

alike. Its drama turned him into a martyr. Although McGowan vividly describes Power's lasting contributions, he is cognizant of the limitations of Power's reputation to date:

[Metadata, citation and similar papers](#)

Histoire sociale / Social History (E-Journal, York University)

his colleagues died within a few years of his own passing, and the massive changes taking place in Canadian society and life — it is perhaps not surprising that the whole of Michael Power's life and work seemed to have been reduced to a few memories of his last days. (p. 265)

If anything can expand Power's place in history, this book will. It is thoroughly researched, and its useful appendices include the original and a translation of Power's 1842 Toronto Diocesan Regulations, which illustrate the focus of Power's endeavours while he was Bishop of Toronto between 1842 and 1847. With its fluid writing and lightly worn erudition, McGowan's self-deprecating introduction draws the lay as well as the academic reader into his text. This impeccably written account is both biography and general social history presented by a masterful academic who has an unusually fine way with words. It is a pleasure to read.

Sandra M. Anderson
Field LLP, Edmonton

MÉNDEZ, Cecilia — *The Plebeian Republic: The Huanta Rebellion and the Making of the Peruvian State, 1820–1850*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005. Pp. 343.

In *The Plebeian Republic* Cecilia Méndez gives an account of the complex process of transition from colony to republic in Peru. The study focuses upon the experience of a rural society of the highlands traditionally regarded as “historically isolated”. In particular, Méndez focuses attention on the plebeian rural actors and their political role at the dawn of the republican period, stressing the difference between their role and the ways of legitimation that had been practised by indigenous elites of noble origin from Cusco.

In contrast, Huanta's political leaders emerged from plebeian classes and had new opportunities of social mobility as a consequence of the *caudillista* state: they were chiefs whose authority was based neither on their nobility nor on their community rights, but rather on war. The latter legitimated their power, while the state legitimated the war. The author refers to the “plebeianization of politics” (an expression coined by the historian Jorge Basadre), which in her opinion did not take place so much among the main leaders as at the base of the political system.

Though the borders between disciplines started to fade long ago, it remains difficult to write a history related to the Andean world that incorporates the historical experience of indigenous peoples, above all that of the *indios del común*. One of the main difficulties has been the scarcity of sources or their partiality, considering that

information comes mostly from either the literate Spanish or Creole areas of society. Moreover, there is also a tendency to think of inter-ethnic history solely in terms of antagonism and subordination, in isolated ways that leave little space for interaction. Another trend has been to differentiate the fields of history and anthropology (or ethnohistory) and leave the portion of the Andean world populated by indigenous people in the hands of the last two. The book under review is, by comparison, a model attempt at integration, since it not only accounts for the complex moment of transition — that of the making of the Peruvian state — but also raises again old questions and provides new answers.

This is not its only virtue. Méndez's book is born of a bloody episode in the recent history of Peru; she intends to contribute to its clarification through a study of the past. The episode dates back to 1983 when eight journalists who were investigating the proceedings of *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) were killed in the province of Huanta, Ayacucho — an incident known as the “Uchuraccay massacre”. The commission, later called the *Vargas Llosa Commission* because of the famous writer's role, was set up to find the culprit. The commission found that the peasants from the Huanta province were the guilty party, stating a collective “cultural” explanation for what had happened, highlighting the peasants' isolation, ignorance, and brutality. Only a few would admit that the peasants could have had their own reasons.

Even though this book is mainly about indigenous people, its author avoids using this expression and the word “Indian”, except for a very few specific occasions. The period under study accounts for transformations in the conception of this term in ways that make it equivocal and ambivalent. Besides, Méndez states her preference for the ways in which the protagonists identified themselves. They did not call themselves “Indians”, unless it could bring about some benefit.

In the dialogue she establishes with the events in Uchuraccay, Méndez asks and answers a number of central questions, some of which are summarized below.

In the introduction Méndez calls the reader's attention to the way the *Vargas Llosa Commission* refers to the peasants who were considered guilty of the massacre as the *iquichanos*. The account of the formation of the identity of the *iquichanos* is the route she follows back to one of the fundamental episodes in her work: the 1825–1828 monarchist rebellion when the first references to the term appear. The *iquichanos* were consolidated as an indigenous group in the imaginary of the urban elites toward the end of the nineteenth century, and they were even attributed a pre-hispanic origin.

Two instances of irony concerning this denomination can be pointed out. The first is that the term was taken from an anonymous pamphlet written by a Spaniard in 1825, and it was around this name that an image of the resistance and rebellion among the peasants of the highlands of Huanta was built. The second is that the identification that started to develop among the urban elites did so at a moment when the peasants of Huanta were adopting a clearly nationalist position.

How was it that a group of rural inhabitants found itself involved in a monarchist rebellion? As also occurred in the case at Uchuraccay, it was difficult for many historians to believe that the peasants could have had a motivation of their own. Their support was variously explained as a result of coercion, submission, naiveté, or ignorance. However, far from being passive objects of manipulation by military chiefs,

landowners, or politicians, the peasants needed to be talked into their adherence by sometimes combining negotiation and coercion. The peasants' support could not be guaranteed in the manner that the straight coercion theory surmised, but rather had to be won through ability, theatricality, and more subtle coercion. The Huanta case shows that the peasants took part in the negotiation — without denying coercion, inequality, and oppression — accepting some of the proposals and rejecting others.

The author relates the analysis of the peasants' adherence to the monarchist cause with their participation in earlier and later warlike episodes: in the independence war, the civil wars, and those wars that provided the frame for the creation of the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation. The Huanta case captures just how unsteady were the lines dividing "patriots", "royalists", and "republicans" and how recent their respective loyalties were: so much so, that it would be a mistake to consider them defined parties. This does not mean that the national life that followed was the result of a purely irrational, factious *caudillismo*, but it does confirm the widely accepted interpretation that independence in Peru resulted more from external pressure than from internal moves, at least with regard to the upper sector of society. The author supports her assertion with abundant information, out of which one can take an example: there were more Peruvian soldiers in the royalist army than in the patriotic one. Most of the members of the latter came from various places in America, in particular from Gran Colombia, whereas only few were Peruvian. On the contrary, only few Europeans were part of the royalist forces. The Huanta case also suggests that monarchism as ideology did not last long. The republic, at times glorified and at times degraded, finally succeeded.

The author puts forward a way of reading the "silences" of the sources the better to understand how the military structure was organized, and through this method her readers comprehend how local politics worked. The communities took part in the rebellion, but were excluded from the highest power positions. Much in the same way, though the community's people were experts in the geography of the area of revolt, they did not control the war. Out of the eight localities that were either headquarters or control posts during the war, three were towns and five were *haciendas*. Nevertheless, to acknowledge these factors does not mean that the rebellion was conducted by men who had no ties with the communities. The *iquichanos* leaders were not outsiders but rather part of the communal world: herdsman, traders, landowners in the coca-growing *montañas*, all part of a net that linked this open community with the lowlands, the highlands, and the cities.

Another possible reading of the silences points the way to observation of the concrete actions of economic rebellion. In Huanta, it took two major forms: the refusal to pay tributes and the collection and appropriation of the tithe. If independence brought about a change in the region that actually revolutionized the established order, that change took place in spite of, and not so much as a consequence of, those who fought for the patriotic cause. It was, in fact, the monarchist peasants with their response to the patriots who entirely altered the tax system, changing what had been established since time immemorial. Contrary to what happened with the *ayllus* from northern Potosí, who demanded that the tributary agreement continue (considered by Tristan Platt as proof of their land rights), the peasants from Huanta refused to pay it.

These rebels not only subverted the hierarchies sanctioned by both the republicans and the colonial society by refusing to pay the indigenous contribution (the ethnic, most tangible, mark of subordination of the early republic), but also forced the landowners to pay a salary for their work through an original revolution of the tithe that installed a “modern code of work”. Given the reality of personal service across the Andes, even till recent times, this system should be judged as *avant-garde*.

The Huantinos have been traditionally considered conservative or even retrograde due to their monarchism, deprived of motivations of their own, and a submissive and unstable mass. The Huantinos’ history under review here discusses these and other stereotypes, offering at the same time an intelligent and sensible way of reading the complexities of a society and a moment that requires such a reading. The work of Cecilia Méndez attempts to unravel the deep motivations that led the peasants to engage in the different episodes of the early republican life, and it warns about the importance of making allowance, at least as a hypothesis, for the existence of motivation behind the actions of these people. Such work requires a different way of reading the sources and a strong determination to find new answers.

Raquel Gil Montero
CONICET Argentina

MEYERS, Debra — *Common Whores, Vertuous Women, and Loveing Wives: Free Will Christian Women in Colonial Maryland*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003. Pp. 249.

Debra Meyers’s fine book studies the social behaviour and culture of English women who settled in Maryland between 1634 and 1713. These the author separates by religion — not in the outmoded manner of Catholics and Protestants, but between those she calls “Free Will Christians” (the majority) and “Predestinarians” (the minority). The former includes Catholics, Arminian Anglicans (those who emphasized human freedom), and Quakers, the latter Particular Baptists, Presbyterians, and Puritans (Calvinist Congregationalists). The Free Willers believed that, through the saving power of Jesus, a life-long exercise of their free will leading to a lifetime struggle to attain virtue would be rewarded thereafter. By contrast, the Predestinarians, following Calvin, believed that their destiny had been arbitrarily determined by God, either to salvation or perdition.

Adherence to one group or the other produced, among other results, two very different views of women. In Maryland this meant that Free Will Christians tended much more toward social, political, and economic equality between the genders than Predestinarians, whose view embraced the close control of women — weak vessels — through hierarchical and patriarchal family structures.

The differences are marked. Much intermarriage occurred among Free Will Christians but almost never with Predestinarians. For their part, Predestinarians tended to marry only within their own religious group. While the Free Willers retained the idea of marriage as a sacrament and, as a private affair, that it held legal implications for