

Race, Witchcraft, and Inquisition in Colonial Peru

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For Presentation at:
The Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association
Concordia University
Montreal, Canada
June 1 – 3, 2010

The Spanish colonial project in Peru, can in part, be understood as a mission for the advancement of European empire building and early capitalist development, where the exercise of disciplinary and governmental power leveraged an individuating diagram of biopolitical control to legitimate the exploitation of Indigenous labour.¹ The Spanish Inquisition, operating under the purview of the Madrid Suprema and the domestic colonial government of Peru, occupies a critical position in shaping the epistemological reality that we have come to express terminologically as the ‘colonial imagination,’ through efforts to situate typologies of race and gender within a grid of hierarchical status. This study examines how the development of Eurocentric race–thinking came to shape the institutions, bureaucracies, and wider functionality of the Spanish imperial endeavour in Peru. I refer to these raciological ideologies, which subjugated Indigenous peoples, as ‘repressive colonial apparatuses,’ whose aim was to shape a docile slave force on the *encomienda*, *mita* and *rapartimiento* systems of labour.² These colonial epistemologies or ‘regimes of truth,’ which strategized metropolitan practices of lawmaking through disciplinary power and governmentality, flowed from the sovereign power of Spanish colonizer, in Agamben’s terms, as *Nomos Basileus*.³ The legal codes drawn up by Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, which applied to all Spanish colonies until 1783, were designed to maximize profits siphoned from mineral rich lands deemed *terra nullius*, by issuing colonial title to Spaniards overseeing the silver mines, levying taxes on the production of silver, mercury, and textiles, and by monitoring the creation and distribution of wealth through the mint.⁴

These colonial pursuits, which symbolize the bedrock of the Spanish settler ethos, were achieved through an essentialist and hierarchical understanding of racial identity. Specifically, from the early Spanish Inquisition in Peru we can observe the infancy of this logic of race-thinking, where carriers of ‘tainted blood,’ the New Christian or *conversos*, (Jews who had converted to Christianity) better known to the Portuguese colonizer as *marranos* or ‘swine,’ African peoples forced into Atlantic slave trade, and those accused of witchcraft by the Lima Magistrates for engaging in the sharing of Indigenous practices of herbology and religion, were identified as conspirators engaged in undermining the Spanish Empire. The domestic colonial government of Peru enhanced this civilizing

¹ Foucault’s lectures on biopolitics situate mercantilism as an art of government with three primary tactics that are representative of the successes and failures which unfolded in Spanish Peru: That the state fortifies itself through the accumulation of wealth, population growth, and continual competition with foreign rivals. Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979*. (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 5.

² Brading and Cross explain that the Mexican *repartimiento* and Peruvian *mita*, were royal forms of tributary service that contributed greatly to the loss of Indian life in the New World, and that the primary divergence between the two colonies was that forced labour in Mexico declined greatly by the middle of the seventeenth century, whereas Peruvian slavery continued until its abolition in 1812. D. A. Brading and Harry E. Cross, "Colonial Silver Mining: Mexico and Peru," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* (Nov 1972): 557.

³ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 31-2.

⁴ Brading and Cross, *Colonial Silver Mining*, 560-1. Furthermore, as noted by Karen Graubart, Toledo’s reforms in the 1570s rather than producing further economic opportunity for both Indians and Spaniards, instead broadened the colonial bureaucracy and abuse of Indigenous women who were now the primary producers of clothing. Karen B. Graubart, "Weaving and the Construction of a Gender Division of Labor in Early Colonial Peru," *American Indian Quarterly*, (Autumn, 2000): 550.

mission by bureaucratizing a network of governmental power for the purpose of acquiring truth and conformity, by instituting a strategy of racial hierarchy, paternal governance, class division, and religious persecution. Irene Silverblatt's work 'Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World,' draws reference to both Marx and Foucault to demonstrate how the individuating experience of modern life carried with it both a homogenizing and specifying force, which simultaneously generalized group identity while demanding a singularized experience of *being*.⁵ Furthermore, Ann Stoler, another scholar influenced by Michel Foucault, professes that that these racist discourses "were disseminated through an imperial logic in which cultural hybridities were seen as subversive and subversion was contagious. In that imperial frame, native sensibilities and affiliations were the invisible bonds that could position those of "mixed-blood" as "world-citizens" at the vanguard of revolt against those "full-blooded" Europeans who claimed the right to rule."⁶ What we witness in colonial Peru is the articulation of a Eurocentric grammar of race-thinking which would posture the purity of European blood as a biological typology of *being* crucial for securing the political and economic interests of the Spanish Empire.

Contemporary scholars examining the categorization of race and ethnicity in Spanish Peru, like other colonial zones witnessing the emergence of cultural, ethnic, and racial hybridization, are confronted with a diachronic, de-territorialized, and polyvalent terrain of colonial difference. I argue that the purpose of interrogating and mapping the discursive field of colonial identity in the New World is not to exhaust, naturalize, or assemble a decipherable colonial domain of identification, but to establish how this complex archive of terminology works to establish truth as a diagrammatic force for determining the political, legal, and economic realities faced by infrahuman subjects. In short, these artificial categories of difference provide an analysis into how the colonial mind ordered an individuated universe of hierarchical classification for the purpose of organizing social status as the *raison d'état* of the state. These expressions of racism and ethnocentrism culminated in two holocausts, one which witnessed the evisceration of fifteen million Indians and another where the lives of thirteen million African lives were erased as the result of enslavement.⁷

David Cahill's work attempts to unravel the problematic nature of defining 'ethnicity' in colonial Peru and its relationship to the division of labour, suggesting that the terminology of colonial difference is protean in nature.⁸ Cahill's analysis, however, falls short in revealing how this strategy underscores a biopolitical technology of force which seeks to individuate the experience of the colonized in order to prevent group

⁵ Silverblatt reminds us that "that modern identity is rooted in the concept of the individual; or, as Marx saw it, the abstract individual could not exist apart from the abstract state; or as Foucault saw it, conjoined processes of totalizing and individuating marked the experience of modern life. Foucault pinpointed the confession as a paradigm of individuating practice." Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions: Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 220-221.

⁶ Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 52.

⁷ Enrique Dussel, *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor and the Philosophy of Liberation*. (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1996), 50.

⁸ David Cahill, "Colour by Numbers: Racial and Ethnic Categories in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1532-1824" *Journal of Latin American Studies* (May 1994): 345-346.

resistance. Foucault's examination of biopolitics uncovers how the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the mapping out of a hierarchical domain of classifications, relations, and processes, which could order the knowledge of nature.⁹ I argue that the colonial experience unfolding in Spanish Peru beginning in the fifteenth century introduced a biopolitical art of government, which effectively instituted repressive colonial practices aimed at obstructing resistance through attempts to create a docile labour force.¹⁰ These discourses of race-thinking in the first instance assemble an archive of colonial difference for tabulating the spectrum of inhuman identities (as can be seen in Cahill's categorization of racial difference in colonial Peru)¹¹ which represent a grid of intelligibility for justifying the inferiorization of non-Europeans, then secondly, as a consequence of the pressures exacted by the inevitable spaces of intercultural exchange and racial hybridization in the colony, the Spanish elite carved out new spaces of classification to maintain a hegemonic presence. These diffuse strategies of alienation and hierarchy would later be evidenced on plantations in the New World by the planter's desire to alienate his 'illegitimate' mulatto offspring (situating this hybrid subject into an untouchable 'Third Space,') in order to prevent any disruption to the convention of primogeniture which governed the transference of wealth. Moreover, laws sustaining the overarching paternal hierarchy in the Caribbean and U.S. South freed children of mixed blood in their teens with the intention of securing strategic alliances for the purpose of subduing slave revolt.¹²

In taking a genealogical approach toward interrogating the strategies being employed in colonial Peru, we can begin to trace how the diffuse and polysemic imperial galaxy of European conquest manifests itself as an adaptable, mobile, and de-territorialized tactic for justifying the violence, cultural genocide, and material oppression

⁹ Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault, *Chomsky vs. Foucault: A Debate on Human Nature*. (New York: New Press, 2006), 6-7.

¹⁰ Foucault describes the connection between labour and capital, and the creation of man as a "machine" serving the economic functioning of production: "First, if capital is thus defined as that which makes a future income possible, this income being a wage, then you can see that it is a capital which in practical terms is inseparable from the person who possesses it. To that extent it is not like other capitals. Ability to work, skill, the ability to do something cannot be separated from the person who is skilled and who can do this particular thing. In other words, the worker's skill really is a machine, but a machine which cannot be separated from the worker himself, which does not exactly mean, as economic, sociological, or psychological criticism said traditionally, that capitalism transforms the worker into a machine and alienates him as a result." Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 224.

¹¹ Cahill evidences how the complex categorizations of colonial difference are not only complicated by the transcultural realities existing in Peru, but the obsession of modern historical approaches to account for an exhaustive schematization of racial identity: "1. español + negra = mulato 2. mulato + española = testerón or tercerón 3. testerón + española = quarterón 4. quarterón + española = quinterón 5. quinterón + española = blanco or español común 6. negro + mulata = sambo 7. sambo + mulata = sambohigo 8. sambohigo + mulata = tente en el aire 9. tente en el aire + mulata = salta atrás 10. español + india = mestizo real 11. mestizo + india = cholo 12. cholo + india = tente en el aire 13. tente en el aire + india = salta atrás 14. india + negra = chino 15. chino + negra = rechino or criollo 16. criollo + negra = torna atrás." Cahill, *Colour*, 339.

¹² For an engagement into the theorization of the hybrid subject and the location/dispersion of subaltern identities within the philosophical, historical, legal and political domains of the colony, see, for example, Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (Routledge, 1994); Elsa Goveia, *West Indian Slave Laws of the 18th Century*, (Caribbean Universities Press, 1970); Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in the Making of New World Slavery*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, (Routledge, 1995).

of non-Europeans. A genealogical historiographical approach toward examining colonialism in the New World also demands the task of disrupting the fabric of teleological and geographic ‘origin’ when considering narratives of European conquest.¹³ As such, this study is inspired by Enrique Dussel’s work, specifically, the importance of challenging orthodox historiography concerning Latin America’s location in the broader constellation of European colonization, and situating the experiences of colonial Peru at the end of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a period of advantage over non-Europeans instead of the colonial conquests of the seventeenth century.¹⁴

These raciological epistemes emerging from the Spanish colonial endeavour, such as the obsession with purity of blood (*limpieza de sangre*), the association of Caribbean and Peruvian Natives with cannibalism, the devil, and witchcraft, as well as the biblical ‘Curse of Ham,’ are just a few of the trans-cultural narratives, which played a role in assembling a uniform colonial mindset in the New World.¹⁵ The written accounts and artistic works of explorers, poets, philosophers, and clergymen, produce a perspective of European civilization as superior. David Brion Davis evidences the connection between race-thinking and free-labour as well as the diverse zones of race-thinking that contributed to European xenophobia, suggesting that the biblical ‘Curse of Ham’ was in fact transmitted to Christian’s in the early fifteenth century by Iberian Muslims.¹⁶ These epistemes of Spanish race-thinking in Peru witnessed the subsequent undertaking of the colonial administrative apparatus to construct an artificial logic of *limpieza de sangre*. This obsession with blood purity, which can be read through Foucault’s examination of racism as a biopolitical strategy for cleanliness or hygiene in European bourgeois culture, materializes earlier in Spanish Peru as a governmental strategy to control the political movements of Indians, Jews, Blacks, and Mestizos, through social status.¹⁷ Moreover, Kiernan argues that “[i]n sixteenth-century Spain with its rage for titles and status there was much talk of preserving the pure blood of aristocratic families, and *limpieza de sangre* was a democratized, vulgarized form of this snobbery, nobility for the common man.”¹⁸

Uncovering this grid of intelligibility is necessary for charting the diachronic permutations connecting the relationship between racism and labour in the New World. As such, the ‘colonial imagination’ is an assemblage of discursive and non-discursive practices which legitimated the seizure, transportation, and subsequent enslavement of millions of people worldwide to satisfy labour production in the mines and on the plantations throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and U.S. South. Furthermore, both

¹³ Foucault explains Nietzschean genealogy as a decentering and opposition to the search for origin that constructs the edifice of rationality and the teleology of history, as well as mankind’s adherence to this monument. Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), 13.

¹⁴ Dussel, *Modernity*, 134.

¹⁵ Rolena Adorno illustrates how early colonial art works emerging from Peru depict Andean peoples fraternizing with the devil, engaging in sorcery, sodomy, and cannibalism, as a means to evidence their heathenism, inferiority and corruptibility. Rolena Adorno, "The Depiction of Self and Other in Colonial Peru," *Art Journal* (Summer 1990): 110-112)

¹⁶ David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage. The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: University Press, 2006), 79.

¹⁷ See, for example, Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, (Duke University Press, 1995).

¹⁸ V.G. Kiernan, *Imperialism and its Contradictions* (New York and London: Routledge University Press, 1995), 165.

mita and plantation slavery should be regarded as early forms of capitalist enterprise due to their scope of production, efficiency, organizational management, and global commercial flow.¹⁹

In Peru, these disciplinary regimes of labour exploitation, the *mita* and *encomienda*, were instituted by the Spanish colonial elite to maximize profiteering through coerced labour and resource exploitation. However, the institutional ingenuity and the experimental configurations governing the management of *mita* labour and the artisanal craftsmanship of those engaged in the mining and refinement of precious metals, reveal a strong likeness to technological advancements realized later on plantation factories in the Caribbean and U.S. South, where the hydraulic powering of the sugar mill and cotton gin would intensify the productive capacity of slave labour. Although acknowledging the significant role European technologies imparted on the early industrial processes being undertaken in the Spanish Americas, Brading and Cross also observe the critical connection unfolding in the New World concerning the manufacturing of silver with other colonial industries like sugar:

These differences suggest, therefore, that American silver mining offers fewer comparisons with its German antecedents than with that other great colonial industry, the manufacture of sugar. The similarities are striking. Unlike tobacco or gold, both sugar and silver required an elaborate refining process only rendered possible by considerable capital investment. In both industries labour costs dominated the primary sector of extraction or cultivation. Both devised labour systems peculiar to America, the one relying upon imported African slaves, the other -at least in the first instance- upon enforced recruitment of Indian peasants. Finally, both operated within strict geographical limits, sugar growing best in the tropical lowlands, and silver being most abundantly located in the high ranges of the inland cordilleras.²⁰

The obsession with the preservation of pure blood and the nobility of the aristocracy consuming sixteenth-century Spain, would promote an idea of racial superiority, engendering episodes of anti-Semitic violence and rise of the Atlantic slave trade.²¹ These Eurocentric ideologies were advanced by individuals like Amerigo Vespucci and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, reinforcing the relationship between race and free-labour. The racist discourses circulating throughout the Spanish imperium, although being challenged by Bartolomé de las Casas, could not overturn the colonial Manichaean logic of rule being pursued in Peru. These colonial narratives positioned non-Europeans through bio-ontologies which exoticized, primitivized, decivilized, and dehumanized ‘inferior races.’ Vespucci characterized Indigenous women as savage and sexually unstable, suggesting that they were prone to cannibalizing male genitalia.²² Indigenous

¹⁹ Davis, *Inhuman*, 77. Moreover, Brading and Cross explain how the mining projects of the Spanish stimulated global commerce and distanced them from strictly pre-modern societies: “Potosi received cloth from Quito, mules from Buenos Aires, sugar and cocoa from Cuzco, and brandy from Arequipa. Merchants as well as miners built their fortunes upon the industry. It was the existence of this export sector in the colonial economies of Peru and Mexico which prevented them from becoming simple agrarian or feudal societies.” Brading and Cross, *Colonial*, 546.

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ Davis, *Inhuman*, 71.

²² Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 19.

peoples were considered passive, docile, and child-like, requiring discipline and hard labour. As a result, the successful marriage between race and free-labour was first realized on a large scale in the New World through the *encomienda*, *mita*, and *repartimiento* for the purposes of mining silver and the production of textiles. The *encomienda* system was a jurisdiction of Indian land granted to an *encomendero* by the crown to collect taxes and services of Indigenous subjects.²³ The *mita* system, however, was a form of forced labour conscription used by the Spanish colonizers to mine silver.²⁴

I argue that these systems of slave-labour provided a blueprint for the larger disciplinarian practices of labour exploitation undertaken on Portuguese and Spanish sugar plantations, as well as a foundation for the implementation of technologies to increase production. Plantation slavery would later reach its apogee through the French, English, and American plantocracy, through their experimentation with the industrial innovation of plantation technology, the scientific management of slave labour, and the employment of colonial slave laws such as the *Siete Partidas* and *Code Noir* to maximize profiteering.²⁵ Carlos Sempat Assadourian, in his article “The Colonial Economy: The Transfer of the European System of Production to New Spain and Peru,” illustrates the crucial role European technologies, production patterns, and legal structures had on the overall economic strategy of the Spanish in Peru.²⁶ The *encomienda* system, although offering a more expansive degree of freedom than those experienced by slaves who would later toil on the sugar plantations of San Domingo, Jamaica, and Barbados, Brazil, et al. represented a critical strategy or art of colonial government, which was grounded on a coercive form of labour and racism. The factory-like organization and deployment of coerced labour being practiced on the Peruvian *obraje* for the production of textiles, evidences the technical conditioning of New World labour and the transference, adaptation, and experimentation of European systems.²⁷ Moreover, with Toledo’s reforms and the prevailing gendered division of labour, which positioned Andean women as the primary artisans for textile production in the *obraje*, we see an expansion of the

²³ Philip Curtain, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 68.

²⁴ Antonio Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 57. Brading and Cross note that “[t]he Peruvian mita, as first set up in 1574, was surely one of the most remarkable economic institutions devised by the wit of man. Each year the Indians of the region stretching from Potosi to Cuzco had to send roughly a seventh of all adult males to work in the mines and refining mills of Potosi, a number estimated at about 13,500 men. It took the Cuzco contingents some two months to cover the 600-mile journey across the Andean altiplano. An identical arrangement supplied Huancavelica with 3,280 Indians recruited from the surrounding districts.” Brading and Cross, *Colonial*, 558.

²⁵ See, for example, Jason Michelakos, “The Caribbean Plantation: Panoptic Slavery and Disciplinary Power” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Canadian Political Science Association, Ottawa, Canada, May 27 – 29, 2009).

²⁶ Carlos Sempat Assadourian, “The Colonial Economy: The Transfer of the European System of Production to New Spain and Peru,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* (1992): 55.

²⁷ Assadourian explains that the *obraje* was a genuine factory with technologically advanced manufacturing techniques: the “selection, washing and separating of the wool, the operations of carding, warping, weaving, the subsequent stripping and burling, and the final process of fulling, all constitute a direct transfer of Castilian textile technology. Given the manual dexterity of the Indian women and the quality of wool used, we can assume that obrajes in the Indies, on their technical basis, achieved levels of productivity and quality comparable to those in Europe.” Assadourian, *Colonial Economy*, 65.

mercantile economy in Peru and the concomitant realities of corruption and abuse concerning the production of clothing.²⁸

One hundred years prior to Spanish colonization, the Inca also ruled over conquered Andean polities through a system of social hierarchy. Father Fernando de Avendaño and Francisco de Ávila, Spanish clergy members and staunch voices for the eradication of Indian witchcraft and idolatry in Peru, spoke out against the tyrannical manner in which the Inca had ruled over the Andean peoples but also harboured admiration for the authority they exerted over their conquered.²⁹ The European colonizer continued this legacy of hierarchy handed down by the Inca, but instead of affording them space for practising their beliefs like the previous ruler, the Spanish enforced an invasive presence of governmental authority, which proved to intensify social hierarchy and economic servitude in order to advance the coffers of Spain. According to Eric Williams, in as early as 1455 a Papal bull authorized Portugal to ‘reduce to servitude all infidel people’ in the New World, making the way for the Spanish colonizer to mobilize slave labour and resource exploitation to satisfy the foreign consumption demands of the metropole.³⁰ As Frantz Fanon states in his work the ‘Wretched of the Earth’: colonial domination was quick to dislocate in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people. The denial of a national reality, the new legal system imposed by the occupying power, the marginalization of the indigenous population and their customs by colonial society, expropriation, and the systematic enslavement of men and women, all contributed to this cultural obliteration.³¹

The main prerogative of the Spanish mercantilists in the New World was to ‘civilize’ the Non-European in a manner conducive to extracting labour and social conformity, a vision which the British and French colonizers would later sustain in their efforts to minimize the costs of slave labour by importing from Africa, India, and China when the local supply of Indigenous people had been exhausted from disease and violence. Efforts undertaken by Bartolomé de Las Casas to challenge the existing labour exploitation decimating Indigenous peoples proved to accelerate the Atlantic slave trade and the development of plantation slavery in the New World. Davis states that “[b]y 1516 and 1518, when Bartolomé de Las Casas called for the massive importation of African slaves into the New World, to spare the Indians from the kind of annihilation he was already viewing, antiblack racist stereotypes had already become embedded in Iberian societies, where large numbers of African slaves had already been transported, usually to engage in the lowliest and least desirable kinds of work.”³² Williams theorizes that “England and France, in their colonies, followed the Spanish practice of enslavement

²⁸ See, for example, Karen B. Graubart, "Weaving and the Construction of a Gender Division of Labor in Early Colonial Peru," *American Indian Quarterly*, (Autumn, 2000).

²⁹ Silverbatt, *Inquisitions*, 180.

³⁰ Williams also reminds us that Indian slave labour was compromised by malnutrition, European diseases, and an overall powerlessness brought on from having lost their traditional lifestyle of liberty to the realities of plantation oppression. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, 1944), 8.

³¹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 170.

³² Davis, *Inhuman*, 73. David Eltis also concurs with Davis, suggesting that “Bartolomé de las Casas and, later, Jean Baptiste du Tertre encouraged reflection and in the former case real change in the way aboriginal peoples were treated, but both accepted the idea that some peoples – specifically Africans – were natural slaves.” David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 15.

of the Indians. There was one conspicuous difference- the attempts of the Spanish Crown, however ineffective, to restrict Indian slavery to those who refused to accept Christianity and to the warlike Caribs on the specious plea that they were cannibals. From the standpoint of the British government Indian slavery, unlike later Negro slavery which involved vital imperial interests, was a purely colonial matter.”³³ Williams is clear in his assessment that the origin of Negro slavery was not born from racism, but economic interest afforded from the cheap and virtually in-exhaustive labour supply which could be procured from Africa, as well as the underlying Spanish belief in the superiority of Black labour: One black slave was worth four Indians.³⁴ Kiernan, however, rightly challenges Williams’ thesis, declaring that racial complexion was the primary lens for determining the colonizer’s image of the New World.³⁵

However, evidence into the racialized colonial project is outlined by Eric Williams when he considers the difference between white and black plantation labour in the Americas. White servants from Britain were typically men who had been perniciously misidentified as being vagrants and criminals -when they were most often just vulnerable and poor- who fell victim to an enterprising group of individuals known as the ‘Spirits’: A group seeking to profit from exporting ‘white trash’ into the slave trade.³⁶ Williams notes that the white servant’s “loss of liberty was of limited duration, the Negro was a slave for life. The servant’s status could not descend to his offspring, Negro children took the status of the mother.”³⁷ Williams draws our attention to English political theorist Adam Smith to offer insight into the colonial mindset- where the measure of reason, progress, freedom, and profit, hinged on a free-market and the ‘invisible hand’.³⁸ Stoler considers this emergent colonial apparatus, the regime of truth situating race-thinking as a constitutive element of liberalism, as a broader grid of intelligibility for ordering the biopolitical project of the European colonizer. Stoler argues that “[i]f race already makes up a part of that “grid of intelligibility” through which the bourgeoisie came to define themselves, then we need to locate its coordinates in a grid carved through the geographic distributions of ‘unfreedoms’ that imperial labour systems enforced. These were colonial regimes prior to and coterminous with Europe’s liberal bourgeois order.”³⁹

Turning back to Peru, we can survey how race-thinking organizes this grid of intelligibility as a force toward disciplinary and governmental power. Silverblatt asserts that “Spanish colonization - anchored in alien traditions of political economy, political

³³ Williams, *Capitalism*, 8. Furthermore, that the West Indian planter believed that slavery was a practice ordained by God. *Ibid.*, p.202.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 9. Moreover, Williams asserts that “[b]oth Indian slavery and white servitude were to go down before the black man’s superior endurance, docility, and labour capacity. The features of the man, his hair, colour and dentifrice, his ‘subhuman’ characteristics so widely pleaded, were only later rationalizations to justify a simple economic fact: that the colonies needed labour and resorted to Negro labour because it was cheapest and best. This was not a theory, it was a practical conclusion deduced from the personal experience of the planter. He would have gone to the moon, if necessary, for labour. Africa was nearer than the moon, nearer too than the populous countries of India and China. But their turn was to come.” *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁵ Kiernan, *Imperialism*, 164.

³⁶ Williams, *Capitalism*, 10-12.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 136.

³⁹ Silverblatt, *Inquisitions*, 53.

morality, statecraft, and culture - unleashed forces that often proved devastating to Peru's native peoples. Tribute requirements, including labor drafts in Peru's rich mines, contributed mightily to Spain's coffers and, ultimately, to incipient capitalism, but they weighed heavily on peasant shoulders."⁴⁰ Assadourian also reports how the colonial textile factories of Peru coerced more adult men than that of New Spain, the Peruvian colonizers extended slavery to both the elderly and young.⁴¹ Moreover, the amount of tax charged by the Crown after silver had been cast into a bar and stamped at the nearest treasury, was a full fifth in Potosi, Peru during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries until it was finally reduced to a tenth in 1736, whereas in New Spain, miners had received this rate as early as 1548.⁴²

With the intensified demands of forced labour and the growing labour shortages incurred from the hazardous conditions of mine work and the growing resistance among Natives to participate in this oppressive colonial regime, further economic and psychological hardship was placed on Indigenous women in the form of tributes. In the early seventeenth century the supply of Indigenous labour was being compromised by a number of factors beyond the natural hazards of mine work, such as the abduction of Indian families forced to work on private *encomiendas*, prompting overseers to retrieve Native workers and return them to their *pueblos* of origin.⁴³ As a consequence of this sharp loss of male labour and the subsequent diminishment of miner profit in the seventeenth century, female family members of Potosi were made responsible for further tributes to shore up lost revenues, but despite this adversity, rose to the occasion by taking up positions as creditors and overseers to survive.⁴⁴ In Spanish Peru we can witness in the early stages of European colonization into the New World, how a site of diverse cultural interaction was reduced to violence. Silverblatt contends that "Indians were not a uniform community: some lived in cities, others in the sierra; some were noblemen; others, peasants."⁴⁵ Some Indianist militants while acknowledging Spain's legitimacy as their ruling power and their own subsequent subjectivity within this framework nevertheless fought earnestly to hold the colonizer accountable for their welfare. In this respect, we come closer to understanding the concept of disciplinary and

⁴⁰ Ibid., 194. Silverblatt evidences the sharp decline of Peru's Native population as a fundamental fiscal crisis being faced by the Spanish Empire in the seventeenth century that would compromise their reputation on the world stage. Ibid., 182. Foucault theorizes that the art of government rationalizes, calculates and constructs a vision of the state according to the principle of *raison d'État*, in an effort to configure its imperviousness and prosperity, and to eradicate any elements seeking to resist. Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 4. I examine this as proof of the core principles of Foucault's art of government concerning mercantilism and the concomitant biopolitical agenda required for colonial legitimation.

⁴¹ Assadourian, *Colonial Economy*, 64-5.

⁴² Brading and Cross, *Colonial*, 561-2.

⁴³ Bianca Premo, "From the Pockets of Women: The Gendering of the Mita, Migration and Tribute in Colonial Chucuito, Peru," *The Americas* (Jul, 2000): 69.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 68.

⁴⁵ Silverblatt, *Inquisitions*, 231. Prior to Spanish colonization there were no 'Indians' proper, but an assemblage of diverse Andean ethnic groups: Silverblatt theorizes that the term Indian "must be understood in its sociability, emerging in the social relations that engage human beings in time. History is inseparable from social processes of understanding; and this holds true not only for those Andeans who, in seventeenth-century Peru, were mobilized by a consciousness of their Indianness, but also for our own attempts to conceptualize the past and present through terms like 'Indian'. Ibid., 212-213.

the practice of Indian subjectivity under Spanish rule in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Aimé Césaire argues that “between colonizer and colonized there is room only for forced labour, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft, rape, compulsory crops, contempt, mistrust, arrogance.”⁴⁶ For Indians to safeguard their cultural continuity, material well-being, and prevent any further religious encroachment meant submitting to the bureaucratic institutions which were designed to limit their very autonomy as self-determined peoples. Working within this colonial framework, Indianism sought for the recognition of collective rights for Andeans in the courts, with their prayers, and with blood. By invoking Christian doctrine and demanding equal protection under Spanish Law, Natives launched a movement of resistance by exposing areas where colonial ideology had failed them.⁴⁷ Silverblatt posits that “Indianism verbalized the collective experience of Andean colonized subjects-high mortality, loss of lands, insufficient food or clothing, a harried and insecure existence-as a constant assault on life's fabric.”⁴⁸ The Catholic Church failed miserably in its mission to fulfill the promise of securing Indian welfare, instead advancing the interests of the ruling Spanish elite. Kiernan argues that “[i]t is a remarkable tribute to Europe’s self-complacency that even while still carrying on the slave trade, it was preening itself on its moral superiority and sending out missionaries to reclaim others from their darkness.”⁴⁹ I would contend that this was not so much complacency, as much as an overarching adherence to the ideological belief in European dominance and superiority being demonstrated through paternalist and xenophobic institutional mechanisms of force dictated by the Church’s ‘civilizing’ project. As such, the overall colonial strategy finds itself grappling with a fundamental paradox which would later repeat itself in the abolition movements of both the Caribbean and U.S. South, modernity’s schizophrenic approach toward reconciling the humanitarian promise of liberty for all, with the natural rights paradigm justifying the hegemony of European civilization through ‘development.’

This developing discourse of race-thinking, under the authority of Madrid’s Suprema and Lima’s Inquisitor’s, sought to eliminate the contamination and perversity brought on by Andean life and in this pursuit, the colonial apparatus was able to successfully co-opt Indigenous elites to their cause. As a response, Nativists banned the Christian way of life and participation in Spanish traditions, abstaining from Spanish foods, and attending Church, in an endeavour to avoid ‘polluting’ themselves and being further assimilated into colonial society.⁵⁰ Nativist strategies were pursued in an effort to reclaim self-dignity, cultural survival and a modicum of self-determination within the ever intensifying colonial power network.⁵¹ We can witness in the rhetoric of Indigenous Peruvian Guaman Poma’s vision for a utopian Andean society, the integration of Christian ideals and Eurocentric values concerning race-thinking with the broader political imaginings of Indianism. Poma’s chronicle of good government, which put forward the belief that it was necessary to safeguard female honour and purity of race to

⁴⁶ Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 42.

⁴⁷ Silverblatt, *Inquisitions*, 210.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 195.

⁴⁹ Kiernan, *Imperialism*, 165.

⁵⁰ Silverblatt 2004, 200.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 202.

avoid the perils of social degeneracy produced from mixed breeding, identifies the extent to which Spanish ideas of race-thinking and Christian moralism had come to permeate and re-conceptualize traditional Andean thinking.⁵² Poma imagined two ways in which to avoid the contamination of inter-racial breeding and social degeneracy from the former Incan Empire: In essence, the first was to institute a policy of residential segregation which would ban Spaniards, blacks, mulatos and mestizos from Indian settlements, and the second was the right of parents or the state to intercede in the marriage choices of women.⁵³ As a reaction to the broader revolutionary movements of ‘Indianism’, the Spanish colonial presence appears to have been transformed into a more advanced authoritarian establishment by having gendered ideologies of celibacy and sexual purity be championed by the Indigenous elite.⁵⁴ However, what could now be observed was that Andean religion and culture had become inextricably tied to Christianity, resulting in the hybridization of Peruvian culture.

Spanish colonialism sought to entrench a triadic racial classification of Negro, Indio, and Espanol. This race-thinking was fed by a xenophobic ideological program where New Christian conspiracies, female disorderliness, native subversion, and the allegiances between slaves and foreign enemies became identified as revolutionary movements which sought to overturn colonial government. One example of supposed sedition resulted in the Church sending a royal decree to Peru in 1602 warning the colonial administration that New Christians were corrupting the faith of Indigenous peoples who had recently been converted to Catholicism.⁵⁵ Non-Europeans and women were targeted by the Church in its movement toward eradicating the dissident behaviours promulgated by Indianness and witchcraft.

The pursuit for heresy, subversion and conspiracy, became essential tactics for configuring a hegemonic typology, where the colonial administration worked assiduously to punish those practicing local Native traditions. Silverblatt contends that “[h]eresy was a first step on the slippery slope to treason, argued the inquisitors. And imperial stereotypes intensified the fears attached to any tie between indios, negros, and New Christians.”⁵⁶ Davis, however, suggests that Spain and Portugal’s intercultural experiences with Jews and Moors had a positive long-term impact on the acceptance of hybrid identities born from miscegenation, something the English had lacked, arguing that Iberians had become acclimated to a broader environment of racial intermixture. Although this observation fails to account for the Spanish belief that there was a pervasive ‘cross-ethnic’ conspiracy, primarily being undertaken by Indians, Jews and Blacks to undermine the imperial interest in Peru, Davis does echo Trouillot’s belief that there was an emerging intercultural world of hybridity: “Latin Americans did not alienate native cultures from their myths of origin, even before the twentieth-century rise of various forms of *indigenismo*. They view themselves as *criollos* and *mestizos* of different kinds, people of the New World.”⁵⁷

⁵² Ibid., 206.

⁵³ Ibid., 205-206.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 203.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 149.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 150.

⁵⁷ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 122.

Silverblatt provides a Church account outlining an expansive list of heretical witch practices: foretelling the future, the arts of Necromancy, Geomancy, Hydromancy, spells, invoking demons, palm reading, love spells, the list continues on, ad infinitum, unravelling the advanced pathological ends to which the Inquisitors were willing to expunge subversion.⁵⁸ This early repressive colonial apparatus, which located Indigenous witchcraft and its knowledge of herbology as a threat to public order, would later, on both the Caribbean and U.S. South plantation, become a source of fear among the plantocracy, who worried that traditional African medicines being practiced by household slaves were being used to poison the planter's family in acts of resistance.⁵⁹ This fear of witchcraft reinforced not only the colonial view of moral weakness among women, but a fear of the growing threat of sedition among subordinated peoples in Peru. Women, who were understood to be morally weak, sexually corruptible, and prone to sorcery, were identified as infidels believed to be undermining colonial aspirations. In order to prevent the corruption of women through intercultural dealings, the Inquisitor's worked to secure female docility by demanding social, political and religious visibility. In the end, this translated into an assault on the diverse cultural practices of Natives and the women who chose to undertake these subversive arts.

Silverblatt reveals how the tapadas, Lima's 'veiled ladies', "would, without apparent shame or concern, promenade around the city, go to its public plazas, or flirt from balconies – masked by very carefully and seductively draped veils."⁶⁰ Clothing would become just one of the focal points of the Church in its campaign to police social and cultural norms.⁶¹ In an effort to prevent an oncoming Dionysian frenzy amongst the female population "The Decree of the Tapadas' was published by the Marquis Guadalizar prohibiting all women from wearing veils in Lima's public spaces."⁶² This edict aimed at achieving a form of panoptic visibility to prevent the tapadas from challenging the racialized and gendered colonial order. Instead of revealing any conspiracy to undermine the colonial authority like the fantastical notions of Judaizing, the Peruvian witch trials failed to yield any tangible evidence of subversion.

Binary distinctions between Old Christian/New Christian, European/Non-European, Pure-Blood/ Tainted Blood, etc. were crucial in charting out an understanding of community predicated on exclusion. Silverblatt observes that by 1615, anti-Semitic discourse had transformed from an interrogation of daily ritual and religious practices, to a growing sentiment that Jews had gained supremacy over the global mercantile economy.⁶³ What was of considerable concern to the magistrates was not only the cost to which the commercial collusion among Jews had affected the Old Christians, but their

⁵⁸ Silverblatt, *Inquisitions*, 165-6.

⁵⁹ Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 75.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 168-9.

⁶¹ Silverblatt evidences how crucial clothing was in the creation of social boundaries and identity in colonial Peru, asserting that the inquisitor's would police Spanish women garbed in Native clothes as well as those of tainted blood cloaking themselves as aristocrats. *Ibid.*, 158. Moreover, Graubart states that both the chronicler Pedro Pizarro and the Jesuit priest Bernabe noted that natives wearing clothing of another group was offensive, and that Indigenous bureaucrat Guaman Poma in the seventeenth century advocated for a dress code to restore social order. Graubart, *Weaving*, 540.

⁶² Silverblatt, *Inquisitions*, 169.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 145.

inherent capacity to scheme and corrupt the simple minded. Reinforcing these notions was the supposed natural likenesses between Indians and Jews, the ability of New Christians to communicate heresies and conspire with black slaves in a secret language, and the proficiency in which these saboteurs enabled corroboration between domestic and international enemies of Spain.⁶⁴ For Lima's magistrates, this evidence brought proof that there was an international conspiracy to harm colonial aspirations in areas where Spain had little or no jurisdictional authority by evading commercial laws and participating in the underground economy with rival nations.⁶⁵ Increased competition with the Dutch, their chief rival for attaining dominance in the New World, precipitated fears of a Dutch/Jewish conspiracy. This advancement into charting new and expanding definitions of Judaizing illustrates how the Spanish colonial imagination was grounded in a cycle of perpetual ideological legitimation, where the colonial apparatus worked to intensify the subjugation of its subjects by creating new conspiracies.

As demonstrated by the cases of Manuel Henriquez and Manuel Bautista Pérez, any commercial dealings, social engagements or fraternization among Jews, could be perceived as conspiracy against the Spanish Empire. The attack on Jewish financiers and merchants, and the characterization of these individuals as self-interested, greedy, deceitful saboteurs, traces the early stages of Spanish race-thinking as a means toward insulating the civilizing project in the New World. In the seventeenth century Lima's Inquisitors warned the Suprema of the emerging Jewish threat to all of Christendom. The magistrates were intent on characterizing the pervasive nature and urgency of this menace by locating Jewish merchants at the center of a networked global conspiracy to undermine the Spanish Empire.⁶⁶ Kiernan reports that "[t]here was, moreover, always a cosmopolitan element in colonial enterprise and the building of empires, as, a little earlier, of the national states in Europe. Foreigners wormed their way into the Seville trade with Spanish America. Marranos or crypto-Jews had a big hand in the trade of East and West Indies; Jews exiled in Amsterdam came to control a quarter of the shares of the Netherlands East India company."⁶⁷

The salient features of modernity can be understood in part through the Spanish inquisition in Peru, as it comes to organize the colonial state as the site for advancing the relationship between race-thinking and slave labour. Silverblatt maintains that "[t]he modern state took "government in the name of truth" as its charge; and one of the most profound social truths for state officials to judge was the nature of human personhood."⁶⁸ Colonial Peru reveals to us how the emergence of race-thinking, European hegemony, and slave labour, came to circulate around a 'tableau of social fear.'⁶⁹ These repressive colonial apparatuses provide insight into the complicated matrix of New World subjectivity and survival.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 150-1.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 148.

⁶⁶ Lima's magistrates were compiling evidence to support the claim that "Portuguese New Christians were monopolizing most, if not all, sectors of mercantile activity; Portuguese New Christians were cornering finance and controlling credit; and Portuguese New Christians were dominating the distribution, retail, and trade of every and all manner of goods." Ibid., 144-5.

⁶⁷ Kiernan, *Imperialism*, 150.

⁶⁸ Silverblatt, *Inquisitions*, 218.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 164.

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