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INTRODUCTION

This is an English translation of Cristóbal de Molina's manuscript titled *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas* (*Relación de las fábulas y ritos de los incas*). Written around 1575 at the request of the third bishop of Cuzco, Sebastián de Lartaún, the report describes various rituals that were conducted in Cuzco during the last years of the Inca Empire. Molina was a priest of the Hospital for the Natives of Our Lady of Succor in Cuzco and he served for nearly twenty years as the preacher general (*predicador general*) of the city. Molina was also an outstanding Quechua speaker, and his advanced language skills allowed him to record both the prayers and the religious celebrations of the Incas in unprecedented detail.

Molina's account was written during a period of growing Spanish domination and accelerated violence against the so-called idolatrous religions of the Andean peoples. Soon after the Spaniards took control of the imperial city of Cuzco (1534), they began to discourage the ritual activities of the Incas. Over the next several decades, as the Europeans gradually increased their power in the Andes, they pressured the indigenous peoples to stop practicing their religious activities. Polo de Ondegardo (1916: 31) indicates that only a few vestiges of the most important Inca celebrations remained in the city during his first term as chief magistrate (1558–1560), and many of those were being practiced in secret. By the mid-1570s, indigenous ceremonies had all but disappeared in the former capital. Within this context of rapidly changing cultural practices, Molina's *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas* is exceptionally important.

It is based on the testimonies of the older indigenous men of Cuzco who were among the last surviving eyewitnesses of the rituals conducted at the height of Inca rule.

Molina begins his work, after a brief introduction, by recording various Andean myths. These are followed by short discussions of *quipus*, the knotted recording devices of the Incas, and the early life of Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui, the ninth ruler of Cuzco. Information is also provided on the major gods and shrines (*huacas*) of the Incas, as well as on different classes of sorcerers, healers, and fortune-tellers.

He then discusses the major rituals that occurred in Cuzco during each month of the year. These accounts are perhaps the greatest of Molina's contributions, as he offers many details that are not provided by other writers. Most importantly, he provides rich descriptions of the Cuzco solstice celebrations as well as the Citua celebration, during which the city was ritually cleansed, and the annual male initiation ritual. Readers of Molina's work must, however, be careful as they compare his ritual accounts to those offered by other early colonial authors, because all of Molina's ritual descriptions are off by one month. For example, those rituals that are generally thought to have occurred in June, are listed by Molina under the heading of May, and those celebrations that are thought to have occurred in December are listed in his description for November. Once this adjustment is made, comparisons between Molina and other sources can confidently be made.

After describing the ritual calendar, Molina offers shorter descriptions of several Inca rites that were not tied to a specific month (e.g., birth rituals, first hair-cutting celebrations, female initiation rites, and marriages). The manuscript ends with concise descriptions of the Capacocha ritual, in which all the shrines of the empire were offered sacrifices, as well as the Taqui Onqoy movement, a religious cult that spread across the Andes during the late 1560s–early 1570s. Throughout the manuscript, Molina also provides transcriptions of various Quechua prayers.¹

The manuscript is not dated, and it is not known for certain when the *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas* was completed.

Nevertheless, most researchers who have worked with the document believe it was written between 1573 and 1575 (e.g., Romero 1943; Porras Barrenechea 1986; Urbano 2008a, 2008b). Since the text refers to the fall of Vilcabamba and the death of the last Inca, it is certain that the manuscript was written after 1572. However, the earliest date for the document is more precisely set by Lartaún's ascension to the Cuzco bishopric. Lartaún was appointed as the third bishop of Cuzco in 1570, yet he did not arrive in the city until 28 June 1573, and he formally entered the office the following week on 4 July 1573 (Esquivel y Navia 1980: 232, 246; Vasco de Contreras y Valverde 1982: 96). Since Molina indicates in the opening sentence of the *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas* that the report was written at the request of Bishop Lartaún, the document must have been composed after early July 1573. The latest date for the manuscript is suggested by a letter written by Francisco de Toledo (1943: xxiii) on 4 November 1575, in which the viceroy notes that Molina had already "busied himself learning and understanding the ancient rites and ceremonies that those Indians had."

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE OF CRISTÓBAL DE MOLINA

The basic known facts of Cristóbal de Molina's life are few, and most have already been reviewed by other authors (Markham 1873; Thayer Ojeda 1920; Loayza 1943; Porras Barrenechea 1986; Urbano and Duviols 1989; Calvo Pérez and Urbano 2008; Urbano 2008a, 2008b, 2008c).² From Molina's own statements, we know that he was born in Baeza, Spain, sometime before 1530,³ but there is no other information concerning his life before he arrived in Cuzco in 1556 at the age of about 27 (see "The Life and Times of Cristóbal de Molina"). Cuzco remained Molina's primary residence until his death on 29 May 1585, although he was called upon during his lifetime to make various trips into the surrounding provinces (Porras Barrenechea 1986: 352; Millones 1990: 224–225).

Perhaps because of his linguistic abilities, Molina was appointed as the priest of the Hospital for the Natives of Our Lady of Succor

in Cuzco in 1565 (Porras Barrenechea 1986: 350).⁴ The following decade was a time of great social upheaval in the central Andes marked by a resurgence of indigenous ritual practices, against which the Spaniards launched a series of repressive anti-idolatry campaigns. It was also a time of great political change, during which the last independent royal Inca, Tupac Amaru, was captured and killed. During this turbulent era, Molina's responsibilities grew as he became the preacher general of the Cuzco parishes. He was also appointed as an inspector general (*visitador general*) by the ecclesiastical council of Cuzco and asked to visit various territories for evidence of idolatry.⁵

Around 1572 Molina authored a work on the history of the Incas. Although this manuscript is now lost, we know that he gave a copy to Lartaún. Molina's history must have impressed the bishop, as Lartaún then requested that Molina write a second report focusing on the myths and rituals of the Incas. Although Lartaún instituted a series of rigorous reforms in the Cuzco region while he was bishop (Vasco de Contreras y Valverde 1982: 96), Molina won Lartaún's favor and was asked to continue in his positions as priest of the Hospital of the Indians and preacher general of the city.

Like several other Spaniards who conducted interviews in Cuzco during the early Colonial Period (e.g., Ruiz de Navamuel 1882, 1940a, 1940b; Sarmiento de Gamboa 2007), Molina sought out the older indigenous men who had lived in the city during the final years of the Inca Empire. He specifically mentions having interviewed men who participated in state rituals during the lives of the last three indigenous rulers of Cuzco, writing: "To this end, I ordered to assemble a number of very elderly men who witnessed and performed those ceremonies and rituals during [the] time of Huayna Capac, Huascar Inca, and Manco Inca, and some leaders and priests who were of those times." However, unlike most of his contemporaries working in Cuzco, Molina was well qualified to conduct these interviews in Quechua.

One of the most important ecclesiastical events of the early Colonial Period was the Third Lima Provincial Council (1582–1583).

The provincial councils were held periodically to settle issues of church hierarchy and to provide support for the evangelistic activities of the Church (Oré 1982; Timberlake 2008: 97). The third council was especially critical for Lartaún, as some twenty-three charges had been filed against him from different officials in Cuzco (Millones 2008: 21). Since Lartaún died in Lima on 9 October 1583, before the council concluded, many of the charges were never resolved.

Molina also traveled to Lima to attend the council. As he left the Cuzco region, Molina carried a letter, dated 6 June 1582, from the leaders (*caciques principales*) of the eight parishes of the city, who were requesting that Viceroy Martín Enríquez (1581–1583) confer tax-exempt status on them (Porrás Barrenechea 1986: 353; Urbano 1990: 276–277). Several of these men are also mentioned in Sarmiento de Gamboa's (2007) *History of the Incas*, and they may have served as informants for both Molina and Sarmiento de Gamboa. Molina's language skills were no doubt welcomed by the council as it toiled with one of its central tasks: the production of three trilingual (Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara) religious works to aid in the teaching of the Christian doctrine. However, while in Lima, Molina became sick and left the city before the council ended, so it is not known how much he actually helped the council with the publications (Millones 1990: 227).

It is also worth noting that Molina testified two times in Cuzco, once before and once after the Third Lima Provincial Council, at inquiries into the services and anti-idolatry campaigns of Cristóbal de Albornoz.⁶ The first took place in Cuzco on 14 January 1577 (Millones 1990: 181–182). In his statement, Molina, who is simply introduced as a cleric priest (*clérigo presbítero*), indicated that he had known Albornoz for more than ten years and that Albornoz had successfully completed anti-idolatry campaigns in the area of Arequipa and Huamanga (modern Ayacucho). Molina was called again to give testimony some seven years later, on 28 March 1584, on the services of Albornoz (Millones 1990: 223–228). This time Molina is introduced into the record in far more elaborate terms as “the il-

lustrious Cristóbal de Molina, cleric priest, preacher general of the natives of this city, who was also inspector general of this bishopric.” This 1584 testimony is the last substantial document we have on Molina. He died in Cuzco a year and a half later at the approximate age of fifty-six.

THE HISTORY OF THE INCAS AND OTHER WORKS
BY CRISTÓBAL DE MOLINA

Molina wrote at least two reports on the Incas. Although no copy of Molina’s first report, commonly referred to as the *History of the Incas*, has survived, we know that it existed because Molina records giving a copy of it to Bishop Lartaún. This is noted in the opening statement of Molina’s *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas*, where he also provides a brief summary of his earlier report.

The account that I gave to Your Most Illustrious Lordship [described] the dealings, origin, lives, and customs of the Incas who were the lords of this land; how many there were, who their wives were, and the laws they made, [the] wars they waged, and [the] people and nations they conquered. Because in some parts of that account I discussed the ceremonies and rituals they established, although not in much detail, I thought it was proper now, principally because Your Most Reverend Lordship has requested it of me, to expend additional effort so that Your Most Reverend Lordship [can] learn about the ceremonies, rituals, and idolatries that these Indians had.

Molina also refers to his first report several times within the text of his *Account on the Fables and Rites of the Incas*. For example, Molina specifically notes that his history contained a retelling of the Pacaritambo origin myth. In this myth, the first Inca, Manco Capac, along with his brothers and sisters, emerged from a cave called Tambotoco in the area of Pacaritambo (Bauer 1991). As they traveled to Cuzco, one of Manco Capac’s brothers, Ayarcache, was turned into

stone at the summit of Huanacauri, becoming an important shrine of the Cuzco region. Molina refers to the creation of this shrine in the following: “[Huanacauri was] their principal *huaca*, which they said was the brother of Manco Capac, from whom they say they descended. So as to not make [this report] lengthy, I will not discuss the fable of this *huaca* here, having [already] made reference to it in the *History of the Incas* that I have done.” Molina also indicates that his telling of the myth appeared near the beginning of his earlier work, writing, “Because this [conversion of Ayarcache into stone] was included and discussed at length in the fable at the beginning of the *History [of the Incas]*, which Your Most Illustrious Majesty has, I do not discuss it here. Your Most Illustrious Lordship can read it there.” We also know that Molina’s *History of the Incas* contained a description of the life of Inca Yupanqui, since Molina notes, “Throughout his life, as is discussed in the account that Your Lordship has, everything [Inca Yupanqui] conquered and subjected was in the name of the Sun, his father, and of the Creator.” Furthermore, within Molina’s account of Inca Yupanqui’s life there appears to have been a section dedicated to the laws and sayings of this Inca king, since Molina notes the following in his religious report: “Concerning the laws and customs [that] he decreed, I stand by [the information in] the account.” Since Inca Yupanqui⁷ was among the most important rulers of Cuzco, it is not surprising that his life was described in Molina’s *History of the Incas*.⁸

Researchers have long suggested that parts of Molina’s *History of the Incas* may be preserved within Miguel Cabello Valboa’s *Miscelánea antártica* (1586), as this author notes that he used the work of the “venerable Father Cristóbal de Molina,” along with those of several other writers, to research the origins of the Inca kings (Markham 1873: viii-ix; Cabello Valboa 1951: 259–260). Both Cabello Valboa and Molina were in Lima for the Third Lima Provincial Council, and perhaps this is when Cabello Valboa gained access to Molina’s manuscript (Núñez-Carvallo 2008: 91).⁹

A copy of Molina’s *History of the Incas* must also have been archived somewhere in Cuzco. Dean Vasco de Contreras y Valverde,

writing in Cuzco in 1649, specifically mentions it as an important source for his overview on the history of the city:

They give the same origin of the city's foundation as they attribute to the descent and royal blood of the Incas. I have found another version that mentions it, and in some length, in a manuscript that, by command of Viceroy Don Francisco de Toledo, was written by Father Cristóbal de Molina. [He was an] ancient priest [and] scrutinizer of the intricate *quipu* annals of those times or, better said, labyrinths where the Indians would barbarically imprison the memoirs of their ancient past. (Vasco de Contreras y Valverde 1982: 43 [1649]; my translation)

It is widely assumed, based on the opening line of the *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas*, that Molina wrote his *History of the Incas* at the request of Lartaún on the bishop's arrival in Cuzco (Urbano and Duviols 1989; Calvo Pérez and Urbano 2008; Urbano 2008b, 2008c). Yet it should be noted that Molina only indicates that he had *given* a copy of his history to Lartaún and that the bishop had then requested that a second study be made on the rituals of the Incas. Vasco de Contreras y Valverde's reference to Molina's *History of the Incas*, provided above, yields additional information on the social contexts as well as the creation data of the manuscript. He specifically states that Molina's history was written at the request of Viceroy Toledo and that it was based on readings of *quipus* (knotted cords used by the Incas to encode numbers and other information). The request would have been made during Toledo's relatively brief stay in Cuzco (ca. February 1571–October 1572). The request would also have been among several others that Toledo made to various Spaniards, including Sarmiento de Gamboa (2007) and Ruiz de Navamuel (1882, 1940a, 1940b), to research the history of the Incas.

There was a third document that Molina also sent to Bishop Lartaún; however, it is unclear if Molina was the actual author of the manuscript or if he was only passing along information collected by someone else. While describing the shrines (*huacas*) of the

Cuzco region, Molina writes: “There were so many places in Cuzco that were dedicated for sacrifices that it would be very tedious if I describe them here. And because all the ways they sacrificed [at them] are included in the *Account of the Huacas* that I gave to Your Most Illustrious Majesty, I will not include this [information] here.” Bernabé Cobo (1990) is known to have copied a large document, now lost, by an unknown writer into his chronicle that included a detailed description of the shrines of the Cuzco region. The above passage by Molina has led some researchers to suggest that Molina may have been the author of this shrine document (Rowe 1946: 300; Zuidema 1964; Porras Barrenechea 1986). John Rowe (1980: 7), however, has pointed out that Molina does not specifically claim authorship of the shrine document but simply states that he gave the bishop a copy. Compelling evidence now suggests that Molina did indeed only *provide* a shrine document to the bishop and that the original author of this document, which Cobo later copied into his work, was Polo de Ondegardo. The shrine document was most likely written around 1559 during Polo de Ondegardo’s first term as the chief magistrate of Cuzco (Bauer 1998: 13–22; 1999).

CRISTÓBAL DE ALBORNOZ AND CRISTÓBAL DE MOLINA

Cristóbal de Albornoz was one of the principal leaders in the Church’s struggle against the autochthonous religions of the Andes in the immediate postconquest era. From 1568 until his death in the early 1600s, Albornoz led a series of campaigns in the Peruvian highlands to identify and destroy native shrines and to punish the individuals and communities who worshipped them (Millones 2008). He was first assigned the position of inspector general [*visitador general*] in the area of Arequipa (1568) and was then sent on a longer assignment (1569–1571) to Huamanga at the request of the ecclesiastical council of Cuzco and the governor of Peru, Lope García de Castro (Albornoz 1984: 215). It was during this period that a young indigenous man named Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, who would later become a writer, came into contact with Albornoz (Figure 1.1).

FIGURE 1.1

Guaman Poma de Ayala (1980 [ca. 1615]: 675 [689]) illustrated Cristóbal de Albornoz and his assistant, Juan Cocha Quispe, during an anti-idolatry campaign against the Taqui Onqoy movement (ca. 1564–1572). The caption reads “First Chapter of Visitor. Cristóbal de Albornoz, visitor general of the Holy Mother Church, good justices, judge.” (Courtesy of Det Kongelige Bibliotek.)

In 1570, while still in Huamanga, Albornoz met Viceroy Toledo, who was himself on a general inspection, working his way from Lima to Cuzco (Levillier 1940). Toledo reconfirmed Albornoz's authority and gave him the title of Inspector General [*visitador general*] of Chinchaysuyo (Millones 1990: 179, 181–182; 2008). Albornoz's anti-idolatory campaigns were largely focused on crushing the newly discovered Taqui Onqoy movement (ca. 1564–1572). During his many campaigns, Albornoz was personally responsible for the destruction of thousands of *huacas* and the persecution of a vast number of individuals.¹⁰ His activities in the provinces of Soras, Apcaras, and Lucanas are especially well documented (Millones 1990).

Molina and Albornoz interacted for several decades. Molina first met Albornoz soon after the latter's arrival in Cuzco (1568), and they both spent the rest of their lives in the city, working under various bishops (Millones 2008). They were also both very active in the anti-idolatory movements of their times. For example, while Albornoz was inspecting Arequipa and Huamanga, it seems that Molina was working as an inspector in the Cuzco parishes (Millones 1990: 224). They also held each other in great esteem. Albornoz was especially impressed with Molina's language abilities, and Molina admired Albornoz for the completeness and effectiveness of his inspections. As part of Molina's work for the bishopric of Cuzco, he visited both Arequipa and Huamanga after Albornoz had conducted operations in these regions. As noted above, Molina testified twice (1577 and 1584) on Albornoz's success in destroying local shrines and punishing the local practitioners of idolatry.

Molina and Albornoz were also in close contact while in Cuzco and appear to have worked together on certain occasions. At one such event, Molina preached to a large crowd on the day that two leaders of the Taqui Onqoy movement, who had been brought to Cuzco by Albornoz, were publicly punished (Millones 1990: 181, 225). Molina was also approached by Albornoz with the suggestion that they should join together “to cast a sweeping net so that no sorcery or idolatry would be left without being destroyed” (Millones 1990: 227). They also both attended the Third Lima Provin-

cial Council (1582–1583), although they did not meet in the city but encountered each other somewhere outside of Lima, while Molina was on his journey back to Cuzco and Albornoz was arriving (Millones 1990: 227).

VICEROY FRANCISCO TOLEDO AND
CRISTÓBAL DE MOLINA

Francisco de Toledo was appointed to the viceroyalty of Peru (1569–1581) with unprecedented powers to calm growing disorder in the Spanish colony. Soon after arriving in Lima, he set out on an inspection of the Andes that was to last four years. Toledo reached the Cuzco region in late February of 1571 and departed for the Lake Titicaca region more than a year and a half later in October of 1572. During the course of his travels, Toledo collected information concerning the history of the Incas, and this research continued while he was in the imperial heartland. While in Cuzco, Toledo asked Molina to interview various official *quipu* keepers to learn more about the history of the Incas. Similarly, on orders of Toledo, Gabriel de Loarte and Álvaro Ruiz de Navamuel conducted a series of interviews in the Cuzco region on the history of the Incas (Levillier 1940). Finally, Sarmiento de Gamboa (2007), who was then the royal cosmographer traveling with Toledo, researched and wrote a *History of the Incas*, which was publicly read to the leaders of the different kin groups of the city on 29 February and 1 March 1572 before being sent to Spain.

Sarmiento's manuscript is of special interest to this study, since it begins with a retelling of several Andean myths, including Viracocha's creation of the world, Viracocha's activities at Tiahuanaco, and the Cañari origin myth. These same myths are also found in Molina's *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas*. Although the two texts contain the same myths, each version gives unique details, making it clear that Molina did not copy Sarmiento's work. Compare, for example, Molina's and Sarmiento de Gamboa's introductions to the Cañari origin myth:

In the province of Quito there is a province called Cañaribamba, and so the Indians who live there are called Cañaris after the name of the province. They say that at the time of the Flood, two brothers escaped to a very high hill called Huacayñan that is in that province. They say in the fable that as the waters were rising, the hill [also] did; hence the water was not able to reach them. (Molina)

They say that in the time of the *unu pachacuti* flood there was a hill called Huasano in a town called Tomebamba in the province of Quito. Today the natives of that land [still] point it out. Two Cañari men climbed this hill; one of them was named Ataorupagui and the other Cusicayo. As the waters kept rising, the mountain swam and floated in such a way that it was never covered by the floodwaters. Thus the two Cañaris escaped. (Sarmiento de Gamboa 2007: 46 [1572: Ch. 6])

Although the two narratives are distinct, their similarities do imply that the authors shared some of the same informants.¹¹ Since it is known that both Molina and Sarmiento de Gamboa were asked by Viceroy Toledo to write histories of the Incas in 1571–1572, and they both did so by interviewing the oldest surviving indigenous leaders of Cuzco, it is not surprising that they shared informants, or perhaps even attended the same interviews.

One of the most important events to occur during Toledo's time in Cuzco was the capture of Tupac Amaru, the last independent Inca, in the remote region of Vilcabamba. A faction of the Inca nobility had retreated into the mountains of Vilcabamba in 1537 and had inspired a long-running guerrilla war against the Spaniards. Toledo ordered a large-scale raid on Vilcabamba in June of 1572 to end this resistance. During the raid, Tupac Amaru was captured, and he arrived in chains in Cuzco on 21 September. Three days later, after a hastily arranged trial, Tupac Amaru was beheaded. During his brief time in Cuzco, Tupac Amaru was not only being judged but was also being converted to Christianity. Although a number of leading cler-

gymen questioned the charges brought against Tupac Amaru and begged for mercy, Toledo was relentless in his zeal to kill the Inca and thus fatally weaken the long-standing indigenous resistance to Spanish rule. Antonio de la Calancha (1981: 1883) and Baltazar de Ocampo (1923: 172) both note that Molina was with Tupac Amaru on the day of his execution. Ocampo, having been an actual eyewitness to the event, provides the most detailed description:

[Tupac Amaru] was accompanied on either side by the two mentioned friars and by Father Alonso de Barzana, of the Company of Jesus, and Father Molina, cleric preacher of the Our Lady of Succor of the Hospital Parish, who went teaching and saying things of great consolation to his soul. They brought him to a scaffold that was built on high in the center of the plaza, beside the cathedral. They led him up there, and those fathers preached to him and conformed his soul with sacred preparations. (Ocampo 1923: 172 [1610]; my translation)

Although Molina was on the scaffold with Tupac Amaru when he was killed, he may not have been one of the religious leaders of Cuzco who had asked for leniency. This is suggested by the fact that in his *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas*, Molina not only condemns the Inca's activities in the Vilcabamba region, calling it a den of thieves, but also praises Toledo's defeat of the independent Incas, writing that "Lord Viceroy Don Francisco de Toledo defeated and expelled them from there, through which God Our Lord was greatly served."

Whatever Molina's views toward Tupac Amaru, it is clear that the priest impressed Viceroy Toledo. Some three years later, on 4 November 1575, while Toledo was in Arequipa, the viceroy wrote a letter to the authorities in Cuzco praising Molina's language abilities and his extensive religious work within the Cuzco parishes. In the letter, Toledo (1943: xxiv) orders an adjustment of Molina's annual salary on the condition that he continue to preach to the Indians of all the Cuzco parishes, including "each Sunday, and on all important

religious days of the year, in the central plaza beside the city's main church." It is clear that Molina retained this position until close to his death, since in 1584 he is still being introduced as the preacher general of Cuzco. Most significantly for this study, Toledo's letter indicates that Molina had, by 1575, already collected information "on the ancient rites and ceremonies" of the Incas, a clear reference to the materials included in Molina's second report to Bishop Lartaún.

CRISTÓBAL DE MOLINA, LUIS DE OLIVERA,
AND THE TAQUI ONQOY MOVEMENT

In 1564, while serving as a priest in the relatively remote province of Parinacocha, Luis de Olivera noted that previous missionary activities had largely failed and that there was a resurgence—or perhaps simply the strong persistence—of native religious beliefs. On further investigation, he found that a growing social movement was turning indigenous peoples away from the teachings of the Church and encouraging them to return to worshipping local shrines. This movement was active not only in his parish but also in the nearby area of Acarí and various other regions of the Andes, including the largest cities. Olivera attempted to root out this "heresy" in the area of Parinacocha, and he denounced the movement to other Church officials, including the archbishop of Lima and the bishops of Cuzco and Charcas.¹²

In the final pages of his *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas*, Molina turns his attention to the events first recorded by Olivera in Parinacocha and later witnessed by other Spaniards across the central Andes. Basing his information on the (now-lost) report written by Olivera, Molina writes the following introduction:

About ten years ago, more or less, a disaffection began to spread among the Indians of this land, during which they performed a type of song that they called *taqui onqoy*. Because Luis de Olivera, a lay cleric in Parinacocha Province, which is in the

bishopric of Cuzco, was the first to witness this disaffection or idolatry while he was [the] priest of that territory, he explains here about the manner in which they carried it out and why.

The discovery of this sect, now referred to as the Taqui Onqoy (*taqui* = to dance; *onqoy* = to fall ill)¹³ movement, provided the impetus for a series of massive campaigns aimed at destroying the indigenous religions of the Andes.¹⁴ Olivera, Molina, and Alborno were active participants in those campaigns, and their anti-idolatry activities brought them into close contact with each other. For example, after Olivera had returned from the countryside to work in Cuzco, Alborno conducted an official inspection of Olivera's former Parinacocha parish, where he found that the cult had continued to grow.¹⁵ Later, Alborno also captured several leaders of the movement, and he brought them to Cuzco to be publicly punished. At the time, Olivera was working as the secretary of the ecclesiastical council of Cuzco, and he heard the sermon that Molina, as preacher general of the city, delivered to the natives on the day that the indigenous leaders were punished. Following this event, Molina visited the Ayacucho region to confirm that the heresy had been extinguished (Millones 1990: 176–182). Later still, in 1577, Olivera and Molina provided sequential testimonies in support of Alborno's many years of work for the Church.¹⁶

The Taqui Onqoy movement was spread by native men and women who believed that they had become possessed by local deities. These “preachers” visited various communities proclaiming that the time of the *huacas* was at hand. They suggested that although the gods of the Andes had been defeated with the arrival of Pizarro, the *huacas* were rising again and would soon defeat the Spaniards, at which time control of the Andean world would be returned to its indigenous people. Molina writes the following:

... they believed that all the *huacas* of the kingdom that the Christians had demolished and burned had come back to life, and had formed themselves into two sides: some had joined

with the *huaca* of Pachacama[c] and the others with the *huaca* Titica[ca]. [They said] that all of them were flying around in the air, ordering [the people] to give battle to God and defeat Him. [And] they [claimed] that they were already defeating Him. And that when the Marquis [i.e., Pizarro] entered this land, God had defeated the *huacas*, and the Spaniards [had defeated] the Indians. But now, the world had turned around, [so] God and the Spaniards would be defeated this time, and all the Spaniards [would] die, their cities would be flooded, and the sea would rise and drown them so that no memory would be left of them.

This reversal of fortune was to come about through the supernatural intervention of the local shrines, and those natives who wanted to be saved from the coming apocalypse needed to renege their Catholic faith and reject all things Spanish. They also needed to return to their native religious teachings and worship the traditional *huacas* of the Andes. In short, it was believed that with the rise of the autochthonous gods, the period of Spanish rule over the Andes was coming to an end. Molina, using information provided by Olivera, provides a summary of the movement:

Within this apostasy, they believed that God, Our Lord, had made the Spaniards, Castile, and the animals and supplies of Castile, but that the *huacas* had made the Indians, this land, and the supplies that the Indians had before [the arrival of the Spaniards]. . . . They went about preaching this resurrection of the *huacas*, saying that the *huacas* now were flying through the air, dried out and dying of hunger, because the Indians no longer made sacrifices nor poured *chicha* to them. [The Indians said] that they had planted many *chacras* with worms to sow them in the hearts of the Spaniards, [in the] livestock of Castile and [in the] horses, and also in the hearts of the Indians who remained Christians. [They said] that [the *huacas*] were angry with all of the [Christian Indians] because they had been baptized and that [the *huacas*] would kill them all if they did

not return to them, reneging on the Catholic faith. Those who wanted the friendship and grace [of the *huacas*] would live in prosperity, grace, and health. In order to return to [the *huacas*], they were to fast some days, not eat salt or chili, nor have sexual relations, nor eat colored maize, nor eat things of Castile, nor use them in food or in clothing, nor enter the churches, nor pray, nor respond to the calls of the priests, nor call themselves by Christian names. [They said] that in this way, they would return to the love of the *huacas* and they would not be killed. They also [preached] that the time of the Incas was returning and that the *huacas* [were] no longer entering stones, clouds, or springs to speak, but [they were] now themselves entering the Indians and making them speak.

The Taqui Onqoy gained its name through the trancelike state that members of this movement experienced. Once possessed, individuals would speak on behalf of the *huacas* and instruct the villagers on how they should react to the coming cataclysm.

The Spaniards were both surprised by the development of this movement and mystified by the peculiar form in which it was manifested. Molina and others linked the Taqui Onqoy movement with the independent Incas entrenched in the Vilcabamba region.¹⁷ Although the continued resistance to Spanish rule by Manco Inca and his sons may have served as an inspiration to many natives, it was not the source of the Taqui Onqoy movement. Instead, it appears that the movement drew its origins from the nearly incomprehensible loss of control and the dramatic cultural transformations that were occurring across the Andes. Within just a few decades, the peoples of the Andes had seen the collapse of the Inca Empire, the decimation of their populations by unknown diseases, and their practical enslavement by strangers who looked and acted unlike any humans they had ever seen before.

Although Lope García de Castro, who was then interim governor of Peru (1564–1569), as well as church officials such as Molina, Olivera, and Albornoz, may have been puzzled by the appearance

of the Taqui Onqoy movement and its profoundly religious dimensions, modern scholars are not. It is now widely accepted that the Taqui Onqoy movement falls within a broad class of social actions frequently termed “millenarian movements” (Millones 1964; Ossio 1973; Wachtel 1977; Stern 1982a, 1982b; MacCormack 1991; Mumford 1998).¹⁸ These movements represent innovative religious responses that offer hope to disadvantaged portions of a population. Numerous millenarian movements have been recorded throughout history, and they frequently occur in the wake of colonialism, such as the North American Ghost Dance of the 1890s and the South Pacific Cargo Cults of the 1940s. These movements tend to call for a return to traditional customs and a rejection of the newly dominant social order. They also include predictions that the current social conditions will be overturned by supernatural forces. Most of these movements are peaceful, but colonial powers often see them as a threat to their control over the civil population and go to great efforts to extinguish them.

Indigenous resistance against the culture and power of Spain was widespread and took many forms over the next century, yet the specific Taqui Onqoy movement of the central Andes was relatively short-lived. It was first noted by Olivera around 1564, and Molina reports that it lasted about seven years. The end of the movement, ca. 1571, coincides with Albornoz’s prolonged anti-idolatry activities in the Ayacucho region, where he is credited with “pulling the movement out by its roots” (Millones 1990: 64) and punishing several of its leaders in Cuzco.

As Molina introduces the Taqui Onqoy movement, he also provides information about what appears to have been another set of native beliefs. He suggests that some of the natives of Peru had come to fear contact with the Spaniards, thinking that they were able to extract a curative “ointment” from the indigenous people. Molina writes:

[In] the year of [15]70, and not before, the Indians held and believed that [people] had been sent from Spain to this king-

dom [to search] for an ointment of the Indians to cure a certain illness for which no medicine was known except for that ointment. In those times [and] for this reason, the Indians went about very secretly, and [they] distanced themselves from the Spaniards to such a degree that no [Indian] wanted to take firewood, herb[s], or other things to a Spaniard's house. They say that [in this way, the Indian] would not be killed inside by having the ointment extracted from him.

This fear is not specifically mentioned in any other colonial account, yet it appears to have developed from the same dismal social conditions that fostered widespread beliefs in the Taqui Onqoy millenarian movement (Wachtel 1977). In the above passage, Molina documents that certain indigenous people believed that an ointment, most certainly fat, was being extracted by the Spaniards to cure a European disease.¹⁹ By the 1570s, an enormous number of native people had died as a result of the European infectious diseases (including smallpox, typhus, measles, and influenza) that had swept through the Andes after contact (Cook 1981, 1998). Native-born people were far more likely to die in these catastrophic epidemics, since they had no natural resistance to the newly introduced microbes. The belief in the ointment-taking abilities of the Spaniards appears to be an indigenous explanation for the prevalent, and disproportional, death of native peoples after the arrival of European diseases. Within this context, the Europeans seemed to have had the ability to extract health from the native populations to save themselves. The belief was factually incorrect, but it provides a powerful metaphor for the social conditions that existed throughout the Colonial Period.

BERNABÉ COBO AND CRISTÓBAL DE MOLINA

In 1653, the Jesuit priest Bernabé Cobo completed his great work *Historia del Nuevo Mundo* (History of the New World), which included an overview of the history of the Incas and a summary of their myths and rituals. Cobo extracted much of his information on

the history and religious practices of the Incas from earlier documents stored in different secular and ecclesiastical archives across Peru, but like most writers of his time, he was inconsistent in acknowledging his sources. Furthermore, in some sections he interwove passages from different sources, and in other places he reproduced entire blocks of information (Rowe 1980: 2). Nevertheless, it is clear that Cobo had a copy of Molina's *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas* and that he relied on it heavily. Molina's manuscript is specifically mentioned in the *History of the New World*, as Cobo discusses the major sources he used to research the Incas. After discussing Polo de Ondegardo's famed 1559 document outlining the history of the Incas, as well as a second, lesser-known work that was produced during Viceroy Toledo's stay in Cuzco, Cobo describes Molina's work:

And a little later, another general meeting of all the old Indians that had lived during the reign of the Inca Guayna Capac was held in the city of Cuzco itself by Cristobal de Molina, a parish priest at the hospital of the natives in the Parish of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios; this meeting was ordered by Bishop Sebastian de Lartaun and confirmed the same things as the previous meetings; the result was a copious account of the rites and fables that the Peruvian Indians practiced in pagan times. This information is substantially the same as that of Licentiate Polo and that of the report that was made by order of Francisco de Toledo. Both Toledo's report and the account by Molina have come into my possession. (Cobo 1979: 100 [1653: Bk. 12, Ch. 2])

Cobo reproduced many large blocks of text directly from Molina and lightly paraphrased others.²⁰ We have marked the major sections of Molina that were copied by Cobo in the footnotes of our English translation.

SUMMARY

The *Account of the Fables and Rites of the Incas* remains an invaluable source of information about the Incas of Peru. Molina's facility with Quechua and prolonged contact with the Andean people made him uniquely suited to provide an in-depth report on precontact Andean culture. Having arrived in Cuzco during a critical period of cultural transformations, Molina took detailed notes about how rituals had been conducted in the imperial capital during the final years of the empire. His report on the religious activities of the Incas offers levels of detail and cultural insights that are rarely matched by other early colonial writers. Molina's record of Inca rituals is all the more important, since his first work, on the history of the Incas, has been lost to antiquity.

This present work provides a new English translation of Molina's report on Inca myths and rituals. The only other English translation was completed by Markham in 1873. Since that time, a vast amount of new information, both historical and archaeological, has become available and standards of translation have changed. We hope that this work will offer new insights into the religious activities of the Incas and will aid others to explore and understand the Andean past.

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