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Book Reviews

Religion in the Andes: Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru. By Sabine MacCormack. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991. xvii + 488 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, glossary, index. \$39.50 cloth.)

Crowning a number of insightful articles that have appeared since 1982; *Religion in the Andes* is the elegant culmination of Sabine MacCormack's work thus far. This book will stand for some time as the intellectual history of early colonial Peru. The author is deeply concerned both with what her historical subjects could know and with what we, in turn, can understand from their perceptions. She completely avoids the jargon that might have littered (and detracted from) such an epistemological project.

MacCormack's title is cryptic. Only after reading the book is its meaning to be fathomed. The more poetic subtitle, "Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru," is much nearer the mark. The author emphasizes religious themes and perceptions of Indian societies, yet somehow without diverting herself from accomplishing a much larger task. She has written a truly remarkable and wide-ranging interpretation of the Spaniards' early years of encounter in the Andes.

Attentive to, but mostly unfettered by, what historians from Porras to Pease have done with the principal Spanish chroniclers, she breathes fresh life into early published sources that some scholars have abandoned as overworked and appropriate only for the detailing of conventional histories of the conquest and its aftermath. MacCormack has digested what great Andeanists such as John Murra and María Rostworowski have been saying for some time, namely, that historians of the Andean world of 1532 and shortly thereafter neglect the accounts of the prescient traveler Pedro Cieza de León, the administrator-commentator Juan Polo de Ondegardo, and the friar-linguist, Domingo de Santo Tomás (to name a few) at their peril. These authors' insights benefit from MacCormack's resuscitation, and are employed with fascinating results. Where others identify limitations and obstacles to our understanding in these biased commentators, she sees opportunities, invaluable points of entry into the mental worlds of her historical subjects. The simultaneous confines and breadth of the contemporary Spanish mind are what this book is about. Readers can build on the related work of Anthony Pagden on the cognitive worlds of contemporary European commentators. Some specialists may query MacCormack's selective reading of the more widely read authors of the time such as Bartolomé de las Casas and the Jesuits José de Acosta and Bernabé Cobo for their views on perception and the diabolic that

most advance her arguments. But all writing involves choices, emphases, and exclusion. Her decisions in this regard seem more than defensible for the project she has undertaken.

Reflecting the Cusco-centric concerns of many of her sources, much of the book emphasizes the Spanish encounter with the *Inka* and *Inka* religion. MacCormack attempts to surmount this regional and imperial bias by arguing for a fused and converging religious tradition (the Andean with the *Inka*) by early colonial times. But she wisely stirs up this image of fusion later by noting that while the *Inka* religious practices had mostly disappeared from seventeenth-century Andean parishes, there were memories of *Inkas* that were fulfilling symbolic and mythic roles in these societies (see especially p. 415). But renewing the focus on the *Inkas* in early colonial times provides MacCormack with more than just this interesting hurdle. The author follows the intellectual trajectory between the first encounters of Spaniards with the *Inka* world (both through their own observations and what writers such as Cieza and Juan de Betanzos could find out from noble Indian informants) and the retrospective commentaries from the first half of the seventeenth century. Historiographically, her insights link not only with those of Rolena Adorno on Guaman Poma and Garcilaso, but also with the *longue durée* approach to refashioned memories of the *Inkas* taken by Alberto Flores Galindo, Manuel Burga, Luis Millones, Gary Urton, and others.

MacCormack exposes the Spanish chroniclers' struggle and near-total failure to perceive Peru's differences. What is most intriguing, for this reader, is how the writers' careful descriptions often defy their own final judgments. As she notes of Cieza de León at one point, "words somehow fail him." And the example of Cieza proves representative of many others. Cieza's depiction of Coricancha, Cusco's shrine to *Inti*, the Sun—the splendid center of the *Inka* world and the inspiration for a network of solar sanctuaries in Tahuantinsuyu—is out of step with his hesitant comparison with the Torre de Calahorra in Córdoba and, even more so, with the Tavera Hospital. And there was evidently much more for a scribbler to admire in this Indian society than the much-noted stonemasonry and road systems that defied geography. As others, notably El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, would later claim for their own constellation of reasons, Cieza drew attention to the *Inkas*' intellectual and theological achievements. By his reckoning, they had conceived of a sovereign deity and of an afterlife. Such apologetic assertions made room for his esteem. He wondered at the complex, foreign world he was seeing and about which he was learning.

But, as MacCormack shows so vividly, such deep thinking also allowed Cieza and others to use their education and Iberian experience to distort and compare, effectively misperceiving the culture. Under his gaze (as under that of Las Casas for a more nebulous group of Amerindians), the *Inkas*

become Andean versions of the peoples of the ancient Mediterranean (and once again MacCormack's late antique erudition is put to dazzling use). Their "religious evolution," like the developments of the Greeks—not to mention "the Egyptians, Bactrians and Babylonians, and even the Romans"—had somehow stopped short of God, becoming entangled instead with secondary things, lower cults "which the imagination suggested to them." The reader can almost sense the relief in the European thinker as he arrives at the comfort of analogy, a familiar tool for his intellectual world-making. The layers of misperception of what is Andean, of course, only multiply from here, obscuring more and more of what lies beneath the heap. The religious rites of various Andean peoples are shown by the writers themselves to have not even remotely resembled the brand of Islam practiced by the Iberian Moors—just as many Andeans proved to be far less integrated into the *Inkaic* imperial cults (Inti, Viracocha, Pacha Camac, etc.) than has often been assumed—and yet Xerez cannot help but observe that throughout Peru "they make their mosques to the Sun."

One example of MacCormack's craft—and perhaps the salient thread that the author weaves through this complex book—is the way she treats various Spaniards' attention to the roles of the devil in their vision of Andean religion. The diabolic, under her sophisticated lens, emerges as a multifaceted concept with intellectual possibilities rather than the customary restrictions. The need that many missionaries, chroniclers, and extirpators of "idolatry" had for an invisible, omnipresent deceiver, or a devious, chameleonic participant in Andean religion, is made intelligible and vivid. This aspect of MacCormack's book should connect usefully with the similarly mentalist approach to the "idea of the devil" in colonial Mexico being emphasized by Fernando Cervantes (forthcoming from Yale University Press). Quite what devils and demons were to Andeans—the hearers of the sermons and the receivers of the message—is a question that largely remains to be answered.

Her treatment of the intellectual role of diabolic deception is one reflection of MacCormack's generally detailed attention to the intellectual connections that bridged Europe and America in the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth century. In this regard, *Religion in the Andes* is a splendid resource which adds impressively to the achievements of such luminaries as Robert Ricard, Marcel Bataillon, George Kubler, John Leddy Phelan, and Pierre Duviols. For example, she does not spout, as if from some script of received wisdom, that the reconquest of the Iberian peninsula from the Moors shaped Spanish intentions in America. Instead, she employs the texts to demonstrate, over and over and at some length, how the growing Spanish experience of non-Christian peoples influenced manners of thinking in many contexts and sometimes with startling results. Some of the author's most evocative connections are, not surprisingly, made between late antiquity and

early colonial Peru. Indeed, her greatest gift to the reader may be her ability to write knowledgeably about things such as the education and intellectual milieu of the Augustinian chronicler, Antonio de la Calancha. She draws wonderfully upon the works that influenced the patristic and early medieval philosophers whose commentaries were, in turn, employed by Spanish thinkers and observers. MacCormack allows herself the luxury of relevant digressions, and there are illuminating passages that connect running themes throughout the book, especially on thinking about phantasms, the imagination, and types of cognition.

The general attention to Andean intricacy is a pleasant surprise in a book that is as driven by its focus on Spanish perception as is this one. Since MacCormack has much to say about terminology and how it was applied, the authorial decision to describe, for instance, the ancestor-beings called *huacas* as oracles is not always satisfying. Her interest in what can be made to resonate with late antiquity makes it difficult, on occasion, for her not to peer through interpretative filters which are related to the ones she seeks to describe. But there are many other careful references to Quechua etymologies from González Holguin and variations in later texts such as that of Guaman Poma de Ayala. And there is recognition of the fact that, as important as Viceroy Toledo was to the organization of a colonial system in Peru, the resettlement of Indians and the assertion of Spanish influences on Andean life in general began much earlier. MacCormack's learned study is full of promise also for at least one of the paths ahead, not only in Andean history, but in the history of the postconquest era in Spanish America generally: the simultaneous appreciation of colonial documents that spring from the Spanish and the Indian worlds. As other scholars have shown in different contexts, both kinds of sources are imperfect, both are influenced by colonial scenarios and are subject to limitations, biases, and covert political agenda. But if it is the complex web of changing relationships and attitudes within the colonial world that we seek to uncover—contradictions and all—then these difficulties are the necessary ingredients of an emerging reality before they are obstacles.

One of the themes in her seminal article "The Heart Has Its Reasons" (*Hispanic American Historical Review* 65 [1985]:443-66) returns in brilliant form as the "combined force of reasoning and extirpation" (p. 405). With her eye on the policies of the church of Lima between 1532 and ca. 1660, she explores further the continuity and difference between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With the principal early chroniclers as her guides, MacCormack documents the simultaneous admiration and denigration of Andean culture for secular and spiritual ends. There is a complicated coexistence of persuasion and coercion in the approach of the church to the evangelization of Indians. Yet at times—during the tenures of ambitious and opinionated prelates whom she does not much discuss—there is a decided shift

from missionary efforts to formal campaigns of extirpation, beginning in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Many questions about early colonial Peru are begged at this point, not least: what did the extirpators, and for that matter the church, find on their tours of seventeenth-century Indian parishes? MacCormack shows convincingly that "the myths and the stories of Andean gods entered metropolitan cultural awareness to a limited extent only" (p. 405). At this point, her attention turns to the people and ministers of those forbidden, devalued, and demonized gods.

This is not a book about Andean religion as it was practiced or conceived by Andean peoples. There are relevant allusions to Andean rituals and religious specialists throughout the study, but it is not until the second part of her final chapter that there is a sustained discussion of religion in the Andes—the practices and actions of actual people. It sits as the most unsteady part of this admirable whole. The title of the section, "Andeans in Their Land," recalls "The Human Landscape," which Karen Spalding placed first as the scene-setting chapter in *Huarochiri: An Andean Society under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984). MacCormack works with the documentation from a series of idolatry trials from the Archiepiscopal Archive of Lima (hereinafter cited as AAL), compiled by Pierre Duviols in 1986. Duviols chose to publish an extraordinary cluster of investigations deriving from the Andean province of Cajatambo. This accessible archive has recently been added to by Ana Sánchez's selection (extraordinary in other ways) of idolatry material from the region of Chancay (*Amancebados, hechiceros y rebeldes [Chancay, siglo XVII]* [Cusco: Centro de Estudios Regionales Andinos, 1991]). The archivist at the AAL who has succeeded Mario Ormeño Ruíz as director, Laura Gutiérrez Arbulú, has recently re-categorized the idolatry holdings and published a chronological summary in an eclectic collection of essays compiled by Gabriela Ramos and Henrique Urbano, *Catolicismo y extirpación de idolatrías, siglos XVI-XVIII* (Cusco: CBC, 1993). The guide by Gutiérrez will assist scholars working with this valuable documentation, updating the helpful index that Lorenzo Huertas Vallejos provided as an appendix to his *La religión en una sociedad rural andina (siglo XVII)* (Ayacucho: Universidad Nacional de San Cristóbal de Huamanga, 1981).

The fascinating material on the ancestral dimensions of Andean religion from Cajatambo (and especially from San Pedro de Hacas [Acas] in 1656-57) is employed with MacCormack's usual care and imagination. But it remains unclear how widely the reader should apply the suggestive conclusions about the survival of pre-Hispanic forms drawn from these particular investigations conducted by Bernardo de Novoa. Apart from a few illustrious examples from the community of Acas, individual Andeans are not identified and many dimensions of their religious lives are not discussed. Cajatambinos become

generic Andeans in the description perhaps more than is warranted. Other trials (in an uneven corpus of almost two hundred) from neighboring regions conducted by different idolatry inspectors, reveal that religious survival and religious change were anything but uniform in the Andes. The post-evangelization Andean religious world was often very different from the opposing organization of *huaca* ministers and religious officials that Novoa was able to find and assault in Cajatambo.

The ways in which Christianity was accepted into, and otherwise penetrated, the Andean religious framework are treated fleetingly in this section, and with (for MacCormack) an uncharacteristic simplicity. Allusions to Christian shrines in the contemporary Andes, and to Catholic holy images occupying "sacred space indoors," leave a lot of time and space untraveled. MacCormack's assertions on what was happening to the Andean worldview and means of managing the sacred may reflect her decision to accept the standard presentation (first by Kubler, then Duviols, and later by many others) of the 1660s as a watershed both for Andean religion and the appetite of the church for persecution (see especially pp. 4-5, 13, 406, and 432). Stopping in this decade allows her another opportunity to connect with the inclinations of European thought in a mind-stretching epilogue, but it ignores the shifting concerns of extirpators and their findings in the idolatry trials that continued sporadically in the Lima region until the 1740s, and even later in a few cases.

This will, thankfully, not be MacCormack's last word on religious change or anything else. She promises a sequel that will engage myth and history to follow on the heels of this important book.

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Reinterpreting Prehistory of Central America. Edited by Mark Miller Graham. (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1993. xvi + 336 pp. Illustrations, maps, charts, tables, notes, bibliographies, index. \$35.00 cloth.)

The celebration of the Columbus quincentenary served as a symbolic pivot for the evaluation and re-thinking of the paradigms that have dominated the contemporary history of social science. As a consequence, most of the current literature dealing with Latin American history and anthropology has been influenced by a trend towards the re-interpretation of the "discovery" and its impact. Following this trend, *Reinterpreting Prehistory of Central America* emerges as a revisionist response to the study of what, up to now, was artificially envisioned as a cohesive Central American prehistory. The