

# The Creolization of the New World: Local Forms of Identification in Urban Colonial Peru, 1560–1640

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At least since Magnus Mörner's 1967 study of what he termed "race mixture" in colonial Latin America, historians have acknowledged that modern jargon can appear anachronistic when applied to colonial subjects, and even contemporaneous terminology might have failed to be meaningful to them in their everyday life. For example, the lists Mörner constructed of eighteenth-century *casta* categories, ranging from commonly used terms like *mestizo* and *mulato* to the more unlikely *abí te estás* (there you are) and *torna atrás* (throwback), represent attempts to categorize the plebeian population from above (and perhaps from a distant European perspective) rather than describing the language of everyday interactions.<sup>1</sup> At the level of the streets, a more compact vocabulary sufficed to locate individuals and groups and included locally useful terms that might have had little currency outside a certain sphere. For example, the "Indian dressed as a mestizo" (or vice versa) appears in certain administrative and legal documents, but the precise meaning of the phrase can be ambiguous today.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (New York: Little, Brown, 1967), see page 58 for the lists.

2. *Casta* was the word coined to describe people of mixed (indigenous, European, African-descent) ancestry in the New World. It comes to us most famously through the "casta paintings," whose intended audience was most likely the European tourist or official visitor rather than locals of European heritage or castas themselves. See Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2004), where she makes the important point that not all casta painting was homogeneous.

While some of the more general categories utilized by present-day researchers, such as race, class, ethnicity, and gender, are certainly necessary within their academic context, they not only lack the subtlety of everyday life but also can fail to illuminate shifting social relations or local ways that people identified themselves or were identified by others within specific communities. These vernacular idiosyncrasies are important not only because they can provide a key to the particularities of a community, but also because they can reveal the mentalities of colonial subjects, whose systems of values are not otherwise apparent to us. These shifting terms and relations are most evident in the transformation from the time of contact to colonial society, from a clash between existing, normalized systems to the development of new, hybrid, and contested regimes, particularly in the urban centers created jointly by colonizers and the colonized.<sup>3</sup> As the population began to include second-generation urban residents as well as those immigrants able to learn the ropes quickly and make a place for themselves, the culture of urban centers was transformed from one of

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Susan Deans-Smith has commented upon the possible audiences for these paintings in "Creating the Colonial Subject: Casta Paintings, Collectors, and Critics in Eighteenth-Century Mexico and Spain," *Colonial Latin American Review* 14, no. 2 (Dec. 2005): 169–204. Critiques of the use of racial and ethnic categories in the colonial period have been made most trenchantly by David Cahill, "Colour by Numbers: Racial and Ethnic Categories in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1532–1824," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26, no. 2 (1994): 325–46; R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660–1720* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1994); Juan Carlos Estenssoro Fuchs, "Los colores de la plebe: Razón y mestizaje en el Perú colonial," in *Los cuadros de mestizaje del Virrey Amat: La representación etnográfica en el Perú colonial*, ed. Natalia Majluf (Lima: Museo de Arte, 1999): 66–107; and Robert H. Jackson, *Race, Caste, and Status: Indians in Colonial Spanish America* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1999). On the problem of "misdressed" Indians and mestizos, see Karen B. Graubart, "Hybrid Thinking: Bringing Postcolonial Theory to Latin American Economic History," in *Postcolonialism Meets Economics*, ed. S. Charusheela and Eiman O. Zein-Elabdin (New York: Routledge, 2004): 215–34.

3. The literature on indigenous resistance and accommodation to colonial practices is by now voluminous. Key works on the indigenous Andes in this period include Manuel Burga, *De la encomienda a la hacienda capitalista: El valle del Jequetepeque del siglo XVI al XX* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1976); Luis Miguel Glave, *Trajinantes: Caminos indígenas en la sociedad colonial, siglos XVI/XVII* (Lima: Instituto de Apoyo Agrario, 1989); Brooke Larson, *Cochabamba, 1550–1900: Colonialism and Agrarian Transformation in Bolivia* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 1998); Karen Vieira Powers, *Andean Journeys: Migration, Ethnogenesis, and the State in Colonial Quito* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1995); Karen Spalding, *Huarochirí, An Andean Society under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1984); Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1993).

military occupation to colonial (that is, unequal and exploitative yet creative) coexistence between a variety of peoples, including Europeans, Africans, and numerous distinct indigenous groups. Colonial contact gave rise to new situations—new hierarchies, social spaces, occupations, classes, and categories of people—that demanded their own vocabularies. This language was “creolized” in the sense meant by linguists and historians of North America and the Caribbean: a creole was a common language with shared meanings that developed out of a sociolinguistic (not to mention military) meeting between geographically displaced groups.<sup>4</sup>

In two colonial urban centers, Lima (the capital of the Viceroyalty of Peru) and Trujillo (a provincial capital on Peru’s north coast), we find evidence of social relations so changed as to demand a new vocabulary, possibly coined by and certainly utilized by the subaltern residents.<sup>5</sup> As societies changed, language, too, had to be invented, borrowed, and adapted to accommodate and forge new realities.<sup>6</sup> While not all slang enters the public record and can therefore be lost to historians, language coined to describe common groups and categories of individuals was of great importance in cities where, in addition to the anonymity granted by migration and mobility, many people shared a relatively small number of names.<sup>7</sup> Professions, locations, personal relations, physical

4. See, for example, John Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988); as well as the edited volume by David Buisseret and Steven G. Reinhardt, *Creolization in the Americas* (College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 2000), particularly Buisseret’s “Introduction” and the essay by Richard Cullen Rath, “Drums and Power: Ways of Creolizing Music in Coastal South Carolina and Georgia, 1730–90,” 99–130.

5. The early history of Lima is covered in Lyn Brandon Lowry, “Forging an Indian Nation: Urban Indians under Spanish Colonial Control, Lima, Peru, 1535–1765” (PhD diss., Univ. of California, Berkeley, 1991). On Trujillo, see Susan E. Ramírez, *Provincial Patriarchs: Land Tenure and the Economics of Power in Colonial Peru* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1986); Katherine Coleman, “Provincial Urban Problems: Trujillo, Peru, 1600–1784,” in *Social Fabric and Spatial Structure in Colonial Latin America*, ed. David J. Robinson (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1979); and Juan Castañeda Murga, “Notas para una historia de la Ciudad de Trujillo del Perú en el siglo XVII,” in *La tradición andina en tiempos modernos*, ed. Hiroyasu Tomoeda and Luis Millones (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 1996).

6. For an important example of the difficulties (as well as benefits) of exploring these translations and transformations, see Susan Elizabeth Ramírez, “From People to Place and Back Again: Back Translation as Decentering—an Andean Case Study,” *Ethnohistory* 53, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 355–81.

7. See, for example, the discussion of race and surnames in colonial Mexico City in Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, chap. 3.

attributes, and ethnic or other designations served to set individuals off from one another. Early colonial wills are therefore full of pointed descriptors of men and women owed or owing small debts: “I declare that I have, in the house of an Indian named Madalena who lives beneath the portals of the plaza, a pink silk dress with a serge skirt,” as Cecilia de Ávila noted in 1589.<sup>8</sup> We can probe notarial documents such as wills and contracts for the language of self- and other-identification in everyday life, which brings us closer to our subjects than does the official language of the viceregal bureaucracy.

In the following essay, I analyze 381 wills left in Lima and Trujillo by men and women of various ethnic groups during the period from 1570 to 1640, looking for cases of vernacular language in order to shed light upon local social structure in the early colonial period.<sup>9</sup> Though other studies have analyzed how elites (in Europe and in Latin America) categorized plebeian society, as in the above example of the castas, or how elites defined themselves, as in the case of the reclaiming of “creole” identity in the late colonial period, we have little access to thinking about how plebeian society imagined itself and its others.<sup>10</sup>

8. “Declaro que tengo en casa de una yndia que se llama Madalena que bibe debajo de los portales de la plaza un bestido nuevo de rraso Rosado con un faldellin de tamenete.” Testamento de Secilia de Abila yndia, Archivo General de la Nación, Perú (hereafter cited as AGN), Protocolos Notariales (hereafter cited as PN) 141 Rodríguez de Torquemada, 1589. While I have modernized many early modern Spanish spellings in my transcriptions of documents for the sake of readability, all archival citations are left in their original spelling.

9. Broken down by region, gender, and ethnic group ascribed in the document, the sample includes the following: Lima: 50 Indian men, 97 Indian women, 48 Spanish/Portuguese men, 41 Spanish/Portuguese women, 5 mestizo men, 12 mestiza women, 3 mixed African-indigenous men, and 2 mixed African-indigenous women; Trujillo: 21 Indian men, 43 Indian women, 26 Spanish/Portuguese men, 21 Spanish/Portuguese women, 0 mestizo men, 7 mestiza women, 2 mixed African-indigenous men, and 3 mixed African-indigenous women. Supplementary material has been gleaned from other notarial documents, especially property rental and sales contracts.

10. On elite self-definition, see Bernard Lavallé, *Las promesas ambiguas: Ensayos sobre el criollismo colonial en los Andes* (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1993); Anthony Pagden, “Identity Formation in Spanish America,” in *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, ed. Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), 51–93; and an interesting intervention by Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided: Contradictions of Postcolonial Nationmaking in Andean Peru* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 1997). Books by Chance, Cope, and Lewis look at the ways in which plebeians manipulated and eluded elite classification systems, but do not address the question of self-invention: John Chance, *Race and Class in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1987); Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*; and Laura Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors: Power, Witchcraft, and Caste in Colonial Mexico* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2003).

Through an analysis of these locally used social categories, I ask how Indians and non-Indians referred to one another and what sort of terms they invented for themselves, offering insights into the new social order and how it was navigated by subaltern groups in the period when colonialism was shifting from a phase of conquest and plunder to a period of institutionalization.

### Reading the Notary's Script

"In the name of the Lord Amen. Let all who see this document know that I, Elvira, Indian, native of the town of Xauxa of the repartimiento of don Antonio de Rivera, wife of Juan de Popayani, a silversmith, resident in this City of Kings of the Kingdoms of Peru, being ill of body, sound of will and of sound mind, judgment and understanding . . ."11 Thus opens a will written in Lima in April 1572. The notary who took down these words wrote in a powerful shorthand in order to condense a large amount of legal as well as spiritual information in short and costly space. Such a paragraph was composed after the notary administered a formal but quirky questionnaire to the testator. Into what ethno-juridical category did the subject fall: Indian (*indio*), Spaniard (*español*), black (*negro*), or something else? Was the testator a formal citizen (*vecino*), a long-term resident with fewer privileges (*residente* or *morador*), or simply passing through the city where he or she testated (*estante en la ciudad*)? Where were his or her parents living, and what was their social status there? If the testator was a woman, was she married, and what were the name, occupation, and location of her husband, living or dead? These questions not only identified the testator for the legal record but established the rules under which inheritance would take place in this particular case and created a record of individuals who might have a claim upon the testator's estate. And while a formal template existed, passed down via legislation, apprenticeships, and printed manuals, the particulars of wills varied not only with individual scribes, who carried their own predilections and prejudices, but also with communities, where local exigencies might shape terminology.<sup>12</sup>

11. "Yn dey nomine amen sepan quantos esta carta vieren como yo Elbira yndia natural del pueblo de Xauxa del rrepartimiyento de don Antonio de Rribera mugger de Juan de Popyani official de platero. Rresidente en esta cibdad de los rreynos del piru estando enferma del cuerpo y sana de la voluntad y en my buen seso juyzio y entendimiyento . . ." Testamento de Elbira, AGN, PN 33 Esquivel, 1572, f. 303.

12. On the notary's craft, see Carlos M. N. Eire, *From Madrid to Purgatory: The Art and Craft of Dying in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), 35; as well as Sarah Cline, "Fray Alonso de Molina's Model Testament and Antecedents to Indigenous Wills in Spanish America," in *Dead Giveaways: Indigenous Testaments of Colonial*

Testators were not necessarily passive actors in this conversation. They might, for example, exercise agency by suggesting or withholding information. This is most obvious in the case of the ethnic markers that generally followed the names of people of African and indigenous descent, for example, “Elvira *yndia*” or “Bartolomé *moreno*.” Sometimes these markers appear within the text of the document itself, possibly because the scribe and the testator agreed to the placement. Sometimes they appear in the margins of the document, perhaps penciled in later by a scribe but not proffered by the testator. Often ethnic designations are missing entirely—unnecessary, overlooked, or refused by one party or the other. And when they do appear, they are periodically contradictory: Luisa Gregoria, who appeared before a notary to write her will in 1625, was designated “mulata” within that document, but in subsequent litigation over her estate she was also referred to as “yndia.”<sup>13</sup>

Scribes, too, could interfere in the production of group identifications or designations on paper. Notarial documents were generally written twice, as a *minuta* or draft (usually by a copyist) and then as a final instrument signed by the parties and the notary, leaving opportunities for scribal error as well as conscious change. In cases where the notary and testator spoke different languages, a translator might also play a role in producing the wording of the document.<sup>14</sup> While the final document was usually read aloud before it was signed, the testator’s illness could make this step a mere formality. And it is possible that, at times, notaries added their own words to documents, secure in the fact that most colonial testators could not read and thus were unlikely to recognize the changes.<sup>15</sup>

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*Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Susan Kellogg and Matthew Restall (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 1998), 13–36. Kathryn Burns discusses the relationship between notaries and power in “Notaries, Truth, and Consequences,” *American Historical Review* 110, no. 2 (Apr. 2005): 350–79.

13. Testamento de Luisa Gregoria, Archivo Regional de La Libertad, Trujillo, Perú (hereafter ARL), PN 96, Bernal Jimeno, 1624–25, f. 640. Contradictions such as this may reflect misunderstandings or differences of opinion or may be evidence of the kinds of changes in status over time described by Cope for Mexico City in *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 76–78. Legal designation as an “Indian” also entitled the party to counsel from the Protector of the Indians and lessened certain criminal penalties, leading many individuals to claim these protections and thus the designation “Indian,” and others to challenge them. See Bianca Premo, *Children of the Father King: Youth, Authority, and Legal Minority in Colonial Lima* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005).

14. None of the documents analyzed in this article appear to have made use of a translator; most of the indigenous testators and other principals were longtime urban residents and apparently spoke Spanish well enough to communicate with the notary.

15. Burns describes a lawsuit that emerged from one notary’s falsification of a final copy in “Notaries, Truth, and Consequences,” 361.

While we can rarely state with confidence whether the source for specific language in a document was the notary, the principal parties, or someone else, we can look for indicators such as contradictions and changes and for the use of particular words in one type of contract and not another, or within one community and not another. Read with these caveats, wills can sometimes reveal how individuals spoke about identification and group membership, in contrast to the official discourse with which colonial historians often must work. Urban wills are fascinating precisely because they reflect the multiethnic networks that underlay the colonial economy and society.<sup>16</sup> The petty traders, craftsmen, and craftswomen who left many of the surviving wills bought, sold, and bartered across ethnic lines, and they used their wills as a means of reckoning those accounts. Wills reveal the idiosyncratic details of local life. For example, Beatriz Magdalena, an indigenous vendor tantalizingly nicknamed La Rica (the rich woman), seems to have provided small loans to numerous Indians in Lima in the early seventeenth century.<sup>17</sup> The need to identify debtors to pay for one's funeral dictated that testators had to employ clear, precise, and local language rather than rely upon official categories or baptismal names. While many of these descriptions are too vague now to be meaningful—like María Curi's 1573 note that "I owe one peso each to two Indians known to my husband"—modern investigators can mine these texts for language that reveals the quotidian.<sup>18</sup>

### **Solareros: Space and Privilege in Early Peru**

Among the most important identifiers in a will, after parentage and ethnic marker, was the testator's relationship to property in the city where he or she lived. In Trujillo, where the *encomenderos* (recipients of indigenous labor grants from the Crown) lacked access to the enormous mineral wealth of the southern Andes or to the vast populations of indigenous labor in the central highlands, propertied status was hotly contested. Successful merchants and entrepreneurs rapidly challenged the *encomenderos*' near monopoly on political and social power, signaled by the title of *vecino* (citizen). The conquistadors, turned into

16. On this urban network, but drawing from idolatry trials rather than notarial records, see Alejandra Osorio, "El callejón de la soledad: Vectors of cultural hybridity in seventeenth-century Lima," in *Spiritual Encounters: Interactions between Christianity and Native Religions in Colonial America*, ed. Nicholas Griffiths and Fernando Cervantes (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1999), 198–229.

17. The text reads "Beatriz Magdalena que llama La Rica." Testamento de Juana de la Requera, AGN, PN 1852 Tamayo, 1625, ff. 246v–49v. She is mentioned in the same way in the will of Luis Perez, AGN, PN 1851 Tamayo, 1623, f. 75v.

18. Testamento de María Curi, AGN, PN 33 Esquivel, 1573, ff. 359–60.

encomenderos and vecinos by royal authority, were able to become gatekeepers to political power by dominating the *cabildo* (city council), where they received substantial economic privileges, heard applications for citizenship, and also distributed properties called *solares*, plots of land in the center of the new city meant to establish Spanish residences and the foundations of “civilization.”<sup>19</sup>

The solar was literally one of the cornerstones of Spanish colonialism. It created the physical space of colonialism by forming the well-known grid that radiated out from the central plaza, symbolic home of the government and church, to the edges of the city. By establishing the *casa poblada*, the residence where the new elite could house extended families, hangers-on, servants, and slaves, it laid the cultural foundations for colonial rule.<sup>20</sup> Many of these houses—some made of adobe or, more rarely, stone—still stand today. Their imposing façades and heavy wooden doors advertised the fact that they were centers of power and privilege.<sup>21</sup> The word *solar*, while it could be used to refer to any terrain (*suelo*) upon which a house would be built, had strong connotations of noble lineage for medieval Iberians.<sup>22</sup> The central solar was thus symbolic of the wealth and social expectations of the *grandees* of the New World, suggesting their aristocratic intentions as well as their need to fortify themselves against displaced Indians.

19. Jorge Zevallos Quiñones, *Los fundadores y primeros pobladores de Trujillo del Perú*, 2 vols. (Trujillo: Fundación Alfredo Pinillos Goicochea, 1996), 1:13; see also the discussion of encomenderos in James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532–1560: A Colonial Society* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 21. On the rights and obligations of encomenderos, see Juan Solórzano Pereyra, *Política indiana* (1648; Madrid: Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 1996), vol. 2, bk. 3, chaps. 1–2. Tamar Herzog presents an important comparison between changing notions of citizenship in Spain and in its colonies, including Lima, in *Defining Nations: Immigrants and Citizens in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2003), 17–63. The *cabildo*, dominated by encomenderos in many cities including Trujillo, was one of the three major local power brokers in early colonial Peru, along with the *corregidores* (magistrates) and the clergy, though its power was generally restricted to the city limits where it sat. See the discussion in Ramírez, *Provincial Patriarchs*, chap. 2. Lowry, “Forging an Indian Nation,” reviews the lack of autonomy in Lima’s *cabildos*, though in Trujillo the *cabildo* did retain the ability to distribute land and name vecinos.

20. Lowry reproduces the plan of a Mexican *casa poblada* in “Forging an Indian Nation,” 236. On the relationship between urbanization and civilization, see Valerie Fraser, *The Architecture of Conquest: Building in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1535–1635* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990), 40–47.

21. Ramírez, *Provincial Patriarchs*, 25.

22. See, for example, the primary definition in Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* (1611; Barcelona: Editorial Alta Fulla, 1993): “El suelo de la casa antigua de donde decien den hombres nobles” (p. 943).



These central properties were collectively known as the *traza* of the city, literally the planned portion. Outside the traza, sometimes marked off by a wall, lay agricultural lands, Indian towns, and eventually the multiethnic enclaves of the poorer classes who could not afford to live within the traza but needed to be near the city.<sup>23</sup> While it was presumed that Spaniards would be the sole residents of the traza, given that the cabildo (and the viceroy, through the presentation of encomiendas) controlled the initial distribution of these properties, these solares did eventually enter a nascent real estate market.

The men and women who came to inhabit these properties were generally not members of the high nobility, though some were *hidalgos*, of minor noble, if not wealthy, families. While most Spaniards who came to Peru in the first decades of conquest did not receive encomiendas or loot pre-Hispanic riches, a significant minority amassed substantial wealth and very publicly purchased new rank or acquired informal social standing.<sup>24</sup> In Peru, it was said, an artisan could become an encomendero or a vecino, and this fact, coupled with the long-standing Iberian anxiety about the presence of heretic, Jewish, or Muslim “blood” corrupting one’s *calidad* or social status, led to an environment of social contestation and even official paranoia in the case of the Inquisition and in some judicial bodies.<sup>25</sup>

Early colonial society was therefore often concerned with determining who was a member of what corporate group, and this determination frequently carried material consequences. The compensation given to those who fought on behalf of the Crown consisted not only of quick loot but of privileges that included lifetime rents, and the rights of caballeros to bear arms, to be called *don*, and the duty to defend the city. The nobles of indigenous society also fought for their share of these designations, as did the plebeian Indians who sought social

23. See Fraser’s discussion of town plans as well as royal ordinances and contemporary debates in *The Architecture of Conquest*, chap. 2.

24. See the discussions of the social achievements and backgrounds of the conquistadors in Lockhart, *Spanish Peru*, chap. 2, and Spalding, *Huarochirí*, chap. 4.

25. A number of artisans were made vecinos of Trujillo in the 1550s, including shoemakers, tailors, masons, and silk weavers. *Actas del Cabildo de Trujillo 1549–1564* (Lima: Concejo Provincial de Trujillo, 1969), 1:29, 123, 124, 319, 367. The Inquisition’s anxiety about bloodline is well known. For foundational statements see Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1998); and the essays in Bartolomé Bennassar, *Inquisición española: Poder político y control social* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1981). For understanding the ways that ethnicity interacted with ideas of *limpieza de sangre* and *calidad*, see Katzew, *Casta Painting*, chap. 2, and María Elena Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2008).

mobility through relationships with the conquerors. As María Elena Martínez has argued, an important foundation for New World hierarchy was the differentiation between noble and commoner, as between Old and New Christian or Spaniard and “Indian.”<sup>26</sup>

While indigenous nobles were able to share in some of the benefits of social privilege, plebeian Indians were not generally eligible to become *vecinos* and *vecinas*. Occasionally they were invited to join this exclusive group: in 1553, the Cabildo of Trujillo granted the title of *vecino* to an Indian man, Rodrigo Xuarez, “because he is Spanish-speaking and married and holds the profession of tailor, and has children, and in order that he [might educate his children] as Christians and within the law of Reason, and so that others take [him as good example] and do the same as he.”<sup>27</sup> The Cabildo’s decision to grant Xuarez this privilege was in keeping with the Crown’s early enthusiasm for “civilizing” Indians, which included policies aimed at intermarriage between the daughters of the indigenous nobility and European men. However, such optimistic measures were soon abandoned; by 1586 the Crown was officially discouraging intermarriage, and the new category *mestizo* had begun to be demonized, its members associated increasingly with vagabondage and fomenting social unrest.<sup>28</sup> Likewise, Trujillo’s Cabildo apparently found that modeling civilization by means of granting acculturated Indians the status of *vecino* did not produce the intended results, and it seems to have abandoned this practice by the latter part of the century.

But, at least in Trujillo, this failure to extend the privileges and obligations of citizenship to plebeian Indians did not mean that they were necessarily blocked from other sources of prestige. The Cabildo, in fact, also granted a

26. Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, chap. 4.

27. “Y atento a ques ladino y casado y official sastre e tiene hijos e para q les . . . Car como xptianos. Y en ley de Razon y otros tomen . . . enplo y Fagan lo mysmo quél.” *Actas del Cabildo de Trujillo, 1549–1560*, 1:127–28. Lacunae represent illegible sections of the original.

28. On the changing attitudes toward mestizos of various classes, see Lockhart, *Spanish Peru*, 163–70; Nancy E. van Deusen, *Between the Sacred and the Worldly: The Institutional and Cultural Practice of *Recogimiento* in Colonial Lima* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2001), chap. 2; Kathryn Burns, *Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 1999), chap. 1; Stuart B. Schwartz, “Spaniards, *Pardos*, and the Missing Mestizos: Identities and Racial Categories in the Early Hispanic Caribbean,” *New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 71, no. 1–2 (1997): 5–19; Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof, “Ethnic and Gender Influences on ‘Spanish’ Creole Society in Colonial Spanish America,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 4, no. 1 (1995): 153–76.

small number of indigenous men the right to inhabit a solar within the traza of the city, giving them access to the public space of privilege if not the other accoutrements of rank.<sup>29</sup> In 1554, using familiar language, the Cabildo gave “Diego yndio” a solar, “given that he is married and lives like a Spaniard” (*atento a ques casado y bibe como español*).<sup>30</sup> A handful of other indigenous men, mainly artisans, also received solares from the Cabildo in this period, often secondary sites between the boundaries of existing properties.

But within a few years of these rare official grants, solares within the traza rapidly came into the hands of not only plebeian Europeans, but indigenous men and women, free black men and women, and castas.<sup>31</sup> With the decline in the north coast’s indigenous population in the course of the sixteenth century, encomienda income plummeted, further restrained by the Spanish Crown’s attempts to rein in encomendero power. Trujillo’s elites suffered dramatic declines in their incomes; many found themselves having to liquidate property in order to pay the debts they had amassed to support their lavish lifestyles.<sup>32</sup> Some of those who had the cash on hand to purchase these properties were petty merchants and artisans. They were also increasingly non-Europeans, and the center of Trujillo soon became the residence of a multiethnic group of property owners.<sup>33</sup>

29. This may run contrary to practices in other regions, including Lima and Caracas, about which Herzog states, “I found [no cases] where land was granted without the previous acquisition of citizenship.” *Defining Nations*, 51. The difference may have to do with the relative prestige of local indigenous elites, especially from Cajamarca, who established their presence in Trujillo by the middle of the sixteenth century. See Karoline Noack, “Negociando la política colonial en el Perú: La perspectiva desde la región norte en los Andes centrales (1532–1569),” in *Los buenos, los malos y los feos: Poder y resistencia en América Latina*, ed. Nikolaus Böttcher, Isabel Galaor, and Bernd Hausberger (Madrid: Iberoamericana / Frankfurt: Vervuert, 2005), 214.

30. *Actas del Cabildo de Trujillo*, 1:150. The concern about marriage had in part to do with religious practice but was a qualification for Spaniards as well, since the granting of a solar implied the obligation of populating and occupying the lot with one’s family. By 1559 the explanation of the Indian’s particular qualifications was no longer included in the Cabildo’s records, viz. *Actas del Cabildo de Trujillo*, 1:345, 348.

31. While it was the Cabildo’s task to grant the concession of solares in the early years, that function seems to have fallen away by 1600 and the properties were sold freely. See Zevallos Quiñones, *Los fundadores y primeros pobladores de Trujillo*, 1:14; *Actas del Cabildo de Trujillo*, vol. 1.

32. On the decline of Trujillo’s encomenderos, see Ramírez, *Provincial Patriarchs*, chap. 3.

33. For example, the widowed Doña María de Valverde Pizarro, from a prominent family related to Francisco Pizarro and called “vecina” as well as “doña,” sold a piece of her

Sometime before she wrote a will in 1600, an indigenous woman named Elena de Faria acquired one of these solares. It was, she stated, “bought with my own money” (*conprado con mi dinero*), and it was in a prime spot: next to the properties of Don Lorenzo de Ulloa and Don Juan de Sandoval, two important encomenderos and members of the cabildo.<sup>34</sup> Faria’s ownership of the solar earned her the new title *solarera*, an adjective apparently unique to Trujillo that notarial documents of this period apply only to indigenous men and women.<sup>35</sup> The term was appended by the notary to their name and ethnic designation, “Elena de Faria yndia solarera,” parallel to the way *vecino* was applied to elite citizens. While only six testators in the sample were identified as solareros—Elena de Faria (1600), Martín Chauca (1613), Cecilia Tinoco (1616), Luissa Madalena (1626), Angelina de Albarado (1627), and María Sandobal (1640)—contracts for sales of solares often identified indigenous buyers or sellers as such.<sup>36</sup> Jayme Nicolás, “yndio solarero ladino,” for example, sold half his solar to Felipe Chuquitanta, “yndio ladino,” in 1608.<sup>37</sup> By the middle of the seventeenth century, the term apparently disappears from the archive.

The term *solarero* does not appear in Cabildo records or in court orders but only in notarial registers (although these pages might enter the court record in litigations). The relationship between Spanish notary and indigenous client was

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solar in the traza for 14 patacones in 1608 to an Indian named Martín Ynsim. Widows could be saddled with their husband’s debts and thus were even more vulnerable to selling off parts of property. ARLI, PN 45 Obregón, 1608.

34. Testamento de Elena de Faria, ARLI, PN 44 Obregón, 1607–1608, 216ff. At least one of Ulloa’s properties was a block away from the main plaza and the cathedral, though it is not certain that this is the solar under discussion (Zevallos Quiñones, *Los fundadores y primeros pobladores de Trujillo*, 1:15).

35. For example, the term does not appear in Sebastián de Covarrubias’s *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* (c. 1611), nor is it used in any documents I have seen in Lima or Spain. In her own analysis of Trujillo’s notarial registers (1550–1619), Karoline Noack has located 19 individuals called solareros, all of them indigenous men and women. Personal communication, Nov. 2004.

36. Testamento de Martín Chauca, ARLI, PN 48 Obregón, 1613, f. 317; testamento de Cecilia Tinoco, ARLI, PN 50 Obregón, 1615–1616, f. 61v; testamento de Luissa Madalena, ARLI, PN53 Obregón, 1626, f. 635v; testamento de Angelina de Albarado, ARLI, PN 54 Obregón, 1627, f. 54v; pleito sobre el testamento de María Sandobal, ARLI, Corregimiento (Corr) Causas Ordinarias (CO), leg. 190, exp. 1149 (1641). The notary used by Sandobal was not Obregón but was identified as the “escribano de los naturales.” Luissa Madalena was not called a solarera when she first testated in 1617, although she had already purchased her solar in 1594; testamento de Luissa Madalena, ARLI, PN 51 Obregón, 1617, reg. 1, f. 199v.

37. Venta del solar, ARLI, PN 45 Obregón, 1608, f. 376.

hardly one of transparency, but neither was it as asymmetrical as that between the Cabildo or the Audiencia and a plebeian Indian. If unhappy with one notary, a client could choose another, particularly for writing up a sales contract, not usually a matter of life and death. It may be that the originator of the coinage *solarero* was the notary. One notary, a Spaniard named Andrés de Obregón who had a large indigenous clientele, seems to have used it more than any other. But it was at the very least accepted and retained by members of the community, who now identified themselves in part by their ownership of urban property and participation in the market.<sup>38</sup> Origins aside, the use of *solarero* marked a social and political fact about Trujillo in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries: far from being a “Spanish” city, Trujillo was multiethnic, and its economic vibrancy rested in part on its indigenous householders.

These new owners of prestigious properties were not necessarily part of the social elite of Trujillo. While a few solares had been reserved by the Cabildo for the region’s indigenous nobility, many of this new generation of solareros were plebeian Indians with occupations such as hatmaker, carpenter, shoemaker, brewer, or vendor. Indeed, while Faria’s will, in 1600, marks the arrival of a new term, interethnic and interclass property transfer was already well established in Trujillo. Catalina de Agüero, a Spanish-speaking indigenous woman originally from Cajamarca who had worked as a domestic servant in a Spanish household, had purchased three solares in the traza for 50 pesos each prior to her 1565 will, thus even earlier than the earliest extant Cabildo record of solar grants to indigenous men.<sup>39</sup>

In fact, of 64 indigenous men and women whose wills were analyzed for this study, 41 of them owned or lived in solares within Trujillo, suggesting that there was a long-term multiethnic presence in the traza in this period.<sup>40</sup> According to Karoline Noack, one-third of the existing records of sales of solares in Trujillo in 1560 involved at least one indigenous party.<sup>41</sup> From the brief descriptions

38. Other notaries who employed the term were Juan de Mata and Martínez de Escobar. Karoline Noack, personal communication, June 2007.

39. Testamento de Catalina de Agüero yndia ladina, ARLL, PN 11 Mata, 1570, f. 42.

40. These 41 were 12 of 21 men and 29 of 43 women in the sample. The fact that, in this sample, female testators were more likely to own solares than male testators could result from the number of male caciques in the sample, whose lands tended to be in their own pueblos; or it could be because women without property were less likely to leave wills than men without property.

41. Noack, “Negociando la política colonial en el Perú,” 214. After 1560 the rate of indigenous participation slowed somewhat, though it continued to be significant until the late seventeenth century.

given in wills and sales records, it is clear that some of these properties bounded one another, forming little enclaves, though always with Spanish neighbors, and that they were resold and subdivided over and over again. For a characteristically complicated example, the indigenous woman Magdalena Jiquil sold her solar in 1594 to Luisa Magdalena, also indigenous, who left it to her children in her will of 1617. The solar was bounded by properties of two elite Spaniards, including the prosecutor for the Real Audiencia, but also by that of an indigenous woman, Catalina Román.<sup>42</sup> Román and her late husband had purchased her lot for 200 *patacones*—a hefty sum—from Captain Baltasar Rodríguez, an early vecino of Trujillo who had served in its Cabildo and as majordomo of the cathedral.<sup>43</sup> Román's solar was eventually split into two; one half she sold to an indigenous shoemaker named Agustín Maldonado, the other half she left to the *cofradía* or religious sodality of San Antonio de Padua as a charitable donation in exchange for masses for her and her husband's souls. Within a brief time after her death, the *cofradía* had rented the solar to its sacristan, Francisco Guancachayco, for 24 *patacones* a year.<sup>44</sup>

These Indian solareros were recent immigrants from the rural Trujillo valley who had found financial success in the city's emerging market economy. Trujillo's economy was driven by its busy port and local industries built around indigenous textiles, wheat, sugar, and cattle ranching, and the city abounded in petty vendors, tailors, carpenters, shoemakers, construction workers, and other artisans and traders.<sup>45</sup> The fervent competition meant that many newcomers remained on the margins of society, but a fair number appear to have achieved stability or economic success. The successful acquired the cash or credit necessary to purchase property, as the conquistadors and their kin sold off their estates.

The purchase of a solar was not simply a matter of ostentation. It offered secure housing and a permanent residence and also provided space for a workshop or store, with access to a better clientele than the *cajonero* or street vendor served. Thus we see artisans acquiring these properties. In 1563 Luis, an indigenous tailor, co-owned three solares in Trujillo with a carpenter named

42. Testamento de Magdalena Jiquil, ARLL, PN 41 Obregon, 1594, reg. 3, f. 89; Testamento de Luissa Madalena, ARLL, PN 51 Obregón, 1617, reg. 1, f. 199v.

43. Zevallos Quiñones, *Los fundadores y primeros pobladores de Trujillo*, 1:307–8. A patacón was a peso valued at eight reales. For a sense of perspective, a servant in Trujillo at this time might earn twelve patacones in a year in addition to room and board.

44. Testamento de Catalina Román, cobdicio de Catalina Román, venta del solar and obligación, ARLL, PN 47 Obregón, 1611, ff. 8, 12, 13v, 223.

45. On the development of the northern economy, see Ramírez, *Provincial Patriarchs*.

Cristóbal; they had purchased these from another tailor and his brother. The ownership of multiple properties suggests that some of these were rented out for additional regular income.

Not only skilled laborers and shopkeepers became property owners. Even a few domestic servants somehow pieced together enough money to purchase a solar. Elvira Carua, who served Alonso Ortiz, an illustrious early vecino of Trujillo who had helped put down Gonzalo Pizarro's rebellion, owned a solar with her husband, according to her 1588 will. She claimed in the will that Ortiz had never paid her salary and asked that her wages be collected from his estate. She had presumably purchased the solar with profits from livestock in the highlands that she and her husband owned and from other businesses, and she had also saved 30 pesos to pay for her funeral expenses.<sup>46</sup>

In 1625, Luissa de Solossa sold a piece of her solar to another Indian, noting that she had acquired it as payment from her master for her services as a domestic servant, possibly because he had not paid her salary on a regular basis.<sup>47</sup> Because many indigenous women in this study who lacked an explicit income source owned solares, it seems likely that some of them received their property as a gift or payment from a former employer. In addition to offering compensation for a lifetime of work through nonmonetary items like property, it was not unusual for masters to provide informally for the upkeep of their children with servants they had impregnated.<sup>48</sup>

Owning a solar offered space to brew, store, and sell the alcoholic corn beverage *chicha*, an often lucrative business engaged in by many urban indigenous women.<sup>49</sup> Leonor de Ulloa, the widow of a hosier, left two large brewing vessels as well as other implements of the trade, according to her 1608 will. Her solar also had a garden and fruit trees, providing other income and sustenance, and she sold it in the same year to a vecino named Benito Alvarez at the substantial price of 200 pesos.<sup>50</sup>

46. Testamento de Elvira Carua, ARLL, PN 80 Vega, 1588, f. 146v. For Alonso Ortiz, see Zevallos Quiñones, *Los fundadores y primeros pobladores de Trujillo*, 1:263–65.

47. Venta, ARLL, PN 53 Obregón, 1625, f. 328.

48. For example, in 1559 Pedro de Osorio left 400 pesos in his will to “Madalena [Indian], my servant, mother of my children” (*Madalena mi criada madre de mis hijos*), although she had to go to court to get her inheritance. ARLL, Cabildo, Causas Ordinarias, leg. 2, c. 46, 1570.

49. Leo Garofalo, “The Ethno-Economy of Food, Drink, and Stimulants: The Making of Race in Colonial Lima and Cuzco” (PhD diss., Univ. of Wisconsin, 2001); Jane Mangan, *Trading Roles: Gender, Ethnicity and the Urban Economy in Colonial Potosí* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2005).

50. Testamento de Leonor de Ulloa, ARLL, PN 45 Obregón, 1608, f. 207.

Thus the upward mobility of Trujillo's ethnically mixed plebeian population conjoined with an official willingness to grant prestigious properties to the "right" kind of men and women and the increasingly urgent need of the surviving conquistadors for inflows of cash to create a vibrant and relatively open market in real estate. While buyers needed cash or credit in order to purchase a solar, once they owned such a property they could turn it into a source of income by renting out units or using it as capital. Thus the ownership of a solar signified more than simple stability; it also offered the possibility of further upward movement.

The exact meaning of the term *solarero* to Trujillo's residents remains unclear. Its coinage around the turn of the seventeenth century lagged behind the earliest purchases of such properties by a few decades, and not everyone who owned a solar was so designated once the term took hold. At least one solarera rented rather than owned her lot, reminding us that modern notions of private property might not correspond exactly with those of our subjects.<sup>51</sup> It is possible that declaring oneself a solarero had resonances for indigenous immigrants who had lost access or had limited access to the resources and privileges that accompanied membership in an Andean *ayllu* or other community structure. Being a solarero, somewhat like being a member of a Catholic *cofradía* or an official of the indigenous *cabildo*, might offer prestige or privileges that drew from pre-Hispanic as well as Spanish and Christian customs and laws.<sup>52</sup> What is clear, however, is that the specific social and economic conditions that arose in Trujillo led to a truly multiethnic city for a period and provided brief opportunities for social advancement for a large group of indigenous immigrants. The coining and deployment of the term *solarero*, apparently used with pride, speaks to a broadening of opportunities or at least the perception of a lack of structural barriers to social success for those near the bottom of the colonial hierarchy. At a time when elite notions of citizenship or *vecindad* were contracting, made more contingent upon the will of authority figures like monarchs and viceroys, and the political arena was therefore becoming more exclusive, the marking of nonelite Indians as solareros indicates a consciousness of their new economic power.<sup>53</sup>

51. The renter was Angelina de Albarado, a chicha brewer; ARLL, PN 54 Obregón, 1627, f. 54v.

52. For a suggestive analysis of how pre-Hispanic land tenure systems evolved in one urban colonial region, see Paul Charney, *Indian Society in the Valley of Lima, Peru, 1532–1824* (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 2001), chap. 2.

53. The medieval Castilian model of citizenship was based upon uncontested residence and was thus less hierarchical. Herzog, *Defining Nations*, 52–59.



In contrast, while a small number of men and women of African descent in Trujillo owned substantial properties, freed men and women were more likely to purchase slaves of their own than a solar.<sup>54</sup> Andrés de Mora, an ex-slave, owned no solar at the time of his 1575 will but with his wife had a slave named Vitoria, whom he freed upon his death.<sup>55</sup> Elvira Martín in 1602 was a free *morena* who operated an inn (*tambo*) and owned a slave, as well as houses “in the city,” but apparently not a full solar lot. The scribe introduced her with words implying impermanence: “being presently in, and an inhabitant of, this city of Trujillo” (*estando y habitante en esta ciudad de Truxillo*), rather than calling her a resident, though nothing in the document suggests that she had any other dwelling.<sup>56</sup>

The decision to purchase slaves rather than solares may reflect the fact that people of African descent in colonial Trujillo were likely to be in occupations, such as operating an inn or performing skilled labor, where extra hands were more valuable to them than real estate. People of African descent appear not to have encountered major obstacles to owning a solar. Sebastián Rodríguez, the son of a free black man and an indigenous woman, inherited his solar in the traza from his mother and left it to his son in 1631.<sup>57</sup> But in the documents consulted for this study, no people of African descent, Spaniards, or castas were ever referred to as “solareros”; the term was reserved for indigenous men and women alone. While individual blacks achieved economic security and some even prestige and wealth, the coining of the term *solarero* for indigenous men and women suggests the recognition of the position of well-off Indians as a group rather than as individuals and thus marks a change in colonial consciousness.

54. There are no really reliable demographic sources for Trujillo in this period, but a 1604 description gives the population as more or less evenly divided between Spaniards/mestizos (lumped into one category, 1,021 total), Indians (1,194), and blacks/mulattos (1,073), with the majority of the black population being free. See Carlos Romero, “Fragmentos de una historia de Trujillo,” *Revista Histórica* (Lima) 8 (1925): 91–93.

55. Testamento de Andres de Mora, ARLI, PN 33 Muñoz, 1575, f. 164v.

56. Testamento de Elvira Martín, ARLI, PN 29 Mata, 1602, f. 221.

57. Testamento de Sebastian Rrodriguez, ARLI, PN 199 Paz, 1631, f. 325. Conversely, barriers to Indians owning slaves might have been more strictly enforced in Trujillo than in some other places, leaving them to purchase land rather than human capital. In Lima, for example, ownership of slaves among testating Indians was much higher and ownership of larger residential and agricultural properties somewhat lower. See Karen B. Graubart, *With Our Labor and Sweat: Indigenous Women and the Formation of A Colonial Society in Peru, 1550–1700* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2007), chap. 2.

### **Indios criollos: Culture and Status**

Although a broad spectrum of indigenous men and women achieved economic success in Lima, its neighborhoods were less integrated than Trujillo's, though they were far from segregated. Perhaps because of the ritual importance of the *plaza mayor* of the viceregal capital, or because Lima's Spanish population so greatly outnumbered its Indians, Lima's center remained firmly the seat of power, and there was no group of Indian solareros to mimic elite men and women of property.<sup>58</sup> But, like Trujillo, Lima was home to men and women known as *indios criollos*, a term similarly referring to a set of cultural and geographic transformations that challenged the dominance of citizens born in Spain.

The term *criollo* has a "confused and politicized meaning," as Daniel Usner has put it, that changes depending upon place, time, and the identity of the speaker.<sup>59</sup> There now seems to be a consensus that it was coined by Portuguese slavers, marking the difference between slaves born in Africa (*bozales*) and those raised in the New World, who spoke Iberian languages and practiced Christianity (*crioulos*, from *criar*).<sup>60</sup> In an interesting bit of counterhistory, the Andean mestizo author Garcilaso de la Vega wrote in the early seventeenth century that it was invented by African-born slaves in order to distinguish themselves from the second, American generation, "since the former are held in greater honor and considered to be of higher rank because they were born in their own country, while their children were born in a strange land."<sup>61</sup> In either case, it appears to have arisen to refer to slaves of African descent but to explain cultural rather

58. A 1613 census of Lima gives the population as Spaniards (11,867), blacks (10,386), Indians (1,978), mulattos (744), and mestizos (192). As Frederick Bowser notes, this certainly undercounts mulattos and mestizos, who were presumably "passing" into the category of Spaniards. Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524–1650* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1974), 304. On the creation of Lima's neighborhoods and especially the Indian Cercado, see Lowry, "Forging an Indian Nation," 65–69. On ritual power in Lima, see Alejandra Osorio, "The King in Lima: Simulacra, Ritual, and Rule in Seventeenth-Century Peru," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84, no. 3 (Aug. 2004): 447–74.

59. Daniel Usner, "'The Facility Offered by the Country': The Creolization of Agriculture in the Lower Mississippi Valley," in Buisseret and Reinhardt, *Creolization in the Americas*, 35–36. See also the statement by José Juan Arrom, "Criollo: Definición y matices de un concepto," *Hispania* 34, no. 2 (May 1951): 172–76.

60. Lavallé, *Las promesas ambiguas*, 19. According to Lavallé, the term was not known in Portugal prior to this point.

61. Garcilaso de la Vega, *El Inca, Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru*, trans. Harold Livermore (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1966), 607.

than simply geographic or biological characteristics (and, more practically, to set prices in the slave market).<sup>62</sup>

Within a few decades, *criollo* was also being used by Europeans in the Americas to name their own American-born generation, sometimes pejoratively through the association with slavery.<sup>63</sup> The first reported usages come from colonial and ecclesiastic officials, including the bishop of Guatemala (cited in 1563), authorities of the Peruvian viceroyalty (1567), and Jesuit authorities (after 1568).<sup>64</sup> According to Bernard Lavallé, the Jesuits picked up the usage so quickly upon their arrival in the Americas that it must already have been fairly common in colonial society. By the turn of the seventeenth century, the description of cities and religious orders polarized into camps of criollos and *castellanos* was common, with the concomitant assertion of fear of the rising power of “degenerate” New World species.

By the end of the sixteenth century, when Spanish-born immigrants to the American mainland referred to “criollos” they generally meant American-born peoples of Spanish descent; when they were discussing people of African descent they appended it to a noun indicating color, as in “*negro* [or *moreno*] criollo,” or status as enslaved (*esclavo*) or free (*borro*). Toward the period of independence, some Spanish creoles proclaimed themselves proudly as “criollo,” arguing for their better aptitude for governing their own homeland and its non-European populations.<sup>65</sup> Following this last usage, historians of Latin America have adopted the simple term *criollo* to refer only to men and women of European descent born in the Americas.<sup>66</sup>

62. The importance of establishing place of birth in order to set a price is underlined in wills such as that of Leonor de Baños in 1636, who asserted that her two female slaves were “criollas, born in my house with the declaration that Captain Diego Muñoz Marchan made” (*ambas criollas nacidas en casa con declarazion que haze el dño Capñn Diego Munoz Marchan*), AGN, PN 1857 Tamayo, 1636.

63. Lavallé, *Las promesas ambiguas*, 20; Martínez, “The Spanish Concept of *Limpieza de Sangre*,” 168; Pagden, “Identity Formation in Spanish America.”

64. All are cited in Lavallé, *Las promesas ambiguas*, 15.

65. See Solange Alberro’s sympathetic rendering of the plight of Spanish immigrants to Mexico and their changing consciousness, *Del gachupín al criollo: O de cómo los españoles de México dejaron de serlo* (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1992). This usage of *criollo* never took hold in the Spanish Caribbean or in Brazil. See Schwartz, “Spaniards, *Pardos*, and the Missing Mestizos.”

66. Linguists, historians, and anthropologists of North America have in turn used the notion of creolization to describe cultural and especially linguistic contact between displaced populations and the living languages that developed out of these long-term experiences. See Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles*.

This story of Iberians and Africans arriving in and adapting to the New World leaves out one set of actors: indigenous peoples. If, as many have done, we take the term *criollo* to mean “born in the New World,” it would be redundant indeed to speak of “creole Indians.” Lavallé has argued for an expanded definition of *criollo* to mean “born in,” akin to *natural* or native; thus one is a creole of a certain place, and an indigenous person would be a creole of his or her birthplace.<sup>67</sup> Yet, as scholars have begun to note, Spanish-American creolization was seen more as a process of acculturation than as a simple reference to birthplace. For example, the records of slave purchases in Peru’s north coast reveal that certain slaves were transformed from bozales to criollos over their lifetime, probably because they learned Spanish, became practicing Christians, and changed their appearance.<sup>68</sup>

Indigenous peoples went through similar metamorphoses. As we have seen, in sixteenth-century Trujillo a small number of indigenous men were awarded the privilege of citizenship because of such physical and metaphysical transformations. And nearly all indigenous men and women who moved to urban centers practiced a kind of cultural bricolage, adding new garments and fabrics to their wardrobe, attending church and joining religious organizations, speaking Spanish alongside or instead of an Andean language, and living in new social arrangements, including the rental of chambers in others’ houses. In such a way, urban Indians also became creolized. And indeed, many of them saw it that way. Urban archives include references to innumerable indigenous men and women with “Criollo” or “Criolla” in the place of a surname.<sup>69</sup> These names most likely derived from adjectives appended to Christian names indicating the individual’s particular status. This label could be pejorative, as we saw with Garcilaso’s explanation of the African coinage of the term, or when

67. Lavallé, *Las promesas ambiguas*, 20. Since *natural* was commonly used to perform this function, it is not clear why *criollo* would be coined. In any case, the term was not used this way in the documents consulted for this study.

68. Rachel O’Toole, “Inventing Difference: Africans, Indians, and the Antecedents of ‘Race’ in Colonial Peru (1580s–1720s)” (PhD diss., Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2001), 28. Schwartz notes that *español* likewise came to designate a cultural, rather than birth-centered, identity. Schwartz, “Spaniards, *Pardos*, and the Missing Mestizos,” 10. It seems safe to say that all colonial categories were culturally constructed and had deeply politicized meanings.

69. See Kimberly Gauderman, *Women’s Lives in Colonial Quito: Gender, Law, and Economy in Spanish America* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2003), 104, and personal communication. Surnames slowly emerged in indigenous Andean communities throughout the sixteenth century and rarely followed a single standardized pattern. See Graubart, *With Our Labor and Sweat*, 108–9.

Iberians dismissed their American-born cousins. Don Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, the seventeenth-century indigenous critic who opposed the mixing of the African, indigenous, and European nations, wrote scathingly of *indios criollos*, whom he defined idiosyncratically as “Indian men and women born in this lifetime of Christian Spaniards” (*yndios, yndias nacidos en esta uida del tiempo de cristianos españoles*), that is, potentially all indigenous persons born after the conquest. Their contact with Christendom had done nothing to improve their character. He complained that they were “great idlers and gamblers and thieves, that they do nothing but drink and be idle, play music and sing, they care nothing for God or the King or any service, good or bad, nor have humility or charity, [nor] Catholic schooling, but they have great arrogance. . . . They go about like ruffians and highway robbers, gypsies from Castilla. . . . And it is a great injury to the rest of the poor Indians.”<sup>70</sup>

Guaman Poma’s accompanying illustration (figure 1) shows an Indian man and woman dancing and playing music at a fiesta, both dressed in a mix of finery from European and indigenous cultures. The man has his hair cut short and wears patterned *pantalones* and a striped European shirt, with a jaunty hat and a cape flowing off his shoulders. The woman wears an *anaco*, an indigenous tunic, decorated with a woven design common to elite Inca garments, but with the addition of European-style detached sleeves, *mangas*. The Andean *lliclla*, a woven mantle, is draped across her shoulders and closed with an elegant *topo*, or pin, and she wears a head scarf. If we contrast this illustration with Guaman Poma’s depiction of the “good Christian nobleman” (figure 2), we see that the sin of the *criollos* is their ostentation and reaching above their proper (plebeian) rank. The elite couple that he depicted approvingly wears sober clothing that covers their bodies, adorned in a restrained manner most obviously by the

70. “Son muy haraganes y jugadores y ladrones, que no hazen otra cosa, cino de borrachear y holgar, tañer y cantar, no se acuerdan de Dios ni del rrey ni de ningún seruicio ni bien ni mal de ellos ni tiene humildad ni caridad, dotrina, sino que tiene toda soberuia. . . . Anda como ruffians y saltiadores, getanos de Castilla. . . . Y es gran daño de los demás pobres yndios.” Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, ed. John V. Murra and Rolena Adorno (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno, 1980), 803 (f. 857). The language is similar to that used by Europeans to dismiss Spanish *criollos*, in part because of theories of the impact of tropical climates and environments upon bodies. See Alberro, *Del gachupín al criollo*, 41, 46; as well as Jorge Cañizares Esguerra, who argues that there also existed a biological-racial explanation for difference among nations in the colonies; Jorge Cañizares Esguerra, “New World, New Stars: Patriotic Astrology and the Invention of Indian and Creole Bodies in Colonial Spanish America, 1600–1650,” *American Historical Review* 104, no. 1 (Feb. 1999): 33–68.

Figure 1. Indios criollos.  
 From Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *Nueva corónica i buen gobierno* (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1992), 802. Reprinted with permission from Siglo Veintiuno Editores.



Catholic rosary that each bears. The criollo commoners present too busy and dissolute a picture; they fail to recognize their place in preserving or creating the kind of static society imagined by Guaman Poma.<sup>71</sup>

Guaman Poma's complaint, and especially his illustration of these transculturated individuals reinventing hierarchy in their new surroundings, bring us closer to the actual contemporary usage of *indio criollo* in seventeenth-century Lima and Trujillo: indigenous people used it to set apart those among them born in cities, with ties to multiethnic urban institutions, rather than those born in rural communities, where they would have been integrated into ayllus

71. In much the same way, Guaman Poma criticizes mestizos and prefers bozal African slaves to criollo slaves. On Guaman Poma's peculiar vision of indigenous society and the conquest, see Rolena Adorno, *Guaman Poma: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru*, 2nd ed. (Austin: Univ. of Texas, 2000).

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Figure 2. Buen cristiano principal. From Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *Nueva corónica i buen gobierno* (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1992), 710. Reprinted with permission from Siglo Veintiuno Editores.

or other kin-based networks. And while Guaman Poma used it as a critical epithet, as others might have in his time, there was a community, at least in these two cities, where it was applied self-consciously and without a pejorative connotation.<sup>72</sup> It was instead an assertion of a positive group identification being constructed by indigenous immigrants and their children, now constructing their own social networks and hierarchies.

In 1617 Alonso de Paz, who had emigrated to Lima from the town of San Miguel de Napo, named as his heirs two young daughters, “one called

72. It seems likely that *criollo* was applied to indigenous people in many locales, but certainly not all. For example, in a collection of colonial wills from Chile, locally born Indians are called “naturales” but not “criollos” except in one case, an unusual will written in the third person by a scribe (perhaps an immigrant from Lima himself) who refers to the testator as “criollo of this land” (*criollo desta tierra*). Julio Retamal Avila, *Testamentos de “Indios” en Chile Colonial: 1564–1801* (Santiago: Universidad Andrés Bello, 2000).

Bernarda, a criolla, four years old, the other girl called María, criolla, one year old.”<sup>73</sup> In Trujillo in 1610, Juana García, “Spanish-speaking Indian, criolla of this city” (*yndia ladina criolla desta ciudad*), sold her solar in the traza for a hundred pesos to Diego Yupay, “ladino Indian, and likewise criollo.”<sup>74</sup> In these cases, urban residents called special attention to the fact that these cultural and geographic transformations had yielded a new category, which they claimed as their own.

We may, as in the case of the solareros, be tempted to see this as a case of a notary imposing a social category on a client. But the first usage of the term I have encountered in the notarial archives comes from the 1608 will of Barbola, “criolla of this city of Trujillo.” In this case, the notary who prepared Barbola’s testament was her brother Pedro Juárez, one of the few indigenous notaries practicing in Trujillo.<sup>75</sup> While it is possible that the coinage originated outside the indigenous community, it is hard to see the brother imposing it upon his sister against her will or without her knowledge. Other instances of its use in Lima come from the *escribano de cabildo* (the cabildo’s appointed scribe) who worked with the population of the Cercado, the neighborhood originally assigned to *mita* laborers during their period in Lima, but by the early seventeenth century home to many of the city’s more prosperous indigenous residents.<sup>76</sup> As in the case of Trujillo’s solareros, while we cannot place the original term in the mouths of indigenous residents, it comes to us through colonial officials intimately familiar with the community and seems to have been approved and deployed by the community and not used outside it.

The term continued to be used through the 1630s and was often incorporated into qualifications about birthplace and skill in the Spanish language. Thus Diego Sedeño’s will in 1609 described him as “yndio criollo nacido en la ciudad de los rreyes” (a creole Indian born in this City of Kings).<sup>77</sup> Not every indigenous person born in Lima or Trujillo was called a “criollo.” Most contin-

73. AGN, Testamentos de Indios (hereafter cited as TI), leg. 1.

74. Carta de venta, ARLL, PN 181 Morales Melgarejo, 1610, f. 349v.

75. Testamento de Barbola, ARLL, PN 82 Alcántara y otros, 1602–1713, reg. 4 (Pedro Juárez), f. 4, 1608.

76. Many of these loose documents are collected in AGN, TI, legs. 1, 1A. All scribal offices were overseen by the government. *Escribanos públicos y de número* were the most general, usually occupying an office or stall in the street; others, like the *escribano de cabildo*, were attached to courts and bureaucracies. See Burns, “Notaries, Truth, and Consequences,” 358.

77. Testamento de Diego Sedeño, 1609, AGN, TI, leg. 1. Lima was originally known as la Ciudad de los Reyes, the City of the Kings.



ued to be referred to as “native of this city” (*natural desta ciudad*), the notary’s boilerplate language. The use of *criollo* was an anomaly appearing in only nine wills and a handful of other documents, but the term had important resonances for the propertied segment of the indigenous community.

What was at stake in this self-categorization? Some of these transformations were certainly pragmatic: urban residents lacked the time, the resources, and often, if second-generation immigrants or later, the knowledge to produce the clothes, food, and cultural objects common to Andean communities. Accepting hand-me-down clothing from employers or purchasing or bartering for new or used clothing in the markets replaced weaving for one’s own use, and with this shift came an interest in foreign novelties, including an appropriation and reformulation of European standards of fashion. European and African foodstuffs and recipes, offered side by side with Andean ones, were sold by mobile vendors or in taverns and *chicherías*. These became a shared taste among the various urban immigrants while retaining the prestige or negative associations of their origin.<sup>78</sup>

The degree to which indigenous immigrants participated in this cultural exchange was flexible, if partly dictated by income, resources, and the retention of ties to rural kin. The wills of indigenous men and women in Lima in this period tend to include at least a few cross-cultural items, clothing in indigenous or European styles made from imported fabrics. The wealthiest had wardrobes that were virtually indistinguishable from those of a Spaniard. Even the poorest changed styles, though their clothes bore the markers of their class. By the early seventeenth century, labor contracts for Indian domestic servants no longer included the locally woven anaco and lliclla but instead a costume of skirt, bodice, and shawl made of cheap imported or manufactured materials, now known as *vestidos de india criolla*, or creole Indian dress.<sup>79</sup> These fashions circulated readily between ethnic groups. The numerous Indian tailors and vendors sold indigenous clothing to Africans and European clothing to Indians. In 1600 Francisca Ana de la Magdalena was owed 11 pesos by an indigenous man for a Spanish mantilla. Ysabel of Guarma’s 1570 will listed a number of small debts with household slaves, and the large number of indigenous-style garments she owned suggests that these debts might have been clothing sales.<sup>80</sup> The intermingling of Andean and European terminology for similar items—shawls

78. On this phenomenon see Mangan, *Trading Roles*, 91–92.

79. Lowry, “Forging an Indian Nation,” 224.

80. Testamento de Francisca Ana de la Magdalena, AGN, TI, leg. 1A, 1600; Testamento de Ysabel, AGN, PN 33 Esquivel, 1570, f. 215.

might be called “mantas” or “llicllas”—illustrates the convergence of certain fashions, at the very least.<sup>81</sup>

In contrast to Lima’s abundant cultural mixing, we can look at evidence from two women’s wills from Surco, a rural town on the outskirts of Lima, made in 1596.<sup>82</sup> These indigenous women came into the city for business (one was a chicha vendor) but maintained their homes and personal networks in their rural community, and this identification is evident in their inventories of goods. One European garment is listed—María Capan requested that Diego return a red taffeta shirt and 60 bells, “which I loaned him for dancing”—but this is an exception. The rest of their catalogs of property include skeins of wool and cotton and “21 spindles” collected in a jar but not the handmade clothes themselves, which would have had little resale value.

Of course creolization was not only a method of participating in emerging transatlantic economies. These men and women spoke Spanish fluently, as evidenced by the absence of translators when they produced official documents with Spanish-speaking notaries. This was a cultural necessity: those who lived as servants or tenants in Spanish or mixed households presumably used it as a lingua franca. Trujillo, as we have seen, did not have clear ethnic neighborhoods where language pockets could easily be maintained. Lima did have a large residential area designated for its indigenous population, the Cercado, but even that was never homogeneous, and the rest of the city was fairly well integrated on the level of households, multifamily residences, and city blocks, as analyses of censuses and other documents have demonstrated.<sup>83</sup>

Finally, religion was at the foundation of much of what we mean by a creole indigenous experience. While rural communities responded slowly and falteringly to evangelization, urban centers seem to have provided fertile soil for conversion to Christianity. The sheer number of extant indigenous wills provides

81. The shawls in Ysabel’s will, cited above, though clearly of indigenous provenance, were termed “mantas.” See also Graubart, *With Our Labor and Sweat*, chap. 4.

82. Testamento de María Capan, AGN, TI, leg. 1, 1596; Testamento de Elvira Coyti, AGN, TI, leg. 1, 1596.

83. Lima’s neighborhoods were officially assigned—the central plaza area was for Spaniards, the Cercado for Indians, and San Lázaro for blacks and castas—but, as Osorio and Lowry both argue, these divisions were superficial at best. Lowry, “Forging an Indian Nation,” chap. 8; Osorio, “*El callejón de la soledad*,” 198–200. The 1613 census of Lima makes this integration eminently clear, as its analysts have shown: Paul Charney, “El indio urbano: Un análisis económico y social de la población india de Lima en 1613,” *Historica* 12, no. 1 (1988): 5–33; María Antonia Durán, “Lima en 1613: Aspectos urbanos,” *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 49 (1992): 171–88.

evidence for this: while wills were necessary to ensure the desired distribution of large properties after death, many wills describe small, even miserable estates with no mortal beneficiaries. Instead these documents are intended to speed the testator's soul through purgatory. Many indigenous men and especially women made their own soul their heir in order to receive ongoing masses after their death.<sup>84</sup> Catalina Hallo, a widow who sold chicha in Callao, Lima's port, and testated in 1580, left some hens and roosters, the bottles and cups of her trade, some cotton thread, a fishing net, and a debt of five pesos still to be collected; what proceeds would come of this small estate she hoped would pay for her funeral, burial, and masses for her soul.<sup>85</sup>

Church attendance and, more importantly, participation in *cofradías*, religious sodalities organized around the cult of a saint, were central to creating creolized Indians. *Cofradías* were common throughout Peru, where they were part of a process that destabilized political aspects of pre-Hispanic communities and created new economic as well as Catholic associations for individuals and emerging social groups, like artisans.<sup>86</sup> In cities, *cofradías* likewise played essential social, political, and economic roles beyond their religious role: providing small loans for their members, offering a community stage upon which subaltern men and women could exercise power, and giving a means for participation in the public rituals that were so central to colonial urban life. In Lima and Trujillo, *cofradías* were often multiethnic (although voting rights and official roles might be restricted to one ethnic group) and thus provided a way for urban Indians to identify with or distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups.<sup>87</sup>

Thus the *indio criollo* was not simply a cultural stereotype, denoting the "fall" of pristine Andean values to the onslaught of colonialism, but represented the energetic attempts by indigenous plebeians to carve out a place for them-

84. In Lima, 44 of 147 indigenous women and 10 of 61 indigenous men named their soul or the church as heir; in Trujillo, 26 of 55 women and 1 of 24 men did so. See also Graubart, *With Our Labor and Sweat*, chap. 3.

85. Testamento de Catalina Hallo, AGN, PN 29 de la Cueva, 1580, f. 662.

86. Olinda Celestino and Albert Meyers, *Las cofradías en el Perú: Región central* (Frankfurt: Vervuert, 1991), chap. 2.

87. Trujillo's *cofradías* seem not to have been segregated by ethnicity in this period. In Lima, segregation did not come fully until after 1650, when lines were drawn not only between blacks, Indians, and Spaniards but even within the African-descent community on the basis of color. Paul Charney notes the particularities of Lima's Indian *cofradías* in "A Sense of Belonging: Colonial Indian *Cofradías* and Ethnicity in the Valley of Lima, Peru," *The Americas* 54, no. 3 (Jan. 1998): 384ff. See also Christine Hünefeldt, *Paying the Price of Freedom: Family and Labor among Lima's Slaves, 1800–1854* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1994), chap. 3; and Celestino and Meyers, *Las cofradías en el Perú*, chaps. 7–19.

selves in the new urban social web. And, like the term *solarero*, *indio criollo* was predominantly used within the indigenous community. While we have seen that notaries could play a role in the development and use of identifying terminologies, in these cases the terms were not generalized beyond the indigenous community and those intimately interacting with it. Miguel de Contreras, the royal notary who carried out the 1613 census of the Indians of Lima, for example, did not use the term in his detailed descriptions, preferring “natural desta ciudad” (native of this city).<sup>88</sup> And in none of the 381 wills surveyed for this study does a nonindigenous testator employ the term. Although Spaniards and blacks had no less need to identify their indigenous debtors carefully, they referred to Indians’ birthplaces, social status, occupations, physical features, and knowledge of the Spanish language but never called them “criollo.” The use of *criollo*, then, by indigenous men and women suggests that this was a term shaded by pride and accomplishment, demonstrating their entrée into a new social hierarchy in which they played a constructive rather than passive role.

### Conclusion

Most of the literature that examines the new terminologies of the conquest emphasizes the loss of particular local knowledge brought by the homogenizing impulse of colonial naming: the flattening of ethnic differences into “Indian,” or the confusion over local political (and religious) structures created by calling ethnic lords “caciques” rather than retaining their pre-Hispanic titles, duties, and privileges.<sup>89</sup> But the loss of local social structures did not leave a vacuum, nor did subalterns passively receive the language of their colonizers and masters. The contestations that emanate from scribes’ documents—the changing language of ethnicity, the crossed-out or contradictory phrases common to archival documents that suggest changes of mind or arguments between principles—demonstrate that plebeians too found language a powerful tool and were eager to use it.

88. For example, Miguel de Contreras, *Padrón de los indios de Lima en 1613*, ed. Noble David Cook (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Seminario de Historia Rural Andina, 1968), 104. Contreras painstakingly noted place of origin, since the tributaries logged in his census would owe payment to their natal cacique.

89. In addition to the works cited in note 3 above, this question is taken up by Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492–1797* (New York: Routledge, 1986); Karen Vieira Powers, “A Battle of Wills: Inventing Chiefly Legitimacy in the Colonial North Andes,” in Kellogg and Restall, *Dead Giveaways*; Susan E. Ramírez, *The World Upside Down: Cross-Cultural Contact and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Peru* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1996); and Ramírez, “From People to Place and Back Again.”

In the preceding study I have investigated two local coinages from urban colonial Peru: *indio solarero* and *indio criollo*. These terms come to us through documents created by indigenous individuals in legal conversations with Spanish, and occasionally indigenous, notaries. While we cannot absolutely assign the origin of either term to an indigenous author, we have seen that they were only deployed when at least one indigenous party was involved, and that the notaries who penned the words had strong, ongoing ties to urban indigenous communities. While such evidence may be criticized as indirect, it also seems to point to indelible facts. The rise of such terminologies indicates a social change that left the existing vocabulary wanting. More importantly, it suggests that this relatively small group of urban indigenous men and women recognized the novelty of their situation and took pains to bring attention to their positions. As a result, I have chosen to use the notion of creolization to highlight the self-consciousness of this inventiveness, to mark this moment as a glimpse at a colonial mentalité.<sup>90</sup>

These coinages also demonstrate that indigenous men and women accumulated some of the social markers of success in colonial society, such as real estate, slaves, imported clothing, language, and religion. While these individuals may have been few in number and unlikely to turn their world upside down, they saw themselves as having achieved success according to the new standards that they embraced, whether slightly or wholeheartedly. And these standards cannot really be said to be those of their conquerors, for they were constructed, in both Lima and Trujillo, by men and women of African, indigenous, and Iberian birth and descent, albeit hardly under conditions of their choosing.

90. For this reason, while I endorse Dana Leibsohn and Carolyn Dean's critique of the use of jargon like *hybridity* for describing the "inherently heterogeneous" cultures that resulted from colonial contact, I disagree with their assertion that urban colonial subjects did not see themselves as participating in a new world, at least one different from that of their rural relatives. Dean and Leibsohn, "Hybridity and Its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America," *Colonial Latin American Review* 12, no. 1 (2003): 5.

## The Creolization of the New World: Local Forms of Identity in Urban Colonial Peru, 1560–1640

Karen B. Graubart

This article investigates two local coinages used in notarial documents, especially wills and real estate sales contracts, in urban early colonial Peru: the “indio solarero” and the “indio criollo.” These terms, apparently invented by the indigenous parties or with their approval, suggest that these residents were inventing new roles for themselves and took pains to bring attention to their new social positions as property-owners (“solarero,” or owner of a solar), Spanish speakers, Catholics, and city dwellers (“criollo,” or born in the city rather than in a rural community). The indigenous men and women who utilized these terms had accumulated some of the social markers of colonial success—real estate, slaves, imported clothing, language, religion—and while they may have been few in number and unlikely to turn their world upside down, they saw themselves as having achieved according to the new standards that they embraced, whether slightly or wholeheartedly. By identifying and understanding the idiosyncratic language they used to identify themselves (as opposed to labels such as “Indian” placed upon them by outsiders), the article approaches the possibility of gaining access to the mentalité of these urban colonial residents.

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