beginning to appear around the nation and that were demanding more radical changes.⁵ Weak-willed government dealings with these social groups, however, never achieved the prosperous relationship that was hoped for. As Ricardo Temoche Benites comments: "The evolved mutualist workers and the industrial workers in formation required something beyond civilism, democratism, liberalism, and governmental paternalism"⁶ Since each of these political parties were more interested in fostering the economic and political development of the country, which in their eyes meant fostering relationships with wealthy entrepreneurs both foreign and domestic, they only gave the labor movement secondary importance in their respective agendas.

A second reason why anarchism achieved popularity within the labor movement has to do with the condition of workers in the country. The lack of labor laws to govern issues such as minimum wage, daily hour schedule, child labor, health and safety regulations, lack of organisms for worker-patron problem resolutions, were just some of the problems this sector of the

⁵Blanchard, Peter. *The Origins of the Peruvian Labor Movement, 1883-1919*. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982), 46.

⁶Temoche Benites, Ricardo. *Cofradías, gremios, mutuales y sindicatos en el Perú*. (Lima: Editorial Escuela Nueva, 1987), 158.

population faced. Peruvian workers typically suffered a fifteen to sixteen hour a day shift and would only receive between eight and ten soles a week for their labor. During this time, costs of food items, accommodations, entertainment, etc. could run as high as three to four soles a day, totaling between eighteen and twenty-four soles a week.⁷ This was hardly an appropriate income to sustain oneself, let alone a family. Such troubling social problems drove many to clamor for a rapid and fundamental change to their existence.

In Peru, the main driving force behind presenting anarchism as an ideological ally of the workers came from intellectuals and members of worker organizations. Freethinkers such as Manuel González Prada and Delfín Lévano saw in anarchism a solution to the morally bankrupt state that was their nation. They hoped to illuminate the workers as to their terrible social conditions, in hopes of bettering their situation and establishing a social utopia in their otherwise decadent world. In order to accomplish this idealistic task, they turned to a social organ capable of communicating their ideas to the vast number of citizens in Lima: the press.

This means of communication would prove to be a fundamental tool for disseminating anarchist ideology and, ultimately, providing the early labor movement with both the leadership and social consciousness needed in order to transform the worker's struggle into a coordinated and influential force capable of bringing attention to the "social question" that plagued, and continues to plague, Peruvian society in the present era. Important scholars such as Peter Blanchard, Steve Stein, Denis Sulmont, to name but a few, have dealt with the labor movement in Peru, all of them highlighting the important role that anarchism played in this social struggle. Unfortunately, these histories have often failed to delve into the mechanism of dissemination of this important ideology, giving little, if any, attention to the crucial role that the press played in

⁷See Basadre, Jorge. *Historia de la Republica del Peru*. Tomo XI. (Lima: Editorial Universitaria, 1968), 250-254 and Pareja Pflucker, Piedad. *Anarquismo y sindicalismo en el Peru (1904-1929)*. (Lima: Ediciones Rikchay Perú, 1978), 37.

disseminating the anarchist ideology that appeared in Peru during the early twentieth century and that helped to stimulate the nascent worker's movement that began to gather significant strength during this period.

We find an additional problem when we look into the works that have dealt with the history of the press in Peru. Such histories have merited attention by important scholars such as Jorge Basadre, Carlos Miró Quesada Laos, Raul Porras Barrenechea, Luis Alberto Sanchez, and in more recent times, Juan Gargurevich. These historians, however, have tended to focus much of their attention on the so called "serious press," that is to say, the established daily newspapers, such as *La Prensa* and *El Comercio*. Sizable media entities such as these have often taken center stage in the field of Peruvian press history. The reasons as to why this has been the case are not difficult to ascertain.

These newspapers were some of the few media entities that had the economic means allowing them to own technologically advanced printing presses, which provided them with the means of circulating vast numbers of their publications within the country, specifically, in Lima. In his work *History of Peruvian Journalism*, Carlos Miró Quesada Laos explains: "In 1902, the first rotary machine in Peru was installed. It was a French press, Marinoni brand, of four pages. The innovation of 'El Comercio' marks an important period for the development of national journalism because it made possible the considerate augmentation of the circulation of these newspapers."⁸ These technological innovations allowed these institutions to entrench themselves in the social landscape of Peru, thus ensuring their eminent presence in history. The beginning of the twentieth century, however, was a time in which the nation faced new and radical ideologies that threatened to upset the established oligarchy, ideologies that certainly did not find a home in the pages of the so-called serious press.

⁸Miró Quesada Laos, Carlos. *Historia del periodismo peruano*. (Lima: Librería Int. del Perú, 1957), 203-204

Only in recent time has there been an interest in addressing these radical publications and analyzing their purpose and message. Academics such as Joël Delhom and Gabriela Machuca Castillo have begun to explore the important relationship between the anarchist press and the labor movement that appeared during this time.⁹ This thesis hopes to contribute to that conversation; to provide further insights into the radical press that appeared in the early twentieth century and the formative influence that the anarchist press enjoyed with regard to the working class in the country. In order to do so, this essay focuses on the first true anarchist publication, *Los Parias*, which enjoyed a longevity and dissemination unequalled by any of the other anarchist publications that were printed in Peru in the beginning of the twentieth century.

In dealing with this publication, I wish to pursue two important goals. The first is to highlight the importance that the printed media played in the dissemination of anarchism in Peru. Without the aid of the press, anarchism would, most assuredly, not have enjoyed the widespread attention that it received. Seeing the press as a natural tool for the dissemination of their ideology within Peruvian society, anarchists were drawn to the use of this communications technology in order to criticize the established status quo and to educate the masses regarding the ideals of anarchism; ideals which these freethinkers intimately related to the worker movement in Peru. This had a crucial effect in Peruvian society since this alliance would help to create the awareness and rhetoric for the critical changes that society needed to face in relation to the worker's conditions.

The second goal pertains to analyzing the contents of this newspaper, in order to understand the messages that it conveyed. Within this publication, we find notions which were quite advanced for the time regarding the state, the clergy, the conditions suffered by the working

⁹See Delhom, Joël. *El movimiento obrero anarquista en el Perú (1890-1930)*. Ponencia presentada en el Congreso anual de la Society for Lat. Amer. Studies, University of Birmingham, 6-8 Abril, 2001 & Castillo, Gabriela Machuca. *La tinta, el pensamiento y las manos*. (Lima: Universidad de San Martín de Porres, 2006).

class, the tools needed to ameliorate this condition, and some of the earliest comments regarding "the indigenous problem" so important to understanding Peruvian reality. This study hopes to provide an intimate look at *Los Parias* and, through its pages, reach a more nuanced understanding of the ideology and mechanisms that helped to revolutionize the Peruvian labor movement.

CHAPTER 2: LA REALIDAD PERUANA

The transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century in Peru brought with it a period of fundamental change. New political and economic forces that gained strength during this time would eventually influence the societal transformation which the nation would experience. The 'guano boom' in Peru during the late 1800's proved to be a key moment for the prosperous sectors of the population. This hugely profitable export provided the upper classes, that were composed mainly of old aristocrats who inherited money and new businessmen who made their fortune during this period, with the opportunity to consolidate political power so as to better exploit this newfound economic opportunity. Steve Stein writes: "The spectacular growth of the guano trade meant an unprecedented economic boom for Peru. Important segments of the country's upper classes had found common economic ground upon which to reach political agreement: the necessity for political order to achieve economic prosperity"¹⁰ This realization allowed powerful elements of the upper class to begin establishing political alliances so as to attempt to gain control of the national government, in order to influence national economic policies that would foster their financial growth. The late nineteenth century is also of importance in Peruvian history because this period marked the rise of the "modern" labor movement in the republic, a movement that would play an important role in twentieth century Peru.

While the societal sphere was experiencing a fundamental change, the political sphere was undergoing quite a different transition. We have already mentioned that the Peruvian nation was, in this particular period, ruled by a rather limited number of political parties interested in pursuing their own political and economic agendas. During the late 1800's and early 1900's, the

¹⁰Stein, Steve. *Populism in Peru: The emergence of the masses and the politics of social control*. (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), 22.

period this thesis focuses on, most political power lied in the hands of two parties: the *demócratas* and the *civilistas* The *demócratas* were a political party founded in 1884 that controlled the country in the late 1800's, and again from 1912 to 1914. The figure which best characterized this party was *El Califa* Nicolás de Piérola, who held the presidency of the nation from 1895 to 1899. Miro Quesada Laos describes the *demócratas* as follows: “The Democratic Party, because of the spirit of its leader and the status of the elements that incorporated it in its foundation, and because of the allies which it had, revealed its ultramontane and conservative character.”¹¹ The highly religious and conservative character of this party led it to be recognized as a force for order in the nation, albeit an elite and paternalistic one.

The second important political party during this period was the *civilista* party. It was founded in 1872 and attained power that same year, when Manuel Justo Pardo y Lavalle became the first *civilista* president of the republic. The *civilistas* would go on to regain command of the nation from 1903 to 1904 under the leadership of Manuel Cándamo, who died in office. He was succeeded by yet another member of the *civilista* party, José Pardo y Barreda, who was president from 1904 to 1908, and again from 1915 to 1919. Basadre notes that: “This group [the *civilistas*] had become a conjunction of distinguished professionals and urban and rustic proprietors and reunited, in general, the people that in Lima were called decent and were wealthy, those who the caciques of the provinces yielded to. They were all united by the bonds of social predominance, tradition, friendship, and sometimes a community of interests.”¹² The term “Aristocratic Republic” is widely used to describe their period of rule, since this party exerted the most control over the country during the early twentieth century. The party was characterized by businesspeople, rich merchants, doctors, lawyers, essentially, the old aristocracies and new

¹¹Miro Quesada L., Carlos. *Autopsia de los partidos políticos*. (Lima: Ediciones “Paginas Peruanas,” 1961), 161.

¹²Basadre, Jorge. *Historia de la Republica del Peru*. Tomo IX. (Lima: Editorial Universitaria, 1968), 193.

bourgeoisies that had been created thanks to the guano boom in the late 1800's.¹³ It would be the *civilistas* who dominated Peruvian politics in the early twentieth century.

The period of conservatism and relative political stability that the nation experienced at the turn of the century created a favorable atmosphere for economic growth. Most of Peru's economic interests lied in exporting goods such as sugar, minerals, cotton, wool, and rubber, among other exports. As Rosemary Thorp and Geoffrey Bertram explain in their work *Peru 1890-1977 Growth and Policy in an Open Economy*, Peru's national companies in the late nineteenth century had enjoyed a period of growth that, unfortunately, begin to decline thanks to various economic policies implemented to foster the export market and attract foreign investment.¹⁴ It would be these industries (i.e. agricultural, textiles, oil, mining, industrial, etc.), both foreign and domestic, that would dominate the economic landscape of the nation. Some of the most prominent companies that appeared during this period include: Cerro de Pasco Mining Company (mining), International Petroleum Company (oil industry), Grace Company (agro-industrial-sugar), Gildemeister Company (agro-industrial-sugar), Duncan Fox Company (textiles-cotton), Peruvian Corporation (railroads), Vitarte Cotton Mill (textiles), La Victoria Mill (textiles), to name just a few. These industries were vital to the development of Peru's economy, but the type of work they demanded and conditions enjoyed in them would be used by those who supported the workers' movement as examples of the exploitation they were victims to.

Workers could exert no tangible influence in order to better their situation, since they lacked the cohesion and organization necessary for change. Their only social support came from the few mutual aid societies, confraternities, and/or worker brotherhoods that had been created,

¹³Garavito Amézaga, Hugo. *El Perú liberal: partidos e ideas políticas de la ilustración a la República Aristocrática*. (Lima: Ediciones El Virrey, 1989), 221.

¹⁴Thorp, Rosemary and Geoffrey Bertram. *Peru 1890-1977 Growth and Policy in an Open Economy*.(New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 70-71.

many of these mimicking the structure of an older form of worker organizations: the artisan guilds that had first appeared in the colonial period. While few in number, they still played a critical role in maintaining an active civil society. As Carlos Forment explains, "The most important forms of associative life in Peru were vestiges from the colonial past. Guilds of artisans and merchants, along with religious confraternities, continued to occupy a central place in public life, having survived the social chaos, economic debacle, and military violence brought on by the wars of independence"¹⁵ New labor organizations that appeared in the latter half of the nineteenth century modeled themselves after types of associations, and they would come to play an instrumental role in maintaining social spaces for those sectors of society that found it increasingly difficult and ineffectual to rely on the government for aid.¹⁶

These workers' associations performed a multitude of tasks such as aiding members who were unable to work or became sick by providing them with some much needed financial aid. They also promoted adult education and some even fought in the name of their members in order to ensure worker rights.¹⁷ It would be these early workers' societies that would first begin to show their fellow workers the power of unification and organization and that would provide an important locus of interaction for the rising working class in Lima. More importantly, these artisans and laborers would come to play a crucial role in the development of the Peruvian working class, since they would inherit the struggle of these earlier worker movements.

It should be noted that what came to be known as worker at the turn of the century encompassed a wide variety of occupations. The profile of the members of this movement was quite varied. They all came from a myriad of backgrounds; however, they did have one thing in

¹⁵Forment, Carlos. *Democracy in Latin America, 1760-1900*. Vol. I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 131.

¹⁶Alexander, Op. cit., 2-3.

¹⁷Temoche Benites, Op. cit., 77-78.

common: they belonged to a lower stratum of society. Peter Blanchard explains:

“The mass of the population was at the bottom of the social ladder. This was not a monolithic or united group but, in general, its members supplied the labor, services and, in some cases, tribute that maintained the elite in its position of power. They toiled on the sierra haciendas, cultivated sugar and cotton on the coastal plantations, extracted copper from the sierra mines, tapped rubber trees in the *selva* (jungle), and drilled for oil on the northern coast. In the urban centers they worked in the factories, mills, and shops, on the docks, construction sites, and railways, and in various other occupations.”¹⁸

Exact figures depicting the actual number of workers that were living in the capital are unfortunately not easy to come by. Statistics that were published in various newspapers and censuses taken provide us with some general figures, but it is virtually impossible to find accurate numbers. Blanchard provides an estimate of the growing number of workers in the urban setting. He states:

“The figures are not precise, but they give some idea of the numbers of workers involved and their growing importance within the urban population: in Lima the proportion of workers and artisans rose from 9.5 percent of the population in 1876 to 16.9 in 1908 and 19.8 in 1920. In Callao the increase was from 11.9 percent in 1905 to 15.9 in 1920. It was in part because of their numbers that the workers of Lima and Callao became the most important element of the labor movement that emerged after 1883.”¹⁹

The growing number of workers also gave rise to the popularity of the worker organizations that were becoming more and more commonplace. One of the most important institutions that appeared in the late 1800's was the “Artisans Society of the Universal Union.” This union was formed in 1886, made up of various separate guilds and mutual aid societies but allowing for other guilds and individuals who were interested to join their ranks. By the year 1891, “Unión Universal” enjoyed a membership ranging in the thousands from member of various professions such as tailors, carpenters, shoemakers, cigarette makers, blacksmiths, masons, bakery workers, to name but a few. Strong umbrella organizations such as the ones mentioned began to appear in

¹⁸Blanchard, Op. cit., 10.

¹⁹Blanchard, Ibid, 12.

the early twentieth century, signaling the growth of the working class in Lima. While these worker societies gave some representation to their members and allowed a space of association for the many different laborers, they were still unable to attain any meaningful changes to their unfortunate conditions through official channels.

Interaction between mutual aid societies that represented workers and the government had not been uncommon since the late 1800s. During this time, many artisans had participated in various congressional and municipal elections, hoping to find some form of representation in the political arena. While guilds and mutual aid societies were able to press the government in certain issues related to worker conditions, such as instituting indemnities for injured workers, their general situation was still deplorable. Labor laws in Peru were weak and, as much as government grew increasingly aware of the laws which were needed to protect workers, they were slow to act upon this necessity.

Among the most important regulations being discussed during the early twentieth century were workers' safety, female and child labor, hours of work, strikes, and indemnities for workers.²⁰ Politician and mayor of Lima Luis Miró Quesada wrote in 1904: "Until recent times no one, not the State, nor the private sector, had preoccupied itself with the labor question among us."²¹ Even though the immediate necessity of these labor laws was presented in Congress, passage of these bills through the Peruvian legislation network of the time was a long and arduous process. This perceived lack of attention to the *cuestión obrera* became one of the points which radical ideologies sought to highlight. Many of those involved with the workers' movement had become frustrated and disillusioned thanks to the limited advancement in workers' rights which the central government had been able to make. As famous Peruvian

²⁰Blanchard, *Ibid*, 37.

²¹Miró Quesada, Luis. *Albores de la reforma social en el Perú*. (Lima: Talleres Gráficos Villanueva, 1965), 115.

historian Jorge Basadre stated: "The condition of laborers and workers in the industry was at the time, thanks to the lack of social laws, of neglect."²² Seeing how many representative guilds and mutual aid societies had met with little success in bringing about profound change, workers sought a more useful alternative, which they found in anarchism. The dynamic militancy and strong leadership that this new philosophy offered ensured its prosperity within the labor movement, allowing this ideology to act as a precursor to other radical thoughts that would appear later in the new century that sought to achieve social justice. The economic, political, and social conditions present in Peru during the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century help to explain, in part, why anarchism became an influential rhetoric in the struggle for workers rights and why it had such a profound effect in the nascent Peruvian labor movement.

²²Basadre, Tomo XI, Op. cit., 274.

CHAPTER 3: ANARCHISM AND THE PRESS-- AN ADDED DIMENSION OF "PUBLIC OPINION"

The relationship between the press, anarchism, and the labor movement in Peru is quite intimate. Indeed, it can be argued that it is in large part *because* of the press that anarchism was able to find such success among the Peruvian working class. Understanding and exploring this mutual interaction provides us with a concrete example of how, by conceptualizing and utilizing the press as a formative and informative tool, an effective means of communications for sectors of the population that found it increasingly difficult to have their voices heard was established.

The role of the press in Peru at this time was influenced by liberal ideology, such as discussed in the works of Alexis de Tocqueville, John Dewey, and Walter Lippmann, to name but a few. These men believed that the press was a necessary social organ in order to maintain freedom, truth, democracy, liberty and social order. The potential of the press to act as a communications tool capable of not merely informing, but also educating the public was also of central importance, since it gave the transparency and created the communication necessary for a society to function properly. While still maintaining its anarchist principles, *Los Parias* managed to adapt some of the guiding points that liberal press theory embodied, such as acting as a watchdog for government and educating the public. Furthermore, this publication sought to echo the reality of a group in society that was unable to find representation in the aristocratic republic.

Finding in the press a space of representation and instruction, the nascent working movement of the twentieth century was able to attain an ideological orientation that provided them with a useful rhetoric with which to oppose and critique the status quo. Using this new critical communications medium allowed this particular group to insert a new dimension to the general public opinion in Peruvian society that, as has been mentioned, often turned a blind eye to this increasingly important sector of the population. The appeal of such a press to the

"popular" movements that began to manifest themselves in the beginning of the twentieth century in Peru was undeniable, and their effects would continue to inspire many for decades to come.

Before the press became a critical space for the formation of public opinion, much of it occurred in spaces of social interaction such as literary salons, family gatherings, taverns, *pulperías* (corner stores), *chícherias* (working-class eateries), associational meetings, among other loci of exchange.²³ It was in these spaces that debates, discussions, and, ultimately, public opinions were created, debated, and shared. With the advent of new communications technologies that appeared in Peru at the end of the nineteenth century, the space for debate regarding society in general found a grander arena. The year 1902 marked a critical juncture for Peruvian society; a juncture that served to change the landscape of the newspaper industry within the republic. In previous decades, most publications that appeared were often hindered in their means of production and circulation, mainly due to the technological limitations they faced.

Many of these papers utilized printing presses imported from Europe, mainly England, such as the Gutenberg Press and, later, the improved Stanhope Press. Each of these hand-operated devices, however, was only able to produce approximately 300-400 copies an hour, a serious limitation to distribution in a city with a continuously rising number of citizens. It would be *El Comercio*, with its purchase of a Marinoni Press capable of producing 10,000 copies an hour that would establish the beginning of the mass press phenomenon that would come to dominate the printed media landscape in Peru. *La Prensa* would follow suit in the year 1903 by purchasing a rotary press capable of competing with the production capabilities of *El Comercio*. Other publications were also quick to improve their technology, acquiring a Koenig Press and

²³Jacobsen, Nils. "Public Opinions and Public Spheres in Late-nineteenth Century Peru: A Multicolored Web in a Tattered Cloth." In *Political Cultures in the Andes 1750-1950*, edited by Nils Jacobsen and Cristóbal Aljovín de Losada (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 278-279.

Rotary Presses (both steam powered) that were able to increase the number of copies printed to 2,000-3,000 per hour. The increase in number meant that these publications could now reach a wider audience and presumably reduce their prices, thus attempting to compete with the mass press systems that had been established.

Being able to produce massive quantities of newspapers meant reaching a larger number of readers, which allowed newspapers to acquire new functions and importance. Juan Gargurevich, in his work *Prensa Radio y TV: Historia crítica*, describes some of the changes this new massive press engendered. He describes two key levels of journalistic functions which appeared under this new system: the first function is political combat and the second is the systemic support of the oligarchic mentality. He mentions, for example, how political parties used the press as a space "to make themselves heard through the daily press and assigning them, clearly, the function of spokesperson and supporter that did not bother to conceal [their agenda], even as new important functions for journalism were taking shape thanks to the influence of new trends"²⁴ This manner of affecting public opinion became quite useful for the parties vying for control of the nation, since they could now present their respective political agendas to a much bigger audience.

The second function, Gargurevich notes, served to help establish a particular point of view of society among its audience. Gargurevich explains: "The social page would be dedicated to the 'grand Limean world,' that small circle that, from a different perspective, seems anecdotal and provincial but that, in Lima, represents the reference for conduct, fashion, and general attitudes. This journalistic conduct would penetrate profoundly, especially in the so called middle classes that, despite their poverty, would identify with the dominant classes."²⁵ What

²⁴Gargurevich, Juan. *Prensa, radio, y TV: Historia crítica*. (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 1987), 87.

²⁵Gargurevich, Ibid, 87.

Gargurevich highlights in his observation is the tendency for this big press to impart on its readers an oligarchic mentality, that is to say, an elite view of how society should function, thus influencing public perception regarding the national situation. This was, however, a limited interpretation of the reality present in the nation, since the social problems that were developing at the time (which found a space of expression in the burgeoning “popular” press) were not being properly discussed. Although these newspapers could claim legitimacy and palpable social presence based on their capital and resources, they still had limited engagement with *all* of society.

The increase in circulation of the big press entities in Peru signaled their desire to reach a larger portion of society, not only for economic reasons but, presumably, to influence public opinion. Noted scholar Armand Mattelart comments on the relationship between ideology and media effects (echoing Gargurevich’s observations as well) when he states:

“The means of mass communication considered in our study belong to the sphere of a dominant class ideology and constitute the support of this ideology, generally labeled bourgeoisie. As this class monopolizes the means of production and dominates the structures of power of information, it is its particular vision of the world that will begin to impose itself as a general vision of that same world.”²⁶

In the time of the Aristocratic Republic, a certain vision of Peru came to dominate the public sphere, focusing mainly on economic development and political harmony that the government wished to promote. In this context, the mass press provided a crucial tool with which to influence the public in general. These mass press papers did offer important information regarding political affairs and social life, however, many of their sections focused on theater, social gatherings, bullfighting, equestrianism, to name a few; issues that were of hardly any interest to the working classes. No significant attention was given to the problems faced by these ever growing non-

²⁶Mattelart, Armand, Mabel Piccini, and Michelle Mattelart. *Los medios de comunicación de masas*. (Buenos Aires: El Cid Editor, 1976), 24.

elites who continued to struggle for attention.

As we can surmise, the reality that was present in these pages was quite removed from the dynamic social occurrences taking place during such a volatile time in Peruvian history. The new economic trends in Peru at the turn of the century brought with them new challenges that the nation had not previously faced. An upsurge in internal migrations to the capital caused an increase in the disenfranchised populations present, which in turn had a critical effect on the standard of living and the already poor job conditions in Lima. Noted Peruvian historian Piedad Pareja describes the social changes taking place as follows:

"In the provinces of Lima and Callao the social ordering was determined by: the process of urban concentration, accentuated by the immigration from the provinces, the severe malaise of industry, the subsistence of the artisans, the emergence of the middle groups (bureaucracy, merchants, professionals) linked to the expansion of the service sectors, and the general deterioration in the standard of living of the popular sectors"²⁷

As we can surmise from such an account, the situation for a large sector of the population was quite dire. General lack of labor laws, a deterioration in quality of life, and the lack of change offered through official channels helped to aggravate the social crisis of the period.

The anarchist publications (among other “popular” papers) that appeared at this time sought to cater these sectors of the populace. Providing a space for critical discourse, these papers acted as an opposing force to the dominance and interest of the ruling class that was reflected in the big press of the time; something that made public reality a malleable topic and, inevitably, had a profound effect on the social sphere. From a critical standpoint, the limited engagement with the Peruvian population which the big press offered became a significant detriment to the creation of a proper and wholesome public sphere, one that was able to represent society as a whole, not simply favor one sector over the other.

²⁷Pareja Pflucker, Op. cit., 39.

Important thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas and Alexis de Tocqueville have greatly advanced our understanding of the ways in which "public spheres" and "public opinion" influence and diffuse themselves in society. The means, the effects, and the social importance these public articulations carry with them have proven essential in understanding modern societies. Their contributions are particularly useful in deepening our understanding of the ways in which private individuals are able to come together to engage and counter the state and engender public opinions.

In his groundbreaking work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Jürgen Habermas offers an explication of what is meant by the public sphere. He states: "The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor"²⁸ What Habermas highlights in his description is the idea that, when private peoples come together to hold rational debates, a new space of interaction and negotiation is created; a space aimed at wresting control away from elite authorities themselves and to provide the public with a means to articulate *their* wants and desires. The media, in the work of Habermas, plays the vital role of communications medium capable of aiding in the creation and propagation of this rational debate. It should also be noted that Habermas discussed how, in the late nineteenth century and thanks to the advent of capitalism, there was a decline of the bourgeois public sphere in the Western world. The rise of consumerism and the increasing monopolization of the media compromised the previous space for critical thinking and rational debates that the public sphere

²⁸Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society*. (MIT Press, 1991), 27.

had previously allowed, diminishing the public's ability to engage in wholesome discussions which helped ensure the preservation of a democratic republic.²⁹ In the Peruvian case, these conditions manifested themselves in curious ways. One can argue that, as a reaction to the increased monopolization of the written word that Peru experienced during this period, alternative mediums of debate and public discourse (such as the "popular" press) were established. Conceptualized in this way, these radical publications help provide us with an added lens from which to interpret Peruvian reality at the turn of the century.

Tocqueville, much like Habermas, recognized the indispensable role that the media and public opinions held in society. He wrote, in his famous work *Democracy in America*, about the vital importance that freedom of the press and freedom of association played in maintaining a proper civil society. He argued that the role of the press went far beyond the task of maintaining freedom; indeed, their role was to "maintain civilization."³⁰ He also reflected on the role newspapers played in ensuring associations between scattered persons who shared similar interests but who were otherwise unable to connect with one another. Commenting on this ability of the press Tocqueville remarks: "A newspaper then takes up the notion or the feeling that had occurred simultaneously, but singly, to each of them. All are then immediately guided towards this beacon; and these wandering minds, which had long sought each other in darkness, at length meet and unite. The newspaper brought them together, and the newspaper is still necessary to keep them united"³¹ As we can observe, the importance which liberal democracy invests in the press is considerable. This is important to recognize in the Peruvian case, since much of the impetus for the role that the press should play in society (or, rather, *came* to play in society) was infused with liberal democratic theory imported from Europe. Since the seventeenth century, the

²⁹Habermas, *Ibid*, 162-168.

³⁰Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in Latin America*. (New York: J. & H.G. Langley, 1841), 135.

³¹Tocqueville, *Ibid*, 136.

press in Peru had emulated the European model, which had undergone a fundamental transformation of its own. It was during this period that the newspapers, particularly in England, began to shift from simple one topic sheets produced only on notable occasions to their more modern informative and critical role. It was these ever changing conceptualizations of the role of newspapers in civil society that influenced Peruvian journalistic practices.

During the twentieth century Peru began to shift towards a more "modern" idea with regard to the role of the press. Big and small newspapers alike began to display a more critical standpoint towards the republic within their pages, albeit biased to their own particular interests, thus contributing to the rise of a more mature press landscape in the country. This change, coupled with the emergence of mass press systems that also appeared during this time, helped to re-shape the arena for public discourse and public representation that would intimately affect the nations' development in the new century. Such a volatile period of Peruvian history demands a closer look at understudied portions of it, portions such as the anarchist press in Peru. Shifting away from studying the more traditional newspapers at the time, we find a space of discontent, of social responsibility and, ultimately, a vision of Peru not often found anywhere else.

During the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century radical publications, such as *La Luz Eléctrica* (1885-1886), *El Libre Pensamiento* (1896-1904), *Germinal* (1889; 1901-1906) *Simienta Roja* (1905-1907), *El Hambriento* (1905-1910), *El Oprimido* (1907-1909), and *La Protesta* (1911-1926) appeared in the country in answer to the growing discontent with the elite control experienced under the aristocratic republic.³² These spaces of public opinion were of vital importance, since they allowed for a different interpretation of Peruvian reality than that which was offered in mainstream public opinion. It would be in 1904 when the first true anarchist newspaper *Los Parias* appeared, serving as precursor to the later anti-establishment

³²Delhom, Op. cit., 2.

publications and social movements that appeared as the new century marched along. The alliance forged between anarchism and the labor movement proved to be an essential component for both, finding in each other a mutually beneficial component.

Anarchism provided the labor movement with a strong ideological path and a means to publicly express their dissatisfaction, while the labor movement provided anarchism with a willing and able social mass from which to cultivate allies for their cause. The main objectives this type of popular press wished to address were quite ambitious. Among these were the initiative to inform this social group of events and ideas that affected them directly, to collaborate with the groups' development within society, to be an educative means of communication that served a vital social purpose and, most importantly, to be a social organ that not simply offered social commentary, but that sought to transform it into concrete actions.

CHAPTER 4: THE PLAYERS

In the mid-to-late 1800's, new trade unions and mutual aid societies were beginning to gain popularity in Peru. The lack of state sponsored initiatives geared towards helping the various disenfranchised populations, mainly the workers, led to the rising popularity of these groups. Some of the more noteworthy ones were: *Sociedad Tipográfica* (founded in 1850), *Sociedad Democrática Filantrópica del Callao* (1848), *Sociedad Amigo de las Artes* (1859), *Sociedad de Artesanos de Auxilios Mutuos* (1860), *Sociedad Amantes del Saber* (1869), *Sociedad de Artesanos del Cuzco* (1870), *Unión Universal de Artesanos* (1871), *Organizaciones Artesanales de Arequipeñas* (1885), *Sociedad de Auxilios Póstumos* (1873), *Confederación de Artesanos Unión Universal* (1886), *Sociedad Estrella del Perú* (1887).³³ Some of these important institutions survived well into the new century, and would become part of the labor movement. Additionally, radical publications, societies, and political parties would provide eventual members of the anarchist milieu. Indeed, the principal agents behind *Los Parias* all came from such progressive backgrounds. Their strong commitment to social change and their faith in anarchist ideology would provide the driving spirit behind this publication.

To speak of anarchism in Peru is to speak of Manuel González Prada. Writer, philosopher, poet, politician, and social activist, González Prada became the staunch defender and militant leader of the anarchist movement in Peru. Son of the aristocratic Francisco González de Prada and Josefa Ulloa de Prada, Manuel González Prada became a polemic figure in Peruvian history. His earliest political exposure was linked to a progressive sector of the *civilista* party, from 1870 to 1885. The war with Chile, which had a profound effect on the nation, would also cause a significant change in González Prada and his personal convictions. He joined the reserves in early 1880s and served as lieutenant colonel in Lima. This experience would serve to distance

³³Temoche Benites, Op. Cit., 78-85.

Prada from the established government officials, in particular with his old rival Supreme Commander-in-Chief Nicolás de Piérola. His work during this time reflected the vengeful spirit which much of Peru endorsed after their subjugation to Chile. Prada had blamed the oligarchy for the defeat, since he believed their ineffectual leadership had caused such a national tragedy.³⁴ In 1891, after serving as president and central figure of the Literary Circle, he helped create a new political party, *La Unión Nacional* (National Union), which nominated him as presidential candidate in 1898.³⁵ This party, identified as a liberal-federalist association and progressive voice within the dominant Peruvian bourgeoisie, was founded in the hopes of providing a political alternative to all those who did not ally themselves with the dominant political parties. The supporters of this small party came mainly from the urban middle class and the artisans, farmers, craftsmen, and workers of the city. One of the most important missions of the National Union was to fight for better social and working conditions, something that assured them much support from the popular classes. Prada was also recognized as spokesperson for a new generation, thanks to his vivid discourses, such as the ones he gave in the Politeama Theatre and the Olimpo Theatre between July and October of 1888, which created a spirit of camaraderie between the intellectuals and progressive workers and students of the time. It is from his speech at the Politeama that his famous phrase, "the old to the tomb, the young to their labor" originated.

While Prada was committed to achieving social change in Peru, there is a period of his life which still remains a bit of a mystery. Merely a month after founding and becoming president of *La Unión Nacional*, Manuel González Prada left for Paris with his beloved family. Some believe that Prada became disheartened with the direction this new political party was taking and decided to gracefully disassociate himself from them. During the process of

³⁴Podesta, Bruno. *Pensamiento político de González Prada*. (Lima: GREDES, 1988), 28.

³⁵Sanchez, Luis Alberto. *Don Manuel*. (Lima: Librería Francesa Científica, 1930), 183.

establishing *La Unión Nacional*, Prada had constantly voiced his concern that the party should not be personalist. As Luis Alberto Sanchez explains,

"It had to be demonstrated, quite clearly, that in Peru there was a space for parties of ideas, not political personalism. The Democrat party was Piérola; the Constitutional party was Cáceres; the Civil party had been Pardo; later, the Liberal party would be Durand; the Civic Union would confuse itself - and nothing more - with Valcárcel, the National Democratic party was Riva Agüero. But, the National Union must not be González Prada."³⁶

Prada himself was fond of stating that neither the Literary Circle nor the National Union was González Prada but, rather, that he belonged to them. His personal aversion to this type of "personality cult" that seemed to reign supreme in Peruvian politics may shed some light as to his motivation for leaving such an important charge. Others have speculated that it was due to a series of personal tragedies which the family had suffered which prompted the Pradas to leave Peru. Cristina González Prada, Manuel's sister, passed away in 1889, which had a profound effect on him. Additionally, he and his wife Adriana de González Prada were expecting another child and, after having already lost two children before, they had decided to leave behind the hectic lifestyle they suffered in Lima in order to seek more tranquil surroundings. Whatever the reason, Don Manuel departed to France, pronouncing to those who had come to say goodbye that "Wherever I may be, my heart, my soul, my thoughts will be for Peru and for the prosperous future of my native country." He lived in Paris for six years, later traveling to Barcelona and Madrid. In 1894, he published his first major work title *Paginas Libres*. His time in Europe would help expand and deepen his intellectual formation and mature his radical ideology.

He returned to Lima 1898, which caused quite a stir in the capital. Nicolás de Piérola, serving as President of the Republic, remarked: "the sybarite has returned." Confrontation between Prada and government officials would continue to rage on well into the new century,

³⁶Sanchez, Ibid, 155-156.

where Prada turned to the press in order to share his ideas. The papers *Germinal* and *El Independiente* became important spaces for critiquing the state and championing the causes of the popular sectors, something which did not go unnoticed by the elites since both these publications were closed down by the state. Prada was not only shunned by state officials, but also by those who had been allied with him in the past. In 1902, Prada officially renounced his ties with the National Union, a party he had helped establish, prompted by their decision to seek a relationship with the “conservative and ultramontanist” regime that had taken control of the nation.³⁷

By this time, Prada had become a devoted anarchist (influenced by his time in Europe) and he began his personal mission of spreading this new ideology to the masses. Denis Sulmont writes that Prada was “the promoter of revolutionary ideology in the beginning of the century in the country and one of the first intellectuals to establish relations with the workers”³⁸ Hugo García Salvatecci mentions that “the importance of anarchism in Peru manifests itself in the enormous influence that González Prada exerted, for so many years, in our youth and by his enormous repercussions on the origins of the syndical movement”³⁹ Manuel González Prada, with his characteristic candor and integrity, became the locus of anarchism in Peru and its most dedicated teacher. In 1904, Prada began work on his most ambitious project to date, the anarchist newspaper titled *Los Parias*, relying on his personal connections to the various radical figures of the time (mainly composed of members from various guilds, working associations, and student groups) and utilizing the press as an educative and informative medium in order to spread anarchist teachings.

³⁷González Prada, Manuel. *Horas de lucha*. (Lima: Tip. “El Progreso Literario,” 1908), 300-307.

³⁸Sulmont, Denis. *Historia del movimiento obrero peruano (1890-1977)*. (Lima: Centro de Publicaciones Educativas, 1977), 19.

³⁹García Salvatecci, Hugo. *El pensamiento de Gonzalez Prada*. (Lima: Editorial Arica, 1972), 17.

The man in charge of *Los Parias* was Pedro Pablo Astete. He was a jeweler and a commission agent (also in the jewel business) by trade, and was close friends with many of the individuals involved in the production of the radical newspapers of the time, such as Alfredo Baldassari. Adriana de González Prada describes him in this way: "He was quite an original fellow our friend 'Don Pablo,' as we familiarly called him at home; almost illiterate since he could only read printed words. Like the donkey of fable: 'He played the flute by sheer chance,' producing a newspaper of advanced ideas without knowing them, much less understanding them."⁴⁰ He is often described as an un-educated individual that, nevertheless, was an important contributor to the social struggle of his time. Most agree that Astete served mainly as administrator in his own newspaper, while Manuel González Prada was the true intellectual force behind the publication. Astete would often visit Prada for advice on how to structure the newspaper, and relied on others for content.

One of these collaborators was Glicerio Tassara, the man who, along with Alfredo L. Baldassari, had been in charge of *La Idea Libre* and who is considered (along with Prada) as one of the first instigators of libertarian ideas in Peru. Much like his paper, Tassara was a man of strong ideas, which often landed him in difficult situations. In 1901, for example, he was involved in a small altercation in the workshop of his newspaper. *La Idea Libre* had previously published an article insulting the Miró Quesada family (owners of *El Comercio*) and was planning to publish another attack in his next edition. One of José Antonio Miró Quesada's sons, Luis, confronted the editors, along with friends Pazos Varela and Carlos Zavala, which ended in tragedy. When the friends arrived in Tassara's workshop to confront him, he took out a revolver and killed Varela. This incident caused a small outrage among the radicals and elites, since Miró Quesada, the instigator of the attack, was never detained, while Tassara was immediately

⁴⁰González Prada, Adriana de. *Mi Manuel*. (Lima: Editorial Cultura Antártica, 1947), 366.

apprehended and taken to court. He was later freed and would continue to oppose the elite regime, contributing financially and ideologically to the flourishing anarchist movement. Another important collaborator was Christian Dam, renowned dentist, Grand Master of Masons in Peru, one of the founders of the league of freethinkers in Peru and, later, the radical party *Unión Nacional*, and founder of *El Libre Pensamiento*.

Aside from counting with the support of professionals, intellectuals, journalists, etc., *Los Parias* was also supported by some prominent working class groups. The most salient of these was the *Sociedad de Panaderos Estrella del Peru* founded in 1887 by Manuel Caracciolo Lévano. He was a bread maker and disciple of Manuel González Prada and became an important figure in the Peruvian labor movement. It should be noted that *Estrella del Peru* is regarded as one of the first influential groups that aided in the formation of class consciousness in Peru and one of the first "societies of resistance" that appeared in the nation. Their main objectives centered on demanding worker rights and the establishment of the eight-hour day in the country. Manuel C. Lévano, much like González Prada, became one of the driving forces behind spreading anarchist ideals in the capital, and is remembered for his unwavering commitment to the betterment of the deprived social classes. His two sons, Manuel and Delfín Lévano, inherited their father's preoccupation for achieving social justice, and went on to create a number of publications, as well as study and action groups devoted to anarchism and the defense of worker rights.⁴¹

Other contributors to the paper include: Pedro (Pietro) Ferrari, who often served as translator (Italian to Spanish) for various pieces published in *Los Parias* and translated a few of Prada's writings as well; Carlos del Barzo, who was a financial and intellectual contributor to the

⁴¹ Lévano, Manuel y Luis Tejada. *La utopía libertaria en el Perú: Manuel y Delfín Lévano, obra completa*. (Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, 2006), 47-48.

paper, established a socialist party of short duration and gave a speech at Prada's burial; and Angel Origgí Galli, who also helped finance *Los Parias* and helped to collect contributions from sympathizers. He would go on to finance *La Protesta*, an anarcho-syndicalist publication that appeared in 1911.

While other anti-establishment newspapers had appeared before 1904, they had lacked the organization and ideological cohesiveness which publications of the new century would demonstrate. They all had exhibited revolutionary tendencies, but had never displayed an absolute commitment to any particular ideology. It would be *Los Parias* that would take such a revolutionary direction, being the first true anarchist newspaper to appear in Peru. The intellectuals, union leaders, journalists, workers, etc. who contributed to the creation and the continued existence of this paper became an important part of the so-called radical elements of Peruvian society who made it their mission to fight for a libertarian utopia in the nation. Their struggle would inspire a new generation of progressive thinkers in the nation, notably José Carlos Mariátegui and Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, who would have an integral role to play in the formation of the powerful counter-establishment movements that would appear later in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 5: LOS PARIAS

Los Parias stands out in the landscape of Peruvian history as the first true anarchist publication to appear in the nation. While previous newspapers had been said to contain 'progressive' ideas and changes to society, none of them had embraced a coherent ideology. It would be anarchism that provided a solid and accessible alternative to the many non-elites who sought a new voice for their struggle. The lamentable conditions the workers of the nation faced, coupled with the relentless efforts of *El Maestro* Manuel González Prada and all the other figures that fought for social justice, contributed to making anarchism a powerful social force.

Anarchist saw in newspapers a medium of communication, instruction, and political engagement that would help them reach out to the masses. Since the wars of independence, newspapers had been used as a communicative tool in order to voice the interests and concerns of the artisans and workers. Papers such as *El Artesano* (1873) and *El Obrero* (1875) are a testament to that. As Iñigo García-Bryce states: "The notion of public opinion in the nineteenth century represented a qualitative shift. Social groups were now able to voice their views on specific matters of policy affecting their interests. Artisans became one of the firsts groups to do so. The 'public sphere,' to use Habermas's term, thus included non-elite actors."⁴² This tradition of non-elite actors finding in newspapers a space to voice their concerns was inherited by the anarchist movement in the nation, who used it to successfully fulfill their obligation to the lower classes.

When dealing with printed materials and their impact on society, one limitation that must be addressed is literacy rates present in the country. Unfortunately, there are no exact figures to help us pinpoint this data. In light of this issue, we must rely on diverse accounts that help us understand how much of a readership *Los Parias* enjoyed. Census information in Peru at the time

⁴²García-Bryce, Iñigo, Op. cit., 141.

in question is scarcely available, since no national census was carried out between 1876 and 1940, a gap of 64 years. Nils Jacobsen comments on this aspect of Peruvian reality when he states: “It is virtually impossible to find reliable statistics on Peruvian newspaper and periodical circulation for the late nineteenth century. But considering literacy rates, urban population size, and a few scattered circulation figures, we can arrive at reasonable estimates. Lima’s population during the late 1890s was about 110,000. With an urban literacy rate of perhaps 25 percent, active readers of papers could not have exceeded 30,000.”⁴³ This estimate reveals that a large portion of the Peruvian population, due mainly to their social and/or economic standing, did not have access to education during the period this study covers, which caused high illiteracy rates in the country. This situation was a serious limitation faced by those who relied on printed materials to formulate new ideas and influence society at large.

The one strength this group possessed, however, would also help them overcome this educational barrier. *Los Pariás* was a newspaper of extremely advanced ideas that managed to reach the blossoming labor movement present in the country. It was able to do so by relying on the personal connections of the people involved in the newspaper as well as the extensive relationships which they maintained with the various workers’ groups (such as *Luz y Amor* and *El Centro de Estudios Sociales Primero de Mayo*) present in the nation. Many historians have traced the anarchist penetration in the artisan and worker groups in Peru thanks to the relationships maintained by both González Prada and the Lévano family, among others. There are many stories detailing how students and workers would often speak out in defense of *El Maestro* Prada and how they would even show up in his home to defend him when news of an attack on his person had been given.⁴⁴ The Lévano family was also of importance in this new

⁴³Jacobsen, Op. cit., 283.

⁴⁴González Prada, Op. cit., 308-309.

social movement, since their personal connections to, and participation in, many worker movements and their involvement in more than 30 progressive publications (such as *El Oprimido*) would ensure their recognition among these entities.

These connections allowed the educated individuals to come into contact with those uneducated masses that they wished to serve, and spread anarchist ideals among them. Additionally, the nascent labor movement counted with the support of educated students, artisans, and workers, individuals who also helped spread the message of *Los Parias*. Burga and Galindo explain:

"Another characteristic of the young peruvian proletariat was its intent to formulate or develop a different popular culture. This phenomenon was facilitated because the majority of those workers were literate...but the fact remains that that autonomous culture was a necessity inasmuch as the oligarchic society, by monopolizing the intellectual life, wished to marginalize the workers completely, condemning them to persist in 'ignorance.' For the oligarchy, intelligence was only possible with money and the corresponding last name. This explains why under all these circumstances and opposite the journalism of the dominant class (**La Prensa** or **El Comercio**) there surfaced, subterraneously, pages, bulletins, magazines, and newspapers redacted by artisans and workers: these are the years of **El Hambriento, El Oprimido, Los Parias, Armonía Social y Plumadas de Rebeldía**. But, accompanying this journalistic activity, there also existed musical groups, composers, theater productions, poetry and cultural circles. In spite of the arduous labor days, the few available hours were utilized to undertake collective lectures, discuss new ideas, and to attempt to comprehend the classics of anarchism"⁴⁵

It was in such gatherings that anarchist ideas were diffused among the working class, which, in part, helped anarchists overcome the limitation of illiteracy that their project faced. These new social actors receptive to anarchist teachings exhibited the characteristics of youth, education, and vigor, skills that made them helpful participants of the anarchist movement in Peru since the established oligarchy, in their eyes, continued to ignore the working masses; both in a social and intellectual capacity.

⁴⁵Burga, Manuel, and Alberto Flores Galindo. *Apogeo y Crisis de la Republica Aristocratica*. (Lima: Ediciones Rikchay Peru, 1979), 158.

It is in this dynamic social context that *Los Parias* appears in March of 1904. It was billed as a temporary publication which, nevertheless, managed to be published steadily until 1910, year in which the director fell ill and the voluntary donations collected were no longer viable to sustain its operational costs. The paper was printed at the "Tipografía La Voce d'Italia" for its first edition, switching in later editions to the "Imprenta y Litografía G. Clauss & Co" and then to "Tipografía El Progreso Literario" and "Tipografía Filipinas." This constant change in printing houses can be explained by the shifting costs of production, which could run as high as fifty dollars per print run.

By the time of their first anniversary edition, *Los Parias* had reached a print run of 3000 copies and, for their second year, a print run of 6000 copies.⁴⁶ This number is quite considerable, since other publications at the time only produced, on average, between 1300-2000 copies of their papers. The persons in charge of production, Pablo Astete, Carlos del Barzo, Glicerio Tassara, Alfredo Baldessari, to name a few, were also the ones involved in the papers' distribution, relying on the help of the many sympathizers to their cause. Those who distributed the newspaper around the capital were also placed in charge of collecting the voluntary donations with which the paper was financed, since they did not charge any fee for the newspaper. At the end of each edition, a detailed list of contributors appeared listing either names or pseudonyms of those who had contributed (mainly, artisans, workers, and intellectuals). These donations usually totaled anywhere from twenty to fifty dollars, which was enough to ensure the production of a new edition. The paper was distributed among various guilds, mutual aid societies, worker organizations, and individual sympathizers who were interested in receiving and disseminating the anarchist message. The format of the paper itself was a 40 cm. x 27 cm. sheet of four pages, with an average of fifteen articles per issue.

⁴⁶Machuca Castillo, Op. cit., 114.

The articles found in *Los Parias* can be divided into three general thematic categories: 1) Educating the public about seminal anarchist principles so as to incite a social revolution 2) informing non-elites as to their social conditions in the country 3) denouncing and rejecting authority, in particular, the state, the military, and the clergy. Other articles published in the paper dealt with a multitude of literary materials (book excerpts, poems, songs, short stories, etc.) that delved deeper into anarchist teachings. These overarching themes help to give us a guide as to the messages found in the pages of *Los Parias* and the vision imparted onto its readers, a vision that helped unite anarchism to the labor movement in Peru.

We find in these pages not a one-dimensional manifestation of anarchism but, rather, an amalgamation of some of the most important ideas which various anarchist figures endorsed. The majority of anarchist ideas which *Los Parias* communicated came from the teachings of Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, and Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin, to name a few. The members of *Los Parias* charged themselves with the task of compiling and spreading some of the most basic principles that Peruvian anarchists came to endorse, principally the awakening of individual consciousness, the rejection of any forms of authority (i.e. state, military, church), utilizing the general strike as a 'crippling instrument' for achieving social change, and the necessity of organization of the masses. Anarchists sought to apply these ideas to Peruvian reality in order to achieve a libertarian utopia; a welcomed alternative to the aristocratic republic.

5.1 Anarchist principles and the social revolution

One of the fundamental components of *Los Parias* was spreading anarchist principles among the nascent working class in Peru in order to instigate a social revolution. From its first edition, the paper clearly shares its mission statement, its message of struggle against the establishment, with its readers. As the first article titled "Dos palabras" states:

"We come to defend, in the fertile ground of thought, the treaded-on rights of the people, of the working classes, of all those who fortune has dispossessed in general, that is to say, of the pariahs, our brothers, the sacrificed victims of bourgeois capital and corruption, because of the reckless and unjust organization of our society. Our program is condensed in the simple enunciation of our objective. Inspired by the pains of the proletariat, of the *social pariahs* with whom we share on a daily basis the harsh tasks of labor, we wish to serve them as loyal and sincere interpreters in light of their orphaned rights"⁴⁷

Guided by Proudhon and Bakunin's message as to the role of the people in the social revolution, the editors and journalists of this paper sought to convey a message of camaraderie and support for the non-elites, identifying themselves as 'interpreters' of their social struggle and seeking to reach the oppressed individual in order to help enlighten him as to his unfortunate condition.

This was a crucial first step, anarchists believed, since provoking this enlightenment would give workers the drive necessary to face the arduous task of social change, motivated by the injustice of their social condition.⁴⁸ One can find in the pages of *Los Parias* a plethora of articles, such as "Lo que es el pueblo,"⁴⁹ "Redención,"⁵⁰ "Ecos,"⁵¹ "Cambio de tactica,"⁵² and "Clases sociales,"⁵³ to name a few, which detail the necessity for the individual to become aware of his social standing not only to rage against his impoverished social condition but, additionally, to begin the larger struggle of establishing a new social order. For example, an article printed on the papers' tenth edition titled "Contra los 'buenos'," explains:

"In the individual, that is to say, the primordial cell of society is where we must seek the causes of a general transformation, according to the time and environment. If, on the one hand, we see the isolated man submissive to the influence of society at large with its religion and politics, on the other hand, we see the free individual that, as insignificant as he might be in the space and the course of the ages, manages nevertheless to impose his personal condition on the world that surrounds him and modifies it in a definitive way, be it by the

⁴⁷"Dos palabras," *Los Parias*, March, 1904.

⁴⁸García Salvattecci, Hugo. *Anarquía: Ciencia y revolución*. (Lima: Editores Okura, 1984), 59-60.

⁴⁹Lamennais. "Lo que es el pueblo," *Los Parias*, August, 1904.

⁵⁰El Loco Darío. "Redención," *Los Parias*, May, 1905.

⁵¹J.V. "Ecos" *Los Parias*, August, 1905.

⁵²"Cambio de táctica," *Los Parias*, March, 1905.

⁵³"Clases sociales," *Los Parias*, February, 1906.

discovery of a law, the realization of a task, by the application of a process or, sometimes, by a beautiful expression that science will never forget."⁵⁴

The capacity, or rather, the necessity for the individual to realize and understand his importance to the overall cause served an important purpose in the early anarchist's teachings in Peru since the social revolution that was the anarchist's ultimate goal would only be achieved by the workers themselves.

In providing a space for recognizing the importance of the workers in Peru, anarchist publications were able to provide them with a militant rhetoric which many members of the labor movement found attractive. Alfredo Baldessari provides an excellent example of the kinds of articles that centered on the value of workers in society. He states:

"The worker is a dethroned king that pays tribute to a liberty that has never existed for him. The world and its progress belong to him, nevertheless, he toils in it like a slave of capital, without any patrimony other than the misery and hunger of his children, without a soothing option other than desperate alcoholism. And to think that a weak effort would be sufficient to awaken this giant tied in cobwebs to achieve its freedom! That he himself could initiate the reform of this fearful and unjust social organization! Revolution eradicates all tyranny and all that is tyrannical. And it would be sufficient for him to want a revolution."⁵⁵

Such articles describing the injustice that workers suffered and the power that lay hidden in them helped anarchists ingratiate themselves with the nascent labor movement of the nation since it offered them an empowering rhetoric and, perhaps more importantly, a dynamic change to their situation which workers of the time were quite receptive to. Seeing how many non-elites in Peru suffered from 'orphaned rights' during this period, the seductive power of the anarchist message becomes quite clear.

Another important element for achieving a social revolution, one which also provides a rationalization for the existence of papers such as *Los Parias*, was the role of

⁵⁴Reclus, Eliseo. "Contra los 'buenos'," *Los Parias*, January, 1905.

⁵⁵Baldessari, Alfredo, "Proletarios y burgueses," *Los Parias*, March, 1904.

intellectuals. Fundamental anarchists like Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin all agreed that the working classes lacked the theory and organization necessary in order to transform society.⁵⁶ It was the intellectuals who played a key role in helping the workers grasp their social reality and individual importance, key elements of achieving social justice. It is important to note that, for anarchists, intellectuals were not guiding architects of the revolution but, rather, helpful participants who had a particular role to play and who stood with the workers, not above them. In Peru, the most famous expression of this idea took place in May of 1905 during a discourse given by Manuel González Prada entitled “El intelectual y el obrero.” In this speech (which *Los Peruanos* published on its fourteenth edition), González Prada sought to formulate an alliance between workers and intellectuals in the country. He stated:

“When we advocate the union or alliance of intelligence with labor, we do not pretend that under a title of an illusionary hierarchy, the intellectual set himself up as a tutor or guide of the worker. We owe the idea that the brain exercises a function more noble than the muscle to the caste system. Intellectuals serve as lights; but they must not be guides, particularly in the great social crises where the arms execute what the brain thinks.”⁵⁷

For anarchists such as Prada, it was indispensable to unite both the 'brain' and the 'muscle' since, working in tandem, they could be a more influential force in society at large. This speech served to enhance Prada's fame among the workers which, in turn, helped the Peruvian anarchist movement attain more followers. Understanding this relationship also offers an explanation as to the motivation of the authors and other contributing members of *Los Peruanos*, who found in the press the most advantageous method of fulfilling their role within this movement and reaching the dormant masses.

Enlightening the workers of the nation, however, was only part of the overall mission.

⁵⁶García Salvattecci. *Anarquía: Ciencia y Revolución*. (Lima: Editores Okura, 1984), 61.

⁵⁷Prada, Manuel G. “El intelectual y el obrero,” *Los Peruanos*, June 1905.

The next step for anarchists was transforming ideology into action in the real world. The essential tool for doing so, and one that *Los Parias* discussed frequently, was the general strike. The papers first edition published an article describing the strike of workers from the weavers' guild who found no solidarity from their fellow laborers, something which the author lamented. The article goes on to advise all workers to unite in their common struggle, lest their efforts be rendered sterile. The author states: "It is necessary that the working classes understand that their efforts must be supportive, general, and in favor of their improvement. It's a question of unanimity in attitude."⁵⁸ Anarchists viewed the general strike as the most influential way of enacting meaningful social change (i.e. attaining better rights, wages, working conditions), and understood the importance of solidarity and organization the working classes needed to achieve. An article that appeared on the papers second edition elaborates on this idea:

"It is indispensable, above all, to direct our steps towards a union, to an emancipation, to form a true workers association, without allowing ourselves to be used by cheap or ambitious politicians -as so often happens with the worker societies in Lima- but to spread out and guide ourselves and seek, resolutely, great medicines to the great ills that exist. Only in this way, fighting economically, relentlessly and without rest, will we achieve, in turn, the preparation for the general strike of the workers -a crippling strike- and thus will we achieve what is unjustly sucked out of the fruit of our labor and our existence."⁵⁹

As the article explains, the need for organization among workers so as to achieve a 'crippling' strike was of paramount importance. When speaking of strikes, the paper was quite clear in helping the workers understand that strikes were a basic right they possessed, and that their exploiters had no right to deny them this expression of their discontent. As an article published in the papers tenth edition states:

"Moreover -speaking generally and in principle- in recognizing that *strikes* are a right, one does not pretend to break the work contract or snatch from the workers the guarantees that a strike proposes to maintain or augment. Strikes are as normal

⁵⁸Del Barzo, Carlos. "La huelga de tejedores," *Los Parias*, March 1904.

⁵⁹"Trabajadores! Al obrero peruano," *Los Parias*, May, 1904.

as a contract, or better stated, they form part of the contract, and are confused with them. Without strikes, or the right to strike, a contract for an indeterminate amount of time becomes servitude."⁶⁰

Many workers in Peru already lived in a precarious position and to place their situation in even further peril by striking was unthinkable. For anarchists, however, these manifestations were too powerful an instrument to ignore, which is why they dedicated many articles to helping workers understand the importance of strikes. A piece authored by Glicerio Tassara comments on this issue. He states:

"Strikes, for example, are, today, the best resource which the workers possess, within the *law of the bourgeoisie*, to defend themselves from the abuses and exploitation of their bosses; so organize yourselves for strikes; that each guild or each worker society constitute a space of resistance to endure the shortages to follow: that all these groups confederate themselves and begin the fight without delay, giving more and more extension and generality to the strike movement and disregard completely government intervention that can do nothing, since it's been destined to uphold the defense of property. Only thus can the workers make themselves fearsome to their bosses; which implies a partial success in the future victory. Only in this way can Peru appropriately support the social revolution that ferments the world over and whose outbreak can be precipitated by eventual causes, in less time that we suppose"⁶¹

Anarchists sought to incite workers to rise against their desperate social condition, to achieve solidarity with their own class, and to help workers understand that strikes were an inherent right, not simply a desperate measure, which they were entitled to. These conditions, anarchists believed, would bring about the idyllic libertarian utopia which they felt was the most perfect expression of a society.

5.2 Condition of the worker

Informing to the populace about the social conditions, specifically, the constant trespasses against the worker movement, was another issue which *Los Parias* covered extensively. Since the fight for worker rights was still in its infant stages during the time this publication appeared,

⁶⁰"Derecho a la huelga," *Los Parias*, December, 1904.

⁶¹Tassara, Glicerio, "La cuestión social," *Los Parias*, March, 1904.

the paper became somewhat of a pioneer in championing worker rights and in proposing the unification of the various guilds and worker associations against the common threat posed by the unjust system of the time. Additionally, by reporting on the terrible conditions which workers suffered in the nation, they helped to make their anarchist message all the more relevant to the working classes. Carlos del Barzo, a regular contributor to the newspaper, wrote the following in an article which appeared in April of 1904 that stated:

"It is necessary, then, that our workers understand, once and for all, that their own interests call to them in this period of transition and struggle, in this period in which the sociological orientation is in need of new mediums, to leave those old paths that are so damaging to their improvement, preparing themselves for the defense of their treaded upon rights...they mustn't forget that **THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKERS MUST BE THE LABOR OF THE WORKERS THEMSELVES** [emphasis added by author]."⁶²

This philosophy, tinted with anarchist principles, of making workers be conscious of their social conditions and uniting against their common threat was typically found in the many articles dealing with the struggle for worker rights and social justice which the paper published. True to their social mission, exemplified by the papers' slogan "For Social Redemption," *Los Parias* sought to provide with such news a small glimpse into the situation of the workers and, by doing so, motivate them to act in order to remedy their situation.

Another illuminating article, titled "Comentarios sobre las huelgas" and authored by Glicerio Tassara commented on the recent strikes that had taken place in the city. In this piece, Tassara details the typical budget that a family unit received; emphasizing the pitiable compensation they were given. He explains:

"Eighty five soles, ninety five cents between twenty six days of work a month, comes out to a quotient of S. 3.30, which should be the strictly necessary day's wage of all workers. Where does this observation flow as a consequence: that the most fortunate workers, those who earn more than 3 soles daily -whether in Callao or in Lima- have a daily deficit of thirty cents. Now imagine those that

⁶²Del Barzo, Carlos, "Movimiento obrero," *Los Parias*, April, 1904.

only earn S. 1.20 to S. 1,50 daily, and those are who constitute the vast majority of the workers among us; and lets immediately answer with our hands over our hearts if these people don't have the right, the perfect right, to declare themselves on strike a thousand times over until they obtain a small raise, even if it is fictitious or temporary!"⁶³

The lack of proper compensation for workers and the rising cost of living in the republic was yet another social problem which tended to deepen the confrontations between the laborers and the authorities, since they could offer workers no support. This was a situation which the anarchists capitalized on, utilizing it as yet another example of how the State and the capitalist bourgeoisie running the nation were uninterested and unable to offer them any meaningful solutions.

Other articles detailing the condition of workers detailed the various injustices committed against this social group. Pieces such as "Jose Real,"⁶⁴ "Abusos,"⁶⁵ "A los trabajadores del Cerro de Pasco,"⁶⁶ "Los atropellos en Trujillo,"⁶⁷ "El accidente de barboncito,"⁶⁸ "La vida de un trabajador pagada cincuenta libras!,"⁶⁹ "Las víctimas de los accidentes,"⁷⁰ "Amo y criado"⁷¹ and "Ecos sociales"⁷² among many others, served to highlight the barbaric conduct of the exploiters and the lack of punishment they received as well as the inconsequential attention given the deaths or injuries suffered by workers, both within the capital and in different areas around the country. These stories showcased the complete lack of official mechanisms for seeking justice against the guilty parties, and to comment on how defenseless a worker was against these violations.

The paper also featured a few distinct sections, published intermittently throughout its

⁶³Tassara, Glicerio, "Comentario sobre las huelgas," *Los Parias*, May, 1904.

⁶⁴"Jose Real," *Los Parias*, March, 1904.

⁶⁵"Abusos," *Los Parias*, April, 1904.

⁶⁶Ferrari, Pedro. "A los trabajadores del Cerro de Pasco," *Los Parias*, October, 1904.

⁶⁷"Los atropellos en Trujillo," *Los Parias*, January, 1905.

⁶⁸Cualquiera. "El accidente de barboncito," *Los Parias*, July, 1905.

⁶⁹P.F. "La vida de un trabajador pagada cincuenta libras!," *Los Parias*, August, 1905.

⁷⁰Un rebelde. "Las víctimas de los accidentes," *Los Parias*, October, 1905.

⁷¹Marcello. "Amo y criado," *Los Parias*, June, 1906.

⁷²"Ecos sociales," *Los Parias*, March, 1907.

existence, titled "Notas y apuntes," "Signos de progreso," and "Civilización peruana." The first section served to echo abuses perpetrated in the country, inviting anyone to write to the paper in order to publish their stories. As the editor's state: "our columns will serve as echo of your complaints and protests. The services of LOS PARIAS, your brothers, are at your disposal"⁷³ This space was reserved not only to share stories of wrongdoings against workers, but also to inform the audience about (and salute the existence of) other sister publications, both in Peru and in other places around the southern hemisphere. In this space, we find international connections to other anarchist/worker entities around Latin America which maintained contact with the anarchists in Lima. News of sister entities which *Los Parias* published often came from Spain, Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina.⁷⁴ The second of these sub-sections titled "Signos de Progreso" informed about various advances that had been made in the name of the worker movement, such as protests and demonstrations by the various worker groups around the nation. The last of these specialty sections, "Civilización Peruana," recorded various reports from around the country regarding various abuses against workers. Most of these sections served to emphasize the serious lack of worker rights present in Peru and the country's inability to deal with this problem.

When dealing with the Peruvian reality, an interesting topic appeared in the pages of *Los Parias*. That topic was *indigenismo*. This is an important issue to address since the 'matter of the indian' was still woefully unaddressed in early twentieth century Peru. *Los Parias* was one of the first papers that dealt with this issue, publishing a number of articles regarding the indigenous peoples of the nation. While the language present in these pieces were racist and paternalistic in nature (these authors were, after all, products of their historical moment), they did take a critical stance as to the way in which indigenous natives were treated in Peru. One article describes their

⁷³"Notas y apuntes," *Los Parias*, May, 1904.

⁷⁴See "Notas y apuntes," *Los Parias*, June, 1904, "Notas y apuntes," *Los Parias*, December, 1904, and "Notas y apuntes," *Los Parias*, October, 1905.

condition as follows: "Contemplating the sad condition that the indians of Peru are submitted to, our spirit rebels and we are horrified of our civilization. What is an indian? the pariah, the helot. Ridiculed and exploited, without possessing the slightest right, not even that of being human, he is driven like an ass by the most convincing of reasons- the stick."⁷⁵ Anarchists classified the deplorable condition of the indigenous natives as a national and permanent matter, and believed that anarchism could help the indigenous cause. Indeed, even men of the caliber of Manuel González Prada understood the importance of such a massive group in Peru. In his 1888 speech in the Politeama Theater, Prada stated: "Peru is not composed of creole and foreign groups that inhabit the piece of land situated between the Pacific and the Andes: the nation is composed of the crowds of indians disseminated in the oriental band of the mountain range."⁷⁶ Finding yet another group of disenfranchised non-elites, anarchists sought to ally their movement to the indigenous movements in Peru, likely to significantly enhance anarchist presence in the nation. This association, however, did not see fruition until the mid to late twentieth century, when *indigenismo* became a central social concern. In his work *Ayllus del Sol - Anarquismo y utopía andina*, Wilfredo Kapsoli explores the relationship between militant anarchist members and various rural leaders and activists who would go on to direct indigenous rebellions in the mid to late twentieth century in Peru.⁷⁷

5.3 Against Authority

As mentioned previously, one key component to anarchism was the complete rejection of any and all authoritative figures. Authority, in the pages of *Los Parias* took the form of the state, the military, and the church. These three forms of control were vehemently opposed by the anarchists, finding in them injustice and a lack of legitimacy to be opposed at all costs. Attacks

⁷⁵"Raza Desgraciada," *Los Parias*, March, 1906.

⁷⁶González Prada, Manuel. *Paginas Libres - Horas de Lucha*. (Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1985), 45-46.

⁷⁷See Kapsoli, Wilfredo. *Ayllus del Sol - Anarquismo y utopía andina*. (Lima: Ed. Tarea, 1984)

on the political machine in charge during the aristocratic republic and the figures that represented this oppressive regime were common in this publication. Attacks against the state, while sometimes identifying particular political parties, would often describe *all parties* in the same negative light. An article titled "La Autoridad" published in November of 1904, for example, describes the general sentiment towards figures of authority:

"The masses must not be impressed by pompous titles or be blinded by uniforms or over-elaborated garbs. They are obliged to repeat night and day that these charges don't imply superiority over obedience; that the shirt of the worker does not have to humiliate itself in front of the dress coat of the president. If there exists a difference between the Supreme Chief and the humble citizen, the difference is in benefit of the second: the citizen pays, the Supreme Chief receives the remuneration: one is the master, the other the servant. The small and big dignitaries of the nation don't rise beyond being simple servile lackeys; every uniform is livery, every salary *a tip*. Let's hate, then, the authorities for the mere reason of being an authority: with the simple act of soliciting or exercising leadership, the perversion of our instincts is denounced. He who figures that he has the soul of a king, possesses the heart of a slave; he who thinks that he has been created for dominance, was created for servitude. The man who is truly noble and free does not expect to command nor does he wish to obey: since he does not accept the humiliation of recognizing masters or lords, he rejects the injustice of possessing slaves and serfs."⁷⁸

Such demolishing words served to undermine all authoritative figures, regardless of their political, economic, or social alliances. Authorities, in anarchist terms, were seen as little more than aristocrats and members of the bourgeoisie who wished nothing more than subjugate the masses and keep them in their state of servitude and hopelessness. This condition, in turn, served to break down non-elites into little more than beasts of burden. An article titled "El estado" states: "The individual has degraded to the point of having turned into a body with no soul, unconditionally subjected to the force of The State: for it he sweats and exhausts himself in the mine, the plot of land, and the factory; for it he fights and dies in the fields of battle."⁷⁹

Anarchists believed that a human being had an inherent value that no one had the right to

⁷⁸Miguel, Luis, "La autoridad," *Los Parias*, November, 1904.

⁷⁹Miguel, Luis, "El estado," *Los Parias*, August, 1904.

command or enslave. This principle was, in their eyes, something which the authorities constantly violated and something which was easily observed given the social conditions of the nation at the time.

In the Peruvian context, anarchists applied their views on authority to the many 'decadent' political parties that had fought for control of the nation. Regardless of their political affiliation, anarchists asserted, their agenda for the disenfranchised masses would remain the same. Carlos del Barzo comments on this circumstance when he states:

"Those who, like us, have been instructed by bitter experience, feel only uncontainable indignation before the old-fashioned oratory of these charlatans that diligently offer great reforms, that result in hurtful sarcasm for the populace to whom they are directed, a populace who will see that, in the long run, this oratory will result in greater evil, in greater disgrace...With the government of a Piérola the inhabitants of Huanta who rebelled against the *salt tax* were machine-gunned, and the striking workers of Vitarte were cut down ; With the leadership of Pardo, the *chalaco* workers who, in order to support the latest taxes demanded a raise in the salaries, were shot down. And, what was done by these two great frauds will be done again, once in power, by those great *appetites on strike* who label themselves: *constitutionals, liberals, and federalist*; all who today call themselves blood of the people, workers, to excite those dressed in rags against the opposing camp and capture their votes with which they will designate the master who will steal the fruit of their labor in the form of taxes, so that they may enrich their pockets, and who will rip their leather with the blows of a sabre when they attempt to rebel against their injustice."⁸⁰

For anarchists, the state was synonymous with subjugation and corruption, regardless of who was in charge. They classified peruvian political parties as 'exploiters' and 'parasites' of the people and *Los Parias* was relentless in their assault. An article written by Pedro Ferrari exemplifies this sentiment. He states:

"Another of the great mistakes in which the people are submerged in is to suppose that the professed liberals are liberals in the true sense of the word, and that a difference exists between them, the democrats, and the civilistas. I have noted previously the difference between one and the others, and I can only say that whichever the party represented by a caudillo, we see in his promises a redeemer of the world: he wishes to do everything, to transform everything under the

⁸⁰Del Barzo, Carlos, "La política y los trabajadores," *Los Parias*, July, 1904.

shadow of a flag, whose slogan is based on absolute liberty and the most perfect democracy; but, when they reach power, we find the most ridiculous disillusion. Whether it be the democrat, the civilista, or the liberal the party which seizes power, we witness merely a change of scenery in the same comedy, since under any form of government we can always see the henchman incarcerate and execute the disenfranchised who asks for a hundredth part of what he produces with his labor and the protection of the great parasites of Humanity who knew quite well how to hide crimes and thefts under a jacket or a frock coat. Those are the political parties, regardless of their flag."⁸¹

As we can see, the representation of the state authorities and their various components was quite dismal, seeing them as oppressive institutions preoccupied only with attaining and maintaining power and filling their pockets, not the plight of the working masses.

Other forms of authority which *Los Parias* constantly criticized were the military and the Catholic Church. In these entities, the anarchists saw yet another form of control of the individual for the benefit of those in power, and they sought to ridicule and satirize these two bodies so as to reveal their inherent evils. Articles such as "Basta de guerra,"⁸² "El sable,"⁸³ and "Militarismo"⁸⁴ revolve around describing the often brutal approaches that the military regularly use in order to enforce order and obedience in the population. Anarchists classified the military as a primitive institution that turn men into mindless savages. Another important attack levied against the military was the constant abuses which they committed. A short story published in 1909 describes such an abuse:

"Mariucha was weak and she sat in a rock; Josecha began to dry her feet and calfs. She told her how at that time all the people of the surrounding areas of Ayacucho had found a safe place, like them; and about an outsider who was called Sub prefect. Mariucha was intrigued to know who this was, but Josecha could not tell her.

Suddenly, various soldiers appeared at the bend in the road. Mariucha hugged Josecha; while he could do nothing to move.

- "There's one!" exclaimed a gentleman of white complexion, well mounted and

⁸¹Ferrari, Pedro, "Los partidos políticos y el pueblo," *Los Parias*, January 1907.

⁸²"Basta de guerra," *Los Parias*, September, 1904.

⁸³Miguel, Luis. "El sable," *Los Parias*, December 1904.

⁸⁴Ferrari, Pedro. "Militarismo," *Los Parias*, February, 1905.

warmly clothed, pointing at Josecha.

The soldiers on foot obeyed and came closer to Josecha...

- "Who are you?" - asked the white man. Josecha did not know what to answer.

- "How old are you?"..."Have you enlisted?"..."Answer me you animal!" (...)

- "Well, you are going to serve your country. You will go to Ayacucho to register and, afterwards, as a voluntary conscript, you'll go to the coast of Lima." "Make him march!" - he ordered the soldiers.

- But Josecha had begun to run. Then, the rider sank his spurs into his horse, swearing he had never seen such a hypocrite indian. Josecha had gained more than 200 meters and he continued to run...but a shot rang out and he stopped."⁸⁵

Such articles served to highlight yet another way in which authority, this time the military, trespassed among peoples basic rights, which is why anarchists called for the abolition of such an institution since it served no positive role in society.

The same virulent criticism was levied against the church, since anarchist believed that any religious institution served to limit the conscious and self-aware man. Articles such as "Enfrailados,"⁸⁶ "Sesenta por ciento,"⁸⁷ "Los sacerdotes,"⁸⁸ and "Olivos y aceitunos"⁸⁹ describe the hypocrisy of the church who, under the guise of righteousness and piety, are allowed to trespass against their fellow men. Religion, Catholicism in particular, was viewed as a stagnant theology that did not permit the evolution of society and served only to maintain control of the masses. As one article explains:

"Is there a God? Is there no God? We do not know; however, the respectable individuals or, rather, the cunning and wicked people of fortune maintain and propagate the idea that people need religion. It just so happens that, in private, those respectable individuals mutually confess the falseness and the conventional aspect of their behavior. Is there a God? Is there no God? We do not know; however, we must behave as if there is a God. The masses cannot be governed if they stopped being restrained by their religious sentiments."⁹⁰

The scathing attacks against religion this publication made a habit of publishing surely made

⁸⁵A.R.B., "El conscripto," *Los Parias*, June, 1908.

⁸⁶"Enfrailados," *Los Parias*, January, 1905.

⁸⁷Miguel, Luis. "Sesenta por ciento," *Los Parias*, February, 1905.

⁸⁸Neyra, Luis Navarro. "Los sacerdotes," *Los Parias*, May 1905.

⁸⁹S.D. "Olivos y aceitunos," *Los Parias*, March, 1906.

⁹⁰Fabre, Joseph, "Un fragmento," *Los Parias*, November, 1907.

them many enemies in Peru since the highly pious Limean society of the time must have found these articles scandalous. True to its anarchist principles, however, *Los Peruanos* did not shy away from their staunch position against the 'cult of religion' which, in their eyes, relied on blind faith and did not allow the development of ideas.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

"...It is not about submissively believing what they think; except in regards to wanting to understand the arguments, ideas, interests, or passions of certain political parties, groups, classes, peoples, or epochs. What is most valuable lies in the documents that these publications reproduce, which are frequently impossible to find somewhere else. To write history only based on newspapers would be simplistic and reprehensible; to do so without having consulted them is, most often, reckless..."⁹¹

The quote by famous Peruvian historian Jorge Basadre helps to highlight one of the contributions this thesis seeks to make. Only a handful of literature has paid attention to the turn of the century press and journalism in Peru; and even less attention has been given to what Porras Barrenechea once referred to as "ineffectual sectarian pieces"⁹², that is to say, the “popular” press. In an era of dynamic change and volatile social conditions, the anarchist publication *Los Parias* became one of the first tangible manifestations of an anti-establishment force dedicated to changing the social landscape of the nation.

The alliance they sought to forge with the workers and the worker movement that was emerging at the time helped them to cement a fruitful relationship that brought to the forefront the deplorable conditions in which the rising number of workers toiled away in on a daily basis. The limited advancement which other groups interested in improving workers’ conditions had made during this period also served to validate the message of *Los Parias* and make it all the more relevant to the disenfranchised masses. The previous leadership offered by mutual aid societies and other worker groups had proven to be ineffectual, since no real headway had been made into improving ‘*la cuestión social*.’ Anarchism offered rapid and more fundamental changes to the labor movement, a highly attractive proposition to the non-elites of the nation. The low wages, harsh living conditions, and rise in the cost of living were additional contributing

⁹¹Basadre, Jorge. *Introducción a las bases documentales para la historia de la República del Perú con algunas reflexiones*. (Lima: Ediciones P.L.V., 1971).

⁹²Porras Barrenechea, Raul. *El periodismo en el Peru*. (Lima: Instituto Raúl Porras Barrenechea, 1970), 45.

factors explaining the reasons why many workers turned to anarchism for support. Another important aspect of this ideological movement in Peru has to do with the weight of the public figures which were involved in this new social undertaking (such as Manuel González Prada and the Lévano family) and the connections which they enjoyed to other important organizations, something that helped anarchism expand its reach within the nation.

In seeing how anarchism spread among non-elites of Peru, the importance and influence of the press in society is clearly made visible. Anarchists utilized the press in order to fulfill the paramount mission of educating and informing the Peruvian masses and, in the case of *Los Parias*, they also served as a galvanizing force for the generally disconnected groups in society that found in this publication a space for association and representation. History recognizes the precursory role that anarchism played in the labor movement of the twentieth century in Peru, and this publication served as the first manifestation of this alliance.

Los Parias stands out as one of the first mediums of communication that sought to establish a connection between the anarchist trend present in Peru in the early twentieth century and the nascent labor movement, an alliance that rattled the social landscape of the republic in the new century. In becoming a space of exhibition and representation, this newspaper managed to present the social *malaise* lived by the workers and provided radical new ways in which to help non-elites rise against their contemptible condition. Finding hardly any discussion of their circumstances in the "big press" of the time, the workers and intellectuals sympathetic to this cause found in the "popular" press a space in which to both promote discussion and, more tangibly, social action in order to rectify the labor conditions present at the time. The radical messages found in the pages of *Los Parias* help add an important social dimension to Peruvian society during the aristocratic republic.

While the anarchist movement would lose its initial momentum in the 1920s and 30s, replaced by anarcho-syndicalism and, later on, by Marxist movements, its original contribution was never forgotten. The anarchist tactic of intensifying the class conflict would prove useful for later radicals, such as influential activist José Carlos Mariátegui and founder of the APRA party Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, who directed their attention and message to the exploited masses that anarchism had sought to represent. An additional, perhaps more practical contribution of anarchism to the Peruvian labor movement, was the promotion of a general strike as a necessary and effective way to achieve better labor conditions. Thanks, in part, to the anarchist movement, a rising trend of strikes and demonstrations began to manifest itself around the capital. Blanchard notes: "Strikes had become an increasingly common feature of Peruvian labor relations. They caused the government to pay closer attention not only to the anarchists, but the working class as a whole."⁹³ Government officials had, prior to the new century, never paid much attention to anarchism and its growing influence in the labor movement, believing it to be only a small and unimportant group. The continuing anarchist presence and their increasing influence over the labor movement, as demonstrated by the many strikes and other demonstration which manifested across Peru, soon brought this group of radicals to the attention of the state. The anarchist press, the workers' press, played a vital role in the solidification of anarchist ideals with Peruvian workers, providing them with tangible tools of opposition, a strong leadership, and a sense of unity and class consciousness that brought them together in order to push the labor movement forward. Using *Los Parias* in order to understand the rhetoric, motivation, intentions, and goals that the individuals who sought a new social order provides us with a way to understand, more profoundly, the Peruvian reality observed during this historical moment; a moment of ideological transformation and general upheaval that would help to change the landscape of Peruvian history.

⁹³Blanchard, Op. cit., 64.

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