political struggles today. Whether in America or around the world, democracy does face a deep crisis of legitimacy and attempts to combat that crisis in ways that offer greater representation are similar to the challenges facing Progressives as they struggled to revision the American nation at the beginning of the last century.

Democracy, of course, is not simply a political system. It is deeply linked to the development of capitalism. As such, the book could have offered more insight into how democracy and capitalism became intertwined, and how they may now require a separation of sorts in order to find the room to rethink a more radical democratic vision. There is an underlying assumption that lurks behind many of the articles in this volume and yet is only clearly articulated in Jerome Mileur's closing essay. It is that politics is the art of compromise and any attempts to aspire to more radical or noble ends is not only naïve, but may cause more damage in the long run. This effectively blames Progressives for the sins of those who came after them. It limits our ability to think outside the institutional box long enough to offer more a radical vision of democracy. Despite being unable to deal with this dialectic in a more constructive manner, the book describes well the dilemma facing Progressivism. It is a dilemma that will mark politics for the foreseeable future, one which may not offer an easy resolution but requires our energies all the same.

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Orin Starn, *Nightwatch: The Politics of Protest in the Andes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

For better or worse, in the 1980s and early 1990s Peru came to mean something more than Machu Picchu and the Nazca lines to the outside world. As Communist regimes around the world came tumbling down, Peru witnessed the growth of a radical, and for a while, successful, self-styled Maoist movement, the Peruvian Communist Party-Shining Path. However, as anthropologist Orin Starn shows in *Nightwatch: The Politics of Protest in the Andes,* the brutal Shining Path was not the only "movement for change" in Peru in those years. First organised in 1976, by the end of the decade peasant night patrol groups or *rondas campesinas* had spread throughout the northern Peruvian Andes, covering some 3,400 villages across over 60,000 square miles. Though by the late 1990s they had begun to unravel, the *rondas* constitute one of the most important yet little known social movements of the late twentieth century in Latin America.

Starn is clearly sympathetic to the rondas campesinas he studies. The rondas did not solve the problems of Peru's northern peasantry, most of which

are in one way or another linked to poverty, but they "made survival just a bit easier for thousands of families" (95). Contrary to Foucauldian interpretations, in the northern Andes the order and discipline imposed by the rondas undermined the status quo, which had been sustarned through disorder. However, Starn avoids a romanticised portrayal. The rondas could be brutal. At times, they resorted to torture and murder to punish rustlers and thieves. Moreover they were hardly paragons of gender equality. More important, Starn shows, the rondas were not a heroic movement of the disenfranchised against the outside world but very much the product of an interconnected world "in which there are no truly out of the way places, and perhaps, never have been" (22). Starn shows that though the rondas began as a peasant-motivated effort to quell theft in villages, it was an initiative that was mediated by a number of non-peasant actors which included local schoolteachers, the police and the local and regional government authorities. The rondas were not a traditional or ancestral movement. Starn traces their origins back to the night patrols on coastal plantations, which were largely wiped out by the Agrarian Reform of 1969. Moreover, the rondas' development, particularly their transition from patrolling to "justice-making" was strongly influenced by political parties, especially the Maoist Red Homeland and, to a lesser extent, the centrist APRA. Similarly, the rondas owed at least some of their growth and success to the direct involvement of NGOs, which helped channel funds and expertise.

At the same time, Starn emphasises peasant agency, "invention" and "creation," in the formation and growth of the rondas. The idea of the rondas was "borrowed" from the plantation patrols, it was not mere "mimicry." Similarly, though ronda justice-making "poached procedure and protocol from the police and the courts" (128), ronda justice was more than a simple copy of formal justice. For one thing, ronda justice implied a significant degree of village participation; it was more democratic. Moreover, the process of justice-making was aimed at reconciliation rather than a blind implementation of the law. Rather than trials, ronda justice functioned by *arreglos* or "fix-its." Significantly, and despite the fears of some government authorities, ronda-justice was *not* envisaged as an alternative to the formal justice system. The rondas saw themselves as "a force not against but for the rule of law" (136), not outside the state but a pillar of national citizenship.

An assessment of the rondas, as Starn rightly argues, depends largely on the standard of evaluation. The limits of ronda organisation are undeniable. Though the rondas were largely male preserves, women played a key role in the success of patrolling, as enforcers of the male obligation to take a turn in the nightwatch. But the rondas did little to alter women's position at the village level. Moreover, the rondas proved incapable of organisation at either the regional or national level. Though the failure of the regional federations of rondas in the early 1990s are at least in part attributable to feuds between political parties and to economic factors, as Starn shows, at least some of the blame lies with the rondas

themselves. The problem of leadership, for example, was never properly resolved by the rondas: most ronda leaders were unable to cope with excessive burdens of responsibility and accountability that the position demanded. Many left their villages after standing down. Nevertheless, Starn concludes, and one is inclined to agree with him, the balance is largely positive. The rondas made a significant difference to peasants' livelihoods at the local level. Moreover, they contributed to a changing perception of the peasantry in Peru's cities and helped put peasant issues back on the political agenda.

Starn's presence, indeed participation, in the story of rondas adds a fascinating anecdotal dimension to the narrative. This is not a stale monograph written at arm's length by a supposedly impartial observer. Starn takes part in the patrols, he sits in the "justice-making" meetings, he helps dig the grave of a young girl who dies of dysentery, he gets an NGO in Lima to fund a water project in the village of Iraca Grande. Starn's hands-on approach extends to whipping himself to gauge the pain of ronda justice. In the village of Tunnel Six where he carried out much of his ethnographic work, Starn becomes a source of loans for the cash-strapped peasants. However, Starn's participation produced conflicts. Starn recalls with shame the day he stood by as a rustler was tortured by the ronderos. He feels uneasy with the secondary role of women in the rondas. These aspects of the book add to rather than obfuscate the story. Starn's presence is never obtrusive; the anthropologist, and at times Robin Kirk, his *compaiiera,* appear not out of a desire to bask in the narrative limelight, but because their role in the events is part and parcel of the ethnographic record.

*Nightwatch* is an elegantly crafted and important book that deserves a readership that extends far beyond the confines of Latin American anthropology and Peruvian studies. It successfully meshes a gripping narrative with an engaging discussion of key themes, ranging from the nature of fieldwork to peasant resistance and globalisation. More important, it brings to light one of the most important Latin American peasant movements of the twentieth century, until now overshadowed by the dramatic impact of the Shining Path on Peru.

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John K. Cooley, *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism*, (second edition) (London: Pluto Press, 2000).

The very best book on the tragedy of Sept. 11th, 2001, is more than two years old. First published in 1999 and re-issued in an expanded second edition a year later, John K. Cooley's *Unholy Wars* is a remarkably prescient guide to the foreign policy machinations that led to the attacks on the United States by Islamic extremists. Although Cooley is a veteran journalist with many years of