

BACK TO BASICS:
Migration, Labor, Markets, and the State in
the Colonial and Postcolonial Andes

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- THE KINGDOM OF QUITO, 1690–1830: THE STATE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.* By Kenneth J. Andrien. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. 255. \$59.95 cloth.)
- POWER AND VIOLENCE IN THE COLONIAL CITY: ORURO FROM THE MINING RENAISSANCE TO THE REBELLION OF TUPAC AMARU (1740–1782).* By Oscar Cornblit. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. 227. \$59.95 cloth.)
- PAYING THE PRICE OF FREEDOM: FAMILY AND LABOR AMONG LIMA'S SLAVES, 1800–1854.* By Christine Hünefeldt. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994. Pp. 269. \$42.00 cloth, \$16.00 paper.)
- MIRAGES OF TRANSITION: THE PERUVIAN ALTIPLANO, 1780–1930.* By Nils Jacobsen. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993. Pp. 481. \$55.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.)
- ETHNICITY, MARKETS, AND MIGRATION IN THE ANDES: AT THE CROSSROADS OF HISTORY AND ANTHROPOLOGY.* Edited by Brooke Larson and Olivia Harris, with Enrique Tandeter. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995. Pp. 428. \$57.50 cloth, \$18.95 paper.)
- ANDEAN JOURNEYS: MIGRATION, ETHNOGENESIS, AND THE STATE IN COLONIAL QUITO.* By Karen Vieira Powers. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995. Pp. 236. \$27.50 cloth.)
- THEY EAT FROM THEIR LABOR: WORK AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN COLONIAL BOLIVIA.* By Ann Zulawski. (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995. Pp. 283. \$50.00 cloth.)

In the last four years, several publications have contributed to a critical mass of new knowledge on colonial Andean history. The most valuable of these contributions expand the field by diversifying into regional areas covered less in earlier works. These new inquiries refine the focus on the basic foundations of colonial Andean societies and economies by questioning sources of evidence with an imaginative critical methodology. They enrich and qualify classic interpretations of demo-

graphic changes, migration trends, labor exploitation, ethnic survival, colonial “markets,” subregional differences, and state organization, authority, and intervention. These works thus constitute a refreshing re-encounter with the seminal academic tradition of pioneers John Murra, John Rowe, Carlos Sempat Assadourian, and others,¹ one that can balance and complement the recent onslaught of ideological and postmodern re-interpretations of the Andean past.²

Three main analytical perspectives can be detected among the seven recent books reviewed here. In the first category are the works that primarily explore colonial demographic, social, economic, and labor issues affecting ethnic survival and reproduction (the monographs by Powers and Zulawski and the first three sections of the volume edited by Larson and Harris). The second approach includes the works that center on the institutional role of the state and local politics in organizing regional and subregional spaces in the Andes, inducing major local disruptions as well as forging historical continuities (the works by Andrien and Cornblit). The first and second perspectives share a regional outlook, although definitions of what constitutes a region or a subregion and how representative specific regions and subregions are of “Andean traits” vary considerably. (I am assuming in this review that a region is an integrated geographic, economic, and social subdivision of a larger Andean macro-region.) The regional outlook is the most adequate for meeting the analytical challenges of the often dispersed and autarkic Andean colonial realities.³ These two perspectives also complement each other in explaining Andean history.

A third perspective in recent Andean historiography stands on its own. It focuses on the thorny question of the transition from colonial to postcolonial realities by emphasizing colonial legacies (direct continuities or modern recastings), ethnic and socioeconomic identities, and popular autonomous traits. This approach is adopted in the studies of Jacobsen and Hünefeldt. The present review will analyze the individual contributions to each of these three perspectives and their combined impact on Andean historiography.

Andean Journeys: Migration, Ethnogenesis, and the State in Colonial Quito, by Karen Vieira Powers, proposes a comprehensive reinterpretation

1. Most notable are the contributions of Noble David Cook, Herbert Klein, Franklin Pease, Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, Karen Spalding, Steve Stern, Enrique Tandeter, Ann Wightman, and Nathan Wachtel.

2. See especially the works of Rolena Adorno, Sabine MacCormack, and Irene Silverblatt.

3. Works by Kendall Brown, Keith Davies, and Susan Ramírez on colonial Peru have contributed to the rigor of this regional perspective. See Brown, *Bourbons and Brandy: Imperial Reform in Eighteenth-Century Arequipa* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986); Davies, *Landowners in Colonial Peru* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984); and Ramírez, *Provincial Patriarchs: Land Tenure and the Economics of Power in Colonial Peru* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986).

of demographic and ethnic evolution in the region of Quito. The importance of intra- and interregional migrants (*forasteros*) in colonial indigenous societies had been recognized in earlier seminal works, most notably by Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz and Ann Wightman.⁴ Powers elevates the explanatory value of Andean local migration in the early colonial period to a new level. She questions seriously Spanish taxation records and thus recent studies on the demographic effects of epidemics based on these records⁵ as underestimating *forasteros* in demographic statistics. Powers's analysis demonstrates how intercommunity migration, return migration, and *forasterismo* in the sixteenth century as well as later migration to Spanish colonial cities in the seventeenth century were an essential element in the survival and reproductive strategy of ethnic communities (based on pre-Hispanic mechanisms of exchange). She explains this process in terms of "ethnogenesis." These survival strategies destabilized and subverted Spanish administrative and extractive systems, but they may also have undermined the indigenous structuring role of *caciques*, the local Indian authorities, through individualistic centrifugal tendencies.

Did migration reproduce or destructure Andean communities? This key question was formulated by Wightman in 1990. Powers's findings tilt the balance in this debate toward a successful ethnogenesis or reproduction of Andean communities by asserting that migration movements in Quito were carried out by common Andean family clusters who transformed yet preserved the social functions of the pre-Hispanic *ayllus*, especially in moving to (rural) *obrajes* or *haciendas*. This radical reinterpretation of the mechanisms of ethnic survival and evolution questioning the role of the *caciques* and territorial customs can be applied to other Andean subregions. While much of this novel interpretation is based on solid historical evidence and elegantly formulated, Powers also relies on theoretical inference but provides less coverage of specific labor realities. In criticizing demographic sources, Powers finds no comparable substitutes except for some qualitative evidence. Because she relies less on urban and labor evidence, full validation of her theses must await further research in other areas of the Andes.

Whereas Powers's analysis centers on migratory aspects in Quito, Ann Zulawski's emphasizes labor relations. She studied two Upper Peruvian poles of attraction of indigenous labor, the mining center of Oruro and the agricultural areas of Pilaya and Paspaya. *They Eat from Their Labor: Work and Social Change in Colonial Bolivia* establishes relevant comparisons with the better studied area of Potosí, which relied more heavily on offi-

4. Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, *Indios y tributos en el Alto Perú* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1978); and Ann W. Wightman, *Indigenous Migration and Social Change: The Forasteros of Cuzco, 1570–1720* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990).

5. Suzanne Alchon, *Native Society and Disease in Colonial Ecuador* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

cially sanctioned subsidy of cheap forced labor through *repartimientos* and the *mita*.⁶ The study recasts the venerable Marxist debate over the specific nature of the colonial economic system, arriving at conclusions similar to those of Steve Stern regarding the noncapitalist nature of the colonial model. Zulawski describes a general context of incomplete transition to capitalism in Spain and a process of social differentiation already in motion in the Andes before the conquest. She then considers closely the varied types of labor arrangements established between colonizers and colonized, ranging from coerced labor to wage labor.

Zulawski is more pessimistic than Powers regarding indigenous cultural and social survival through migratory movements. Zulawski concedes that the pre-Hispanic Andean practice of producing in several complementary ecological niches may have led to the migration of ayllu peasants through the active participation of *kurakas* (caciques). But she also stresses several other factors inducing migration and abandonment of the Toledan *reducciones*: the drain on manpower created by the *mita* system of coerced labor, difficulties in fulfilling official tribute responsibilities, and the attraction of urban-mining centers for indigenous laborers employed in formal labor contracts (*conciertos*). Zulawski adds another important factor that consolidated the livelihood of migrant families: the complementary mixture of remunerated labor, community responsibilities, and a host of other activities by family members as renters, servants, artisans, and petty merchants. The decline of silver production in Potosí and Oruro and the resulting economic stagnation of the seventeenth century depressed Upper Peruvian agricultural regions such as Cochabamba. It had less effect on the commercial wine-producing agricultural region of Pilaya and Paspaya because of Pilaya's proximity to the Potosí market. Zulawski concludes, "despite economic downturn, socioeconomic change had advanced too far in Upper Peru for a decline in the region's mines to cause a reversal of the trends toward mercantilization and the commodification of labor" (pp. 60–61). Her short gender analysis relies heavily on the anthropological-gender interpretation of Irene Silverblatt.⁷ It arrives at predictable conclusions regarding the relative autonomy and legal expertise of Andean women in urban contexts and the crucial role assigned to women in achieving family subsistence (chap. 6).

Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes: At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology is a collection of essays edited by Brooke Larson and Olivia Harris with the assistance of Enrique Tandeter. It centers on the

6. See Jeffrey A. Cole, *The Potosí Mita, 1573–1700: Compulsory Indian Labor in the Andes* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985); and Enrique Tandeter, *Coercion and Market: Silver Mining in Colonial Potosí, 1692–1826* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).

7. Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987).

economic and social impact of markets on Andean societies. In several ways, the essays in this volume are built on the classic methodological roots of modern Andean historiography. Larson's lucid introduction summarizes and updates recent historiographical debates, pointing out the necessary symbiosis of historical and anthropological analyses. Larson considers this volume an effort to bridge the diverging paths of ethnohistorical and political-economy studies. This endeavor implies a conciliation between Murra's influential anthropological perspective regarding the colonial continuity of pre-Hispanic nonmarket mechanisms of exchange and Sempat Assadourian's economic perspective stressing the reorganizing effect of Spanish-style markets among Indian groups. Larson's introduction sets the tone and the boundaries of the essays that follow. This valuable synthesis will be extremely helpful to students and nonspecialists.

Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes contains ten essays on the colonial and postcolonial periods by John Murra, Steve Stern, Carlos Sempat Assadourian, Susan Ramírez, Thierry Saignes, Enrique Tandeter and associates, Brooke Larson and Rosario León, Tristan Platt, Olivia Harris, Marisol de la Cadena, and a conclusion by Olivia Harris. Some of the essays are original to this volume, other were published previously. The value of the collection is that it covers the most salient and current interpretations of the available social data (using *visitas*, chroniclers, tribute censuses, and early historical accounts) on the evolution of Andean traditional socioeconomic customs and their interaction with the initial market mechanisms introduced by Spaniards.

Murra and Ramírez reaffirm the preconquest lack of markets as known in Western cultures (in opposition to the theses of María Rostworowski, which were accepted by Stern for the pre-Hispanic Peruvian coast).⁸ They also reassert the importance of traditional reciprocity and tribute in the Andes. Assadourian points to the weak basis for markets and nonlabor tribute during early colonial exploitation, which was largely coercive. Stern cautiously considers indigenous intervention in European-style colonial markets as neither capitalist nor purely traditional, postulating that it is intelligible only as a precondition to the subsistence of ethnic ayllus and as part of a broader sociocultural and religious context. Stern thus renders obsolete the false dilemma of which basic foundation in colonial Andean societies prevailed (or should be emphasized in historical analysis)—indigenous traditions or Spanish colonial institutions.

On later colonial periods, Saignes and Tandeter et al. argue for the opening of new opportunities of social articulation and subsistence of indigenous and mestizo groups through migration, trade, markets, and mine labor (more in consonance with Powers and Zulawski). Larson and

8. María Rostworowski, *Etnia y sociedad: Costa peruana prehispánica* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1977); a second edition entitled *Costa peruana prehispánica* was published in 1989.

León, in contrast, document a reversal of such options in Cochabamba. *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes* also includes a section of studies of more contemporary Andean cases that cannot be reviewed here. What becomes clear at the end of the volume is that the differing views on the symbiosis of colonial markets and indigenous nonmarket customs vary according to the degree of economic penetration by the European colonial model in each of the periods and regions studied.

Much of what is missing in the contributions just discussed regarding the colonial state's institutional and political economic influence is addressed in Kenneth Andrien's *The Kingdom of Quito, 1690–1830: The State and Regional Development*. Andrien seeks to explain how the colonial and early postcolonial state influenced major economic and social shifts in the regions of Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca. In this comprehensive study, Andrien brings to bear his own influential research and recent pathbreaking works by others.⁹ Although critical of the "rigid ideological determinism" of the dependency paradigm, he finds some useful concepts in that theoretical framework, especially those linking peripheral areas to the global context and those placing markets at the center of economic transformation. Andrien believes that the state's historical role in allocating labor, accessing raw materials, forcing consumption, and subsidizing production justifies his integration of political-economy analysis with the rigid *dependista* focus. Such theoretical refinement could well have disregarded dependency encumbrances except for the concept of autonomy that Andrien finds pivotal in his historical treatment.

Andrien's main hypothesis is that the period from 1690 to 1830 witnessed a transition from a situation of "autonomy" (existing previously during the seventeenth-century crisis) to a reversal resulting from the development of new export sectors aided by state-induced trade and tax reforms.¹⁰ Andrien believes that export development equates with diminished autonomy (in other words, enhanced dependency). In consequence, the region surrounding the city of Quito declined in textile manufacturing and urban markets. Meanwhile, Guayaquil developed from a small port into a coastal center for shipbuilding and exporting cacao, and Cuenca evolved into a prosperous trading center. Migratory and demographic flows from the northern to the southern highlands also resulted from these economic shifts, lessening government control and taxes in the south and enhancing its attractiveness to migrants from the north. Here,

9. Kenneth Andrien, *Crisis and Decline: The Viceroyalty of Peru in the Seventeenth Century* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985); and "Economic Crisis, Taxes, and the Quito Insurrection of 1765," *Past and Present*, no. 129 (1990):104–31. See also Martin Minchom, *The People of Quito, 1690–1810: Change and Unrest in the Underclass* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1994); and Carlos Contreras, *El sector exportador de una economía colonial: La costa del Ecuador entre 1760 y 1820* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1990).

10. Autarky might be a better concept to employ in describing the condition of Quito in the seventeenth century.

Andrien's emphasis on the economic and state-related stimuli of indigenous migration diverges from Power's view of migration as a primarily spontaneous communal strategy of ethnic survival. Moreover, the new tax burden fanned conflicts like the Quito insurrection of 1765.

To demonstrate his points, Andrien relies heavily on fiscal records, which have yielded a wealth of information from his painstaking research in various Ecuadorian and Spanish archives. Although fiscal sources can privilege state policies over other variables in economic change, Andrien combines them with demographic and qualitative evidence to offer a sophisticated analysis. After reading *The Kingdom of Quito*, one cannot fail to realize the close connections among state decisions, migratory trends, and market developments.

The richly abstract approach used by Andrien to explain the effects of policy making in Quito contrasts with Oscar Cornblit's highly specific, almost atheoretical account in *Power and Violence in the Colonial City: Oruro from the Mining Renaissance to the Rebellion of Tupac Amaru (1740–1782)*. And whereas Andrien's analysis is regional in outlook, Cornblit's study centers on the single colonial urban center of Oruro. Yet the two can be viewed as complementary in explaining the macro and micro factors that determine political actions and conflicts in colonial settings. Also, just as Andrien's work complements Powers's study on the Quito region by expanding the chronological treatment to the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Cornblit's book carries the study of Oruro into the second part of the eighteenth century and beyond the chronological limits of Zulawski's study (1600–1725). Despite the difference in perspectives and methodologies, these two pairs of studies fill a major void in historical knowledge of mostly unexplored Andean areas. They could be used together beneficially in the comparative study and teaching of Andean and Spanish American colonial history.

Cornblit's study is the least innovative of the four. Reading his book proves to be a forced immersion in the minutiae of archival research. It is not a reader-friendly narrative. The stated objective is to recount the social circumstances and conflicts in Oruro between 1740 and 1781. But one finds hardly any references to relevant historiographical debates in the body of the text, whether by choice or unwillingness to update an aging manuscript by discussing recent contributions. The task of drawing conclusions is left to the reader. Cornblit's overly demanding text fails to set up a historical problem. His unorthodox treatment is thus limited in linking the local history of Oruro to its larger geographical and social environment. On the positive side, Cornblit's local and legalistic perspective approximates one way in which contemporary political figures and family clans perceived their conflicts and problems.

Cornblit's reconstruction of the social conditions in Oruro is broken into two disparate sections: the elite conflicts of the 1740s and the dev-

astating uprisings of 1781 inspired by Tupac Amaru and Tupac Catari. Initially, his treatment is limited to the two leading factions of the Oruran mining elite—one dominated by creole families and the other by recently arrived Spaniards—and their interaction with city and royal officers and indigenous peoples (p. 64). Cornblit resorts to explaining the behavior of these elite members in terms of their “extreme greed” (p. 3) and personal attacks in trying to control the post of *alcalde* in the city’s *cabildo* and obtain the favor of the *corregidor*. References to the role of the mining decline in Oruro in creating the conflictive atmosphere are neither thorough nor convincing (chap. 8). Toward the end, Cornblit expands his analysis to include the motivations, actions, and fears of creole, peninsular, and indigenous sectors during the rebellions (chaps. 9–13). These portions are based on testimonies in the trial records of indigenous rebels and in creole and peninsular confessions provided in two extensive appendices. The fight between creole and peninsular factions in Oruro just prior to the indigenous invasion undermined the city’s defense against the inevitable attack. After the rebellion, the social fabric of Oruro was shredded and the leading elite factions ruined. Overall, *Power and Violence in the Colonial City* is of specialized interest only for those researchers studying colonial political and administrative topics.

Mirages of Transition: The Peruvian Altiplano, 1780–1930 is a major study of regional development over the long term by Nils Jacobsen. He examines the complex issue of the transition from a colonial socioeconomic structure to a postcolonial export-led formation in one of the most underdeveloped areas of the Andes, the altiplano region (today divided between Peru and Bolivia). This work shares with Andrien’s study a focus on socioeconomic development and the consideration of postcolonial problems. Jacobsen brings his study into the twentieth century, however. He finds that although the colonial state and its policies played an important role in the altiplano’s economic decline between the 1770s and 1825, in the postcolonial environment, the state exercised little influence in major transformations. In Jacobsen’s view, conflict between domestic regional elites (*gamonales*) and peasants mainly shaped ambivalent efforts at “modernization” and helped block a full capitalist transition. Rather than blaming export-led growth and foreign interests for causing regional underdevelopment (as Andrien does), Jacobsen points to a particular “constellation of power” (involving “liberal gamonales” acting as interlocutors of foreign capital as well as peasant communities) that reinvented “colonial legacies” and thus fortified socioeconomic “identities” impeding fully capital-intensive activities, wage labor, and free private farming. As a result, monopolies, clientelism, and communal solidarity stunted local markets and limited production.

To explain incomplete and truncated development in the Andes, Jacobsen combines economic concepts in dealing with trade circuits, live-

stock raising, and the use of land and labor with social and ideological categories. The importance he ultimately assigns to ideological paradigms in contributing to this adverse developmental outcome is a postmodern innovation in his previous materialist approach. *Mirages of Transition* (based on rich and unique archival research on agrarian and trading agents of the Azangaro province) relies ultimately on recent emphases on ethnic differentiation and identity, heavily determined by “racism,” to explain economic problems.¹¹

The role of racial and autonomous popular and gender identity in the region of Lima is the methodological center of Christine Hünefeldt’s *Paying the Price of Freedom: Family and Labor among Lima’s Slaves, 1800–1854*.¹² Unfortunately, Hünefeldt’s commendable efforts to penetrate the uncharted and highly ideologized waters of gender and race in Peruvian history ultimately produce diminishing returns, in part due to the scant sources available. The study’s strength—its comparative approach to the study of slavery—is mostly underutilized. Insufficient evidence on urban and rural labor and on the economic impact of slavery and abolition in late colonial and postcolonial Peru renders comparison with other slave systems in the Americas incomplete and too general. The role of the state in the abolition process is neglected in favor of the author’s conviction that autonomous family or gender mechanisms, used by the slaves themselves to gain their freedom, are the most relevant factors to consider. This interpretation runs counter to the history of emancipation elsewhere. The alternative is to rely on fictionalized devices that contribute little to rigorous historical analysis.

In conclusion, the seven books reviewed here demonstrate the expansion of Andean colonial and postcolonial studies into neglected regions and topics. One finds in the most valuable recent contributions an innovative integration of seminal historiographical perspectives with new approaches that avoids the pitfalls of postmodern exaggerations. It is clear that Andean historiography must develop its own eclectic approach and avoid mechanical adaptations to theoretical fashions. The best device for stimulating the field’s further development is a healthy revisiting of its basic foundations.

11. This perspective has been taken to new levels in Mark Thurner, *From Two Nations to One Divided: Contradictions of Postcolonial Nationmaking in Andean Peru* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997).

12. See also Carlos Aguirre, *Agentes de su propia libertad: Los esclavos de Lima y la desintegración de la esclavitud, 1821–1834* (Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Universidad Católica, 1993).