



PROJECT MUSE®

Latin America's Shifting Politics: Virtue, Fortune, and Failure in Peru

Alberto Vergara

Journal of Democracy, Volume 29, Number 4, October 2018, pp. 65-76 (Article)



Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2018.0063>

➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/705718>

Latin America's Shifting Politics

VIRTUE, FORTUNE, AND FAILURE IN PERU

Alberto Vergara

Alberto Vergara is assistant professor of social and political sciences at the Universidad del Pacífico in Lima, Peru. From March through July 2018, he was a Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington, D.C.

On 21 March 2018, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (widely known as PPK) resigned from the presidency of Peru. His vice-president, Martín Vizcarra, succeeded him as chief executive. Less than two years into a five-year term, the 79-year-old former banker and economy minister had opted to leave office rather than face impeachment. Three months earlier, he had survived a first attempt to oust him over corruption charges related to Odebrecht, the giant Brazilian construction firm that is embroiled in Brazil's massive Lava Jato (Car Wash) scandal. The eruption of fresh allegations left PPK with nowhere to turn, however, so he gave up his post rather than suffer certain expulsion.

This sudden downfall, coming so soon after PPK had sidestepped an impeachment drive, came as a surprise. Perhaps it should not have, since his survival the first time around had owed so much to circumstances beyond his control. He had been spared in December 2017 because a portion of the left in Peru's 130-seat unicameral Congress had been unsettled by what it saw as antidemocratic impulses underlying the impeachment campaign. The anti-PPK effort had been led by Keiko Fujimori, the daughter of disgraced ex-president Alberto Fujimori and the leader of the Fuerza Popular party. Fearing that Keiko might be seeking payback for PPK's narrow victory over her in the 2016 presidential runoff, left-wing legislators hung back from supporting impeachment. Joining them in this posture of reluctance had been a dissident faction of *fujimoristas* under Keiko's younger brother Kenji. They had expressed willingness to back PPK in return for a promise to pardon Alberto Fujimori, then serving a 25-year prison term for human-rights abuses. The impeachment vote failed on December 21, and three days later PPK

announced his decision to pardon Alberto Fujimori on “humanitarian” (medical) grounds.

Then in March 2018 came videos released by Keiko Fujimori. These recordings showed PPK aides trying to buy a legislator’s vote with offers of public-works contracts. The PPK presidency was doomed.

There had never been any shortage of expert commentaries listing the many weaknesses and difficulties that PPK—a technocrat elected by the thinnest of margins, and with no party to speak of—would have to overcome during his term.¹ Yet few expected that he would find himself driven from office.

What explains this turn of events? To borrow the language of Niccolò Machiavelli, PPK had been a leader who had lacked *virtù* but had been buoyed up by a measure of *fortuna*. Even though many of the problems that had beset him had been evident and easy to predict, PPK never understood the roots of his weakness, and his poor decisions made things harder for him. Great good fortune might still have saved him, but luck has its limits, and problems that had seemed obscure or at least not so grave back in 2016 had proved enough to sink him. Among these “surprise” sources of trouble one must count the overflowing mess of the Odebrecht affair, as well as the unexpectedly aggressive way in which the right-wing populists of *fujimorismo* chose to go after a right-wing technocrat such as PPK.

What is *fujimorismo*? It might best be described as a political movement made up of several layers of assets. The first—and perhaps most crucial—of these is the memory of Alberto Fujimori’s presidency, which lasted from 1990 to 2000. Early in that period, in April 1992, he carried out a “self-coup,” closing the courts and Congress and usurping their powers. Yet in spite of that, and despite the corruption and human-rights abuses with which he is associated, a large share of Peruvians still see Fujimori as above all the man who brought peace and stability to a country wracked by economic mismanagement and the unbridled violence of the Shining Path terror movement. During his time in office, Fujimori was always reluctant to form a party: The military and a controlled media gave him all the organized support he felt he needed. When his administration collapsed amid a vast corruption scandal, Fujimori fled his native Peru for exile in Japan. At least two-hundred people linked to his rule ended up being sentenced for various offenses.

During the 2000s, sentiment favoring Fujimori began gradually regaining its strength. At decade’s end, Keiko (b. 1975) reached the legal age of eligibility for the presidency, and the *fujimorista* revival really took off. It was she who gave *fujimorismo* its second key asset—a sufficiently well-organized party in a country with no parties. In both 2011 and 2016, she reached the presidential runoff. In the latter year, moreover, Fuerza Popular came out of the elections with a commanding 57 percent majority in Congress.

In brief, Keiko Fujimori inherited symbolic political capital and successfully multiplied it by adding an organizational layer that had previously been lacking. Yet as the story of *fujimorismo*'s relationship with PPK's administration will show, neglecting to construct a layer of commitment to democratic institutions and insisting on a posture of hardened opposition toward first PPK and now Vizcarra have proved to be major problems for *fujimorismo*, Fuerza Popular, and Keiko Fujimori.

PPK: Fortune Without Virtue

No ideological split or flaw in the design of institutions led to the downfall of PPK. Instead, it had more to do with the fragmentation and disorder that mark Peruvian politics, and that have so severely shrunk the capacity for cooperation. The proliferation of politicians who, as Steven Levitsky and Mauricio Zavaleta have pointed out, are opportunistic free agents with very short time horizons precipitates hard and fierce competition that leaves no scope for collective action in the general interest.²

Five centuries ago, Machiavelli wrote that a successful prince must possess both fortune and virtue. He has luck on his side, but he is also skilled and astute enough to channel it in his favor. For a leader to succeed, one of these qualities is not enough; a balance of both is needed. The arrival in power of PPK, and his actions as president of this country of 32 million, can be seen as befitting a prince with fortune but without virtue.

Luck had carried him into the presidency. Two months before first-round elections in April 2016, his candidacy had nose-dived. His support was in the single digits, and all signs pointed to his leaving the race to succeed outgoing president Ollanta Humala. But then Julio Guzmán, who was trailing only Keiko in the polls, was disqualified when election authorities found that his party had broken its own internal rules while putting together his ticket. Guzmán, a U.S.-educated economist and former official of the Inter-American Development Bank, was a younger (albeit less famous and less affluent) version of PPK. Had Guzmán been able to stay in the race, PPK almost certainly would not have been a contender.

By that stage, the contest was to see who would face Keiko Fujimori in the runoff. Enough center-left voters, hoping to keep the radical left out of the second round, switched strategically to PPK to put him in second place: He won 21.1 percent to Keiko's 39.9 percent.

His victory in the second round was more a vote against *fujimorismo*'s association with authoritarianism and corruption than it was an expression of enthusiasm for his candidacy. When Keiko defended Fuerza Popular's general secretary against charges of money laundering and links to drug trafficking, leftist candidate Verónica Mendoza (who had won 18.8 per-

cent in the first round) threw her support behind PPK, campaigning for him in the south where she was strong but Kuczynski was irrelevant. She endorsed his candidacy because she regarded neoliberal continuity as preferable to a government with ties to drug trafficking.³ Even so, PPK barely squeaked by: His margin of victory was less than a quarter of one percent.

While PPK had luck, would he have the virtue needed to cope with the obvious problems facing his presidency? Voters had used him as a tool to block Keiko Fujimori; he needed to build some positive legitimacy of his own. He had to convince his second-round voters that he would defend the platform—centered on support for democracy and the rule of law and opposition to corruption—that had made him president.

The weakness of PPK in Congress made the task of legitimacy-building that much more crucial. He had run on a ticket called *Peruanos por el Cambio*. Like most Peruvian parties, it was a shell used to promote a specific candidate; it had won only eighteen congressional seats, while *Fuerza Popular* had 73 seats. This meant that PPK would need to be able to lead a legislature that he did not control. But any such *institutional* strategy could work only if it was teamed with a *political* strategy to construct presidential legitimacy.

From the outset, however, PPK floundered at both his institutional and his political tasks. Instead of building legitimacy on his support for democracy, the rule of law, and anticorruption, he went back to being the technocratic figure from the first round, preoccupied with orthodox macroeconomic policies and resolved to avoid clashes with the *fujimorista* majority in Congress. As PPK's voters came to realize this, they began to desert him, while few Fujimori supporters were won over. Strongly identified with big transnational economic interests after a long career as a banker, lobbyist, and technocrat, PPK proved neither willing nor able to go against type. During the era of Trump, Brexit, and the global populist wave, PPK settled for an elitist profile. He chose a fellow former economy minister to serve as premier, and filled his cabinet and inner circle with private-sector figures. Only three of his nineteen ministers had run for elective office, while seven were economists.

Predictably, this collection of political neophytes from the executive suites of Lima went in for policies such as shrinking the deficit (even though it stood at just 3 percent of GNP), cutting taxes, and scaling back the bureaucracy and major infrastructure projects. The agenda that won the election was cast aside. The right-of-center technocrats in PPK's administration abandoned anything that might antagonize the right-of-center populists in *Fuerza Popular*. Keeping Congress mollified so that it would go along with plans for modernizing the economy became priority number one.

No example of this was more illustrative than the *fujimoristas'* censuring of education minister Jaime Saavedra in December 2016. Saavedra, a former World Bank official, was the only holdover from Humala's cabinet,

with an impressive record in his post. Fuerza Popular legislators interpellated him over what they claimed were irregularities in procurement contracts, but it was widely understood that what they really objected to was Saavedra's push to impose stronger oversight and quality control on badly run private universities.⁴ The PPK administration abandoned Saavedra and his reforms without much of a fight, hoping thereby to keep the *fujimoristas* "on side" when it came to economic policy. The public's reaction to this pusillanimity could be read in PPK's plummeting approval numbers.

The president should also have realized the dangers that could come from filling the cabinet with private-sector figures. The space for damaging conflicts of interest was vast. These did not take long to surface. Charges that Peru now had a "government of lobbyists" began coming from across the political spectrum. *Fujimoristas* amplified claims that the president had been an unscrupulous lobbyist. Within eighteen months of his close win, PPK had alienated most of his administration's supporters. The problems facing him—whether political, economic, or institutional—had been evident at the time he won the presidency, but he either failed to take them seriously or made bad decisions about them. Favored by fortune but lacking in virtue, PPK set himself up for failure and made his grip on office vulnerable.

Yet his downfall cannot be fully explained by questionable decision making. Indeed, like the narrator in Leonard Cohen's song "The Traitor," PPK might argue that his "shabby ending" as chief executive had been "half my fault" but also "half the atmosphere."

The Unexpected

While PPK did little to counteract predictable threats to his presidency, it is also true that some of these pitfalls turned out to be worse than he, his ministers, and many analysts could have anticipated. In particular, no one foresaw 1) how incessantly virulent the *fujimoristas* would prove to be; and 2) how far the Lava Jato scandal would reach into Peru.

Many in PPK's administration had worked for Alberto Fujimori in the 1990s. They had ties to the neoliberal economic reforms that the onetime agronomist and college dean had introduced shortly after his election in mid-1990. It was no stretch to imagine many of PPK's ministers serving in a Keiko Fujimori cabinet (indeed, some might even have preferred that). It was hard to conceive that this political kinship would crumble under PPK. When Keiko had faced Humala in the 2011 runoff, PPK had been one of her enthusiastic supporters. He was eager to help her defend Alberto Fujimori's neoliberal economic model against Humala, who was widely thought to favor a leftist approach reminiscent of Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez.

From the outset of PPK's presidency, however, Fuerza Popular made plain its intention to oppose him at every turn. No one seemed to grasp

how serious this stance was. Every day, the *fujimoristas* vowed that they would never work with PPK; every day, the experts urged him to reach an accord with this hostile congressional majority. He tried. The president gave Fuerza Popular a congenial education minister and central-bank board of directors as well as other friendly cabinet officials. He even froze some policies related to public spaces for memory and human rights that *fujimoristas* dislike.

Yet the more ground PPK gave, the more Fuerza Popular and its allies attacked him. Their outrage filled the media. Congress gave ministers no rest, constantly finding pretexts to summon them for questions and explanations. The daily threats and censurings were paralyzing, yet the government seemed baffled. How could *fujimorismo*, a movement that PPK's technocrats and administrators (little used to dealing with populism) saw as an ideological relative of theirs, be so set on sabotaging them?

Why were the *fujimoristas* in Congress bent on undermining the executive in a way not seen since the 1960s? Some of this was doubtless a carryover from a longer process in interbranch relations. Congress had for some time been growing more aggressive in its dealings with the executive—forcing Humala's prime minister to resign in 2015, for instance. As political scientists would say, "horizontal accountability" was increasing, and Humala had felt compelled to engage in more negotiations with Congress over policies than previous presidents had gone in for.⁵ That this trend should continue under PPK was not unusual. Indeed, it might even have been expected to gain strength after an election in which one side (PPK's) received the bulk of its votes from greater Lima (population almost ten million) and other large cities, while the other side (Keiko's) dominated most of the rest of the country.

A second reason for the heatedness of *fujimorista* opposition lay in the movement's lack of full consolidation as a party. Consolidated, stable political parties are institutions that lengthen the time spans in which politicians think. These longer time horizons, in turn, reduce irrationality and uncertainty within the political system.⁶ *Fujimorismo*, many commentators assumed, had come close enough to consolidating itself as a party to exert a stabilizing influence, tamping down irrationality and easing cooperation. This assumption was wrong. Far from acting like a party, *fujimorismo*, even with its large congressional majority, continued to behave like an ad hoc political vehicle little concerned with long-term rationality.

A Price Worth Paying?

In Congress, Fuerza Popular had little in the way of a policy agenda or proposals (even short-term ones). Instead, it poured its energies into maneuvers meant to stymie PPK. Despite warnings that such hostility would cause Congress, Fuerza Popular, and Keiko Fujimori herself to lose popularity—as indeed all did—the price was deemed worth paying.

A *fujimorismo* that cared little about public rejection was not a phenomenon that anyone had anticipated, but it was a reality.

What can explain this political irrationality? There seem to be two reasons for it. First, Keiko's second straight defeat in her quest for the presidency (Humala had beaten her by 51.5 to 48.5 percent in 2011) appears to have distorted the *fujimoristas'* view of Peruvian politics. Despite the absence of compelling evidence, they continue to insist that PPK won by fraud—a viewpoint that of course tends to reinforce their “eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth” approach to political contention. Convinced she had been robbed of the presidency, Keiko vowed to use her congressional majority to bring down the pretender. This is something new and ominous. The three presidential elections leading up to 2016 had been vigorously fought, but in none of them had a major contender openly questioned the legitimacy of the result. Such a move, and the pattern of behavior that it has unleashed, imperils the future of Peruvian democracy. The *fujimoristas* were not intellectually or emotionally prepared for the possibility that they could lose another presidential election, and the shock of this unforeseen setback drove them to seek immediate revenge. As the Black Keys song “Little Black Submarines” reminds us, “everybody knows that a broken heart is blind.”

The second reason is the system of informal rules that regulates Peru's partyless politics. As Levitsky and Zavaleta explain, the Peruvian political ecosystem lacks solid political organizations. Instead, it is dominated by free agents who seek to run on the tickets of formal parties despite having no organic relationship with them.⁷ These free agents have learned to do without parties except episodically. The dynamic is self-reinforcing: A political entrepreneur rents a spot in a vehicle registered to compete in elections, and the shell party in turn lives off the money that this brings in. Although Fuerza Popular has become a more structured political vehicle, its model does not differ greatly from the others in Peru. If Keiko Fujimori's prospects of reaching a runoff were to vanish tomorrow, free agents would find political shelter in another organization the very next day.

This “business model” hampers party solidity. If each campaign season sees places on party tickets being rented out, democracy's representative character suffers. That the places are auctioned not merely to individuals but to economic interests only makes matters worse. This is becoming ever more common in Peruvian politics, with the *fujimorista* brand being an especially popular vehicle. Various business sectors eager to avoid government regulation are now nesting within *fujimorismo*. Members of Congress, mayors, and governors act as agents for transport companies, agricultural interests, or owners of private universities, all of them seeking privileges such as exemption from public oversight. Informal and even illegal businesses are now getting in on this game: Parties have begun selling seats in Congress to informal mining interests

and even drug-trafficking organizations. In the 2016 campaign, for instance, Keiko Fujimori promised that if she won, she would relax efforts to control the informal miners who have been pillaging Peru's portion of the Amazon basin.⁸ It is also probably not altogether a coincidence that members of Congress and other individuals close to *fujimorismo* have become embroiled in drug-trafficking investigations.

Another interest group that has embraced this brand of politics comprises Peru's evangelical Christian churches, whose total membership amounts to around 15 percent of Peru's population.⁹ Before the 2016 election, Keiko Fujimori had been working to moderate her conservative discourse on social issues. But needing resources and organization to keep her campaign going, she aligned herself with the evangelical churches—which had been among the critics of Jaime Saavedra's educational policies relating to sexuality and gender—in opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage.¹⁰

The Saavedra controversy showed the “rent-a-party” model in action. The education minister had crossed the “red lines” of two key stakeholders in *fujimorismo*: the evangelical churches and the owners of low-quality private universities. Each group had direct interests not easily amenable to compromise. Each wanted rapid and dramatic action to protect its interests, and each had bought its way into Fuerza Popular. Hence the heated interpellation of Saavedra, who was subjected to hours of hostile questioning on the floor of Congress. Private interests were served, while public interests (in quality education, for instance) took second place.

We should also note that while these interests will not let Keiko Fujimori quell their zeal for their own agendas, they likewise will not curb her decision making in other areas so long as she helps them with what they care about. That is, she does nothing to restrain the ambitions of these private interests, and they make no move to rein in any irrational decisions that she may make for herself or her party. This is not the stuff of political stability.

If Fuerza Popular did not foresee losing the presidency, PPK does not seem to have foreseen how vehemently determined to topple him the *fujimoristas* would turn out to be. Only after almost eighteen months did the president begin to stand up to them. By then, however, his popularity had cratered. The public had realized how weak was his commitment to his prodemocracy mandate, and how ready he was to give in to Keiko Fujimori. Having done nothing to reinforce the legitimacy of his presidency, PPK went into political freefall with three and a half years left in his term. He and his aides then came up with a plan to turn things around, but his proposed cure would prove worse than the malady.

Pardoning Fujimori

In the eyes of PPK's strategists, the pardon of Alberto Fujimori became the coin that would buy peace with the *fujimoristas*. By the end

of 2017, Alberto Fujimori had served slightly less than half his 25-year sentence. It was well known that Keiko did not want her father freed, fearing that despite his age (he was born in 1938) he might challenge her for the leadership of Fuerza Popular. Her brother Kenji, who had won more votes than any other member of Congress, had said repeatedly that his main goal in politics was the release of his father, and had denounced those around his sister who maneuvered against this. The PPK administration saw in this rift between siblings a chance to split *fujimorismo* and break up its huge bloc in Congress. Freeing Alberto Fujimori, the reasoning went, would lead to the rise of a Kenji-led faction allied with PPK while reducing Keiko to the head of a smaller grouping. All that remained was to choose the right moment for putting the plan in motion.

The opportunity came in December 2017, with Fuerza Popular's attempt to impeach PPK for his links with Odebrecht. The Lava Jato investigations in Brazil had revealed that Odebrecht had spent US\$29 million on kickbacks in Peru.¹¹ On numerous occasions, PPK had categorically denied that he had ever had any contractual ties to the company. Then he suddenly admitted, with no prompting, that he had in fact had a contract with the Brazilian firm. There followed revelations of many other dealings between Odebrecht and companies owned by PPK or his closest associate. The *fujimoristas* rose to the bait. An impeachment crisis was on.

The administration quietly made a deal with Kenji to commute his father's sentence on medical grounds if Kenji could pry away enough Fuerza Popular members in Congress to sink impeachment. On December 21, the impeachment vote went ahead. Kenji and ten of his colleagues refused to vote with their party, saving PPK and leading to Kenji's announcement that he would create his own grouping and ultimately his own party. Three days later, Alberto Fujimori left prison a free man and headed to a hospital.

If losing the 2016 runoff had triggered irrationality on the part of Keiko Fujimori, the splitting of her party and the release of her father seemed to precipitate a thirst for vengeance. Added to this was the ire of the left. Leftists had backed PPK twice, first to win the presidency over Keiko and then to help shield him from impeachment, but they regarded Alberto Fujimori as anathema and saw the PPK-Kenji deal as an act of betrayal. There were angry protests in the streets of Lima. PPK had on his hands not only a vengeful Keiko but also a vengeful left. His days in office were numbered.

A new impeachment motion was introduced, this time by left-wing members of Congress. The official reason was new evidence concerning PPK's once-hidden dealings with Odebrecht. But beneath that lay leftists' fury at how the president had made a mockery of them by liberating Alberto Fujimori. The impeachment vote was set for 22 March 2018. The result seemed uncertain; it was unclear whether the left and the anti-PPK

elements of Fuerza Popular would find the 87 votes they needed. Then, on March 21, came the release of the so-called Kenjivideos. These recordings showed PPK emissaries and Kenji offering money and public-works contracts to a *fujimorista* lawmaker whom they were trying to woo away from Fuerza Popular and the pro-impeachment camp.

It had been a set-up. The legislator had been sent to play “hesitant” and secretly record the negotiations. But none of that mattered. With the corruption blown wide open, PPK resigned. Authorities immediately moved to bar Kuczynski from leaving the country for eighteen months while the corruption allegations were investigated.¹² Congress suspended Kenji Fujimori, and he too is under investigation. In effect, his sister had politically assassinated him. Like a character from a Quentin Tarantino movie, Keiko Fujimori had visited her revenge upon everyone.

Competition versus Cooperation

Guillermo O’Donnell wrote that an institutionalized democracy is a system of “competitive cooperation,”¹³ a delicate balance between electoral struggle and long-lasting, shared institutional commitments. In Peruvian democracy, the balance has been lost: Short-term competition is smothering cooperation. The system is dominated by political actors with short-term ambitions that they value very highly and from which they do not seem to be able to detach themselves. Programs and ideas are brought to their knees by a system of competition whose fundamental mechanism is the sale of spaces in electoral vehicles. Once politics becomes dominated by actors representing vested interests that buy their way into parties and then pursue their agendas without sparing a thought for the party and its longer-term interests, the moderating effects of a longer time horizon vanish. Today vanquishes tomorrow. Competition overcomes cooperation.

While PPK engineered his own downfall—a technocratic manipulator too clever for his own good—he did so amid a gradual degradation of Peru’s institutional and representative systems. As the economy boomed, the representative system was left to deteriorate, and the need to strengthen the rule of law was forgotten. In this country of enormous resources, the spirit of “win now” flattened concern for the institutions that were supposed to secure a common future. And though the erosion has long been in process, its most recent manifestations have been new. Indeed, we have come to witness a new political low: short-term squabbles among politicians lusting to gain revenge or avoid jail.

In another new and ominous development, we now see the dynamics of political “short-termism” creeping into the governance of economic institutions. For decades, Peru has prided itself on its efficient economic management.¹⁴ Institutions such as the Finance Ministry, the national tax authority, the Central Reserve Bank, and many regulatory bodies were run according to clear long-term plans that were kept insulated from

politics. Over the last two years, however, this has begun to change. The Central Reserve Bank's seven-member board now includes both José Chlimper, who is Fuerza Popular's general secretary, and Rafael Rey, who was Keiko's running mate in 2011. This sort of politicization is unprecedented in contemporary Peru. Meanwhile, between July 2016 (when PPK assumed the presidency) and June 2018, Peru had four successive finance ministers. Even a few years ago, this kind of volatility in such a key office would have been unthinkable. Institutional degradation is now claiming beachheads on what were once "islands of efficiency," threatening to make them like the dysfunctional political mainland, where the ethos of short-term contentiousness has shoved aside prudent mindfulness of the need for long-term cooperation.

The PPK presidency crashed and burned not because of ideology or institutional rules, but because the consequences of letting Peruvian democracy's system of representation wither away could no longer be avoided. Now, those consequences are becoming ever more damaging and visible.¹⁵ It would be naïve to believe that the political dynamics of confrontation deployed by Fuerza Popular against PPK have come to an end with the latter's departure. *Fujimorismo* was a fleeting enemy of the defeated administration, but it is a constant foe of the construction of democracy and the rule of law in Peru. The *fujimoristas* have grown strong because they have mastered the rules of a politics governed by opportunism, dirty money, and hostility to cooperation. From within the confines of the short-termist quagmire, the long-term statecraft required to consolidate the rule of law is impossible. There is hope, however, since Peru's citizenry is tired of the opportunist manner of doing politics. If solid democratic leadership can match citizens' dissatisfaction, the country might head toward a better future.

Will President Vizcarra prove able to rise to this challenge and opportunity? At the time of this writing in August 2018, he seems to have realized what PPK never did: that anticorruption and political reforms can no longer be postponed. After a huge corruption scandal involving the judiciary and politicians, Vizcarra has proposed four main constitutional reforms to be put to a referendum soon. He is seeking a reform of the judiciary, closer control of political parties' funding, a shift back to a bicameral Congress, and term limits for national legislators.

Whatever comes of all this, the very fact that the new president has placed political and institutional reforms at the very core of his agenda—and that he is seeking a popular vote to legitimize them—stands as a remarkable and unexpected development in today's Peru. Where once technocratic legitimacy was the order of the day and the economy was the government's main focus, now popular legitimacy and political reform seem to be taking center stage. Vizcarra has been trying to tap into popular indignation, and he seems to grasp that strengthening the rule of law will require a certain tolerance for conflict with the legislature

and the forces of *fujimorismo*. Will he have the *virtù* and the *fortuna* to prevail? It remains to be seen.

NOTES

1. Eduardo Dargent and Paula Muñoz, "Peru: A Close Win for Continuity," *Journal of Democracy* 27 (October 2016): 145–58.

2. See Steven Levitsky and Mauricio Zavaleta, "Why No Party-Building in Peru?" in Steven Levitsky et al., eds., *Challenges of Party Building in Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 412–39.

3. "Verónica Mendoza: 'No nos hemos limitado a decir 'votaré así', hacemos campaña contra el fujimorismo,'" *La República* (Lima), 30 May 2016, <https://larepublica.pe/politica/771974-veronika-mendoza-no-nos-hemos-limitado-decir-votare-asi-hacemos-campana-contra-el-fujimorismo>.

4. "A Small Act of National Suicide in Peru," *Economist*, 17 December 2016, www.economist.com/the-americas/2016/12/17/a-small-act-of-national-suicide-in-peru.

5. See Alberto Vergara and Aaron Watanabe, "Delegative Democracy Revisited: Peru Since Fujimori," *Journal of Democracy* 27 (July 2016): 148–57.

6. On time horizons, see Guillermo O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 5 (January 1994): 55–69; on the rationalist role of parties, see Kurt Weyland, *Making Waves: Democratic Contention in Europe and Latin America Since the Revolutions of 1848* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

7. Levitsky and Zavaleta, "Why No Party-Building in Peru?"

8. Mitra Taj, "Peru's Illegal Gold Miners Back Fujimori's Vow to End Crackdown," Reuters, 31 May 2016, www.reuters.com/article/us-peru-election-mining-idUSKCN0YM1R1.

9. According to the 2007 census, the evangelical share of the population was 12.5 percent. A decade later, specialists agree, the number must have increased.

10. "Keiko Fujimori Says Rape Victims Should 'Keep Their Babies,'" Telesur, 5 May 2016, <http://wp.telesurty.net/english/news/Keiko-Fujimori-Says-Rape-Victims-Should-Keep-Their-Babies-20160505-0041.html>.

11. Malu Gaspar, "Una trama que vale un Perú: Ascenso y caída de Odebrecht en Latinoamérica," *Piauí* (São Paulo), July 2017, <https://piaui.folha.uol.com.br/material/una-trama-que-vale-un-peru>.

12. Mitra Taj and Marco Aquino, "Peru Prosecutors Seek to Bar Toppled President from Leaving Country: Source," Reuters, 21 March 2018, www.reuters.com/article/us-peru-politics/peru-prosecutors-seek-to-bar-toppled-president-from-leaving-country-source-idUSKBN1GX27L.

13. O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy," 59.

14. Eduardo Dargent, *Technocracy and Democracy in Latin America: The Experts Running Government* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

15. For a fuller version of this analysis, see Alberto Vergara and Aaron Watanabe, "Presidents Without Roots: Understanding Regime Transformation in Peru Since 1990," *Latin American Perspectives*, forthcoming.