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BOOK REVIEWS

Kimberly Theidon, *Intimate Enemies: Violence and Reconciliation in Peru* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvania Studies in Human Rights 2013), 488 pages, ISBN 978-0-8122-4450-2.

What is it like for ordinary people to live through revolutionary violence and the state's repression of that violence? This stunning book offers amazing and troubling insight into the lives of peasants in highland Peru who endured the revolutionary and increasingly violent Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) movement and the onslaught of soldiers seeking to ferret out and destroy it. Although much of the violent confrontation dates from the early 1980s, the book traces the changes in these highland communities from the late 1970s until 2000. Anthropologist Kimberly Theidon describes vividly, through powerful stories and quotes, what happened to the people caught in the conflict. Many lost husbands, children, animals, livelihoods, lands, and ultimately, the sense of caring and community. She describes the difficult lives of widows, of mothers mourning for their murdered children, of women raped, and of Sendero sympathizers who were reluctantly allowed to return to their home communities if they repented, but who remained outsiders. Her rich ethnographic account also describes resilience in the face of suffering, moments of joy and caring, and efforts to rebuild and to forget. This is not simply a story of human suffering, but also one of endurance and recovery.

Kimberly Theidon spent many years doing ethnographic field research in several highland Peruvian communities during the 1990s and 2000s. She recounts stories and encounters from villages that were largely opposed to Sendero Luminoso as well as those that supported the movement. The book discusses these two kinds of communities: those in the North and those in the South. Those in the North were largely opposed to Sendero and saw its fighters as threatening outsiders. In some communities, leaders sought security from Sendero militants through the state military. They petitioned the government to send soldiers and set up a local base to protect them. Yet the soldiers engaged in rape and abuse of local populations.

Those in the South were more often sympathetic to Sendero at first, and some joined the movement. Poor peasants were attracted by the movement's ideology of equality and collective labor for the good of all. Senderistas were often people from peasant backgrounds educated in local universities where they heard about the potential of revolutionary change to disrupt entrenched inequalities. During the early period of the movement Senderistas worked to help poor peasants and to build facilities to improve village life. Over time, however, the movement became more violent, less concerned with the well-being of peasants, and more interested in establishing control over them. Horrific massacres and attacks produced hostility among highland villages and led many to turn against the Sendero movement. As Sendero forces fought against the state, they appropriated local food

resources. As the movement turned more violent and destructive, many peasants became disillusioned and tried to leave but faced violent reprisals.

Theidon tells many stories of villagers fleeing to the caves in the mountains, eating salt and water, carrying children with them and struggling to find food and warmth, and returning to find homes burned to the ground, animals killed, and food stores stolen. Many fled to Lima or highland cities, producing a large displaced and impoverished population. The people Theidon talked to described the period before the violence as relatively good, with food, housing, and some communal justice. Yet, there were always deep inequalities and injustices, grievances which the Sendero movement articulated and sought to ameliorate. Even before the violence, poverty and inequality were widespread in the highlands, fueling the revolutionary movement to come.

One of the products of this history is the continuing relations between killers and their victims in the same villages and neighborhoods. People who organized massacres lived near or in the communities where the massacres occurred. Neighboring villages remember deaths caused by their neighbors. As they seek to collaborate in the post-conflict era to benefit from state and NGO rebuilding programs, they must overcome deep distrust and anger. They are, as the title suggests, *Intimate Enemies.*

The existence of enemies nearby, even in the same village, provides a valuable context for understanding the role of the Peruvian Truth Commission. In a massive project to document the violence, the Truth Commission carried out a series of investigations and interviews between 2001 and 2003. Theidon traces the way truth telling works in such deeply divided communities. Telling what happened often exposes deep injuries and anger, exposing past wrongs that must be put aside in order to continue living together. While forgiveness may or may not take place, communities thrust together after such suffering and killing do learn to live together, even if not in a trusting or mutually helpful way. The book argues that the Truth Commission relies on an inappropriate model of cathartic truth-telling as a mode of producing community reconciliation. Most of those injured in the violence do not seek reconciliation but reparations—recompense for the loss of livelihood, animals, a community, or murdered family members. They think the killers should take responsibility for helping the widows left behind, for example. The book implies that the Truth Commission does not have deep resonance within local communities or respond to their needs.

This book is not an account of the conflict itself, and it does not attempt to describe its timing or scope. Instead, it reconstructs how this period was understood by those who lived through it: what they thought about it, what they saw, what they experienced. It is full of descriptions of the author sitting down with someone, talking about the past, or hearing his or her description of a day, an event, a person. It is rich in the details of everyday life, of stories from people whose perspectives rarely make an appearance in historical accounts. This was a very complicated conflict, without clear lines or membership, often pitting peasants against peasants. It is only appropriate that the book does not attempt to construct a coherent history of this conflict, but instead presents many views of it, many glimpses of what it meant to a wide variety of people. We hear about those who celebrated the achievements of Sendero Luminoso, those who lost husbands because they attempted to

defend it, and those who survived by having sex with the soldiers stationed in the highlands, among many other stories.

Kimberly Theidon focuses in particular on the lives of women—as combatants, as widows, as mothers who place the survival of their children above all else, as victims of rape, and as resilient people who survive horrific violence and suffering and keep on working for their families, their communities, and their own survival. Although the Truth Commission recognizes that women's experiences of rape are important to document, Theidon notes that women rarely want to talk about their own experiences, but instead describe the suffering of others that they have seen or know about. This reticence is important to understand for those promoting transitional justice processes that ask victims to recount their stories in order to hold perpetrators responsible. It may be more effective to ask different kinds of questions, broader ones about the experiences of neighbors, friends, and a community instead of about the experiences of the victims themselves. Throughout the book, Theidon emphasizes the particular situations of women, and many of her interviews report women's perspectives. This is a valuable addition to the post-conflict and transitional justice field, which often ignores gender or focuses largely on soldiers and civilians without attention to women's distinctive experiences.

One of the important insights of the book is that such conflicts should not be thought of only in terms of perpetrators and victims, or even perpetrators, victims, and bystanders. There are also beneficiaries, who may or may not be the perpetrators. Some became wealthy, gaining better lands, more animals, or positions of leadership from the conflict. Such inequalities fuel anger, making it more difficult to forget and move on. Although Theidon does not make this point explicitly, her ethnographic accounts suggest that many of the beneficiaries are men, while those who face greater poverty, displacement, and hardship are often women.

Another important insight is the appeal of the idea of security for these communities. Theidon insightfully notes that the current preoccupation of much Foucauldian scholarship is exposing the oppressive role of discipline in modern state systems. Yet here there is a yearning for order, for leaders with authority to make decisions for the community, for forms of justice that will punish the guilty. She notes that local justice systems of this kind existed in the past, but were deeply undermined by the conflict. Now there is a dearth of leadership, of mechanisms for punishing those who have violated the rules, of practices of everyday caring and support for neighbors. Some of those who were the most violent during the conflict have now won leadership positions, angering those who have suffered from the violence. There is a loss of community support and a sense of belonging as well as confidence that those who violate community norms will suffer and repair their wrongs. Impunity for those who have wronged others eats at the communities. Theidon describes cases of widows who receive no support, single mothers with small children who cannot adequately feed and care for them, families torn apart by killings and alcohol.

The book offers relatively little discussion of human rights per se, but it does provide a rare and valuable perspective on what it means to suffer human rights violations. There are no statistics or general patterns here, only a myriad of specific, contextualized stories that provide a far more complicated and rich tapestry of violence and its consequences. People

experienced this violence differently, suffered or benefited differently, and were more or less able to cope. In contrast to accounts that are more general and less specific, this book shows how complicated the nature of violence and its effects are, how varied the responses are, and how difficult it is to produce a simple story of how reconciliation works in a post-conflict society.

In sum, this is a terrific book, an engrossing and moving account of suffering and resilience. It is a narrative made up of many small vignettes, conversations, encounters, and everyday experiences that reveal the texture of the conflict and the shape of life afterwards. It is wide ranging, from massacres and attacks by soldiers to the expansion of evangelical churches and their mediating role in the conflict, to ideas about supernatural forces that add to chaos and suffering in everyday life; from the entrance of NGOs into the post-conflict landscape, to the perspectives of observers and participants in massacres during the war. This is not a simple story, but one that reveals the complexity of a conflict that is internal to a country and that changes over time. Its issues are often irrelevant to those caught up in its tensions and violence. The book is well grounded in anthropological theory and theoretical perspectives on violence as well as transitional justice and human rights. It explains, in a way that I have not encountered before, how a movement such as Sendero Luminoso could happen and how it tears communities and lives apart. Maoist movements continue to emerge in impoverished, desperate communities around the world; the insights of this beautifully written book are invaluable for understanding how they develop and what they mean for those caught in the middle.

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"War Time" in International Criminal Law

Mary L. Dudziak, *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (New York: Oxford University Press 2012), 221 pages, ISBN 9780199775231

I. INTRODUCTION

Mary Dudziak's insightful book chronicles the impact of the wartime narrative on US law and policy. Much of the political discourse in this country is framed around a binary notion of "times" being divided between war and peace. Wartime is the exception and, as a result, wartime discourse is used to justify exceptional policies, many of which conflict with our society's foundational norms of freedom and justice. Although the book's orientation is descriptive, Dudziak's project is clearly animated by her concern about the consequences of wartime framing. In particular, she is concerned about abuses of important individual rights in