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El Símbolo católico indiano (1598) de Luis Jerónimo de Oré: saberes coloniales y los problemas de la evangelización en la región andina by Catalina Andrango-Walker (review)

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BOOK REVIEWS

Andrango-Walker, Catalina. *El Símbolo católico indiano (1598) de Luis Jerónimo de Oré: saberes coloniales y los problemas de la evangelización en la región andina*. Iberoamericana / Vervuert, 2018. 237 pp. ISBN: 978-84-16922-90.

El Símbolo católico indiano (1598) de Luis Jerónimo de Oré: Saberes coloniales y los problemas de la evangelización en la región andina by Catalina Andrango-Walker is a beautifully thought-out and thoroughly-researched critical study of a previously under-read colonial text. Published in 1598, the *Símbolo* remained marginalized until the 1992 facsimile edition by Antonine Tibesar, with studies by Noble David Cook, Julián Heras and Luis Enrique Ford. Since then, it has been the object of study of several well-known critics and historians. Andrango-Walker's work moves the focus on Oré's first publication away from the expansion of Catholicism in Peru toward a broader, more important view of the *Símbolo* as a very early questioning of the imperial construction of the New World *other*. In it, she makes a convincing case for *criollo* identity in its most nascent form as early as 1598.

Chapter 1 presents a brief biography of Oré as translator, preacher, and representative of the Franciscan Order in Spain. This chapter also discusses his identity, noting that he was an *indiano* or child of Spaniards, born in Huamanga. Thus, his place of enunciation was between two cultures: the indigenous and the European. Oré used this construction of identity to claim authority to write the *Símbolo*: he was a witness to the events he was recounting, as well as a participant since he was also an itinerant preacher. The chapter also details the contours of early *criolla* society in Peru and contextualizes Oré's views within the work of Bartolomé de las Casas.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to the analysis of the natural history and study of Andean ethnography that Oré introduces in the *Símbolo*. Andrango-Walker shows that Oré did not espouse the classical humanist geography of the world in three parts (Asia, Africa and Europe). Neither did he support the theories of climatic determinism, stating that the population of Peru was not devoid of reason or morality simply because of where they lived. Instead he considered the Andean population to be as rational and capable as any of understanding and accepting Catholicism, particularly since they were already monotheists.

Chapter 3 discusses the elements of the colony that Oré believed competed favorably with those of Spain: universities, convents, churches, and proof of the religiosity of the people. Most especially, however, Oré believed that *criollos* were as intellectually gifted and well-educated as their Peninsular counterparts. He placed

himself and his family in the *Símbolo* as examples of the *criollo* worthy of respect, thereby enhancing his authority to write the *Símbolo*.

In Chapter 4, Andrango-Walker discusses the object of Oré's intense search: an adequate methodology for the transmission of the articles of Catholic faith to the Andean people. First the author analyzes the rhetorical models that Oré adapted including *De procuranda indorum salute* by José de Acosta, several pastoral texts from the Tercer Concilio Limense and the treatises of Luis de Granada. In the second half of the chapter, Andrango-Walker analyzes two examples of *cantos* or musical pieces that Oré translated into quechua. The seven *cantos* in Oré's text are adaptations of a work originally attributed to Saint Athanasius, and their use was designed to invite the active participation in and *performance* of the Catholic faith by the Andean people. With this, Oré meant to counteract the violence with which conversion to Catholicism was imposed upon the indigenous of Peru.

In addition to her valuable critical study, Andrango-Walker includes in the volume two appendixes that contain correspondence and other laudatory documents by leading *criollo* intellectuals of Oré's time. These works indicate that Oré's work broadly represented their thinking about the highly rational nature of the Andean people, the struggle of the *criollo* to articulate his place in the new society, and the role and necessity of catechizing the indigenous population to carry out the imperial project.

The strengths of Andrango-Walker's study are many. She successfully places Oré within his time and place of enunciation. Her careful reading of the *Símbolo* helps us to see the double-voice in the Franciscan's text. On the one hand, he attributes great rationality to the Andean people, seeming to be a radical defender of the Amerindians. However, on the other hand, he espouses conversion of the New World peoples as a necessary first-step to the conquering of Peru by Spain. Andrango-Walker's meticulous research and abundant notation in the book help the reader to understand in detail the points she is trying to make. Her analysis of the translated *cantos* is essential to understanding this hybrid artistic creation by Oré. By turning the conversion process into a questioning on the part of the indigenous congregation of their prior, pagan beliefs, the *cantos* are a means for bridging two cultures through music and translation.

If there is anything I might criticize in Andrango-Walker's book, it is the numerous typos and grammar mistakes. I understand that the editing process is difficult and by necessity rapid. These errors do however detract from a wonderful book. Also, she cross-references her own work (see chapter 2, for example) and repeats a great deal. Perhaps some reorganization of the material could have prevented this. Nevertheless, this is an excellent research work that deserves to be read with care.

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