On the Edge of the Wild:
Representations of Peru's Montaña Region and its Indigenous Peoples, an Enduring Frontier between the Andean and Amazonian Worlds

By

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in History and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date Approved: June 02, 2020

Abstract

On the Edge of the Wild demonstrates how Indigenous peoples, Spanish conquistadors, missionaries, scientific explorers, and early national elites have formulated conceptions of the montaña region—located at the eastern slopes of the Andean highlands in northern Peru—and how these ideas have changed or adapted over time. This is a regional history of the montaña—with a special focus on the Huallaga and Mayo river valleys in the vicinity of the colonial cities of Moyobamba and Lamas in northern Peru—that traces back past ecological, cultural, and geopolitical considerations that have positioned the montaña region as a central place within the territorial imagination of Peru, and more generally of the Andean World. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, the environmental attributes of the montaña region have allowed its diverse residents to see the value in maintaining a physical and cultural barrier with colonial powers and urban early national elites. Indigenous and Spanish chroniclers portrayed the Inca Empire's difficulties with this region, turning it into a perennial frontier between imperial civilization and a wilderness inhabited by savages. Over the course of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, the montaña changed from a romanticized gateway to a golden *El Dorado*; to a north-south corridor for missionaries hunting for souls to convert and civilize; to a frontier zone and project for improvement; and finally, to a potential emporium as well as barrier to commercial possibilities that would link the new nation of Peru with Brazil and the industrializing economies of North America and Europe, before the rubber boom of the late nineteenth century exploded these prior visions.

This project contributes to the fields of environmental, regional, colonial Latin American, and Indigenous peoples' history. Countering the tendency by scholars to treat the Andes versus Amazonia as separate or in tension, *On the Edge of the Wild* seeks to bridge the gaps between

these two ‘worlds’ by identifying some of the lost cultural and economic linkages drawn from the montaña’s and its inhabitants’ history. In a context where Natives from the montaña region—specifically the Kechwas of Lamas and vicinity—are still in the process to obtain their territories’ title, this project sheds light on their ancestral and historical connections with this montaña and with the colonial-era Indigenous group known as the Motilones.

Keywords: Ethnohistory, environmental history, montaña, regional history, Peru, Motilones, Kechwas, Amazon World, Andean World.

Acknowledgements

In my first trip to the cities of Tarapoto, Moyobamba, and Lamas in northern Peru I received an invitation to go to Yurilamas, one of the furthest Kechwa Native Communities in the area that could only be reached by walking through the mountainous forested terrain of the montaña region. With the help and guidance of two Kechwa leaders, it took us ten hours to go through what it seemed like an endless landscape full of forested hills. Since I had little knowledge of the region, it became clear to me that I was not physically or mentally prepared to face this montaña environment. I thank these new friends for not leaving me behind; even if they had just met me. They continuously lied about how much longer we had to keep going and motivated me on every step of the way. Without them I could have not survived the montaña.

Along with these experiences, this dissertation is a product of all the support I have received over the past seven years. At the University of Kansas, the History Department funded travel for research and conferences through the Gene Muller and Oppenheimer awards, and the Hall Center for the Humanities provided writing support through the Richard and Jeannette Sias Graduate Fellowship.

I want to thank the environmental history community at the University of Kansas. Joining them while learning about the field of environmental history was both intimidating and inspiring. I thank the members of this group, in particular Gabriela Torres, Amber Roberts Graham, Ariel LaGue, Steve Davis, Wenjun Yang, and Dan Chmill. I also thank my friends from the History Department who became family to me: Jen Warburton, Brett Bias, and Patrick Klinger. We supported each other's work during coursework and during our writing process.

I am fortunate to have Greg Cushman as my advisor. I thank him for making me persevere and for pushing me to ask the right questions. His knowledge about Latin America and

environmental history shaped every stage of this dissertation. He never gave up on this project, and he devoted his undivided attention to this work and my professionalization at KU. I also feel lucky to have a dissertation committee full of incredible scholars that I know well, and proudly call my mentors. I want to thank Brent Metz, Sara Gregg, Luis Corteguera, and Rob Schwaller for not only teaching me how to be an anthropologist and a historian, but for their kindness in having shared their homes and families with me. I thank Ed Russell for keeping me on his radar and connecting me with the platform *Environmental History Now* for academic women of minority groups. I thank Vanina Teglia who read early drafts of this project, and she was my companion while doing research in Madrid. During my last two years at KU, I benefited from having my office close to Tony Rosenthal's. I thank him for giving me great suggestions on how to balance teaching, dissertation, and life. I also want to thank Mariana Candido for teaching me how to position myself as a Latina scholar. I am grateful for Santa Arias for being my role model as a Hispanic scholar. Santa has helped me every time I needed it, both inside and outside of the classroom. From hosting me in Madrid while I was doing research, to encouraging me to get a lecturer position in the Spanish and Portuguese department, she has been key in my development during my time at KU.

Finally, I am thankful for the love and support of my parents in Lima, Clara and Juan, who have unconditionally supported my work and my research. I thank my husband Robbie for keeping me grounded and loved. I never thought I could have a home here, but with him, now I do. The amazing quality of illustrations and maps in this project would have not been so beautifully laid out if it was not for him. I am grateful for my Frazelle family, and for all the warmth that I have felt spending weekends and holidays with them. I thank my amazing friends Elene Cloete, Meghan Farley Webb, Sydney Silverstein, and Mariah Crystal for their constant

encouragement. They have read many of my papers and cover letters on very short notice. I feel grateful to have found at KU the possibility to learn Quechua for three years with Nina Kinti-Moss, a great professor and friend. Although we do not speak in Quechua anymore, she is always teaching me something new. Doing research in different countries usually required more funding than I had available. I could have not done it without the help and support of the Rubio family and Ximena Sosa in Quito, Carolina Pardo, Sol Diaz and her family in Bogotá, and Fiorella Duarte and Ruth Fuente in Madrid.

This dissertation is meant to provide the historical links between the Kechwas from Lamas and the montaña region. They have helped me in so many ways that my heart will always be grateful. Yupaychani.

To the memory of my brother

Table of Contents

Abstract iii

Acknowledgements v

List of Figures x

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

Chapter 2: Where Conceptions of the Montaña Begin 18

Chapter 3: Where the Civilized World Ends: The Montaña as a Frontier for the Inca and Spanish Empires 49

Chapter 4: Where the Christian World Ends: The Montaña as a Frontier of the Missionary Project during the Seventeenth Century 94

Chapter 5: Where Enlightenment and Improvement End: The Bishop Martínez de Compañón's Efforts for Improving the Montaña in the late Eighteenth Century 132

Chapter 6: Where Knowledge and Nation End: The Montaña as a Divide for Humboldtian Travelers and Nation Builders before the Rubber Boom 177

Conclusion 213

Bibliography 216

Appendix I. List of Jesuit Missions, 1638-1767 232

List of Figures

Chapter 1 Introduction

Figure 1.1: Conservation area Cordillera Escalera and the Huallaga river in the Province of San Martín, Peru. *Source*: SEVINDI, *¿Por qué, para qué y para quién se creó la ¨conservación¨ de Cordillera Escalera?* Ginno Perez, Jan 31, 2017.

Figure 1.2: Sub-regions of the montaña considered in this study. *Source*: Google Maps.

Chapter 2 Where Conceptions of the Montaña Begin

Chapter 3 Where the Civilized World Ends: The Montaña as a Frontier for the Inca and Spanish Empires

Figure 3.1: "Burials of the Antisuyus." GKS 2232 4°, p. 291 [293], The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Figure 3.2: "The sixth captain, Otorongo Achachi Inka, or Camac Inka, *apu*." GKS 2232 4°, p. 155 [155], The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Figure 3.3: "Mapa Mundi of the Indies of Peru, showing the quatripartite division of the Inka empire of Tawantinsuyu." GKS 2232 4°, p. 1001-2, The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Figure 3.4: "The thirteenth captain, Ninarua, *qhapaq apu*, powerful lord." GKS 2232 4°, p. 167 [169], The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Figure 3.5: "The second lady, Mallquima, qhapaq, powerful." GKS 2232 4°, p. 175 [177], The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Chapter 4 Where the Christian World Ends: The Montaña as a frontier of the Missionary Project during the Seventeenth Century

Figure 4.1: *Samuel Fritz*, The Great River Marañón or of the Amazonas with the Mission of the Society of Jesus, geographically described by Samuel Fritz, settled missioner on said river. *Source*: *El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas con la Misión de la Compañía de Jesús geográficamente delineado por el P. Samuel Fritz misionero continuo en este Río*. Quito, 1707 (Bibliothèque nationale de France, *Cartes et plans*, Ge D 7855). Metal engraving by Juan de Narvaez, (32x42 cm).

Figure 4.2: FIGURE 4.2 *Samuel Fritz*, Map of the Marañón or of the Amazonas. *Source*: *Mapa geographica del río Marañón, o Amazonas hecho por Samuel Fritz*, 1691 (Bibiotheque nationale de France, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b72002640/f1.item).

Chapter 5 Where Enlightenment and Improvement End: The Bishop Martínez de Compañón's Efforts for Improving the Montaña in the late eighteenth century

Figure 5.1: Carrier Native from Lamas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.2: Topographical map of the bishopric of Trujillo of Peru. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.3: Topographical map of the province of Lamas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.4: Motilones from Lamas when going hunting. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.5: Motilones from Lamas hunting mammals. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.6: Native from Lamas with Church Clothing. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.7: Native from the Montaña Infidel. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.8: City Map of Ciudad del Triunfo de la Santa Cruz de los Motilones de Lamas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.9: Native from Moyobamba carrying bananas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.10: Natives from Moyobamba carrying canoes. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Figure 5.11: Female Natives from Lamas spinning wheel. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Chapter 6 Where Knowledge and Nation End: The Montaña as a Divide for Humboldtian Travelers and Nation Builders before the Rubber Boom

Figure 6.1: Maw's route (in red) starting from Trujillo (Peru) to Para (Brazil). *Source*: Henry L. Maw, *Journal of a Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic: Crossing the Andes in the Northern Provinces of Peru, and Descending the River Marañon or Amazon*, 1829.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The South American bioregion known today as the *montaña*, the mountainous transition zone between the high Andes and lowland Amazonia, stretches from far southern Colombia to the Gran Chaco of Bolivia, with most of it in Peru. This densely forested region is considered one of the most biodiverse and intact biomes in the world and has its own unique cultural and environmental history, yet historians and social scientists have given little recent attention to this archetypal transitional bioregion. In this dissertation I focus on the colonial history of Peru's montaña region, and the entangled relationships of Indigenous peoples and outsiders with the region's unique ecological conditions from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. I argue that the environmental attributes of the montaña region have allowed its diverse residents to see the value in maintaining a physical and cultural barrier with colonial powers and urban early national elites. I show how Natives from the montaña have frequently been considered by outsiders as an invisible part of the environment, yet at the same time are understood to be the only people who can manage its difficulties.

Like most Peruvians living along the coast or highlands, generalized perceptions about the Amazonian region and its Indigenous population initially prevented me from recognizing the material and cultural features of the montaña region and the people living in it by seeing it as the classic unpopulated and pristine wilderness. In 2009, Indigenous groups from many parts of Amazonian Peru united together with the goal of organizing an uprising that protested against the Peruvian state's neoliberal policies meant to dispossess them from their land. This incident not only brought global attention to this little understood region, but it also made visible the

existence of several Indigenous groups fighting together despite marked language and cultural differences and geographic separation between the territories they were trying to protect to preserve their livelihoods. Similar uprisings have occurred in recent years in the montaña of Ecuador and Bolivia, often targeted against mineral extraction.[1] As a part of this widespread movement, in June 2009, thousands of Natives belonging to different ethno-linguistic groups congregated in the town of Bagua in northern Peru—a long-established montaña outpost—to publicly denounce the government's on-going disregard towards Indigenous people living on the eastern side of the Andean mountain range. Tragically, Peruvian police violently shut down this peaceful protest in the middle of the night resulting in a high number of deaths and injuries. Out of the almost forty Indigenous ethnicities participating in this protest, the Kechwa-speaking natives from the lower Huallaga watershed of the montaña bioregion—about 300 kilometers by highway to the east in what is now the province of San Martín—stood out for being one of the largest extant Indigenous groups in Amazonia, congregating 30,000 peoples.[2]

My language training in Quechua, and the opportunity to teach in a Study Abroad program in the region, allowed me to focus my field research for my master's degree in anthropology analyzing the challenges that Kechwa Indigenous leaders have faced in defending their territorial rights after the Bagua conflict.[3] The conservation area known as *Cordillera*

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[1] Susanna B Hecht y Alexander Cockburn, *The Fate of the Forest: Developers, Destroyers, and Defenders of the Amazon* (University of Chicago Press, 2011); Candace Slater, *Entangled Edens: Visions of the Amazon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Shane Green, *Customizing Indigeneity: Paths to a Visionary Politics in Peru* (Stanford University Press, 2009); Suzana Sawyer, *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador* (Duke University Press Books, 2004).

[2] Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI), Censo 2007: características *sociodemográficas*, (Lima: INEI, 2011). The Kichwas would disagree with this number; they believe there are almost 50,000 Kichwas in San Martín.

[3] Quechua refers to the language in general terms spoken in Latin America, while the Kechw Indigenous groups have defined themselves from the generic language by changing the spelling. Ximena Sevilla, "Kichwa Organizations in the Peruvian Amazon: Twelve Challenges in their Quest for Land Rights" (master's thesis, University of Kansas, 2013).

Escalera—located in the heart of the montaña region—provides a case study showing the centrality of this place to the identity and livelihoods of the Indigenous group of Kechwas who have inhabited it, according to their histories, since at least the time of the Spanish conquest. In 2005, the Peruvian government created Cordillera Escalera knowing that part of that territory belonged to the Kechwas (see fig. 1.1). For the past fifteen years, Kechwas living in the city of Lamas and other nearby locales have been fighting against the Peruvian State's creation of this conservation area ostensibly designed to protect it from environmental degradation. According to the Lamas Kechwa, the government commonly assumes, following a dogma of international environmental management dating back to the famous 1972 United Nations Conference in Nairobi, that because the Kechwas are poor, they are a major threat to the environment.[4] For Kechwa leaders, the government must stop seeing them as their enemies and try to consider them as valid allies in the cause of nature protection. Due to recent attempts of the Peruvian government to question the legitimacy of the Kechwas' claims in order to exclude the people from this conservation area, the Kechwas feel an urgency, not only to prove that they have a deep historical connection to this territory, but also to the sustainable nature of their long-term interaction with the montaña region—in stark contrast to recent colonists originating from outside this region, who since 1980 have turned the middle Huallaga valley and Department of San Martín into one of the most notorious centers for coca cultivation and drug running in South America. As a core aspect of their territorial defense, the Kechwas of Lamas and vicinity have expressed their need to obtain legal proof of their ancestral and historical connections with the

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[4] Sawyer, *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador*; Jacqueline M. Vadjunec, Alyson L. Greiner, y Marianne Schmink, "New Amazonian Geographies: Emerging Identities and Landscapes", *Journal of Cultural Geography* 28, no. 1 (2011): 1–20; Vadjunec, Greiner, y Schmink; Green, *Customizing Indigeneity: Paths to a Visionary Politics in Peru*; Christopher Rootes, "Acting Locally: The Character, Contexts and Significance of Local Environmental Mobilizations", *Environmental Politics* 16, no. 5 (2007): 722–41.

montaña, in particular to the colonial-era Indigenous group known as the Motilones, who according to them, date back at least to the period just before the arrival of Spanish conquistadors and missionaries. This dissertation examining centuries past is thus directly relevant to the contemporary social and political context of the vast montaña region existing on the durable frontier between the Andean and Amazonian worlds.

FIGURE 1.1 Conservation area Cordillera Escalera and the Huallaga river in the Province of San Martín, Peru. *Source*: SEVINDI, *¿Por qué, para qué y para quién se creó la ¨conservación¨ de Cordillera Escalera?* Ginno Perez, Jan 31, 2017.

The case of Cordillera Escalera illustrates the Peruvian government's strategy to limit Kechwa and other Native peoples' attempts to claim these territories as part of their ancestral heritage. In the case of Peru, the policy framework for conservation areas allowed the state to have the right to expropriate areas with valuable scenery, flora, and fauna that needed to be

protected.[5] However, in practice, the Peruvian government has used this legal framework to disregard local populations' rights over these territories while also restricting or even eliminating Indigenous peoples' interactions with nature. Despite the Kechwas' efforts at managing this forested area for as long as they could remember, they were not included in the government's process of creating this conservation area.[6] The Kechwas have interpreted this political move as a reaction to their legitimate requests for official land titles to those exact same territories. The administration of Cordillera Escalera was placed in the hands of the regional government, who had the authority to restrict the access of the same people who have lived there and depended on its resources and productivity in the interest of keeping it safe from outsiders' attempts to profit from the land. This resulted not only in the legal prosecution of Kechwas for "trespassing" in that area, but also, paradoxically, gave the national and regional government legal authority to do exactly the opposite of preserving these lands, by neglecting to limit the illegal entrance of settler colonists (typically mestizos from the highland areas) and by leasing them to transnational corporations interested in oil and gas exploitation.

The illegal presence of settler colonists has threatened the Kechwas' main activities of maintaining small agricultural plots (*chacras*)—typically at different altitudes and with different crops than closer to home—and their communal hunting and gathering practices. As part of the Kechwas' ancestral knowledge, they are used to engaging in farming practices to avoid soil

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[5] Felipe Injoque Espinoza y Gustavo Suárez de Freitas, "Problems in the Enforcement of a Strict National Park Policy: The Case of Peru", in *Amend, Stephan, and Thora Amend. National Parks Without People? The South American Experience* (IUCN, 1995), 321.

[6] This approach is slowly changing. For the past twenty years, the discussion about protected areas among technocrats and politicians has started to incorporate the participation of local people in the creation of master plans. In theory, the inclusion of local people as allies in the management of these national parks has been seen as an opportunity to create new economic opportunities—local people working as park rangers (*guardabosques*), for example—resulting in the development of the region with the investment in activities such as ecotourism. In practice, however, this shift has still been limited to the complex relationship between the Peruvian state and the Amazonian indigenous people who have socio-cultural and economic linkages with these protected areas.

erosion that diversify their subsistence base while making it possible for them to survive on what they harvest and hunt. The majority of the products that they harvest are for their own consumption, and they usually sell the rest or trade it for imported goods such as cleaning and school supplies, and clothes. On the contrary, illegal settlers often aim to profit as much as they can from the natural resources of the montaña forest.[7] Their presence in the montaña region is usually transitory, and their purpose relies on felling trees and growing monocultural products such as coffee and cocoa, which are highly valued in the marketplace. Overall, the growing number of illegal settlers in the Cordillera Escalera highlights the Kechwa's belief that the government is not able to protect the forest.

After ten years of fighting in court and denouncing the regional government's failure to take care of Cordillera Escalera's environment, the Kechwas won a crucial trial in December 2017. One of the main arguments that favored the Kechwas in this trial relied on the regional government's incompetence to devote resources to actively control illegal activities—logging, farming, and hunting—within the 149,870 hectares of the conservation area.[8] This trial established that when compared to the regional government, the Kechwas had already proven their ability to maintain an efficient system to protect the Cordillera Escalera territory. Starting in 2018, the judge granted the Kechwas the permission to continue with their economic and cultural activities inside the Cordillera Escalera, while also empowering them to prevent the illegal presence of oil companies and outsiders seeking territories to settle. Although the Kechwas and their political organizations applauded this decision, seeing it as an overall success, legally this

[7] For more on the economic pressures of Andean population seeking small subsistence farms in Amazonia, see: Gerardo Rénique, "Law of the Jungle in Peru: Indigenous Amazonian Uprising against Neoliberalism", *Socialism and Democracy* 23, no. 3 (2009): 117–35.

[8] At 1,500 square kilometers, the Cordillera Escalera Conservation is almost exactly half the size of Yosemite National Park in California or half the size of the U.S. state of Rhode Island.

territory remains as a conservation area and not as a Kechwa territory. As a result, Kechwas are still demanding their territorial rights, even if those rights cannot be granted until they demonstrate the history of their permanence in the montaña region. This dissertation seeks to contribute to this history by depicting the history of this particular area of the montaña in a broader regional perspective, helping to locate the deep history of the ancestors of the Kechwas' long connection with this environment.

Today, Kechwas living in the vicinity of the cities of Tarapoto, Lamas, and Moyobamba in the Mayo and Lower Huallaga River valleys believe their ancestors belonged to the Indigenous group called the Motilones but remain unsure of those linkages. As one possible manifestation of these linkages, Kechwas today proudly celebrate the Santa Cruz de los Motilones during the first week of July. During this celebration, inhabitants from the city of Lamas gather together to pursue their Indigenous heritage combined with their religious devotion. Sources about this specific area indicate that during the colonial period there were a series of Indigenous ethnicities closely related with this place, as well as with the first Iberian-style cities in the montaña. Among these indigenous groups, the Motilones and the Tabalosos were the largest, most prominent, and from the Spanish perspective most civilized groups in the region.[9] In 1536, when the Spaniards founded the first city in the montaña, called Moyobamba, they fought against the Motilones that ended up complying and living as Christianized Natives in the new city.

This contemporary context is enhanced and complicated by the following questions: What is the montaña region? How have different cultural groups envisioned and interacted with the natural environment in the montaña over time? What is the history of relationships between

[9] Carta del Conde de Salvatierra relativa a las fianzas dadas por Martin de la Riva Herrera, 12 December 1653, Lima 57, N. 19, Microfilm/ED-061/41. Archivo General de Indias (hereafter cited as AGI).

locals and outsiders within this region, and how has it influenced the ethnogenesis of distinct Indigenous groups, such as the Motilones? And to what extent does the situation of the Kechwas today reflect a long history of attempts by various colonial powers—and later, national elites—to execute their sovereignty and authority over these territories? Starting during the era of late Inca expansion up until just before the Rubber Boom of the late nineteenth century, this dissertation focuses on the historical meanings that various Indigenous peoples, Spanish conquistadors, Jesuit missionaries, late colonial reformers, scientific explorers, and early national elites have ascribed to the montaña—in all cases conceiving it transhistorically as a forested, mountainous transition zone between the highland Andes and lowland Amazonia. Conventional sources and ethnographic fieldwork have been useful for identifying cultural practices that remain until today and establish the connections between these earlier montaña peoples and present-day Indigenous people.

Methodologically, I employ a regional approach to study the vast bioregion and diversity of ethnic groups that constitute the boundary between the highland Andes and lowland Amazon regions of northwestern South America, and more specifically, to elucidate the changing geopolitical and cultural visions of this frontier environment in relationship to the highlands and the lowlands of what is now Peru. Whereas the montaña region, as a whole, covers a much larger area (see fig. 1.2), this dissertation's main analysis focuses on the peninsula of the montaña between the upper Marañón and the Lower Huallaga rivers where the cities of Moyobamba and Lamas are located today, although it will also range to other parts, as well, such as the Andesuyo region near Cusco and Huamanga (when discussing the chronicler Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala), as well as the montaña south and east of Quito and Cuenca in present-day Ecuador from where Jesuits started their vast missionary project to colonize the province of Maynas. Looking more broadly at the geography of the montaña region, two main physical attributes stand out: its

moderate altitude (920m-1376msnm) 3000-4500 feet and its relation to rivers born in the slopes of the Andean highlands. Although present-day conventions are clear in depicting the Marañón River in northwestern Peru as the principal source of the Amazon River (a practice dating back at least to the influential maps Jesuit cartographer Samuel Fritz), colonial usage often used the Marañón to refer to the whole main channel of the Amazon, or used Marañón and Amazon interchangeably. The colonial-era sense of direction can be confusing to modern readers. Following the convention of the Inca and other Central Andean peoples, as illustrated in his *mapa mundi*, Guaman Poma believed the Marañón River reached the Mar del Norte (the Caribbean arm of the Atlantic Ocean) by following the course of the sun from southeast to northwest, flowing along the montaña via the Magdalena, all the way to the vicinity of Cartagena in present-day Colombia. Perhaps following Andean geographical thinking, the first European voyagers believed they were going to reach the shores of the Atlantic Ocean by navigating down the Marañón.[10]

[10] For a discussion about Guamán Poma's mapa mundi see: Gregory T. Cushman, "The Environmental Contexts of Guaman Poma: Interethnic Conflict over Forest Resources and Place in Huamanga (Peru), 1540-1600", in *Unlocking the Doors to the Worlds of Guaman Poma and His Nueva Corónica*, ed. Adorno Rolena y Ivan Boserup (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 87–140.

FIGURE 1.2 Sub-regions of the montaña considered in this study. In its simplest definition, the montaña region is the red-shaded area of relief to the north and east of the Andean cordillera where it transitions to the green lowlands of the Amazonian Basin. In its original connotation, the *Andes* referred specifically to this rugged, forested slope—to the lands inhabited by the *Antis* who populated the quarter of the Inca empire known as Andesuyo. Chapter 3 deals as much with the region to the north and east of Cuzco as it does with the region north and east of Huamanga. Chapter 4 also deals with regions to the north of the Marañón (and Jaen, Bagua, and S.F. de Borja) along the upper Santiago and Pastaza watersheds in Quijos. *Source*: Google Maps.

This study combines an interest in the history of a specific region of the montaña while also exploring the ways that past ecological, sociocultural, and ideological considerations have positioned the montaña region as a central place within the territorial imagination of colonial Peru—fully on a par with the desert Coast and high Sierra as one of the three fundamental regions of Peru (a subject developed further in the next chapter.) More recently, the tendency by scholars to treat the Andes versus Amazonia as separate or in tension has hindered our ability to notice spatial, cultural, and social continuities between these vast regions or "worlds." This project seeks to identify some of those lost linkages, often treating the Andes and Amazonia as a continuum with the montaña region at the center of the two, rather than on their edge. Indeed, this dissertation addresses conceptions of this region that have changed over time. Following the question of why people belonging to specific social groups viewed this montaña environment differently, I focus on the ideas and representations of the montaña rather than its physical and material changes.

One of the main challenges in this study has been to identify local Indigenous perceptions about their changing relationships with this environment and other peoples with whom they shared it. The understanding of sources describing outsiders' experiences with the montaña region as well as the Native groups they encountered required specific knowledge about the montaña region to only filter the sections referring to this region. Without having a previous idea about the name of towns, rivers, and even family names that remain popular in the area today, it would have been harder to identify the sections in these accounts pointing out at the montaña region. In these instances, I analyzed the way that outsiders depicted the montaña while searching for hidden details and "reading against the grain" of these narratives to gain insights about Indigenous perspectives. To determine what Indigenous peoples from the montaña thought

about this environment, I have relied on outsiders' reflections, illustrations, and interpretations of montaña Natives' responses to these encounters. The Inca and chronicler Guaman Poma were, in fact, outsiders and often held derogatory views of the montaña region and its peoples that should be interpreted as colonialist. To make matters more complicated, ethnic groupings on the frontiers of Amazonia were often highly mobile and fluid. One of the main points of interest of this dissertation is how some montaña Indigenous groups—most notably the Motilones of Lamas and Moyobamba—settled down and became Quechua speakers as part of the colonial project.

The overarching argument centers on the montaña region's portrayal as an obstacle for outsiders' imperial agendas across four centuries of history. As much as these outsiders had envisioned themselves as gaining or maintaining control over this tropical environment and its Natives, the unsustainable nature of their relationships with this place and its peoples continually derailed their expectations—forcing them to adapt, regroup, and develop different plans to execute. On the other hand, from the perspective of its Natives, the montaña was far from being an obstacle. Indeed, its supposed wildness and inaccessibility often facilitated their possibilities to stay alive, to have some autonomy, and to resist the colonial church and state and their impositions. To an extent, Indigenous peoples from the montaña often used the terrain and their intimate knowledge of its attributes to their advantage, sometimes embracing the option of becoming subjects of the colonial powers, by serving them as interpreters, guides, hunters, food carriers, carrying heavy loads—at times carrying people too—while sometimes fleeing to the wildest areas of the montaña, where outsiders had no way to access that territory. Flight was an especially attractive option during episodic epidemics, as a counter to enslavement, or as a response to violence. Whereas the montaña typically served as a permanent barrier to the aspirations of outsiders, for Natives, their mobility and connectivity to this environment proved

crucial to securing their own (and outsiders') basic survival, as well as to maintaining commercial networks between their communities and the lowlands and the uplands that outsiders so often hoped to usurp. As both an environmental and cultural history of the Peruvian montaña over the *longue durée*, it starts with the ways that Indigenous and Spanish chroniclers portrayed the Inca Empire's difficulties with this region, turning it into a perennial frontier between imperial civilization and a wilderness inhabited by savages. Over the course of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, the montaña changed from a romanticized gateway to a golden *El Dorado*; to a north-south corridor for missionaries hunting for souls to convert and civilize; to a frontier zone and project for improvement between the viceroyalty of Peru, Empire of Brazil, and rebel kingdom of Juan Santos Atahualpa; and finally, to a potential emporium as well as barrier to commercial possibilities that would link the new nation of Peru with Brazil and the industrializing economies of North America and Europe, before the rubber boom of the late nineteenth century exploded these prior visions.

This dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter two delves into the territorial and historiographical imagination of the montaña region as it relates to the rest of Peru and the Andean and Amazonian Worlds, more generally. The montaña's frontier condition engages with a broader understanding of the economic and cultural interactions with this environment over time. I draw on North American and Latin American historians and cultural theorists who have sought to understand how the realignment of power relationships among peoples during colonialism have produced so called third spaces, frontier regions, middle grounds, and contact zones, that remain as perennially contested areas—between classes of people as well as ideas—marked by their ambivalence, hybridity, fluidity, and relative lack of colonial hegemony. I define

the concept of frontier in the montaña as a constant negotiation between different actors involving their interactions with nature as well as with culture.

Chapter three examines views of the montaña region as a perennial frontier during the era of Inca and Spanish imperial expansion during the sixteenth century. The Incas and Native intellectuals who celebrated their legacies saw the forested montaña as Andesuyo or the corner of the enemies when reproducing the history and mythical past of Inca encounters with this region. From the point of view of Spanish conquistadors, the montaña was a gateway to Amazonia and the mythic richness of El Dorado, as well as for founding new Iberian-style cities where Spanish colonists could settle and establish their dominance over dense populations of montaña Natives. While both groups entered the region believing they could fully subdue the montaña and its inhabitants, in practical terms the montaña environment greatly challenged those expectations, pushing them to find alternative ways to exert their dominance over the area. Once conquistadors founded the first cities of Chachapoyas, Moyobamba, and Lamas, this region emerged as an outpost and bridge between upland, colonial "Civilization" and lowland, ungoverned "Savagery."

In chapter four, I explore Jesuit efforts to Christianize Indigenous people while creating mission settlements, known as *reducciones* or reductions, in places scattered through the montaña region that suited the Jesuits' perceived needs. Based in Quito in present-day Ecuador Jesuits followed their missionary fervor and tributaries of the Great Marañón east and then south creating a corridor that ran parallel along the montaña. According to detailed Jesuit accounts and maps, Christianization played a vital role in ensuring some montaña Indigenous peoples' cultural survival, in opposition to other neighboring groups, with whom they were often in violent conflict. However, in contrast to adjacent regions of the highlands, this Christianization and the

settled life it entailed came and went in waves, with Natives accepting it and rejecting it depending on their convenience periodically abandoning Jesuit missions to escape deep into the montaña where they knew outsiders could not find them. Jesuits' portrayals of their struggles in the montaña province of Maynas vividly show the importance, indeed centrality of environmental attributes of the montaña to their Christianization project.

Chapter five seeks to reveal the meanings that Spanish Bishop Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón ascribed to the montaña region and its inhabitants in the broad context of the Bourbon Reforms of Spanish imperial governance at the end of the eighteenth century. After the Jesuits were expelled from Spanish America in 1767, as head of the Bishopric of Trujillo, Martínez Compañón became the highest church authority in the Peruvian montaña that included the old Jesuit missions of Maynas, and he devoted his career to improving the financial and social situation of the Bishopric of Trujillo. For Martínez Compañón, good government depended on the proper organization and control of the landscape and geography. Thus, when he traveled to the montaña region including Lamas and Tarapoto as part of his pastoral visit to the far eastern reaches of the bishopric in 1784, he quickly realized that crucial attributes of this wild and remote environment would forever prevent him from attaining his idea of modernization. Although this is a story told from the point of view of a colonial church representative influenced by Enlightenment ideas and with a marked scientific bent, Martínez Compañón's views of the montaña were challenged by the responses of Indigenous people against his efforts to relocate them away from their familiar environment and closer to the more accessible coast. My analysis of Indigenous people's responses to the Bishop's modernizing agenda for this montaña, including dozens of full-color visual representations of montaña creatures and cultural practices collected by the Bishop, sheds light on a completely different narrative from what the Bishop

believed. These images show that for the Motilones of Lamas, the montaña environment was central for their subsistence and well-being. Far from being an obstacle to modernization as Martínez Compañón saw it, these illustrations demonstrate how this environment facilitated their possibilities to attain economic prosperity and maintain a level of sociocultural independence from colonial power and its institutions.

Finally, chapter six looks at scientific expeditions to the Upper Amazon region and rugged montaña after the independence of Peru in 1821. In examining how these North American, French, Italian, and British scientific expeditions followed in the footsteps of the famed scientific explorer Alexander von Humboldt, I focused on the way that these travelers identified the environmental and geographical attributes that potentially made this montaña region so central to the economic and political interests of their home countries. For these foreign travelers the montaña represented an opportunity for them to open a commercial network through the Atlantic Ocean, bypassing the rest of Peru altogether. Moreover, they believed that the montaña and its inhabitants (particularly their labor) were essential to their aspirations for expanding regional business enterprises to the rest of the world. Even from the perspective of urban national elites, the montaña represented an opportunity to attract foreign presence and investment to Peru. However, after facing this environment, these travelers came to understand that the montaña region could not be penetrated from outside without disciplined effort by Indigenous peoples and without the presence of the Peruvian nation-state. Even if in the travelers' eyes most of the Natives in the montaña were still considered semi-'savages', they nonetheless recognized their skills in helping them journey from one place to another, from river to river and hill to hill. Some clearly valued the intricacy of Native knowledge of flora and fauna, even though they tended to write their informants out of their narratives of discovery. Thus, it

became clear to these travelers that Natives of the montaña had long ago mastered the place itself, and that it was impossible for them to accomplish anything of true substance without the help of Indigenous people. Compared to the travelers' own sense of limitations when trying to make sense of this region and establish connections with other places, the montaña for Indigenous peoples clearly existed as part of an integrated whole that outsiders could barely begin to comprehend. Meanwhile, these travel accounts demonstrate how montaña peoples had maintained their own ways to stay connected to other places, while also participating in different socioeconomic activities that benefited themselves or their patrons.

Chapter 2

Where Considerations of the Montaña Begin

This dissertation focuses on the history of changing conceptions of the montaña region as an enduring frontier defined by its physical features and its multi-ethnic interactions. During the colonial period and the first decades of Peru's rise as a new nation-state, this frontier has been perceived in numerous ways that were highly dependent on the different strategies of engagement that colonial agents established with the montaña environment and the Indigenous groups living there. In recent decades, regional conceptions of Peru have typically neglected to discuss the existence of the montaña, much less consider the historical and cultural processes that have shaped the region and its relationship with the Andean highlands, Amazonian lowlands, and coastal administrative centers. Before the rubber boom of the late nineteenth century, the case was very different. The montaña was considered one of the three basic regions of Peru. These older considerations are highly relevant to theoretical conceptions of the frontier and wilderness within environmental history and colonial studies, which frame the following chapters. In other words, reflecting on the historical significance of the montaña region will present some alternative ways for analyzing colonial encounters with the environment and Indigenous groups in comparison to other parts of the Americas and colonial world.

Placing the montaña region in dialogue with ideas of the frontier, wilderness, and other regional conceptions of Peru not only reveals the overall significance of this region within these broader histories, but it also presents a fundamental challenge to binary notions so often employed to represent the relationship between place and people. At the center of this chapter is

the identification of the montaña as a place that "shaped both the colonial society under formation and the Indigenous groups that engage [with] them."[1] The value of the montaña as a regional conceptualization, then, is founded on the continuous negotiation between outsiders, settlers, and Indigenous groups over their social roles in relation to one another. On the one hand, outsiders and colonists had to reconcile their expectations to their experience regarding how to integrate this region and its peoples to the Spanish empire, the Peruvian state, and the increasingly global economy in which they were enmeshed. On the other hand, Indigenous groups' knowledge about the montaña environment and proven ability to flourish within it allowed them to constantly reconfigure their interactions with outsiders. Indeed, across the colonial period and beyond, this region was as much defined by the superficiality of colonialism as it was by its impacts. As a consequence, its frontier condition emerged as a permanent, rather than ephemeral characteristic that came to define the whole montaña region, distinguishing it from the impermanent, moving frontiers of the North American West and many other frontier regions within Latin America.

These considerations reveal the former centrality of the montaña region to the geographical and geopolitical imagination not only of Peru, but also of the Andean World more generally. Analyzing the fundamental constructs that locals and outsiders have used to understand this part of the world can also shed light on how perceptions, conceptions, and aspirations for this spectacularly diverse territory have changed over time.

Regionalizing Peru

1. The Three-Region Division

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[1] Fabricio Prado, "The Fringes of Empires: Recent Scholarship on Colonial Frontiers and Borderlands in Latin America." *History Compass* 10, no. 4 (2012): 318-333, p. 320.

Today, people tend to think of Peru as having three natural regions visualized as three vertical and parallel stripes that extend from north to south: the Coast (*Costa*), the Andean heights (*Sierra*), and the jungle or lowland Amazonia (*Selva*). This tripartite division is very old. However, in the past, locals and outsiders have considered the geopolitical division of Peru in a different way. For instance, when the Spanish Jesuit missionary Manuel Rodríguez explored the Viceroyalty of Peru in 1684, he described it as divided into three basic regions:

> Una a la costa de el mar, en que estan los valles[;] otra en lo alto, que es la cordillera que atraviesa toda aquella parte de Indias; y otra los Andes, que son cordilleras de vosques, que se dizen montaña.[2]
>
> One on the coast by the sea, where the valleys are; another in the heights, which is the mountain range running throughout that part of the Indies; and the other is the Andes, which are mountains covered by forests, that are called *montaña*.

Similar to Father Rodriguez, in 1928 the famed Peruvian writer José Carlos Mariátegui asserted that among the many problems that Peru had at that time, the identification and differentiation of regions was not one of them.[3] For him, it was indisputable that modern Peru was divided into three well-defined geographical regions: the coast, the Andean heights, and again, the montaña. This differentiation was not only physical, he claimed, it also defined the most basic socio-economic realities of the country. For Mariátegui, one of the central challenges that Peru had to face was how to abolish the highly unequal socio-economic structure maintained by Peruvian landlord elites located on the Coast over Indigenous population from the Sierra.[4] By

[2] Manuel Rodríguez, *El Descubrimiento del Marañón*, Alianza Universidad 654 (1684; Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1990), p. 84–85.

[3] José Carlos Mariátegui, *7 Ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Lima: Biblioteca Amauta, 1927).

[4] For more about the social, economic characteristics that allow the landlord elites to have greater economic power and the ways in which maintained it, see Manuel Burga and Alberto Flores Galindo, *Apogeo y crisis de la república aristocrática* (Lima: Ediciones Rikchay Perú, 1981). For more about the challenges in the Peruvian society for building a nation see: Florencia E. Mallon, *The Defense of Community in Peru's Central Highlands: Peasant Struggle and Capitalist Transition, 1860-1940* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1983); Carmen Mc Evoy, *La utopía republicana: ideales y realidades en la formación de la cultura política peruana, 1871-1919* (Fondo

preserving the supposedly "natural" difference between these two regions, the power of these political elites remained unchallenged.[5] Mariátegui's main goal was to highlight the differences between the Costa and the Sierra, and he showed almost no interest in the montaña, referring to this third region as a place separate from the densely populated Andean heights and the rest of the country, dismissing it as "still lack[ing] sociological and economic significance."[6] Mariátegui's point of view made particular sense for an intellectual concerned especially with the southern part of the Sierra, where the isolation of the montaña was particularly striking.

Perhaps the lack of significance that Mariátegui attributed to the montaña region provides a hint as to why the term montaña has mostly disappeared from the lexicon of regionalist thought in Peru during the twentieth century and has instead became replaced by the word Selva in the regionalization used today. Although the division of Peru into three regions (Costa, Sierra, and Selva) remains the most popular way of talking about the differentiation of social, cultural, and natural regions in Peru, most Peruvians today have little to no awareness about those times past when the montaña was considered to be one of the three main regions that characterized the history of the country and the relationship of its population with the natural world. Perhaps there is one continuity between those who have identified the montaña and the lowland Selva as Peru's third region. In both cases, national elites have purposely perpetuated generalized views about that third region that made invisible the socio-cultural and economic historical connections of Indigenous peoples with this region.

Editorial PUCP, 1997); Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided: Contradictions of Postcolonial Nationmaking in Andean Peru* (Duke University Press, 1997); Brooke Larson, *Trials of Nation Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Rory Miller, "Region and Class in Modern Peruvian History," *University of Liverpool, Institute of Latin American Studies* 14 (1987).

[5] There is a large historiography on looking at the history of Brazil and Mexico from a regional point of view that I have not yet examined.

[6] "La montaña, sociológica y económicamente, carece aún de significación." In Mariátegui, *7 Ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*, 151.

Reflecting on the question of how geopolitical visions have determined these regions, French geographer Evelyne Mesclier argues that the meaning of the three-region division lies primarily with economic and sociological factors, which have historically had more relevance than purely physical ones, omitting the natural world from consideration.[7] Similar to Mariátegui, Mesclier only considers in her analysis the geopolitical features of the Costa and the Sierra. For her, the prevalent three-region division is a manifestation of the economic, social, and political system that has overwhelmingly benefited the centralization of power among the elites of Coastal cities who have viewed access to the Pacific Ocean as the main basis of the prestige, influence, and the commercial progress of the country in connection with the rest of the world.[8] This opens up the question as to which different geopolitical (rather than geographical) visions dictated the earlier historical focus on the montaña as Peru's third region, which will be a central preoccupation of subsequent chapters.

2. The Andean-Amazonian Binary

From the point of view of both the Costa and the Sierra, the jungle or Selva of Amazonia has traditionally been represented in isolation from the two other regions, as if societies on both sides of the Andean heights cannot be understood together. In other words, the geographical barrier posed by the Andean heights which delineated cultural and cosmovision differences has been perceived as the most evident reason why the Amazonian lowlands have been secluded

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[7] Evelyne Mesclier, "De la complementariedad a la voluntad de 'aplanar los Andes': Representaciones de la naturaleza y pensamiento económico y político en el Perú del siglo XX," *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Études Andines* 30, no. 3 (2001).

[8] See Cleary, "Towards an Environmental History of the Amazon: From Prehistory to the Nineteenth Century," *Latin American Research Review* 36, no. 2 (2001): 64-96; for understanding how the regional economy was reoriented to the coast instead of the Andes. Therefore, the "trade links that had ruptured, and the Amazon became more isolated within the continent while a new network of external relationships- administrative, economic, and religious- tenuously began to bind it to Europe." (3). Eventually the lack of communication between the Amazon and the Andes strengthened the importance of Andean and coastal commercial centers such as Quito and Lima respectively.

from the rest of modern Peru. As a result, the Andean versus Amazonian binary has hindered traditional scholarships' ability to notice spatial, cultural, and social continuities between these two regions or "worlds," in which the montaña region has served as a connector. Anthropologist Alexandre Surrallés argues that focusing on those connections will allow scholars to actually see the Amazon region as a continuous and fluid place that has long been culturally and ecologically integrated with the rest of the Andes. In the case of the Colombian Amazon, focusing on the nineteenth century, historian Carlos Zárate argues that the overcoming tension between the Andes and the Amazon would enable the historiography of this region to "recover the lost social linkages"[9] between these two landscapes. This alternative configuration of territorial linkages between the Andes and Amazonia as a continuum, in fact, can be traced back to the pre-colonial period when the montaña was considered a pathway for the development of a close relationship between the Andes and the Amazon that was shaped, not only by conquering and migratory groups, but also by cultural influences emanating from one region to the other.[10]

3. The Eight Bioregions of Peru

One of the most important contributions to understanding the role of geographic criteria in thinking about the regional divisions of Peru is the mid-twentieth-century work of Peruvian biogeographer and ecologist Javier Pulgar Vidal.[11] As an attempt to privilege ecology within the definition of regional differences, but without ignoring humanity's place within these ecologies, he postulated the existence of eight natural regions as a response to what he considered an

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[9] Carlos G. Zárate Botía, *Extracción de quina: la configuración del espacio andino-amazónico de fines del siglo XIX* (Bogotá: CO-BAC, 2001), 12.

[10] Ann-Christine Taylor et al., *Al este de los Andes: relaciones entre las sociedades amazónicas y andinas entre los siglos XV Y XVII*, vol. 1 (Editorial Abya Yala., 1988). For more about frontier dynamics between the Spanish and indigenous peoples see: Erick Langer, *Economic Change and Rural Resistance in Southern Bolivia, 1880-1930* (Stanford University Press, 1989); Cynthia Radding, *Landscapes of Power and Identity: Comparative Histories in the Sonoran Desert and the Forests of Amazonia from Colony to Republic* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

[11] Javier Pulgar Vidal, "Las ocho regiones naturales del Perú," *Terra Brasilis (nova série). Revista da Rede Brasileira de História da Geografia e Geografia Histórica* 3 (1940).

outdated and inexact division of the country into only three regions. To emphasize the historical depth of human engagement with these eight bioregions, Pulgar Vidal selected Indigenous words to refer to them. For example, the *Quichua* bioregion refers to the mid-altitude ecoregion where maize cultivation and Quechua-speaking peoples predominated. *Rupa Rupa*, the name he gave to the montaña ecoregion, refers in Quechua to the place of burning or heat of the sun.[12] For him, the simplistic consideration of only three regions had hindered considerations of the ecological, cultural, and social diversity of Peru. Building on the method of German geographer Carl Troll's 1929 account of his expedition to the central Andes, Pulgar Vidal defined the natural environment of these regions as the result of a combination of factors such as: altitude, latitude, soil, subsoil, climate, flora, fauna—and crucially—the ways that locals have understood and interacted with these elements over time. As a key part of this project, Pulgar Vidal sought to collect and recover the names that local peoples, mostly peasants with local knowledge, still used to refer to the region or regions where they lived.[13] Based on a synthesis of these factors, Pulgar Vidal categorized eight separate "natural regions" in Peru that brought together these aspects of nature, culture, political economy, and history. Later, he extended his research to other Andean countries such as Colombia and Ecuador, eventually concluding that there are eight natural regions in all of tropical America.[14]

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[12] González Holguin, *Vocabulario de la lengua qquichua* (1608), s.v. "rupay." For historical application of *Quichua* as a bioregional concept, see Cushman, "The Environmental Contexts of Guaman Poma," 109-114.

[13] For more about integrating oral history in environmental history see: Cynthia Radding, *Landscapes of Power and Identity: Comparative Histories in the Sonoran Desert and the Forests of Amazonia from Colony to Republic* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005). Radding explains the importance of tracking down the name of places as a valid source that may reveal ancient knowledge about the meanings and uses of mountains and rivers: "names of places can demonstrate an intimate relationship with the flora and fauna. These names of places become an ethno-environmental map." (13). The use of linguistic evidence to learn indigenous groups' routes and also as a proof that landscapes may change over time, but usually their names remain.

[14] Pulgar Vidal: "Las ocho regiones naturales de la América tropical" and "Las ocho regiones naturales de Colombia."

Pulgar Vidal's notion of regionality—inspired by local knowledge and his studies of Peru's geography—perceived the Peruvian territory as a continuous landscape which integrates eight natural regions with eight different social and cultural realities from west to east, from the Pacific Coast to the Amazonian plain. Among these eight regions, the two located to the east of the Andean heights he named the *Rupa Rupa* or Upper Amazon and the *Omagua* or Lower Amazon.[15] In Pulgar Vidal's classification, the Rupa-Rupa or Upper Amazon corresponds to the montaña region found along the eastern slope of the Andean heights, defined by its rugged mid-altitude valleys covered with dense vegetation and forests. He emphasized its differences with the Omagua or Lower Amazon, which was characterized by its immense jungled plains and fields where the Marañón River and its tributaries flow on their way to the Atlantic Ocean.

Three other geographical variables are crucial to understanding the montaña region of what is now northeastern Peru. Though most travelers who ventured into the Amazon region tended to emphasize the grueling experience of crossing up the high and steep Andean heights then down again to the deep river valleys of the montaña region, the majority of travelers across this time period followed natural mountain passes, land depressions, and long-established Indigenous highways through them that tend to separate the Andean highlands into sections. In what is now northern Peru, the mountain pass used by many of them was the Porcuya pass (Abra de Porcuya) located in the Huancabamba Depression to the north of the Marañón that is very close to the montaña cities of Moyobamba and Lamas. The uniqueness of this pass, compared to the rest of the Andean cordillera, lies in how low and accessible it is. It has long been known for being the lowest east-west pass (reaching only 7,000 feet altitude) to go through the Andean

[15] The names of these eight regions respond to the Indigenous dialects used locally to describe them. These regions divide the territory between the relatively dry western lowlands (Chala, Yunga). Mid-altitude valleys where the bulk of the indigenous population lived (Quechua, Suni), the highest part of the Andean heights (Puna and Jalca), and the densely forested eastern part (Rupa-Rupa or Upper Amazon, and Omagua or Lower Amazon).

highlands anywhere from Colombia to Chile. A second geographical element to consider when defining regions, is the significance of plateaus and peninsulas of montaña surrounded by lowland regions, such as the one surrounding Moyobamba and Lamas, or the lasting independent stronghold in the vicinity of the Cerro de la Sal established by the Asháninka and other ethnicities who joined the rebellion of Juan Santos Atahualpa that began in 1742.[16] Some of these regions do not have a steep inclination, which made possible the existence of large pre-colonial and later colonial settlements. A third crucial geographical characteristic of the montaña is the existence of *pongos* (narrow gorge or canyon along the river), which interrupt transport on fluvial mountain "trails" (i.e. seasonally navigable rivers) that have long enabled the navigation of peoples to and from the Upper and the Lower Amazon region. Pongo in Quechua literally means "door." The Pongo de Aguirre in the Lower Huallaga River refers to the Spanish conquistador Lope de Aguirre. As it will be discussed in the next chapter, he failed to find the legendary golden kingdom of El Dorado when he followed this well-trodden riverine "trail" and passed through this "door," while succeeding in finding densely populated settlements in the Lower Amazon (especially of Omaguas—thus, Pulgar Vidal's favored term for this bioregion), before eventually reaching the mouth of the Amazon river on the Atlantic Ocean. Rather than serving as a geographical barrier to movement, in fact, the densely settled montaña area around this "doorway," allowed travelers to prepare both physically and mentally for facing the unknown dangers of Lower Amazonia.

Whether we divide Peru into two, three, or eight basic regions, the question remains to define how the montaña fits within each. What did Father Rodriguez or Mariátegui mean when

[16] On the latter, see Stefano Varese, *La sal de los cerros*, 5th ed. (1973; Havana: Fondo Editorial Casa de las Américas, 2011); Enrique Casanto Shingari and Pablo Macera, *El poder libre Asháninca: Juan Santos Atahualpa y su hijo Josecito* (Lima: Universidad de San Martín de Porres, Fondo Editorial, 2009).

they described Peru's third region as the montaña? In practical terms, the montaña especially stood out to those who have visited and experienced this landscape.

The Montaña as a Frontier in Ethnohistorical Scholarship

As in the case of Father Rodriguez, over a period of time starting in the sixteenth century and ending at the beginning of the Rubber Boom (circa 1880), accounts of Indigenous and mestizo chroniclers, Spanish imperialists, missionaries, and scientific explorers tended to describe their experiences with the montaña as an environment that revealed two basic options to outsiders. On the one hand, it offered possibilities for outside settlement or economic exploitation; or on the other hand, it had an unmanageable geography with limited possibilities, unless they fully relied on Natives to maintain their colonialist agendas. In all of these instances, however, outsiders expressed an intense interest in expanding the colonial system along the edges or frontiers of empire persisted, despite the challenges the environment presented, whether they were agents of Inca, Spanish, Jesuit, or national expansion. Even if they could not hope to manage the environment by themselves, the montaña kept drawing them in. It is a central goal of this dissertation to explain the reasons that led them to formulate these conceptions of the montaña and how they changed or adapted over time. The dynamics of these interactions between outsiders and locals show a repeated pattern of colonial enterprises never working the way they were intended in the first place, frequently in response to "the opportunities and contingencies derived from the environment."[17] Another repeated pattern we see is the inadequacy of using binaries such as civilized versus wild, Christian versus infidel, Andean versus Amazonian, urban versus rural, among others, to conceptualize this place as a frontier.

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[17] Prado, "The Fringes of Empires: Recent Scholarship on Colonial Frontiers and Borderlands in Latin America," 322.

Although environment has long been an important concern of frontier scholarship,[18] newer scholarship on frontier societies in the colonial Americas has brought to the forefront of discussion the ways in which outsiders and local Indigenous population interacted both with each other and with nature. For example, historians Cynthia Radding and Susan Deeds explore the centrality of nature and Indigenous agency in histories of frontier societies in Sonora, other regions of the North American Borderlands, and Chiquitos in Bolivian Amazonia.[19] Radding suggests that in frontier societies the environment does not merely provide the scenic backdrop to the human drama but that it is, rather, integral to the historical narrative.[20] Radding's approach to the notion of regionality also serves as an example for thinking about how natural and cultural processes have shaped the montaña region's environment over time, specifically, as part of a landscape continuum that has been culturally and ecologically shaped by its interconnections with both the Andean heights and Amazonia.

The perspective of the montaña as a frontier space where Indigenous groups negotiated their resistance or compliance to colonialism resulted in the continual creation and re-creation of that space. Peruvian anthropologist Frederica Barclay comments on the lack of attention in the historiography given to this montaña as a frontier space characterized by dynamics of conflict and encounter, in which Andean and Amazonian territories became mutually articulated based on conflicting moral and material ideas.[21] For her, the study of this frontier space between the Andean and Amazonian regions of Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, and Venezuela during the

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[18] Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Frontier* (1951; Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2003).

[19] Cynthia Radding, *Landscapes of Power and identity: Comparative Histories in the Sonoran Desert and the Forests of Amazonia from Colony to Republic*.; idem, *Wandering Peoples: Colonialism, Ethnic Spaces, and Ecological Frontiers in Northwestern Mexico, 1700–1850* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); Susan Deeds. *Defiance and Deference in Mexico's Colonial North: Indians under Spanish Rule in Nueva Vizcaya* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003.

[20] Cynthia Radding, xix.

[21] Frederica Barclay Rey de Castro, "Olvido de una historia: reflexiones acerca de la historiografía andino-amazónica," *Revista de Indias* 61, no. 223 (2001): 493-511.

pre-colonial and colonial periods has been marginalized due to the way regional research of the Andes has been dominated by historians, and studies of Amazonian Indigenous communities by social scientists—a dichotomy of basic disciplinary approach.

Another reason that has limited the study of this region lays not only in the necessity to approach it from an interdisciplinary point of view, but also in the need to integrate its physical and environmental features to the historical analysis. The understanding of ecological processes that have shaped the terrain and the ways that people have adapted to those processes can shed light on people's simultaneous interactions with the Andean/Amazonian region—with an emphasis on the montaña. Instead of accentuating the division between the Andes and the Amazon, Barclay reclaims the idea of thinking about an Andean/Amazonian region that brings together both regions. Rather than thinking of these two regions as separate, the purpose remains in thinking of both of them interacting with each other. This reiterates historian Thierry Saignes' contention about the need to recognize deep historical processes—including environmental processes—that have affected the recognition of the Andean and Amazonian regions as one of cycles of connection and disconnection. According to Saignes, the expansion of the Inca empire and its assertion of control over the eastern slope of the Andean mountains actually required the Incas to shut down most of the trade routes and ecological connections that had formerly integrated parts of Amazonia with the rest of their territory as an explicit strategy of rule.[22] The degree to which the Incas followed through with their plans to enforce their superiority depended on other variables such as distance and the social and economic structure of the populations from the eastern side of the Andean heights—or Andesuyo as the Incas called that region and its

[22] Thierry Saignes, "El piedemonte amazónico de los andes meridionales: estado de la cuestión y problemas relativos a su ocupación en los siglos XVI y XVII", *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Etudes Andines Lima* 10, no. 3-4 (1981): 141-176.

peoples. However, the Incas' relationship with the Andesuyo was itself in constant negotiation, as much as their notions of their eastern frontiers.[23]

Indigenous views of Andesuyo related by Guaman Poma and other chroniclers show that notions about nature in the montaña region were intrinsically connected to the Incas' own cultural mindset regarding this region and its peoples, and their relative lack of articulation with the imperial center and its cultural norms.[24] According to historian Susan Ramírez, the word Cuzco itself was a marker of possession, and the presence of a ruler made that place a center of the Inca empire. The Inca empire's center, as well as its frontiers were remarkably flexible, making it possible for the Incas to maintain a network of exchange for coca production and other forest resources with Andesuyo peoples, typically founded on the principle of reciprocity, rather than extractivism, as they came to be based during the colonial period.[25] For Ramírez, this trade made sense due to the difference between the Incas and Spanish' notions of territoriality. Indigenous territorial conceptions of organization varied from the Spanish ones who believed in confining people into one specific place clearly defined. For the Incas, the borders delineating the four regions of the Tawantinsuyo were "vague and frequently changed," rather than lines literally written in stone across the landscape of Cuzco and the Inca empire.[26]

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[23] Indigenous groups' differences on sociocultural and economic dynamics within this frontier region depended on their proximity to the capital of the Inca Empire. Based on the recognition of Kechwa speaking communities situated along the eastern side of the Andes, and how far they were from Cuzco, such as Ecuador and Colombia, it was useful to analyze the history of these places based on their role as a periphery from the Inca Empire and because of that with different social and economic dynamics than the ones imposed by Incas. For more on the linguistic expansion of Kechwa, see: Frank Salomon, "A North Andean Status Trader Complex Under Inka Rule", *Ethnohistory* 34, no. 1 (1987): 63–77.

[24] Susan E. Ramírez, *To Feed and Be Fed: The Cosmological Bases of Authority and Identity in the Andes* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2005). For other delineations of colonized Andean space in which the natural world cannot be separated from culture, see Cushman, "The Environmental Contexts of Guaman Poma: Interethnic Conflict over Forest Resources and Place in Huamanga (Peru), 1540-1600."

[25] Ramírez, *To Feed and Be Fed*, 31.

[26] Ramírez, 48–49. See also Carolyn Dean, *A Culture of Stone: Inka Perspectives on Rock* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

Although this dissertation does not go back that far, archaeological data published by French ethnologist Ann-Christine Taylor et al., shows that in stark contrast to recent times, the montaña was once a center of cultural exchanges, and that it also had influence over a series of valleys located from east to west, as far back as the Early Formative Period (i.e. Initial Period, circa 1800-900 BCE). Much more recently, it could be inferred that the montaña's central geographical location in between the Sierra and Selva had historically ensured a constant movement of Natives fluent in the Indigenous language of Quechua. This elucidates a possible explanation for why today's montaña Kechwas in the vicinity of Moyobamba (est. 1541), Lamas (est. 1653), and Tarapoto (est. 1765) have continued to speak the language. Interestingly, the probable forebears of today's Kechwas, the Motilones, the Tabalosos, and other montaña peoples were well known for their familiarity with this mountainous environment, as well as their physical endurance and cultural durability, which gave them a prominent role as porters within the cultural and commercial networks particular to frontier areas within Spanish jurisdictions in northern Peru, perhaps dating back to the Inca Empire.[27]

Language is a critical problem to consider regarding the ethnohistorical dynamics of the montaña region. As previously explained, because of the Quechua language they speak, which is usually considered characteristic of highland Andean Natives, the Peruvian government has recently questioned the legitimacy of Kechwa claims to ownership of these lands, and they have accused Kechwas of being nothing more than recent colonists from the highlands who lack true Indigenous status in this part of the montaña.[28] For outsiders, the very idea of an Indigenous

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[27] Taylor et al., *Al este de los Andes: relaciones entre las sociedades amazónicas y andinas entre los siglos XV y XVII*, 1:56.

[28] In order to make that distinction between the Andean Quechua and the non-Andean Quechua speaker communities, it is important for Kechwa communities to emphasize that difference by spelling Kechwa in a different way.

group that speaks a supposedly Andean language raises suspicions about their "true identity." As this study will show, frontier societies that have lived in the montaña historically—such as the Kechwas—have simultaneously engaged with groups from *both* the Sierra and the Selva, as part of ongoing strategies of adapting their cultural traditions to changing historical circumstances. The frontier theoretical lenses enable us to understand why the Kechwas today do not fall into either of the binary categories of Andean or Amazonian. They are not Andean, but they are not Amazonian either. This history of ethnogenesis is important because being depicted as mere Andean migrants by Peruvian government representatives (and even by other Amazonian Indigenous groups), is an affront to Kechwa claims to having ancient, strong, spiritual connections with their home territory and the animal and plant life and environment that surrounds them, notwithstanding its basic, ongoing importance to their livelihoods and sense of cultural identity.

Theorizing the Frontier in Colonial Scholarship

This study argues that the montaña existed at the fringes of the Inca, Spanish, and Portuguese empires, and later, of the Peruvian nation-state and industrializing world.[29] But what does that mean from the perspective of frontier and colonial studies? Indeed, this dissertation demonstrates that the montaña typically served as a *permanent* barrier shaping the different ways both inhabitants and outsiders interacted with each other and their environment. I employ the concept of frontier as a theoretical framework for exploring changing notions of the montaña over time. Here, the most useful notion of frontier elucidates the montaña's fluidity and connectivity. Based

[29] For more studies about the Amazon region as a contested zone between the Spanish and Portuguese empires see: Sebastián Gómez González, *Frontera selvática: españoles, portugueses y su disputa por el noroccidente amazónico, siglo XVIII* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2014); Fabrício Prado, *Edge of Empire: Atlantic Networks and Revolution in Bourbon Río de la Plata* (University of California Press, 2015).

on its ecological and cultural features, the montaña can be seen as a continuum between the Andean heights and lowland Amazonia providing the material conditions to ensure those dynamics. In that sense, this montaña has shaped both locals' and outsiders' responses to each other's power relationships.

Critical geographers John Morrisey, David Nally, Ulf Strohmayer, and Yvonne Whelan argue that power relationships among peoples during colonialism have produced so-called third spaces, frontier regions, middle grounds and contact zones.[30] To these geographers, these colonial spaces have inevitably become contested areas because of their ambivalence, hybridity, and fluidity.[31] This theoretical perspective emphasizing the continual production and reproduction of 'multiple geographies' still leaves much room for thinking critically regarding the way in which the existing historiography has neglected to consider human beings' interactions with nature in such terms. For instance, the consideration of regions in South America shaped by their relation to the Andean heights often treats nature in reductionist, even deterministic terms that fails to consider the various ways in which nature and its interpretation have been both geographically and culturally constructed. My analysis of the continual negotiation between different actors about the basic nature of the montaña environment reveals the intermittence of power relationships in the montaña at the same time that it exposes the historical fluidity and complexity of cultural connectivities with nature, even for Indigenous societies like the Kechwas.

[30] These authors engage in the discussion of using the frontier, contact zone, borderland, middle ground as theoretical framework for understanding regions like the montaña: John Morrissey et al., *Key Concepts in Historical Geography* (Sage, 2014); White, Richard, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge, 2011).

[31] According to Morrisey et al. they are interested in studying 'historically sensitive geographies', as well as 'geographically contextualized histories' in Morrissey et at., *Key Concepts in Historical Geography*.

The tradition of thinking theoretically about frontiers comes primarily from the North American experience of analyzing the westward expansion of a European-derived population. An examination of this experience elucidates the montaña's perennial status as a frontier, in stark contrast to North America's frontier. In his celebrated speech at the Columbian Exposition of 1893 and subsequent works, Frederick Jackson Turner famously defined frontier as a highly mobile line which divided savagery and civilization. Turner characterized the advance of American settlement westward to an area of "free land" as an essential part of American development, particularly where democratic governance was concerned. This process of pushing the frontier further west reached its final point once there were no more lands for North Americans to conquer.[32] For Australian paleontologist Tim Flannery, the essence of the frontier experience lay in the relationship that European-derived Americans established with Indigenous peoples and with the land. According to Flannery, Turner's thesis represented an example for conceptualizing a frontier anywhere, including his own homeland Australasia and the destructive impact that so-called Aboriginal peoples had on the environment when they arrived as colonizers. In his words, this conceptualization brings to light how the ecological and social responses of the frontier shaped the North American colonist. This American expansion based on resource utilization, resulted in the colonists' "frontier attitude" which lies at the "heart of capitalism, and which presents such a major challenge to conservationists today."[33] Historian Patricia Limerick complements this explanation from another perspective. She argues that in order to stress continuity between the colonists' westward expansion and the Western present,

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[32] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (University of Michigan. Digital Library Production Service, 1920).

[33] Tim Flannery, *The Eternal Frontier: An Ecological History of North America and its Peoples* (Grove Press, 2002), 292. See also Tim Flannery, *The Future Eaters: An Ecological History of the Australasian Lands and People* (Port Melbourne, Australia: Reed Press, 1994).

ideas of savagery and civilization should become a central part of the discussion about the frontier thesis.[34]

Recently, Latin American scholars' theorization of frontiers have called into question binary notions such as wilderness/civilization or Andean/Amazon. For example, Colombian historian Carlos Zárate conceptualizes frontier as a constant negotiation between different actors in their interactions with nature. [35] David J. Weber discusses those negotiations in the context of Spanish frontiers, especially in North America.[36] At the beginning of the Spanish conquest, frontier zones were marked by their association with Indigenous people as "savages" living outside the bounds of civilization. These views changed and adapted over time, depending on how successful the Spanish were in exerting control over those territories, but even by the late eighteenth century, frontier zones "contained numerous independent Indians who had fallen under Spanish influence but were not fully Christian."[37] Thus, frontier regions existed as the result of a constant negotiation between locals and outsiders. The blurriness, yet surprising permanence, of these frontiers dividing savagery and civilization, was maintained through the articulation of trade networks. For Weber, the lives of the people involved in these commercial networks were "shaped by the dualities of conflict and interdependence, friction and exchange, peoples who face one another across frontiers often find common ground."[38] My examination of the montaña sheds light into the ways in which (a) the physical environment shaped the social dynamics of locals and outsiders, while (b) these agents' constant interaction transformed their

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[34] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (WW Norton & Company, 1987).

[35] Carlos G. Zárate Botía, "Movilidad y permanencia Ticuna en la frontera amazónica colonial del siglo XVIII", *Journal de la Société des Américanistes*, 1998, 73–98.

[36] David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (Yale University Press, 2005).

[37] Weber, 247.

[38] Weber analyzes the common grounds between these Spanish frontiers and frontier regions around the globe (254).

perceptions, aspirations, and representations of their surroundings. This study of the montaña as a frontier in Latin America thus focuses on material and cultural indicators that have been produced and reproduced as part of the dialogue between the Andean heights and Amazonian lowlands over time.

Much of the older frontier scholarship, from Walter Prescott Webb to Alfred Crosby, has given relatively little attention to Indigenous perspectives and agency in these processes, including processes of environmental change. More recent historiography about frontiers has begun to integrate Indigenous peoples, treating them equally dynamic agents to the outsiders, creating the possibility of interpreting the historical construction of geographical places as a result of both spatial and social relations. In other words, there is no longer "a clear-cut division between the colonists and the colonized."[39] Tamar Herzog's *Frontiers of Possession*, for example, calls for looking at local interactions, specifically involving Natives groups in frontier areas, to gain a better sense of the actual borderlands that existed between the Portuguese and Spanish empires, rather than starting from what treaties and laws stipulated about them in Europe.[40]

But were these South American frontiers as ephemeral or mobile as their North American counterparts have been portrayed?[41] Whether frontiers are defined as to the existence of economic connections with other areas, or due to the impacts of the place on people's identity formation, the frontier framework has tended to understand these as transitory conditions in which the production of a frontier's meaning is constantly in flux. According to Michael

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[39] For a discussion in Latin America see Prado, "The Fringes of Empires: Recent Scholarship on Colonial Frontiers and Borderlands in Latin America," 323. For North America, see especially works by Richard White and Pekka Hämäläinen.

[40] Tamar Herzog, *Frontiers of Possession* (Harvard University Press, 2015).

[41] Michael R. Redclift, *Frontiers: Histories of Civil Society and Nature* (MIT Press (MA), 2006).

Redclift, "it is only when transitional features are the dominant characteristic that the region is a true frontier."[42] Yet in the case of South America's montaña, the region has been long perceived as fixed and permanent frontier. Is it possible to reconcile these seemingly contrary viewpoints of the frontier? Rather than thinking about frontiers as fixed places with a specific location, defining the concept of frontier in the montaña as a place of constant negotiation between colonial agents and Natives allows historians to engage with a broader consideration of frontier dynamics. This not only includes the importance of environmental characteristics, but also elements not necessarily confined to a geographical mindset. For instance, interactions in the montaña also articulated commercial connections with other areas, including the social and cultural processes of multiple actors who have ascribed a variety of meanings to this frontier area. On the other hand, distinctive climactic and ecological attributes of the area such as its closeness to rivers, its location in between two important differing regions of settlement, or on the margins of expansion, can determine the meanings given by peoples who have established contact with this region, as well as vice versa. Thus, the values that different groups of people assigned to frontiers can switch or overlap because they are "in a state of becoming something else." [43]

Redclift's approach also highlights the value of fixating on the contextualized history of ideas regarding a frontier space. Latin American scholars have typically taken a materialis(tic) approach toward the study of frontiers, emphasizing their socioeconomic and sometimes ecological character. The work of colonial ethnohistorian John Murra has been particularly influential on this count, asserting that the frontier between the Andes and the Amazon has maintained its durability since the pre-colonial period. His ideas about ecological complementary

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[42] Redclift, 23.
[43] Redclift, *Frontiers: Histories of Civil Society and Nature*.

and the variety of uses that Andean ethnicities made of vertical landscape serves as a regionally specific—and contrasting—example for exploring how frontier regions complemented each other ecologically and culturally. Murra's approach starts from an exploration of the concept of frontiers as natural differences between ecological niches first, and then, as zones within which economic and cultural networks became mapped onto those geographic areas.[44] For Murra, Andean societies had a remarkable ability to domesticate and control different ecological niches located at different altitudes, often including fields of coca or other lowland crops sited in the montaña. Metaphorically, each one of these niches functioned as an island with its own internal dynamic that kept them operating separately, but were simultaneously connected to a center (often an ethnic community) and existed as part of a larger whole.[45] Murra depicted this complementary system of islands as a "Vertical Archipelago." This conglomerate not only contained islands with a wide variety of ecological characteristics, but also depended on the cultural specificities of the ethnicities who have adapted to the vertical uses of the landscape. By obtaining a wide range of products from different altitudes at different times of the year,[46] Andean societies over the longue durée have been able to maximize "the reciprocal use of human energies."[47] This meant controlling as many ecological niches as they could, while maintaining access to most of the resources from different places—in the process, building a little ecological empire for each ethnic group. This model of vertical ecological complementarity reinforces the view of frontiers in this region as permanent, and existing as a part of an ecological unity with its

[44] John V. Murra, "El Archipielago Vertical' Revisited," in *Andean Ecology and Civilization* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1985).

[45] Carlos G. Zárate Botía, *Extracción de quina: la configuración del espacio andino-amazónico de fines del siglo XIX* (Bogotá: CO-BAC, 2001); María Clemencia Ramírez de Jara, *Frontera fluida entre andes, piedemonte y selva: el caso del valle de Sibundoy, siglos XVI-XVIII*, vol. 4 (Instituto Colombiano de Cultura Hispánica, 1996).

[46] Murra's model also implicitly accounts for differences between years related to the climate extremes of El Niño and La Niña.

[47] Murra, "'El Archipielago Vertical' Revisited", 15.

own internal dynamic and logic while it also unites the Andes and the montaña as complementary, not contrastive.

Unlike the American frontier thesis, in which the frontier was treated as ephemeral and transitory, enduring tensions existing in the montaña region have required different ways of theorizing it as frontier. The key element that has led Latin American scholars to argue in favor of the frontier's durability over centuries drew from Murra's depiction of the Andean landscape. By taking into consideration the different ecological niches transversally interconnected and located at different altitudes, the frontier area became an "intermediary zone" with "obligated pathways" that persisted over time. In their studies of far northern areas of the montaña, historian Carlos Zárate and anthropologist María Clemencia Ramírez de Jara refined Murra's concept of verticality and complementarity (originally derived from the southern Andes) to understand frontiers in the cases of Colombia and Ecuador.[48] For them, the notion of ecological complementarity of frontiers was fundamentally based on peoples' interactions with physical characteristics of the environment defined as 'frontier agents,' such as rivers, forested mountains, as well as climatic conditions. These frontier agents served as permanent and durable determinants of people's ecological, social, and economic practices. In the case of the Quechua-speaking Natives of Sibundoy, known as the Inga, in the Putumayo valley of what is now Colombia (a case of great comparative interest to the Kechwas), the construction of Inga identity was based on their ability to establish commercial relationships with outsiders through their abilities to facilitate communication with other regional groups due to their language skills (they spoke in Quechua), as well as their physical abilities to navigate rivers, or to walk long distances during rainy seasons.

[48] Zárate Botía, *Extracción de quina*; Ramírez de Jara, *Frontera fluida entre los andes, piedemonte y selva.*

The persistent existence of geographical features in these specific areas made it possible for humans to create and use commercial networks, such as those involving the extraction of *quina* from *Cinchona* trees in the montaña of southern Ecuador, while engaging in their own cultural transformation and redefinition.[49] Yet the existence of commercial networks in these "intermediary zones" has led Ramírez de Jara and Zárate to theorize frontiers as places that have also been shaped by the maintenance of an interdependent trade system of goods premised on maintaining their own self-sufficiency.[50] For peoples like the Inga of Sibundoy, the socio-cultural and economic dynamics established in frontier areas of the Peruvian viceroyalty during the colonial period were also strongly influenced by their geographical distance from other important cities belonging to the Peruvian viceroyalty.[51] For the *quina* producers of southern Ecuador, the frontier nature of this intermediary zone "shaped social relations of production and exchange with Andean society as well as formed an integral part of an ideology/worldview" for Natives of the region.[52]

The Montaña and the Idea of Wilderness

Just as in the case of frontiers, the concept of wilderness has allowed historians to interpret geographical depictions of places, but importantly, to highlight the different kinds of linkages between the material elements and the ideas established around that region—while placing the perceived wildness of nature in that region at the center of consideration. Perceptions about the montaña by outsiders have often centered around the overwhelming presence—or lack thereof—

[49] Zárate Botía, *Extracción de quina*.

[50] Zárate Botía, "Movilidad y permanencia Ticuna en la frontera amazónica colonial del siglo XVIII"; Ramírez de Jara, *Frontera fluida entre andes, piedemonte y selva*.

[51] Ramírez de Jara, *Frontera fluida entre andes, piedemonte y selva*.

[52] Brooke Larson, *Trials of Nation Making: Liberalism, Race, and Ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*, 20.

of wilderness. An analysis of the ways that agents of power have defined wilderness during different periods of time can shed light on the real reasons driving these power relationships—no longer hidden by notions of wilderness.

Again, the North American experience of conceptualizing the wild and wilderness provide a necessary starting point for analyzing Latin American works using that concept. From the point of view of the North American tradition, the concept of wilderness integrates both the moral and the physical sides of wild places as they have been redefined over time in relation to Westerners' changing values regarding Christianity, conversion, expansion, civilization, conquest, imperialism, enlightenment, improvement, progress, capitalism, industrialism, and development, among others.[53] These representations of wilderness have responded to changing views about nature as well as their position as human beings in the natural world.[54] Historian Roderick Nash provides a foundational exploration of the idea of wilderness as one in which people's views about nature depend on place and time.[55] Similar to other authors interested in the history of the U.S. West, Nash emphasizes how nineteenth-century westward expansion in the United States was perceived as an opportunity to bring civilization, development, and order to little known and wild areas, traditionally populated by Native populations, but he reframes these concerns in relation to the history of ideas and intellectual history, focusing on the ways that

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[53] For works on development and ecology see: Arturo Escobar, "Construction Nature: Elements for a Post-Structuralist Political Ecology," *Futures* 28, no. 4 (1996): 325–43; and Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Cornell University Press, 1990), which considers both the early modern (and religious) era and nineteenth- to early twentieth-century. See also Michael Taussig, "Culture of Terror—Space of Death: Roger Casement's Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, no.3 (1984): 467-97.

[54] Raymond Williams, "Ideas of Nature," in *Problems of Materialism and Culture: Selected Essays*, (London: Verso, 1980), 67-85; Clarence J. Glacken, "Changing Ideas of the Habitable World," in *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth*, (University of Chicago Press, 1956); Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967); Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[55] Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American mind* (Yale University Press, 2002).

those ideas have depended on the context and the ideology of their time and involved the reconceptualization of the wild in relation to nature and culture.[56]

Going much further back in history, environmental philosopher Max Oelschlaeger argues that Westerners' approaches to wilderness have been shaped by the way that they have conceptualized nature as an independent realm that is detached or foreign to their own experiences.[57] From that perspective, histories of perceptions of the South American montaña would seem to be prime territory for study. Yet despite their primacy in time as well as influence in Western thought compared to North American engagements, Amazonia has received very little attention in the wilderness literature.[58] Like Nash, Oelschlaeger identifies changes over time in the views of wilderness that respond to how "the evolving character of culture as human nature has articulated itself in particular places and times."[59] For him, since the nineteenth century, the meaning of the idea of wilderness has shifted from considering it as a resource that can provide goods and economic revenues; to an area that needed to be conquered and civilized; to finally become a sacred place that must be preserved in order to keep nature safe from Man and its indiscriminate use and destruction.

For understanding the progression of these views over time, both Oelschlaeger and Nash see it necessary to look at Christianity as a religion that is based fundamentally on anthropocentric views of the world combined with a linear conception of time rather than a

[56] See also Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology* (Yale University Press, 1991); Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*; Redclift, *Frontiers: Histories of Civil Society and Nature*; see also William H. Goetzmann, *Exploration and Empire; the Explorer and the Scientist in the Winning of the American West* (Monticello Editions, 1966) for the centrality of scientific exploration and knowledge production in this process.
[57] Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*.
[58] Candace Slater, *Entangled Edens*.
[59] Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*, 5.

cyclical one.[60] From that perspective, Natives focusing more on maintaining their livelihoods than in God represented an affront to all the Christianizing efforts. Compared to other beliefs in which humans consider themselves to be part of nature by also engaging in a cyclical conception of time, Judeo-Christian tradition's view of nature has kept humans removed from it.[61] Under those Christian moral codes present in the Bible, wilderness embodied the wild lands that "did not have an unholy or evil connotation but was venerated as the symbol and even the very essence of deity."[62] That veneration has led many to interpret the unknown wilderness as a paradise—or as the opposite, as a wasteland. According to historian Vittoria di Palma, within early modern British thought, wastelands are depopulated places interpreted within Christian tradition which Man should feel compelled to *improve* and transform into a cultivated garden in order to achieve salvation, both in this world and the next.[63] Similarly to her argument claiming that the concept of wasteland has shaped attitudes toward land, the rugged terrain of the montaña has also been defined both as a paradise and as a place that can turn solitary men into wolves. To that end, the improvement of the souls through Christianization required the improvement of the land and vice versa.

Such ideas of wilderness, paradise, and wasteland profoundly influenced European conquistador and colonists' interactions with the landscapes of the New Continent. Historian Donald Worster describes the importance of Europeans' perceptions of the Americas as a second

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[60] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700* (Stanford University Press, 2006).

[61] Ibid., 100; Nash also describes the linkages between Europeans' preconceived ideas about wilderness and the Judeo-Christian tradition. See: Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 20; see also John R. McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World* (WW Norton & Company, 2001); Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," in *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment* (Routledge New York, 1996), 184–93.

[62] Nash, *Wilderness and the American mind*, 20.

[63] For an example of wilderness Vittoria Di Palma, *Wasteland: A History* (Yale University Press, 2014). The idea of paradise and wasteland is part of an elaborate historiography that I will need to familiarize myself with. These ideas shaped European's ideas about the Amazonia as a potential site of paradise.

earth—as a material paradise, to use Nash's words—with unlimited resources ready to be used for their own economic benefit.[64] According to Worster and Nash, these ideas of plenitude and abundance of resources located in a new continent could be found more specifically in Europeans' views of what they understood as "free land." This "free land" provided colonists' the opportunity for using it for farming—regardless of what Indigenous populations were doing with it. As a result, despite the tough circumstances that colonists had to endure in order to survive in the New World, they were ultimately worth it. Meanwhile, the presence of Native Americans challenged European beliefs that they had found a lost paradise.[65] In a similar way to the North American case, Spanish colonizers interpreted the "unknown" places where they encountered ecological and cultural adversity, as the antipode of paradise, or where they could live like in the paradise such as the garden of Eden and el Dorado in Amazonia.

Spanish explorers interpreted the fear of confronting new and uncivilized places and people as wilderness. Despite all the opportunities attached to this new continent that seemed to have all the environmental conditions and resources that the Old World lacked, new colonists experienced the harsh reality of a landscape that was hostile to their needs and expectations regarding the development of their society, particularly into towns or cities.[66] Thus, wilderness became widely viewed as an obstacle to civilized Man's attempts to attain progress based on the production and consumption of goods for economic revenues. A good example of this view can be found in Worster's argument about the economic system as the main cause for ecological crisis in the twentieth-century southern Great Plains, and historian Jeffrey Bolster's consideration

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[64] Donald Worster, *Shrinking the Earth: The Rise and Decline of American Abundance* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

[65] For understanding more about ideas of land being passive, docile and subject to the colonizers' exploitation, see Carolyn Merchant, *Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1980), 39.

[66] Redclift, *Frontiers: Histories of Civil Society and Nature*, 77.

of English colonists' commercial activities and their critical effects on the ocean's marine resources. Ultimately, both Worster in the plains and Bolster in the ocean, analyze modern society's reasoning for taming wilderness as for the development of capitalism.[67] At every point in the period covered by this dissertation outsiders have referred to Amazonian population in derogatory terms while claiming ownership in its resources.

Views about North American landscapes dominated by forests, rivers, and mountains tended to depict wild areas as uncivilized wastelands that had to be improved. Whether this ideology was based on cultural values that responded to opinions about God or "the new science," it created among those colonists the imperative of becoming agents of order and improvement. On the one hand, the Judeo-Christian tradition of bringing order to chaos and civilization to wild places motivated settlers to feel responsible for using the power given by God to improve the land as well as people's souls. On the other hand, improving the land also meant the "introduction of new farming techniques, and accelerated enclosure of land."[68] Fredrik A. Jonsson's study of the eighteenth-century Scottish Highlands as the "Enlightenment's frontier," redirects this discussion away from the Americas toward an "internal" frontier of Great Britain. He portrays the improvement ideology of the eighteenth century as establishing the imperative to make the land profitable by cultivating it and managing it privately in the most efficient way possible, facilitated by new scientific knowledge as possible.[69] To this point Di Palma adds that this improvement was framed as both an economic and moral imperative.[70]

Jonsson examines the belief that through scientific experimentation in acclimatization it

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[67] Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s*, 25th anniversary ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); W. Jeffrey Bolster, *The Mortal Sea: Fishing the Atlantic in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012).

[68] Redclift, *Frontiers: Histories of Civil Society and Nature*, 79.

[69] Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, *Enlightenment's Frontier: The Scottish Highlands and the Origins of Environmentalism*, (Yale University Press, 2013), 48.

[70] Di Palma, *Wasteland: A History*, 39.

would become possible to improve the climate and incorporate animals and plants that could adapt to that improvement.[71] Historian William Cronon also engages with the need of humanity to impose superiority over nature by getting better at controlling it. For him, that kind of relationship with nature exemplifies how "wilderness came to reflect the very civilization its devotees sought to escape," and it is certainly relevant to the Peruvian state's present-day attempts to dispossess the Kechwas in its ostensible effort to conserve and control the wildest parts of the northeastern montaña.[72]

Moving on from sacred and scientific approaches to understanding wilderness, historically this view has shaped imperial and colonialist practices. For colonists and conquistadors, the battle against wilderness has served as a justification for their conquering enterprises. Expertise and scientific knowledge about farming techniques as a way to improve environmental conditions of the soil in order to obtain economic development made sense as long as they were connected to ownership and land occupation.[73] As Cronon explains, the concept of wilderness became intrinsically connected to a cultural value based on humans' power to dominate because it implied the realization of the existence of the "other."[74] Whether the environment or certain social groups who inhabit it a certain way can be perceived as part of wilderness, in both cases the need to tame "the wild" has emerged hand-in-hand with other values attached to the Western thought.[75] Even before Europeans established contact with the New World, the transregional exchange, transplantation, and acclimatization of domesticated

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[71] For more examples on how taming nature was considered necessary for development see: McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*.

[72] William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature", *Environmental History* 1, no. 1 (1996): 15.

[73] Andrew S. Mathews, *Instituting Nature: Authority, Expertise, and Power in Mexican Forests* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011); Joseph Morgan Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007).

[74] Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature", 23.

[75] Nash, *Wilderness and the American mind*.

species had already occurred.[76] According to historian Alfred Crosby, domestication and animals and plants made possible the survival of a growing population in Europe. However, "farmers and pastoralists found that their new way of exploiting nature was a sword that cut both ways,"[77] mainly because invasive species found the opportunity to reproduce quickly and efficiently. Human disturbance of environments provided almost an ideal "niche" for ruderal, weedy, "portmanteau biota." At the same time, weeds often provided an important food for introduced livestock, while unfamiliar diseases hampered indigenous' response ability to protect themselves and the native environments they had helped create in the Americas. This means that even if colonizers' actions have not been the only ones modifying their environment as they go, they have intensified their superior position over nature with the aim of achieving progress in their societies. From that perspective, the concept of wilderness has shaped the way in which these first encounters described colonizers' relationship with nature, by distinguishing "civilized" from "savage" practices.

To conclude, the study of the montaña not only fills the gap on the current ways that the Peruvian territory has been conceptualized, but by doing so it brings to light the complex history of its inhabitants and their relationships with outsiders. While there is no comparison between the Andean scholarship and the one about the montaña, this study contributes to a larger field of study that needs to be developed. As it will be shown in the following chapters, there is plenty of evidence demonstrating outsiders' repeated efforts for civilizing—what they perceived—as the wild montaña's landscape and its Indigenous population. Even if some of these attempts to

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[76] Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); Charles C. Mann, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus*, 1st Vintage Books ed (New York: Vintage, 2006); and for other examples of using biological allies to help in order to establish power relationships see: John Robert McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[77] Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*, 28.

incorporate the montaña and its inhabitants to the imperial system were successful, others not so much, and situating the montaña as a frontier provides a theoretical tool for analyzing these interactions and transformations. As such, it remains at the center of this dissertation to historicize exactly when and why these dynamics took place in this seemingly changeless and permanent region of South America. Ultimately, shifting alliances between these colonial agents and Natives while also adapting and changing their strategies as colonizers and colonized agents has prevented colonial and national elites from taking control over these territories and its resources.

Chapter 3

Where the Civilized World Ends: The Montaña as a Frontier for the Inca and Spanish Empires

This chapter examines conceptions of territoriality expressed by outsiders about the montaña region at the onset of the colonial period. Spanish conquistadors were by no means the first to conceive of this region as a frontier. Trade and cultural exchange between the Andean highlands and Amazonian lowlands dates back millennia, and the Inca Empire looked on the forested lands of the *Antis* (Andesuyo) as a major barrier to the spread of imperial rule and civilization.[1] These views influenced the perceptions of Spanish conquistadors like Orsúa and Lope de Aguirre who encountered this montaña while trying to make sense of it for the first time before reaching the Marañón River, as well as subsequent early Spanish attempts to 'conquer' this region during the seventeenth century. The analysis of these perspectives goes in tandem with Indigenous views about the area and their relation to the Inca's pre- and post-conquest relationships with the montaña and its peoples. At the end of the chapter it will be clear that representations of the montaña as a frontier were remarkably similar among representatives of both the Inca and the Spanish empires because both were unable to gain more than a modicum of control over the region, but different in the sense that their notions about the frontier were more flexible depending on the level of Natives' assisting them in their journeys. Over time, these power dynamics shaped the montaña as a place where civilization and wilderness met.

[1] For more on this see: William L. Balée, *Cultural Forests of the Amazon: A Historical Ecology of People and Their Landscapes* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013); Jos Barlow et al., "How Pristine Are Tropical Forests? An Ecological Perspective on the Pre-Columbian Human Footprint in Amazonia and Implications for Contemporary Conservation," *Biological Conservation* 151, no. 1 (July 2012): 45–49, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2011.10.013; Gregory W. Knapp, *Andean Ecology: Adaptive Dynamics in Ecuador*, Dellplain Latin American Studies, no. 27 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991).

Representations and perceptions of the montaña and its peoples under the Inca

In this section, it will be possible to reconstruct perceptions about the montaña region by the Inca Empire from before and after the arrival of the Spaniards to Peru. Two remarkably detailed sources, the narrative of Spanish chronicler Pedro de Cieza de León and the text and drawings of the Quechua Native noble Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala depict the montaña region as the Andesuyo (the corner of the Andes).[2] Guamán Poma placed the montaña—where the Andesuyo is—as an essential part of the Inca empire's territory and mindset by illustrating and depicting the Inca empire's origins, its political organization, and the Incas' relationships and experiences with this environment. Guamán Poma described the main groups of Natives living in the montaña as the Antis and the *Chunchos*.[3] Although he did not elaborate on the reasons to distinguished both groups of Natives, he represented the two of them as "naked Indians, that are called Anti *runa micoc* [the Anti people who eat men],"[4] referring to them as *infieles* or infidels.

Eventually, the Incas gained some control over the Andesuyo. As a representative of Inca thought, Guamán Poma viewed himself as descended from and loyal to the empire. According to him, the Inca empire's territory or Tawantinsuyo included "the southern area between the mountains in Chile up to the mountains of the New World, from South Sea (Pacific ocean) to the North Sea (Marañón river); the whole sierra, the whole montaña, the whole Andean mountain range and the llanos (coast)."[5] Guamán Poma's description of the Tawantinsuyo reflected the full coverage of the empire, but not necessarily the control over Indigenous groups living in those

[2] *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615), The Royal Library, Copenhagen, GKS 2232 4°, (abbreviated as *NC*); Pedro de Cieza de Leon, *The Discovery and Conquest of Peru*, ed. Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook (Duke University Press, 1999).

[3] *NC*, (1615), fol. 323 [325].

[4] *NC*, (1615), fol. 323 [325].

[5] *NC*, (1615), fol. 341 [343].

territories, especially in the montaña or Andesuyo. The degree to which the Incas succeeded or failed to enforce their superiority depended also on other variables such as distance and the social and economic structure of the populations from the montaña. However, the Incas' dynamics with the Andesuyo were intermittent and changed as much as imperial (the empire's) notions of their eastern frontiers.

When Guamán Poma described the Inca Age, he started when the Inca civilization was in its formative period, the first generation of the ruling class—called Incas—started exploring the territory surrounding the Andean mountains in the south-central part of today's Peru. In this relation based on mythic origin stories that Guamán Poma collected, the montaña region became a place where Natives could escape from the Inca's impositions. As a way to explain the association of the montaña as a getaway place, Guamán Poma wrote about the time when Natives ventured to go on expeditions to places up north, and they found one Native called Anca Uallo Changa who came out from the Choclococha lake accompanied with fifty thousand Natives. Not only these Natives identified Anca Uallo as their leader, but Anca Uallo also had the intention to become the ruling Inca at the time when Mango Capac Inca was the first Inca in charge. Deceptively, Manco Capac Inca introduced his sister to Anca Uallo, and she tricked and killed Anca Uallo. Once the Natives saw their leader dead, "they went to the montaña and passed to the other side [where] the North Sea is in the mountain range, and the land behind the montaña is cold, rough, where they stayed until today."[6] Guamán Poma referred to the Marañón /Amazonas river as the North Sea o *mar del norte*, and broadly to the montaña region as the area located on the eastern side of the cold Andean mountains.

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[6] *NC*, (1615), fol. 85 [85].

During the time that Manco Capac Inca stayed in power, the contact between the Incas and the Natives who chose to live in the montaña after the death of their leader remained distant. One hint to understand this disconnection is by looking at Guamán Poma's comparison between the Incas' and the montaña peoples' religious practices and beliefs. According to Guamán Poma, Manco Capac Inca, considered today as the first sovereign of the Inca empire and civilization and the father of all Incas, introduced the practice of worshiping idols, *huacas*,[7] and demons to the Natives.[8] In Guamán Poma's words, Manco Capac Inca was the one initiating the practice of venerating the sun and the moon, while claiming that the sun was his father. Then, he managed to subdue the city of Cusco's population without violence, just through his "enchantments and deceptions,"[9] helped by the power of the huacas and the devil.

On the other hand, the people of the montaña called the Antis and the Chunchos[10] did not share the same belief system. If Manco Capac Inca and his idolatries were able "to conquer half of Peru, the other half had yet to be conquered in the montaña."[11] This interpretation relied on Manco Capac Inca's inability to take control over the montaña, and how the Antis and Chunchos had stayed secluded within this environment. Guamán Poma believed that instead of having images, they worshiped entities of nature itself, and the people from the montaña worshiped the *otorongo* or tiger (meaning the jaguar *Panthera once*), and the *amaro* or snake among the most important ones.[12] He also pointed out that the drive to worship these animals differed from the

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[7] The Incas considered huacas or holy objects as essential representations of their religious beliefs. See: Carolyn J. Dean, *A Culture of Stone: Inka Perspectives on Rock* (Duke University Press, 2010); Sabine MacCormack, *Religion in the Andes: Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1991); Claudia Brosseder, *The Power of Huacas: Change and Resistance in the Andean World of Colonial Peru* (University of Texas Press, 2014).

[8] *NC*, (1615), fol. 87 [87].

[9] *NC*, (1615), fol. 87 [87].

[10] The word Chuncho comes from the quechua word *chu'unchu* which means 'feathered' used to qualify population from the Amazon that have not yet been incorporated into civilization (*DRAE*, 2001).

[11] *NC*, (1615), fol. 87 [87].

[12] *NC*, (1615), fol. 269 [271].

relationship that the Inca and peoples from other parts of the empire had with their idols (huacas). For Guamán Poma, Natives in the montaña worshipped these animals in part because of the direct threat they posed to their lives. By worshiping these animals, the montaña people thought they were not going to get eaten, and in lieu of calling the animals by their names, they showed their respect and how much they feared them referring to the otorongo as the *cino achachi yaya* [grandfather, ancestor], and the *amaro* as the *capac apo amaro* [the mighty lord snake]. In addition to considering these animals sacred, Natives from the montaña also used *coca* leaves for their sacrifices and ceremonial activities. Coca trees have a long history of growing in the montaña, and Natives' relationship with this plant can be understood when Guamán Poma explained the name Natives used to refer to this plant as *coca mama*, while kissing it, and finally chewing it.[13]

In Guamán Poma's characterization of the religious practices performed in the montaña, he revealed his contempt for the peoples from this area because of their basic lack of civilization. Portraying them as naked savages, and probably in the company of the devil who drove them to behave like animals, Guamán Poma explained the montaña people's sacrifices' and burials' tradition (see fig. 3.1). On the one hand, Natives from the montaña sacrificed other Natives who did not belong to the region, by burning snake fat, maize, and bird feathers in the name of the otorongo. They also sacrificed huacas and idols with two children, white rabbits, seashells, feathers, and ram's blood. On the other hand, when someone died, Natives cried for one day and on the following days they organized a celebration where they cried, sang, and laughed.[14] Unlike Indigenous people from other areas, the montaña peoples ate their dead's human flesh until there were only bones left. Then, they dressed these bones with a dress out of bird feathers hand-

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[13] *NC*, (1615), fol. 269 [271].
[14] *NC*, (1615), fol. 292 [294].

crafted for the occasion—out of bird feathers that they had hand-crafted. After that, Guamán Poma wrote, they would take the dead's bones and, without crying, place them inside of a tree called *vitica* where worms had already created a hole in the tree trunk. Finally, they sealed the hole, and "never see it again in their whole lives, they do not remember the dead nor perform another ceremony in remembrance of them."[15] Though Guamán Poma described this burial practice as an ancient tradition before the Spanish arrival, he assured his contemporaries that the practice continued in the montaña even after their contact with Spanish priests. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Guamán Poma wrote his *Corónica*, some fathers from different religious orders had already visited the montaña, and according to Guamán Poma, the only reason why they had not witnessed this kind of burial practice was because Natives were good at hiding them from outsiders.

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[15] *NC*, (1615), fol. 292 [294].

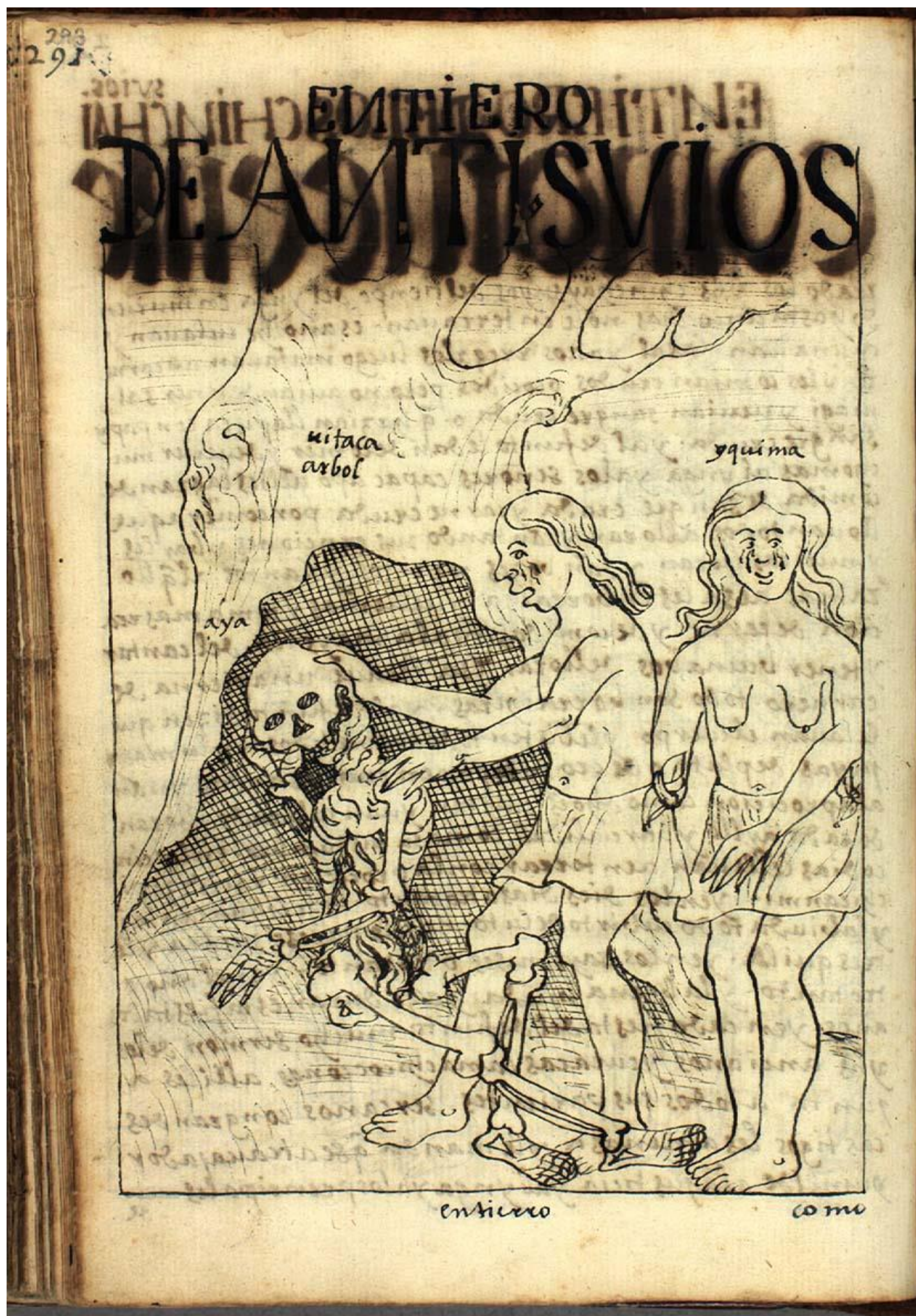

FIGURE 3.1. “Burials of the Antisuyus.” GKS 2232 4°, p. 291 [293], The Royal Library, Copenhagen. Natives from the montaña placing their dead inside a tree trunk. Note the portrayal the Natives from the montaña bare-chested, without much distinction between men and women. The significance of this scene lays in Guamán Poma’s comparison with the Incas’ sophisticated burial practices.

Compared to the images and text depicting the Incas, or Natives from other regions of the empire, those representing the montaña clearly referred to Natives as naked infieles, who were hostile, belligerent, and ate human flesh due to their savage condition and their utter detachment from God.[16] Indeed, Guamán Poma's images portrayed Natives from the montaña or the Andesuyo naked, hunting, and in much closer and direct interaction with wild nature. Not only there was a stark difference between the Natives from the montaña and the rest of the Natives, but in his written interpretations of these images he blamed it fundamentally on the Natives' companionship with the devil. One of the 'miracles of God', as Guamán Poma recounted, was the period of time when God allowed natural disasters to happen in areas where people had been "bad Christians."[17] Guamán Poma interpreted natural disasters such as the eruption of a volcano, earthquakes, snow storms, hail—and in the case of the montaña the spread of diseases, for which there was a special word in colonial Quechua *ante uncoy* or "*mal de los andes pestífero,*" meaning "pestilential disease of the montaña"—as a reminder that "every man and in every house [that] God sends his punishments to the world, so they call him and thank him so he can take us to his glory where the Holy Trinity lives."[18] According to Guamán Poma, in the montaña that lay beyond the lowlands of the Marañón river, God sent plagues such as measles, smallpox, *garrotillo*, and mumps that killed many people.[19] Although these plagues diminished the Indigenous population living in many other areas as well, in the montaña region people also suffered from other plagues infesting birds, which also damaged the quality of the soil to produce food. With these pestilences, as Guamán Poma called them, he implied that many people died of

[16] *NC*, (1615), fol. 77 [77].
[17] *NC*, (1615), fol. 95 [95].
[18] Diego Gonçalez Holguin, *Vocabulario de la lengua general de todo el Peru llamada lengua qquichua o del* Inca (1608; Lima: Imprenta Santa María, 1952), s.v. 'ante uncoy'; *NC*, (1615), fol. 95 [95].
[19] *NC*, (1615), fol. 95 [95].

hunger and the ones who survived fled from their towns, leaving vast stretches of the montaña as a dangerously diseased, depopulated desert land.

Guamán Poma also emphasized the challenges that outsiders faced when dealing with Natives living in the montaña because it was populated by large numbers of Natives belonging to different ethnicities. From his perspective, even if outsiders wanting to conquer Indigenous peoples from the montaña were able to subdue one of the many ethnic groups, they still had to find a strategy that would work with the rest of the Natives. On this matter, he declared that "it has been said that there are [in the montaña] too many Natives with many traditions and ethnicities who bring war against each other, such as the Chunchos, and the Antis."[20] These Natives were also known for being warriors or *indios belicosos* because they were used to living in a state of constant warfare against each other. All of these reasons presented by Guamán Poma reinforced his conviction that reducing Indigenous people from the montaña was a difficult goal to achieve either because they were too many and too dispersed in their different ethnic groups, or because even when confronted, they were adept at fighting back.

Besides representing the savage nature of Indigenous people from the montaña, Guamán Poma also recognized the physical and ecological attributes of the montaña region as another of the main obstacles for outsiders to take control over the region. In his images and explanations Guamán Poma argued that montaña peoples also had the montaña environment on their side; therefore, in his images he illustrated this environment with trees, animals, and rivers. He also revealed that this region had many riches to offer, particularly in gold, silver, spacious lands, and abundant cattle while pointing out that "this land is in need to be discovered,"[21] showing the absence of successful conquests in the area. Besides the animals that were considered deities in

[20] *NC*, (1615), fol. 85 [85].
[21] *NC*, (1615), fol. 168 [170].

the montaña, Guamán Poma acknowledged the immense variety of reptiles, monkeys, fish, birds, and mammals that Natives interacted with on a regular basis.[22] Indeed, Guamán Poma's perceptions about the montaña region itself—as a place with fertile soils, wide rivers, abundant animals, and plentiful resources[23]—went in tandem with his classifications of Natives as natural warriors. In the author's words, "they were all warriors that could not be defeated due to the vastness of the montaña territory, fierce animals, and mighty river."[24] It can be inferred that the combination of the power of the montaña environment and its people prevented the Incas—and later the Spaniards—from effectively gaining control over this region. In sum, everything indicates that from Guamán Poma's perspective, the vastness of the montaña and the outsiders' ideas about the montaña region and its inhabitants represented as unknown, wild, and dangerous to encounter were the most common ways of making sense of this environment.

The Inca empire expansion and the Andesuyo

Starting with the first Inca ruler Manco Capac Inca, and ending with the Incas Huascar and Atahualpa who were the last Incas defeated by the Spanish conquistadors in the sixteenth century, dynastic chronologies tend to agree that there were in total fourteen Inca leaders.[25] Guamán Poma de Ayala referenced these fourteen Inca leaders, but more importantly from the perspective of empire building, he also described the work of their captains and their expeditions to conquer new territory and peoples for the Inca empire. Guamán Poma's characterization of some of these captains was based on their successes and failures within the difficult montaña

[22] *NC*, (1615), fol. 445 [447].
[23] *NC*, (1615), fol. 77 [77].
[24] *NC*, (1615), fol. 77 [77].
[25] This dynastic chronology only applies to the Inca rulers living up until the point the Spanish arrived, omitting Tupac Amaru defeated after the conquest of Vilcabamba in 1572. See: Brian S. Bauer, Madeleine Halac-Higashimori, and Gabriel E. Cantarutti, "Martin Hurtado de Arbieto and the Spanish Colonization of Vilcabamba," in *Voices from Vilcabamba: Accounts Chronicling the Fall of the Inca Empire*, (University Press of Colorado, 2015).

region. According to Guamán Poma, after Manco Capac Inca failed to establish control over the Natives who fled to the montaña at the beginning of imperial expansion, it was not until the sixth ruler, Inca Roca, that the Incas established partial dominion over the montaña region and its peoples.[26] Guamán Poma described Inca Roca as a large strong man, who was able to speak with the thunder, and known for his cunning and his taking away the lands of the poor. Regardless of his colonizing strategies, he was widely recognized for being the first Inca to gain power over Andesuyo, the montaña region. In Guamán Poma's words, "add[ing] to the lands conquered by his father, he conquered the whole of Andesuyo."[27] Guamán Poma's explanation for Inca Roca's unprecedented success in this untouchable region had its mythical origin in the ability of Inca Roca and his son to turn into an otorongo or jaguar (see fig. 3.2). As an otorongo, Inca Roca was able to conquer one of the biggest groups of the montaña people, the Chunchos. Guamán Poma also attributed to Inca Roca the introduction of the practice of chewing coca leaves to the sierra, an article closely associated with the montaña environment.[28] Though this practice was not new, he described it as a "vice and bad habit, because whoever ingested it [coca leaves] kept it in their mouths without eating it, just like the tobacco chewers."[29] Whether Inca Roca actually conquered the Andesuyo or he just "established friendship and companionship"[30] and ceremonial/religious connections, Guamán Poma did acknowledge Inca Roca's more than friendly association with Chunchos Natives from the montaña to the extent that he fathered many children with them, establishing the Inca ethnic line in the region.

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[26] *NC*, (1615), fol. 103 [103].
[27] *NC*, (1615), fol. 103 [103].
[28] *NC*, (1615), fol. 154 [156].
[29] *NC*, (1615), fol. 154 [156].
[30] *NC*, (1615), fol. 103 [103].

FIGURE 3.2. "The sixth captain, Otorongo Achachi Inka, or Camac Inka, *apu*." GKS 2232 4°, p. 155 [155], The Royal Library, Copenhagen. Note at the bottom right it says Andesuyo. This is a representation of the montaña as wildness, portraying the captain's ability to kill the otorongo, so he could turn into him and control the Andesuyo's peoples.

From then on, the expansion of the Inca empire continued to the formation of the Tawantinsuyo or four corners or regions of the empire—*Collasuyo*, *Contisuyo*, *Chinchaysuyo*, and Andesuyo — with Cusco as its center (see map of the Tawantinsuyo fig. 3.3). The ninth captain Inca Urcon,[31] known for his domineering feats of stone movement, followed in the footsteps of his father Topa Inca Yupanqui, who had conquered many of the provinces to the northwest of Cusco, in Chinchaysuyo, including Huanuco, Chinchaycocha (Junín), and Tarma, which potentially served as highland gateways to the montaña region drained by the upper Huallaga, Pachitea, and Perene rivers where they claimed to have found one hundred thousand Natives. Inca Urcon and other "courageous captains"[32] sired by their father Topa Inca Yupanqui extended Inca dominance to the *andes* or montaña of Chinchaysuyo, inaugurating an epoch of great justice and curiosity regarding the region. In his explanation of these different corners, Guamán Poma referred to the Andesuyo as a place that hosts warrior-like and fertile Natives where outsiders cannot access because of its topography, pointing that "inside the rivers there are lizards, poisonous snakes, lions, tigers, and many other animals, and rough and mountainous terrain; that the Incas with deceit conquered those montaña people."[33]

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[31] *NC*, (1615), fol. 159 [161].
[32] *NC*, (1615), fol. 160 [162].
[33] *NC*, (1615), fol. 982 [1000].

FIGURE 3.3 “Mapa Mundi of the Indies of Peru, showing the quatripartite division of the Inka empire of Tawantinsuyu.” GKS 2232 4°, p. 1001-2, The Royal Library, Copenhagen. Note the montaña at the top of the image depicted by trees, animals, and naked Natives close to the *Mar del Norte* that Guamán Poma considered the Marañón River.

It was not until the thirteenth captain, Ninarua Qhapaq Apu, that the Incas demonstrated their ability to conquer the montaña region under the command of the last of the Inca kings preceding the arrival of the Spanish, Guayna Capac. In recognition of his achievements in Guayna Capac's expeditions to expand the empire to the far north, into what is now Ecuador and southern Colombia, Guamán Poma characterized Capac Apu Ninarua as the captain and powerful lord of the Andesuyo (see fig. 3.4). His drawing vividly portrays Ninarua as a feathered lord of the forested montaña, with the jaguar (otorongo) and anaconda (amaru) as his heraldic symbols. Many of the captains that accompanied Guayna Capac Inca on his journey to Quito (today's capital city of Ecuador) have names denoting their connection to the northern montaña, including Otorongo, Anti Cucillo, Anti Nina, Quiro Amaro, Anti Zupa, Chupayoc Anti, Yscay Cinca Anti, and Llatan Anti.[34] Underscoring the reputation of the Antis as powerful, wild warriors, Guamán Poma credited these captains for bringing greatness to Guayna Capac Inca and the empire to its largest territorial extent. Their success was premised on a force of Natives brought naked from the montaña, "with the sole purpose of eating rebellious *yndios*" they met during their conquest, and who still "remained unconverted and unconquered in their villages in the montaña," where "there are many Indians on the other bank of the river, … much gold, silver, cattle, many infieles. [And] there is land to be discovered."[35]

[34] *NC*, (1615), fol. 168 [170].
[35] *NC*, (1615), fol. 168 [170].

FIGURE 3.4. “The thirteenth captain, Ninarua, *qhapaq apu*, powerful lord.” GKS 2232 4°, p. 167 [169], The Royal Library, Copenhagen. King or *Apu* of the Andesuyo with an otorongo and a snake as his heraldic symbols representing the montaña’s most distinctive non-human organisms along with the trees in the background and his clothing made out of seeds and feathers.

As is typical in Guamán Poma's portrayal of ethnic groups as male-female pairs, his acknowledgement of captain Ninarua Capac Apu as the lord of the Andesuyo was followed soon after by a portrayal of a "powerful second lady"[36] from the montaña of Andesuyo called Capac Mallquima (see fig. 3.5.), in series with great ladies of the other quarters of the empire. He depicted her, like others of her kind, as a "lady of good stature and beautiful, whiter than a Spaniard woman, but wearing a loincloth, and in some other ethnic groups (*casta*), they are naked down to their skin, as are those of this casta and being of nature, men as well as women, they eat human flesh."[37] This image portrays her association with forest, showing monkeys and birds on the ground staring at her as if they were venerating her—perhaps inspired by images of the virgin Mary standing with open arms—suggesting her almost religious power over the Andesuyo environment. Women from the montaña like Capac Mallquima typically smeared themselves with *mantur*, a red plant colorant (probably bija, also called annatto, achiote, or bijol, *Bixa orellana*),[38] and according to Guamán Poma, were defined by their mobility, wildness, and the vastness of their domain: "they wander the montaña and they are Natives that need to be conquered […] but there is so much montaña that it cannot be conquered."[39]

[36] *NC*, (1615), fol. 176 [178].
[37] *NC*, (1615), fol. 176 [178].
[38] *NC*, (1615), fol. 176 [178]; Gonçalez Holguín, s.v. "mantur."
[39] *NC*, (1615), fol. 176 [178].

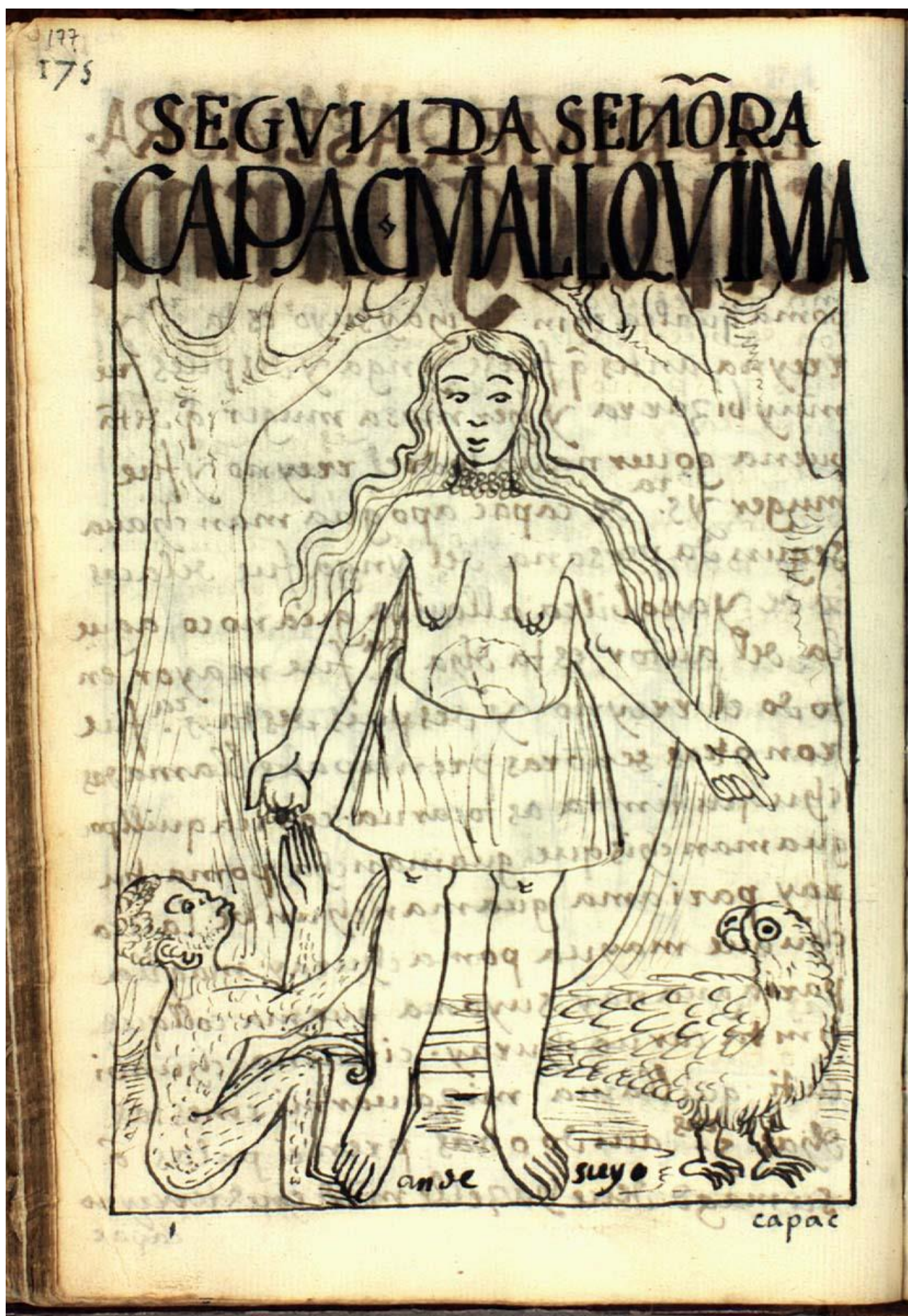

FIGURE 3.5. “The second lady, Mallquima, qhapaq, powerful.” GKS 2232 4°, p. 175 [177], The Royal Library, Copenhagen. Queen of the Andesuyo. Guamán Poma also mentioned other ladies from different towns of the montaña, some from rich areas, and some from where infieles lived.

Although the Incas' dominance over the montaña was superficial, at best, Guamán Poma considered Andesuyo to be fundamental to the way the Incas ruled over the Tawantinsuyo. Just like the other quarters of the empire, the Andesuyo had its own representative at the royal council.[40] According to Guamán Poma, one of the Inca's main concerns was to enforce his laws or *ordenanzas* (ordinances) through the work of these representatives.[41] Having a lord of the Andesuyo could not guarantee that Natives from the montaña had surrendered to the Inca's authority, but it definitely signified that some of the ethnic groups responded to Inca rulings. Usually the Inca and his lords representing the different areas of the empire demanded that all Natives who were subjects to the Inca followed the laws to the letter, or else they risked punishment involving torture or death for them and their descendants.[42] Significantly, these punishments were also meant to affect the places and environments where the punished one lived, by sowing salt on their lands, and were overtly intended to depopulate these places, so that only animals symbolizing wildness continued living there, such as the deer of the montaña or *luycho*, mountain lion or *poma*, fox or *atoc*, wild cat or *usco*, the condor, and the hawk or *guaman*.[43]

Even if an environment with these wild animals as symbols of wilderness and deserted nature of the montaña region could be associated with other lands and environments deserving of discipline or punishment, Guamán Poma seemed to have referenced the montaña region. Wild animals, including three species of snake closely associated with the montaña and lowlands—the diamond-backed bushmaster (Lachesis muta), the deadly striped-and-spotted pit viper (Bothrops sp.), and the double-spotted anaconda (Eunectes murinus)—could themselves be instruments of

[40] *NC*, (1615), fol. 183 [185].
[41] *NC*, (1615), fol. 182 [184].
[42] *NC*, (1615), fol. 182 [184].
[43] *NC*, (1615), fol. 183 [185].

the Inca's justice.[44] In the case of adulterers, virgins, and lawbreaking men and women of power, the people and environment of the montaña itself exercised the final punishment. In the case of adulterers, if the man seduced the woman, the man would be sentenced to death and the woman would receive two hundred lashes and banishment to the service of a convent for her whole life.[45] If the woman seduced the man, then the woman was sentenced to death and "the men would receive lashes and be sent to exile to the montaña, to the Chunchos Indians to never be seen again."[46] In the case of "princes, great lords, pontiffs, virgins, nobles, and priests,"[47] that varied depending on their gender. Men were sentenced to jail time and tortured to obtain information about their crimes, then given over to the Chunchos to be executed by being eating alive. Women on the other hand, were tortured with a rope, and "if these women were found guilty, they were fed to the Antis so they could eat them alive."[48] In sum, Guamán Poma's ideas about the montaña environment not only represent the Inca's attempts to control this region, but also his vision on how to use its threatening nature to legitimate his power over the rest of the Tawantinsuyo.

The Incas' relationship with the Andesuyo or montaña region reflected a residual lack of control, lack of law, and sense of wildness or barbarism. The Incas named the montaña region the Andesuyo for a reason, because it represented the corner suyo of the Antis (which literally means in Quechua the corner of the enemies). Despite the periods of time when some of the Inca rulers had gotten a better hold of the Andesuyo by defeating some of them at war, or by having representatives in the area, they considered the Andesuyo and its people as an ambiguous eastern

[44] *NC*, (1615), [304-5]; T. Cushman, "The Environmental Contexts of Guaman Poma: Interethnic Conflict over Forest Resources and Place in Huamanga (Peru), 1540-1600," 97.
[45] *NC*, (1615), fol. 307 [309].
[46] *NC*, (1615), fol. 307 [309].
[47] *NC*, (1615), fol. 312 [314].
[48] *NC*, (1615), fol. 312 [314].

edge of their empire. In the case of the Spanish empire, ideas about the Andesuyo as a place apart, inhabited by Natives belonging to different ethnic groups perpetuated the Incas' failed experiences in trying to subordinate them.

The Spanish empire's struggles and first Iberian-style towns in the montaña

The earliest Spanish expeditions to the eastern side of the Andean mountains during the sixteenth century were the ones led by Alonso de Alvarado in 1538, Juan Pérez de Guevara in 1541, Gonzalo Pizarro in 1541, and Pedro de Orsúa in 1560. In all these cases, the main motivation for these expeditions lay in the expectation of finding the golden riches of *El Dorado*. Once these explorers encountered the montaña, they had to adapt their expectations since the geography and the montaña people presented for them both opportunities and adversities. According to Spanish chronicler Cieza de León, Francisco Pizarro's first contact with the Incas in northern Peru had given him the sense that there was more land to discover and more Natives to conquer on the northeast part of present-day Peru.[49] To some extent, some more than others, all of these expeditions failed because of the Spaniards' inability to establish dominion over the montaña environment and its peoples.

In 1535, five years after Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro started the process of conquest of Peru, he ordered a group of men to inspect the northeastern areas of the nascent colony.[50] This *entrada* sought to find the area that Francisco Pizarro had already visited in passing, a city belonging to the Inca empire in Cochabamba (south of Leimebamba) where the Indigenous group known as the *Chachapoyas* lived. The Spaniards had all heard the tales of El Dorado and hoped they might find it on this expedition. After a grueling experience trying to

[49] Cieza de León, vol. 3, fol 118, In *The Discovery and Conquest of Peru*, 398.
[50] Cieza de León, vol. 3, fol 118v, In *The Discovery and Conquest of Peru*, 125.

cross the Andean mountains by foot, because their horses could not keep up, they finally made it into this vast and well-settled peninsula of highlands and montaña lying between the upper Marañón and Huallaga rivers, but realized they did not have the manpower to actually secure the obedience of the Natives from the area. After their return to Lima with little to show for it, one of the men in this group, Juan Pérez de Guevara, solicited Pizarro's permission to take an expedition and go back to the land of the Chachapoyas. In company with other Spaniards such as Alonso de Alvarado, Vitores de Alvarado y Gómez de Alvarado, Captain Ruy Barba Cabeza de Baca, and his infantry, they went forth for the "discovery, conquest, and pacification of those places."[51] Juan Pérez de Guevara, however, quickly returned to the heartland of the new colony to fight on the side of Francisco Pizarro against Pizarro's old partner in the conquest Diego de Almagro at the battle of Salinas in 1538. Alonso de Alvarado used this as an opportunity to take command of the *entrada* and establish control over that area, disregarding Juan Perez de Guevara's initial claim.

With the aim of conquering new areas that had not been taken by other Spaniards, Alonso de Alvarado had first reached Peruvian shores with his uncle Pedro de Alvarado—a well-known conquistador of Central America—in 1534.[52] This attempt almost cost Pedro de Alvarado his life, after he confronted Francisco Pizarro demanding the opportunity to conquer new areas.[53] Pedro de Alvarado had no other option but to go back to Central America, but his nephew Alonso de Alvarado had decided to stay and prove his loyalty to the Spanish crown, which at that time it meant to fight in Francisco Pizarro's war against Manco Inca Yupanqui in 1536. As a reward for his loyalty, Francisco Pizarro allowed Alonso to take part in the expedition to the

[51] Ibid.
[52] Cieza de León, vol. 3, fol 118v, In *The Discovery and Conquest of Peru*, 399.
[53] Ibid.

montaña of what is now northeastern Peru with more resources in the hopes of finding a land full of gold and silver. The expedition gathered its forces in the northern coastal city of Trujillo and crossed the western range of the Andean mountains, down to the port of Balsas on the upper Marañón, before climbing up to the plateau where they found the *Chachapoyas*. After Juan Perez de Guevara left, and without much resistance from the Natives, Alonso Alvarado founded the city called *San Juan de la Frontera de los Chachapoyas*, referencing in the name *frontera* or frontier as indicative of the first Spanish town located in this vast territory on the eastern edge of the Spanish colony of Peru.

Cieza de León's recollection of these events portrayed the Chachapoyas as an Indigenous group famous for having fought against the Incas in order to maintain their freedom and autonomy, even if they had to eventually comply with the Inca's rulings and tributary demands.[54] For Cieza de León, dealing with Natives in Chachapoyas seemed feasible because of their previous political organization serving the Incas. He represented them as 'tamable' and rational because they had already been tamed by the Inca:

> The ones [Chachapoyas Natives] from Peru serve well and are tamable because they have a better reasoning because they had all been subjected by the Inca kings to whom they paid tribute, always serving them, and with that condition they were born, and if they did not want to do it, the necessity constrained them to it, because the land of Peru is all depopulated, full of mountains and mountain ranges and snowy fields.[55]

Alonso de Alvarado's power over the Natives of Chachapoyas allowed him to put Natives to work with pickaxes and hoes so they could level the land for a new city and make it grow in order to sustain the future Spanish population there.[56] This peaceful experience with the

[54] Pedro Cieza de León, *Crónica del Perú: el señorío de los Incas*, vol. 1 (Biblioteca Ayacucho, 2005), 211.
[55] Ibid., 45.
[56] Ibid., 212.

Chachapoyas left Alonso de Alvarado and his men optimistic that they could continue on deeper into the montaña in search for El Dorado.

Apparently, Alonso de Alvarado went south where he believed he could get an *encomienda* (Spanish labor system in which prominent Spaniards were entrusted the souls and labor of Natives) with groups of Natives located in proximity to the Chachapoyas, such as the *Guancas* and the people from *Cascayunga*.[57] Even if Cieza de León did not go into details about the location of these Indigenous groups, he described it as a much more appealing place than Chachapoyas, suggesting a more populous—and seemingly more fertile zone of the montaña compared to Chachapoyas.[58] In Cieza de León's words "these places had houses and warehouses belonging to the Incas, the towns were very healthy, and in some of them there were gold mines."[59] The chronicler also mentioned positive features about the geography of these provinces characterized by a large number of trees, fruits, fertile soil, where wheat and barley would be able to grow as well as grapes, figs, and other trees from Spain implying that the montaña was amenable to colonization. Since Alonso de Alvarado had expressed his interests in founding the town of Moyobamba right after his conquest of Chachapoyas, it would be an educated guess that Cieza de León meant to describe this montaña region. Once again, while Alonso de Alvarado saw the potential of becoming the sole conquistador of the montaña, he did not have the men nor the resources to make this a reality. With the expectation that he could convince Francisco Pizarro to help him with this endeavor, Alonso de Alvarado went back to Lima—the new capital of the colony.

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[57] Cieza de León was not clear in identifying the place where these Indigenous groups were located. However, there is a town called Cascayunca close to the city of Moyobamba.

[58] Cieza de León, *Crónica del Perú: el señorío de los Incas*, 212.

[59] Ibid.

As the governor and general captain of the kingdom of Nueva Castilla—Peru—Francisco Pizarro denied Alonso Alvarado's permission to colonize the Moyobamba area, and instead, he granted permission to claim the region's resources to Juan Pérez de Guevara, who had been betrayed by Alonso Alvarado. In 1540, Francisco Pizarro instructed Perez de Guevara in the name of the King of Spain to "go to said land of Moyobamba entering deep into the montaña or *tierra adentro* towards the Cascayungas of the land of Moyobamba, and pacify all the chiefs and Indians of the said land."[60] Based on previous Spanish contacts with the Chachapoyas, Francisco Pizarro seemed confident in Juan Perez de Guevara's ability to deal with this task. Pizarro described the environment surrounding Moyobamba as one populated by many Native chiefs "who were rich in gold and other lands," and by many Natives "who have not given His Majesty obedience."[61] He also acknowledged in his letter what he referred to as the "disposition of the land" suitable to be populated by Christians, due to its fertile lands, waters, mountains, and gold mines. This town, Pizarro said, should be called *Santiago de los Valles de Moyobamba*.

This request gave Juan Perez de Guevara the authority needed to prepare for the expedition to establish the city of Moyobamba. Pizarro allocated one hundred men on foot [footmen] and one hundred men on horses [cavalry] to Perez de Guevara's expedition, suggesting the expectation that they might have to fight against any Natives who decided to rebel against the imposition of Spanish authority and the teachings of the Catholic faith.[62] Where the peaceful Natives who did accept to be treated as vassals of His Majesty were concerned, Perez de Guevara needed to find the healthiest and most convenient place to establish a Spanish colony, preferably close to where neighbors and inhabitants could take gold from the mines

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[60] AGI Lima, 7-VI-1540, transcribed by Waldemar Espinoza Soriano In: *Juan Pérez de Guevara y la Historia de Moyobamba, siglo XVI* (Lima, Editora Magisterial, 2003).
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.

"with the least work and cost."[63] In 1541, Perez de Guevara carried on with Pizarro's orders and headed to the conquest and discovery of Moyobamba, stopping first in Chachapoyas. The limited information about this expedition suggests that even if Juan Perez de Guevara managed to found a new Spanish town of Moyobamba, the exhausting circumstances of the trip seem to have taken a toll on his men and prevented them from securing a permanent settlement.[64] In sum, even though Perez de Guevara had the political and logistical support of Pizarro for this expedition, his efforts fell short when trying to overcome the challenges of settling such a distant and rugged outpost in the montaña region.

To make matters worse for the region's colonizers, Perez de Guevara's initial attempt seemed to have encouraged the residents of Moyobamba to abandon the site and depopulate the vicinity.[65] Meanwhile, Perez de Guevara received the news that Francisco Pizarro had been killed by the son of his former partner Diego Almagro.[66] Once again, after all the hardship Perez de Guevara and his associates had gone through, he had to go back to Lima to demonstrate his allegiance to the king of Spain, but more importantly to "hinder the said uprising" of Almagro's followers. [67] The new representative of the Spanish crown in Peru, Cristobal Vaca de Castro, with the help of Perez de Guevara and the father of Guamán Poma, decisively defeated Diego Almagro's son at the battle of Chupas in 1542, at the exact spot near Huamanga where Guamán Poma claimed his familial homeland.

Being on the winning side helped Perez de Guevara to make a case for his return to Moyobamba to try again with the foundation of the town and the lands nearby. Cristobal Vaca de

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[63] Ibid.

[64] [Cusco, 1 de mayo de 1543] AGI documents transcribed by Waldemar Espinoza Soriano In: *Juan Pérez de Guevara y la Historia de Moyobamba, siglo XVI*.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

Castro's letter illustrated Perez de Guevara's appeal to go back to Moyobamba with the crown's resources, as well as the reasons why Cristobal Vaca de Castro agreed to send him over.[68] In Vaca de Castro's words, Perez de Guevara's efforts should have focused on finding a good place to settle a Spanish town with the characteristics that he seemed relevant for Spaniards while centralizing Natives who come in peace in order to Christianize them.[69] This time Perez de Guevara was successful in establishing the city of Moyobamba, conquering other Natives and their lands in the montaña region, which at this point made it by far the most distant outpost of Spanish colonization on the eastern frontier.[70] Five years later, in 1548, the viceroy of Peru Pedro de la Gasca wrote a letter to Perez de Guevara not only identifying the troubles that he had faced in his expeditions to the montaña, but also promising him a compensation for his services to the Royal Crown: "And you spent a lot of work, because you left *Ruparrupa*[71] lost and damaged"—Ruparrupa being the Quechua word for the heat of the sun, fire, or fever, used here to refer to the montaña region as hot—"you and the people who were with you […]. In all of which you made many expenses that you are still owed."[72] Thus, viceroy Pedro de la Gasca rewarded Perez de Guevara with the rights of discovery, conquest, and settlement of Chachapoyas "that used to belong to Alonso de Alvarado,"[73] though the ambiguity regarding Perez de Guevara's rights over Chachapoyas continued to generate controversy well after his death in 1570.[74]

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[68] Ibid.

[69] [Cusco, 17 de mayo de 1543] AGI documents transcribed by Waldemar Espinoza Soriano In: *Juan Pérez de Guevara y la Historia de Moyobamba, siglo XVI*.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ruparrupa is the quechua name for hot, and people used it to refer to the montaña region for being a hot mountainous forest.

[72] Encomienda de Indios al Capitan Juan Perez de Guevara [Cusco 7 de julio de 1548]—escrito por Pedro de La Gasca, de la Santa y General Inquisición, presidente destos reinos e provincias del Piru por su Majestad. AGI documents transcribed by Waldemar Espinoza Soriano In: *Juan Pérez de Guevara y la Historia de Moyobamba, siglo XVI*.

[73] [Lima, 28 de abril de 1550] AGI documents transcribed by Waldemar Espinoza Soriano In: *Juan Pérez de Guevara y la Historia de Moyobamba, siglo XVI*.

[74] In Encomienda en el hijo del capitan y por subcesion en los indios por muerte del capitan, su padre [Lima, 17 de febrero de 1570] "The legitimate eldest son of Juan Perez de Guevara, Francisco de Guevara, a [vecino = citizen]

The montaña as the last outpost of civilization

Whether the Spaniards had the direct intention of conquering and settling the Chachapoyas region and its surrounding montaña, or whether they just wanted to find the golden riches of El Dorado, in all of these cases, their accounts reflect their recognition of the montaña region on the eastern slope of the Andes as the last outpost of civilization before entering into the wild and unknown lowlands of the Amazon Basin. Reaching the montaña in what is now northeastern Peru required the Spaniards to cross one or two separate ranges of the Andean highlands on foot, or to navigate the upper reaches of the Marañón River and its tributaries through the montaña all the way to the Amazonian lowlands, which they called selva. Where the Marañón River joins the Ucayali River in the selva, they combine to form what came to be known as the *río de las amazonas*, the river of the Amazon warriors.[75]

The accounts of the expedition of Gonzalo Pizarro and Francisco de Orellena traveling down the Napo—a northern tributary of the Amazon—in 1541 written by Friar Gaspar de Carbajal,[76] and of Pedro de Orsúa and Lope de Aguirre's expedition to the Huallaga and Amazon Basin in 1560 composed by Toribio de Ortiguera[77] serve as crucial early sources for understanding explorers' expectations and perceptions of the montaña region. Once they crossed the Andean highlands, these men came to perceive and understand the eastern side of these

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of the city of Los Chachapoyas, considers that he belongs to the succession of the repartimiento and Indians of Leymebamba and Chilcos and Llercat, which was in terms of the said city of Los Chachapoyas, for having been entrusted in the said his father, as evidenced by the entrust that President Gasca made of said distribution." National Library of Peru, documents transcribed by Waldemar Espinoza Soriano In: *Juan Pérez de Guevara y la Historia de Moyobamba, siglo XVI.*

[75] Rivers in the montaña region such as the Huallaga and Ucayali end up joining the Marañón river, but they all belong to the Amazon basin.

[76] Gaspar de Carbajal, "Relación del descubrimiento del famoso río Grande que, desde su nacimiento hasta el mar, descubrió el capitán Orellana en unión de 56 hombres escrita por Fr. Gaspar de Carbaxal, del orden de Santo Domingo de Guzmán" y 1600 1501."

[77] Toribio de Ortiguera, "Jornada del rio Marañón," in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* (Atlas, 1968).

mountains, not just in terms of the rivers that demarcated the region and provided its main routes of transport, but also in terms of the differences between the montaña, the sierra, and the selva. For them, the montaña emerged as a middle ground between the Andean highlands and the selva. These travelers were clear in representing the montaña as a civilized place due to its relatively mild climate conditions, easy access to river ports that facilitated the transportation of goods and people between the highlands and lowlands, and to its settled populations of civilized Natives who recognized the laws of the Inca, and now Spanish. After repeated efforts to establish Iberian-style cities in the montaña, such as Moyobamba, the Spanish Crown had many incentives for exploring and colonizing this middle ground between the emergent Andean and Amazonian worlds of the colonial era.

After Francisco Pizarro appointed his brother Gonzalo Pizarro as a governor of Quito 1540, Gonzalo Pizarro wanted to verify whether the rumors about the existence of El Dorado or the *Country of the Cinnamon Trees* actually existed or not. Like his brother, Gonzalo envisioned himself as a great conqueror who deserved to rule a kingdom as rich as the one founded by his brother. However, because much of the coastal and highland territories in the viceroyalty of Peru had already been discovered, Gonzalo Pizarro had the perfect motive to go east seeking to find the riches that highland Natives had talked about. For this massive expedition, Gonzalo Pizarro recruited Francisco de Orellana to serve as a lieutenant along with two hundred Spaniards and thousands of Natives from the Quito area. After spending almost the entire year of 1541 struggling east through the rugged montaña from Quito, Gonzalo Pizarro sent a crew led by Francisco de Orellana in a raft downstream with the expectation that they were going to bring back food for Pizarro and the expedition who were dying of sickness and hunger. Orellana never came back, and rather than returning to Pizarro and Quito empty-handed, he followed the current

of the rivers downstream, until he finally ended up at the mouth of the Amazon River on the Atlantic coast in August 1542. Despite this disastrous experience on the eastern side of the Andean mountain range, the rumor that "another Peru" existed on the eastern side of the Andean mountain range persisted.

In 1560, twenty years after Gonzalo Pizarro's initial expedition, the viceroy of Peru, Andres Hurtado Mendoza directed Pedro de Orsúa to lead an expedition to the same general region. For Pedro de Orsúa, the prospect of finding another territory rich enough to be conquered and inhabited by the Spaniards, in which he would become governor of the land and the people that lived in those areas motivated him to take command of this expedition. The desire to understand and control this vast unknown was accompanied by a growing interest to identify the rivers that belonged to the Amazon River and its tributaries. The more they knew about these rivers, the more time they could spend navigating the region, instead of struggling and starving their way through montaña region on foot.

Despite the Spaniards' inability to conquer the territory located on the eastern side of the Andean mountains, they kept pursuing these expeditions motivated by the dream of finding "another Peru," or at least a place similar to the viceroyalty at that time. The Spanish Crown had promised conquistadors not only that they would become the governors of the land that they conquered, but they would also obtain the rights to Indigenous labor through encomienda. For conquistadors such as Gonzalo Pizarro and Orsúa, this meant finding a territory rich in gold, spices, or other valuable commodities from which they could profit. By then, El Dorado had become a widespread myth among Europeans interested in this general region.[78] Although the

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[78] Manuel Rodríguez, *El descubrimiento del Marañón*, Alianza Universidad 654 (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1990); John Hemming, *Tree of Rivers: The Story of the Amazon* (Thames & Hudson, 2008); Jean-Pierre Chaumeil and Josette Fraysse-Chaumeil, "La canela y el dorado: les indigenes du Napo et du haut-Amazone—au XVIe Siecle," *Inst. Pr. Et. And* 10, no. 3–4 (1981): 55–86.

Incas had proven to have some dominion over the parts of the eastern montaña lying below the Andean highlands, with the exception of the establishment of the city of Moyobamba, the Spaniards had not succeeded in exploring this vast region, much less colonizing it.

Trying to make the most out of the political turmoil, colonial officials encouraged a variety of new expeditions to this region with the aim of reducing the social tension caused by these territorial conflicts. According to the early-twentieth-century Spanish historian Ciro Bayo, the men who enlisted for these expeditions had typically already been involved in the civil wars, had little to nothing to lose, and wanted to find "mountains of gold," adding a common saying among his contemporaries that "as there is no poor marriage, there is no poor discovery."[79] Thus, the Spanish Crown granted a general pardon to all who had committed criminal offenses in the civil wars with the expectation of gathering as many men as they could for these dangerous explorations to the Amazon. While the number of men willing to explore this region increased, the 'quality' of these also decreased. For the chronicler Bayo, most of the men who accompanied Orsúa in his expedition were "the scum of the Spaniards who lived in that viceroyalty, people ruined by previous civil wars, in debt to justice, and for whom the discovery of El Dorado would be their moral and material redemption."[80] One of these men was the infamous Lope de Aguirre, who reputedly went mad during the expedition, killing Orsúa and the rest of Orsúa's crew, and declaring himself king of the lands they discovered.

Although finding El Dorado seemed to be the main hook for expeditions into the region during the sixteenth century, expeditionaries also had other expectations concerning the places they hoped to find. Not only did they constantly compare the New World's landscapes to the

[79] Ciro Bayo, *Los Marañones: leyenda áurea del Nuevo Mundo* (Impr. de E. Bailly-Baillière, 1913), 31–32.
[80] Ibid., 35.

ones in Spain and other parts of the Iberian world,[81] but they frequently described some regions of the Peruvian viceroyalty as the best places they could have hoped to encounter. While depicting these places as more appropriate for Spanish living standards than other parts of the continent, they also imagined a place that belonged to an already established commercial network, with climatic conditions highly suitable for finding food and maintaining health, containing fertile land, and an ample population of malleable Natives workers who paid tribute. According to the Spanish chronicler, Toribio de Ortiguera, who gathered first-hand information from the survivors of the Pedro de Orsúa's expedition in 1581, the city of Quito represented the best geographical features of the whole kingdom. This categorization relied on his belief that Quito's lands were "the most fertile and abundant in the human life… and one of the best and most beautiful and healthy temperate of all those in the Indies."[82] Ortiguera suggested Iberia as the standard with which 'fertility' and 'good climate' were measured. For him, this place supported a large number of cattle, horses, and mules, as well as fruits that grew all year long such as "figs and pomegranates, quinces, peaches and apples and plums, pears, pippins and limes and lemons, oranges and citrons, melons and cucumbers [...] everything is going to give in abundance, except olives, because the olive trees are still new."[83]

The accounts of Spanish expeditions demonstrate that the main purpose of these written depictions went in two different directions. Based on their European standards of living, the first one consisted on finding more and richer places to settle; the second one, had the purpose on reporting back to the crown details about the different places that these travelers encountered. When traveling from west to east, Spaniards knew that after crossing the Andean highlands, what

[81] Rodríguez, *El descubrimiento del Marañón*.
[82] Ortiguera, "Jornada del Rio Marañón," 240.
[83] Ibid.

followed was the montaña, and then the selva. These three geographical regions were clearly portrayed by these explorers in terms of civilized or uncivilized places. Whereas the Andean highlands were perceived as a place characterized by cold weather due to the high and steep mountains, the montaña was seen as a resting place and the last stop of civilization before entering into the wild wilderness of the selva. In order to reach the Atlantic Coast, these travelers knew they had to navigate the rivers in the montaña, expecting to join the main Marañón River into the selva. Despite the differences between these rivers (e.g., the color of the waters, the size, the depth, and their breadth) all of them were navigable and connected the Andean highlands to the montaña and the montaña to the selva.

The Spanish conquistadors' interest in identifying the geographical regions in Peru went in tandem with their concern for finding places where they could see themselves settling. Therefore, their interests in their expeditions also reflected the ways they perceived the montaña in contrast to the cold Andean highlands on one side, and the hot selva lowlands on the other. The Andean highlands represented the first real challenge for the Spaniards who wanted to go to the east. For this reason, travelers vividly illustrated the horrors of these environments. Gonzalo Pizarro realized that he would probably not find El Dorado after his horrible experience in passing through this mountain range. Pizarro and his men were unable to find food because the region appeared to be uninhabited. At some point, they walked a long distance because they could not ride their horses in the steep mountainous territory. In his letter to the king of Spain, Pizarro explained the reasons for his failure and blamed the harsh conditions of the environment in the highlands: "There was no disposition to create a town, being as it is the mountainous land of big and rough and uninhabitable mountains [...]."[84] However, he acknowledged that the locals

[84] José Toribio Medina, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas: según la relación hasta ahora inédita de Fr. Gaspar de Carvajal con otros documentos referentes a Francisco de Orellana y sus compañeros* (Sevilla [s.n.]

had told him about the findings for the ones who could go beyond, "mines of gold would be found."[85] The mountains in this range were covered in snow with very steep slopes, making travel very miserable. According to Father Rodriguez, who was preparing to pursue his own expedition into Amazonia in the late seventeenth century, out of the three hundred and forty Spaniards that accompanied Gonzalo Pizarro, only eighty escaped from these highlands.

After passing through the Andean highlands, Spaniards showed their surprise when they encountered the montaña environment. With a landscape covered by mountainous forests, and with an elevation of 2,820 feet (860 meters), conquistadors expressed their relief in facing a different kind of environment. Besides the altitude and the mild climate, they also realized the advantages of having access to the same rivers that had their sources in the Andean highlands. Making sure to avoid the deadly mistake of Pizarro's expedition, Pedro de Orsúa planned his expedition as a "water excursion." He had learned from previous experiences that it was unbearable to explore the region on foot. Instead, he decided to take advantage of the existence of navigable rivers in the montaña. Gonzalo Pizarro's expedition became well known among Spaniards because he and his men almost died and were forced to go back to Quito rather than joining his captain Orellana on a raft on his way to the selva. As a result, the montaña represented the first stop for resting after crossing the highlands and the last stop before entering into the wilderness of the selva.

Among the features that distinguished this montaña region, all Spanish conquistadors mentioned the idea of encountering "good soil" for farming. According to Friar de Carbajal, who witnessed the area, the montaña was suitable for the colonizers' interests. In his words, he

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Imprenta de E. Rasco, 1894), 92–93.

[85] Ibid.

believed that “this land [montaña region] is warm and has very good disposition.”[86] In all of the accounts, Spaniards mentioned how important it was for them to find such a fertile land. They explained that a moderate altitude of the region allowed the soil to be fertile. Once Orellana parted ways with Gonzalo Pizarro, he found the montaña region, and Carbajal described that moment when they both realized that “the land was always better because it was all [located in] savannahs and mountains.”[87] It appeared that both of them agreed on the favorable outcomes expected out of the combination between the altitude and the quality of the soil. In the explorers' eyes, the land was also located in the “most happy and colorful land that we saw in the river and we discovered because it had high full of hills and valleys very populated,”[88] suggesting that the soil and vegetation supported a large population as opposed to perceptions of the unpopulated montaña now. Here Carbajal portrayed the montaña as a landscape, pleasant to the eyes with many possibilities for the Spaniards' settling plans. This section has followed the journey, and their ways of interpreting the different landscapes that they encountered. The montaña stood out as the region that had more to offer to these travelers because of its ecological and cultural conditions. As a landscape, ‘in between’ the Andean highlands and the selva, the Spaniards referred to this region based on its location. The montaña city such as Moyobamba showed the cultural characteristics that made them attractive to Spaniards' interests for settlement. In other words, the montaña and its connections through the different zones due to the existence of navigable rivers clearly captivated the Spaniards' geographical imaginary.

Spaniards' relationships with Natives

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[86] Ibid., 75.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., 69-70.

In the montaña, Spaniards interacted with multiple groups of Natives who belonged to different ethnicities and who lived in dense settlements. This large, diverse population of Indigenous people represented yet another advantage that the montaña offered to Spaniards. Orellana and Carbajal knew and hoped to employ these Natives as a labor force, while at the same time acknowledging the risks of confronting so many Natives in such an isolated territory. To their benefit, the city of Moyobamba had years of being established as a town of Spaniards that offered visitors an opportunity to rest and get their strength back before continuing their travels. The Spanish city of Moyobamba functioned as a major stop for travelers because it had a pier located on the shore of the Mayo river—one of the tributaries of the Huallaga River that eventually joins the Marañón River. In addition, groups of Natives such as the Motilones living in the vicinity of Moyobamba demonstrated a perfect picture of what Spaniards intended to attain. Early accounts portrayed the Spaniards as being pleased to find the Motilones who had already been Christianized between 1538-1540, when Juan Pérez de Guevara founded Moyobamba. Although the Indigenous population in this area was fairly spread out through small villages surrounding the town and extending down the Mayo valley to the Huallaga River, Natives willing to become Christianized—some of the Motilones— populated the city of Moyobamba and the nearby areas. From the perspective of colonial officers, the city of Moyobamba and the Christianized Motilones represented a successful example of what the Spaniards intended to do elsewhere in that foreign territory. Thus, the Spaniards looked positively at the presence of these Natives, and described Moyobamba as if it were like any of the Spanish towns they were so familiar with: "This town had all its settlements in one street, and a plaza in the center, the houses on either side, and we found plenty of food."[89]

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[89] Ibid., 57.

Moyobamba had a strategic location because it was close to two of the largest and most important rivers entering the Amazon basin. With the exception of Pizarro's expedition, after 1542 all the travelers referred to Moyobamba as the town where they could stop and rest before entering into the 'horrible selva or jungles.'[90] For instance, Pedro de Orsúa chose this region as a starting place because of its convenience: it had ready food, labor, materials, river access, and a bit of the comforts of living in an urban Spanish settlement. During 1559, Orsúa along with his twenty-five captains and twelve slaves stayed in the vicinity of Moyobamba for eighteen months working on building boats, and gathering enough men interested in joining the expedition. In sum, Moyobamba became a prime place in the montaña for congregating Spaniards who came from all parts of Peru with the idea of discovering new lands with Orsúa. While these accounts praised Moyobamba as an exceptional place to settle because of its environmental attributes, noticeably different than the other areas that Spaniards had visited before, they were also satisfied—and even impressed—by the conveniences of having the Christianized Motilones assisting them as much as they needed to.

Spanish conquistadors identified major differences between Natives who lived in Christianized places such as Moyobamba, and the ones who lived in more distant places in the montaña or lowland selva of Amazonia, far from the colonial authorities. Even within the montaña, Spaniards were able to distinguish between Natives who had been pacified/converted—usually living close to the riverbanks—and the ones who had fled deep into the hilly montaña or "*tierra adentro*." From their perspective, Natives who had refused to be

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[90] It was not hard to find the excerpts in which these travelers talked about the montaña mostly because they would actually classify the region as montaña or *monte*. However, sometimes because there was more information about the rivers, they would imply this region by making reference to the place where the Huallaga River meets with the Marañón River. Another marker that helped me to look in the right direction was their notions of the upper and the low river (*rio arriba* and *rio abajo*).

Christianized did not live "in towns, like rational people, instead in deserts, like beasts."[91] The Spaniards' ideas of place were thus clearly connected to cultural notions about Natives and their relative degree of civilization. If Natives such as the Motilones were well behaved, Spaniards characterized them as having "good disposition,"[92] and being "dressed and well behaved."[93] Many of these Natives were also considered "people of reason and very ingenious men."[94] These positive characteristics, specifically aimed at the Motilones, made sense not only because of their utility, but also because they had achieved the Spaniards' standards of civilization. Thanks to the Motilones, these conquistadors were able to eat in abundance, navigate the rivers in canoes without getting lost, and have someone who could serve them as guides and interpreters. Ortiguera illustrated the Motilones as "peaceful people subject to the city of Santiago de Muyobamba, which was [located] more than 1,200 miles upriver, according to common and more general opinion of those who have seen it."[95]

Spaniards were aware that Natives could attack them unexpectedly and kill them—particularly in dense forested areas. Spaniards expressed their concern about these "wild Natives" because they had not been tamed, and even if they had, those teachings had not worked with them. Therefore, these Natives were fearless and confident based on how numerous they were, as well as how familiar they were with their landscape and how best to engage in warfare on their own terrain. Since the environmental conditions of the selva were not the same as the ones of the montaña, each time they attempted to explore the selva, the Spaniards suffered many more days starving and weakened by the high temperatures of the region due to the lack of

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[91] Rodríguez, *El descubrimiento del Marañón*, 85.
[92] Ortiguera, *Jornada del rio Marañón*, 231.
[93] Toribio Medina, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 88.
[94] Ibid., 81.
[95] Ortiguera, *Jornada del rio Marañón*, 221.

"civilized" settled populations on which to feed. It did not help that Natives had heard or seen Spaniards being ruthless murderers every time they encountered a Native settlement. Whether they were searching for food or riches, chances were that Spaniards would end up killing with their muskets all the Natives who did not want to give up their food supplies.[96] As a result, Spaniards could no longer find Indigenous communities in the riverbanks because most of them had abandoned them and fled to the montaña. In sum, it was a general consensus among Spaniards to classify the Motilones as a separate category from the wild Natives who had either fled to other places in the montaña or who had always lived in the selva.

Foundation of another montaña city: Lamas

After Orsúa's expedition, the rest of the Spanish attempts to replicate the 'successful case' of the city of Moyobamba in the montaña region did not turn out as intended mostly because the montaña environment got in the way of these colonizing attempts. Traveling throughout the montaña was a grueling experience, not to mention they had to rely on Christianized Natives to do so, who sometimes would abandon them, leaving the colonizers lost and hungry with no other option than turning back. Whether the Motilones were not enough to assist the Spaniards' plans to establish more Spanish cities in the montaña while dealing with other Indigenous groups, or whether Natives—including some of the Motilones —allowed Spaniards to settle only to abandon these settlements once the Spaniards were gone, the situation seemed to not have changed much. It was not until 1653, almost one hundred years after the first Spanish

[96] Another reason that could explain this abandonment are the diseases brought by the Spaniards. The seventeenth century missionaries described in great length how entire Indigenous communities disappeared.

expeditions went to the montaña, that Spanish Martín de la Riva Herrera founded the second most important Spanish city in this region of the montaña called *Lamas*.[97]

Martin de la Riva Herrera had expressed his interest in discovering and conquering the province of the Tabalosos and the Motilones to the viceroy of Peru, Conde de Salvatierra. Based on his experience as the *corregidor* or magistrate of Cajamarca—one of the biggest Spanish cities in the northern Andean region of Peru— he must have felt confident that with the viceroy's help, he had more chances to legitimate any claims he made to lands and service.[98] Apparently, obtaining *despachos* (official licenses) to guarantee Martin de la Riva Herrera the rights over the province of the Tabalosos and the Motilones was not an easy task because that region already belonged to the jurisdiction of Archdiocese of Trujillo based in the coastal city of Trujillo. Luckily for Martin de la Riva Herrera, viceroy Conde de Salvatierra granted him the permission to lead the *entrada* or entry to "the provinces of the Motilones, Tabalosos, and others who are in the Marañón River basin."[99] Two years later, in 1654 Martin de la Riva Herrera sent a letter to the viceroy notifying him about his progress in his entry to the montaña region. De la Riva Herrera proudly reported the addition of new Christianized towns and Indigenous populations to the Royal Crown indicating "the number of Natives being reduced, as well as the fruits that its soil can produce."[100] In his letter, De la Riva Herrera wanted to also explain the 'real condition' of the Natives from this region as well as the good condition of the land.[101] His letter meant to communicate the message that despite the initial rejection that these Natives had showed him,

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[97] Carta del Conde de Salvatierra relativa a las fianzas dadas por Martin de la Riva Herrera, 12 December 1653, Lima 57, N. 19, Microfilm/ED-061/41, AGI.

[98] As a *corregidor*, he had the duties of a mayor.

[99] Carta del Conde de Salvatierra relativa a las fianzas dadas por Martin de la Riva Herrera, 12 December 1653, AGI.

[100] Carta del Conde de Salvatierra relativa a las fianzas dadas por Martin de la Riva Herrera, 12 December 1653, AGI, fol. 19a.

[101] Carta del Conde de Salvatierra relativa a las fianzas dadas por Martin de la Riva Herrera, 12 December 1653, AGI, fol. 19a.

they had ultimately accepted to be baptized and they were working on building churches and farming the land.

The rest of De la Riva Herrera's correspondence with the viceroy focused on the viceroy's inability to send him the official land titles, and De la Riva Herrera's explanations of his work in turning Natives into the king's vassals. For the viceroy, the main issue lay with the consequences of his own disregard for the religious authorities in Trujillo who included the province of the Tabalosos and the Motilones in their jurisdiction.[102] The Inspector General of Trujillo had heard the news of De la Riva Herrera's demands regarding the despachos from this area, and denied the possibility of giving them away claiming those belonged to his own jurisdiction. On the other hand, De la Riva Herrera reassured the viceroy of his prosperous advances in the montaña while also warning him about the implications of not returning to the province in order to reinforce his power and prevent Natives from fleeing these newly conquered areas. De la Riva Herrera characterized Natives of this province as "the first among the infieles, yet the most bellicose ones too."[103] To settle this impasse the viceroy advocated on behalf of De la Riva Herrera in his letters to the King of Spain proposing him as the best man to be in charge of this region. The viceroy argued that De la Riva Herrera had proven himself already to know how to manage five hundred Natives from this region "of great ferocity," by only talking to them about God and without being violent.[104] Martin de la Riva Herrera narrated his first encounter with the Tabalosos:

> This province of the Tabalosos is the first among the infieles and the most bellicose among them, and although I sent other intelligent Indians in front of them in their language to make them understand how none of us would harm them if not to be their friend and beg them to be reduced to the knowledge of our Catholic holy faith and vassalage of your

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[102] Carta del Conde de Salvatierra relativa a las fianzas dadas por Martin de la Riva Herrera, 28 July 1653, AGI.

[103] Ibid., 410.

[104] Ibid., 410.

> majesty. But they did not want to hear my words, but rather before they became rowdy and disposed to prevent me from entering and I always avoided the use of arms making them many exhortations in their language and so they listened, listened, and admitted the peace that in the name of your majesty I offered them, and they were happy with the gifts.[105]

In addition, he mentioned this province not only was the biggest one, but it also had the largest population of infieles well-known for being dangerous that remained to be conquered.[106] At last, the King appointed Martin de la Riva Herrera as the governor of the province of the Tabalosos, the Motilones, and the areas nearby the Huallaga River.

The next time Martin de la Riva Herrera headed to the province of the Tabalosos and Motilones, he brought along Bachiller Fernando Celis de Saldana as the Vicar of the province in order to baptize more Natives. However, in this occasion, the heavy seasonal rains of the montaña and the Spaniards' fear of drowning in the nearly impassable rivers forced him to wait in the city of Moyobamba until the onset of the dry season, when he could gather again his men and face the Tabalosos and Motilones.[107] When De la Riva Herrera saw the Tabalosos first, he proceeded to give them gifts such as axes, machetes, knives to maintain their devotion and to incentivize them to bring other chiefs to the presence of De la Riva Herrera, so he could "keep them happy and quiet"[108] with his gifts. When these *caciques* (chiefs) arrived, the ones who followed the cacique Ojanasta revealed they wanted to become Christian. Although, these caciques were used to living in separate hamlets or villages with their own families separated from each other, they nonetheless offered their services for evaluating locations for De la Riva Herrera to establish new towns.

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[105] Ibid., 410.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid., 421.
[108] Ibid.

With the help of the Tabalosos, specifically cacique Ojanasta, governor Martin De la Riva Herrera founded the town of *San José de Lamas*. To make this possible, De la Riva Herrera explained Ojanasta's key role in this endeavor in a letter to the viceroy. Ojanasta had organized other Natives and convinced them to join efforts with the Spaniards as a way to face the challenges left by the epidemics. For the eight years before the arrival of De la Riva Herrera, Natives from this region had died from epidemic smallpox, and Ojanasta believed their alliance with the Spaniards could be beneficial in case they had to confront other Native ethnic groups such as the Omaguas at war.[109] Ojanasta suggested De la Riva Herrera to postpone his plans, return to Cajamarca or Moyobamba, and then come back after the rainy season. In the meantime, De la Riva Herrera declared that Ojanasta "was going to wait for me with cleared-out fields and roads."[110] Ojanasta's cooperation made it possible for De la Riva Herrera and his men to take control over this area, while also bringing at least four hundred and thirty Natives willing to settle with the Spaniards. Ojanasta then, took care of all the necessary arrangements for De la Riva Herrera's crew to establish the Spanish town of San José de Lamas. Ojanasta even decided the best place to locate Lamas based on Native considerations and group consensus regarding its geography. Ojanasta told De la Riva Herrera, that "everyone had thought it was a pretty good place with a good temperament and fertile lands and savannahs to raise all kinds of livestock and provide for everyone."[111] Although *Lamas* became one of the most important Spanish colonial cities in the montaña, the reality of its existence depended on what both sides hoped to gain from Natives' alliance with Martin de la Riva Herrera.

[109] Ibid., 424.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

In general, De la Riva Herrera's strategies to convince Natives to recruit other Natives seemed to have worked well. However, there were many other Indigenous groups in the montaña region who were not as welcoming as the Tabalosos. They did not only go to war with De la Riva Herrera, but they also made it impossible for him to continue his plans for expanding his authority in the rest of the montaña territory. De la Riva Herrera explained to the viceroy how he and his men almost lost their lives when the Native group of the *Suchiches* brought together other groups of Natives warning them against the Spaniards, claiming that "Spaniards had arrived to harm them, taking them tied to Moyobamba."[112] Luckily for the Spaniards, every time they went under attack, they had the option to retreat to either Moyobamba or Lamas where they could find some backup from subdued Native populations.

In conclusion, this chapter analyzed the Inca and the Spanish empires' multiple attempts of conquering and making sense of the lands of the montaña region. Starting in the pre-Hispanic period and going all the way to the mid-seventeenth century, outsiders' views of the montaña and its inhabitants shifted depending on how civilized they looked for their own conveniences. For the Incas the montaña or Andesuyo represented an environment that was initially hard to dominate, with a population so diverse and warrior-like that it depended on them whether the Incas could establish and maintain commercial routes. For the Spanish conquistadors, their expeditions to the montaña symbolized their efforts to civilize the fringes of the empire while also trying to find places that had been already under the relative control of the Incas. This strategy gave them the opportunity to establish the first cities in the montaña, those eventually used as outposts before entering to the wilderness of lowland Amazonia. In both cases, natural advantages such as the altitude, the weather, and the closeness to the Marañón River's

[112] Ibid., 422.

tributaries, made the region attractive to conquer, while maintaining ideas about the place and the people connected to wilderness and savagery. Both the Incas and the Spanish conquistadors struggled to include the montaña region and its peoples in their empires, and each saw the montaña as a zone that they needed to explore, conquer, and incorporate in their political and economic systems.

Chapter 4

Where the Christian World Ends: The Montaña as a frontier of the Missionary Project during the Seventeenth Century

In this chapter, the montaña region emerges as a central region for Jesuit missionary operations within the jurisdiction of the *Real Audiencia de Quito*—a region including present-day Ecuador, a broad swath of lowland Amazonia, and parts of northern Peru that was established in 1563 by King Philip II.[1] During the presence of the Jesuits in this jurisdiction, specifically in the province of Maynas, the relationship that they established with the montaña region and its Indigenous peoples varied. These relationships depended, first, on the proximity that the missionaries had with the Jesuit Order's base in the city of Quito; then, on their ability to create, access, and maintain Jesuit mission settlements, known as *reducciones* or reductions, scattered through the montaña region and lowland Amazonia or selva. By following the course of the Marañón River and its tributaries, the Jesuit efforts to Christianize Indigenous people relied in the occupation of territory east and the south creating a corridor that ran parallel along the montaña. I argue that the pattern of settlement of Jesuit missions in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century demonstrates in a new way how the limits between the "civilized" and the "savage" could be

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[1] Most of the territory of the *Real Audiencia de Quito* belongs today to the country of Ecuador, however the southern borders of this *Audiencia* also included the montaña city of Moyobamba now located in the northern part of modern Peru. According to the Royal decree of 1563, the southern borders of the Audiencia were: "On the coast, on the way to the City of the Kings, until the port of Paita, and inland Piura and Caxamarca and Chachapoyas and Moyobamba and Motilones exclusively." In practical terms, the president of the *Audiencia* served as a general captain of the whole region, even if he was still subordinate to the Viceroy of Peru until the new viceroyalty of Nueva Granada was established in 1717. Out of the six provinces that belonged to the *Audiencia de Quito*, the province of Maynas represented the biggest challenge to the religious orders' evangelization attempts. In Waldemar Espinoza Soriano, *Amazonía del Perú. Historia de la gobernación y comandancia general de Maynas (Hoy regiones de Loreto, San Martín, Ucayali y provincia de Condorcanqui): del siglo XV a la primera mitad del siglo XIX* (Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, Banco Central de Reserva del Perú, PromPerú, 2007).

defined by the montaña environment and more precisely by the riverine mobility provided by the Marañón River and its main tributaries, specifically the Huallaga River. This montaña region represented an opportunity for the Jesuits to position themselves in a vast territory with a large quantity of Natives who needed to be civilized and Christianized. For a hundred and thirty years, these missionaries kept trying to find the best way to reduce Natives while expanding the boundaries of their mission. Natives' connections with this environment allowed them the autonomy to resist the Jesuits' plans by fleeing to the montaña.

FIGURE 4.1 *Samuel Fritz*, The Great River Marañón or of the Amazonas with the Mission of the Society of Jesus, geographically described by Samuel Fritz, settled missioner on said river. *Source*: *El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas con la Misión de la Compañía de Jesús geográficamente delineado por el P. Samuel Fritz misionero continuo en este Río*. Quito, 1707 (Bibliothèque nationale de France, *Cartes et plans*, Ge D 7855). Metal engraving by Juan de Narvaez, (32x42 cm). Note the yellow oval highlighting the montaña region where the Jesuits established some of their reductions. From west to east: ● Quito; ● Lamas and Moyobamba; ● Jesuit mission centers: San Francisco de Borja, Santiago de Laguna, San Joaquín de Omaguas ▲ Mouth of the Santiago River, Pastaza River, Huallaga River, Ucayali River, Napo River, Javari River, and Rio Negro along the Marañón River.

The map above shows the Marañón River and its tributaries as well as the main cities in and Indigenous groups belonging to the province of Maynas and its vicinities. Dedicated to Philip V, Jesuit cartographer Samuel Fritz engraved his map when he was named superior of the missions of the Province of Quito in 1704. Based on Fritz's hand-drawn version of 1691, this map presents the course of the Marañón from its headwaters near Quito to its mouth in the Atlantic. Drawn from first-hand experience, this map represents Fritz's knowledge in his voyages navigating the Marañón River from one end to the other. At first glance, the map highlights the Marañón River running parallel to the equator dividing the frame in the middle. The level of detail regarding the lower left side of the map suggests Fritz's aim to communicate information about the Spanish side where the Jesuits established their mission centers and reductions in connection with Quito (see green dots in fig. 4.1). Brazilian historian Camila Loureiro Dias' study on Jesuit maps argues that Fritz cared more about showing the space occupied by the Spanish missions and not so much the areas under Portuguese control as a way to validate the Jesuit dominion over these territories to the Spanish and Portuguese crowns.[2] Even the rays emanating from the symbol of the Society of Jesus placed in the middle of the map covered only that side of the image. As this chapter will show, the missionization process had at least three stages that can be traced by following the establishment of mission centers and their location (see green dots in fig. 4.1 & 4.2): (1) San Francisco de Borja (1638) where the Marañón meets the Santiago River, (2) Santiago de Laguna (1663) also at the mouth of the Huallaga River, and (3) San Joaquin de Omaguas (1686) in the selva where the Napo River joins Marañón.[3]

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[2] Camila Loureiro Dias, "Jesuit Maps and Political Discourse: The Amazon River of Father Samuel Fritz," *The Americas* 69, no. 1 (2012): 95–116.

[3] Most of the literature depicts the Jesuit occupation in these three stages adding a fourth stage from 1710-1767, that this chapter will also make reference to that period of time, for more see: Sandra Negro, "Maynas, una misión entre la ilusión y el desencanto," in *Un reino en la frontera: las misiones jesuitas en la América colonial* (Editorial Abya Yala & PUCP, 2000); Manuel María Marzal and Sandra Negro Tua, eds., *Un reino en la frontera: las misiones jesuitas en la América colonial* (Editorial Abya Yala & PUCP, 2000).

As evidenced by the location of these mission centers in the map, the Jesuits kept trying to expand their control in the Maynas province by creating new reductions at the east of the Andean heights—first in the montaña, and later in the selva to the point of reaching the Río Negro. Going east meant to encounter more Indigenous groups to reduce, but it also meant needing to contain the advances of the Portuguese expeditionary forces. Beginning in 1611, the Portuguese *correrias* or expeditions seeking to capture Natives for their slave trade had been a constant threat to the Spanish empire's frontiers in the selva.[4] The Portuguese also used these correrias as an opportunity to engage in commercial activities with ethnic groups allied to them. To the detriment of the Jesuits, the Portuguese efforts to do so not only persisted over the sixteenth century, but they intensified at the beginning of the eighteenth century resulting in the loss of Jesuit reductions leaving the Jesuit friars no other option but to retreat to the town of Yavari—border town near the Yavari River, current crossing point for the Brazil-Peru and the Brazil-Colombia borders in modern Peru (see blue triangle in fig. 4.1). [5]

At the end of the seventeenth century, Jesuits like father Fritz believed that their missionary practice of territorial occupation and dominion in the area could go in tandem with the creation of more reductions. This strategy worked to an extent, as Fritz successfully reduced the Omagua Natives and established at least twenty reductions in the selva among the neighboring Yurimagua, Ticuna, Pebas Indigenous groups (see Appendix I). In that sense, the map he drew reflected his intentions to highlight the Jesuits' impressive expansion over the region, considering the harshness of the terrain, the dangers of facing various Native groups, the

[4] Negro, "Maynas, una misión entre la ilusión y el desencanto."

[5] For a discussion about the Tordesillas Treaty delineating the border of the Spanish and the Portuguese empires in the New World see: Juan Sebastián Gómez González, "Contra un enemigo infernal, argumentos Jesuíticos en defensa de la Amazonía Hispánica: provincia de Maynas, 1721-1739," *Fronteras de la historia* 17, no. 1 (2012): 167–94.

Portuguese threat, and even other religious orders' attempts to position themselves in the area.[6] This discussion sheds light on the Christianization process that came and went in waves. Sometimes Jesuits were able to reduce and maintain these reductions in the selva, but most of the time they either relocated Natives from the selva to the montaña or stayed in the montaña to focus on preventing Natives from abandoning those reductions as well.[7] In both cases, Natives' level of compliance varied. Depending on their convenience, Natives decided to stay in the reductions or escape deep into the montaña where the Jesuits could not find them.

Following the Marañón River and its tributaries (see blue triangles in fig. 4.1 & 4.2), the Jesuits started their Christianization project in 1638, proceeding with varying degrees of success until they were expelled in 1767.[8] The initial stage of this process corresponded to the establishment of reductions during the first ten years of their presence at the east of the Andean heights. At the beginning they left Quito riding horses using the route via Latacunga, Riobamba, Jaén, until they could cross the Andean heights on foot reaching the Marañón. The navigability of the rivers and availability of canoes and balsas navigated by Native rivermen allowed the Jesuits to explore the Santiago and Pastaza rivers. Fritz's hand-drawn map of 1691 clearly

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[6] For more on the distribution of the Marañón's left bank to other religious orders such as the Franciscans, Mercederians, and Carmelites see: Loureiro Dias, "Jesuit Maps and Political Discourse: The Amazon River of Father Samuel Fritz," 100-101.

[7] Despite the accounts of Jesuit fathers like father Magnin arguing their inability to know how many people lived in this area during the early eighteenth century, others estimated the total number of inhabitants living in these missions at that time was 19,228 in Marzal and Negro Tua, eds., *Un reino en la frontera: las misiones jesuitas en la América colonial*.

[8] Though the presence of the Jesuits in the "New World" dates back to 1566 when the Council of the Indies provided them the authorization to go to Spanish America, it is not until 1638 that the religious order of the Jesuits were officially granted the permission to establish missions in the Province of Maynas. Before the Jesuits stepped into this area, other orders such as the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Mercederians had already ventured to Christianize and civilize some areas belonging to the province of Maynas' eastern region. Since 1629, the Augustinians and secular clerics had also started their Christianizing work with many native groups, among them, the Indigenous ethnicity of the Maynas people. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Jesuits felt as capable as the rest of the religious orders to increase the scope of their mission beyond the city of Quito. In Julián Bravo Santillán and Octavio Latorre, eds., *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús: a través de las cartas de los misioneros alemanes que en ellas se consagraron a su civilización y evangelización 1685-1757* (Quito: Biblioteca Ecuatoriana, 2007), 19.

represents the connection between Quito and these two rivers as well as the montaña region symbolized by green mountains (see fig. 4.2). Once they were in the Marañón, the Jesuits decided to establish the reductions in the vicinities of the San Francisco de Borja Spanish town and the Manseriche *pongo* or canyon. They declared this town as the center of Jesuit operations the same year they found it, starting their work in the territory defined by the Santiago, Marañón, and Pastaza rivers where they reduced Indigenous groups known as the Xeberos, and a polyglot of groups belonging to the area south from Santiago de Borja labeled as the Mainas people.

The second stage was defined by the Jesuits' attempts to expand their mission to the selva (1651-1680). From the town San Francisco de Borja, the Jesuits went east along the Marañón trying to get as far east as they could or they also tried to use the second way to cross the montaña through the province of Sucumbíos, Pasto, and Archidona until they could reach the shores of the Napo River downstream to the Marañón. Accompanied by Spanish soldiers, the Jesuits established reductions close to the main rivers to facilitate easier access. In the selva, at the mouth of the Huallaga and also the Ucayali rivers, the Jesuits established the reductions with the Paranapuras, Muniches, Aguanos, and Cocamas. Even if some of these Indigenous groups followed the Jesuits voluntarily, others fought back. To that end, the Jesuits prepared to engage in violent confrontations in order to reduce Natives, which resulted in many deaths and injuries on both sides.[9] The legend in Fritz's map located and dated all of the Jesuit martyrdoms, but wrote out all of the Indigenous deaths, most of them happening in this period of time when the Jesuits tried to reduce the Omagua Natives.[10] The violent episode with the Omaguas forced the

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[9] Negro, "Maynas, una misión entre la ilusión y el desencanto."

[10] "The Company of Jesus has a very long, laborious and apostolic mission on this great river, which it entered in the year 1638. With its center in the city of San Francisco de Borja, province of the Maynas, which is 300 leagues from Quito, it extends through the Pastaza, Guallaga and Ucayale rivers to the end of the Omaguas province. The passes to this province can be done by only three very rough roads and largely on foot: through Jaén Patate's, and Archidona's ports where the Missionaries embark in canoes sailing long, and dangerous distances to their reductions. The following Fathers have died in the hands of barbarians: venerable father Francisco de Figueroa at the mouth of

Jesuits to abandon that area until 1680. By 1660, then, the Jesuits had a better understanding of the challenges they had to face to continue their work in the region, one of them being connectivity. Maintaining the reductions required the missionaries' constant presence, so they founded the town Santiago de Laguna close to the mouth of the Huallaga River to use it as the center of their mission instead of Borja. This occupation strategy not only brought the Jesuits closer to the selva where they intended to keep working, but also to the Spanish cities of Lamas and Moyobamba located in the montaña on the west bank of the Huallaga River (see red dots in fig.4.2).

The next stage between 1686-1710, the Jesuits tried again to expand the mission further to the east toward the mouth of the Río Negro. Responding to the need for reinforcements, German Jesuit missionaries and scientists such as Heinrich Richter, Samuel Fritz, Wenceslao Breyer, among others joined the mission in the Maynas Province. As explained earlier regarding Fritz's map, these men were interested not only in evangelizing Natives, but also in applying their scientific knowledge to gather information about the state of the Jesuit missions, the place itself and its inhabitants considered useful for positioning the Spanish crown's dominion over the Portuguese. Superior Father based in Quito assigned the reduction of the Omaguas to Fritz; and to Richter, he appointed the Christianization of the Conibos, Piros, and Cocamas from the area surrounding the mouth of the Ucayali River. This time, the Jesuits changed their missionization strategy. Instead of imposing their superiority with violence, they approached Natives in a friendly way, focusing on learning the Native language, the environment that surrounded them,

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the Apena River next to the Guallaga in 1666; the venerable father Pedro Suárez in Abijiras in 1667; the venerable father Agustín Hurtado in Roamaynas in 1677; the venerable father Henrique Ricter in Piros in 1695. And in this same year of 1707 we had the news that barbarians have killed the venerable father Nicolás Durango in Gayos. The locations of their deaths are symbolized with this <†> for such a glorious cause the venerable father Raimundo de Santa Cruz died drowned in the Bobonaza River in 1662." In *Samuel Fritz, El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas con la Misión de la Compañía de Jesús geográficamente delineado por el P. Samuel Fritz misionero continuo en este Río*, Quito, 1707 (Bibliothèque nationale de France, *Cartes et plans*, Ge D 7855).

and the best way to convince Natives to settle in the new reductions. This tactic allowed Fritz to also create reductions among the Ticunas and the Yurimaguas on the right bank of the Marañón close to the Napo River. Since the mission center in Laguna was located too far away from these new reductions, father Fritz established the town of San Joaquín de Omaguas in 1686 to use it as the center of the Jesuit mission in the lowland Amazonia or selva (see one of the green dots in fig. 4.1 & 4.2). By the turn on the eighteenth century, Fritz had managed to position the Jesuits all the way to the Río Negro jeopardizing the Portuguese commercial activities who—in alliance with other Native groups—kept fighting Natives settled in Jesuit settlements.[11] In 1711, out of the almost forty reductions Fritz and Richter created between 1680-1700, there were only five left. As much as Fritz attempted to persuade the Portuguese, the Jesuits ended up withdrawing to the town of Laguna and to the montaña region in general.[12]

Compared to the first Spanish conquistadors who had gone to the montaña on foot, the Jesuits relied as much as they could in using the rivers to reach the east side of the Andean heights. Fritz described the importance of having these rivers surrounding the Jesuit reductions by emphasizing their origin in the Marañon river up in the high mountains of the Andes, and the long distances and territories these tributaries covered allowing the Jesuits a greater mobility and control within the province: "An immense amount of rivers and streams flow in its basin [Marañón basin] both north and south, after having traveled most of them more than one hundred leagues. It contains various types of fish, and in its surroundings quantities of deer. It is full of innumerable islands of different sizes, of which the smallest range from five to ten to twenty

[11] Gómez González, "Contra un enemigo infernal, argumentos Jesuíticos en defensa de la Amazonía Hispánica."

[12] For more on how local activities were dislocated from what the laws defined as legal occupation on the side of the Spanish and the Portuguese empires, see: Tamar Herzog, *Frontiers of Possession* (Harvard University Press, 2015).

leagues, being very close to each other, since every year they flood, they are highly fertile."[13] For Fritz, one of the main attributes of the region lay in the possibilities for mobility when navigating any of the Marañón tributaries. The lack of roads in good condition and the steepness of the mountains made it impossible for Jesuits to ride horses, so carrying heavy loads destined to the reductions depended entirely on the Christian Natives who had no other option but to oblige.

Father Enrique Richter narrated what it entailed to go to the selva while giving the sense to his reader that the navigation throughout the different rivers made his missionization possible: "From here I will go to Laguna [city], and from there passing by the Guallaga river, I will return to the Marañón River, and I will navigate it for six days downstream to the mouth of the Ucayali River, from Peru."[14] Then, father Richter traveled for a whole month along the Ucayali until he finally reached the lower zone of the province where he found natives from the Cunivos and Mananabobos ethnicities. His goal was to establish reductions, again closer to the rivers, even if that meant uniting the two or more ethnicities in the same place, and running the risk of the future clashes that could result as part of that union. Nevertheless, he believed that "although the two nations are united, there will be problems for their immoderation, since men have several women at the same time."[15] Father Richter's experiences in navigating several rivers downstream to find Natives who were more likely to resist the conversion to Christianity exemplify the Jesuits' common idea that fathers often expressed in their depiction of Natives: the

[13] Samuel Fritz, "Carta de Sudamérica descripción del rio Marañón y las misiones que fueron fundadas allí por los jesuitas alemanes de Bohemia. Excerpta del relato de R. P. Samuel Fritz, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús de la Provincia de Bohemia, en el año 1701," in P. Julián Bravo Santillán and Octavio Latorre, eds., *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús: a través de las cartas de los misioneros alemanes que en ellas se consagran a su civilización y evangelización 1685-1757* (Quito: Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Pólit," Sociedad Ecuatoriana de Investigaciones Históricas y Geográficas, 2007), 99.

[14] Enrique, Richter, "Quinta carta del Padre Enrique Richter misionero de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias Occidentales al reverendo Padre Emmanuel de Boye, provincial de la Compañía de Bohemia. Escrita en la Laguna, que es una bahía del rio Huallaga, el 1 de enero de 1686," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 76.

[15] Ibid.

further east they were, the harder it was to reduce them. Particularly, in comparison with the Indigenous groups located close to Borja and Laguna—in areas where the fathers had more control and access over. Natives from that area had more experiences with outsiders, they knew how to speak Quechua, and therefore, the level of isolation felt among the missionaries was significantly lower than in the most remote areas of the selva. In his letter to another father, the Jesuit missionary Wilhelm de Tres wrote about the time he started his work in the Maynas province in 1706 when he was in charge of five groups of Natives, the Chayabitas, Catalanes, Paranapuras, Muniches, and Ottanavos.[16] Not only did these groups live in the montaña region closer to each other, but they also lived closer to other cities of the montaña Lamas and Moyobamba, and the Huallaga river—near to the mouth of the Marañón river (see yellow shaded area in fig. 4.1 & 4.2).

When arguing about the significance of the rivers reaching the montaña from Quito to the Marañón, father Maroni also discussed the possibilities for navigating the Marañón's tributaries to the south in Peru, and relationship of these fluvial networks to the Jesuit missions of Chiquitos and Moxos.[17] More to the point of this dissertation, Maroni identified three main rivers connecting the whole territory belonging to the viceroyalty of Peru, all running parallel along the montaña creating a corridor from north to south. First the *Cusco River*, in southern Peru—probably referring to the Ucayali River—; then the "river that people call the *Motilones* river"[18] in central Peru, speaking of the Huallaga itself; and then the Avila River up north which goes all

[16] R.P. Wilhelm de Tres, "Carta del R. P. Wilhelm de Tres, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús en el rio Amazonas al Reverendo Padre Jose Chambge, sacerdote de la misma Compañía. Escrita en Cuenca, Sudamérica, el 1 de junio de 1731," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 246-47.

[17] For more about the Moxos see David Block, *Mission Culture on the Upper Amazon: Native Tradition, Jesuit Enterprise and Secular Policy in Moxos, 1660-1880* (University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

[18] Pablo S.I. Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito en los dilatados bosques de dicho río, escribíalas por los años de 1738 un misionero de la misma Compañía*, ed. Jimenez de la Espada (Madrid: [1738], 1889), 562-63.

the way to the provinces closer to Quito. According to Maroni, the different names assigned to these rivers responded to the different experiences Spanish conquistadors and missionaries had with these rivers and the Indigenous people living nearby them. Maroni used as an example the name of rivers and areas such as the Pongo de Aguirre on the lower Huallaga River and the Orellana river in reference to the expeditions of Lope de Aguirre and Francisco Orellana in 1540 developed in the previous chapter.

Although the rainy season presented many challenges preventing the fathers' riverine mobility, they acknowledged the necessity of the rain for the production of crops and the fertility of the soils. Father Magnin expressed the way in which the rivers shaped the environment and their missionary activities clearly considering the rainy season as an overall positive leading to a fine harvest of food and of Native souls in the region:

> It is true that the Marañon fertilizes the entire country that crosses over it, favoring several nations that inhabit it. Likewise, spiritually, the preaching of the gospel is possible, helped by grace, as any other navigable river allows an abundant harvest there. Goes through all these regions, flooding these extensive jungles, watering the new plants, feeding the old ones, tearing down the wild ones, paving the rugged places, conserving the plains at their level; and the missionaries, with the help of this dew fallen from the sky and expanding everywhere, reap the fruits of their efforts and the reward of their work.[19]

The presence of the Marañon river and its tributaries in the Maynas province opened access to different kinds of environments, which the Jesuits referred to as the upper and lower zones, being the upper zone in the montaña because of its altitude; and the lower zone the selva.

Unlike the Jesuits' characterizations of the selva—and its challenges to reduce its nations—their perspectives about the montaña were more ambivalent. On the one hand, they acknowledged the difficulties to access that region from the Jesuit headquarters in Quito. Father

[19] Juan Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 1740, trans. Julián Bravo Santillán and Octavio Latorre (Quito: Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Pólit," Sociedad Ecuatoriana de Investigaciones Históricas y Geográficas, 1998), 184.

Maroni depicted his travel to Maynas as "very laborious navigation, where they met some fugitive Indians of Macas, reporting the existence of many hills."[20] No matter how much they prepared for this trip, the Jesuits portrayed these journeys as if they were facing the worst kind of punishment.[21] Navigating the rivers alleviated some of this suffering, but reaching the upper areas required them to walk through the hilly forests for days at the risk of getting lost, or being attacked by animals or Natives. Roads were in bad shape, and hard to find, and it took Maroni days "crossing the montaña on a somewhat painful road along some streams that needed to be waded where the reduction of the Chayabitas can be found on a hill that dominates the entire montaña, and two leagues after that the Paranapuras."[22] Natives fleeing to these forested areas, knowing the Jesuits' limitations finding them, demonstrated the extent to which the Jesuits depended on Native guides. On the other hand, the Jesuits saw the montaña as the central point of departure for facilitating their expansion into the selva. Since other religious orders had taken control over the right bank of the Marañón, the Jesuits expected the reductions in the montaña—south of Laguna—to serve as an outpost for their missionary enterprises, both in the rest of the montaña region and the selva. Both scenarios challenged missionaries because they were in constant shortage of supplies and gifts to keep Natives interested. In this context, and despite the geography of the montaña, the Jesuits understood the advantages of being relatively close to Moyobamba and Lamas, especially after long undefined stays in the reductions and the difficulties to keep a fluent communication with Quito.

As contradictory as it may seem, and even if many pages on the Jesuits' accounts were devoted to complaining about the harshness of montaña region, the montaña also meant for the

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[20] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 28-29.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

fathers having access to what this environment had to offer through the Natives' hands and hard work. Despite the characterization of the montaña as "uncultivated"[23] or *inculta*[24] due to the lack of an available open landscape to settle as well as the lack of gold and silver, the Jesuits portrayed the territory's flora and fauna as abundant with many opportunities to offer besides its location nearby the Marañón tributaries.[25] Father Maroni believed that although the reductions in Paraguay had better equipped churches and infrastructure than the ones in Maynas, the reductions in the Maynas province had "everything that the climate and the disposition of the montaña allowed."[26] When not in the rainy season, father Wenceslao Breyer witnessed rivers having the best kinds of fish as well as different sizes of delicious turtles that had "as much meat as a fat ram."[27] In addition to the tigers from the montaña, called otorongos, which Natives hunted for their beautiful pelts that they could trade with Natives from other areas, the missionaries showed their surprise when they realized that Natives could eat all sorts of birds, animals, snakes, and insects.

Natives have hunted birds, monkeys, and mammals native to the montaña environment until today, including *sajino* or pork, *sacha vaca*, which tastes like cow meat, and *majaz*, which the fathers considered similar to pork.[28] For fishing and hunting, Natives from the montaña prepared special poison powerful enough to kill animals or fish, yet harmless to humans. The

[23] Ibid., 91.

[24] Word used to refer to a person who has few studies or little general knowledge of the world; and a place that has not been cultivated.

[25] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 139.

[26] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 162.

[27] R.P. Wenceslao Breyer, "Carta del P. Wenceslao Breyer, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Bohemia, a su hermano el Padre Breyer, sacerdote de dicha Compañía y provincia de Praga. Escrita en el pueblo Santiago de Laguna el 18 de junio de 1699," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 92.

[28] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 97.

Jesuits recognized Natives' expertise in preparing this poison that they shot with their blowguns, as well as the poison called *Barbasco* that they prepared from tree roots in order to get the "fish drunk, until they died."[29] Even during the rainy season, when hunting and fishing was more limited, Natives relied on women's work who prepared thick beverages made out of maize, plantain, manioc, and other fruits that they could find.[30] Different groups of Natives made a special trip to the mines of salt, one of the most popular resources in the montaña, located two walking days away from Moyobamba.[31] The Jesuits recognized Natives' activity of mining salt as a traditional one, that Natives knew how to prepare for it, and what the journey entailed depending on how far they lived from it. While Natives depended on salt to preserve their food, the missionaries also appreciated the possibility of seasoning their meals. In describing all these possibilities that the montaña had to offer, Magnin compared the montaña with a pantry, where the mountains, rivers, and lakes provided food and resources to survive in that kind of environment. Despite the Jesuits' overall disdain of Natives' traditional practices, father Maroni could anticipate that Natives' usage of herbs and barks for medicinal purposes would be something that any specialist in botany or medicine would consider worthy of attention, resulting in their "entertainment and enrichment of their science with new and very exquisite novelties."[32]

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[29] Ibid., 133.

[30] Ibid., 134.

[31] Ibid., 262. Although the practice of mining salt is illegal, he Kechwas of Lamas have kept the tradition of going to the mine salt of Tiraco. See Grimaldo Rengifo, "Los caminos de la sal: el regreso al territorio excluido. efectos del fondo de iniciativas de afirmación cultural (FIAC) en la recuperación de los ámbitos de comunidad de los Quechua-Lamas.," *PRATEC*, 2009.

[32] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 117.

FIGURE 4.2 *Samuel Fritz*, Map of the Marañón or of the Amazonas. *Source*: *Mapa geographica del río Marañón, o Amazonas hecho por Samuel Fritz*, 1691 (Bibiotheque nationale de France, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b72002640/f1.item).
The yellow oval highlights the montaña region and the mission of the Huallaga with the following reductions: ● Xeberos, Paranapuras, Muniches, Otanaves. From west to east: ● Quito; ● Lamas and Moyobamba; ■ Jesuit mission centers: San Francisco de Borja, Santiago de Laguna, San Joaquín de Omaguas ▲ Mouth of the Santiago River, Pastaza River, Huallaga River, Ucayali River, Napo River, Javari River, and Rio Negro along the Marañón River.

'Hunting for souls' in the wilderness

As part of the Jesuits' systematic attempt to Christianize different Indigenous groups, they followed the Marañón and its tributaries with the aim of finding Natives willing to follow the Jesuits and live with them in one of the Jesuit reductions. Throughout the different stages of the missionary process the fathers tried different ways to persuade Natives in joining their reductions. This implied that the Jesuit father—with the help of a Native guide who spoke the language—had to find a prime spot to settle close to a river. In addition, he expected these newly reduced Natives to contribute in the building of a church, housing, and small farms to produce food for everyone in the reduction. Indeed, the introduction of these reductions in 1569 by the viceroy of Peru don Francisco de Toledo was meant to force Native people of central Andes to relocate to new Iberian-style towns.[33] By abandoning their homes where Andean Natives lived dispersed and separated by the challenges of the Andean environment, Toledo expected them to also leave behind their lives. This suggested that until these Natives learned how to live like the Spaniards in a quadrilateral street grid with a central plaza and a church, they could not be true Christians. In the case of the missionaries, these reductions became a way to tame both, the wild Natives and their home environments. In other words, the Jesuits' experience in Maynas depicts the history of reductions as a colonizing strategy.

Similar to a small town—and sometimes referring to reductions as such—one of the Jesuits' main challenges relied on bringing together Natives belonging to different ethnicities in a harmonious community. Due to the vastness of the territory populated by a large number of Natives affiliated to different Indigenous groups who spoke different languages, the Jesuits quickly recognized that in order to reduce these Natives they needed to transform them "first [in]

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[33] Jeremy Ravi Mumford, *Vertical Empire: The General Resettlement of Indians in the Colonial Andes* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012).

civilized men, and then Christians."[34] In his writings about the history of the Maynas missions and his own experience as a missionary and cartographer in that region, Swiss father Magnin described that convincing Natives to live in the reductions required as much effort as to keep them there, "if the missionary needs particular sagacity to get them out of their old huts, he needs even more of it to in order to retain them."[35] For Indigenous people, who used to live only with their extended family members with the habit of switching places to live and settle depending on the season of the year or the resources available, the missionary's task of reducing them seemed almost impossible. Magnin pointed out at the missionaries' teaching procedures: "the first thing is to accustom them to live together and in peace in one place, to build huts, plant some products, to spin the cotton, and to work so they can dress and search for food they could eat."[36] From the fathers' perspective, guaranteeing the basics of a civil life would eventually result in the creation of an established institution for the Natives where they could learn how to live a Christian life.[37]

During the first stage of the missionary project, the fathers depicted themselves as the "hunters of souls," suggestive of the wildness of the people and the environment. In Magnin's analysis of the mission's history, he portrayed missionaries' first contact with Natives as the hardest in the history of the Jesuits, comparing it to the kind of preparation one needed to engage when going hunting for animals. By explaining Natives' inability to understand the fathers' reasons and 'good intentions' to reduce them, Magnin portrayed Natives as savages, reluctant to follow the fathers' directions unless they could get something in exchange. The fathers used the Natives' desire for iron tools showing their desperation for replacing their simple "axes made of

[34] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 195.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.

stone, animal fangs, and bones used to cut sticks and build their canoes."[38] Soon enough missionaries and Natives realized the value of these iron and steel tools and how they could capitalize on them for achieving the results they wanted. Magnin and the rest of missionaries knew how Natives were willing to do almost anything to gain access to these tools, while Natives knew they had in turn to oblige and become subjects of the Jesuits. In Magnin's words, he characterized Natives as being so greedy they would be ready to exchange their most valuable belongings in exchange for those goods, ready to even "give away their children in exchange for an axe, or by stealing or killing their neighbors who had them."[39] Thus, Magnin could not think of a better way to describe their tactic as "authentic soul hunters."[40] Using those terms, a successful hunting enterprise meant for the Jesuits to survive the geography of the forested montaña while they were looking for Natives to reduce. Knowing that they were going to run out of food, water, and possibly get lost, the fathers believed in risking their lives as part of their duty so they could catch and reduce as many Natives as they could.[41]

Jesuit Paolo Maroni explained the Natives' aversion to settling in a reduction by highlighting the Natives' previous lack of a hierarchical social and political system similar to the Incas and the Aztecs. Indigenous groups from this area were not interested in being part of enclosed settlements such as the reductions.[42] Although each one of these ethnicities from the

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[38] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 180.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 184-85.

[41] "¡Auténticos cazadores de almas! porque si los misioneros han merecido a veces este nombre, nunca lo fueron con tanta razón como en estas comarcas. En efecto, arriesgarse así por bosques y espinos con tan débilmente escolta, andando en el canto y los pantanos, cinco, ocho, diez dias como gente extraviada en un desierto, sin ver otra cosa que aves, tigres y animales semejantes, llevando ellos mismos en sus espaldas su masato y su harina de yuca, tomando en sus manos, de las quebradas que encuentra en su camino el agua clara o lodosa para apagar la sed que le devora, que otra cosa hacen sino lo de los cazadores y lo que hacen los indios que les acompañándonos que cazan a cada momento monos y pauses para poder sobrevivir el grupo el mismo misionero no tiene otro remedio, a veces que tomar el fusil y proveer a la subsistencia." In Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 184-85.

[42] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 128.

Maynas province had their own leader, called a *cacique* or *curaca*, in practice these caciques were not concerned about disciplining their ethnic line to stay at the reduction or to obey the Jesuits.[43] Therefore, the maintenance of these reductions relied on the one missionary in charge of the reduction who had to make sure to instruct and guide Natives so they could live as civilized and Christian people. Once the Jesuits made sure Natives had their own place to live, they wanted them to start farming different European products besides the plantains, manioc, and maize that they were used to eating.[44] Though the fathers did everything they could in changing the Natives' lifestyle, they realized that only few of them showed interest in settling. Considering the diversity of the different Indigenous groups living in the vast Maynas province, persuading Natives from different ethnicities with different languages and cultural patterns to live permanently in the same place, all together in one reduction, required the missionaries to be even more creative and diplomatic in catching the Natives' interest. Father Maroni mentioned how unattainable this part of the project seemed since there were more than forty districts or nations —that the Jesuits knew of— whom they thought needed to be congregated into reductions. Maroni clarified to his readers how the Jesuits called each one of these Indigenous societies "nations" or ethnic groups not necessarily because they covered large territories, but because they were so spread out from each other while also "being considered different and strangers [from each other] since ancient times."[45] Each one of these nations had their own cacique, language, territory where they would go hunting, and historically they had tried to live as far as possible from each other. German Father Wenceslao Breyer suggested that one of the reasons

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[43] Ibid., 127.

[44] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 196.

[45] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 292.

why Natives kept their distance from each relied on securing their livelihood based on hunting and fishing.[46]

Although the fathers did not expand on the reasons why these nations held the tradition of being sometimes at war and some other times at peace, they expressed their concerns about the constant possibility of conflict between the members of these nations within the Jesuit reductions. In order to make sense of these groups being at war, the fathers believed it was all the result of the devil's work. Father Magnin highlighted how Natives from these nations were accustomed to kill and destroy each other, and how their war strategies depended on their knowledge of their environment.[47] Besides building their own traps and withdrawing to hidden areas, they casted spells by burning herbs in order to chew and spit them while "talking with the devil."[48] Referring to the second stage of the Jesuit project—when the Jesuits focused on reducing the areas surrounding the mouth of the Huallaga River and the montaña region—, Father Maroni depicted Natives' war strategies as designed to prevent the presence of enemies in their territories coming from the selva. In Maroni's view, success or failure of these war campaigns had to do not so much with the traps and obstacles that the Natives placed, but with the fact that these Natives were "the children of the montaña,"[49] and therefore knew how to protect themselves by using the environment to their advantage. As expected, and for their own safety, the missionaries had a better chance of reducing them while they were not at war; otherwise, they would just hide deep in the montaña. By 1730, almost sixty years after the Jesuits

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[46] R.P. Wenceslao Breyer, "Carta del P. Wenceslao Breyer, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús de la Provincia de Bohemia, a su hermano el Padre Breyer, sacerdote de dicha Compañía y provincia de Praga. Escrita en el pueblo Santiago de Laguna el 18 de junio de 1699," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 92.

[47] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 178.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 145.

founded the mission center of Santiago de Laguna, father Maroni emphasized how the eventual success of the Huallaga reduction had to do with the fact that most of the nations had already found peace with each other, suggesting that they had been civilized and were ready to live in the reduction.[50]

With the guidance of Natives who had already been Christianized, the fathers from the Society of Jesus approached Natives from these nations by offering gifts such as knives, axes, needles, and iron utensils.[51] Magnin described this strategy as being effective while stressing the fathers' willingness to risk their own lives in doing so. The fathers labeled Natives who refused to convert to Christianism as pagans or *paganos*. In addition, father Juan Bautista Julián warned another father about the pagans' misleading openness to conversion once they had seen these gifts.[52] Some would accept the gifts and then hide from the missionaries, others would just avoid direct contact with the fathers and try to obtain the tools and goods from other Indigenous groups or the Portuguese. In general, this strategy appeared to be effective to an extent. Indeed, these gifts got Natives' attention, and many of them decided to obey and follow the missionaries in exchange for them, but many others tried to negotiate a different way to frame their relationship with these fathers—not just oriented by the goods they could gain from that interaction.

As evidenced by Father Francisco Xavier Zephyris' letter in 1742, the Jesuits had kept using this gift-giving strategy for over a century. He revealed to his sister his frustration in trying multiple times to convince the leader of the Jameos, located at the mouth of the Ucayali River, to

[50] Ibid., 233. It was called the Guallaga reduction, because it was one of the first reductions located close to the Huallaga river, that according to Maroni in this quote it meant "downstream river."

[51] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 184.

[52] R.P. Juan Bautista Julián, "Segunda carta del R. P. Juan Baut. Julián, S. J., misionero en Quito y rector en Tacunga, de la provincia de Alta Alemania, a un sacerdote de la misma Compañía y provincia. Escrita en la misión de los Xeberos," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 315.

join the mission with his people.[53] Zephyris characterized them as a numerous and wild nation that every time they saw the missionaries they would run away, until they allowed limited contact and gifts while even hosting them with courtesy. Despite their somewhat friendly interaction, the Jameos never allowed a closer interaction with the Jesuits or agreed to move to a reduction, claiming that although they could accept one of the fathers to live with them and even agree to follow God by building a church and houses, but they were never going to abandon the place where they lived. According to the Jameos cacique, father Zephyris could not ask them to leave their selva where they had worked so hard to keep their homes in a place where they could have access to resources.

When the searching for new nations to reduce got too dangerous, the fathers brought along not only their Native interpreters, but also Spanish soldiers, typically those based in one of the main Spanish cities of the montaña, either Lamas or Moyobamba. These soldiers were called by the Jesuits the *viracochas*[54] and by the Natives the devil or *diablo*.[55] Based on the violent episodes happening during the second stage of the Jesuit project, when Jesuits allowed the use of guns to subdue Natives from the selva, both missionaries and Natives did not welcome the presence of the viracochas except when the fathers felt they had no other option. Considering it the help of the viracochas as a necessary evil, the fathers called them when they either had to find more Natives to reduce or punish the ones who had already been reduced but decided to

[53] R.P. Francisco Xavier Zephyris, "Carta del R. P. Francisco Xav. Zephyris, S. J., misionero de la Provincia austriaca a su señorita hermana en el convento real en Hall Tirol. Escrita en la Misión de Francisco Regis, de los Jamaes, en la región del rio Marañón, el 10 de Agosto de 1742," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 308-309.

[54] Magnin explained the different meanings of the viracochas. For the Jesuits, the viracochas were the pure Spaniards since it is also the name that Natives gave to Spaniards when they encountered the first conquistadors, because it meant the "children of the sun" which was the god they worshipped. During the eighteenth century, the term was loosely employed to every outsider and Spanish descendant. In Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 229.

[55] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 245.

escape. On their end, the viracochas were also not so keen on the idea of traveling long distances to the selva and exposing themselves to the dangers of a different environment. Thus, they considered more feasible to get involved in these confrontations with the reductions of the Huallaga mission in the montaña. Father Wenceslao Breyer criticized the viracochas' role in the province of Maynas because they were either too disengaged in fulfilling their responsibility of protecting missionaries, or too violent, which created resentment on the side of the Natives.[56] In theory, though, by request of the viceroy of Peru, the viracochas had to support the missionaries to force pagans to accept their relocation to a reduction. Father Wilhelm de Tres' account in 1731 describing the time he had to rescue one father and one viracocha from the rebel Natives demonstrates the ongoing tensions between the Jesuits, Natives, and the viracochas.[57] He complained that only six Spaniards agreed to go with him in this rescue expedition, and when the soldiers found the rebels, he had to implore them to not use violence. Ultimately, the Jesuits knew that violence could get out of hand quickly, harming their fragile relationships with Natives even more.

'Taming' wilderness

The variety of languages that Natives from different nations spoke, even within the same reduction, prevented missionaries from basic communication with Natives, let alone properly catechizing them. In Quito, while preparing their expedition to the province of Maynas,

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[56] R.P. Wenceslao Breyer, "Carta del P. Wenceslao Breyer, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús de la Provincia de Bohemia, a su hermano el Padre Breyer, sacerdote de dicha Compañía y provincia de Praga. Escrita en el pueblo Santiago de Laguna el 18 de junio de 1699," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 93.

[57] R.P. Wilhelm de Tres, "Carta del R. P. Wilhelm de Tres, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús en el rio Amazonas al Reverendo Padre Jose Chambge, sacerdote de la misma Compañía. Escrita en Cuenca, Sudamérica, el 1 de junio de 1731," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 250.

missionaries typically learned Quechua, or what they called the Inca language or *lengua general*.[58] However, when the missionaries reached these diverse Indigenous groups, they realized that each one of them had their own language, and that if they wanted to evangelize that area, they had to learn all of these. Thus, the fathers also spent a long effort in their reductions trying to find the best way to communicate with Natives who spoke different languages. Compared to the Jesuits' past experiences working with the reductions of Moxos, father Zephyris wrote a letter to his brother commenting on the challenges posed by the existence of so many languages that were so strange for a foreign missionary like himself. Reflecting on the accounts of another father Juan Bautista Julian who had learned Quechua and other Indigenous languages, father Zephyris described what this father had told him about his experience in his reduction, as well as his inability to communicate with Natives:

> He [father Juan Bautista Julian] could not understand or speak one word with Natives when he arrived at their town. Nor was someone to be found who could serve as an interpreter. That is why he took two native boys in his service, taught them the general Indigenous language [Quechua] with hard efforts, so that, after they had studied, they could instruct them [natives] in their mother tongue and, therefore, he was going to be able to exercise his [missionary] work. But how long would this work last? However, there is still no other way easier to Christianize these wild nations.[59]

Even if it took years for the fathers to make progress in breaking the language barrier, the Jesuits also had to face many other challenges in converting natives to Catholicism.

Since learning more than one language simultaneously required a skill set that missionaries did not have, they circumvented this issue by finding intermediaries who could have a sense of one of the Native languages and Quechua to serve as interpreters for the Jesuits. Due

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[58] Until this day, Kechwas from Lamas speak the variant of Quechua from northern Andes, similar to the one spoken in the Amazon region of modern Ecuador.

[59] R.P. Francisco Xavier Zephyris, "Segunda carta del Padre Zephyris a su distinguido hermano, el señor Felix von Zephyris. Escrita en Quito, el 13 de noviembre de 1724," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 169.

to previous experiences of Spaniards coming from coastal cities to the montaña towns in need for Native interpreters, most of these Native intermediaries and interpreters could be found in the towns of Lamas and Moyobamba. During the times that the Jesuit father could not find someone willing to live in the reductions with them, the fathers came up with a system for training Natives from different nations to speak Quechua. The logic behind teaching them Quechua instead of Spanish relied in the previous experience of the Inca using Quechua as the language of the Inca empire. In Maroni's words, "introducing in the reductions the use of the Inca language [..] as this language was found early in the city of Borja and the province of the Maynas, where the Spaniards who were assisting in that conquest were introducing it, it was not very difficult to extend it to other reductions that communicated with the Maynas [people]."[60] To that end, missionaries sent one representative of the reduction to one of the towns with the purpose of turning them into their interpreters. Father Maroni depicted the Jesuits' efforts in propagating Quechua, by teaching it in the cities of Quito, Borja, and Moyobamba to other fathers and other Natives.[61] This measure, however, did not solve the problem that missionaries encountered when they interacted with the elderly and women, who ignored Quechua altogether, "and so it is necessary for the missionary to learn their native language to teach and confess them."[62]

Despite the Jesuits' need to communicate for the most mundane activities, their main concern revolved around their ineffectiveness at instructing the Catholic sacraments to the so-called infidels. Having to rely on interpreters in every interaction the fathers had with Natives not only inhibited Natives' relationship with God, but it also shaped the Jesuits' way to catechize. First of all, it was almost impossible to prevent these interpreters from disclosing what they had

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[60] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 120-21.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., 120-21.

heard in confession with other Natives. Magnin expressed his frustration with this issue, describing all these confessions as being defective by default. Even if the fathers tried their best to follow the basic structure of the confession, the Natives' frequent lack of remorse while confessing added to their disinterest to express sorrow for having offended God revealed, as Magnin phrased it, the "evidence of the little importance they [Natives] placed on their infidelity."[63] The Jesuits felt forced to constantly question themselves regarding the different approaches they needed to take to convert the infidels. With all these obstacles, and without being able to communicate, how could they be expected to accomplish this missionary project? Magnin illustrated another of the missionary's sense of defeat in dealing with natives who did not care or wish to convert to Catholicism: "Do tell me! —said a missionary in his memoirs— What do I have to do with [Native] patients of this kind, who in response to all that I have advised them, they say they do not want baptism or other sacraments, that they do not regret their sins, and that they do not care whether they go to paradise or hell?"[64]

While the Jesuits expressed their efforts to avoid Natives' failure to participate in church activities (sacraments) and misunderstanding of basic doctrine, unorthodox marital and sexual practices fell into a different category. Suggesting that these were signs of barbarism, the Jesuits were specifically instructed to police those behaviors among Natives. However, persuading Natives to stop engaging in polygamous marriage not only seemed impossible, but it also had the logical effect of deterring Natives from participating in anything related to church altogether. According to father Magnin, out of all the teachings, the Natives most resisted the issue of marrying only one woman; he explained that "the missionary frequently preached against this custom and vice [until] he noticed that they no longer came to instruction; he changed the subject

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[63] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 243-244.
[64] Ibid., 226.

so as not to lose everything and since then, they attended regularly."[65] Therefore, missionaries felt the need to modify their discourse in order to not lose the Natives' already limited engagement.

Throughout their time in the region, the Jesuits learned how to adjust their methodology for catechizing, hoping Natives would voluntarily choose to stay in the reduction. However, the Jesuits' disposition on changing their own ways to indoctrinate did not prevent Natives from fleeing. Whether Natives decided it was time to leave the reduction because they were tired of serving the Jesuits at the expense of their own survival, or whether there were other Natives convincing them to do so, the fathers saw those actions as unreasonable responses to what they envisioned for the mission. Without understanding their responsibility in completely shifting Natives' political, economic, and cultural lives which depended on their connections with the land, Jesuits could only express their fear of losing more reductions jeopardizing the permanence of the mission in Maynas. After multiple experiences of seeing Natives deserting these reductions, the fathers realized that even if Natives showed visible signs that they had learned how to live as civilized and committed Christians in the reduction, Natives' knowledge about the environment as well as their "old habits" could prompt their decision for deserting the reduction. Father Francisco Zephyris wrote a letter to his sister reflecting on the difficulty for missionaries to succeed on the evangelization of Indigenous people, who he described as savages: "It is easy to imagine, on the one hand, what other brutal vices these savages engage with and, on the other hand, what is the job assigned to one missionary to be able to keep them [Natives] within the limits of Christian moderation and decency, when they have already converted to the Christian

[65] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 205.

faith."[66] Despite the time and energy the fathers invested in setting the reductions up and teaching Natives how to live as Christians, ultimately, they were unable to guarantee the permanence of Natives in these reductions. In general, the fathers expressed their frustration of not being able to achieve this goal, by reducing Natives to their stereotypical notion of savages.

Rather than elaborating on the reasons why Indigenous people chose to flee from the reductions, the Jesuits made sense of this desertion by judging their character in a derogatory way. They blamed Natives' own nature for their unwillingness to leave their old habits behind such as they drunkenness, polygamous marriages, spells, and vices in general. Father Maroni made this point clear in the following quote, interestingly adding that Natives' deceiving nature made them think that they can get away by being Christians without renouncing their previous lifestyle.

> These are the difficulties that are offered just to bring them together; not fewer than those found even after they [Natives] have been reduced when introducing them to the doctrine as a way to police them so they can have the lifestyle of other Christian towns, and above all, to remove from them their various Native customs (*costumbres gentilicias*) incompatible with the Holy Gospel such as the killing of each other for suspicions and reasons of no basis or to gain fame for being brave; noisy drunkenness; the group of women that some have, the repudiation of them by many others, as well as the spells, riddles and other abuses and vices that they would like to preserve while at the same time staying Christians; finally, the continuous trips that many engaged when being *gentiles*, and would like to continue when being Christians, leaving and forgetting for a long time their houses, children and doctrine.[67]

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[66] R.P. Francisco Xavier Zephyris, "Carta del R. P. Francisco Xav. Zephyris, S. J., misionero de la Provincia austriaca a su señorita hermana en el convento real en Hall Tirol. Escrita en la Misión de Francisco Regis, de los Jamaes, en la region del rio Marañon, el 10 de Agosto de 1742," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 278.

[67] "Estas son las dificultades que se ofrecen solo para juntarlos; no menores son las que se encuentran, aun después de poblados, para doctrinarlos, para introducir en ellos alguna especie de policía y modo de vivir según los estilos de otros pueblos cristianos, y sobre todo, para quitarles varias costumbres gentilicias incompatibles en el Santo Evangelio, como son las matanzas de unos con otros por sospechas y motivos de ningún fundamento o para granjearse fama de valientes; las borracheras ruidosas; la muchedumbre de mujeres en algunos, el repudio de ellas en otros muchos, como también los hechizos, adivinanzas y otros abusas y vicios que quisieran conservar y ser juntamente cristianos; por fin, los paseos continuos que estilan muchos cuando gentiles, y quisieran continuar cuando cristianos, ausentándose y olvidando largo tiempo sus casas, hijos y doctrina." In Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 169.

The Jesuits' reasoning for the constant challenge of Natives' deserting reductions lay in the Natives' attachment to their former ways of living. Sometimes, even if the Natives in the reduction seemed content with their situation in the reductions, other Natives would instigate riots, expecting to convince the reduced Natives to flee with them. For the missionaries, this situation was another example of Natives being simple and easily manipulated. Father Adam Schaffgen wrote a letter to another father from the Society of Jesus describing the determination of non-reduced Natives who did not reside in the reduction in rescuing Natives from the reductions, even if that meant violently fighting against the ones who wished to stay with the Jesuits.

Whether Natives fled these reductions because they wanted to, or because other Natives forced them to do so, these tensions escalated quickly and sometimes resulted in the death of Natives and fathers in charge of the reduction. Once again, father Schaffgen, writing about the Jesuits near the end of their mission in Peru, attributed these actions to the extent in which he considered Natives being savages. On one hand, Schaffgen acknowledged how barren their missionization efforts were; on the other hand, he reinforced the idea that Natives acted like savages because they were guided by evil forces due to their detachment from God.[68] Although father Schaffgen did not delve into other alternatives as to why the existence of these reductions were in constant danger, he did mention the discourse that other Natives employed to encourage Natives from the reduction to join the cause of protecting their nation's interests. In his letter, Schaffgen not only reflected on how the interaction between outsider Natives and the ones from the reduction was getting more violent than in previous years, but while doing so he wrote: "I

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[68] R.P. Adam Schaffgen, "Carta del R. P. Adam Schaffgen, S. J., misionero en la región de Quito, procedente de la Provincia del Rhin Superior, a un sacerdote de esta Provincia y Compañía. Escrita en la misión de S. Francisco Xavier, entre los Chamicuros y Tibillos, el 12 de marzo de 1752," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 320.

could not retain more time for my newly Christianized natives, telling them what I have always preached about loving the enemies and the generous forgiveness of wrongs caused, instead, they marched along with the others of their Nation, who had invited them to join in arms against their enemies, to avenge the innocent blood of their brothers killed in blood and fire."[69] Perhaps without noticing, Schaffgen's words provide a deeper understanding of Indigenous people's reluctance to stay in the reductions based on the sentiment of resistance against the Jesuits' notions of civilization and Christianity. Rather than framing these experiences as the actions of savages, Natives fighting to liberate other natives from the reduction had more to do with their sense of belonging to a group and to a place.[70]

Relocation from the selva to the montaña

By 1650, the Jesuits became well aware of the dangers involved in reducing nations located in the neighboring areas where the Marañón meets the Ucayali, Napo, and Yavari rivers. Nevertheless, the third stage, invigorated by the arrival of fathers Fritz and Richter, presented new opportunities to expand the mission to the east. Indeed, Fritz and Richter successfully established the mission in the Lower Amazon, and others on the Napo and the Ucayali rivers (see Appendix I). However, political confrontations with the Portuguese, limited support from the Spanish crown, and the reaction of nations who did not welcome the Jesuits, forced the Jesuits to retreat west close to the towns of Laguna, specifically the region enclosed by the Huallaga and the Ucayali rivers (see the yellow shaded area in fig. 4.1 & 4.2).[71] The increasing presence of the Portuguese in disrupting the Jesuit reductions became even more powerful when, in 1693, the

[69] Ibid.

[70] Schaffgen is writing about these inter-ethnic wars in the context of the Juan Santos Atahualpa revolt in the central montaña of Peru, developed in the following chapter.

[71] Negro, "Maynas, una misión entre la ilusión y el desencanto."

king of Portugal, Dom Pedro II ordered a new distribution to the territory among all religious orders, overturning the exclusivity the Society of Jesus had maintained during most of the seventeenth century.[72] This decree affected the Jesuit control over the selva, and allowed them to keep only the reductions located over the right bank of the Marañón (territory to the south), as opposed to the ones over the left bank that the Portuguese redistributed among the Franciscans, Mercederians, and Carmelites. This shift in the geographic orientation of the Jesuit missions, resulted also in a shift in their strategy. They wanted to keep reducing Natives, but they needed to also strengthen the reductions they had left while relocating the ones that were in danger of being attacked by the Portuguese or other nations.

The case of the Jesuits trying to reduce and relocate the Mayorunas or Barbudos (bearded) Indigenous people from the right bank of the Marañón to the east bank of the Huallaga illustrate, yet another of the Jesuit efforts to control Natives well known for being violent and dangerous to outsiders and the already reduced Natives.[73] Father Maroni depicted the Mayorunas before they were reduced as the ones who "do not live on the banks of this Guallaga river, but inland." And then Maroni explained that in addition to the environmental challenges of reducing Natives by trying to keep them away from the montaña, close to the river banks, they also had to face the dangers that people such as the Mayorunas presented for the reductions: "They were so feared [Mayorunas], that the Natives of the reductions did not dare to navigate the [Guallaga] river along the bank of their lands, but always on the opposite one, suspicious that they [Mayorunas] did not go after them (as it has happened) to kill them."[74] Eventually in 1651, and after multiple attempts, father Raimundo de Santa Cruz reduced these Mayorunas into the

[72] Loureiro Dias, "Jesuit Maps and Political Discourse: The Amazon River of Father Samuel Fritz."
[73] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 238.
[74] Ibid.

Huallaga missions at the east bank, who demonstrated that they could become "docile and good natives to be taught."[75] Father Maroni hypothesized that the reason why the Mayorunas were both unwilling to be reduced, and once reduced, easy to teach had to do with their previous contact with Spanish conquistadors who had a history of settlement along the Guallaga river nearby the Lamas, Tabalosos, and Santa Cruz of Saposoas founded by Pedro de Ursúa in the sixteenth century. In other words, the tradition of relationship with the empire helped in the missionization project. In fact, Maroni believed that the whiteness in the youngest generations of the Mayorunas, along with their beards could be interpreted as a sign of their early contacts with Spaniards.[76]

Father Maroni also described another father's experience, one who had the responsibility to relocate the Chayabita Indigenous group from the north of Moyobamba and Lamas in the montaña region south of the Marañón—closer to one of the riverbanks of the Paranapura river. According to Maroni, to reach the Chayabitas, he had "to navigate seven days upstream, [then] up the hills, with the annoyance of ticks… That's where they had their town and where the so-called immense forested mountains were seen, covered with thick trees and a variety of palms, […]"[77] Apparently this was a successful endeavor because some of the Chayabitas accepted the father's offer and, in exchange for canoes and tools, they relocated in the town called Paranapura. The father explained that "even if they [Chayabitas] felt bad for leaving their lands," they chose to believe what the father had told them, reassuring them that "as long as they were indoctrinated, the Spaniards would not harm them or take their children away, which is what

[75] Ibid., 242.

[76] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 242.

[77] Ibid., 257.

they feared the most."[78] The Jesuits' reasoning to assimilate the Chayabitas to the existing area of Paranapura originated from the idea that the Paranapura river, which had its origins in the forested mountains inhabited by the people of Moyobamba and the Chayabita Natives, meets the Huallaga River, closer to the Santa Maria de Huallaga town.[79] This illustrates an effective strategy used to reduce and relocate natives whose original settlement was too grueling for the missionaries to get there.

Though it is worthwhile to mention that some of the former Jesuit reductions remain today as towns, the majority of the ones located close to the riverbanks either dissolved or the Jesuits had to relocate them deep into the montaña. As early as 1642, father Francisco Figueroa saw his life's work of reducing the Xeberos, with other nations such as the Pandabeques, Cutinamas, and Cocamillas, evaporated when they were all struck by smallpox. For six months Natives from these reductions in the areas surrounding Borja died.[80] Historian Sandra Negro Tua documented that between 1690 and 1720 Natives suffered through twelve cycles of epidemics, and between 1720-1767 they endured epidemics at least fifteen other times. As a result, Natives made sense of this situation by blaming themselves, their enemies, or the Jesuits. The Jesuits portrayed Natives as being frightened, thinking that perhaps they have done something wrong, and the Jesuits had casted evil spells over them as a lesson.[81] The location of these reductions—so close to the rivers—made them even more vulnerable, since many nations used these rivers as part of their daily routes. To prevent this situation, the Jesuits relocated some of these populations deep into the montaña.

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[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid., 255.

[80] Negro, "Maynas, una misión entre la ilusión y el desencanto," 279.

[81] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 125.

This explains why even when Natives had accepted the missionaries' predicaments, as well as their relocation to one of the Jesuits' reduction, they still had to fight diseases that would kill them as soon as they had been reduced. According to Magnin, these diseases took over the new reductions, targeting only Natives who suffered strong fevers, "rheumatisms, fluxions in the head, having very unpleasant and of great effect among them because they lasted a long time and became contagious and epidemic in this country where many people got killed."[82] Natives called one of the venereal diseases: 'cuchipes', and it was so common among newborn babies that it was possible to see them infected and covered with pimples and ulcers with bone pain. Magnin reported Natives using their herbs and plant roots such as *Sarsaparilla* as a remedy. This was useful to ease their symptoms, but for cleaning and healing ulcers they used a vine called 'yahuama', which they boiled and cooked for a few days.[83]

In addition to these diseases, Natives also had to deal with measles, which killed most of them regardless of age, "taking them to the grave unless they could flee quickly enough to the forested mountains," which was seen as "the sole barrier against the ravages of this terrible evil and the progress of contagion."[84] Father Juan Bautista Julián wrote about his experience with the mission of the Xeberos. After two years of working with them, "a dangerous plague surrounded them, causing first death in a large number of them; then offering the rest the possibility to escape and leave him abandoned by himself in the forested montaña."[85] As a way to excuse the Jesuits' little progress establishing the missions in the province of Maynas, father Wenceslao Breyer explained the effects of diseases among the Natives. He blamed the *peste* or plague for

[82] Magnin, S.I., *Descripción de la provincia y misiones de Mainas en el reino de Quito*, 248-49.

[83] Ibid., 249.

[84] Ibid.

[85] R.P. Juan Bautista Julian, "Segunda carta del R. P. Juan Baut. Julian, S. J., misionero en Quito y rector en Taccunga, de la provincia de Alta Alemania, a un sacerdote de la misma Compañía y provincia. Escrita en la misión de los Xeberos," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 313.

killing Natives while also reducing the number of baptized people in the province.[86] According to father Maroni, the deadly plague struck Indigenous people from the areas surrounding the Huallaga river—specifically the population of Santiago de Laguna—in 1680.[87] Instead of waiting to get infected, some of the Natives abandoned the reduction and the father in charge, refusing to go back even after the plague was over. Faced with this situation, the father, who was not able to live without the Natives' assistance, needed to find another reduction and start all over again. Natives' experiences with epidemics became another reason to resist the Jesuit reductions, or to accept them for a short period of time and then abandon them when threatened with destruction.

Finally, it seems that some of the missionaries acknowledged that another of the challenges in relocating people from different environments lay in the Natives' inability to adapt to the new mission environment and survive there. The fathers believed that after living in the same area after so many generations, the very act of forcing Natives to live in a different place caused them so much 'nostalgia' that they could not survive in these new settlements. Though the Jesuits did not explain the symptoms, they were able to connect this disease with Natives' environmental displacement. Along with the realization that preventing these Natives from dying out of nostalgia was physically impossible for one missionary, eventually, the Jesuits recognized that the climatic differences in relocating people from where they used to live dispersed in the montaña triggered this nostalgia. Father Wenceslao Breyer attributed this feeling to the changes in the weather too: "Before they lived in the montaña and now they are forced to live on the

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[86] Here it seems that Wenceslao Breyer is referring more generically for epidemic disease and not bubonic plague. R.P. Wenceslao Breyer, "Carta del P. Wenceslao Breyer, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús de la Provincia de Bohemia, a su hermano el Padre Breyer, sacerdote de dicha Compañía y provincia de Praga. Escrita en el pueblo Santiago de Laguna el 18 de junio de 1699," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 94.

[87] Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón y misión apostólica de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Quito*, 389.

plains, which means that moving these people from their homeland is the same as taking their lives away due to their nostalgia."[88] Reflecting back on the Jesuits' constant efforts to reduce Natives in Maynas, father Zephyris believed that nostalgia was ultimately the main reason why their work as missionaries had been so unattainable for so long.[89] Once the Natives were taken away from their montaña in order to gather them in towns where they were required to identify with each other and with a new place to live, they would just get so overwhelmed by nostalgia that they would fall ill and die. "Every change of weather can potentially kill them, especially if one takes their hope of returning home away. Therefore, there are only seven souls left, out of the eight hundred brought last year."[90] The number of Natives who died of this nostalgia compared to the ones who died as a result of the epidemics remains unknown. However, the Jesuits' reflection about the effects of displacement on Natives' health seemed the only instance in which they were actually questioning their missionization methodology.

This chapter shows that the process of missionization went far beyond issues of belief; it was also about imposing a way of life based on the establishment of missions and reductions throughout the province of Maynas. Although the Jesuits envisioned their expansion to become as broad as the Marañón River itself, placing their dominion over the montaña and the selva, the Portuguese countermanding of these advances forced the Jesuits to retrieve to the southern areas of the Marañón, closer to the mouths of the Santiago, Pastaza, and Huallaga rivers. Being close

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[88] R.P. Wenceslao Breyer, "Carta del P. Wenceslao Breyer, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús de la Provincia de Bohemia, a su hermano el Padre Breyer, sacerdote de dicha Compañía y provincia de Praga. Escrita en el pueblo Santiago de Laguna el 18 de junio de 1699," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 94.

[89] R.P. Francisco Xavier Zephyris, "Octava carta del Padre Zephyris, misionero de la Compañía de Jesús, desde el rio Marañón, al P. Francisco Xavier Gottner, sacerdote de esta Compañía, doctor en filosofía y profesor de la Universidad de Graz. Escrita en el pueblo de Pinches, cerca del rio Pastaza, que desemboca en el Marañón, el 2 de enero de 1727," in Bravo and Latorre, *Las misiones de Mainas de la antigua provincia de Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 193.

[90] Ibid.

to the montaña, specifically to the towns of Lamas and Moyobamba, represented a huge advantage for the Jesuits even more so to counter the numerous times when Natives resisted the Jesuits' control by abandoning the reductions. This created, in turn, a corridor that went from north to south parallel to the montaña where the Jesuit missions remained connected to Quito and the towns located in the montaña rather than to coastal cities. Based on the Jesuits accounts, personal letters, and maps, this chapter traced back at least three distinct periods of the Jesuits' efforts to reduce Natives with the intention of teaching how to become civilized, as well as Natives' constant negotiation among themselves, the Jesuits, and their environment. At the end, their choices fluctuated between staying in the reductions subjected to the Jesuits' wishes, or following their own traditions and its linkages to the places where they were originally from.

Chapter 5

Where Enlightenment and Improvement End: The Bishop Martinez de Compañón's Efforts for Improving the Montaña in the Late Eighteenth Century

FIGURE 5.1. Carrier Native from Lamas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

Bishop Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón y Bujanda commissioned Native illustrators to paint during his *visita* or pastoral visit of the bishopric of Trujillo in 1780. The above illustration represents the dense geography of the montaña region where a Native carrier, the carrier's son, and dog appear to be immersed in the montaña. This landscape covered by forested mountains and different sizes of trees seeks to emphasize both nature and culture. As will be explained throughout this chapter, Indigenous inhabitants from the montaña—some of them identified as Motilones—living in the main cities or towns such as Moyobamba and Lamas were accustomed to traveling long distances with heavy loads on their backs. Perhaps the Native from Lamas holding an Andean pan flute in the image symbolizes Natives' physical, linguistic, and social capabilities to move across different regions such as the Andean highlands while maintaining sociocultural and economic linkages.

This tradition of wide mobility among Natives from the montaña allowed them certain autonomy from what the Bishop envisioned for the improvement of the bishopric. Particularly during the rainy season when Spaniards found it very dangerous to navigate the rivers, and outsiders found it almost impossible to access the region. Every attempt to do so required many days of walking on roads which generally could only be recognized and found by local Indigenous people. The clothing Natives wear in this image is the same one displayed in another image of a Native from Lamas wearing church clothing, and different from the one showing a Native from the montaña identified as an *infiel* or infidel (see fig. 5.6 & 5.7). The infidel from the montaña wears a crown of feathers on top of his long hair while holding a bow and arrow, and what looks like a club used as a weapon (see fig. 5.6). This difference between the carrier Native and the infidel one matters because they are both identified as Natives from the montaña in the image's description. However, unlike the infidel, the carrier Native from the city of Lamas

has already been Christianized. The child holding the dog on a leash, reveals yet another marker of civilization. All these observations reinforced Martínez Compañón's ideas that cities functioned as a civilizing entity providing its inhabitants the conditions to live in a civilized manner as opposed to the montaña.[1]

During his Royal Visit to the montaña region, Bishop Martínez Compañón (1737-1797) wrote a letter to the viceroy of Peru explaining the challenges that the montaña region represented for fulfilling his obligations as the highest colonial authority in the region. In 1782, Martínez Compañón firmly believed that the environmental features of the montaña region prevented its inhabitants from living a proper Christian life. Besides the fear of losing the presence of the church in these provinces due to the geography of the montaña, Martínez Compañón was also afraid of the negative environmental effects that the montaña could have on both locals and outsiders who interacted with this landscape. For the Bishop, the montaña represented an obstacle to his plans of achieving social and economic order and improvement in the bishopric—key ideological principles of this reformist era.[2] He feared that the wild conditions of the montaña would prevent Indigenous people and even the representatives of the secular clergy from becoming 'civilized'.

This chapter explores the meanings that the Bishop ascribed to the montaña and its inhabitants in the broad context of the Bourbon Reforms by looking at his efforts of relocating Lamas (the main city of Peru's Northern montaña). Although this is a story told from the perspective of a colonial church representative, Martínez Compañón's views of the montaña

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[1] The formal distinction between city and town mattered during this period and in this region, but in this case, it would be more helpful to picture these cities in rural areas as towns.

[2] John R. Fisher, *Bourbon Peru, 1750-1824* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003); Marta Herrera Ángel, *Ordenar para controlar: ordenamiento espacial y control político en las llanuras del Caribe y en los Andes centrales Neogranadinos, siglo XVIII* (Ediciones Uniandes-Universidad de los Andes, 2014); Cristina Mazzeo de Vivó, ed., *Las relaciones de poder en el Perú. Estado, regiones e identidades locales. Siglos XVII-XIX* (Fondo Editorial PUCP, 2001).

were clearly challenged by the responses of Indigenous people to his efforts for relocating them to a different environment. Following the analysis of Indigenous people's responses to the Bishop's improving agenda, this chapter suggests a completely different narrative for understanding contests over the montaña region. Using images as historical sources reveal the ways that patrons' perceptions about nature were not always aligned with the way Compañón's Native collaborators chose to produce what the montaña embodied.[3] My aim is to confront the idea of the 'montaña as an obstacle' and the obvious contradiction with the Indigenous Lamas community's idea of the 'montaña as a central place for their existence'. For these Natives, the region had facilitated their possibilities, not only to stay alive, but also to resist the colonial state and its impositions. The geography of the montaña allowed its Indigenous inhabitants to maintain some level of economic and sociocultural independence from colonial power—and this is a crucial reason that modernizers like the Bishop found the montaña environment so troubling. For him, the montaña represented a frontier at the edge of the empire dislocated from civilization.

Martínez Compañón, from Navarra,-Spain, completed his university training in canon law in 1759. After his academic job as a chancellor at the University of Oñate, he was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1761. According to historian Emily Berquist, his appointment as an adviser of the Inquisition in 1766 helped advance his ecclesiastical career to become the canon of Lima's cathedral in America.[4] After holding this position he got promoted to Bishop in the northern area of Trujillo. Accompanied by his secretary Pedro Echevarri, the Bishop's approach relied in familiarizing himself with the material and social situation of his bishopric's

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[3] Daniela Bleichmar, *Visible empire: botanical expeditions and visual culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment* (University of Chicago Press, 2012).

[4] Emily Berquist, *The Bishop's Utopia: Envisioning Improvement in Colonial Peru* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 21.

jurisdiction. As one of the king's church representatives in America, Martínez Compañón believed in his capability for enacting the Spanish Empire's reform projects as part of the Bourbon reform agenda. The Bishop's task of national improvement for the benefit of the empire resulted in his campaign to assess how and where his diocesans lived. Berquist suggests that Martínez Compañón wanted to prove to the European elites that Natives—if properly guided—could be transformed into ideal vassals so they could become full members of Spanish society.[5]

As a reformist, the Bishop's ideas to improve his bishopric's jurisdiction (93,205 square miles) included the establishment of schools, towns, and cities to ensure that local populations could live and behave like Catholics. This idea not only followed Martínez Compañón's plans for civilizing his diocesans, but it also aligned with the Bourbon agenda of producing more knowledge about the colonies. The Bishop aspired to capitalize on having obedient and educated Natives who had knowledge about local plant and animal life. With the idea of bringing that knowledge to the Spanish Crown in a way that it could benefit them economically, the Bishop gave special consideration to Indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants, food crops, rivers, and all sorts of resources that could be used to build houses and churches.[6] Martínez Compañón arrived in Peru around the time when naturalists such as Antonio de Ulloa, Cosme Bueno, Hipólito Ruiz, José Pavón, and Alejandro Malaspina had shown their interests in the flora and

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[5] Berquist, 31.

[6] For more about the growing community of naturalists in the late eighteenth century and how they placed their scientific knowledge at the center of the empire by the time that Martínez Compañón arrived in Peru, see: Neil Safier, *Measuring the New World : Enlightenment Science and South America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Pedro M. Guibovich Pérez, "Morales Cama, Joan Manuel; Morales Cama, Marco Antonio. La Ilustración en Lima: vida y obra del doctor Cosme Bueno y Alegre (1711-1798)", *Bulletin De L'Institut Français D'Études Andines*, núm. 40 (2011): 606–8; Bleichmar, *Visible empire: botanical expeditions and visual culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment*; Felix Munoz Garmendia, ed., *La botánica al servicio de la Corona. La expedición de Ruiz, Pavón y Dombey al Virreinato del Peru* (Madrid: CSIC-Lunwerg, 2003); Margarita Eva Rodríguez García, "Lejos del gabinete: viajes científicos a la América portuguesa y española (1777-1792) y representación de la naturaleza", *Memorias: revista digital de historia y arqueología desde el Caribe*, núm. 25 (2015); Rafael Sagredo Baeza y José Ignacio Gonzales Leiva, *La Expedición Malaspina en la frontera Austral del Imperio Español* (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria-Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana de la DIBAM, 2004); Arthur R. Steele, *Flores para el Rey. La expedición de Ruiz y Pavón y la flora del Perú* (Barcelona: Ediciones del Serbal, 1982).

fauna of Peru. For these scientists the understanding of Peru's natural resources would contribute to the commercial and economic improvement of the viceroyalty.[7]

Though Martínez Compañón focused his attention on the entire bishopric's jurisdiction with the coastal city of Trujillo as its provincial capital, he must have known that the montaña region was going to be the most challenging area for him to 'improve'. During the second half of the eighteenth century, the Spanish Crown and viceregal administrators had to contend with the power vacuum left in the Northern part of the montaña region as a result of the Jesuits' expulsion in 1767 from the Maynas province. The montaña in central Peru had experienced the Indigenous rebellion of Juan Santos Atahualpa in 1742, halting any attempt of the colonial authorities to attain control over that area.[8] Colonial officials were interested in having a better sense of the montaña region in general, encouraging naturalists and people like the Bishop to gather information about the territory and its inhabitants. For historian Víctor Peralta Ruiz, naturalists directed their efforts to explore what they considered the edge of the empire, referring to the area located on the eastern side of the Andean heights.[9] Peralta Ruiz provided three reasons why learning more about the montaña made the most sense for the empire. First, the more existing routes to access this region the better to promote economic and commercial colonization of the region. Second, having an official presence in the montaña would avoid a potential dispute with Portugal over their imperial boundaries. Finally, the discourse regarding most Natives living in the montaña and further east as savages persisted among colonial elites based on the lack of socio-economic and cultural connections between the coast and the montaña. Responding to

[7] Víctor Peralta Ruiz, "La frontera Amazónica en el Perú del siglo XVIII: una representación desde la Ilustración", *Brocar: Cuadernos de investigación histórica*, núm. 30 (2006): 139–58.

[8] Fernando Santos Granero, ed., *Opresión colonial y resistencia indígena en la alta Amazonía* (CEDIME-FLACSO, 1992).

[9] Peralta Ruiz, "La frontera Amazónica en el Perú del siglo XVIII: una representación desde la Ilustración".

these challenges, Martínez Compañón's map of the bishopric of Trujillo sought to provide a sense of the bishopric's extension, as well as the Bishop's ideas to achieve an internal economic connection between the main cities represented with red dots.

FIGURE 5.2. Topographical map of the bishopric of Trujillo of Peru. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

The red dots indicate the cities of Trujillo along the coast of the Pacific Ocean, the Andean city of Chachapoyas, and the montaña cities of Moyobamba and Lamas. The black-shaded oval provides a sense of Martínez Compañón's vision for improving his bishopric based on ensuring the connectivity between the provinces, while realizing that Moyobamba and Lamas were too far removed. The new town of Tarapoto is located close to Lamas in an orange dot. The Bishop believed in relocating Lamas to Tarapoto as a way to remove Lamas from the montaña.

This map represents the geographic diversity that Bishop Martínez Compañón and his collaborators explored as part of his pastoral visit in 1782. Out of all the environmental features that characterized the bishopric of Trujillo, the ones that the Bishop highlighted the most were the rivers, the Andean heights, and the montaña region symbolized by little trees. The map key also illustrates the colonial hierarchy of urban settings existing in the bishopric such as the episcopal city—in this case Trujillo—located close to the south west border with the bishopric of Lima; then the cities, towns, parishes, new parishes, and suppressed ones, followed by mission towns, towns of infidels, rivers, provinces, Andean heights, and finally the montaña. As it will be explained later in this chapter, Martínez Compañón's pastoral visit of the twelve provinces delineated in the map with red resulted in his realization that the montaña and the towns located there were much further to the east and relatively disconnected with the rest. Getting from the city of Chachapoyas to the cities on the eastern edge of the bishopric, Moyobamba and Lamas, took more travel time than what the Bishop had anticipated. Based on the Bishop's grueling experience in the montaña traveling through the hilly geography and the bad shape of the roads laden with mud, the map key has a note warning future travelers about the number of days it could take when traveling in the montaña. Going from Moyobamba to Chachapoyas in the rugged territory of the montaña took the Bishop twice as much time as it took him to travel the same number of leagues elsewhere.[10] While this map responded to the empire's need for information about the geography and the access routes to these different regions, it also characterized the Bishop's desire to force the internal articulation of the bishopric, and the montaña region made this task far more challenging.

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[10] See the key map on fig. 5.2: "En tierras ágrias, y montañas segun su maior, ó menor fragosidad se andan en un dia quatro leguas en línea recta, tres, y hasta nomás que dos, y quarto como subida en mucha parte del camino de Chachapoyas a Moyobamba."

The visita

As part of the Bourbon Reforms, Viceroy Amat summoned the Sixth Council of Lima in 1773 with the purpose of applying Enlightenment reforms to the American clergy and the Church of the empire.[11] These new policies were meant to establish financial directions, strengthening tax collection mechanisms, reorganize the administrative bureaucracy, and improve religious civil service and education through the creation of new institutions. Following these measures, the Spanish brought back the *mita*, or forced labor system in mines along with the increasing of the *alcabala* and the legalization of the *reparto*. While the alcabala functioned as a tax for essential items, the reparto involved the forced sale of goods to Indigenous peoples. For Martínez Compañón, an effective enactment of these reforms required specific knowledge about the number of diocesans living in the bishopric, the kind of urban settlements they were living in or had close, as well as the main economic, social, and cultural activities in which they engaged on a regular basis. Martínez Compañón saw it as imperative to plan his visita to the bishopric. Typically, a visita was an expected way to start a new residency as a Bishop. However, in practice this would not usually happen and if it did, it would have been a short mandatory one to the most important or loyal towns.[12] As a result, the huge geographic extent of the Bishop's visita with the scale of the Bishop's scientific collections were exceptional.

Martínez Compañón became the second Bishop who actually complied with his pastoral duty of visiting all the territories that belonged to his bishopric. He followed the steps of Alfonso Toribio de Mogrovejo, the second Archbishop of Lima (from 1580 to 1606) who organized four

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[11] Daniel Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo (Peru) Bajo el Episcopado de Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón, 1780-1790* (Victoria-Gasteiz: Servicio Central de Publicaciones, Gobierno Vasco, 1992), 44.

[12] According to the Laws of the Indies —development of the decrees of the Council of Trent and Lima— prelates had to personally visit their respective dioceses and recognize the status of their doctrines. In Compilation of Laws of the Indies, law XXIV, title VII, book, "On archbishops and bishops."

pastoral visits in his jurisdiction.[13] Known also as Saint Toribio, his second visit in 1585 to the northeast included the same places that two hundred years later Martínez Compañón visited. Inspired by Saint Toribio's experience gathering data on every town where he stopped, not only about the history of the church but the condition of the territory and its inhabitants, Martínez Compañón also wanted to visit these territories in order to measure the economic and social situation of the people living there. According to Berquist, Martínez Compañón's sense of obligation to visit the territories relied on his belief that "without understanding local people, he could not adequately assess how they utilized the natural world around them and how this relationship could be improved."[14] For the Bishop, the visita represented an opportunity to collect data from the inhabitants and their interactions with nature to guarantee their inclusion in the bishopric as religious citizens. To that end, the Bishop also sought to improve the infrastructure and political organization that would allow him the possibility to collect taxes, and therefore, increase the revenues for the bishopric.

Martínez Compañón's records regarding his pastoral visit to the territory within the bishopric of Trujillo surpass 7,500 folios. These documents reflect Martínez Compañón's attempts to keep colonial authorities in Lima and in Madrid informed about his efforts to reform the social, political, and economic situation of his jurisdiction. He wanted simultaneously to create ethnographic and geographic knowledge about the bishopric to promote reforms at the provincial level and use that information to write a book describing the Natural History of Trujillo. Though he never actually wrote the book, he made sure to collect and illustrate the social and economic activities that he witnessed as well as the physical characteristics of the

[13] For more on the archival records of Saint Toribio's visits accounts see: José Antonio Benito, ed., *Libro de visitas de Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo (1593-1605)* (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2006).

[14] Berquist, *The Bishop's Utopia: Envisioning Improvement in Colonial Peru*, 53.

landscape. After Martínez Compañón died, his nephew, José Ignacio Lequanda compiled these drawings in seven volumes.[15] Two of these volumes portray the people that Martínez Compañón encountered in his visit and their daily activities such as hunting, cooking, and fishing. Compared to other naturalists exploring the flora and fauna in the late eighteenth century, Martínez Compañón had bigger plans. As a religious devotee, scientist, and reformer, the Bishop's improvement project went beyond the study of the human and non-human. He aimed at the transformation of people's minds, bodies, and souls by improving the environment in which these people lived. Therefore, he devoted the bishopric's resources to collect data so he could structure his reforms accordingly to the different provinces of Trujillo.

Although Martínez Compañón left a huge collection of writings, now located at the National Archives of Colombia and the Archivo General de las Indias, he also left a noteworthy collection of cultural artifacts, maps, and graphic illustrations of people, animals, and plants derived from many of the places that he encountered in his pastoral visit. While the 1,327 watercolor illustrations in the collection were gathered from local and Native informants, the Bishop also commissioned members of the secular clergy to help him collect samples of specimens that were specific to each one of the bishopric's provinces. After almost three years of travels, Martínez Compañón kept correspondence with parish priests to encourage them to contribute to his enterprise of gathering data which he could use to quantify the region's population and natural resources.[16] To that end he sent them a list of eighteen questions regarding the Natives (education level, marital status, life expectancy, common sicknesses, allegiances to other ethnic groups), the climatic conditions where these Natives lived, as well as

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[15] C. Martínez Compañón, *Trujillo Del Perú*, 12 vols. (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1985-1991, 1936).

[16] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo.* 44.

the economic activities in which they engaged. Unfortunately, whether these parish priests ever sent their answers back to the Bishop or not remains unknown due to the lack of archival records. In general terms, Martínez Compañón's great interest in discovering local people's agricultural, commercial, and cultural activities provide a sense of how much he perceived himself as a religious man loyal to the Spanish Crown.

In 1780, the viceroy of Peru officially allowed Martínez Compañón's pastoral visit in every territory of the bishopric of Trujillo. With this decree, Martínez Compañón not only believed in bringing the population together and organized into cities and towns, but he also wanted to establish a reliable infrastructure of roads and bridges in order to facilitate connectivity with an efficient collection of taxes and commercial exchanges. However, 1780 was a year marked by Indigenous revolts in the south and center of the viceroyalty of Peru, forcing Martínez Compañón to delay the visit for two years. Finally, on June 2 of 1782 Martínez Compañón started his visit in the company of his secretary Pedro de Echevarri, as well as a missionary, a chaplain, a prosecutor, a notary, and several Indigenous and black servants.[17] Martínez Compañón departed from Trujillo in the month of June to avoid the rainy season so his company could transit—as much as the geography allowed—through narrow roads by riding mules and hand carriages called *literas*. He traveled north along the coastline stopping in the beach town of Chicama, then crossing the Andean heights until reaching Cajamarca where he visited small towns while conducting an inspection of the local clergy. Following the northeast route, he visited the mines in Celendín, and from there he changed his plans. Instead of heading down to the Andean province of Huamachuco, he went northeast to the montaña city of Lamas, the one positioned at the eastern edge of the bishopric in his map (see fig.5.2). In his letter to the viceroy

[17] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo,* 59.

of Peru, Martínez Compañón apologized for changing the pastoral visit's itinerary without informing him about it.[18] According to this letter, Martínez Compañón decided to arrive to Lamas first in order to address the ongoing local conflict between the inhabitants of the city of Lamas and the ones from a nearby town called Tarapoto (see fig. 5.2 & 5.3). On the one hand, Martínez Compañón claimed that solving this conflict was an urgent matter due to the dangerous consequences of having people from other towns of the same province involved in this serious dispute over land rights. On the other hand, Martínez Compañón explained to the viceroy that he needed to verify first if the information about the conflict was accurate. Even if Martínez Compañón did not explicitly reference the Indigenous revolts from previous years, he needed to personally address this situation in case it could turn into an Indigenous uprising.

[18] Baltasar Martínez Compañón. *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú), señaladas por el obispo de Trujillo, D. Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón*, 1784 (Bogotá: AGN, Colonia Miscelánea Tomo 30 folio 119).

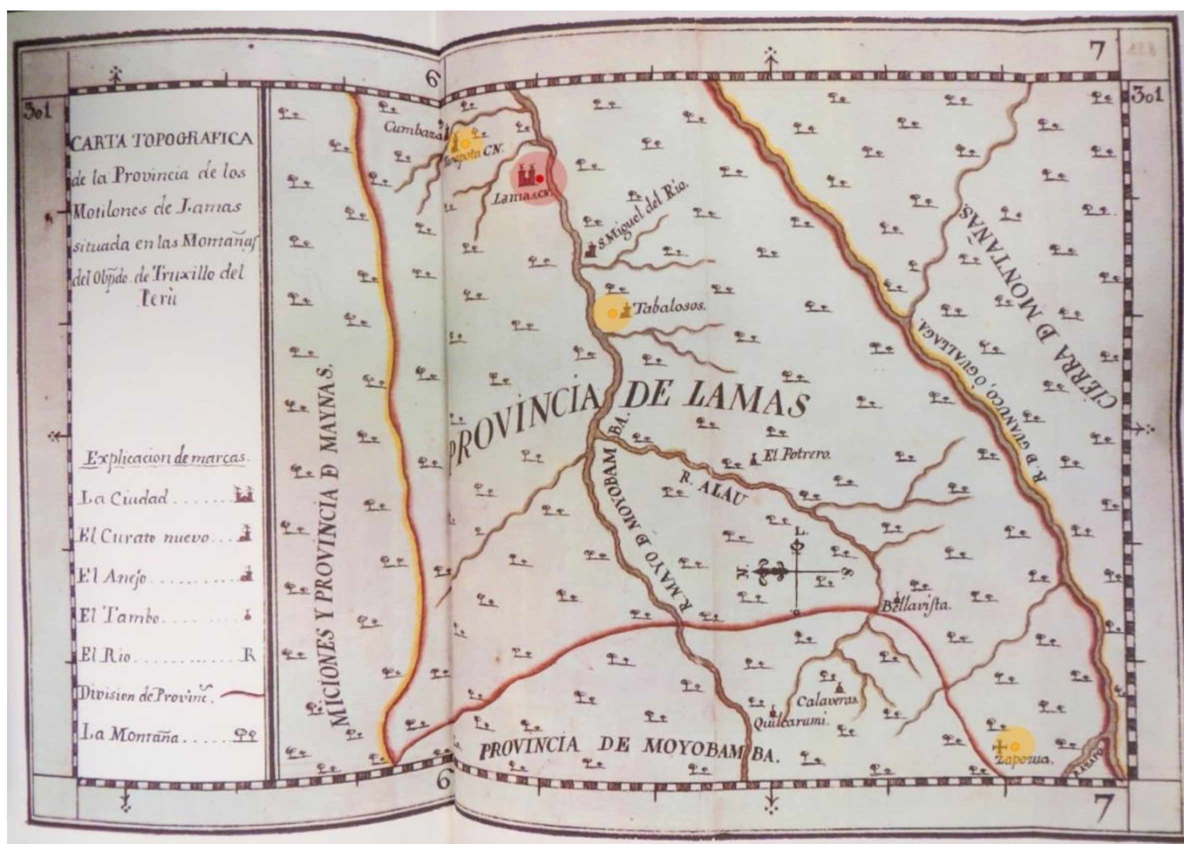

FIGURE 5.3. Topographical map of the province of Lamas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.
This map shows the scattered location of towns in this mountainous territory that Martínez Compañón intended to 'solve' by relocating the ones located in the montaña such as Lamas. The province's capital city of Lamas is located at the top with a red dot symbolized by a church. Note that the orientation of this map differs from modern cartography conventions. North is on the left of the map, and the east is at the top where Lamas and the new curate of Tarapoto (orange dot) are located. In contrast to Lamas' population where two thirds of the population were Natives, the rest of these towns marked with orange dots were either former Jesuits' reductions or Indigenous communities named after their ethnicity. In both cases, they were entirely populated by Natives. If he would have had more resources, he claimed, he would have removed all the towns from the montaña including this province and Moyobamba's too presented at the bottom of this map—east from Lamas.

Indigenous revolts in Peru had been a constant threat to Spanish rule especially since the enforcement of the Bourbon reforms during the eighteenth century. In 1742, the multiethnic Indigenous revolt of Juan Santos Atahualpa started in the central montaña region of Peru. Although this happened forty years prior to the designation of Martínez Compañón as the Bishop of Trujillo and the rising of Tupac Amaru in southern Peru, the successful uprising of Juan Santos exposed colonial authorities' lack of control over the montaña which lasted one hundred years. Ethnohistorian Fernando Santos Granero contextualizes this revolt as the culmination of Natives' discontent towards the Franciscans' 'evangelizing methods' at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[19] The experience of two failed local Indigenous revolts in the same area, the Amuesha in 1712 and the Ashaninca in 1724, paved the way for the success of Juan Santos. By the time Juan Santos organized his revolt, Santos Granero suggests that Natives coming from Franciscan reductions were ready to join forces with Andean Natives to support Juan Santos' revolt against the Spaniards. Juan Santos' uprising in the montaña became impossible to defeat even as it forced the Franciscans to abandon their missions and flee to the coast.

Based on his promise of freeing everyone from persecution, tyranny, and forced labor from the Franciscans and the Spaniards, Juan Santos achieved what his predecessors had not been able to do by themselves; the unification of central montaña Natives and Andean Natives against colonial impositions. The writings of Spanish scientists Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, who were in Peru at the time of Juan Santos' revolt, have given historians a sense of colonial officials' perceptions about Juan Santos' military advances.[20] They all feared the possibility of Juan Santos and his army taking over the Andean city of Pasco—one of the main centers of

[19] Santos Granero, *Opresión colonial y resistencia indígena en la alta Amazonía*.

[20] Peralta Ruiz, "La frontera Amazónica en el Perú del siglo XVIII: una representación desde la Ilustración", 145.

mining activity in the viceroyalty of Peru.[21] According to Juan and Ulloa, none of the Viceroy of Peru Marquis of Villagarcía's military campaigns against Juan Santos were effective due in part to Juan Santos' rebels' knowledge about the montaña environment. By 1746, the Spaniards realized the harshness of the montaña geography had made it impossible to defeat Juan Santos. As a result, they changed their offensive strategy to a defensive one. Juan Santos retreated to the center of his operations in the montaña region while keeping it—and himself—protected from the Franciscans and colonial officials. Eventually, Juan Santos' resistance faded away, but that part of the montaña remained independent from colonial and republican domination for the next one hundred years.[22]

Following the experience of what happened in the central montaña of Peru, it became clear to colonial authorities that the montaña region within the bishopric of Trujillo needed special attention to avoid another rebellion. These authorities feared that losing control over this part of the montaña region could trigger two irreversible events for the Spanish empire. On the one hand, they believed that Natives from the montaña needed colonial dominance or else they could regress to a 'wild state'. They were also aware that the montaña region remained as one of the most vulnerable frontier zones they needed to protect from the Portuguese empire.

In the context of colonial authorities frightened by the dissemination of Indigenous uprisings, the viceroy of Peru Jose Amat appointed Martínez Compañón as the Bishop of Trujillo. Four months later the Túpac Amaru rebellion started in southern Peru in 1780. According to historian Restrepo Manrique, this event clearly influenced Martínez Compañón's

[21] For more about mining centers in the viceroyalty of Peru and the loss of Upper Peru mining centers due to the new viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata in 1776 see: John Fisher, "Silver Production in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1776-1824", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 55, núm. 1 (1975): 25–43.

[22] James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (Yale University Press, 2009).

views since he witnessed aspects of the rebellion while he was in Lima with the Archbishop of Lima Diego Antonio de Parada.[23] Historian Charles Walker argues that the rebellion of Túpac Amaru represented another revolt against the representatives of the Spanish crown who embodied the Bourbon reforms.[24] However, the Bishop's reaction to it seemed different from the rest of colonial officials. Martínez Compañón sought to convince church authorities to avoid a military intervention when dealing with Túpac Amaru.[25] The Bishop expressed his conviction for taking a paternalistic approach rather than a violent one. He believed in the promotion of formal education for Natives as a way to instruct them about the benefits of a more efficient tax collection system. Natives' understanding that these taxes were going directly to the King of Spain would end up discouraging them from rebelling against him.

When Martínez Compañón became the Bishop of Trujillo, he realized that the whole territory covered a large population scattered in a strikingly diverse landscape.[26] After the creation of the Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata in 1776, the bishopric's territory was considered the biggest in the Viceroyalty of Peru with the largest population, but also the poorest measured by the limited tax collection. According to the Bishop's own demographic calculations, the bishopric's total population was 240,463. 118,324 were Natives (48.6%); 79,043 mestizos (32.56%); 21,980 Spanish, including creoles born in America (9.68%); 16,630 *pardos* or mixed-race of African descent (7.10%); and 4,486 blacks (2.09%).[27] Though the Bishop's illustrations portrayed female and male representatives of these groups, the majority of his reforms targeted Indigenous population who mostly lived in the Andean territories and the montaña region.

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[23] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo,* 44.

[24] Charles F. Walker, *The Tupac Amaru rebellion* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014).

[25] Berquist, *The Bishop's Utopia: Envisioning Improvement in Colonial Peru*, 94.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Martínez Compañón, "Estado que demuestra el número de Abitantes del Obispado con distinción de castas."

The Bishop's main reasons to focus on Natives—specifically the ones living in the montaña—relied on the almost non-existent presence of colonial authorities in the montaña after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767. As already discussed in the previous chapter, the Jesuits had kept a relative control over the montaña via mission towns. For one hundred and thirty years Jesuits were the only colonial representatives in the region. Although cities in the montaña such as Lamas, with 4,000 inhabitants, and Moyobamba, with 5,000, persisted, the situation of the abandoned mission towns and scattered groups of infidels organized by their Indigenous ethnicity worried the Bishop (see fig. 5.3). For Martínez Compañón, the lack of structure and colonial civil or secular representatives in the montaña could potentially affect Natives' ability to live like civilized people. In this context, Martínez Compañón wanted to make sure he could exert his authority over the montaña before it was too late. Following other critics of the Jesuits, Martínez Compañón blamed the Jesuits for the lack of socio-political and economic organization in their missions. Although this was consistent with the common rivalry between secular clergy and church missionary orders at that time, the Bishop as well as other colonial authorities' rhetoric condemning the Jesuits' strategy pointed out their disregard for aligning themselves with Spanish rule.[28] In maintaining relative political and economic autonomy, the Jesuits' prevented their missions from the stain of the Spanish colonial system. Thus, after the Jesuits left America, the Spanish faulted the Jesuits for their failure to take advantage of the abundance of natural resources and their commercialization.[29] In the Bishop's eyes, had the montaña region been in

[28] Manuel María Marzal y Sandra Negro Tua, eds., *Un reino en la frontera: las misiones jesuitas en la América colonial* (Editorial Abya Yala & PUCP, 2000); Francisco Borja Medina, "Los Maynas después de la expulsión de los Jesuitas", en *Un reino en la frontera: las misiones jesuitas en la América colonial* (Editorial Abya Yala & PUCP, 2000).

[29] Borja Medina, "Los Maynas después de la expulsión de los Jesuitas".

the hands of someone other than the Jesuits, his task of integrating them to a civilized life might have been less challenging.

The Bishop's plans for improving the montaña

Following his plans for visiting the furthest cities of his bishopric, Martínez Compañón headed east to the cities of Lamas and Moyobamba (capital of the provinces of the same name). It took the Bishop ten days to travel from the Andean city of Chachapoyas to Lamas, and another eight days to go from Lamas to Moyobamba. The poor conditions of the roads as well as the rugged and mountainous forested terrain of the montaña forced the Bishop and his crew to seek different roads—at the risk of getting lost or being attacked by infidel Natives or animals—until they eventually found their way to Lamas. Reflecting on the harshness of the roads, how isolated these cities were from the rest of the bishopric's provinces, and the challenges he faced traveling to both of these provinces, the Bishop believed that "due to the distances, the roughness of roads, and the lack of everything in these solitudes and remote places, it is experienced as a necessity his assistance to maintain and start a life by leaving all of that behind."[30] In keeping with his plan of reforming and improving his jurisdiction, the Bishop devoted his attention to the construction of roads and the establishment of urban settlements for the small towns that surrounded the cities of Moyobamba and Lamas. While most of the new towns remained over time, the roads could not even last a whole season. No matter how hard he tried to keep these towns connected, maintaining the roads during the rainy season when all turned to mud was nearly impossible. The

[30] Baltasar Martínez Compañón. *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú), señaladas por el obispo de Trujillo, D. Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón*, 1784 (Bogotá: AGN, Colonia Miscelánea Tomo 30 folio 135).

more time he spent traveling throughout the montaña, the more convinced he became that its geography was going to be an obstacle to carrying out his reform plans.

Martínez Compañón valued the montaña's fertile soil, mild weather, fruit trees, and its abundant natural resources with plenty to fish and hunt (see fig. 5.4 & 5.5); nevertheless, he argued that none of this would matter if these towns stayed inaccessible and so dispersed (see fig. 5.4). The lack of reliable roads to transit in and out of them prevented their inhabitants' chances to become part of what the Bishop envisioned as a broader commercial network with Chachapoyas as the economic center. In the Bishop's words, "the towns of these provinces were so removed from Chachapoyas that they could barely engage in another commerce."[31] The dispersion of cities and towns in the montaña trumped the Bishop's strategy to articulate a network of production and commerce with Chachapoyas at its center. Based on how accessible it was for the Bishop to get to Chachapoyas from Trujillo, he envisioned people living in towns in the montaña to relocate somewhere else where they could actually benefit from the Chachapoyas commercial network. Ultimately, the Bishop did not have the means to bring civilization to the montaña, so he wanted to bring people to civilization. Chachapoyas offered its inhabitants and its neighboring towns the opportunity to prosper socially and economically by providing them a proper education so they could live all together as Christians.

Economically, the Bishop believed that the population of the montaña could supply Chachapoyas with different agricultural products in order to strengthen the city's commercial ties with other areas. To that end, he distinguished between the products well known in the montaña for having a high yield such as cotton and tobacco, and the ones with a low yield (cacao, cinchona). Instead of encouraging the production of those crops as a way to reinforce their local

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[31] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f.143.

economy, Martínez Compañón believed that Chachapoyas should be the only city of the entire bishopric east of the Andean heights. According to the Bishop, all the places located in the montaña needed to "contribute to the prosperity of Chachapoyas and its province by planting cotton and perhaps serve the king by producing all the tobacco of the best quality of this bishopric."[32] According to historian Restrepo Manrique, the Bishop's efforts for building roads demonstrated his strategy of facilitating the communication between the provinces, specifically the ones with mining centers located in Hualgayoc, Cajamarca, and Chachapoyas.[33] Thus, the increase in mining activity would generate an increase in population along with agricultural and industrial production. Potentially, Chachapoyas could become what in Martínez Compañón's mind what the cities of the montaña could never be: a commercial center on the eastern edge of the bishopric with the possibility of bringing together the best products of the region so they could be distributed in other places.

[32] Ibid., f.144.
[33] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo,* 108.

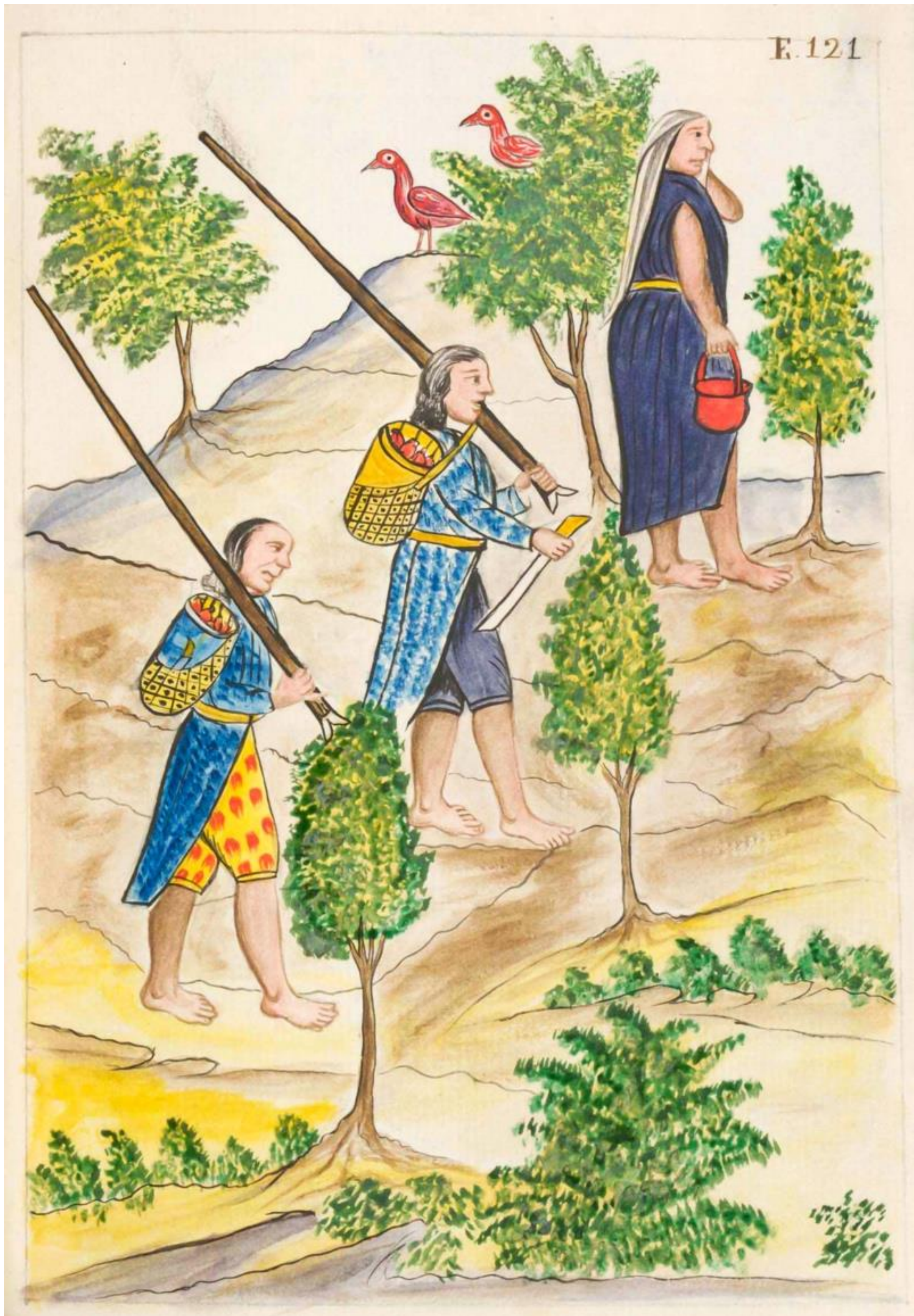

FIGURE 5.4. Motilones from Lamas when going hunting. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

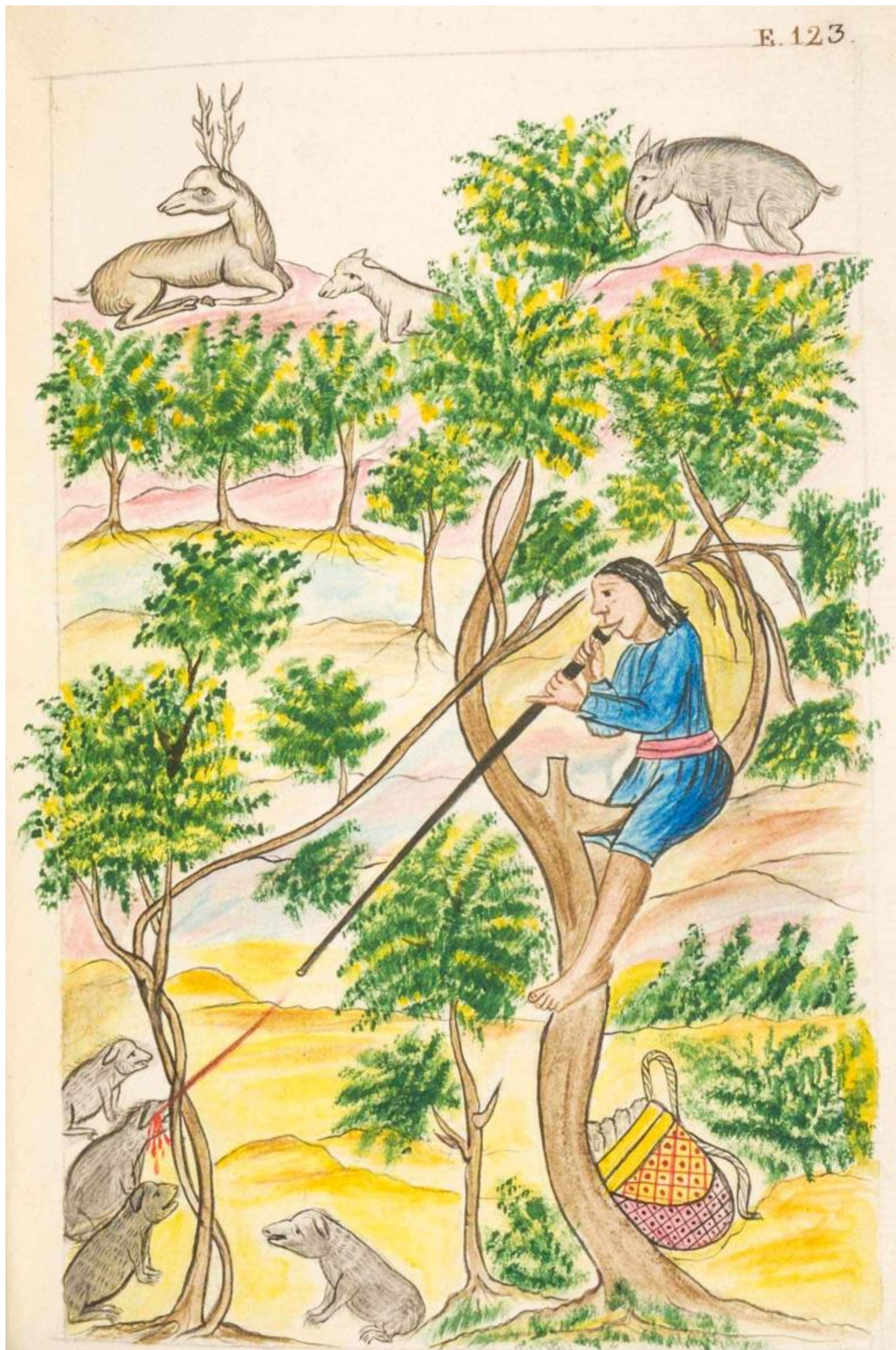

FIGURE 5.5. Motilones from Lamas hunting mammals. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.
Both images represent a common practice among the Motilones of Lamas well known for entering deep into the montaña for hunting. While men are carrying their blowguns, darts, and their steel machetes, women participate in what seems like a regular activity by collecting fruits. The mountainous landscape stands out along with the diverse flora and fauna of the montaña. In both instances they demonstrate the abundance of resources and possibilities that the montaña offered to ensure the Motilones' livelihoods. The display of birds and *sajinos* or mammals—native to the montaña—proves that even if for the Bishop the Motilones were 'poor', they did not share that view.

Once the Bishop realized that the montaña region did not have the necessary geography to connect it with the rest of provinces, and simultaneously to Trujillo, he put all his efforts in developing the town of Tarapoto. Although this town was not far from the montaña cities of Lamas and Moyobamba, the Bishop preferred its geographical conditions because Tarapoto was located in the middle of a valley in closer proximity to one of the Huallaga River's tributary, the Cumbaza River and not in the middle of the montaña region. Though the Bishop portrayed Tarapoto as a town with "bad lands" of flatter and sandy terrain, he still preferred it over the other towns in the montaña.[34] When debating whether Tarapoto's location had its advantages compared to Lamas and Moyobamba or not, the Bishop acknowledged that at first glance it seemed that it did not. In his words:

> Tarapoto had pastures for livestock, but not enough because they were located on the banks of the Cumbaza River without much cultivated land for the entire population. While in the city of Lamas there are two harvests a year of maize and beans, and one of very high quality cotton, in Tarapoto to harvest cotton it is necessary to leave some distance to sow it, and those of maize and beans do not do more than one harvest a year, though it is abundant. On top of this, the temperament of Tarapoto is hotter than the one of Lamas, and that its waters are not very good either.[35]

Tarapoto's topography had its limitations regarding the number and quality of the land, the number of harvests per year, the lower quality of cotton, and its weather conditions. However, the Bishop claimed that being so close to the river allowed its inhabitants to catch a fair amount of fish and at least sell it to the province of Maynas up north and to the province of Pataz when going west. By river, the route from Tarapoto to these towns in Maynas was six leagues shorter. For Martínez Compañón even if those six leagues did not sound like much of a difference, in the

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[34] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f.123.

[35] Ibid.

montaña each league equated to four in time, and that made "the situation in Tarapoto noticeably more advantageous," he concluded.[36]

Though the Bishop recognized the challenges of Tarapoto's topography, he preferred it over the montaña environment. The establishment of Tarapoto had originally been the Jesuits' idea, and by the time the Bishop got involved in the local conflict between Tarapoto and Lamas, he understood that Tarapoto was "without a doubt one of the least bad places of all the other ones in the province."[37] Back in 1765, the Jesuits created the town of Tarapoto in order to relocate the people from Lamas who had been complaining about gully erosion affecting their crops and livestock. Thus, the Jesuits created the town of Tarapoto with the expectation that all the inhabitants from Lamas would move there. However, at the time that they proposed the transfer of the Lamas population to Tarapoto, only 1,000 people actually relocated with their household and livestock, while the rest stayed in Lamas unsure of the Tarapoto environment.[38] They were right. The relocated population of Tarapoto, characterized as the most obedient ones to the Jesuits' mandates, realized that Tarapoto's topography, along with the weather, and the quality of the water affected negatively the production of their crops. For instance, their production of cotton—so central to their livelihoods for trading in their local economy—decreased in Tarapoto from two harvest seasons every year to only one, creating enough tension among these new inhabitants that they tried to return to Lamas.[39] The inhabitants of Lamas did not accept their return, which resulted in the conflict that prompted Martínez Compañón's urgency to prioritize Lamas in his visit.

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., f.143.

[38] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo,* 62-63.

[39] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f.119.

Seventeen years later, when Martínez Compañón arrived in Lamas, he confirmed the rumors about the conflict between the population of Lamas and Tarapoto. According to him, “the spirits were indisposed and quite heated” not only among the inhabitants of Lamas, but also among the people living in other towns of the same province.[40] The Bishop attributed the responsibility of this situation to the Jesuits and the local government’s poor management of the city, having failed to complete the relocation of the entire population of Lamas to the town of Tarapoto back in 1765. However, after anticipating the challenges posed by the montaña environment for his reforms, he realized that finishing what the Jesuits had started could solve the problem of the montaña. To that end he assigned one more priest to this province who could solely be dedicated to Tarapoto, and he also ordered the construction of the main plaza, a church, and roads that could communicate the town with other commercial points that he was interested in promoting with the hope that it could soon become a city.

Getting away from the montaña

In Martínez Compañón’s view, a proper city, away from the roughness of the montaña, would also mean the possibility to have a place where their inhabitants can harmoniously coexist. Referring to the Motilones Natives of Lamas, the Bishop could not understand the reasons why this town with the official recognition as a capital city had remained so far removed from civilization one hundred years after its establishment. According to him, two thirds of the population in Lamas were Natives, and while some of them went to church, he depicted the rest of them as *montaraces* or probably even more wild than when they had been reduced. Entering deep into de montaña, they could get lost for many days hunting beasts, monkeys, and birds (see

[40] Ibid.

fig. 5.4 & 5.5).[41] Though, “not all of them have so much fondness and communication with their montaña” the Bishop portrayed them as being lost in their “weakness, laziness, drunkenness, and other vices.”[42] Their suitability of living like wild animals in the montaña convinced the Bishop that there was no future for them as long as they stayed in this environment: “And the worst thing is that you can hardly find hope that their discipline and traditions will be improved or that they will be useful to the king and their states, while they remain in the separation in which they live today.”[43] For the Bishop, improving the lives of people depended on the geographical conditions of the place and on the presence of the secular clergy in charge of educating the Native population. As a result, the development of cities and towns, became the Bishop’s main strategy to put order in the bishopric. Once the settlement of people could guarantee their lives as vassals of the king, it would be easier to create a commercial network that could integrate all the places to the center of the bishopric.

As long as the Bishop could change the place where Natives lived—far away from the montaña—he could see them improving and devoting their service to the church and the king. In the meantime, he demonstrated in his letters to the Viceroy of Peru his feelings of compassion when seeing Natives living places in such a state of poverty.[44] By poverty he meant the poverty of the soul in the sense of being wild, as well as the poverty of Natives who were unable to live a civil and Christian life, disconnected from the places or cities that could offer those opportunities for them (see fig. 5.6 & 5.7). According to the Bishop’s estimations, around 9,000 inhabitants who lived in the montaña had also a “wild and savage life,”[45] due to their isolation from each

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[41] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f.143.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid., f.135.
[45] Ibid., f.144.

other dispersed in the vastness of the montaña, not following the Christian sacraments, and their "lack of industriousness."[46] The Bishop suggested that Natives' weakness relied on limiting the products they grow to what they need, probably implying that Natives rejected the basic principle of production for commercialization purposes. For him, this life prevented them from contributing to the development of the entire jurisdiction of the bishopric. The montaña perpetuated people's autonomy from everything that the Bishop wanted the bishopric to become; and articulated entity that could guarantee a modern and civilized way of living. Martínez Compañón supported this argument by stressing the poor conditions of the people living in the montaña whether they were affected by diseases or by gully erosion causing the loss of their farmlands and animals. The Bishop described those conditions as the ones prolonging the "state of barbarism" in which the population lived.

[46] Ibid., f.143.

FIGURE 5.6. Native from Lamas with Church Clothing. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

FIGURE 5.7. Native from the Montaña Infidel. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

In both cases, the images represent Natives from the montaña. The one from the left is ready to go to church in Lamas, dressed for the occasion with cotton fabric while holding a hat made of macaw feathers—as a symbol of civilization since the local production and small-scale commercialization of cotton and hats were common in the area. On the right, the image encapsulates an infidel *indio montaraz* or wild Native ready to go hunting. He is also wearing cotton clothing colored with natural dyes native to the region. The distinction between both of them mattered because most of the Bishop's efforts centered around his idea that the montaña environment got in the way for Natives to live a Christianized life and become vassals of the king. On the contrary, staying in the montaña meant staying, and in some instances becoming an infidel.

In keeping with his project to integrate his bishopric, Martínez Compañón focused on strengthening the role of the ecclesiastical institution called *cofradías* or religious confraternities. These cofradías could sometimes include Natives serving as the gatekeepers between church administration and the local community, particularly in Indigenous communities. The Bishop saw the need to rely on these cofradías to ensure the management and administration of the bishopric. In Martínez Compañón's mind, the improvement and modernization of the Bishopric could only be attained as long as the cofradías could facilitate an effective collection of alms and Indigenous tributes. The Bishop's main goal relied on reinforcing the role of cofradías by encouraging his diocesans to contribute to the bishopric through them. This would guarantee that the cofradías had more means to execute the Bishop's plans. His strategy of allying with the cofradías sought to provide the institutional hierarchy to support the priests' administration on each one of the provinces of the Bishopric. As part of his job, he believed it could be beneficial for his reforms to encourage the presence of the secular clergy in the bishopric. However, the particular geography of the montaña made it even more necessary to insist on having priests, diocesans, and cofradías in the area working as the "watchmen of good practices."[47] He expected them to act as his "agents of change"[48] for Indigenous people by controlling their behavior helping them to get closer to God. With the help of these allies, Martínez Compañón hoped to send a clear message that would discourage members of the clergy, cofradías, and Natives from "drunkenness, or other unworthy excesses of religion and humanity; while trying to make their parishioners understand the goal to which all the Christian cofradías seek."[49] In other words, the Bishop wanted to reinstate Natives'

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[47] Ibid., f 92.

[48] Berquist, *The Bishop's Utopia: Envisioning Improvement in Colonial Peru*, 43.

[49] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f. 92.

respect for these cofradías so he could—in turn—trust them to follow through his improvement reforms.

The creation of a network of priests exerting control in the montaña the same way that the Jesuits did seemed unattainable considering the limited number of priests he could send to the provinces. Martínez Compañón knew that even the most dedicated priest could not fulfill his duty of representing the church within the vast territory of these provinces. Expecting one priest to travel by himself from town to town was unreasonable, given the long distances separating these towns. In a letter to the Viceroy of Peru, Martínez Compañón explained his reasons to send more than one priest to these provinces: "the relentless rain created the worst conditions for traveling throughout the montaña region, full of muddy roads and swamps."[50] As a part of his obligations, the Bishop wanted to create the political and physical conditions to facilitate the secular clergy's work. To that end, he assigned more than one priest to the towns of the Lamas and Moyobamba provinces. This measure would not only resolve the lack of presence of the church in the montaña but would also increase the number of baptized people. Martínez Compañón believed that later on he could use this number as a proof of his work in the eyes of the king, but more importantly as a proof that the bishopric had a large number of Christian souls who could contribute to the economy of the empire. For the Bishop, more baptized people would inevitably result in more people going to church and the collection of more alms.[51]

Martínez Compañón intended to use these resources to create more Catholic schools in the cities to transform Indigenous people into civilized men. Once these men became Christian, the Bishop believed they could go back to their hometowns to preach the word of God. Despite the lack of institutional support from civil authorities, the Bishop considered it possible to obtain

[50] Ibid., f. 135.
[51] Ibid., f. 96.

resources from these newly transformed Christians.[52] In the case of the montaña, Martínez Compañón believed this process of conversion to Christianity had to be accompanied by the change of location of the people living in the montaña. As an example of Martínez Compañón's concern to convert what he called *gente montaraz* or wild people to Christianity, he made reference to the first time he encountered these infidels from the montaña (see fig. 5.7), portraying them as "being ignorant towards God, meaning the same as pursuing a cult of adoration to (natural) creatures."[53] Though, he understood that these beliefs were common once upon a time, he attributed this distance from God to the montaña environment that "did not allow local reunions,"[54] forcing Natives to live "without true society, union, or generosity among them."[55] As a result, the Bishop devoted all his efforts in bringing the church to the places that he saw fit, while taking men away from the places and ideas that seemed too wild for him to accept.

Besides the fear of losing the presence of the church in these provinces due to the geography of the montaña, Martínez Compañón also feared the effects of the montaña on the priests. For the Bishop, the place itself "could transform the priests into wolves."[56] Not only he used the image of the wolf as an ascription of wildness, but he also suggested the possibility of priests neglecting their sacred duties. Though he did not specify, he assumed that leaving these representatives of the church by themselves, without any company, and isolated from the world could be detrimental for their lives and for the bishopric too. Without making an explicit reference to the Jesuits, Martínez Compañón hinted at the idea that "in such scattered places, and so monstrous roads, rough, and dangerous like those,"[57] even the men of God could lose their

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[52] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo,* 37.

[53] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f. 139.

[54] Ibid., f. 119.

[55] Ibid., f. 139.

[56] Ibid., f. 141.

[57] Ibid., f. 135.

minds and souls. Without these priests in the terrain for gathering information or controlling people to live like Christians, the Bishop knew the integration of these territories was going to be an impossible task. For him, the improvement of the Natives' souls needed the support of the church. Thus, as important as it was having a larger group of priests in the area, it was also crucial to have the infrastructure to support that organization.

The geography of the montaña region had convinced the Bishop that the improvement of souls could not happen in that kind of environment. However, neither the colonial state nor the bishopric had the funds to provide the infrastructure (roads, cities, churches, schools) the montaña region needed. To that aim, he focused on supporting the establishment of new urban settlements hoping that the foundation and concentration of people in towns and cities would finally deter "the abandonment and dispersion of its inhabitants."[58] Lamas became the first city he planned on relocating. The Bishop wrote a letter to the viceroy asking for his authorization "to move Lamas to another place, one that despite not being the same as Lamas would be far away from the montaña."[59] However, the challenges of relocating these populations demanded his full attention. According to Restrepo Manrique, even if the population in question wanted to participate in that process, not only the Bishop needed to have the authorization of the viceregal authority, but most importantly the availability of land with the conditions necessary for the new inhabitants to build their houses.[60] Martínez Compañón also had to secure the necessary funds to relocate a large population in constituted Christian cities. For a successful relocation, the Bishop needed seeds for the production of the land and being able to support the population until they could get their first harvest. If it depended solely on him, he said "I would not only relocate said

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[58] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo,* 96-97.

[59] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f.119.

[60] Restrepo Manrique, *Sociedad y Religión en Trujillo*, 101-102.

city out of this montaña, but I would also relocate its entire province and Moyobamba's too,"[61] suggesting the bishopric's financial limitations to pursue his relocation project.

Due to the limitations of Tarapoto's environment for allowing more population than the one already established, the relocation of Lamas to Tarapoto never materialized. Besides the animosity existing between the population of Lamas and Tarapoto, the Bishop understood that Tarapoto did not have enough resources available to contain Lamas' inhabitants. This meant that he needed to find a different place for this relocation. Referring to this issue, the Bishop informed the viceroy that: "of the idea of wanting to move to Tarapoto, not only they [Lamas population] never gave indications, but on the contrary, they were always disagreeable, openly resisting due its farmlands' narrowness and low fertility, plus the prevalence of heat."[62] Apparently, finding a different place to relocate Lamas seemed more challenging than what the Bishop had expected, voicing his disappointment that "not even in the whole province this city could be transferred."[63] Unsuccessfully, Martínez Compañón spent a year searching for a place to relocate Lamas, and another five trying to achieve this goal. On two different occasions he came up with two places to do so, Julao and Saposoa; however, neither persuaded the Lamas inhabitants of leaving. They considered these places either too small, too far away from the mountainous terrain where they went hunting, claiming that none of these places could match Lamas' highest yield in the production of cotton and maize.[64] Martínez Compañón expressed his frustration in dealing with the population of Lamas. For him, if only Lamas were situated in a more favorable area, the bishopric would have benefited from the economic opportunities of

[61] Martínez Compañón, *Capítulos y ordenanzas que se deben observar para el culto de la iglesia de Lambayeque (Perú)*, f. 144.

[62] Ibid., f. 124-125.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., 143. While Moyobamba had legal permission to produce tobacco and could trade it with the neighboring province of Maynas due to the navigation of the river, selling some fish and wax.

commercializing cotton, tobacco, and maize. In the Bishop's view, the montaña region was doomed and his modernizing project with it. Therefore, for Martínez Compañón's enlightened project, the improvement of an area distant from the *montaña* depended on the number of inhabitants, their judiciousness as Christians, and the different kinds of linkages that they could establish with Chachapoyas and Trujillo.

As a way to validate his fixation to get Lamas out of the montaña, the Bishop focused his attention on the city's gully erosion (see fig. 5.8). Martínez Compañón felt an imperative to solve that problem calling them "horrendous gullies"[65] located everywhere in the city, risking the lives of its inhabitants. For decades the gullies had been an unresolved problem to the extent that he thought he could use this environmental problem as an excuse to get support from the viceroy in his relocation efforts. By analyzing the Bishop's response to his parishioners' request to address this issue, it is clear that part of the pressure to relocate the city came from the same group—the one third of the Lamas population who were Spanish or mestizos. Though the Bishop never mentioned the ethnicity of his parishioners—who had demanded his help—the times he referred to the Lamas population he described them either as 'his parishioners' or as 'wild Natives'. Perhaps having a majority of the population considered wild was a matter of concern for the elites in Lamas who projected their fears onto the Bishop. Overall, the Bishop's comparison of gullies with fences demonstrated once again his rejection to allow Lamas and its inhabitants to remain isolated from the outside world.[66]

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[65] Ibid., f. 133.
[66] Ibid.

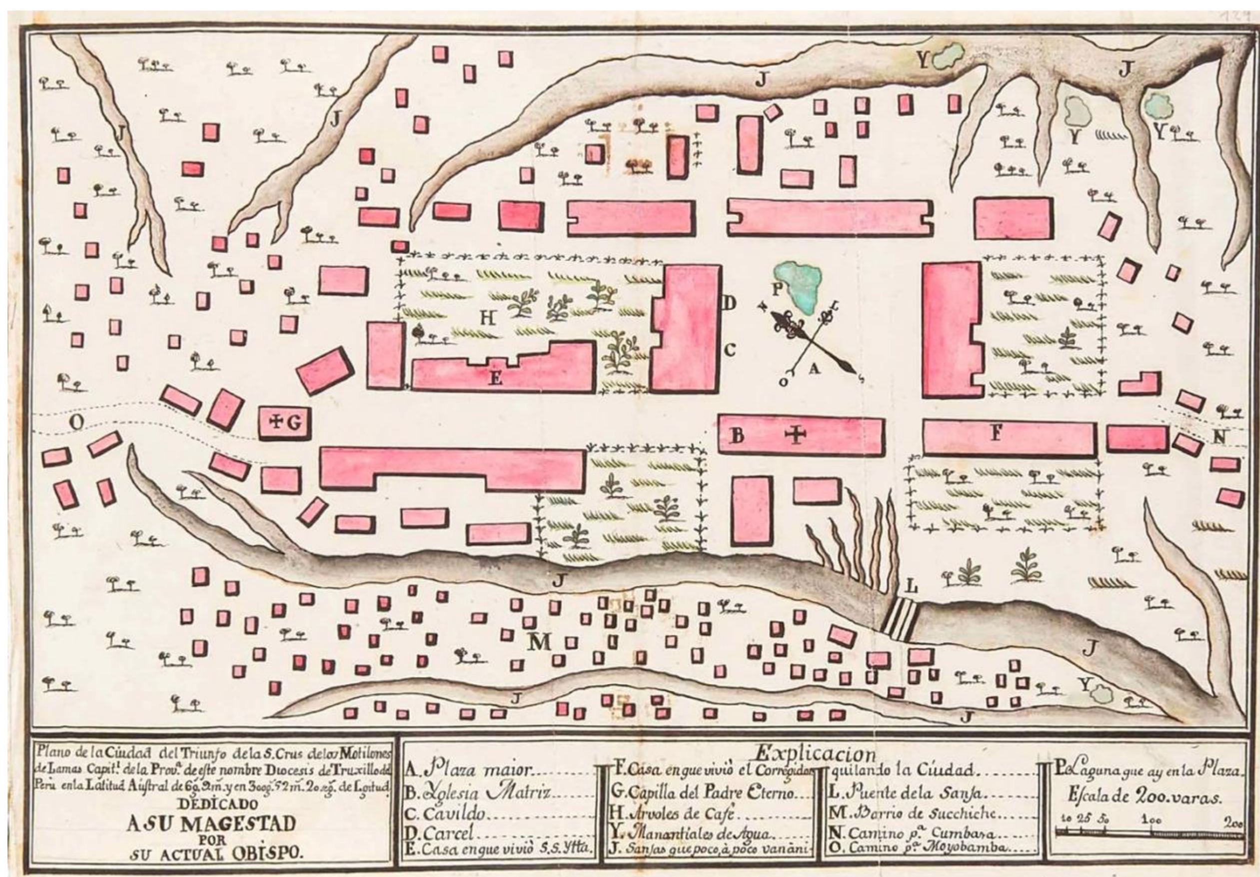

FIGURE 5.8. City Map of Ciudad del Triunfo de la Santa Cruz de los Motilones de Lamas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

This map represents the city of Lamas that the Bishop tried on many occasions to relocate outside of the montaña. Besides the Bishop's narrative about the montaña being an obstacle for his improvement reforms, in Lamas the Bishop focused his attention on the dangers of the gullies (letter J) that surrounded the city while harming people's lands and livestock. Just like every city during the colonial period, Lamas had a main plaza, church, council, and prison. It also portrays the most noticeable environmental features such as a water source in the middle of the plaza, gullies, little trees symbolizing the montaña, and coffee trees located close to the plaza.

Indigenous views of the montaña

The analysis of Martínez Compañón's visual records—commissioned to local Natives during his visita—elucidates a different narrative about the montaña environment and its inhabitants. The images suggest that Natives from Lamas or Motilones had in the montaña the environmental conditions to ensure their subsistence independently from the Bishop's commercial networks. In contrast to the Bishop's idealization of settled urban life, the mobile aspect of the Motilones represented one of their most precious cultural traits they had kept over generations. The image of the *Carrier Native from Lamas* (fig. 5.1) illustrates Natives mobility, depicting a man, his son, and dog in the course of their own journeys through the montaña while carrying goods.[67] Outsiders and other Indigenous groups praised the Motilones for their strength and knowledge of the region allowing them to walk long distances from north to south and from east to west carrying heavy loads of up to 35 kilos (80 pounds) with merchandise on their backs. The Motilones' ability to travel to various places (by foot or by the navigation of rivers) provided a level of autonomy from the colonial authorities that the Bishop considered as a dangerous and derogatory characteristic of them—an aspect of their uncivilized wilderness. Natives from the montaña were perfectly equipped to travel freely throughout a geography that the Bishop and outsiders in general considered almost inaccessible. The following illustrations depict women from Moyobamba transporting bananas, as well as carrying canoes to navigate the nearby rivers for trading with other regions (see fig. 5.9 & 5.10). Depending on the season of the year, Natives

[67] Similar depictions can be found in *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615), The Royal Library, Copenhagen, GKS 2232 4°. There is an image of Guaman Poma himself with his son and their dog traveling through the Andes. Artist Luis Thiebaut, probably commissioned by José Ignacio Lequanda (Martínez Compañón's nephew) has an image of a Motilones Native from Lamas carrying a load in his back in his "Civilized nations" section. In Luis Thiebaut, 1799, *A Painting of the Natural, Civil, and Geographical History of the Kingdom of Peru*.

navigated the rivers reaching different places where they could trade their products while establishing and maintaining their own economic and social linkages.

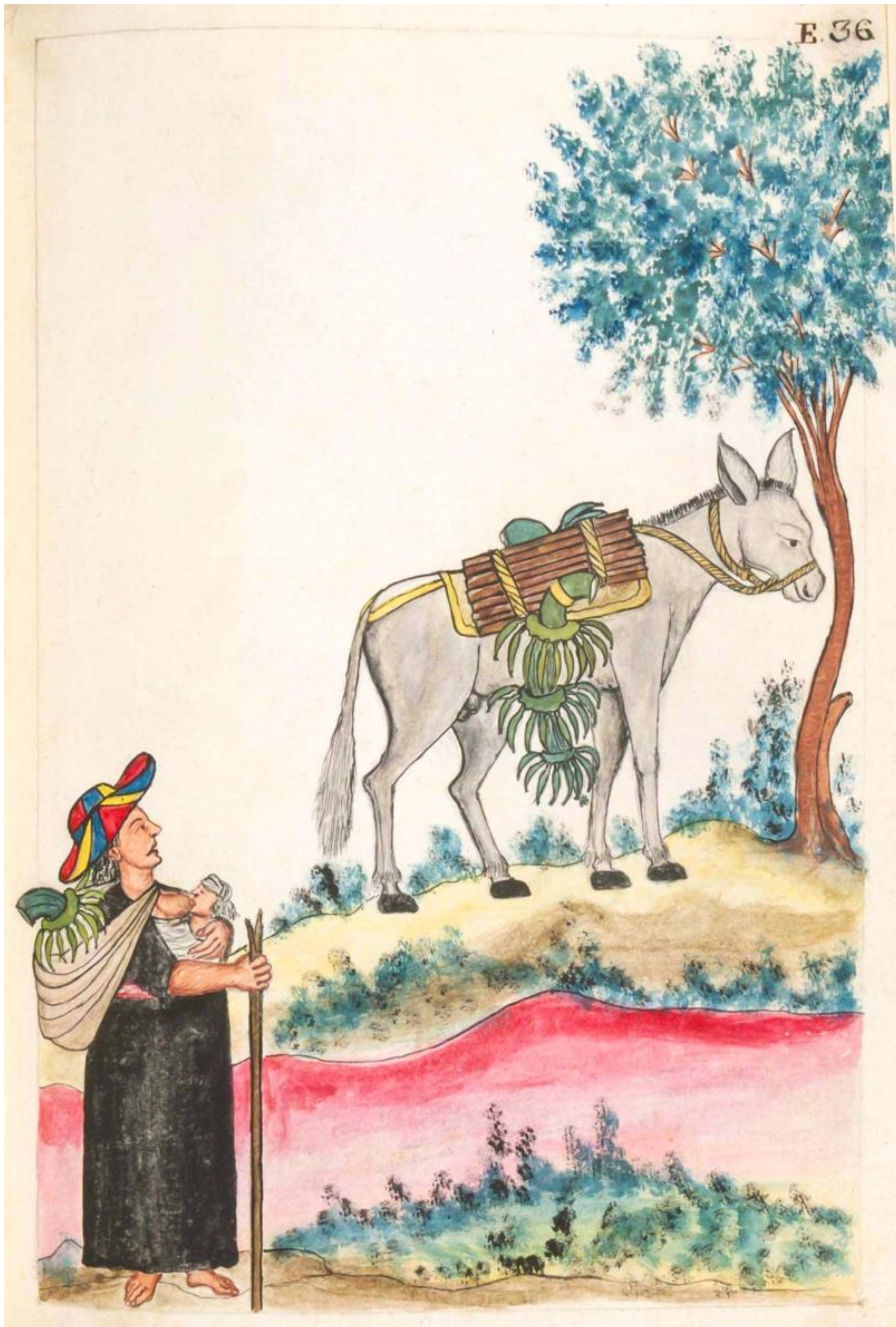

FIGURE 5.9. Native from Moyobamba carrying bananas. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.

FIGURE 5.10. Natives from Moyobamba carrying canoes. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España. In both cases these women are wearing black cotton dresses with woven belts (typically seen in the Kechwa's traditional clothing today). The hats made of macaw feathers illustrate that the production and commercialization of these hats had already started by then. There is one sample of this hat in the Museo de las Américas in Madrid, portrayed as a common accessory for men and women of this area who traded it or sold it to the Portuguese.

In most of these images, Natives appear to engage in social and economic activities that depended completely on their natural surroundings. The montaña itself takes an active role in providing the natural resources that enable their collective and daily practices. These watercolors portray women and men working together engaging in activities such as fishing, hunting, weaving and spinning cotton (fig. 5.1, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11) The illustrations not only show the extraction of natural resources, but they also portray the production, transportation, and commercialization of goods. Besides the technology and techniques employed in the production of these goods, both the flora and the fauna of the montaña represent an essential part of Native' life. A competing perspective of the montaña's natural environment, which the Bishop complained and tried to improve for so long, is on display here—fully integrated with the traditional social and economic life of Indigenous people. Instead of representing the Motilones and the montaña as a disjointed part from the bishopric, these images demonstrate a sense of connection between what they thought of themselves in correlation with the environment. Even if the Bishop would have been successful at relocating Lamas, could he really have removed the Motilones their traditional ways of engaging with the montaña? Martínez Compañón blamed the montaña for shaping the Motilones' wilderness, but he could not make sense of this relationship. Thus, the message of these images does not have any correspondence with the place that Martínez Compañón depicted in his writings.

FIGURE 5.11. Female Natives from Lamas spinning wheel. *Trujillo del Perú*. Royal Palace Library, Madrid/Patrimonio Nacional de España.
This image illustrates male-female collaboration in the production of cotton yarn with a spinning wheel. While Martínez Compañón acknowledged the high quality of cotton in Lamas, he failed to mention details about this production and commercialization.

In conclusion Martínez Compañón's determination to improve people's lives relied on his belief in the importance of taking the montaña out of the Natives that he characterized as wild or montaraz. Although the Bishop's depiction of the montaña people as being isolated in their mind and body from Chachapoyas and Trujillo was not incorrect, it did not mean that Natives needed to be removed from their environment and their community. As the images show, all of these economic activities required Natives to work in couples or in groups, which implicitly countered the Bishop's claims that Natives had no idea how to be part of his idea of a civil society; rather, they explicitly chose to resist his impositions. The depiction of a female Native from Lamas making cotton yarn with a man not only portrays their partnership, but it also brings up the value of cotton for Natives in Lamas that the Bishop neglected to mention. Overall, the illustrations reveal the more complex material environment of the montaña and the people, both coexisting regardless of how far away they were from Trujillo. On the many occasions that the Bishop offered the Natives from Lamas to relocate, they responded negatively due to the lack of places available for them to secure their livelihoods. They required a place *like* the montaña where they could see themselves growing their crops, hunting, and trading with other regions. Not to mention the cultural meaning attached to the montaña and the various resources native from the montaña region such as dyes, resins, and medicinal plants for pursuing their daily activities. Martínez Compañón could never understand that despite his efforts to find an alternative to the montaña, Indigenous people from that region were historically, and therefore, deeply dependent of that environment.

Chapter 6

Where Knowledge and Nations End: The Montaña as a Divide for Humboldtian Travelers and Nation Builders before the Rubber Boom

This chapter seeks to explore the historical meanings that Indigenous peoples, scientific explorers, and early national elites have ascribed to the montaña. One of the emphases of this section is contextualizing the perspective of outsiders who served as patrons and participants of scientific expeditions to this region in the period right after the independence of Peru—a period during the nineteenth century that involved contestation and the abrupt reconfiguration of territorial sovereignty. The other goal is to explore the role of Indigenous peoples from the montaña in shaping this new configuration of the nation-state. From the perspective of foreign naturalists and nation-builders who were interested in promoting the exploitation of botanical resources of Amazonia, the montaña and its peoples seemed exactly what these explorers were looking for —a profitable foreign investment in the creation of new commercial networks. However, these attempts in concentrating those investments in the montaña required that Indigenous people become fully subjected to these new agents of power. Natives knew too well these outsiders needed their labor, production, and their knowledge about the region. I argue that the montaña represented an opportunity to attract foreign presence and commercial opportunities to the country. Despite the montaña's prime environmental attributes for these countries' economic agendas, the montaña region ended up being a barrier that blocked these opportunities.

In 1850, North American Lieutenant Lewis Herndon received orders from the United

States Navy Department to start a scientific expedition in the Amazon basin.[1] The goal of this expedition was to collect information about the geographical location of the Amazon River and its tributaries, as well as the commercial position of the towns close to these rivers. Beginning at the Amazon River's headwaters in Peru and finishing at its mouth located in Brazil, Lieutenant Herndon's mission was designed for gaining knowledge about the kind of products that could be found in the Amazon region, the value of their trade, and their productivity: "the yield per acre and per hand of staples, such as matte, coca, and cocoa, sugar, rice, cinchona, hemp, cotton, India-rubber, coffee, balsams, drugs, spices, fees, and ornamental woods."[2] Through this expedition, the U.S. Navy also intended to identify the condition of the silver mines of Peru, which also meant finding out "what effect would it have in turning the stream of silver from those mines down these rivers? [and] with what description of craft can they be navigated respectively?"[3] Herndon's interest in the montaña grew when he realized how limited were the historical and geographical accounts about this area.[4] But his curiosity, and the reports of other travelers, focused on the potential of this region for the extraction of natural resources, for locating areas with environmental conditions appealing for Western occupation, and finally for the possibility of connecting the montaña with other commercial centers.

This search for resources in the Amazon during the nineteenth century became a common practice by countries such as the United States, France, Italy, and England, who saw an

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[1] These expeditions arrived inspired by Humboldt's travels to America, for more see: Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed (London : New York: Routledge, 2008); Aaron Sachs, *The Humboldt Current: Nineteenth-Century Exploration and the Roots of American Environmentalism* (New York: Viking, 2006); William H. Goetzmann, *Exploration and Empire; the Explorer and the Scientist in the Winning of the American West* (Monticello Editions, 1966).

[2] Henry L. Maw, *Journal of a Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic: Crossing the Andes in the Northern Provinces of Peru, and Descending the River Marañon or Amazon* (London: John Murray, 1829), 26.

[3] WM. Lewis Herndon and Lardner Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon, Made under Direction of the Navy Department* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, 1854), 25.

[4] Ibid., 14-13. Herndon provided a summary of a handful of accounts focused on the montaña starting with the first Spanish conquistadors trying to discover the Amazonia.

opportunity in the recent independence of Latin American countries to establish economic and political relationships with these new nations. Therefore, territories located in nations such as Peru —especially the Peruvian montaña region— were identified as having many resources to offer to these trade-oriented countries. The narratives from these scientific expeditions reflect the travelers' perceptions about what the montaña could offer to their own countries' future political and economic interests. More importantly, these narratives also show how the new South American republics positioned themselves in the international market and the ways in which they dealt with world powers by advertising the possibilities of foreign occupation in the montaña area. Travelers' experiences exploring the economic and environmental potential of the montaña and its rivers reveal how world powers, and new nations such as Peru, have together defined their own geopolitical policies. On the one hand, the montaña region awakened not only the interest of world powers to a potential source of raw materials, but also spurred interest in promoting the technology and infrastructure to open access to those resources through the rivers. On the other hand, the Peruvian state encouraged the outsiders' exploration of the montaña and its resources in order to attract European immigration, technological innovation, and foreign investment. In both situations, political elites from afar expected to gain something by identifying opportunities inherent to the montaña landscape.

During the nineteenth century, the vacuum of power left by the fallen Spanish empire allowed early national elites and foreign naturalists to focus their attention on the montaña region. By the time scientific expeditions from Europe and the United States expressed their interest in visiting the region, national elites were still in the process of discovering what the eastern side of the Andean chain of mountains had to offer to their political and economic interests. Despite the rumors that both groups had heard at some point about the montaña, it was

clear that the little information they had was not enough and if anything, it encouraged foreign naturalists to pursue their expeditions in this region while being supported —in every way except financially— by the Peruvian government. Italian scientist Antonio Ramondi referred to the colonial efforts at the end of the eighteenth century to have a more accurate idea to the extent of natural richness.[5] The nineteenth century then, is centered on different attempts from early national elites and scientific expeditions to know more about the areas that remained to be considered as 'unknown' or too 'wild', and still were open to exploration.

Despite the early accounts describing the montaña, general assumptions about the area as a wild place inhabited by wild people still predominated. Although national elites and naturalists had a broad sense of the abundance and variety of natural resources in the montaña, the lack of scientific information and knowledge in general motivated them to focus their studies there. For national elites, the naturalists' eagerness to go to the montaña did not interfere with their own political and economic agendas. On the contrary, the Peruvian authorities needed someone else to finance and execute an assessment of the region. In exchange for taking over that heavy burden, national elites were often willing to provide all the necessary contacts (with local officials or priests) in the field to make these expeditions possible. In this way, both groups felt that they were benefiting from this implicit arrangement while contributing to the 'modernizing project'—as they called it—envisioned by these two groups.

For naturalists, the exploration of the montaña region meant an opportunity to generate scientific knowledge out of this still unknown place defined mostly by how far removed it is from the coastal commercial centers. During this period of time, practices and methods regarding the natural sciences had made major advances. For Raimondi, natural sciences in the nineteenth

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[5] Antonio Raimondi: *El Perú: historia de la geografía del Perú* [Parte Preliminar], (Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería, 1876), 11.

century allowed naturalists from all over the world to speak the same language in terms of employing the same scientific naming and standardization processes.[6] Therefore, the work of these botanists in the field became valued not only among their peers but also among the government representatives of their countries of origin who wanted to know more about the place. For them, having the authority to explore the montaña region not only meant contributing to the natural sciences, but also being able to quantify the extent of natural resources while collecting samples of what the montaña could really offer to the rest of the world. Despite the harsh geographical conditions and the information gathered from previous explorers, these naturalists saw the opportunity to employ the latest tools to measure and calculate latitude, longitude, distance, and gather statistics. Following the footsteps of Humboldt in various other measurements, they decided to gather as much data as they could from these remote environments.[7] By bringing the natural sciences to the montaña, these naturalists felt that they were also going to bring the montaña closer to what these naturalists understood as scientific knowledge.

For the ones who started their expeditions in Peru, the montaña represented a place where they could see its potential of becoming 'civilized' enough for their needs in contrast to more remote parts of the high Andes and lowland Amazonia. The presence of navigable rivers for entering and withdrawing goods represented one of the main features of the montaña. At that time, the navigation of rivers provided the most important transportation system, and it made possible the communication between different countries —and within Peruvian territory—for

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[6] Ibid., 17.

[7] Gregory T. Cushman, "Humboldtian Science, Creole Meteorology, and the Discovery of Human-Caused Climate Change in South America," *Osiris* 26, no. 1 (2011): 19–44; Michael Dettelbach, "Alexander von Humboldt between Enlightenment and Romanticism," *Northeastern Naturalist* 8, no. sp1 (2001): 9–20; Susan Faye Cannon, "Humboldtian Science," *Science in Culture: The Early Victorian Period*, 1978, 73–110, analyze the extension of Humboltian science to contextualize these scientific explorations and their methodology.

commercial purposes. In the specific case of the montaña region, the rivers had already proven to be the most efficient routes to access and control this territory. Reports created from European and American explorers refer constantly to the *uses* of the rivers among local inhabitants (e.g., priests, Indigenous peoples, governors, etc.) either because they moved across long distances, or because they used the rivers for trading with Indigenous people and their goods. Along these rivers goods such as cotton cloth (*tocuyo*), tobacco, fruits, and vegetables flowed from the points of extraction, cultivation, or processing to consuming centers in the rest of the region.

Another expectation of the information that naturalists wanted to collect lay in the ways that their countries of origin could gain economic advantage over others. For European countries and the United States, having a clear idea of what was actually available in the montaña region coupled with specific ways in which new commercial networks could be developed in the area, determined whether they would keep their interest in financing more scientific expeditions or not. From the travelers' accounts of the montaña region, it was more than urgent to express how beneficial it would be for these countries to keep investing in the area. North American Lieutenant Herndon compared the Amazon with the Mississippi River, emphasizing the potential of this river to guarantee commercial relations with Peru. His mission in Peru "had opened the eyes of the nations who dwell upon the banks of the Amazon,"[8] and would "have an important and direct bearing upon the question, whether the United States may or may not enter into commercial relations."[9] Similarly, British naturalist Richard Spruce shared his concern regarding the political presence of a Brazilian vice-consul stationed in the montaña city of Moyobamba, as

[8] WM. Lewis Herndon and Lardner Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon, Made under Direction of the Navy Department*, 356.

[9] Ibid.

well as French politicians located in some of the Amazonian cities of Brazil.[10] Spruce suggested that the British crown "watch over the interests of [other] Europeans on the Upper Amazon," regretting "that England did not possess the magnificent Amazon valley instead of India!"[11]

For the early national elites struggling to make sense of Peru as a new nation during this period of time, ideas about the montaña region continued to be shaped by obsolete and misinformed beliefs about the people and the area in general. Although these Peruvian elites were aware of the natural resources' abundance in the area, they also knew about its lack of state representatives. Without the presence of the state and the church, national elites believed that opening the market of Amazonian products to European countries and the United States could also mean attracting those foreign populations to settle indefinitely, farm the land, and engage in commercial activities. While trying to get all the permits needed in order to start his expedition, Lieutenant Herndon's correspondence with the Peruvian Minister Tirado shows the Peruvian government's overt interest in facilitating European and US immigration by "calling over industrious men of all professions and creeds, of all ages, nations, and conditions, with the sole condition that they shall be moral and laborious."[12] Apparently, the minister also offered the future settlers fertile lands, tools, seeds, and domestic animals as long as these settlers "live together like brothers."[13]

National elites were very optimistic and expected that the navigation of the Amazonian rivers would allow local people to become part of an international commercial network that involved Brazil and the rest of the world. They knew that the navigation of rivers would allow

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[10] Richard Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, ed. Alfred Russel Wallace, 2 vols. (Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1908), 204. He was overtly engaged in the quest to transfer *Cinchona* out of South America to British plantation colonies, as an envoy of the Kew Botanical Garden.

[11] Ibid., 217-18.

[12] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 365.

[13] Ibid.

the growth of commercial routes bringing prosperity and civilization in the montaña region where by then most of Indigenous people were still considered "semi-savages" or "savages."[14] While it was a well-known fact that most of the Amazon river's tributaries were navigable and Indigenous people had a long history using these routes to engage in their own trading activities, the reality of the terrain and the people was far more complex than what they had anticipated. Once the travelers made it to the montaña for the first time, they started to grasp the difficulties of the montaña itself.

First, reaching the montaña from the Peruvian Coast was not an easy task and could take more than one month depending on whether it was the rainy season or not. Out of the different routes to cross the Andean chain of mountains, the most commonly used route to the montaña was the one located in the far north of Peru. Herndon's explanation for taking this route was that it was a "tolerably good mule road all the way to Moyobamba; and almost all articles of foreign manufacture—such as cloths and the necessary household articles used in the small towns that border the Huallaga and the Marañón—are supplied by this route."[15] Maw's conversation with the minister of interior convinced him to take the Huallaga route throughout the montaña of northern Peru by telling him that there he would be able to find out that "the vegetable productions of the districts bordering on the Marañon, and its tributaries the Guallaga (Huallaga) and Ucayali, to be more numerous and more valuable than those of any other part of Peru."[16]

The most frequented route started in the coastal city of Trujillo. Then from Trujillo to Cajamarca it would take five days by mule depending on the season of the year, then seven days to Chachapoyas, eight more days to Moyobamba, four days north by foot to the port town of

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[14] Peruvian Minister Tirado in correspondence with Herndon in Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 364.

[15] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 38-39.

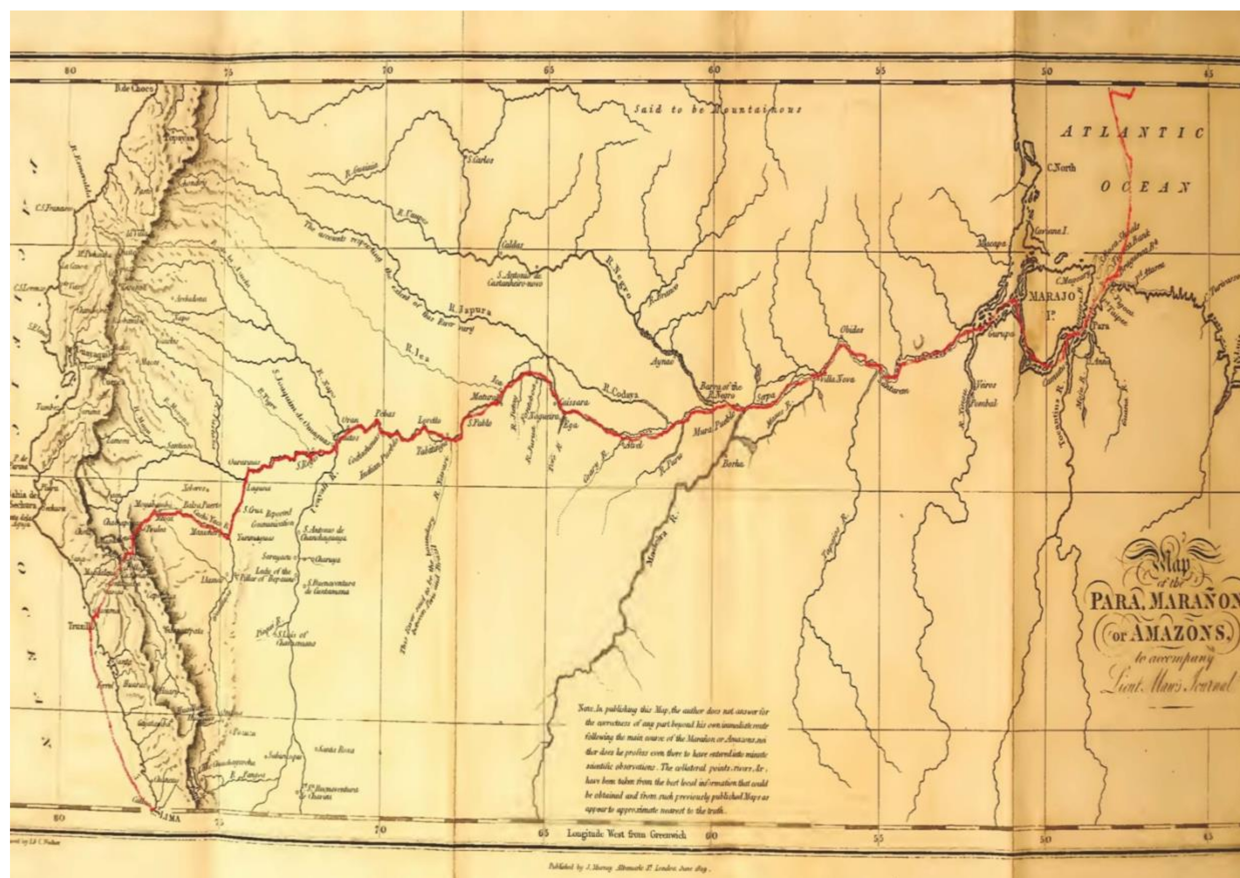
[16] Maw, *Journal of a Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic*, 3.

Balsa Puerto, and a two-day canoe to Yurimaguas where the Peruvian steamers arrived from Brazil (see fig. 6.1). From Yurimaguas to Tabatinga, the first city on the Brazilian border, it would take "fifty-eight hours; a fare of $70, gold; [and] $17 third class.[17] Overall, travelers spent a considerable amount of time in their writings analyzing other possible routes into and through the region, and then describing the harshness of their own attempts to penetrate the montaña.

[17] Information that Herndon uses it as a reference in Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 326.

FIGURE 6.1 Maw's route (in red) starting from Trujillo (Peru) to Para (Brazil).

This map shows the typical route taken by foreign scientific expeditions searching for a way to connect the Pacific with the Atlantic Ocean by traveling through the Amazon River (shown in red). Starting in the city of Lima or Trujillo, these travelers—assisted by Natives—went north, then crossed the Andean heights, rested in the montaña towns, and prepared the rest of their journey navigating the Marañón River's tributaries such as the Huallaga River. *Source*: Henry L. Maw, *Journal of a Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic: Crossing the Andes in the Northern Provinces of Peru, and Descending the River Marañon or Amazon*, 1829.



All agreed that crossing the Andean chain of mountains and exploring the eastern side of those mountains was one of the most grueling experiences of their entire travels. Despite their initial excitement in exploring the montaña, nothing prepared them to face this place. Although all the explorers were advised to take the northern route, depicted as the easiest one, there was nothing easy about that journey. The botanist Spruce, who spent weeks exploring in the vicinity of Lamas and Tarapoto, even wondered if it was worthwhile or even possible for people coming from the coast to reach the montaña at all, at least during the rainy season when he attempted the crossing: "The eastern slopes of the Andes no doubt contain much fine ground, but for want of roads they can scarcely be explored, except by one to whom the pecuniary value of his collections would be no object, and who could go to any amount of expense."[18] Naturalists' hopes to explore the montaña had been rapidly overshadowed by the almost nonexistent roads for them to use, the existence of places only reachable by many days on foot, and the navigability of the rivers been possible but highly dependent on the weather and on the locals' skills to navigate loaded canoes through or around the *pongos*. Literally and figuratively, travelers quickly realized that they depended on the locals at every step of their journey to get into and out of the montaña and to explore it as well. Whether these travelers had a choice or not, they endured the toughness of the roads, just to get to the montaña which seemed to be an even tougher environment.

Once these travelers crossed the Andes and made it to the eastern side of those mountains, their preconceived assumptions about the montaña region and its people had to be redefined. The precarious shape of the roads and the risks involved in navigating the rivers through the rapids or pongos were still present, but that did not mean they were not going to try it

[18] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, 204.

anyway. It was clear for all the travelers that throughout the whole expedition they were going to hire and trust the right people for the different tasks at different points of the expedition. Usually, local authorities such as governors and priests would be the ones following national elites' orders to assist these travelers in every way that they could. These authorities hosted travelers at administrative outposts, sharing past experiences of the area as well as their network of contacts. However, priests and governors' most important role lay in their ability to exert their power over Indigenous people so they would agree to help these travelers to make the expedition possible. Whether these travelers felt they were able to trust Indigenous people or not, they faced the unavoidable reality that Indigenous people were the only ones capable of serving as informants, guides in the field, interpreters, guardians, navigators, and carriers of heavy loads. Lucky for them, the Motilones of Lamas and Tarapoto were famous for their willingness and capacity in these matters.

By the time travelers had realized how much their survival and success in the montaña depended on the locals, they had also gotten a better sense of the distances involved and the relative passability of the roads and rivers connecting different settlements. No matter how much effort some of the government or church representatives put into the maintenance of the most used roads, it ultimately depended on the traveler's luck to find a route where they were capable of transit. Raimondi's repeated experience illustrates how unreliable were the changes in the conditions of the same roads throughout time. In his first visit to the montaña in 1855 he described the route to Moyobamba as "slippery mud with its mudflats and quagmires, with its steps almost one yard high, with its palisades, where the beasts slip or stumble at every moment, and fall with continual risk that the rider will break a leg."[19] Ten years later, during his second

[19] "Había recorrido a bestia la celebre ruta de Chachapoyas a Moyobamba con su barro resbalosos con sus fangales y atolladeros, con sus escalones de casi una vara de alto, con sus trechos empalizados, donde las bestias

visit, Raimondi believed that the roads were in not such a horrible shape after all. He attributed this changes not so much on how the roads had actually changed, but on his inability to remember the well-kept roads from his home country as clearly as he did the first time.[20] In addition to the uncertainty generated by the existence and condition of the roads, travelers also needed to consider the lack of knowledge regarding the expected duration of travel from point to point within the montaña. Most of them realized that the estimated time of arrival provided by Indigenous people was far from accurate. Even with ideal weather or water levels for traveling, sometimes the travelers had a hard time finding sufficient locals willing to continue working for them for the proposed pay, or to find the logistical resources needed for the trip such as mules, canoes, food, and lodging.[21]

For travelers, one of the main attractions of the montaña region once they were able to reach it was its ready access to navigable rivers guaranteeing an "eastward communication with the world."[22] The existence of navigable rivers belonging to the Amazon basin represented a good business opportunity for other countries, not only for securing the flow of commercial networks, but also for introducing steam boats and associated ideas of modernization to the area.[23] However, all the travelers quickly found out that navigating these rivers through the montaña region meant also crossing the infamous pongos. Spruce described these pongos as the place "where the river is much narrowed and confined in one channel by the steep hills on each side."[24] Peruvians explained to Spruce that in these narrow areas the rivers are 'boxed in' and

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resbalan o tropiezan a cada rato, y se caen con continuo riesgo de que el jinete se rompa una pierna." In Raimondi, *El Perú: historia de la geografía Del Perú*, 40-41.

[20] Ibid., 40.

[21] Ibid., 428.

[22] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 113-14.

[23] Steamboats were used as both instruments and symbols of modernization in Upper Amazonia. This changed rapidly over the course of the nineteenth century and saw it as one of the "tools of empire" see Daniel Headrick, *Tools of Empire* and *Tentacles of Empire* on the Old World.

[24] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 19.

when the river is high the pongo is impassable.[25] Herndon also described pongos as "designat[ing] places where a river breaks through a range of hills, and where navigation is of course obstructed by rocks and rapids."[26] In order to avoid a pongo, travelers had "to climb a mountain-side and then go down again, and perhaps steep cliffs render descent impossible for a long distance."[27] After passing the pongo, travelers typically encountered a flat and low area where they could see the river gradually open out wide. Each encounter with these pongos was a reminder that the only way for them to pass these pongos was with the help of locals, Indigenous people who knew how to navigate or bypass those waters. For Raimondi, Indigenous people were used to facing these difficulties and knew how to deal with these pongos because they had done so for so long.[28] Interestingly, the literal meaning of pongos in Kechwa is doors, and that is exactly how they felt for these travelers, because once they crossed these doors, they were able to see what the montaña had to offer them.

After facing these "natural obstacles," as these travelers referred to them, they were able to appreciate the montaña landscape. According to all of these travelers' descriptions, the montaña region impressed them greatly. Not only was it visually appealing, but the fertility of the soil and abundance of nature were also evident. Raimondi poetically refers to the montaña as a place with "varied landscapes, full of life for the lush and exuberant vegetation of the tropics, and the numerous streams, whose crystalline water came falling with pleasant murmur among the green foliage."[29] He was also impressed by the moderate temperature of the area depicted as if the cloudiness of the landscape would allow a nice breeze that felt like it could take away the

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[25] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 35.
[26] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 166.
[27] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 85.
[28] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 29.
[29] Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte Preliminar], 378-79.

heat that he had experienced in his journey. For Raimondi, this "gust of wind wrapped the skirt of the hill covered with vegetation in a thick veil, and dissipating by moments, it let appear a new scene in which some elegant arboreal ferns showed their beautiful parasol of leaves."[30] Compared to the rest of his voluminous writings about his travels in Peru, Raimondi portrays the montaña landscape as one of the most beautiful ones that he had seen. Indeed, it was the archetype of the verdant tropical landscape that so many travelers following in the footsteps of Alexander von Humboldt hoped to experience. Despite all the difficulties to reach the montaña, Raimondi reassured the reader that the montaña was full of valuable crops, such as sugar cane, coca, and cocoa (and the people who cultivated them). Suggesting the main limitations for transporting these goods, he noted that the harvest, production, and commercialization of these products could be enhanced by bringing a mule with them.[31] The region presented a huge variety of crops that were exchanged with other towns.

At the montaña city of Moyobamba, where many travelers first entered this ecoregion, they learned about the different ways to reach other commercial centers such as Tarapoto and Lamas, and the Huallaga and Marañón. Indigenous people from the area had many alternative routes to get to these cities and other towns spread out throughout the montaña. It was clear to many of these travelers that the region's Indigenous people had a long time ago mastered the place itself with their ability to go from one place to another, from river to river and from hill to hill—even if in the travelers' eyes most of them were still somehow 'savages.'[32] Considering how rough the travelers' journey into and through the montaña had been, it seemed hard for them to believe the efficacy with which Indigenous peoples were able to engage in the exchange of

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid., 121.

[32] Raimondi, *El Perú*, v.1, 128.

their products with other parts of the territory and other Indigenous groups. In Raimondi's accounts of the montaña, he emphasizes the harshness of the road from Moyobamba to Tarapoto, which "is not passable by beasts and only serves for the Indians who trade with the capital of the province."[33] Compared to the travelers' own limitations in making sense of this region and its connections with other places, the montaña for Indigenous people appeared as an integrated part of a whole. Local Natives had maintained their own ways to stay connected to other places, while also participating in economic activities that may have benefited themselves or their patrons.

Depending on the places these travelers had already visited, their perceptions about Natives varied. In an attempt to qualify labor, these travelers were able to categorize the groups of Natives they encountered depending on how 'helpful' or useful they were. Usually, Indigenous people living in the cities and towns were referred to as fieles because they were docile and obedient, while the ones living in small settlements with no mestizos and whites were called *semisalvajes* or semi-savages. The infieles or savages were the ones living in isolated places of the montaña. Regardless of the kind of experiences that these travelers established with Indigenous people, they almost universally believed that the future of Indigenous people was doomed. The obedient ones were docile and easy to manage, but the travelers could see how local officials and even priests took advantage of that situation. The semi-savages and savages needed to be taught how-to live-in civilization, but they were too dangerous, too drunk, and had no interest in learning.[34]

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[33] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 1862, 50.
[34] Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte preliminar], 128.

Lieutenant Herndon reflected on how sad it was for him "to see the condition of the Peruvian indians. […] They make no progress in civilization, and they are taught nothing."[35] Referring to his own experience of dealing with Native Americans in his home country, on the one hand, Herndon explained how much Natives needed to be disciplined, suggesting their lack of intelligence; and on the other hand, Herndon felt that communication with them was not going to be productive at all. He believed that the path of civilization needed to continue with or without Indigenous people: "civilization must advance, though it tread on the neck of the savage, or even trample him out of existence."[36] Overall, travelers expressed their frustration for their inability to take advantage of the resources that the montaña region offered. Among these blocked resources, they included Indigenous people's labor, blaming the Peruvian government for not guaranteeing good conditions on the roads for people to travel, and for allowing foreigners to exploit the services offered by Indigenous people while preventing them from participating in the improvement of their own communities so they can become modern citizens.[37]

The majority of the Indigenous population in the cities of the montaña region were the fieles. Travelers described them as smart, obedient, and docile. In cities such as Moyobamba and Tarapoto, one of the fieles' main occupations was to serve in the houses of mestizos and white Spaniards. They also were in charge of cultivating the *chacras* or small plots that surrounded the city where the daily goods came from. The fieles were well known for fabricating blowguns for hunting, collecting resin and wax to fabricate torches or candles, and for carrying merchandise on their backs and traveling with heavy loads great distances through the montaña.[38] Outsiders

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[35] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 227.
[36] Ibid., 228.
[37] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 188.
[38] Ibid., 87.

trusted fieles' knowledge about the region, and they were always in charge of transporting goods and people to different places. Fieles showed most respect to governors and priests; Herndon depicted how submissive Indigenous people were by being "very obedient to their priest, always saluting him by kneeling and kissing his hand."[39] Spruce also mentioned how even Indigenous people in high political positions —such as chief officials (curacas)—would wait after mass to receive the orders from the priest.[40] In the case of the fieles there was no doubt about how little power they had, and how limited were their options, in case they wanted to stop serving others.

In more urbanized parts of the montaña region, the power of the governor and the priest mattered to economic and social relations because almost every task directly involved Indigenous people's labor. Although fieles would typically get some sort of payment, the governor and priest would also receive monetary compensation for their underlings' labor, and for allowing Indigenous people to receive goods in exchange for their work. To illustrate this point, Herndon cites an instance when he and his crew asked for Indigenous assistants as part of their preparations for their exploratory trip. He was surprised how many fieles obeyed the request of the governor and the priest and offered their manpower without limitations and for an extended period of time. "The power of the governor to take them [fieles] from their labor and send them on journeys of weeks' duration with any passing merchant or traveler," was remarkable, all the more so because they had "taken thirty-eight men out of a population of ninety."[41] Travelers expressed how local officers routinely took advantage of Indigenous people by using them as transportation similar to mules to carry goods on their backs for commercial purposes.[42] "A travelling merchant goes to the governor and says, 'I have such and such a cargo;

[39] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 164.
[40] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 16.
[41] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 153.
[42] Ibid., 79.

I want so many Indians to transport it.' The governor generally a white or Mestizo, sends for the Curaca, (the lineal hereditary governor of the tribe of Indians of that district, who has great authority, and without whose assistance the whites probably could not govern at all,) and orders him to have so many Indians detailed for a journey."[43] In general, travelers actively criticized the Peruvian government for allowing that kind of mistreatment to Indigenous people, especially considering that slavery and the Indigenous head tax were abolished in 1853.

Despite some of the travelers' strong feelings about the ways in which the fieles provided forced labor, they nonetheless consented that this situation was "a necessary evil, and without their help the scientific traveler could not move away from the populated areas, to travel unknown regions."[44] To explore the interior of the montaña where not even pack animals could penetrate, these travelers found it essential to employ the 'almost free labor' of fieles. Raimondi routinely referred to the fieles as 'useful arms' (*brazos útiles*), because they were routinely employed in the transport of cargo, both by land and by river.[45] Local officials forced almost everybody coming from the montaña cities to work against their will, because the conditions were excruciating and they had to leave behind their families and their work in their own chacras so they could work as beasts of burden. Spruce's numerous exploration trips in the montaña depended on these carriers who were able to withstand the most inhumane working conditions. Usually the fieles would all navigate the rivers until it was possible, and when the river was too full to continue and face the rapids, they had to carry the cargoes up across the hill as well as emptying the canoes while dragging them across the rocks too.[46] Raimondi nonetheless recognized the fieles' special knowledge of all the details about a place, the forest, and the rivers

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[43] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 79.
[44] Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte preliminar], 126.
[45] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 185.
[46] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 24.

which made it possible for them to wander around the montaña.[47] Raimondi even cautioned outsiders not to lose sight of the fieles because they walk fast and through the dense forest "as if it were an open field."

Once the travelers understood how critical the knowledge and forced labor of Indigenous people was to their explorations as well as the development of commercial relationships, they realized that this system based on the subjection of the fieles was not going to be sustainable much longer—and certainly could not be extended far into the remaining wilderness. Without the presence of local authorities forcing Indigenous people to 'assist' outsiders, travelers had a hard time convincing anyone to sell their mules, agree to take cargoes on their backs, or even navigate the rivers for extended periods, even when offered good pay. This forced labor had such a negative impact on the montaña cities and towns that Indigenous people started to flee in order to avoid the oppression and tyranny of the governors and priests.[48] According to Raimondi, it was possible to see the consequences of this resistance by noticing the decrease by more than a half the number of fieles willing to help. To Raimondi it was obvious that most of these fieles had no wish to suffer the cruel conditions of being servants and so chose to escape to isolated places in the montaña where the authorities could not find them.[49] For Raimondi, it was not only a problem that the fieles had to transport from city to city the goods coming to and from Brazil, but also that the number of fieles that local officials and mestizos needed to maintain or expand these commercial networks would have to keep growing. The increasing flow of the goods coming and going to the montaña depended on a larger number of fieles that the governors and priests had no

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[47] Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte preliminar], 126-27.
[48] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 185.
[49] Ibid.

way to guarantee. In what was supposedly the most civilized part of the montaña, the social system was actually condemned to stagnation or decline.

Once these fieles made the decision to escape forced labor and return to other parts of the montaña where they could not be found, the travelers identified them as semi-salvajes. In other words, these were people who did not follow the laws of God and lived without the accoutrements of civilization where no other mestizo or white Spaniard would choose to live.[50] If it was lucrative for them, these semi-salvajes would sometimes agree to work for outsiders, whether it was navigating the rivers or hunting. But semi-salvajes would engage in these commercial relationships on their own terms, which meant starting whenever they wanted, and finishing the job whenever it was the most convenient. Raimondi described as semi-salvajes, the people from the town and port called Chasuta. According to him, hiring people from Chasuta or Chasutinos was worth the hassle since they were well-known for having the expertise at navigating the rivers and pongos. Unfortunately, from the perspective of outsiders, Chasutinos drank too much alcohol, which required that travelers give them as much time as it would take for the Chasutinos to prepare themselves for a trip.[51] Spruce warned outsiders on how unreliable the Chasutinos were. Even if they agreed to navigate the rivers, they would not hesitate to 'desert' outsiders at other points of the trip. For example, they avoided at all cost crossing paths with Indigenous groups identified as true savages or discontinue trips if weather conditions were unfavorable. Spruce described in a matter of fact fashion the moment when he realized that the semi-salvajes were not going to continue on the trip with him on the Huallaga: "We found it, however, impossible to persuade them to proceed beyond Chasuta, the reason given for deserting us being that the Indians of Chapaja, a pueblo in the pongo, were awaiting their arrival to fall on

[50] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 458-59.
[51] Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte preliminar], 396.

them unawares and kill them."[52] In sum, the semi-salvajes seemed to have far more control in negotiating their interactions with outsiders and used their knowledge about the place to their advantage.

Besides the difficulties of the terrain in the montaña, travelers of all ethnicities had to face the risk of encountering Indigenous groups hostile to foreign invasion, described variously as salvajes, infieles, bárbaros, or chunchos.[53] These Indigenous groups were referred to in these ways because in the eyes of outsiders, they were "savage" and "barbarous," had not been baptized, lived independently in remote areas of the montaña, and believed that outsiders were "lost men with a depraved heart."[54] Seeing how the salvajes were kidnapped and traded in the montaña cities as slaves and dependents, travelers understood that the salvajes wanted to keep their distance from outsiders.[55] The most dangerous, according to Raimondi, were the ones who had experience with men who called themselves civilized, and who "under the pretext of civilizing them, have invaded their houses and destroyed their crops; they have been stripped them of their land, and sometimes hunted [them] as ferocious animals. These unfortunates have not received from civilization but grievances," and could be rightfully expected to redress them with violence.[56]

Raimondi also blamed Indigenous interpreters for exacerbating the already conflictual relationship between the groups.[57] He explained that the fieles who served as interpreters often saw the presence of outsiders as a threat to their own commercial activities. The fieles benefited in some ways from the condition of the salvajes who "lived almost independent in such remote

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[52] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 23.

[53] Back in the early seventeenth century, chronicler Guamán Poma referred to the population of the Andesuyo or montaña by calling them the Antis and the Chunchos, see Chapter 3.

[54] Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte preliminar], 128.

[55] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 158; Raimondi, *El Perú* vol.1, 438-39.

[56] Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte preliminar], 128.

[57] Ibid., 129.

places, […] far from the authorities and even, one might say, beyond the reach of the judicial administration,"[58] by allowing them to engage in a "small but lucrative trade."[59] In order to prevent outsiders from jeopardizing those exchanges, the fieles often lied about the motivations of outsiders present in the region, encouraging salvajes to think that the outsiders were going to enslave them and take away their wives and children. Overall, Raimondi criticized outsiders' attitudes toward the salvajes, mistreating them as if they were wild animals that needed to be 'tamed'. In his opinion, those people should take into consideration the "local conditions of the montaña" and the ways in which "they have a thousand advantages over us [outsiders], and even their weapons favor them."[60]

Both groups, travelers and local officials, were challenged by their inability to predict whether they could trust or not the people of the montaña. Indeed, for Raimondi they were not reliable, and attempts at Christianizing them had repeatedly failed. Indigenous people's familiarity with the terrain and the geography of the montaña, coupled with the government officials' inability to establish order in the montaña, allowed Indigenous populations to define on their own terms their relationship with outsiders. They lived following their own laws and customs, obtaining glass beads, knives, machetes or axes in exchange for products that they produced in the montaña such as cacao, sarsaparilla, rubber, and vanilla.[61] Outsiders and local officials as well criticized the little incentive that Indigenous people living on the margins of civilization had to collect more of those resources in an appropriate manner and insert them in the market. For instance, sarsaparilla was one the products that outsiders wanted to produce in much larger quantities due to its medicinal effects. However, this plant was located "on the

[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 130.
[61] Ibid., 129.

banks of almost every tributary of the great streams of the montaña" close to where the savages lived and prevented outsiders from collecting it and for selling it at the market.[62] Herndon described father Calvo's frustration for not been able to offer these products to the market even if he had obtained from the prefectures the exclusive right to collect all the sarsaparilla on the Ucayali river and its tributaries.[63] Local officials and priests claimed that Indigenous people did not know or did not care enough to not destroy the entire plant once they were done extracting the vine from the sarsaparilla root.[64] This is an example of how the savages were perceived as the ones directly affecting outsiders' opportunities to increase their own revenues and to expand the market in the region.

Under the orders of priests and local elites, fieles collected products so they could be traded. As father Calvo explained to Herndon, priests did not have a salary, which meant that "it was impossible for a clergyman to live unless he engaged in trade."[65] According to father Calvo, every year the governor appointed twelve Natives to serve him [this theoretically would have been done away with when the Indigenous head tax was abolished in 1854, soon after Herndon's visit]. It was considered an honorable position and father Calvo believed Indigenous people wanted to serve. It was meant to be "for the service of our holy mother church," and people working for the father were called *fiscales*.[66] The fiscales served the father in every way, mostly, in the father's small plot of land or chacra producing food and market crops, and in the trapiche processing sugar cane. The fiscales were commonly called mitayos in reference to the mita system of the colonial period when colonial authorities forced Indigenous males to leave their

[62] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 184.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid., 164.

homes to work in the mines or to complete other kinds of corvée labor as a form of taxation. Herndon also described alternative ways in which priests were able to obtain money or marketable products from other sources. Besides trade, priests would also get compensated for performing marriages, burials, and christenings. Usually, this income was directed to build or repair churches and other small expenses to cover the presence of priests in the area.[67] Overall, priests found the means not only to prosper, but also to maintain their social and political control.

As long as the Christianized Natives or fieles remained obedient, priests and local officials could actually maintain the sociopolitical structure of the montaña with them at the top. Unlike the colonial period, when the church had full support from colonial authorities, the power of priests during the nineteenth century was much more vulnerable. The ongoing absence of the central state from most areas and the growing number of Indigenous people fleeing to the more unreachable parts of the montaña, was considered a threat for outsiders' efforts to bring civilization to this region by opening it to the external market. Thus, the economic, political, and social power of the priests depended on Indigenous population's devotion to the church and God. By the time these travelers visited the area, fieles recognized the power of the priests "to appoint and remove curacas, captains, and other officers" within Indigenous communities.[68] To priests, the fieles were "tractable and docile, […] but sometimes a little insolent."[69] In comparing the mind of fieles with that of a child, Herndon believed they needed even more disciplinary measures than the ones provided by the priests. From this outsider's perspective, the presence of the central state could have provided even better education and discipline for Indigenous people, making sure that the fieles would always obey and not flee.

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[67] Ibid., 206.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

The increasing number of Indigenous people fleeing showed outsiders in general their inability to control Natives who refused to be part of their civilizing plans. Contrary to their aim to continue relying on Indigenous labor to fulfil their commercial ambitions, Indigenous people would find the way to desert their cities or towns. Besides the ones fleeing to more inaccessible parts of the montaña due to their "proclivity to fall back into savage[ry]," it was not uncommon for them to go to Brazilian-influenced or controlled territory where Portuguese 'comerciantes' (businessman) would employ them and pay a more fair price for their services.[70] According to Herndon, the reason why fieles would rather go to Brazil as a form of resistance is because missionaries had civilized them. This understanding of civilization implied that Indigenous people had learned to appreciate the value of property and consumer goods, and they became consumed by what he saw as a highly desirable "ambition and desire to improve their condition."[71] In Brazil, Indigenous people were also mistreated, but at least they had the possibility to accumulate goods such as knives, beads, fish-hooks, and mirrors, so they could take back to their families. Encouraged by these successful experiences, people decided to also go to Brazil and stay there for several years. In Herndon's words, "the Peruvian Indian returns home a rich and envied man, and others are induced to go below in hopes of similar fortune."[72] In sum, the situation of Indigenous labor in the montaña had proven to be central for any of the civilizing ideas that outsiders had. This created a problem with no solution because outsiders needed obedient or "civilized" labor. On the one hand, fieles would take the decision to 'go savage' and flee to parts of the montaña considered not so civilized; on the other hand, the ones

[70] Ibid., 207-8.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid., 260.

who were civilized and wanted to improve their condition would also flee to Brazil seeking better economic opportunities.

Despite the vulnerability of the post-colonial Peruvian economic system, which relied on Indigenous people's labor, outsiders' excitement about the natural richness of the montaña remained constant. Travelers described the land as extraordinarily fertile, "there are no words to give an idea of the immense variety of natural reproductions, and of the activity of nature in the continuous development of their beings."[73] For Raimondi, the montaña defined by the Huallaga, Ucayali, and Marañón rivers that surrounded it, "meets all the most favorable conditions for life; such as, an atmosphere constantly loaded with aqueous vapors, a fairly high temperature, with a virgin and fertile soil."[74] Travelers not only saw how seemingly easy it was to grow crops for export such as rice, cotton, sugar cane, coca, and tobacco, they also valued the immense variety of medicinal plants in the region.[75] Outsiders also found it surprising to notice how cotton, coca, coffee, cocoa, manioc, plantains and fruits grew effortless in this geography almost spontaneously.[76] Indigenous people were used to trading vanilla, resins, and wax to light the houses, and products found in mines like salt, gold, gypsum, alum, sulfur, and lignite by traveling long distances and trading what they could sometimes in exchange of money, but mostly using bolts of cotton cloth called tocuyo as a form of currency.[77]

Tocuyo was widely used as currency throughout the montaña and the rest of the lowland Amazonia, making up for the lack of money circulating in the area. It was woven by the women from cotton, which was considered the staple production in the montaña because of its

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[73] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 126.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 160; Raimondi, *El Perú* [Parte preliminar], 23.

[76] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 134.

[77] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 81-82; 128-29; Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 160.

abundance. According to Spruce, cotton-spinning was the principal industry of the women of Tarapoto. For one day of spinning, women were able to make four balls of cotton-thread, then woven "into a coarse cloth called 'tocuyo'" that was used to pay wages for work days, along with machetes, axes, and in all sorts of exchanges.[78] Tocuyo's value depended on its quality and origin. The most important kinds of tocuyo were the one from northern Peru, the English, and the North American one. The quality of "the Peruvian is very thick and dense; the British one is thinner but it is not dense; and there are two different North American kinds of tocuyos: thin and thick."[79] Indigenous people sold the Peruvian one in Tarapoto, which was also the main center for collecting tocuyo from the rest of the region. Whereas the value of tocuyo in the main plaza of Tarapoto was one and a half reales, one vara (100 square yards were equal to 108 varas), anywhere else it was two reales. The English and North American tocuyo was almost half again cheaper, just one real for one yard. Yet, no matter what kind of tocuyo, Indigenous people were always charged the equivalent of two reales, which ended up benefiting outsiders who would buy the North American tocuyo for one real, exchange it for work, and other goods to Indigenous people at two reales.[80] From the point of view of outsiders, not only was the North American tocuyo the most profitable choice, but they claimed Indigenous people liked it the most. Contrary to that assumption, Spruce explained that it was only due to the introduction of these imported tocuyos had caused the decrease of local manufacture.[81] Herndon, described the reach of Peruvian montaña-produced tocuyo which extended all the way to the north and east down the rivers. To the east, the price doubled depending on the farthest place where tocuyo traveled down

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[78] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 81-82; Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 82.

[79] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 81-82.

[80] Ibid., 81-82.

[81] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 82.

the river to be exchanged in Brazil and in Moyobamba: "tocuyo was exchanged for straw hats and English printed cotton cloths."[82]

While Tarapoto was the center of production of tocuyo, Moyobamba was important as a center for the manufacture of straw hats. Just like tocuyo, first these straw hats became famous in the surrounding areas of the montaña and then most of the production of hats went to Brazil, and finally from Brazil to Europe and the United States. For Spruce, the majority of the 20,000 inhabitants of Moyobamba were involved in this trade of hats known to Brazilians and Portuguese as "Chapeos de Chile."[83] In Spruce's words, the Brazilian market valued these hats so much that "the finest sell for an ounce of gold, or even more."[84] Despite the harshness of the territory, merchants coming from Brazil made sure to get to the montaña loaded with articles that could be exchanged "in Moyobamba and Chachapoyas for straw hats, tocuyo, sugar, coffee, and money."[85] In Herndon's accounts, he depicted an incident when he ran into traveling merchants, one from Portugal and the other from Brazil in the montaña. They had four boats and three canoes loaded with iron, steel, iron implements, wine, brandy, short swords, guns, ammunition, crockery-ware, copper kettles, and coarse cloth. These merchants estimated the value of their merchandise at five thousand dollars and expected to exchange them for regionally produced tocuyo, straw hats, and "all the sarsaparilla they could find, and dispatching it back in canoes."[86]

Along with these products, Indigenous people from the montaña brought with them salted river fish or *paiche salado*, which they prepared and stored for selling in lowland Amazonia and Brazil. Raimondi depicted the production, distribution, and consumption of this salado as a

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[82] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 160.
[83] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 46-47.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 173.
[86] Ibid.

growing industry in the montaña by changing the dynamics of its inhabitants and the landscape of the areas where they sold this salado.[87] During the dry season, the population from the montaña cities and towns who were engaged in the preparation of the salado went to the river banks, established their camps, and get ready to exchange it with the infidels. With the salado, people also exchanged tocuyo, knives, and hooks, so they could obtain from the infieles staple food such as plantains and yucca, and even their personal work.[88] According to Raimondi, this type of commercial activity stood out in the area for mobilizing so many people for an extended period of time while transforming the scenery of those remote places: "At this time they improvise on the banks of the mighty Ucayali [river]; a multitude of huts that provided with varied effects of change, transform these solitary regions into a real fair where animation and content reign."[89] It also allowed Indigenous people —generally from Lamas— to continue with their fishing tradition of finding fishing streams closer to the high parts of the montaña, and "sometimes remain a week, exposed to almost daily rain and barely sheltered at night in a rude rancho of palm-leaves."[90]

When the salado became a desirable product outside the montaña, the price increased and the way it was sold changed. Instead of selling it chopped in many pieces without weighing it, exporting the salado to Brazil meant also to divide the fish in only four pieces and sell it depending on the weight. To the surprise of many, including Raimondi, it seemed impossible to believe that the price of the salado was cheaper in Brazil than in the montaña cities such as Moyobamba.[91] Compared to the hassle of transporting products within the montaña, places in

[87] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 159.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Spruce, *Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon & Andes*, V2, 40.
[91] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincia litoral de Loreto*, 159-60.

Brazil with easy access to the rivers allowed the entry of products coming from the montaña at a relatively low cost. Just like other places in the montaña, Moyobamba was located at a higher elevation where not only people had to go up the rivers to get there, but they also had to carry their loads of merchandise through the often muddy roads.[92]

The import of products from Brazil to Peru also encountered similar issues faced by the internal commercialization of salado. Usually, Brazilian cargoes bound for Peru were transported up the Amazon River and Marañón to first arrive at the Peruvian lowland cities of Loreto or Nauta. Once in the montaña, Brazilian products continued along the Huallaga and Mayo rivers to a point where it was impossible to follow without people who had the ability —and the willingness— to carry these cargoes on their backs all the way to the montaña cities and towns. Due to the condition of the roads, its basic topography, finding and paying people to carry those cargoes increased the final price of the product enormously, causing the merchants' discouragement to engage in commercial activities in those territories. According to Raimondi, it was cheaper and required less effort from merchants to centralize their production coming from the montaña in commercial houses located in Nauta. Products such as straw hats, salado, sarsaparilla, vanilla, copaiba balm, resin, copal, tar, wax, and other medicinal plants were among the many that reached the commercial houses in Nauta so they could be traded and sent on to markets in Brazil, the United States, and Europe.[93]

Although the geography of the montaña limited the import of products from Brazil, the export continued from the montaña to Brazil and to the rest of the world. Inhabitants from Moyobamba were well known for traveling long distances in order to offer their merchandise. Travelers' accounts narrated how in every place that they visited there was always someone from

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[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid., 92.

Moyobamba or foreigners from Spain, France, and Portugal.[94] Herndon illustrated this point by calling these traders from Moyobamba as "the Jews of the country" that "will compass sea and land to make a dollar […] and seem capable of undergoing great hardship and fatigue, for they carry their cargoes to distant by roads or rivers that present innumerable difficulties."[95] Another reason why the import of products to the montaña did not happen throughout the Atlantic route —the Amazon River and its tributaries— is that Brazil had taxed the articles that were transported in the steamers to import into Peru.[96] Therefore, the price of the products coming from Brazil could not compete with the ones coming from the Pacific route. Even if the Pacific route presented the same problems when trying to pass from the Pacific coast to the montaña region, merchants who had economic interests in maintaining that commercial route would still prefer it.

With the introduction of the steamboat to lowland Amazonia and the major rivers of the montaña, Brazil and Peru officially negotiated the possibilities of promoting trade relations between these two countries in order to bring civilization to the whole area. In October of 1851, both countries signed the treaty of fluvial commerce and navigation, and of the boundary.[97] From the travelers' point of view, this treaty favored Brazil more than Peru, because Brazil gained more opportunities from maintaining a monopoly of the trade and navigation of the Amazon River and its tributaries.[98] According to the first article of this treaty, the main goal was to encourage the navigation of the Amazon River and its tributaries by steamboats in order to ensure the export of the emporium of goods from that region. In this article, the expectation was

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[94] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 161.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 168.
[97] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 356.
[98] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 356; Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 173-74.

based on the assumption that trade through the rivers —also exempted from taxes— contributed to the civilizing agenda of these countries by "increasing the number of the inhabitants and civilizing the savage tribes."[99] Right after this treaty was signed, a commercial route started to the Peruvian port of Nauta. Travelers like Raimondi witnessed the changes in the region because of the introduction of steamboats. For Raimondi, this fluvial trade increased every day, while opening new opportunities to the inhabitants of the towns located in the vicinities of navigable rivers. From the perspective of these travelers, had the Peruvian elites supported more this trade by "facilitating the transport of products in all the tributaries of the Amazon River,"[100] the whole region would have been improved.

Herndon estimated the kind of investment that the montaña needed in order to be transformed. With twenty thousand dollars spent on infrastructure and labor, Herndon believed that it would have been possible to enforce existing commercial networks and create new ones. Due to the inability of big steamboats reaching the narrow rivers up in the montaña region, Herndon argued in favor of the economic benefits of running a small steamer between Loreto (the frontier port of Peru) and the port in the montaña located in the city of Chasuta. Instead of having small canoes transporting merchandize throughout part of these eight hundred miles, for a total period of time of eighty days, Herndon envisioned steamers reaching the Peruvian frontier in only twelve days. Besides the steamers, Herndon believed it was also necessary to employ a thousand men for carrying these articles of trade. Foreign investment in small steamers would also bring unintended consequences to the region such as increasing the traffic of people traveling, purchasing "articles of luxury-such as Yankee clocks, cheap musical instruments."[101]

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[99] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 357.
[100] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 167.
[101] Herndon and Gibbon, *Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon,* 185.

In Herndon's predictions, the more chances to obtain this foreign merchandize, the harder "the Indians will work to obtain them."[102] After one year, the profit of this commercial trade would double, and with a railroad to transport goods even farther, the steamboat company would be able to monopolize the trade. Just to have an idea the possibilities that these travelers saw for the region with the introduction of steamboats, the following chart describes the profit and the number of merchandize exported from Loreto to Brazil by the Brazilian Steamboat Company in the first half of the year 1858.[103]

[102] Ibid.
[103] Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 167.

Merchandise	Nauta	Pebas	Loreto	Value
Brea-arrobas [tar (arrobas)		4		15
Cacao-idem		1		3
Sombreros de bombonaje [hats]	32088			96264
Fariña-alqueire [*]			105	126
Amacas [hammocks]	12		18	72
Pescado salado-arrobas		88	668	1814 3
Zarzaparrilla-idem			7	100 6
Tabaco-idem			4	72
			Total	$98467 1
Import during the first half of 1858				$25800
Revenue for the province				$72667 1

TABLE 6.1 Items exported from the border province of Loreto by the steamboats of the Brazilian company in the first half of the year 1858.[104]
These numbers show how lucrative the hat trade was; compared to essential goods such as fish and farina or manioc flour.

In conclusion, this chapter situates ideas about the montaña based on the accounts of travelers seeking new commercial opportunities for the montaña's natural resources, and their exportation to the rest of the world. An analysis to these travelers' accounts of their experiences with the montaña region in northern Peru during the nineteenth century sheds light on their relationship with Native groups from the montaña. These travelers started their journey without knowing what to encounter but left excited about all the commercial possibilities of the montaña. In a broader geopolitical context characterized by the rise of new nations, the chapter focuses on what these scientific expeditions discovered and described as a place that was almost perfectly

[104] These numbers show how lucrative the hat trade was; compared to essential goods such as fish and farina or manioc flour, in: Raimondi, *Apuntes sobre la provincial litoral de Loreto*, 167.

suitable to their agenda, provided that access—and therefore, connectivity—to this region could be improved or civilized as well as its local inhabitants. By this point some of the montaña Natives had become fully tired of their implied contribution to these external economic agendas, demonstrating their unwillingness to participate in transporting these goods. These travelers' encounters of the montaña reflected the extent to which they had to readjust their expectations about new Republics such as Peru and their ideas about Indigenous peoples.

Conclusion

This dissertation has examined representations, perceptions, and aspirations of the montaña region in Peru over the centuries, starting in the sixteenth century up until the nineteenth century. By analyzing the accounts of Indigenous and Spanish chroniclers, Spanish conquistadors, missionaries, and scientific expeditions, this project traces back the way that the montaña region remained central, and othered, in the territorial imagination of colonial Peru. Although most of these sources have provided a sense of what these actors encountered when they faced the montaña and its peoples in their expeditions, the most challenging part of the project has been to integrate what the montaña meant for local Natives. Outsiders' expectations regarding the montaña changed and adapted as soon as they ventured to this region. These views varied from considered it as wilderness, semi-civilized, or even prime place to settle. Focusing mostly on the montaña of northern Peru, this dissertation has explored various attempts from outsiders who could imagine taking advantage of what the montaña had to offer. The drive to access the montaña, as a revolving door to the selva, has been constant; however, outsiders' expectations about this region have not matched up the reality of the area and its inhabitants turning the montaña into an enduring frontier for their civilizing plans. For Indigenous groups of the montaña, their cultural and economic relationship with this environment allowed their survival. In a way, early encounters with the Inca empire first, and then the Spanish empire paved the way for their future responses and resistance to colonial powers.

On the Edge of the Wild's initial scope meant to include a couple of more chapters, one about the Spanish-Portuguese frontier, and another about the Juan Santos Atahualpa rebellion of 1742 in central montaña of Peru. This will be developed on the next stage of this project, mostly

because in both scenarios the montaña persisted as an enduring frontier, while shaping the montaña peoples' efforts to stay connected to their environment. As seen in this dissertation, when focusing on Natives from the montaña, their mobility and connectivity stood out to outsiders forcing them to reshape their colonizing strategies. Between the sixteenth through nineteenth century outsiders' plans for civilizing, catechizing or improving the area depended on Natives who were used to playing the role as intermediaries, interpreters, and gatekeepers to the complex environment of the montaña and its navigable rivers. Thus, these dynamics led outsiders to also question or sometimes reinforced their stereotypical ideas about wilderness and barbarism. Going back to the original question, what is the montaña, this dissertation's main goal has been to unveil these perceptions and provide the historical and geographical context to understand the history of the region and its inhabitants better. Seeing it as a whole, the dissertation has highlighted the existing tension of framing the montaña as a permanent frontier—of ideas and people—while at the same time identifying the different dynamics that have led to this realization.

Future projects involving the Andes and Amazonia would benefit from identifying linkages of both regions with the montaña. Instead of separating Andean and Amazonian studies, more sustained attention to the montaña can bridge those gaps, helping historians to avoid falling in the trap of not seeing or understanding what happened at the east of the Andean heights, or understanding the interconnections between proximate landscapes. A closer look of the montaña's environmental attributes such as its location, its proximity to the Marañón River's tributaries, and the possibility of reaching a large and diverse Native population has shown that this region deserves more studies. Especially, if this project only touches on the montaña of the

Huallaga and Mayo river valleys in the vicinity of the colonial cities of Moyobamba and Lamas in northern Peru.

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Appendix I. List of Jesuit Missions, 1638-1767

Jesuit Missions & Reductions/Towns		
Missions in the Upper Amazon	**Nuestra Señora de las Nieves de Yurimaguas**	**Aguarico Mission**
San Francisco de Borja (Mission Center)	Santiago de la Laguna (Mission Center)	San Pedro a la boca de Aguarico
San Ignacio de Mainas	Laguna Coarí de Yurimaguas	San Estanislao de Yairaza
Santa Teresa de Mainas	Tracuatuba de Yurimaguas	Corazón de Jesús de Yaso
San Juan Evangelista de Mainas	San José de Ataguates	Los Mártires del Japón
La Concepción de los Xeveros	Santo Tomé de Cutinanas	San Luis de Guteizaya
San Pablo de Pandabeques	Santa María de Guallaga	Santa Teresa de Pequeya
San Xavier de Aguanos y Chamicuros	Nuestra Señora del Loreto de Paranapuras	La Trinidad de Capocui
San Antonio de Aguanos	La Presentación de Chayavitas	Santa Cruz de Zueoqueya
	La Concepción de Cahuapanas	San Luis de Tiriri
	Santa María de Ucayale	
	San Ignacio de Barbudos	
	San Joaquín de Omaguas en Guerari	
	Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Omaguas	
	San Pablo de Omaguas	
	San Cristóbal de Omaguas	
	Santa Ana de Yurimaguas	
	San Regis de Indios Lamistas	
	San Estanislao de los Muniches	

Jesuit Missions & Reductions/Towns		
Pastaza River Mission	**Mission in the Lower Amazon**	**Napo River Mission**
Los Ángeles de Roamainas	San Joaquín de Omaguas (Mission Center)	La Reina de los Ángeles de Payaguas
San Salvador de Zapas	San Fernando de Mayorunas	Los Ángeles de Guarda de Payaguas
Nombre de Jesús de Coronados	San Regis de Yameos	San Pedro de Parayaguas
Santo Tomé de Andoas	San Carlos de Alabonos	San Xavier de Icaguates
San José de Pinches	San Simón de Nahuapo	San Juan Bautista de Paratoas
Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de Muratas	San Pablo de Napeanos	San José de Huayoya
	San Xavier de Urarinas	La Sociedad de María
	San Ignacio de Pebas	San Bartolome de Necoya
	Nuestra Señora del Carmen de Mayorunas	Nombre de María de Guacoya
	Nuestra Señora de Loreto de Ticunas	San Miguel de Ciecoya
	San Juan Nepomuceno de Iquitos	Nombre de Jesús de Maqueye
	Santa Barbara de Iquitos	San Juan Nepomuceno de Tiputini
	Santa Maria de Iquitos	
	San Sebastian de Iquitos	
	Corazón de Jesús de Iquitos	
	San Xavier de Iquitos	
	San José de Iquitos	
	Corazón de María de Iquitos	

Source: José Chantre, *Historia de las misiones de la Compañía de Jesús en el Marañón español* (A. Avrial, 1901).