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An Evil Lost to View? An Investigation of Post-Evangelization Andean Religion in Mid-Colonial Peru. By Kenneth Mills. (Liverpool: The University of Liverpool, 1994. 147 pp. Maps, charts, notes, bibliography. £12.00 paper.)

This brief monograph focuses on the religious practices of one parish in the Archdiocese of Lima in the mid-seventeenth century. Author Kenneth Mills documents the status of indigenous conversion in the parish of San Pedro

de Acas, Cajatambo, finding it incomplete but in progress, if not toward orthodox Spanish Christianity, then toward a "colonial religion" that fulfilled the needs of the Andean people.

The author bases his microhistory largely on documents generated by seventeenth-century Peruvian campaigns—the most systematic in Spanish America—to destroy the physical artifacts of Andean religion and punish its practitioners. In the mid-seventeenth century, Archbishop Don Pedro de Villagómez (1641-71) launched one of these campaigns against what he called "an evil lost to view" in his "Carta Pastoral de exortación e instrucción contra las idolatrías de los indios del Arzobispado de Lima." Using this documentation as his base, Mills both provides a treatise on indigenous religious practices and beliefs in a specific place and time, and instructs the student of colonial history in how to wring useful information from testimony limited in vision and scope.

Mills finds much subtle evidence about indigenous religious practice and belief—the two are not always or necessarily connected—which the extirpators of idolatry, in their all-or-nothing view of religion, missed. The picture presented by his reading of the extirpation materials is not so much one of syncretistic religious practices (although these existed) as of a fluid situation of co-existing belief and worship systems with individuals passing back and forth between them:

religious explanations were, for many Indians in the mid-colonial period, both expanded and expanding. These explanations came from a variable composite of two belief systems: the Andean, which was the more familiar and fundamental, and the Christian, which was gradually penetrating and being adopted in different degrees and forms. (p. 118)

A "mixed religious world" of Andean people positioned between competing religious systems, in which many people adhered to each system separately while others syncretized elements of both, thus comes into view.

An Evil Lost to View does not present a static view of indigenous religious life. The author points out differences between the teachings of the religious leadership—both catholic priests and indigenous dogmatizers—and the general population. While historians are familiar with the gap between the teachings of the Spanish clergy and the religious practices of their flocks, it is interesting to see this process affecting indigenous religious leadership as well. By the mid-seventeenth century in Acas, "The Andean minister-dogmatizers, as much as the priest-*visitadores*, had a subtle religious contender with which to deal: a colonial religion which was both a survival of a regional Andean

belief system and a nascent Andean Christianity" (p. 114). Contact not only created a syncretized Christianity but also changed Andean religion. In order to respond to the challenge of Christianity, indigenous dogmatizers altered their approach to Christian concepts such as confession and sin from one of resistance to incorporation.

The majority of Indians were neither orthodox Christian nor traditional in their beliefs and practices. But within this generalization, Mills finds great diversity. His evidence reveals individuals making choices about their religious practices which range all along the spectrum between the extreme Christian and traditional positions. Mills' work is valuable both for the perspective it offers on religion in the Andes and as an example of the creative use of Spanish source materials to recover indigenous lives.

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