

Faith as an Option has much to commend it. Joas's argument offers a robust critique of many conventional notions in mainstream sociology. His call to social scientists to face the realities of the day is to be warmly welcomed. Indeed, given present-day crises, "social sciences have no choice but to try to help meet the need for analysis of the contemporary world, a need that makes its presence felt in the public sphere" (p. 63). However, there are inevitably many issues raised by Joas that are open to comment and criticism. One issue is with the very notion of the "option." Joas attempts to avoid the idea that "option" means "choice"; he claims that his perspective has nothing to do with "choice" in the rational choice model of economics. However "to opt" for something is inevitably to exercise choice. In a risk society of expanding choices, to say that faith is an option means that it is optional. If Christian belief is optional, isn't that the essential characteristic of a secular age? This problem is related to the idea in Habermas (that Joas appears to accept) that believers have an obligation to give rational support for their faith. Why? Where is the compelling force in the idea behind an obligation to talk? Fundamentalists, both secular and religious, appear to have little interest in any rational defense of their positions vis-à-vis some external audience. They already have the truth. In any case, when was faith simply an affirmation of certain theological propositions? Hence for skeptics regarding any Habermasian optimism about the positive potential of communication, the future of "Religious Diversity and the Pluralistic Society" (chap. 7) looks bleak rather than promising. Liberal faith from John Rawls to Jürgen Habermas to Hans Joas may be all we have to sustain optimism, but it is a thin foundation.

Sociología de Lima. By Joaquín Capelo. Lima: Imprenta Masias, 1895–1902 (vols. 1–2, pp.152 and 236, 1895; vol. 3, pp. 342, 1896; vol. 4, pp. 122, 1902).

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One of the early classics of sociology is this monumental study of Lima by a disgruntled Peruvian engineer. The work's size and unfashionable theories contributed to its long invisibility, but the real causes were that *Sociología de Lima* concerned a Latin American city and that it was written in Spanish, which for various reasons did not become one of the languages obligatory for metropolitan scholarship in the 20th century. So the book languished

* Another review from 2054—*Ed.*

until the demographic and linguistic *reconquista* of North America after 2000.

Knowing no Spanish, your reviewer has here followed the venerable scholarly practice of learning a language by translating a major work. It would have been easy enough to feed Capelo's masterpiece into a machine translation system. But languages are not simple variants of a single ideal form of communication. They are complexities that shape the thinking of their speakers. Translating Capelo in order to learn Spanish teaches one some things that machines cannot know.

Joaquín Capelo was born in 1852. After secondary education at the Colegio Nacional de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, he entered the science faculty of the ancient University of San Marcos, where he wrote theses on heavenly bodies and on plant life, taking a doctoral degree in 1872. He joined the faculty immediately thereafter but continued to study civil engineering. After working on the fortification of Lima during the War of the Pacific (1879–83), he became the government's chief of the public works in 1883. He began a long congressional career in the same period. Throughout the 1880s and early 1890s Capelo supervised road construction throughout Peru, with a particular emphasis on the areas east of the Andes. In 1896 he became the founding director of the Ministry of Development, and he later became special commissioner for the immense northeastern department of Loreto. After a tumultuous election, he became in 1901 senator for the department of Junín (1901–19), as a member of the democratic party. Perpetually in opposition, Capelo was active in indigenous affairs and also urged regulation of employment, opposing the exploitative contracts and predatory practices of the mining companies. He decried government corruption, election fraud, and military expansion. Usually unsuccessful in his legislative efforts, Capelo finally achieved in 1916 a protective law for indigenous laborers.

Capelo played a broad role in Peruvian intellectual life, supporting and at the same time criticizing the sociological positivism then general in Latin America. He helped found the Peruvian Association for Indigenous Peoples in 1909, and he published widely: works on algebra in 1875 and 1896, a philosophical meditation on matter and spirit in 1894, a general work on Peru in 1895–96, as well as the immense *Sociología de Lima*, here discussed. In 1912, he published a novel, *Los menguados*, which, like the fiction of José Rizal, was in reality more a sociopolitical pamphlet than a genuine novel. Growing pessimistic in later life, Capelo ultimately moved to Europe, dying in Paris in 1925.

Sociología de Lima is a work of about 170,000 words in four volumes. The first three volumes appeared in 1895/96. Capelo's ministerial obligations delayed the fourth volume for six years, during which time new views led him to publish a separate work on national public education. As a result, the fourth volume became a cursory summary. All the same, *Sociología*

as completed was almost revolutionary. No comparably comprehensive community study had yet been attempted in North America. Empirical sociology at the time consisted either of large-scale classificatory data gathering (Herbert Spencer) or of detailed studies of neighborhoods (Charles Booth and his American followers) or individuals (followers of Frédéric LePlay). Systematic community theory was emerging from city planners like Ebenezer Howard, but the community study as such had not yet taken clear empirical form.

But *Sociología de Lima* is not merely an empirical work. It is also a moralistic one. We are never unaware of Capelo's admiration for hard work or of his dislike for "social parasites" like financiers, lazy workers, and the idle wealthy. His contempt for religion is also clear: "This Lima of the conquistadors and indentured Indians, the conquering and the conquered, the executioners and the victims, held many impure consciences to tranquilize, many tears to wipe out, and many iniquities to soften, . . . and this made indispensable an extraordinary development of the religious spirit and consequent construction of churches and monasteries" (1:33–34). Also condemned are the military and the colonizing Spaniards, who "established a system of thoughtless obedience for three centuries, as they did in all their colonies, to extinguish in the individual all initiative and all confidence in himself" (1:39–40). By contrast, Capelo's proindigenous sentiment is strong. He speaks of the walls of Lima, "an immense cemetery, where lie buried, without question, the rights of thousands of Indians put to forced labor, in the name of the general good, from which, in all times, they were excluded" (1:32).

Like most pioneers, Capelo perforce used various and often unknown sources. The population data can be traced (much of it to an earlier work by Jose G. Clavero that is more gazetteer than systematic study), and some of the tables give official sources. And to be sure Capelo's official positions gave him access to much unpublished information. But his core calculations about Lima's economic life rest on assumptions about typical occupational wages and on back-of-the-envelope calculations (see 2:64, 83–84, 151). Similarly, the long and detailed accounts of the typical lives of workers must come from Capelo's vast personal and administrative experience, for there seem to be no interviews or other data intentionally collected for the writing of this particular book.

The volumes are organized into an overarching theoretical scheme, which is given in the final section of the final chapter of the first volume. Capelo draws heavily on Herbert Spencer, taking from the English philosopher a comprehensive vision of an evolutionary (and hierarchical) chain of being that leads to the "superorganic" world of men. However, Capelo transforms Spencer's three systems of "sustaining," "distributing," and "regulating" into "accumulation and renovation," "creative action," and "ordering." For

most of the work, these are known by the more earthy metaphors of “stomach,” “heart,” and “head.” Indeed, threesomes pervade Capelo’s thinking: stomach, heart, and head become lower, middle, and upper class, for example, or, in another place, egoism, altruism, and idealism or yet again commerce, association, and justice. Capelo draws on his own earlier philosophical work for other trichotomies: “The true trinity of God, the spirit, and the moral law” or “the trinity of modern times: causality, individuation, and dependence” (1:144).

But neither the theory nor the empirics is really the glory of this work. Its glory is its author: by turns visionary, passionate, obsessional, nationalist, technocratic, and reformist. The very prose itself has a variety that both delights and exasperates. There are extended metaphors, extravagant diatribes, and witty sarcasms. But there are also sober preachings, formal analysis, and sentimental asides. The mixture makes for exciting but often erratic reading. In volume 1, page 48, we find the description of an elegant park from which memory “took across the seas the fame of the diminutive foot and proverbial grace and beauty of the Liman woman.” The next page starts a major section on Lima’s sewers.

The four volumes, or books, of *Sociología* embody Capelo’s Spencerian design. Book 1 introduces the city itself—its physical setting and infrastructure as well as its basic demographics (human beings are the “infrastructure” of society for Capelo.) Books 2–4 are then meant to cover the three great systems: *la vida nutritiva* (the economic system or stomach), *la vida relacional* (public opinion, industrial governance, and social institutions—the heart), and *la vida intelectual* (schooling and expertise—the head). As noted earlier, the last section outgrew the present work and achieved separate publication. But even in the three main volumes, the overall approach changes steadily. Book 1 is largely data based and more or less factual. Book 2 comprises general sociological interpretation based on a mixture of solid data, inside knowledge, and eclectic theory. Book 3, although still considerably informed by data, is mainly directed at contemporary national politics, which had just seen the transition to civilian rule.

The work opens with a grand panorama of the physical setting of city, perched on a thin wedge of rising savannah only 60 kilometers wide, under the shadow of the massive western cordillera of the Andes and watered by the Rimac River, which descends almost 5,000 meters in 160 kilometers. Just as the mountains confront the sea, so too the colonizers confront the colonized: Lima is founded by “a mix of two races, one too much humiliated to give account of its proper merits, the other too arrogant to recognize the values of others, both weak in spirit of initiative and little confident in the extent of individual power, one not well accustomed to give orders, the other not accustomed to obey, one the heir of moral cowardice, the other of a thousand crimes and evils” (1:22). The transition from the

detailed water velocity measurements of page 20 to this dramatic moral language on page 22 is characteristic of both the book and the man. (This review will include more than the usual share of such quotes, because Capelo's language is one of his most striking characteristics.)

After this grand opening, Capelo covers infrastructure of all kinds: not only the all-important water, but also buildings, roads, lighting, telephones, trams, railroads, and cultivated lands (the last is simply another section on water, because cultivation is possible only through irrigation). He then paints a demographic portrait of the city by race, age, gender, and marital status. The numbers are not very trustworthy, as Capelo knows well. But book 1 closes with a detailed table, based on official data, of the 3,432 establishments in Lima in 1890, roughly one per twenty inhabitants of working age (1:127–30). In four pages, we get an intimate portrait of the diverse life of a growing city. There are 137 types of shops (or in some cases individual occupations), including 554 corner shops selling groceries, fruits, and vegetables, 482 restaurants, cafes, and bars, 80 carpenter shops, 69 coal yards, 60 hatmakers, 42 drugstores, right down to the 9 basket makers, 6 photographers, 5 fireworks makers, 4 tinsmiths, 3 horse merchants, and 1 chemical laboratory. Suddenly, the city comes alive.

Book 2 takes up the first of Capelo's systems, Lima's "stomach" – in later terms, its system of production. Capelo here abandons trichotomies for a dichotomy reminiscent of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Karl Marx: the division between primary producers and those who live off the surplus of primary production. Thus, there are agricultural, industrial, transport, commercial, and transient workers on the one hand, and there are services and professions, functionaries, soldiers, rentiers, and "parasites" on the other. Capelo then remakes this division within primary producers, since for him, contractors and large-scale entrepreneurs are not really primary producers, but manipulators who expropriate not only working men but also the true experts who actually know how to undertake and manage a serious project (2:129–34).

All collective enterprise begins as a castle of cards, which the least movement of the air blows to the ground. But if that movement does not take place in the first moments, the little family of spiders begins to spin its web and little by little the house of cards gains solidity and assures its connections. . . . making its meal of the little flies that it finds on its way, and finishes by constituting a solid system capable of defying a hurricane (2:135–36)

He will later caricature those who create such houses of cards (3:66–72), giving a wonderfully sarcastic description of a day in the life of a typical manipulator of public opinion.

The main body of book 2, however, is a comprehensive review of the occupations of Lima. From the lowest to the highest, Capelo gives for each

type of worker a rough count, an estimate of income, and a description of life conditions, internal status, economic vulnerability, typical life course, and mobility prospects. Probably derived from Capelo's own experience and files, these passages are rich in detail, giving the reader a lively (but quite idiosyncratic) sense of all types of work and life in the city, from the peons in the field through the rural aristocracy of workers (the carters) to the varieties of absentee landlords, the several kinds of gardeners, the seamstresses (mostly women fallen on hard times through loss of family support), the casual workers who wait on the street corner, and the strolling peddlers whose vicissitudes are chronicled in almost romantic detail. The big merchants and capitalists are handled roughly, but it is small financiers like pawnbrokers who draw Capelo's special ire, for they suck savings and capital out of the lower classes. (Annual interest rates are around 60%, and most pledges are eventually forfeited.)

Throughout, Capelo espouses an ethic of self-actualization through work:

Lord and master of himself, [man] is only able to be happy when, contemplating himself in the height of moral perfection to which he has arrived, he knows that that perfection is his own work, his exclusive labor; . . . that substantial perfection which raises him to the contemplation of the Supreme Being, of that being who creates worlds not by making valleys of tears, but true workshops of incessant labor, where his creatures . . . try to come closer to him without ceasing and always by their own effort. (2:97)

This mixture of sympathy, puritanism, abstract religiosity, and work ethic constitutes Capelo's ambivalent morality. He is genuinely sympathetic to the lower classes and genuinely antipathetic to exploitation, but he is also confident that the guidance of engineers will provide work and moral projects for all and that meaningful life lies only in that work.

Because Capelo conducts his review by sectors rather than by statuses, each sectoral discussion crosses the full range of class possibilities. Even a group like the professions ranges from a handful of elite professionals (estimated at 2,000 people) to the lowly and predatory *papelistas*. "Of all the social groups which Lima holds," he tells us, "none is as harmful as those fifty evildoers, whose crimes are hidden behind the papers of the law" (2:102). But as so often in Capelo, sympathy intervenes: "And yet some of those wretches, under the influences of other environments, could have become men of good" (2:103). Among the public employees he similarly contrasts the well-off and dishonorable functionaries with the poorer but honest public workers.

Book 2 closes with Capelo's diagnosis of the origins of Lima's economic problems. He sums all the income totals given for occupations and claims (by implicit invocation of Say's law) that the resulting total annual wage bill will estimate Lima's total product. On this assumption, primary producer surplus over subsistence is relatively much greater than is secondary

producer surplus. Yet because consumption tastes are set by class divisions that cross the primary/secondary divide, middle- and upper-class members of the secondary producer group must inevitably siphon money out of the primary world, by “a thousand means, all immoral” (2:155). By rights, says Capelo, only hard work, investment, morality, and other middle-class virtues deserve achievement and reward (2:160–68). Curiously, although this seems a strongly positivist passage, Capelo eventually condemns positivism as failing to recognize the importance of God, the spirit, and the moral law (2:227).

Book 3 turns from this examination of Lima’s nutritive (economic) life to its “relational life.” Internally this “heart” section is again subdivided into stomach, heart, and head. But Capelo begins with the heart’s head (public opinion) then turning to its stomach (industry), and finally to its own heart (social institutions).

The very prescient analysis of (elite) public opinion regards it as a net or mesh loosely constraining what people can think. By later generations, this section would be read as a study of the “culture” of Peru: its values in religion, philosophy, and nationalism, its sentiments for liberty, truth, tolerance, and the like. But as an occasional positivist, Capelo is concerned here not with empirical culture, but with normative judgment, and he thinks such public opinion is a dubious moral guide for the heart of society, which should take its cue not from an internal guide, but from the “real head” of society—*la vida intelectualiva*, that is, intellectual experts like Capelo himself. Indeed, experts are central throughout the work (e.g., 3:37). Capelo has no problem with a highly centralized, administrative state if that state is listening to the right advice. By contrast, there is almost nothing in the book on the stuff of democracy—legislation, legislative debate, and the like—perhaps because Capelo’s own legislative experience had itself been so unhappy; there had been little democracy in Peru.

There follows a long section regarding the nutritive life of the heart of the community: the industrial policy problem. This analysis focuses strongly on the dynamics of internal and external investment, taxes, balance of payments, and other national issues and so drifts away from the earlier community study framework. Capelo combines a liberal position on domestic economy with an understanding of Peru’s new position in the international division of labor. What he cannot see is the coercive power of that international division of labor, which alone possesses the capital necessary for major Peruvian development. Indeed, the book breathes a deeply committed nationalism, particularly in this resentment of foreign capital. As it happened, the 1890s did briefly see independent development in Peru, when foreign capital fled because the great governmental defaults of the preceding years. But by the early 1900s, the new homegrown elites were seduced

by the easy export profits that could be achieved by allowing foreign investment, which returned to Peru once the foreigners forgave the immense foreign debt in exchange for ownership of the national railroads built at such cost in the 1870s. Capelo's view of this exchange is withering. He notes that established industries crush all new local possibilities through government connections, speaking of "the infernal trinity of monopoly, usury, and financialism" (3:155).

Capelo then turns to a general review of societal institutions, continuing his national-level analysis. He begins with religion and politics and then turns to social institutions proper (family, workshop, *salon*, association, club, social classes, and political parties). In his view, most Liman institutions require massive changes if they are to help develop the city and the nation. Religion is the worst. Petrified and wasteful, it immures productive people for life (convents are "tombs of living people"). It preaches church doctrine, when it should preach love of work, care for one's neighbor, hatred of vice, and the evils of laziness, envy, avarice, and egotism.

In discussing political institutions, Capelo emphasizes expertise and planning (3:173) as the best way to achieve liberty, security, and justice, his trinity of governmental functions (3:192). He sees the dangers of tyranny in a national guard, but also admires the safety of Peru under the (authoritarian) Incas (3:187). Indeed, he argues that liberty and authority are correlative (3:193). Authority is the means to the end of liberty, and in any case electoral power simply does not exist in Peru. The executive and the judiciary are the only means of political efficacy. And when Capelo finally does argue that freedom should exist in Peru, the freedom he most desires is freedom to work.

Like any bureaucrat (and positivist), he wants laws to be planned and clear, using his own domain of roads as a long (and negative) example. Similarly, he dislikes the complexity, arbitrariness, and unplanned nature of the tax system. (Peru should increase taxes on the rich, since they won't notice it, and should not crush industry and energy at the bottom of society; 3:229). He is however skeptical about welfare systems, whose problems he illustrates by discussing the high price of death in Lima. Since burial fees (which equal about one-third of a year's subsistence income) include taxes that are designed to aid the poor, the people with the highest death rate (the poor) must borrow money to pay burial fees in order to contribute to a fund to support themselves (3:235–40). A section on popular education (elite and expert education come in book 4) treats popular education as the moral equivalent of roads—a kind of moral infrastructure "designed to conserve in the social mass the capital of enlightenment, habits, and good customs that constitute the patrimony acquired definitely for human society in modern times." But in practice popular education is "badly administered, di-

rected by many heads, all without spirit, without plan, without determined policy" (both quotes 3:242) A long final section on development (the ministry Capelo was soon to head) notes the long heritage of irrationality evident in the fact that different aspects of development had been located in different ministries. More broadly, Capelo objects to weak laws and the domination of contractors and sees a need for corporate housecleaning. He wants effective administrative tribunals to regulate commercial affairs and urges the preferential hiring of Peruvians over foreigners. In short, he has a full positivist and nationalist program.

From politics, Capelo turns to social institutions proper. These are the most fundamental of institutions because they are "most directly located in human nature . . . a record of past civilizations and vanished races" (3:254). Starting with the family and the individual (the first two concentric units of his society), he moves on to the workshop and the salon (the social settings of the "work" of the many and the elite), and then to the union and the club (the respective associations of those two social classes). He then concludes with a general section on social classes and political parties.

When speaking of the individual as a "social institution," Capelo in actuality means national character. On the positive side, his portrayal of the "general qualities of the [Peruvian] race" includes "goodness, generosity, virility of men; sentiments of charity and compassion of women, and their beauty and grace; and [in the men] their enthusiasm for any large enterprise and every elevated sentiment, [in the women] their facility of intuitive perception, [in both] their special love of art" (3:256). But the list of things they lack is also long: self-confidence, consciousness of duty, determination to work, practical sentiment, pride in one's own personality, habit of saving, sobriety of life, modesty, love of study, ideals of truth, justice, and goodness, conservation of health, and of liberty in action. None of these, we are told, is abundant in Lima (3:256–57). Interestingly, apart from the sober Protestant qualities, this is the same picture of the Latin American character that we have already seen in José Vasconcelos, complete with a similar comparison to the United States (3:258).

Although he had treated the family with considerable kindness in book 2, Capelo is now more harsh. He rejects the complex Latin family with its dependent aunts, uncles, and cousins. Those who rise should not be expected to aid their less successful relatives, and those who fall should be proud enough to rise again by their own hard work. Young people should not freeload; North American success reflects a willingness to throw children into the labor market on their own.

As for work, "The man of the people knows that he must go every day to work in his workplace, and the wealthy man knows with equal clarity of perception that daily he must do the honors of his salon" (3:264). In

the middle class, Capelo tells us, the two alternate, while the two extreme classes suffer the loss of the one or the other: pleasant family life or real work. Yet both are necessary. The salon is the place that educates in values, morals, and grace, while the workshop gives material wealth. Although in many other places Capelo underscores the relative precariousness of the middle class (e.g., 3:279), here he emphasizes that middle-class life is preferable. The two extreme classes also produce different kinds of associations: the union/guild and the club. The one grows out of the workshop as the other grows out of the salon. But neither is strong in Lima. Its collective life is “rudimentary.”

As this analysis presages, Capelo is largely Spencerian about class itself. He first argues that social class happens through sedimentation, and he notes that public opinion, industry, and institutions (i.e., *la vida relational*) are what resists external change, in class as in other things. Hence class tends to endure. But he then analogizes (Spencerian) homogeneity to democracy, and heterogeneity to aristocracy, accepting Spencer’s notion that homogeneity leads to heterogeneity via differentiation. He thus arrives at a fully Spencerian definition of (and admiration for) an aristocracy of proper merit. At the same time, he thinks merit is not opposed to democracy but is its major ally, for it leads to an aristocracy of virtue, talent, valor, hard work, character and “all that is noble and elevated” (3:276). Thus, real democracy is, for Capelo, a version of aristocracy. He does not mention any virtue of democracy itself as a practice.

On party politics, Capelo leavens his own disenchantment with rationalist and positivist ideals. Experience had taught Capelo that party politics is always about the leader—*el caudillo*. To be sure, there are always conservatives and liberals, because some people want stability and others want change. And parties do have origins in principles and interests. But they mainly involve affect and personal relationship. Parties arise out of currents in society, but once such currents and parties have started, leading men will be found and will become dominant. Here Capelo is a realist, and as illustrations of his argument, he discusses three major changes in Peruvian politics—in 1854, 1872, and 1895—giving in this short section his basic judgment of recent Peruvian history.

In his peroration, Capelo is the passionate Spencerian and positivist, describing a great evolutionary chain from the smallest organism to the abstract superorganic world. But his ultimate verdict on Lima is negative: “Our institutions are petrified, almost in totality. There is no life, because there is no spirit nor adequate organization. They are moved by acquired velocity, by virtue of their inertia” (3:311). The city should rid itself of all institutions founded on unpaid work—“absurd monstrosities that service an imbecile people” (3:314). It should rid itself of all who are not skilled:

professors who can't teach, judges who can't judge, political bodies without responsibilities, and other such groups. Performance must be rated by external actors, not cronies.

After the passions of book 3, book 4 is an afterthought. Since the main body of Capelo's educational views appears elsewhere, we need here note only the outlines of his discussion. The book opens with a celebration of philosophy and science, which together can transform and improve the world. This is Capelo's credo of positivism and technocracy. The book then sequentially examines the means through which these movements (should) influence society: by example, by writing in periodicals and books, or by teaching in school and university. Book 4 continues familiar themes: the importance of moral rectitude, the centrality of good examples in the household and the workplace, the danger of striving for mere position and advancement rather than because of some kind of authentic calling to professional or intellectual achievement. Despite Capelo's faith in education, this last fear suggests his deep (if implicit) belief in a relatively static and hierarchical society. He often speaks of living in one's "correct position" (4:40), a locution that implies that social rise and fall will be gradual revelations of innate character, as in early Protestantism. Finally, Capelo finds the Liman schools uniformly disastrous. "The best years of a student's life are wasted in torment. . . . They come out of that atmosphere unhealthy, knowing hardly even how to read poorly . . . but with a head full of many things of memory, which have never been understood and which will be forgotten quickly" (4:91). Colleges are much the same: full of bad professors and worse instruction. The curriculum has mistakenly retained useless classics and humanities while cutting science and practical instruction. (In the event, Capelo's 1902 book on education argued similarly for vocational education within the framework of universal elementary education—his positivism thus extended to education, as well.)

The deep message of this immense work lies in its resolute combination of science and reform. Throughout much of late 19th century Europe and its dependencies, a scientifically reformed society was the vision with which the middle class opposed the various traditionalisms of past elites and the radical reconstructions of the socialists. That "is" and "ought" could be combined came naturally to many of the early social scientists. Indeed, social science was almost definitionally a reform project. Doing social science inevitably drove one toward reformist positions, and conversely reformism clearly required a scientific basis. This explains what is, for many a later reader, the almost obtrusive emotionality of Capelo's writing. But social science *was* an emotional business for him. The answers to major "political" questions were derivable from evidence and logic, and Capelo had no patience for those who could not see this fact. This attitude explains, too, the near absence of what a later generation might expect in terms of political

analysis, despite Capelo's often clear vision of immediate political realities. For men like Capelo, politics (as others understood the word) happened only because of scientific error or failure. It is perhaps only his long battle for the indigenous peoples that may have ultimately disabused him of this faith. But one wonders what he thought of Tupac Amaru II and the other ghosts of Flores Galindo's Andean Utopia.

But for us as latter-day readers what matters is that Capelo's emotional faith in his social science turns what might have been a dispassionate and uninteresting mass of data into an intense and idiosyncratic ethnography of a real city and a real society, a real time and place, from the point of view of an intensely committed if utterly idiosyncratic observer. We see him, we see his city, and in that tension, Capelo and Lima both come alive, and with them a whole world of economies, peoples, ideologies, and daily experience. This work is a true classic.