Indians and Mestizos in the "Lettered City"

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Colonial Andean texts become key windows for studying the discursive formation of identities and the politics that underlie them, since in writing, Indian and mestizo intellectuals found a crucial tool to convey their social and political aspirations and worldviews. The process of identity formation is an important aspect of colonial ethno-genesis, which also involves the conscious efforts of the colonized to redefine themselves and their “others” in situations of social distress and upheaval. Karen Powers’s notion of ethno-genesis as a constant re-creation of ethnicity helps us understand changes in group and individual identity. In the Andean context, the interethnic encounters Spanish colonialism provoked through migration produced such a re-creation, a process of contention in which the disparate forces of the colonized and the colonizers gave birth to a distinctive society in which Andeans “reinvented themselves as a culture.”

In colonial Peru, interethnic encounters took place in different regions but mostly in Lima, a unique cosmopolitan city in the viceroyalty. Uprooted Indian immigrants (mitayos, artisans, yanaconas [native retainer subject to a colonial overlord]) of different ethnicities from the highlands, the coast, and perhaps from the Amazon rainforest had come to reside and sojourn in the “city of Kings,”
as had a significant portion of Afro Peruvians. In these diverse communities, Spaniards, Indians, and other castes came to coexist in places such as the segregated Indian town of El Cercado and other Indian neighborhoods, including San Lázaro, La Magdalena, and Santa Ana. Lima was especially a meeting place for native authorities from the Audiencia of Lima, who converged on the royal court while carrying through judicial appeals—a task that usually resulted in prolonged sojourns in the city.

As the general interplay between native Andeans and Spanish peoples deepened with the implementation of the Toledan reforms in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a constant redefinition of Indian authority and identity boundaries transpired that took on renewed impetus as the Bourbon policies advanced in the eighteenth century. Andean writers reconstructed the images of themselves and their colonial “others” as native authorities were stripped of political power in their communities, losing control over the communal means of life and ultimately becoming the target of a systemic attack on indigenous culture that took on racial connotations.

While images of the self and the colonial “others” featured prominently in Andean texts, the practices of writing to top authorities in the kingdom and visiting the court in Spain were also a performance of identity and power that allowed for the contestation of colonial stereotypical constructions of the colonized and the redefinition of identities in ways that strengthened Andeans’ struggles for social and political empowerment. Andean intellectuals presented themselves as capable and legitimate noble subjects, envisioning themselves as members of knightly orders, wearing Spanish clothing, and carrying weapons. As knights of the Indian republic, they “naturally” sought admission to the priesthood, schools, and universities and ultimately would crown themselves as alternative kings.

Constructing identities of the self and the colonial “others” through discourse was a political as much as a cultural process, a discursive and communicative operation that seems to have functioned as a cultural negotiation with the Spanish value system, intended to gain the acquiescence of the royal interlocutor and the rights Andean elites felt entitled to as a result of having accepted Christianity and provided tribute and service to the crown. Functioning as a sort of inverted Andean mañay (a religious compromise between conquerors and conquered to achieve social peace in pre-colonial times), Andean intellectuals adopted such Iberian notions and symbols as pureza de sangre and expected to be entitled to social privileges. Thus, the ideas of membership in the Catholic priesthood, access to Western education, and belonging to knightly orders make sense—less as unproblematic acculturation than as a strategic response to pressing historical and political needs. The way intellectual Andeans used these values and symbols, however, differed from that of Spanish authors. For Andeans, these were struggles to shed the imposed identity of “Indians” and perpetual pupils and
neophytes and to become “old Christians,” less in the spiritual regard than as an avenue for social self-assertion and eventually ethnic autonomy under Spanish rule.

The process of identity formation was a contested one in which political and religious imaginaries were inextricably connected. The ways the Christian language and concepts were used reveal Andean scholars’ awareness of the politics of religion in a colonial setting, which reverberates in every folio of their manuscripts. They wrestled to define themselves as the most devoted and oldest Christians in the land, an anxious trope that unveils spirituality as a highly contentious field in which Andean intellectuals’ political understanding of Christianity featured prominently. The political needs of an “Indian nation” (Indian nobles of different ethnicities and their mestizo relatives), struggling to redefine the republic of Indians as equivalent in all respects to its Spanish counterparts, led Andeans to fight over the meaning of Christianity and the power to minister it in the Andes. Educated Indians and mestizos launched legal and textual battles that generated a rich record for the study of colonial ethno-genesis: the colonized’s social and discursive strategies to forge and refashion religious and political identities to overcome the rigid colonial social and ethnic hierarchies and emerge as a unified non-Spanish ethnic body (Indian nation) entitled to remain distinctive in times of deepening social unrest.

This chapter addresses the Andean discursive formation of identity in a threefold manner. First, it describes the self-construction of Andeans as nobles, as they simultaneously moved closer to and departed from a European understanding of social differences and allegiance to the king. Because Andeans also constructed their identities in a relational and oppositional manner, with the point of reference always the Spaniards’ religious, social, and political identification, they portrayed themselves as the Spaniards’ opposites. Second, the chapter examines the construction of colonial subalternity in Andean scholarship—elite Andeans’ perceptions of Indian commoners and other colonial subordinates, such as women, blacks, and other castas. Third, Andean writers consistently commented on the colonizer’s behavior and nature, which configured their construction of oppositional identities. The second half of the chapter discusses at length the more salient discursive aspects of Andean religiosity through the ways Christianity was articulated and religious identities were defined.

TRANSFORMING INDIAN ELITES INTO COLONIAL NOBLES

The legal and discursive campaigns by Andean intellectual and leaders for social reaffirmation and the many individual petitions by caciques seeking to partake in the public performance of power were also struggles for the redefinition of their identities. At stake was the representation of Indian elites as an Indian nation of
noble subjects, shedding the status of “Indians” to wrestle respect from the colonizers and create a niche for themselves. These efforts brought Andeans closer to colonial power standards and cultural values as they strove to actualize a reciprocal relationship with the king. Requests for mercedes (public favors adapted as forms of attaining justice), for example, entailed a kind of writing that situated the petitioner within the space of the colonizer’s culture, and they allow a glimpse of the politics of Indian identity formation. Without overtly questioning the colonial ascription of “indios,” the writers proclaimed that they were first and foremost Christians and loyal vassals of the king, a first step toward an exposé of their “good service.” This language constitutes the Andean bid to share the religious and political universe of the European colonizer.

In approximately 1677, Jerónimo Lorenzo Limaylla advanced a rendition of the Indian “good service” theme in his “Memorial” to petition for the creation of a Santa Rosa knight order for Indian nobles. Claiming to be speaking on behalf of the caciques principales and governors from the entire kingdom of Peru, “all those Nations,” Limaylla attempted a negotiation of the noble privilege: “The Indians from the kingdom do not lack [merits] because they have been serving Y. M. [Your Majesty] for hundreds of years . . . paying tributes and rates as well as the caciques and governors attending to their obligations, thus showing their love for Y. M.” He subtly altered the notion of good service, however, by drawing attention to the key role of elite and non-elite Andeans in sustaining the empire. This understanding of good service empowered the work of native commoners and Indian authorities as a service that secured the empire’s financial strength. If the ideas of colonial subjection of commoners as tributaries and the condition of elites as the enforcers of such subjection were accepted, Limaylla and the nobles of “all those Nations” should have been entitled to become knights of the Indian republic.

In his “Memorial,” Limaylla appeared to be supporting the Toledan project of Indian reducciones and the ecclesiastical extirpation effort. Yet the eligibility for noble privileges he proposed reveals more clearly the contrast between the apparent and subliminal agendas for nobility Andeans sought in the years around 1677. In his proposal, the requested preeminences should only be given to virtuous descendants of caciques who, “since the moment we received our holy apostolic law, had not relapsed into idolatry, superstition, or other sins that stain its stability.” But the purpose of the preeminences was, more clearly, that “caciques should have some estates and the necessary distinction . . . so that they are better appreciated by Spaniards because only with such wealth would they [Spaniards] hesitate to oppress them [Indians] and, in turn, they [Indians] would communicate with them [Spaniards] with more love and less fear. Thus, there would be more stability in those empires and it would be a great pleasure to be the vassals of Y. M.”
This passage supports a notion of honor that involves Spaniards viewing Andeans with dignity and respect as opposed to simply mimicking the colonial notion of honor, which sought to distinguish Spanish nobles as socially superior. Clearly, Limaylla sought social empowerment and equality between the nobles of the “two republics” in return for Andeans’ good service and even viewed this social balance as the key to Spanish hegemony.

Limaylla’s counterparts in the 1720s refashioned their past to validate the good service they contributed in this strategy of negotiating rules by redefining the Andean mañay in colonial times. They invoked deeds of their ancestors, which at the time of the Spanish conquest and early-colonial years may have established new arrangements of reciprocity, as evidence of their ancestors’ good service to portray themselves as loyal subjects. Among the members of the Lima network of kurakas in 1724, the descendants of the sixteenth-century Apoalaya—a powerful Indian lineage from the Mantaro Valley in central Peru—attempted to establish their good service through evidence of their ancestors’ “collaborative” deeds during the Spanish conquest. In the eighteenth century, the kurakas sought to be recognized for their loyalty as an extension of the loyalty of their Apoalaya forebear, allegedly a general of the Inca army who was able “to reconcile his obligation [to the Inca] with the great service he rendered to the [Spanish] crown.” Apoalaya, a military chief of the Huanca, allied with Pizarro to counteract the Inca invasion of the Mantaro Valley in the conquest years. Such examples of collaboration reflected customary pre-colonial forms of reciprocity between conquerors and conquered.

The same document from 1724 refers to Don Francisco Saba Capac Inga Yupanqui, another member of the network, who, along with twelve other native nobles from the Province of Lima and other regions, identified themselves as members of a collective “Indian nation, descendent from Inca emperors.” They advocated for the enforcement of the 1697 cédula de honores and for other social justice issues they had been raising since 1711. Inga Yupanqui empowered himself before the king through the good service of his ancestors starting in 1640, specifically Maestre de Campo Don Jerónimo Paulli Chumbi Saba Capac Yupanqui Inga, cacique and gobernador of the Pachacama Valley and the Port of Lurin. Paulli Chumbi led 200 Indian soldiers to help the viceregal forces fight enemy pirates on the Barlovento coast and continued to collaborate in similar enterprises until late in his life. In 1724 his descendant Don Francisco used the same expedient as a credential for his own fidelity to the king.

The validation of their service might imply that kurakas and other elite Andeans appear to have been endorsing the imperial aims of the Spanish crown, such as conquest of the Inca and the defense of the empire against other European powers, as well as supporting colonial notions of nobility and distinction. In this particular case, the kurakas were protesting a bando that prohibited mulattoes,
blacks, and Indians from wearing Spanish clothes, and they were petitioning to be clearly distinguished from such groups and to be entitled to dress in Spanish garb like the nobles they were. Even more intriguing is the re-education of their historical good service as part of their construction of ethnicity in the eighteenth century.

The network of *kurakas* from different areas of the Audiencia of Lima and officers of the Lima Indian Battalion who signed the memorial not only proclaimed themselves as an Indian nation of descendants of the Inca emperor but expected to be recognized for good service offered during the early collaboration between the colonizers and the Huancas in the Mantaro Valley, to conquer the Inca. They also claimed to have helped the ethnic lords of the Pachacamac Valley in 1640 and the viceregal armies fight other rivals of Spain in Europe. The ethnic lines within this diverse group of Andeans are redefined and seemingly blurred, and their past rivalries seem to fade away; the notion of an “Indian nation” is subtly introduced as a conglomerate of undifferentiated ethnicities from different regions of the viceroyalty, sharing a common history devoid of interethnic contention. Although applied to the Túpac Amaru Rebellion, Charles Walker’s idea that the Inca symbols were part of an “invented tradition” from colonial times as opposed to a “primordial memory” is pertinent here as well—perhaps even more so than in the case of the Cusco people, since the ethnic Andeans writing from Lima who represented themselves as an Indian nation were from various regions of the Viceroyalty of Peru.

The Indian memorialists from 1724 also brought religious expedients to bear when substantiating their loyalty. They identified themselves with Indian, mestizo, and creole figures—known in Lima as models of virtue and mystical qualities—in their effort to be seen as good Christians and therefore deserving of ecclesiastical distinctions. In their gallery of Indian “exemplary lives,” they exhibited the names of the “venerable” Nicolás de Dios, founder of the congregation “Casa de Jesús, María, and José,” who after his death came close to becoming the first Andean saint in colonial Peru. The list of virtuous Indians and mestizo men and women in the early eighteenth century included Brother Francisco de San Antonio from the Recoleta of Santo Domingo; Brothers Antonio Barreto and Juan Cordero, the latter of whom was the “great pious founder of the Convalescencia de los Nativos” in Lima; Sister Inés de Jesús María from the Encarnación nunnery; Sister Catalina; Sister Magdalena de Jesús, “of outstanding and continuous prayer”; and Sister Francisca Anchipula, “venerable founder of the noble Indian women’s convent Nuestra Señora de Copacabana.” Past *caciques* of exemplary life and noble blood, such as Don Juan Ucho Inga Tito Yupanqui, *cacique principal* and *encomendero* from the Querocotilla *repartimiento* (Chachapoyas), completed the long list of honorable and loyal Christian figures. Andeans strove to be models of spiritual purity, but not only for religious reasons. They also presented their
virtuous deeds and descent as entitlement to *mercedes* for their good religious service to the evangelization enterprise, for which stressing their identity as noble and honorable colonial subjects on an equal footing with Spaniards was crucial.

The list of revered Indians and mestizos deserves attention, as some of these “virtuous lives” were also associated with other, more earthly underground currents of protest and rebellion in seventeenth-century Lima. In 1650, the canonization of Nicolás de Dios was the target of an Andean movement sustained by a network of caciques and mestizos such as Don Juan Núñez Vela de Rivera and other creole sympathizers in Lima, discussed in Chapter 6. Don Juan Ucho Inga Tito Yupanqui was one of the participants in the movement for enforcement of the 1697 *cédula de honores* during the first decades of the 1700s. While the figures of the past may have indeed been pious individuals, these Christian models of virtue were also Indian and mestizo members of the church who in one way or another engaged in activism for Andean religious autonomy—the founding of convents for Indian nuns, advocacy of Indian sainthood, the founding of Indian confraternities, and similar activities—rather than exhibiting an unproblematic identification with Christianity. Ultimately, this group of Indian authorities turned the basic condition of colonial subordination, that of tributary Indians and *mitayos*, not only into a sign of loyalty and a rendering of good service but also into an empowering symbol on which the entire empire depended:

And if all those [names] referred to above, without mentioning others who have not manifested themselves because of their poverty, have not displayed the greatness that God gave them... we should explain that even though they are not nobles, in their own sphere they contribute equally to Y. M. with their tribute and personal services, which are some of the most useful services to your crown, because thanks to their continuous work and their judicious response to the mitas, they work the mines, the treasures of the kingdom fructify, and they [tributary Indians] are in every way the ones more devoted to such work.11

This rendition of Indians’ good service in 1724 echoes the one by Limaylla in his 1677 “Memorial,” mentioned earlier. Later Andeans, such as Fray Calixto in 1749–1750, also felt compelled to use the legal content of the *cédula de honores* as a legitimate frame to define Andeans as noble subjects. Not only did the mandate recognize that descent from gentiles did not bar Andeans from access to the priesthood, but it also stated clearly that colonial authorities should reward them with the same preeminentences accorded to Spanish nobles. Fray Calixto thus argued that Andean and Spanish nobles were social equals, as they were both subjects of the same king—a key argument echoing Limaylla’s assertion of nobility. The “Representación verdadera” contributed substantially to create the notion of an Indian nation. Its introductory page expresses the text’s nature as a lamentation.
from “the entire Indian Nation” spoken on behalf of the “Indios Americanos” (American Indians), regardless of social or ethnic differences.\textsuperscript{12} Andeans’ perception of themselves as nobles of the Indian nation served as a weapon to fight their way into spaces of social advancement and autonomy rather than as a tool for simplistic and opportunistic social climbing that emulated the noble Spaniard. This would be, in practice, a way to erase the racial difference that forced Indians to remain at the lower echelons of colonial society. Overall, Andean scholarship reinterpreted the “merits” necessary for mercedes in a wider sense than the colonial notion of good service and used them as negotiating instruments to attain a reciprocal arrangement in which members of the Indian nation could empower themselves as a group of ethnic counterparts of the Spanish nobles and thus fight colonial racial assumptions and Spanish prejudiced attitudes toward Andean elites.

**IMAGES OF *INDIOS NATURALES* AND THE SUBALTERN “OTHER” IN ANDEAN TEXTS**

While Andean scholars framed their own identities as noble Christians and loyal subjects of the Indian nation, they also generated images of *indios naturales*, or common Indians, in a relational and somewhat oppositional pattern. The tensions that emerge in Andean intellectuals’ perceptions of tributary Indians inadvertently emphasized the subordination of Indian commoners at large. Whereas educated Indian elites described themselves as capable and deserving of their autonomy and power, they portrayed their “fellow” Indian commoners for the most part as weak and inferior and projected onto them the colonial perceptions of the state and the church vis-à-vis Indians at large as wholesale minors in need of paternalistic protection. These perceptions could also be the legacy of pre-colonial hierarchies.

Exposure to ecclesiastical literature, which played a key role in the mentoring of Indian intellectuals throughout the colonial period, contributed to the dissemination of images of native Andeans as “docile,” “rational,” capable of understanding godly matters, but also “naive,” “weak,” and “miserable.”\textsuperscript{13} In the late seventeenth century, Juan de Cuevas Herrera expressed his internalization of such descriptions, as he deplored the poor state of evangelization in the parishes of Charcas Province. He represented Amerindian commoners as “poor victims” and distanced himself by designating them using the third-person plural “they”: “[T]hey are helpless, convulsed and humiliated, as Isaiah would call them. They are pupils lacking a spiritual father.”\textsuperscript{14} Cuevas Herrera, a parish priest, shared Spanish legal definitions of indigenous peoples as minors and the connotations of inferiority attached to them: “I say that these unhappy [Indians] are pupils and the priest must be their tutor . . . as though it was written in a testament.
I say it should be this way, out of Christian piety, because of their imbecility, ineptitude, and narrow minds.”\(^\text{15}\) As a parish priest, Cuevas Herrera felt it was his duty to protect his flock by stressing their helplessness before the kingdom’s patriarch.

Likewise, Cuevas Herrera’s contemporary in Jauja, Jerónimo Lorenzo Limaylla, consistently maintained a third-person plural (“they”) narrative voice when referring to non-elite natives as “infidels” and “idolaters.” Exhibiting a biblical-sounding narrative style, Limaylla portrayed Andean commoners as “sheep . . . poor lambs . . . oppressed as the Hebrew under the barbarian yoke of the Egyptians” in an effort to emphasize their helplessness and the need for protection and to draw the king’s attention to their plight.\(^\text{16}\) While depicting them as “weak” and “inferior,” Limaylla slipped in an interesting suggestion that the Indians’ weakness was a result of their history: “[T]hey [the Indians] are naturally fragile, and weaker of force and energy than they were during their gentilismo [condition of gentiles], when they were among the more bellicose and strong of the region, like the other [n]ations of the world.”\(^\text{17}\) Inadvertently, the writer implies that Christianization made Andeans weaker, even though this might also imply that they had become more “civilized.”

Like indios naturales, Indian noblewomen were portrayed with a similarly patronizing view. In defending female Indians’ right to enter religious orders in 1749, Fray Calixto and his cowriters represented indigenous women as “pure,” “docile,” and potential models of spiritual perfection. This perception, along with their view of single mothers as potential or real threats to the social order, attested to the European mores already settled into the imaginary of late-colonial Andeans.\(^\text{18}\) These writers, however, claimed the right to join religious orders for noblewomen and mestizas as well. Overall, while indigenous and mestizo scholars sought to empower themselves as capable, rational, noble, and loyal subjects, they inadvertently prolonged the subordination of female and male indios naturales by continuing to describe them as ethnic inferiors.

In the process of constructing Andean elites as colonial nobles, Andean writers inadvertently took part in another creative operation. Implicit in the dialectic dynamics of marking social distinction and privilege is the existence of an “other,” the reverse image of the noble, the underprivileged without whom Andean elite individuals could not exist. In this sense, Andean writing inadvertently helped strengthen the colonial creation of ethnic and racial difference. Because the struggles for Andean social recognition—both textual and legal—implied an empathy with the notion of hierarchies and distinctions, the acceptance of Iberian notions of purity of blood, Andeans contributed consciously or unconsciously to marking hierarchical boundaries among their fellow subordinate subjects and other castes of the colonial society based on the perceived superiority of Andean nobles. Andean scholarship thus produced a record of identity construction in
which Spanish values and understanding of social order entered the world of the Andean elite, marked interethnic and racial boundaries, and defined more clearly their sense of superiority within the subordinate colonial community.

This creationist process reveals itself in the complaints of the Lima network of kurakas in 1724, at a time when Viceroy Castelfuerte was attempting to hold mestizos liable for mita and tribute. The viceroy had lumped Indian nobles and mestizos with the group of other castas who were prohibited to wear Spanish-style clothing. This is a case of the Andean elite’s desired performance of identity and concerns about drawing lines of difference among the colonized to realize the legal promise of social equality between the nobles of the two “republics”:

“We supplicate Your Excellence to issue a provision . . . declaring that Indians and mestizos must not be included in the prohibition on [wearing Spanish] dress, along with blacks, mulattoes, and zamboes, and instead, they must be understood as and comprise one whole body with the Spaniards and hope to receive this merced in all justice.”

The symbolic representation of social status through clothing worn in public spaces would distinguish noble Andeans from groups that, in their minds and according to the larger Spanish society, were considered inferior. Thus, the nobles of the Indian nation still retained a hierarchical view of society, particularly during their struggles to leverage their rights as nobles in equal standing with Spaniards.

A similar construction of subalternity emerged in 1749–1750 when, claiming the right for noble Indians to travel freely to Spain, the “Representación verdadera” identified African immigration to the Andes as “harmful” and referred to Africans in these words:

Is there more oppression for us, that a generation so strange and servile stands in a better position than Indians, and that black slaves are set free to move around and may pass freely to Spain, whereas the Indian, even the noble, has to pay taxes and render the mita? Oh God! Is it possible that even your own slaves can become our masters that mistreat us and persecute us, and your powerful hand does not move to redeem us? . . .

All that has been done so far is that the kingdom gets crowded with strangers from [E]thiopia, blacks, mulattoes and zamboes . . . those atrocious, indomitable swine and outrageous people that have brought vices, evil, sodomy and continuous burglary.

In this passage the hostile tone in reference to other subordinate subjects is used to deplore what the writers perceived as the fact that Andean Indians had less freedom and status than blacks, thereby implying that, among all colonial subjects, noble Andeans deserved a higher status. While the writers seem to have internalized racist biases against blacks and mulattoes, they also express a more general identification with colonial notions of hierarchy and distinction.
Construing the Colonizer: Images of the Colonial “Other”

Andean scholars effected a construction of the colonizers’ identities as deviant and opposed to those of Andeans. They depicted Spanish authorities and priests in images that stressed their “non-Christian” and “evil” nature as a way to contest charges of idolatry and other negative identities imposed upon Andeans by ecclesiastical discourses and colonial authorities’ narratives in chronicles, reports, laws, and pronouncements in court. Bartolomé de las Casas had contributed to this form of identity construction in the 1540s by adopting biblical metaphors to cast cristianos (Spaniards) as “very cruel and ravenous wolves, tigers, and lions.”

These biblical and Lascasian images continued to provide tropes for Andeans’ construction of the colonizers’ identity as the natural opposite of the allegedly weak and naive Andeans. In accusing corregidores of deterring Indians from conversion, Cuevas Herrera later maintained that “corregidores are pests,” “they are the enemies of God,” and “they are men whose only God is money.” Likewise, Cuevas Herrera often referred to abusive hacendados in very negative terms, as “[T]urks or [M]oors with neither God nor law,” revealing the extent to which Spanish conquest ideologies also permeated educated Andeans’ minds.

In the mid-eighteenth century, as they protested against racial exclusion by the church, Fray Calixto and the unknown coauthors of the “Representación verdadera” used all possible adjectives that denote social transgression to depict the colonizers, contesting similar representations of Andeans by clerics and officials: “[T]hey have taken over [everything] temporal, spiritual, and eternal . . . and everything is justified on the account that the candidates [for the priesthood] are white and Spaniards, and thus they are admitted although they are unworthy, ignorant, vicious, illegitimate, adulterous, and sacrilegious. Thus, the [religious] orders are infested with lowly born people.”

Virtually all the texts under consideration portrayed colonial officials in unequivocally negative terms, equating them with the most vicious animals and deadly diseases and highlighting their corrupt, violent, and non-Christian behavior—casting them as “sinners.” Similar representations of Spanish officials are also found in the creole/mestizo writings that worked for common cause with Andeans, such as the “Manifiesto de Oruro” (1739). Juan Vélez de Córdoba described colonial authorities as “thieves,” “tyrants,” and ultimately “vampires who sucked our blood, leaving us so depleted that only our mouths are left for us to complain.” In this regard, there had been little change in Andeans’ perceptions of Spaniards from the early writings of Guamán Poma de Ayala, in the seventeenth century, to the late eighteenth century.

Indian scholars’ discursive construction of their own identities and those of the Spaniards gravitated around a binomial opposition between colonized and colonizers and simultaneously contested the colonial rhetoric that contributed
to producing racial stereotypes. The rhetorical strategies surrounding identity formation revealed educated Andeans’ use of foundational biblical images and ecclesiastical discourses in the Americas. On the other hand, their discourses revealed that Andeans, especially in times of upheaval, negotiated identities by rejecting certain images and stereotypes imposed upon them by the colonizers while redeploying those definitions against their perceived “others,” according to the political needs of the struggles and criticisms they were conducting at any given time.

This shifting and negotiation of identities, which may appear as ambivalence to non-Indian contemporaries, were part of the traditional practice of the pre-colonial mañay and came to be visually and performatively represented in the public rituals of the age-old urban baroque culture in colonial cities and towns of the Spanish empire. Andean nobles’ participation in pageantry, for example, was part of the construction of their political identity through public performance in the colonial city. In a parade in Lima in 1748 as part of the viceroyal celebrations of the new Bourbon king Ferdinand VI’s coronation, the cabildo of El Cercado led a masquerade of eleven Inca kings, their coyas (Inca queens), and cheerful dancers lavishly dressed. The pageant closed with a banner that read “Long live the Catholic monarch Don Ferdinand VI, King of Spain and Emperor of the Indies,” with the last cart pulled by eight horses and displaying the royal coat of arms—the “imperial eagle of Lima grasping a flag with the cross and the Indians with their plumes and flutes and whistles underneath, celebrating happily their subjection.”

These overt signs of allegiance and surrender should not be taken at face value, however. Behind the baroque signs of Indian allegiance and political subordination to the empire was a silent parade of rebellion, a layer of radical resistance to colonial rule. The same Indian entity that organized the parade, El Cercado cabildo, was also behind the rebellions planned to take place in Lima and throughout the areas surrounding the viceroyal capital sometime after 1748, which eventually broke out in 1750.

In the public ceremonial life of Lima and Cusco, Indians wanted to represent their loyalty as subjects of the king, but this overt demonstration was only one aspect of a more complex political culture. While for some it may have been seen as a genuine gesture, for others it was only one side of the way Indians perceived their relationship with the king, particularly in times of social upheaval. Although informed by the asymmetrical relationships of colonialism, Andean reciprocity continued to define relationships between kurakas and their constituencies for centuries. Similarly, caciques and other native authorities perceived and represented their relationship with the king in a reciprocal manner (mañay). After all, a measure of reciprocity, real or imagined, between the king and his subjects was implicit in the European notion of the state as a corpus politicum mysticum.
By displaying their allegiance, the noble Indian performers were also sending a message of unfulfilled reciprocity. In 1748–1749, El Cercado cabildo was still demanding the enforcement of the cédula de honores and the abolition of the repartimiento de comercio, just when a new arancel practically legalized the latter, and the “Representación verdadera” was being prepared with demands for sweeping reforms of the empire’s administration, with Indian participation. The nobles within the Indian network centered at El Cercado cabildo participated in the parade to express their role in the mañay, often a compact of reciprocity frustrated by the Spanish king, which Indian leaders were resolved to enforce either through law or rebellion—both possibilities were represented and subtly present in the parade. The parade, some would say, was a demonstration of Inca revivalism. Most noble Indians in the parade were not of Inca descent, yet they seemed to have shared the urgency to redefine themselves as a unique ethnic group—a redefined Incan-ness—in late-colonial times, an Indian nation that would include members of various ethnic groups and regions, not strictly ethnic Incas. These were, after all, times in which the powerful effect of market forces, social divides, migration, and closer interethnic relations in cities tended to erase ethnic lines in favor of a more “generic Indianness.”

Interpreting the complex nature of Indian and mestizo political culture, particularly Andean scholars’ construction of identities in the colonial period, involves an understanding of the dialectical dynamics of allegiance/rebellion—a reminder that allegiance could also be just one aspect of Indian resistance under colonial rule. Constructions of Andean identity embodied the tension between the loyal Indian and the rebel. After all, Andeans may not have quickly forgotten their traditional mañay under Inca rule. Their practices of resistance and mediating constructions of identity suggest ongoing redefinitions of the political mañay in late-colonial times.

**IDENTITY AND RELIGIOSITY: THE VERY NOBLE AND VERY BEST CHRISTIANS OF THE INDIAN NATION**

The manipulation of religious categories, identities, and discourses was central to the cultural expression of mestizo and Indian educated elites, and their texts serve as unique windows into the changing religious culture in the mid- and late-colonial Andes. Overt expressions of pious Catholic devotion and reiterated proclamations of Christian identity were staples of the Andean writings under study, but the pattern was also present in Guamán Poma’s Nueva corónica y buen gobierno (ca. 1615). How are we to interpret these expressions of Christian identity by ethnic elites in a colonial situation, and to what extent did they pertain solely or at all to the realm of spirituality? Further, what meaning should be ascribed to Andean Christianity, as publicly articulated in mid- and late-colonial Andean
writings? After long exposure to Christian indoctrination and the workings of the church, colonial Andean intellectuals probably well understood the less spiritual undertones of Christianity and the social and political power wielded by the “magistrates of the sacred.”31 The wealth of information on Andean religiosity contained in the Andean texts reviewed here begins to indicate alternative functions of Christianity, such as language and Christian discourses, in the context of Andeans’ struggles for greater participation in the sphere of the sacred.

By exploring Andean writers’ production of religious meaning through their discursive practices, we can understand why they were invested in presenting themselves as the “true” Christians of the land and exactly what being Christian meant in the late colonial era for subordinated ethnic subjects endeavoring to participate in the institutions of social and political life. An analysis of the politics of these Andeans’ religious discourse and identity serves as a window onto the larger issue of Andean religiosity in the public realm of writing and social participation in the sacred sphere. This section sheds light on the ways an important segment of Andean society expressed their views of colonial Christianity and defined both their and the colonizers’ identities along religious and ethnic lines.

In understanding educated Andeans’ expressions of Christianity, Kenneth Mills has suggested that seventeenth-century Christian Andeans constantly reformed Christian codes and that they had “consciously or unconsciously ‘changed’ in order to meet the new pressures on their own terms instead of being only shaped by them.”32 More broadly, I maintain that instead of an unquestioned identification with Catholicism, Andean scholars subtly redefined Christian dogma and discourse to fight ethnic discrimination and colonial oppression and used such redefinitions to empower their struggles for ethnic autonomy starting in the late seventeenth century. They used images from the Bible, and Christian canonical rhetoric in general, as pragmatic tools to pave their way into the colonial fields of power and prestige usually denied to Indians and ultimately to fight for social equality by moving away from colonial definitions of who they were.

The literature on colonial Andean religion has largely remained centered on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The focus of these studies has gravitated around the early evangelization efforts, the subsequent campaigns of extirpation, and the changes introduced in the three church councils of Lima—namely, the new strategies for religious conversion through purification of the Christian message and the cultural transformation of native Andeans more generally.33 Scholars have questioned notions such as “acculturation,” “conversion,” and total rejection of Christianity—commonly used to explain Amerindian religious changes after the Spanish conquest—interpreting them as homogenizing categories that dismiss native agency, nuance, patterns of religious variation, and the reciprocal influence between Christianity and indigenous religious systems.34 Colonial Andean religion has been viewed as a blending of the pre-Hispanic and Catholic
religious systems toward a new rendition referred to as syncretism and the crystallization of Andean Christianity.\textsuperscript{35}

In subsequent decades scholars criticized this interpretation of syncretism, mainly for its assumption that this was a completed religious synthesis between the two systems that remained unchanged after the mid-seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{36} Syncretism also denies indigenous peoples the ability to select and synthesize elements from both Christianity and their own religious beliefs and practices and to rework those elements in the process. Both religious conquest and complete Indian rejection of Christianity were rather exceptional occurrences in the entire process of religious change in the Andes following the Spanish invasion. Scholars now tend to agree instead that the relationships between Indian and Spanish religious cultures ran the gamut of complex forms of mutual interaction, from adaptation to a complete reworking of both Andean and Christian practices and beliefs. These relationships did not necessarily represent an equal exchange and varied across time and space depending on myriad political, social, and cultural-historical factors.\textsuperscript{37}

In understanding Andean religiosity in the late 1600s and the 1700s, this section moves beyond discussions of syncretism by discerning Andean elites’ deployment of religious discourse in their search for social autonomous spaces as an important dimension of religious change. Although commentaries on the persistence of Amerindian religious rites and beliefs (usually a diverse and changing combination of pre-Hispanic and Catholic practices) continued to appear in the eighteenth century, it seems that by then the bulk of the Amerindian population subscribed, at least publicly, to a distinguishable set of Catholic symbolic practices, which formed an important part of the varied Andean religious cultures. By the late colonial period, questions about conversion and idolatry seemed to have been less of a concern of the church and the state, at least in the central areas of Peru, although they are reiterated in Andean writings as a shield to advance an agenda of inclusion in church institutions. By then, more widespread literacy and social activism by Andean scholars had defined new territory for the expression of their religious thought and political culture, producing new discursive forms that demanded new ways to read native religiosity. Concomitant with the use of Inca symbols of authority in painting, genealogies, public ceremonial life, and Indian writings for recognition of their nobility in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Indian and mestizo writers under study articulated expressions of religiosity in complex \textit{memoriales} and representations to the king and the viceregal authorities. These sources opened a new venue for today’s analysts to reexplore the more worldly functions of colonial Andeans’ religion, the undertones of anxious identification with Christianity, their insistence on becoming full members of the church, and other expressions of deep piety and devotion that have led some to believe Indians were completely Christianized.
Beyond social and individual spiritual practices (e.g., rites, customs, inner experiences, indoctrination), the study of the discursive formation of religious ideas by a group of Christianized Andeans shows that Indian and mestizo religiosity appeared within a highly politicized field in which thinkers systematically redefined Christian principles to defy the practices of the Peruvian church and to question the behavior of Spanish practitioners of Catholicism. Rather than representing digressions on purely spiritual matters, their comments on religion are infused with political undertones, as the contradictions within Spanish colonialism gave them a strong rhetorical impetus: the gap between an empire sustained by universalizing Christian principles and the exclusionary practices of its ecclesiastical and governmental institutions. The writers used these conditions as tools to empower Andeans as the kingdom’s moral capital and to diminish Spaniards as anti-Christian and morally unauthorized to rule.

THE WORLDLY POWER OF DIVINE WILL

The political deployment of religious concepts featured prominently in Andean discussions of the legitimacy of Spanish rule, as discussed in Chapter 4. The notion of “divine will” in particular was redefined to both accept and problematize Spanish justifications of the conquest while upholding Inca religious history as the supreme spiritual symbol and wresting legitimizing power from Christianity. In discussing the legitimacy of the Spanish presence in the Andes, Juan de Cuevas Herrera reformulated the myth of Viracocha to explain the defeat of the last Inca ruler in Vilcabamba and reworked the notion of divine will, not with Scholastic arguments but through a “prophecy” by Viracocha:

Viracocha . . . banished by his [f]ather Yavarvacac Inca to the Chita place, near Cusco, saw a thing, not a human vision or corporeal representation, but the figure of a white and blond man with a beard similar to ours: [t]his figure spoke clearly to him that in forthcoming times, some people like him would come bringing the true religion, one better than the one they then professed, and that it was the will of Pachacamac, the world maker, that Indians become their subjects, receive it [the new religion] and pay allegiance to the newcomers. This prophecy was repeated among them from generation to generation and Guayna Capac, the oldest of the Incas, repeated it again, warning that the moment was arriving in which the men foreseen by Viracocha would come and then they [Andeans] should receive them, obey them, and pay service to them, just as Viracocha had commanded and he [Guayna Capac] was commanding again. . . . Thus, Atahualpa Inca, the son of Guayna Capac himself, received our fellows [Spaniards] with the customary love and friendliness. . . . Finally, Fuanso [sic] Inca, Guayna Capac’s legitimate heir, coming out from the Vilcabamba [M]ountains with more than 200 D [thousand] warriors, seized the city of Cusco, where only 150 Spaniards had been left. By an evident
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miracle, God Our Lord saved them from such a multitude, like the gospel's seed. They [the Inca] thus believed the truthfulness of his ancestors' predictions. Addressing his people, he said that undoubtedly it was Pachacamac's will that these kingdoms must become the Spaniards'. He tenderly asked his people to obey heaven's design and turned back to his refuge, where the ingratitude and unkindness of a Spaniard, whose life he had graciously and kindly spared, paid him back with death. . . . Therefore, my conclusion is, my Lord and Catholic King, that God, the sovereign King, gave these kingdoms of Peru to the House of Castile.38

More than a century earlier, Spanish chroniclers and conquerors had contributed to the creation of the Quetzalcoatl myth in Mexico. Similar versions of Viracocha's myth and the miracle of the apostle Santiago saving the Spaniards from the Inca army in Cajamarca also appeared during the conquest of the Inca. To deny the Spanish conquest and the justice of their invasion, Guamán Poma had written in approximately 1615 about the presence in the Andes of Saint Bartolomé, missionizing before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors.39

Reformulating the legitimacy of Spanish rule by invoking the myth of Viracocha may also have facilitated the acceptance of Catholicism and the Spanish presence among Andeans. In the late seventeenth century, Cuevas Herrera's rendition of the myth contributed to the re-creation of the story of Spanish conquistadors being perceived as envoys of the ancestral gods. Beyond the historical accuracy of the events he related, however, the choice of validating divine will through an Inca prophecy that allegedly took place in pre-Christian times is intriguing. Cuevas Herrera's projection of notions of divine law onto the Inca past reveals his religious creativity and reminds us of Mills's reiteration that for Andeans the two religious traditions were usually complementary rather than contradictory and changed over time according to different understandings of those traditions.40

While Cuevas Herrera set out to demonstrate that the Americas were "given" to the Spaniards by divine will, he did so through a particular rendition of the Viracocha myth—possibly mediated by the Spanish chroniclers—and an allegory for the orality of pre-colonial cultures: the phrase "by the mouth of God." More important, "heaven's design" and "Pachacamac's will" both function as legitimizing agents in the text, although emphasis seems to lean toward the latter.

Thus, Cuevas Herrera's rendition of Viracocha as God's interlocutor can be seen as part of what Peter Gose considers the Spanish attempt to "reconcile the discovery of America with a Christian universalizing history."41 By casting the defeat of the last Inca rebellion in Vilcabamba as a sign of divine will or the fulfillment of Viracocha's prediction, however, Cuevas Herrera admitted that the Inca god was able to communicate directly with the Christian God and that Andeans could also be the people "chosen" by God. In this way, while the writer
legitimized Spanish rule, he empowered the Inca religion and Andeans as people able to elevate their thinking to godly matters—a capability some missionaries, including José de Acosta, denied them. By presenting Viracocha as the recipient of God’s revelation (“by the mouth of God”), Cuevas Herrera undermined the relevance of the 1493 bull by Pope Alexander VI as a legitimizing tool of the Spanish spiritual conquest and rule. Simultaneously, as he merged the prophecy of Viracocha into a historical justification of Spanish rule, Cuevas Herrera validated Inca history as part and predecessor of Western history.

This narrative operation links Cuevas Herrera’s rendition of the past with similar discursive proclamations from earlier in the century. Inca Garcilaso de la Vega’s rhetorical strategy in his *Comentarios reales de los Incas* (1609) sought to change the image of the Inca society in Europe by reconciling Inca and European historical traditions and, thus, to conflate aspects of the Christian and Inca religions. In fact, in the introduction to the “Cinco memoriales,” Cuevas Herrera made explicit that Garcilaso de la Vega was part of his intellectual inspiration:

[He is] an author free from any suspicion, Garcilaso de la Vega, an excellent elder of the pure royal blood from the Inca kings. And, if you don’t believe him, come, communicate, and ask the few remaining branches [heirs] of the royal trunk... I, as one of them, since I am the fourth grandson of Don Cristóbal Paullu, son of the Great Guayna Capac, third brother of the two Incas Huascar and Mancolo, I have researched very well that these my ancestors’ kingdoms... have come to be very justly Y. M.’s, may God keep them prosperous as I wish.

Cuevas Herrera’s identity in this passage follows the pattern of cultural negotiation explained in the previous section. He projected himself as a member of the Spanish church, a Christian, and a loyal subject who recognized the legitimacy of Spanish rule. From that standpoint he spoke of the colonizers as “our fellows” when relating Atahualpa’s encounter with Pizarro. Simultaneously, he empowered himself as a direct descendant of the Incas from Cusco and authorized his discourse by acknowledging the inspiration of Garcilaso de la Vega, whom Cuevas Herrera identified strategically as an elder “of the pure royal blood from the Inca kings.” Alternating these two forms of identity—a cultured Inca noble and a devout Christian and subject of a Spanish king—these Andeans dwelt in a liminal space, a threshold between the Spanish and Andean worlds, from which Cuevas Herrera sought justice for his native fellows, however unstable such a place may have been.

Garcilaso de la Vega’s *Comentarios reales de los incas* constituted a seminal work in the reconstructions of Inca history and memories in mid- and late-colonial Andean scholarship. In 1749 the Andean composers of the “Representación verdadera” developed the most complex elaboration of Andean religion to dis-
pute the ecclesiastical stereotyping of Andeans as idolatrous. The manuscript's subsection “Breve y compendiosa satisfacción” clearly drew on Garcilaso de la Vega’s thesis that Andeans had already been monotheistic before the Spanish invasion:

The Peruvian Indians from the kingdom of Cuzco were gentiles and less idolatrous and superstitious than the Roman, Spanish, European and Greek gentiles, because they did not worship a superior deity other than Pachacamac, which means the demiurgic, the one who animates everything, and the Sun, whom they believed to be their lieutenant and the [f]ather of their Inca kings. They did not have thirty thousand gods like the Roman and European gentiles of the [O]ld [W]orld, but only the Sun, whom they worshipped with external and visible adoration, and thus, they painted it and built its temple; whereas to Pachacamac they did not paint or create an idol, but they worshipped it with inner and spiritual veneration, stating that he was invisible and immense. . . . Thus, wisely ignorant, they worshipped in Pachacamac the true God, creator and life giver of heavens and earth, whom they did not know as one and trine and by revelation and faith infused in baptism, but they knew it by the natural reason that dictated to them that God was one, unique, and omnipotent.

In a similar manner, Garcilaso de la Vega claimed that the Inca “held Pachacamac in higher and more sincere veneration than the sun” and that Pachacamac was the unknown maker of the world. Using the same translation as, and reinterpretation by, Garcilaso de la Vega effected more than a hundred years earlier, the “Breve y compendiosa satisfacción” cast the Andean past as “less idolatrous” than the Christian European past. The text slightly modified Garcilaso’s elaboration of how Andeans knew about God prior to Christianity. For Garcilaso de la Vega, Andeans worshipped a variety of gods, emphasizing the predominance of the Sun and Pachacamac. The “Breve y compendiosa satisfacción,” in contrast, simply erased the polytheistic nature of Andean religions in an effort to equate their cults of the Sun and Pachacamac with the Christian monotheistic ideal. Assuming that only the Inca religion had existed in the Andes prior to the European invasion, the text conflated Pachacamac—a pre-Inca deity of the northern coastal peoples of ancient Peru—with the Sun as one god. This monotheism, however, was nuanced with dualistic tones. Pachacamac and the Sun had “invisible” and “interior” as well as “visible” and “exterior” manifestations. Thus, this monotheization or Christianization was informed by the dualism of Andean gods (God/human) but presented in a different fashion to fit the needs of the argument (invisible/visible).

Just as Garcilaso de la Vega attempted to rectify the historical record of Inca culture for Europeans, the “Breve y compendiosa satisfacción” occasionally attempted to “straighten out” errors in the Spanish understanding of Andean
religion, such as the meaning of *huacas* (Andean sacred entities or objects and places of reverence). Through a discussion of the various meanings of the word, the text contests the ecclesiastical accusation that *huacas* were idols Andeans worshipped. As opposed to Garcilaso de la Vega’s explanation of the manifold connotations of *huacas*, however, the “Breve y compendiosa satisfacción” chose only a few and emphasized that *huacas* were a type of Amerindian art object rather than idols: “Ancient Indians would mold and work those figures to imitate nature in all they would see . . . and with them they had so much fun in the feasts they made to their Inca kings . . . and they would offer these figures to them as if they had brought them to life. . . . Thus, those things were not idols that the ancestors worshipped but figures with which they brought nature to life through imitation.”

Basically, Andeans were not idolaters but figurative artists, perhaps in the best tradition of the Spanish Renaissance.

### COLONIAL “SIN” AND DIVINE JUSTICE

Reelaborations of Christian notions of sin, punishment, and divine justice appeared prominently in Andean writings that questioned the behavior of Spanish rulers. As he rejected the corruption of *corregidores* and *curas*, Fray Calixto maintained that there would be divine punishment for Spanish officials and priests not only after death but also in this life, in reparation for the violence and expropriation they inflicted upon Indians: “And since God is an honest and just judge, he will punish them here, apart from the punishment that in the other life, precisely, awaits them for the atrocious and inhuman crimes . . . that people subjugated by other nations have suffered.”

Colonial oppression was framed as a “sin” and colonial officials as “sinners” who deserved double punishment; thus, Indians would be redressed through this kind of divine justice. This reformulation of punishment for “colonial sin” had significant antecedents in the writings of Indian authorities and contemporaries of Cuevas Herrera, also residents of Charcas Province. Earlier in 1650 the *caciques principales* from the Bishopric of La Paz—Don Cristóbal Nina, Don Juan Quispe, and Don Pedro Larua—members of a large social network of native authorities in southern Peru, while reclaiming restitution of encroached communal lands, had launched an apocalyptic rendition of the “divine punishment” that as a damnation awaited colluding Spanish officials and colonists:

> In terms of the Sacred Scriptures, and therefore of the Catholic faith, God will switch kingdoms, from one people to another, because the powerful commit injustices and slander, injure, mistreat, and deceive the helpless poor in various forms. And as the miserable Indians have suffered so many harms under the powerful Spanish since they became rulers, so much that the loss of their lands was the ultimate aggravation . . . God has made as his just design
The inescapable execution of his punishment for all. So many iniquities have irritated and armed his hands for the vengeance.52

The wrath of God would fall upon colonial sinners as the ultimate retribution for the expropriation of native Andeans’ lands and other injustices. But this rendition of divine justice had a distinctive political undertone: the end of Spanish rule and the advent of a new kingdom ruled by other people. Divine justice forecast the finite character of Spanish rule, the beginning of the end, when Spaniards would lose their “right” to *dominium*. Ultimately, the death of the empire would be the divine punishment for colonial sins.

**THE POLITICS OF RELIGIOUS IDENTIFICATION:**
**THE ZAPA INCA VERSUS THE POPE**

The power confrontations involved in Andean struggles for social justice permeated their religious reworkings and definitions of religious identity. Andean scholars and social activists were aware of the political power of colonial religion and ecclesiastical authorities and effected a repositioning of the Inca past to accommodate the political needs of their colonial present. In a discursive move that would challenge contemporary ideas about the Andean utopia and the revival of Inca symbols, Andean leaders detached themselves from their Inca roots and customs to displace their identities to the sanctioned territory of Christianity and purity of blood and ultimately to obtain justice in times of colonial expropriation of their communal lands and chiefdoms.

The campaigns for the defense of their lands in the southern Andean region in the mid-seventeenth century led by the *caciques principales* and *gobernadores* Nina, Larua, and Quispe—the authors of the passage just cited and contemporaries of Cuevas Herrera and Limaylla—provide an illuminating construction of Christian identity by Andeans. A cunning argument by the Audiencia of Lima was used against these Indian litigants, which posed that by endorsing *composiciones de tierras* in favor of Spaniards, the king was merely following “*el derecho del Inga*” (Inca law). Since the Inca had allegedly deprived his subjects of ownership of and dominion over lands, by ruling against the Indian litigants the Spanish king Philip would merely be continuing the Inca tradition. What is more intriguing is the *kurakas’* response to such judgment by the fiscal of the Audiencia of Lima in 1650. They claimed that if the king denied Andeans their legitimate land rights, he would be acting

[a]s if for [himself], such a pious and Catholic [m]onarch, the barbarous tyranny of a gentile Indian king [the Zapa Inca] was more important than the just and right decision of a high pontiff of the [c]hurch, the saintly and wise successor of Saint Peter and the vicar of Jesus Christ, supreme sovereign of...
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heaven and earth, who commended the [k]ing to take care of this [c]hurch of new Christians . . . [and help them] to enjoy the freedom of being God’s children, governed in peace and justice: not by the laws of gentiles and barbarians, who have expired along with their empire, but by the law of rational peoples, the very sacred, just, royal, and very holy pontifical laws. . . . And thus treated, these new converts may understand that, if the gospel was so beneficial for them at the spiritual level, at the temporal level it also improved their situation at the time of Philip, who recognized [Indians] as the owners of the lands because of their being Christians, whereas at the time of the Inca they could not own [the said lands] for having being gentiles, or at least they could not have in usufruct all the ones they needed but which were in effect available. 

In 1650 these prominent Andean leaders from La Paz no longer saw themselves as Incas in custom or vassalage but rather as “rational people” and Christian subjects of the church, a new identity that, beyond the spiritual meaning, functioned as a passport to retain their property. They would have no major difficulty detaching themselves from the Inca, their old rivals anyway, who were now viewed as barbarous tyrants—reminiscent of Andeans using descriptions of the Inca created in the Toledan era.

But inasmuch as Andeans tried to be included in the community of old Christians and to gain access to justice, the Christian promise of redemption did not come true. The text next moves into a territory of frustration and distrust:

Not even their [Indians’] venerable condition as new Christians served them well. From their freedom as gentiles, they converted to our Catholic obedience, trusting the security that old Christians promised them, on behalf of God and the [k]ing, that they would be treated, governed, and protected in our Christian discipline much better than they were in their barbarous gentilismo. But, caring only for their personal interests, the ministers of this despicable dispossession regarded Spaniards, mestizos, suspicious mulattoes, the Portuguese, dubious Catalans, and even the French and the Dutch, their enemies, as people of higher status and more capable to own their lands than the Indians. And they deprived [Indians] of the lands that God, nature, and the Catholic [k]ings and the just viceroys had given them. . . . For the Indians . . . the many and constant prayers, penitence, masses, and prerogatives that they and other good people elevated to God, asking to redress them for so much harm[,] were to no avail either.

The net result of the Indian conversion was the loss of freedom and assets they had enjoyed while they were gentiles. Behaving like a true Christian was to no avail; instead, they became aware of the ethnic biases of the colonial state and the church, which were unable to deliver the promised social justice for native Andeans. The new Christians became quickly disappointed with the colonial pact they had entered into as a result of the conquest; this identification was fractured
from the outset. In their new state, Andeans found themselves in a kind of abject
liminality: they were no longer Incas, whose empire and customs had “expired”
anyway, but they were not true Christians either, since the reasons they had
accepted this affiliation never came to fruition. Thus, their outward profession of
Christianity was at odds with their inner feelings of frustration and discontent.

The same ambivalence emerged in the mid-eighteenth century when Fray
Calixto and his cowriters struggled to debunk ecclesiastical arguments against
Indian priesthood. They admitted that their ancestors had “sinned” by practicing
idolatry. However, to elude charges of idolatry in their own time, which would
have strengthened the definition of Andean prospects as neophytes, the writers
detached themselves from their Inca ancestors altogether and professed a new
Christian affiliation. They seemed to reject their Inca identities to position them-
selves as old Christian subjects, pure of blood and eligible for the priesthood.55
To shed neophytism, the mark of exclusion from religious organizations, Andeans
struggled in unpredictable ways throughout the colonial period. Fray Calixto was
aware of a real cédula by Charles II on April 16, 1693, that granted Indians and
mestizos eligibility for positions in the Holy Office Tribunal as “[m]inisters, cali-
ficadores, and consultants . . . [and] they only have to prove on both [maternal
and paternal] lines of descent two Christian grandparents.”56 This decree was the
result of Andean scholar Juan Núñez Vela de Rivera’s writings and leadership in
Peru and Spain.57

Although it may sound paradoxical, for Andean activists fighting for social
inclusion in the church, being appointed members of the Holy Office was crucial
for their identification as old Christians: “Indians would very gladly . . . subject
themselves to fasting . . . and to observance of all the holidays of the [c]hurch by
attending mass, and they would willingly subject themselves to the Holy Tribunal
[of the Inquisition] in exchange for being honored with [d]ignities, [p]riesthood,
and the religious orders, like the rest of Catholics.”58 Thus, they would be con-
sidered old Christians, no longer neophytes, and would be able to act as ethnic
magistrates of the sacred. Not surprisingly, the 1693 decree apparently did not
go into effect, since both the “Representación verdadera” in 1749–1750 and the
“Planctus indorum” in approximately 1751 reiterated the same demand. The
“Planctus indorum” asserted that Indians had no impediment to being ordained
as priests or becoming bishops, since “they are old [C]hristians, after two centu-
ries of being born by [C]atholic parents; and . . . the Indians that commit crimes
against the faith should be brought to the inquisition, since the immunity against
the inquisition has been unduly fomented by Spaniards to prove Indians’ con-
dition of neophytes.”59 Again, rather than the actual religious meaning of this
statement, it is the political implication of holding positions in the Inquisition
Tribunal so Andeans would enjoy the status of old Christians that gives force to
the discursive strategy.
“MORE CHRISTIAN AND CATHOLIC THAN SPANIARDS”

Following the same rhetorical line, throughout the colonial period Andean scholars insisted, sometimes to the point of exhaustion, that they were not only Christian but also the true Christians of the land. In fact, they exceeded Spaniards in their devotion. One might wonder, however, why Andeans were still so anxious to reassert their Christian affiliation in the late colonial period. What was behind this discursive gesture of cultural approval for the colonizers’ religious practices? Here is just one example of how Fray Calixto defined Andean religiosity in 1749, when he led the written debate over Andeans’ perpetual status as neophytes: “With respect to Spaniards, Indians appear more Christian and Catholic and may raise the banner of those utterly Christian and very Catholic, since thousands of them abundantly joined the [c]hurch and received baptism, very quickly and almost without miracles, and despite the many examples of tyranny, cruelty, covetousness and horrendous crimes that they saw in Spaniards . . . and in spite of all this, they converted and still are devoted Christians.”

Andeans became Christians in spite of Christians, the writer suggested, while Spaniards appeared in reality the antithesis of Christian role models.

Andean scholars who outwardly professed Christianity were also concerned with values such as pureza de sangre and supported mission projects, presenting themselves as perfect, loyal subjects of the king. Unconditional adhesion to Catholicism, however, might be seen as an anomaly that fulfilled other important functions. As in Spain, in Spanish American societies the statute of pureza de sangre and recognition as an old Christian amounted to being deemed rational and socially acceptable (Spaniards were generically referred to as “cristianos”) and to having the right to gain access to a number of opportunities, such as admission to the priesthood. Reasserting a Christian identity, then, had important political implications for Indians and mestizos, who still remained excluded from the church in the late stages of colonialism in the Andes.

Rather than indisputable signs of spiritual assimilation with Catholicism, anxieties about Christian identity functioned as a political weapon in a society in which mestizos and indios ladinos had become aware of the barriers to their social advancement and the need for ethnic survival. Their accreditation of pureza de sangre was also the rhetorical and social device needed to construct genealogies that tied them to the old Incas to support their claims to chiefdoms (in Limaylla’s and many other cases) and to free themselves from tribute and mita obligations, but at the same time it proved their long-standing conversion to Catholicism and access to a measure of social power that secured ethnic survival—even if that purity of blood was mostly fictional and often deliberately constructed. A redefinition of religious identity was imperative if they were to fight their way into the church; such a resignification unveiled the political and colonial dimensions of Christianity and attempted to fight Andeans’ subordinate status as Christian.
minors and neophytes who would never be Christian enough to minister between humans and God.

In constructing Andeans’ religious and political identity, the Andean scholarship discussed here should be distinguished from the notions of Andean utopia and Inca messianism examined by John Rowe, Alberto Flores Galindo, Manuel Burga, and Jan Szemiński, among others, and analyzed later in this chapter—even though both traditions may have overlapped chronologically, especially in the eighteenth century. In their excess of Christianity, Andeans appeared as a unique kind of “good Christians,” detached from their Inca past as much as from the Spanish model of Christianity in their time. Spanish officials were clearly un-Christian role models, but the “good” Spanish missionaries were long gone: “Indians were very good Christians and Catholics, because they were such a kind of men who, in spite of what they have seen from the time of the conquest, remained in the faith that the Spaniards founded with such a bad example. This does not deny the saintly examples of early apostolic men of respectability, missionaries, and bishops . . . but they are all gone.”

What was being fought in these debates, in the end, was a political rather than a spiritual battle to define who had the power and the moral strength to bear the banner of Christianity and teach the Christian doctrine in the Andes. It was a struggle in which the colonized seized the religious discourse and symbols of the colonizer and exhausted their possibilities to win a space for Andean religiosity over colonial Christianity. Rather than claiming the return of the Inca, as seemed to be the case with the Oruro rebel Juan Vélez de Córdoba in 1739 and Túpac Amaru II in 1780–1781, Andean writers longed for a utopian Christianity that would grant Andeans full membership in the church but would also enable them to demonstrate, with their own pristine example, who the true Christians in the Andes were.

It is also important to recognize, however, the power dimension inherent in the fight for the priesthood and the historical nature of colonial Catholicism. Rather than seeking full inclusion in the Catholic Church per se, Andeans mostly sought to participate in the power spheres of Catholicism because it was the predominant form of religion in colonial Peru, a colonial imposition of the spiritual and political powers of the period. The barriers of difference the church had upheld for centuries would have threatened to become blurred if Andeans had been admitted into the priesthood, as Spaniards and, later, creoles had been admitted during the colonial era. Estenssoro Fuchs interpreted the church’s systematic opposition to accept Andeans as priests as an acknowledgment of the danger implicit in full inclusion. In other words, rather than simply reflecting Andeans’ desire to assimilate to Catholicism, recognition of Andeans as full Christians functioned as a dangerous weapon that threatened to unsettle the hierarchical edifice that sustained colonial institutions. Thus, the public expression
of Andean religiosity in writing became highly political, a contestation and a reflection of colonial religion’s political nature.

Incorporating Indians and mestizos into the priesthood, however, also had the potential to strengthen the church as an inclusive institution and Christian principles as spiritual guides, thereby buttressing the hegemony of both Christianity and the church. But the church was probably not yet ready to see such an opening; by continuing to limit Indians’ access to the realm of the sacred, it would actually intensify their struggle for ethnic autonomy.

AN ALTERNATIVE UTOPIA: “ONE GOD, ONE LAW, ONE KING”

The Andean activists who gathered around El Cercado cabildo in the late 1740s and discussed their social and political agenda imagined various alternative ways to escape colonial discrimination. They considered rebellions to defend themselves against the harms of the repartos and the Bourbon attempts to downgrade mestizos and Indian authorities. As opposed to the Incan utopian ideas prevalent in different insurrectionary contexts in the 1700s, leaders in the mid-1700s also envisioned the coming of a “true” Christianity—perhaps a long-term social and cultural goal of a more cross-ethnic nature—in which the spiritual equality among humans bound by Christian love would ease the social tensions and redress Andeans from colonial injustice. Summed up as loving each other as one Christian nation, this doctrine had a salient political connotation, however, as an attempt to bridge the distance between Spaniards and Andeans. Fray Calixto expressed the hope that

[a]ll this [discord] will cease if Spaniards and Indians united and all together became one, and loved each other, marrying among themselves and becoming one whole people and one nation, as though they were vassals of the same master, ruled by the same laws, as though noble Indians were equal to noble Spaniards, and commoner Indians equal to their Spanish counterparts. And being all one single people, merit only would place them in the ecclesiastical and secular dignities: [t]hat way, women would have men to marry and would live honestly and in Christianity, thus avoiding so many spurious children, lowly born, mulattoes, vicious, and born from incontinence. Thus, most children would be legitimate, as they commonly are in Spain where this distinction or discord [mestizos/whites] does not exist, and as they are also among Indians, who bear mostly legitimate children. The kingdom would then be populated by strong and politically united people under one [n]ation, one law, and one [k]ing.  

Andeans here envisioned a Christian love of a utopian kind that would make Spaniards love Indians and unite with them (avoiding racial mixing with “lower” castes), embracing Catholic marriage, legitimacy, and colonial law. If Spaniards
were able to see themselves as “one” with Indians and, overcoming their racial and ethnic biases, were to legally marry Indian women, a world of social harmony would emerge in which noble Indians would be recognized for their status and be admitted to the priesthood; many single Indian women would find suitable Spanish husbands and would be “restrained” and populate the land with legitimate children.

This love, sealing the union of the “two republics,” would represent the dissolution of the Habsburg plan for segregation. The utopian world thus represented, however, endorsed the colonial hierarchical division between nobles and commoners of the “two republics.” This utopia was also the dream of an “ideal” society in which the values of the colonizers and the imaginary of the colonized would come together peacefully in a heaven of social harmony, where love would erase discrimination and all subjects would agreeably accept Spanish rule, Christianity, and colonial laws. This notion of love is utopian as much as it is utterly political. It sought to obliterate colonial power relationships through “Christian love,” a kind of love and unity that more than 200 years of colonial Christianity in the Andes had failed to achieve. Very important, nevertheless, is the underlying critique of colonial discrimination that emerged from Andeans’ utopian dreams of social harmony in the last stages of Spanish rule in the Andes. A utopian realm of Christian harmony was a last hope to counter colonial injustice in the face of protracted exclusion and the ineffectiveness of long-standing royal protective policies.

The prevalence of this political interpretation of Christianity in the writings of Andean scholars studied in this book and in the writings of dozens of other kurakas and mestizos must be accounted for as an important layer of Andean thought when assessing the thesis of Inca revivalism in late-colonial Peru. The political substratum of these Christian notions of love and social harmony unveils a different utopia, one enveloped in discourses laden with excessive professions of Christianity. Concealed behind these expressions was a major critique of the realm’s major spiritual institutions and the ways Christianity had become a tool of colonialism. This political culture was clear later, in 1780–1781, in Túpac Amaru’s religious expression—which appeared to be simultaneously the embodiment of Inca revivalism, Spanish Christian thinking, and support for the church as an institution. As opposed to Fray Calixto’s dream, however, Túpac Amaru’s dream was to create one nation of Indian, mestizo, creole, and casta brothers by killing all Europeans.65

ANDEAN REBEL CATHOLICISM?
The political undertone of Andean religion becomes more apparent closer to the rebel conjunctures of the late 1700s and their discursive production. As with the opposing political forces on the ground, the tensions between royal discourses
and colonial policies exploded, and Andean thinkers situated their voices and rhetorical weapons in the vacuum left by those tensions. The rebellions in Cusco and La Paz (1780–1783) were both an opportunity and a battle for discursive production, leaving a rich record of Andean rebels’ religious and political ideas. In his letters and edicts, Túpac Amaru professed a rather pious Catholicism and overall promised respect for clerics and the church. In his envisioned Inca rule, ecclesiastics would continue to receive tithes and other fees. Nevertheless, he resignified medieval theological notions of “just war” and “divine justice” in ways that subverted conventional interpretations of those Christian precepts. As opposed to the various Andean writings analyzed in this book, Túpac Amaru advocated violence on behalf of Christianity, God, and the church. In spite of his Christian and devotional rhetoric, the Cusco bishop Juan Manuel Moscoso excommunicated Túpac Amaru, probably for good reasons. In line with the Andean scholars studied here, however, leaders of the 1780–1783 rebellions brought to a heightened moment the preexisting colonial critiques, their political use of Christian discourses, and their proposals for reform.

For Túpac Amaru, the rebellion was a “just, defensive war” that had to be waged on the corregidores and other colonial oppressors in the Cusco cabildo for their long exploitation and abuse of Andeans. After many decades of petitioning and advocating for the enforcement of justice for Andeans, killing tyrannical rulers seemed just. Túpac Amaru had been educated in the school of caciques in Cusco by Jesuit mentors and must have been familiar with the Neo-Scholastic tenets that legitimized rebellion when rulers stopped protecting and reciprocating their subjects. The insurrectionary leader presented the killing of Spaniards as a case of divine justice, which amounted to enforcing the laws against abuses by colonial authorities who for around three centuries had gone unpunished. On January 3, 1781, as he was planning to take over Cusco, Túpac Amaru justified the killing of the Tinta corregidor José de Arriaga on November 10, 1780, as an exemplary punishment for his alleged actions against the church:

Corregidores and other people insensitive to all acts of charity have covered up all these extortions against the law of God. . . . Because it has caused me so much pain that this city [Cusco’s cabildo] has committed so much horror, beheading several of my people without granting them the last confession and dragging others, I must summon this illustrious cabildo to stop the excesses against the townspeople and grant me the entrance to the city. If this is not done immediately . . . I will force my entrance with fire and blood, at the discretion of my troops, without making any distinction among the people there. . . . A situation as important as this demands the surrender of all weapons, regardless of the immunity of those who carry them. Otherwise everybody would have to face the rigor of a just defensive war. . . . [A]nd they would experience all the rigor that divine justice demands.
The execution of rebels without administering the sacrament of confession before death convinced the leader of the corregidores’ anti-Christian nature. In the aftermath of the Sangarará victory, Túpac Amaru described the anti-Christian behavior of the colonial authorities to the visiting inspector José Antonio de Areche:

They beheaded women while the Very Holy Sacrament was exposed in the holy church of Sangarará, and that immediately unleashed God’s wrath: because they did not worship the sacred, neither did the sacred help them; and as the aggressors of priests they died without their help. I sent out a couple of youngsters to preach to them in the streets so that they were treated as Christians (since I did not want to kill them but only to gather them, explain my reasons, and put them in the path of salvation), but heaven’s high judgment sent them away, and they gave themselves to death, thus beginning their unhappy destiny. Is this the way to invite us to peace and subjection to the crown, by killing us like dogs without the necessary holy sacraments, as though we were not Christians, by throwing our corpses to the fields so the vultures make a feast out of them . . . [and] by killing our women? 70

Túpac Amaru’s violence was, then, a “just, defensive war” against the sacrilegious viceregal army and Cusco’s cabildo officials, who unleashed God’s wrath and did not listen to his “missional envoys.” 71 The rebel leader impersonated a divine judge, crowning himself “Don José I for the grace of God, Inca King of Peru,” and proclaiming to be the “dispenser of the divine justice” who would deliver Andeans from Spanish slavery. 72 Thus, the rebellion was conducted in the name of God, but it was also a sort of Andean counter-crusade against the Spanish “Christian infidels” and for the defense of the “sacred Catholic religion”:

[Corregidores] are apostates because they disregard the ten commandments. They know that there is one God but do not believe he is rewarding and just, and his own works stand for that. They despise the precepts of the church, vilipinding the ecclesiastic discipline and punishment, because they learn them as mere ceremonies or fantastic fiction. They never confess themselves because there is no priest [who] would possibly absolve them. 73

Túpac Amaru’s “crusade” was certainly at odds with the kind of Spanish Christianity endorsed by the church, and his writing did not lack determination to make the case that the rebellion was a morally justified “holy war” against non-Christian corregidores.

The rebel Catholicism during the upheavals of the period 1780–1783 was a discourse supported by armed action and a series of acts of power that implemented some measures Andean scholars and others had long demanded from the church and never obtained. The rebel leader appointed chaplains for his troops, as some curas doctrineros and local caciques joined the rebellion. It is also well-
known, however, that other priests led troops against the rebels. Túpac Amaru commanded Quechua-speaking priests to serve as his emissaries and to conduct communications and negotiations with the authorities of the Cusco cabildo on his behalf. Diego Cristóbal Túpac Amaru, another leader and the brother of José Gabriel Condorcanqui Túpac Amaru II, acted as a bishop during the rebellion, appointing curas doctrineros in curacies that had long remained without one. In his words, “[B]ecause I found some curates completely abandoned, I provided these ecclesiastics myself so that the [Indian] souls do not lack the spiritual food and other succor they need. And it would be very appropriate that Your Excellency enabled them with the necessary licenses.”

Diego Cristóbal felt that his actions still needed the endorsement of Bishop Moscoso to be fully effective.

For his part, Julián Apasa Túpac Katari, the rebel Indian leader in Upper Peru who also adhered to Christianity, performed roles as an ecclesiastic authority. He took over some chapels and summoned ecclesiastics of his choice, while others were “elected” by the comün (Indian town council) to offer religious services. In the midst of the rebellion, priests such as Don Isidro Escobar, Don Julián Bustillos, and Don Cayetano Torres performed mass and administered the sacraments to the rebels. Katari set up chapels in San Pedro and Pampajasi, outside the city of La Paz, and had weddings consecrated by unauthorized clerics. Ultimately, the judicial authorities accused the rebels of having conducted an “ecclesiastic insurrection” and committing crimes against the “[d]ivine and [h]uman [m]ajesty.”

The parabolic language of the Bible, characteristic of the “Cinco memoriales” and the “Representación verdadera,” was also present in the rebel’s papers. Túpac Amaru’s edicts encapsulated religious imaginaries and textual devices known in the Andes since the times of Guamán Poma, Cueva Herrera, Limaylla, and Fray Calixto. As in the “Representación verdadera” and the “Planctus indorum” three decades earlier, Túpac Amaru equated imperial Spain with ancient Egypt and its pharaohs, the later Goliath with the colonial authorities, and the ancient Hebrews with the Andean peoples. He proclaimed himself the last descendant of the Inca rulers of Tawantinsuyo and the Andean equivalent of the Hebrew prophet Moses and King David, leading the Andeans to true knowledge of God, a sort of promised land where he would be the sole provider of divine justice.

Along similar rhetorical lines, Diego Cristóbal Túpac Amaru used biblical images to link Spanish tyranny with Indian rejection of Christianity when he addressed Moscoso in 1781, arguing that the insurrection was the natural outcome of the cruel and inhuman way corregidores, caciques, and mandonés treated Indians. Because they were deaf to the Indians’ pleas for justice, Indians could only “clamor like the Hebrew to shake off the oppression of so many pharaohs, and they were forced to fast from the spiritual food like the mass, the word of God, the holy sacraments . . . because they feared that upon their coming to the
town... such judges... and ogres would be ready to demand and collect dues.”
Opressed Andeans, like the Hebrews, had to sacrifice their “spiritual food” and rebel to be delivered from colonial rule. Rebellion was thus forced on Andeans so they could live like “good Christians.”

IDENTITY AND THE POLITICS OF RELIGIOUS “EXCESS”: CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of identity formation in this chapter highlights the views and constructed images of Andeans and their colonial others in light of their own discourses, which expand our understanding of their intellectual creativity and political agency. Rather than simple and homogeneous, Andeans’ identities involved a complex of interrelated layers, which, after all, characterizes human consciousness more generally. Andean intellectuals viewed themselves as the moral opposites of, and superior to, Spanish Christians, while they felt socially of a higher class than blacks and mulattoes. In line with the social agenda of ethnic self-empowerment they developed in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these writers strove to demonstrate that they were capable old Christians as well as social co-equals with the colonial Spanish nobles. As such, educated Andean nobles naturally felt entitled to the priesthood, education in schools and universities, and civil service and to be allowed to perform their nobility publicly through Spanish dress and membership in prestigious social orders.

The textual analysis in this chapter reveals Andeans’ political culture of reciprocity and cultural negotiation with the colonizer in the mature stages of Spanish rule. As in their pre-colonial mañay, they adopted some of the colonizer’s cultural institutions. They used pureza de sangre to define their standing as old Christians and nobility as well as their entitlement. These scholars brought to bear their ancestors’ willing acceptance of Christianity and rendering of tribute as signals of their compromise with Spaniards’ social values, the expectation being that as an “Indian nation,” the king would guarantee the means for their social and cultural survival. But Andeans did not simply accept the colonizer’s culture at face value; as they wrote their ideas, they redefined the meaning of nobility and purity. Their discussions of neophytism and their defense of access to social opportunities were also political battles over the definition of their identities. They sought to deconstruct the colonial definition of Andeans as Indians who were in a perpetual state of legal minors and fought to shake off the day-to-day tutelage and social control of Spaniards.

From the late 1600s through the late 1700s, caciques and other participants in Andean networks from different regions of Peru referred to themselves as an “Indian nation,” a homogeneous, ethnic denominator for native elites and their mestizo relatives. This identification was articulated mostly by elite Andeans.
who strove to equate their social status with that of the Spanish nobles and also deployed it to distinguish themselves from Spaniards and to stress their autonomous agenda. By erasing ethnic boundaries and intra- and internal ethnic conflicts (probably overshadowed by interaction in the city among Andean immigrants from diverse regions) and unproblematically mixing ethnic groups’ disparate pasts, the “Indian nation” appeared as a homogeneous front, a redefined group identity used to negotiate opportunities for social advancement by Andean leaders that expressed itself both textually and through political activism in Lima and Madrid. In the area of identity formation, Indian elites, their mestizo relatives, and eventually local pro-Indian creoles shared a common ground, which challenges the contemporary understanding of these groups and their worlds as separate, with mestizos and creoles equally interested in disassociating themselves from Indians.

In describing their religiosity, Andean scholars perceived themselves as more devout Catholics and more loyal subjects than Spaniards; they willingly “surrendered” to Catholicism and filled their texts with a language of piety, devotion, and moral perfection. The discursive presence of this excess and the anxiety over their Christianity, however, prompt us to question the ulterior factors and ambiguity behind their rhetoric, which belies a kind of religiosity somewhat removed from the ideal of the church. Henry Ward’s opinion that “the forms of Indian Christianity were more orthodox than the content” could also be applied to Andeans’ religiosity in the last stages of Spanish colonialism, as seen in their written texts. A careful analysis of their writings allows other subtexts to appear, a more political layer of discourse that unveils a certain pragmatism: the use of religious rhetoric for political and social empowerment, often expressed in complex strategies for asserting a religious identity that fostered their larger agenda. While stressing their own virtuous and pious Catholicism vis-à-vis non-Christian Spaniards, Andeans rejected the degrading identity of idolaters—which the colonial church had long imposed upon them—and blamed Spaniards’ unjust rule for the Indians having run away from the mission towns to the montaña to resume their former religious traditions. In doing so, however, they acknowledged the resilience of native religions as challenging forces even in the late-colonial years.

Andean authors also reaffirmed their longtime conversion to Christianity and “resilient” Catholicism for more than purely spiritual reasons. They constructed their identities as rational and old Christians to establish their eligibility for the priesthood, education, and membership in prestigious organizations. They appealed to a notion of Christian love (amor al prójimo) to find a bridge between the Indian and Spanish worlds in their effort to avoid discrimination and attain social equality among the strata of the “two republics.” Self-professing their Christian identities allowed Andean intellectuals to speak their truths as rational subjects, “willingly” associated with the dominant spiritual project.
Although Christians, however, Andeans presented themselves as anti-colonial Christians who believed that only the creation of an Indian priesthood and prelatehood would bring true Christianity and social harmony into existence. Their Christianity sought to accomplish the anti-colonial aim of erasing the colonial difference that made them inferior to Spaniards and kept them from self-rule and spiritual and social power. Confirming the creativity of mid-colonial Andean religiosity established by present-day scholars, the writers under study legitimized Spanish rule through the divine power of Viracocha’s predictions—thereby diminishing the power of the papal bulls—and Christianized the Andean past as a dyadic monotheism. But they also Europeanized the definition of *huacas* to debunk Andeans’ essentializing identity as idolaters. In different instances they detached themselves from their Inca past to identify as rational, less idolatrous Christians.

The religiosity of Andean scholars differed in various ways from the ideal model of Catholicism as preached and practiced by the church and other Spaniards in the Indies. Notions of “sin,” “love,” “divine justice,” and “Christianity” were defined mostly in political terms and related to issues of injustice in this world. Justice, as understood by native and mestizo intellectuals, was the “true” Christianity, which would come about only when Andeans were able to have their own judges, educators, *procuradores*, managers of their organizations’ funds, and priests. Ultimately, Andean intellectuals’ Christianity played a political function in support of their agenda for ethnic self-assertion under colonial rule, even if that agenda was occasionally nuanced by long-term Christian utopias with cross-ethnic undertones. Their writing unmasked the political nature of the church as a colonial institution in which social and ethnic differences mattered as much as they did in any other non-spiritual organization of colonial society. In all of these forms, Andean religious cultures changed as they faced the colonial everyday encounter with European Christians, no less than Christianity itself was transformed as it was perceived, articulated, and actively reformulated by mid- and late-colonial educated Andeans.

NOTES

2. For a historical reconstruction of the formation of the Indian town El Cercado, see Lowry, *Forging an Indian Nation*; Coello de la Rosa, *Espacios de exclusión*.
4. Ibid., 207.
5. Ibid., 207–207v.
6. AGI, Lima, 495, Abril 1, 1724.
7. Pease, *Perú Hombre e Historia*.
8. AGI, Lima, 495, Abril 1, 1724.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
13. Casas, Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias, 72.
15. Ibid., 227.
19. AGI, Lima, 495, Octubre 26, 1724.
20. Similar complaints had been raised in the past by Garcilaso de la Vega, Guamán Poma de Ayala, and other Indian nobles. The caciques in 1724, however, were acting collectively to construct their identity, and they did so within the general struggle for more social and political space for Andeans in the late colonial period.
22. This perception also reveals the extent to which Spanish notions of purity shaped the Indians’ mentality and were turned against African Andeans. Martínez, Genealogical Fictions, 121.
23. Casas, Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias, 72.
26. AGI, Charcas, 363, 10–10v.
27. On earlier Andean performances of social difference and identity through Inca participation in Cusco’s ceremonial life, see Dean, Inca Bodies.
29. I discussed in Chapter 3 the roles of individual rebel leaders in the parade and the activities of some of the other performers in the legal battles for enforcement of the cédula de honores in the eighteenth century and their support of Andean campaigns for the priesthood.
31. Taylor, Magistrates of the Sacred.
33. For studies focusing on Andean religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see, among others, Marzal, La transformación religiosa peruana; McCormack, Religion in the Andes; Mills, “Evil Lost to View,” “Bad Christians in Colonial Peru,” and Idolatry and Its Enemies; Griffiths, The Cross and the Serpent; Duviols, La destrucción de las religiones andina; Griffiths and Cervantes, Spiritual Encounters; Cahill, “The Virgin and the Inca.” For Andean religion in eighteenth-century Cusco, see Szemiński, “Why Kill the Spaniard?” and “The Last Time the Inca Came Back.”
34. Griffiths and Cervantes, Spiritual Encounters.
35. Ibid., 286; Marzal, La transformación religiosa peruana.

39. Peter Gose has proposed that Viracocha, the singular form of a former group of Inca and Andean ancestral deities, was thus redefined and presented by Spanish missionaries as a “wandering apostle” who had conducted early evangelization in the Andes. Gose, “Converting the Ancestors: Indirect Rule, Settlement Consolidation, and the Struggle over Burial in Colonial Peru, 1532–1614,” in Conversion: Old Worlds and New, edited by Kenneth Mills and Anthony Grafton, Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003, 142.

40. Mills, “Evil Lost to View” and Idolatry and Its Enemies.


42. In the first book, Garcilaso devoted himself to straightening out Spanish historians’ common mistakes about the Inca religion in an effort to find similarities between it and Christianity (i.e., monotheism, the soul’s immortality, the cross, and the final judgment). In the prologue, Garcilaso manifested his interest in revising the history of the Inca as rendered by Spanish historians by commenting and glossing their versions. In chapter 19, Garcilaso states that he supplemented the histories with information missing in the Spanish accounts and corrected false information the Spaniards had provided because they ignored the native languages. Vega, Comentarios reales de los incas, 6, 46.


44. A resurgence of interest in Garcilaso de la Vega’s writings among later Andean scholars seemed to have occurred after publication of the second edition of his Comentarios reales de los incas in 1723. Osorio, Clamor de los Indios Americanos, 14.

45. In the second book of the Comentarios reales de los incas, Garcilaso de la Vega presents a history of religion that explains “idolatry” and also traces the origins of monotheism among the Inca: “[The Inca] had no other gods than the Sun, whom they worshipped for its natural benefits and excellence, as they were people more civilized and political than their ancestors.” Vega, Comentarios reales de los incas, 60.

46. “Representación verdadera,” 140.

47. Vega, Comentarios reales de los incas, 62.

48. Ibid., 59–64.

49. Ibid., 66–70.

50. “Representación verdadera,” 140v–141.

51. Ibid., 165.

52. AGI, Indiferente General, 1660.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.


56. Ibid., 150v.

57. AGI, Lima, 19, 20, and 22, cited in Estenssoro Fuchs, Del paganismo a la santidad, 493. Estenssoro Fuchs maintained that the ecclesiastical recognition of the canonization of Nicolás Ayllón amounted to a challenge to the customary status of neophytes accorded to Andeans; hence, the intervention of the Lima Inquisition to avoid continuation of the proceedings. On the other hand, the strategy of Andeans’ seeking appointments as Inquisition Tribunal officers so they could attain recognition as old Christians is reiterated in the “Planctus indorum” in 1750. Navarro, Una denuncia profética [“Planctus indorum”], 20[122], 470.
58. “Representación verdadera,” 152.
60. “Representación verdadera,” 138v.
61. See previous discussion in Chapter 6, “History of the Legal Campaigns for Andean Noble Privileges.” For further discussion of the notion of purity of blood, its original links to religion and racial connotations in Iberian societies, and how the concept evolved in Spanish America and among Indian elites, see Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*.
63. Estenssoro Fuchs, *Del paganismo a la santidad*, 441.
64. “Representación verdadera,” 160–161v.


67. Thomson, *We Alone Rule*, 170. On several occasions he manifested that his project was a Catholic one: “[Our goal] is to preserve the faith and the precepts of our [h]oly [m]other [c]hurch, and to enlarge it.” He was stern with ecclesiastics who opposed the rebellion, although he asked them to pray for him in their masses and to commend him to the “divine majesty” for the success of his “enterprise.” AGI, Lima, 1039, Enero 3, 1781, 4.

68. Alternative interpretations of the rebels’ violence against Spaniards can be found in Szemiński, “Why Kill the Spaniard?” 167. Szemiński discusses the rebels’ various perceptions of Spaniards, including that of Spaniards as heretics, which adds to my analysis of Spaniards as anti-Christians, or “untrue” Christians, more generally. Insurrectionists used the idea that Túpac Amaru would end the offenses against the church and the tyranny of *corregidores* to justify their actions with arguments suitable to the dominant colonial regime. Thomson, *We Alone Rule*, 169.

69. AGI, Lima, 1039, Enero 3, 1781, 29.
70. Ibid., 214.
71. Alternative interpretations of the “God” the rebels referred to suggest that this call for violence against Spaniards had a more traditionally Inca meaning. In his analysis of Andean belief systems in the Great Rebellion, Leon Campbell refers to an Andean belief that the Inca creator god, Viracocha, aware of the critical times Andeans lived in, had prompted Andeans to act against those he saw as immoral figures who were going against God. Campbell, “Ideology and Factionalismo,” 117.


75. “Copia de la carta que el rebelde Diego Túpac Amaru respondió a la que le escribió el Señor Obispo del Cuzco, sobre su rendimiento.” Azángaro, Noviembre 5, 1781, reproduced in Valcárcel, *Colección documental de la independencia del Perú*, 153.

76. “Testimonio de la confesión del reo Julián Apaza, alias Tupa-Catary y de la sentencia que se dio y ejecutó en su persona,” Febrero 20, 1782, reproduced in ibid., 177, 183–184. For further analysis of Túpac Katari’s religious beliefs, religious/political dynamics, and symbolic performance of spiritual authority, see Thomson, *We Alone Rule*, esp. chapters 5 and 6.

77. “Maybe the cause of our temporal and spiritual devastation is that the pharaoh that harasses us and mistreats us is not just one but many outsider [forasteros] pharaohs, so iniquitous and perverted like the corregidores, their lieutenants . . . and collectors; them being certainly so diabolical and perverse that I presume they were born out of an infernal chaos, impious, cruel and tyrannical.” Durand Flores, *Colección documental del bicentenario*, 206.

78. “Copia de la carta que el rebelde Diego Túpac Amaru respondió,” 150.
