SPIRITUAL TOURISM AS THE NEW COLONIALISM: 
THE MAINTENANCE OF COLONIAL HIERARCHY IN
CUSCO, PERU

A Thesis
presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
at the University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

By
K.H. Wilson
Dr. Dennis Kelley, Thesis Supervisor
May 2017
The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

SPIRITUAL TOURISM AS THE NEW COLONIALISM: THE MAINTAINENCE OF COLONIAL HIERARCHY IN CUSCO, PERU

Presented by Khrystyne H. Wilson, a candidate for the degree of Masters of Arts, and hereby certify that in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

__________________________________________
Dr. Dennis Kelley

__________________________________________
Dr. David Amponsah

__________________________________________
Dr. Ivan Reyna
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Dennis Kelley for his constant guidance, support and proof-reading of my many thesis drafts. You helped me in innumerable ways, and provided an unequivocal source for talking through difficult concepts and theories and offered constant understanding. I would like to thank Dr. David Amponsah for helping me to initiate and develop my research. Your rigorous editing and encouragement allowed me to become a better scholar. I would also like to thank Dr. Ivan Reyna. Your difficult questions and insider viewpoint continually push me to tackle demanding questions.

Additionally, I would like to thank the entire Religious Studies Department for reading through and providing edits and comments on my thesis draft on several occasions and for encouraging me to pursue my research interests. I have drawn influence from each faculty member within the department, and they helped to shape me into the scholar I am.
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INTRODUCTION

In the center of Cusco Peru lies a sprawling, intricate colonial cathedral built on top of the remains one of the most important Inca Temples, Qurikancha. The Spanish colonizers chose this site purposefully to demonstrate their might through demolishing the home of the Inca gods and replacing it with a church to the Christian god. Less than a mile down the road, in the shadows of another colonial church, the late 16th century Catedral de Cusco, stands the world’s highest Starbucks. In the ninth largest coffee producing country, it is strange to see the Seattle-based chain offering its usual specialties such as Kenyan and Sumatra coffee roasts. Starbucks claims the second floor of the 17th century Spanish colonial Convento Santa Catalina. Just as the colonialists asserted their god’s power by placing their church atop the Inca’s temples, this modern corporate colonizer claims the Spanish Catholic space as its own. This Starbucks, which symbolizes the superiority of westernization over the colonial identity of Cusco, which in turn demonstrates its superiority over indigeneity, embodies the argument of this paper. There exists in Cusco, Peru a continuation of colonial structures, or coloniality, wherein spiritual tourism, takes up the empty space left behind by the colonizers during decolonization and perpetuates the same colonial processes that place the indigenous firmly on the bottom of a social hierarchy.

In Cusco, Peru there endures a colonial hierarchy, originally implemented during Spanish colonization, wherein the elites maintain control over the indigenous population, and the middle class mestizo population acts as cultural brokers between the two. This hierarchy has persisted through the history of Peru, and now shows itself through the new subcategory of cultural tourism, spiritual tourism. Separation between the spiritual tourists,
stakeholders in the spiritual tourism industry, and the indigenous populations, which can be seen through the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo, the Civic Parade and Inti Raymi festival, spiritual retreats and the ever popular treks to Machu Picchu, continues to operate on a hierarchical scale, with the indigenous groups subjugated to their position at the bottom. Contemporary spiritual tourism serves to propagate this colonial hierarchical system by continuing the work of colonialism in signifying what it means to be Quechua.\(^1\) However, this signification ultimately does not imply that Quechua-speaking communities have no agency within this industry. Rather, these individuals contest and reject their signification through acts of silence, reclaiming loaded terminology and maintaining their own self-defined identity.

**COLONIALITY THROUGHOUT PERUVIAN HISTORY**

While formal colonization has ended in Peru, the mindset of colonialism, or coloniality, persists. Anibal Quijano clarifies the difference between the two, first defining colonialism as “A relation of direct, political, social and cultural domination…established by Europeans over the conquered of all continents.”\(^2\) He then explains that although formal colonialism has ended, coloniality has persisted. This he defines as “[the] specific colonial structure of power [that] produced the specific social discriminations which later were codified as ‘racial’, ‘ethnic’, ‘anthropological’ or ‘national,’ according to the times, agents and populations involved.”\(^3\) He states “these intersubjective constructions, product of

\(^3\) Ibid.
Eurocentered colonial domination were even assumed to be ‘objective’, ‘scientific’, categories, then of a historical significance. That is, as natural phenomenon, not referring to the history of power. This power structure was, and still is, the framework within which operate the other social relations of classes or estates.”¹⁴ This power structure, embedded with colonial categorizations maintains in Peru. Mignolo furthers this definition, using Quijano’s coloniality of power to provide a name for the “set of framing and organizing assumptions that justify hierarchies and make it almost impossible to evaluate alternative claims.”⁵ He summarizes that coloniality is “the colonial matrix of power.”⁶ For the purpose of this paper, I will follow Quijano and Mignolo’s definitions of coloniality by using the term to mean the mindset, ideology, and structures formed within colonialism that persisted through decolonization into the present.

Coloniality also differs from neocolonialism, popularized by Sartre, in that the latter can be defined as “the survival of the colonial system in spite of formal recognition of political independence in emerging countries which become the victims of an indirect and subtle form of domination by political, economic, social, military or technical.”⁷ While seemingly similar to coloniality, neocolonialism differs in that while it lacks the direct control of colonialism, neocolonialism is still is a physical control, albeit indirect, of a developing country through capitalism, globalization and cultural imperialism. Coloniality,

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⁴ Ibid.
however, encompasses the ideology of colonialism, and can be self-inflicted rather than solely imposed by a stronger, outside political force. Colonality is based on a Eurocentric production of knowledge developed during colonization which ascribes value to certain people and groups while marginalizing others. Thus it is colonality that endures in Cusco, Peru.

One way in which colonality endures is through the continued use of colonial hierarchies. Quijano posits “coloniality of power was conceived together with America and Western Europe, and with the social category of ‘race’ as the key element of the social classification of colonized and colonizers…the old ideas of superiority of the dominant and the inferiority of dominated under European colonialism were mutated in a relationship of biologically and structurally superior and inferior.” This stratification based on race still continues in Cusco through the hierarchical structuring of people. In this hierarchy, the top, elite category has changed throughout time, while the middle mestizo group and the bottom indios groups remained in their hierarchical positions. While the castes can no longer be determined through phenotype, the racially-based colonial terminology and stigmatization are still used. For example, the indios category now consists of campesinos, or people who live outside of urban centers, lack formal education, and speak Quechua, and thus become conflated with the Pre-Columbian group and are classified as “the Quechua.” The persistence of this hierarchical categorization of people demonstrates the continued colonial idea that the indigenous population remain at the bottom of the social ladder because of their putative inherent lower status. The hierarchy then designates them as

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subjects of higher groups, first as manual laborers providing material goods and now as a source of spiritual commodity.

**PRECOLUMBIAN CUSCO**

The city of Cusco has been continuously settled since the 11th century CE. Cusco was first settled by a number of different indigenous horticultural based groups, prior to the Inca Empire’s conquering and capitalizing of the city in the 13th century. The Inca empire was an unstable conglomeration of different ethnic groups throughout their geographic region. The Empire was split into four quadrants, or Suyu, with a representative chief in each underneath the umbrella of Tahuantinsuyu or the Inca State. These quadrants themselves were made up of many smaller ethnic groups under one ruling chief who then reported to the Sapa Inka or the Inca King. Under the Inca Empire, the Sapa Inka allowed different indigenous ethnicities to maintain their way of living, with a caveat of their participation in the Inca governmental and religious systems.

It is impossible now to differentiate between the different ethnic groups that existed prior to their incorporation under the Inca Empire as many groups were relocated, and in their relocation took on aspects of the ruling Inca class as well as those of their ethnically different neighbors. Spanish colonization creates even more confusion when attempting to distinguish between ethnic groups, as the colonial government was unconcerned with differing between ethnicities, but rather cared about limpieza del sangre or blood purity. Thus, the ethnic groups under the Inca Empire became one category under colonization:

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11 Ibid.
los indios. Because if this, contemporary indigenous groups do not maintain the same names or characteristics as those prior to colonization. Presently, they are, most often, classified by their language or geographic location. Therefore, the indigenous population located in the province of Cusco became the Quechua, named after the language of the Inca rulers.

During Inca rule, the Sapa Inka required tributes from each of the individual chiefdoms. These tributes included material goods as well as marriage alliances between the children of the rulers of these ethnic states. The Empire’s cohesion was fragile, and often required reconquest on the part of the ruling class, as well as mitma, or forced mass migrations of whole ethnic groups from one geographic region to another in order to force these resettled communities to rely on the Incas for defense, supplies and governance. This forced migration helped to create loyalty to the state, decrease rebellions as well as easily transmit the official language, Quechua, and culture to newly acquired ethnic groups.  

While this encouraged submission under the Inca Empire, it also solidified ethnic differences between neighboring populations. The Inca State encouraged this differentiation by forcing ethnic groups to distinguish themselves through the maintenance of traditional clothing or even in the case of the Huancavelicas, extracting six teeth from each of the new settlers to distinguish them from their neighbors. While this system worked to minimize uprisings against the ruling class, and created a system of beneficial

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reciprocity, where resources were evenly spread throughout the region, it was still unstable. Spanish Conquistadors took advantage of this instability.

**SPANISH COLONIZATION**

In 1533, Spanish explorer Francisco Pissarro “discovered” Cusco while exploring the New World for gold, and declared war against the Inca Empire, ultimately defeating and establishing colonial rule over it. With the Inca Empire disbanded, the unified people broke apart into their original ethnic groups under the control of the Spanish colonists. After the conquest of the Inca Empire, the Spanish utilized a series of puppet rulers from the Inca royal family. However, after a failed rebellion and the execution of the remaining Inca royalty, the Viceroyalty of New Castile, now referred to as the Viceroyalty of Peru, was created. The Spanish crown ruled over the area of the Inca Empire with a series of regal officials or viceroys, as a province of the Spanish Empire. This viceroyalty was first made up of Españoles then after a few generations their criollos descendants, who were the children of two Españoles born in the New World. Concerned with racial categorization of those who inhabited their new holdings, the viceroyalty created a racially based caste system, or sistema de castas, developed to differentiate between levels of limpieza de sangre, a concept brought over from Spain and originally used to distinguish between Spanish Christians, Jews and Moors.¹⁴

In colonial Cuzco, this caste system was split into innumerable groupings, meticulously detailing all the combinations of races found in the continent of South

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America, and what the descendants of these combinations were to be called.\textsuperscript{15} The hierarchical system placed the \textit{Españoles} at the top, the \textit{criollos} directly beneath them, followed by Inca nobility, \textit{mestizos}, and finally ending with \textit{indios}, freed African slaves and African slaves.\textsuperscript{16} With time, the power and number of the Inca nobility decreased, and everyone of Inca, or indigenous South American descent became an \textit{indio}, and thus fit into the bottom of the caste system. In addition, with continued interbreeding between groups, the phenotype markers and ability to recount genetic heritage became more complex. In the 1790 Lima census, the numerous racial categories condensed to only nine racial groups: \textit{Españoles}, \textit{indios}, \textit{mestizos}, \textit{negros}, \textit{mulatos}, \textit{quarterones}, \textit{quinterones}, \textit{zambos}, and \textit{chinors}. In the 1975 census, these groups decreased even more to only five groups: \textit{Españoles}, \textit{indios}, \textit{mestizos}, \textit{negros libres}, \textit{esclavos}.\textsuperscript{17} The focus on racial categorization continued, but the number of categories decreased with the inability to prove blood percentages. While these categories decrease, the treatment of those at the lower end of the hierarchy did not change.

The colonial structure in Peru involved an elaborate \textit{encomienda} system in which the Spanish enslaved and forced native groups to labor and give tributes to their Spanish overlords. Under this \textit{encomienda} system, the crown would sanction early Spanish settlers use of land and the people inhabiting that land in the New World in order to not only utilize indigenous labor to extract goods from these new land holdings, but also to spread

\textsuperscript{15} For detailed description of these \textit{castas} see Magnus Mörner, \textit{Race mixture in the history of Latin America} (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 58-59.
\textsuperscript{17} Fisher, \textit{Government and Society in Colonial Peru; the Intendant System 1784-1814}, 251-253.
Catholicism to these indigenous people and further colonization. Out of this idea of the encomienda system came a system based on commercial agriculture: the hacienda which developed in the 17th and 18th centuries. The hacienda system employed similar tactics as the encomienda system. In the hacienda system, a hacendado or owner of the hacienda would employ indigenous laborers to do agricultural work. In return, the laborers would receive a place to live and a portion of produce for their own consumption. This system ultimately led to the same issues of the encomienda system: the reliance of indigenous laborers on the landowners, the potential for abuse of the system, and the inability of indigenous laborers to move beyond this system. These haciendas remained after the collapse of colonial rule, continuing the maintenance of the indios as the lowest caste and as manual laborers.

INDEPENDENCE OF PERU AND THE 20TH CENTURY PUSH FOR MODERNIZATION

In the early 19th century, as Spain dealt with power struggles in Europe against the Napoleonic regime, anti-colonialists in the Americas took advantage of the lack of a legitimate monarch to claim independence from Spanish rule. The Viceroyalty of Peru remained loyal to the Spanish crown as the criollo rulers, having inherited the rule from their Españoles parents, enjoyed their favored and privileged position within the sistema de castas. Peruvians only began to fight for liberation from the crown after pressure from...

the military occupation of José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar, the Argentine and Venezuelan leaders of the liberation movement. Peru declared independence from Spain in 1821 with José de San Martín, a criollo, as the leader of the new independent government and Protector of Peru.\(^{20}\) While independence liberated Peru from Spanish rule, the colonial features remained with the criollos still maintaining control of the government, including the continuation of the aforementioned hacienda system. Amid liberation, the racial system put into place during colonialism remained, with the Españoles’ descendants, the criollos taking position at the summit of the caste system, the mestizos, incorporating a larger quantity of racial combinations, maintaining their position in the middle, and the indios at the bottom as laborers in the hacienda system.\(^ {21}\)

With independence, there began a series of criollo presidents in control of Peru, and maintaining the superior position on the racial hierarchy until the mid-1800s. Starting in 1836, there began a series of territorial disputes between Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Ecuador, culminating in the War of the Pacific in 1879, which saw Chile defeat Peru and Bolivia in 1883. At the same time, Peru was influenced by influx of foreign entrepreneurs and companies attempting to profit from the rubber boom and related railroad development in 1879. These foreigners utilized the system of haciendas already in place for cheap indigenous labor for manual labor, including collecting rubber.\(^ {22}\) During this period, Andrés Avelino Cáceres, the Peruvian president, signed away control of Peruvian railways,


mining rights, and agreed to annual payment to British bond holders to clear the debt Peru owed for their help during the wars of independence and subsequent territorial wars leading to British control over the main assets of Peru. While formal colonialism had ended, there maintained European control over Peruvian assets, with the mestizo population positioning themselves directly beneath this British control, and the indigenous groups continuing their role as laborers.

After the War of the Pacific in 1883, having cast off their debts and the majority of their assets to Britain, Peru began an effort to rebuild, looking to Western countries for inspiration for how to move into the post-industrial revolution social and economic world. Within this reevaluation came the issue of what to do with the indigenous population, who did not fit into the new modernization of the state. The indigenous groups, who had been continuing their role as uneducated laborers in the haciendas as agricultural workers, miners, railroad builders and rubber collectors, epitomized the perceived lack of modernization in Peru. The attempt to create a national identity based on the ideals of a modern, educated, scientific state was at odds with the presence of indigenous groups, and in an attempt to create a unified, uniform state, the Peruvian government took measures to eradicate the category of the “indigenous.” This focus on “integration,” which ultimately led to either indigenous groups altering their behavior to become “modernized” or their elimination, included the forced sterilization of more than 200,000 Aymara and Quechua people between 1996 and 2000.23

At this point in history, it was impractical and no longer in anyone’s interest to refer to the antiquated *limpieza de sangre* to determine indigeneity. The governmental system no longer enforced the caste system, and it would have been impractical to trace the lineage of each individual to determine their blood status. However, the same racially based terms, *mestizo* and *indio*, and stigmatization persisted from this earlier categorization of race. Instead of referring to the amount of indigenous or European blood in a person, these terms came to refer to ethnic and class differences which maintained that indigenous is inherently inferior to non-indigenous. *Mestizo* referred to anyone that was of the middle class, and who had adopted Western cultural practices and style of dress, spoke Spanish, and either lived in cities or owned the *haciendas* in the country. *Indio* continued to refer to those in the lower class, who maintained indigenous cultural practices and style of dress, spoke indigenous languages, had minimal education and provided the manual labor in the countryside. This distinction between *mestizo* and *indio* based on ethnic and class differences continues presently, but maintains the appearance of a racial system in its use of racially-based terms. During the nationalistic endeavor to modernize Peru, the focus against *indios* then was not focused on eradicating pure-blooded indigenous groups, but rather on eliminating an ethnic group that threatened the nation’s modernizing agenda. While the *mestizo* class, particularly the elite, focused on modernizing, the *indios* were continually persecuted and retained their positions as laborers, and Western forces continued their hold on Peruvian capital through mining and railroads and began to take control of the cultural capital of Peru.

One of the methods for the modernization of South America was the implementation of a series of scientific conventions, including the First Pan American
Scientific Congress in Santiago Chile in 1908. Invitations to this scientific congress were extended to numerous United States academics, including the now famous Hiram Bingham. The invitations to US scholars included requests for each scholar to present papers on “Mathematics, Physical and Chemical Sciences… Biology, Paleontology, Geology, Anthropology, Engineering, Medicine… Jurisprudence, Social Sciences, Pedagogic sciences, Agriculture and Zootechny.” Hiram Bingham, a Yale professor, presented a paper entitled: “Why the English Colonies on Achieving their Independence Constituted a Single State, whereas the Latin-American Colonies could not Form a Federation among Themselves, nor even a Confederation.” This paper topic demonstrates Hiram Bingham and his associates’ belief that the United States was superior to Latin American countries. After the conference, Hiram Bingham took a side trip to Peru and visited the Pre-Columbian city of Choquequiero. It was on this trip that his focus on Inca archaeology developed, leading to his obsession with finding lost Inca cities and ultimately his rediscovery of Machu Picchu in 1911.

Instead of looking for physical capital in the form of precious metals, rubber, or agriculture, archaeologists and explorers followed Bingham in searching for historical gold in the form of the lost Inca cities, artifacts and knowledge. Societies such as the Smithsonian and National Geographic promoted this focus on cultural capital through their goals of “increase and diffusion of knowledge.” Peruvian government and academia,

25 Ibid.
26 William Barlow, The Smithsonian Institution, “For the Increase and Diffusion of Knowledge Among Men”: An Address on the Duties of Government, in Reference Chiefly to Public Instruction: with the Outlines of a Plan for the Application of the Smithsonian Fund to that Object (BR Barlow, 1847), 18.
made up of elite *mestizos*, promoted this connection with United States and European scholars, while the *indios* continued to act as laborers, carrying the archaeologists and explorers and their gear up to the high altitude cities, clearing the ruins of debris and executing the physical excavation.

**THE RISE OF TOURISM**

Following Bingham’s heavily publicized discovery of the ruins at Machu Picchu, which was one of the first fully photographed features in the National Geographic Magazine, there began a rise in tourism which continues to be a largest source of revenue, and the fastest growing industry in Peru. Following suit with the explorers’ and archaeologists’ desire to accumulate cultural capital, tourists followed suit wanting to see firsthand the natural and cultural aspects of Peru. These primarily white, international tourists then take the position of the original *Españoles* as the elite class utilizing the same Peruvian *mestizos* as cultural brokers and *indios* laborers. The *mestizos* take the form of the tourism industry providing guides that can mediate between the indigenous Inca-ness of sites such as Machu Picchu while providing Western luxuries such as high end accommodations, cuisine and shopping. Meanwhile the *indios* still provide the labor, maintaining their positions as agricultural workers, miners, and now porters carrying tourists up those same paths they carried the explorers and archaeologists up less than a century ago.

Contemporarily, there has been a shift in trends in Peruvian tourism. While cultural tourism still plays a big role, there has developed a subgenre of cultural tourism which is gradually increasing in popularity for international tourists: spiritual tourism. I argue that in Cusco, spiritual tourism has taken up the top hierarchical position originally filled by
the Spanish conquistadors, while the tourism industry of Peru acts as the *mestizo* cultural brokers, helping to translate the *indios* culture to spiritual tourism. Just as the focus for explorers moved from material capital to cultural capital, now spiritual tourists are seeking spiritual capital, and the tourism industry helps to do this by signifying what it means to be indigenous, thereby forcing the indigenous population of Peru to maintain their position at the bottom of this colonial hierarchy.
CHAPTER ONE: INCANISMO AS A NATIONALISTIC ENDEAVOR

INCANISMO & TOURISM IN PERU

In her work *Culture on Display: The Production of Contemporary Visitability*, Bella Dicks discusses today’s tourism as a way of “visiting culture.” Tourists want to not only see the geographical distinctions between their homes and the places they visit, they also want to see the cultural distinctions, and take part in the location’s distinct culture. Thus to be a highly desirable location for tourism, cities must have a clear, individual “culture” that is immediately recognizable and accessible to tourists. Dicks states that tourists want “a kind of ‘National Geographic’ perspective on the world, in which, selected, highly demarcated cultural identities are expected to be on display in different places.” When tourists visit a place, they want to see the same National Geographic style snapshots, to feel as if they are in the exotic location, taking a picture that sums up the culture and entirety of the location. This concept of “culture on display” causes locations that cater to tourists to select one specific “culture” and emphasize the qualities of that culture through all of its touristic attractions, regardless of whether it accurately represents the country or not. This allows the tourist to maintain a sense of contrived intimacy with the location of the travels, and the local people within it. The government of the city of Cusco has purposefully chosen their national culture to be based on an idyllic version of the Inca Empire.

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27 Bella Dicks, *Culture on Display the Production of Contemporary Visitability* (Maidenhead, Berkshire, England: Open University Press, 2003), 1.
28 Ibid 11.
29 Ibid 6.
Tourists’ desire to see the “National Geographic snapshots” is even more evident in Cusco, Peru where tourism is a direct result of the National Geographic Magazine. Following the National Geographic Magazines’ publication of over 10,000 photographs from Hiram Bingham’s archaeological work on Machu Picchu in 1911, there began a push for tourism in Peru.\textsuperscript{30} However modern tourism did not fully take off until the invention of jet planes in the 1960s. During this era, the phenomenon of backpacking took hold as well, causing even more tourist traffic in Peru.\textsuperscript{31} Presently, tourism is the most rapidly growing industry in Peru. From 2015 to 2016, tourist arrivals to Peru increased by 7.8% to 4.57 million tourists, making Peru the fourth most visited country in 2016 behind Morocco, USA and Hong Kong.\textsuperscript{32} Since 2010, tourist arrivals has increased by 41%.\textsuperscript{33} 79% of tourists come to Peru to visit Machu Picchu.\textsuperscript{34} The city of Cusco itself is full of tourists, primarily from North America, Europe and Japan.\textsuperscript{35}

At the center of this growing tourism industry is Peru’s own, altered version of Indigenismo: Incanismo. Indigenismo is a political idea in many Latin American countries,

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\footnotesize
\bibitem{30}Gomez-Barris, “New Age Tourism and Cultural Exchange in the Sacred Valley, Peru,” 70.
\bibitem{32}“Peru Tourist Arrivals 1980-2017 | Data | Chart | Calendar | Forecast,” \textit{Trading Economics} 
\bibitem{33}Ibid.
\bibitem{34}“Perfil del Turista Extranjero 2015,” \textit{Prom Perú}, 
\bibitem{35}“Tourism,” \textit{Peru Reports}, 
\end{small}
most notably Mexico, that focuses on validating indigenous cultural differences. While some scholars argue the origins of Indigenismo date to Bartolomé de las Casas, who championed the rights of the indigenous populations of the New World, the period of 1910-1970 marks the peak of Indigenismo in Peru. In Peru, Indigenismo originally took the form of intellectual anti-Hispanismo sentiment opposing the oligarchical government. From this initial movement in the 1920s, it morphed into what Jorge Flores Ochoa calls Incanismo, defined as “a specific application of Indigenismo to the Tawantinsuyu, or Inca State.” Beyond just geographically different, Incanismo differs from Indigenismo in that it is an imposed emphasis on a specific, extinct group of people by an elite class that does not belong to this group. Indigenismo, in contrast, is a term used by a group to promote their own indigenous identity as well as indigeneity as a whole. In this case, Incanismo focuses on Tawantinsuyu as an idyllic, socialist empire where people had a resilient connection to nature. The emphasis on Tawantinsuyu thus becomes a national identity wherein the Inca past becomes part of a shared heritage that all Peruvians, regardless of indigenous status, can possess and promote as a national identity. Talal Asad explains

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40 Ibid
41 For more information on Incanismo and Cusco, Peru see Pierre L. van den Borghe and Jorge Flores Ochoa, “Tourism and Nativistic Ideology in Cusco, Peru.”
“The modern nation as an imagined community is always mediated through constructed images.”

While Asad clarifies that in the case of the United States and Great Britain, this constructed image is based on secularism, in Peru the focus is entirely on the idea of the romanticized Inca Empire, and thus incanismo.

Incanismo can also be seen through the glorification of other non-Inca indigenous practices, however with the qualifier that these practices are significant because of their connection to the Inca past. This is seen in the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo and the Civic Parade outlined later in this paper. Spiritual tour groups traveling to Peru also fall into the trap of Incanismo through looking for a “Sacred Inca” through focusing on the “spirituality” of indigenous groups based on their idealized peacefulness and connection to nature. Contemporary indigenous groups thus become a connection between the present and past. Incanismo, while seemingly beneficial to indigenous groups, only serves to maintain the colonial hierarchy. Incanismo allows for the elite class to signify indigenous groups as well as promote and appropriate the indigenous cultural aspects of which they approve, leaving those they do not.

Incanismo in Peru specifically valorizes the idea of the romanticized Inca Empire. This is further developed through the spiritual tourism industry which endorses the idea that the Inca, and through their connection to the Inca the Quechua, inherently possess a spirituality, peacefulness and connection to nature. The tourism industry furthers this ideology through focusing international tourism marketing on this concept of a “Sacred Inca.” In turn, spiritual tourists drive the industry, which wants to appeal to this burgeoning

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group of tourists, through their desire to seek out the spirituality of the Incas to utilize in their own lives. This has caused a marked increase in spiritual tour packages, as well as stores, restaurants and excursions that market specifically towards spiritual tourists. These include stores selling crystals, dream catchers and alternative medicines, as well as vegetarian, vegan and organic restaurants, and shamanic retreats and rituals. Many of these concepts or material items do not relate to either the Incas or contemporary populations of Peru, but rather come from other indigenous populations across the globe. Spiritual tourism’s push for a pan-indigenous “Spiritual Indian” drives the market for these anachronistic items.

Incanismo in Peru can also be contradictory, lauding the spiritual nature of the indigenous people, while denigrating the people themselves as we will see in later chapters. Incanismo promotes the shared cultural heritage of the country, but only the elite possess and control what this shared cultural heritage entails. Peruvians utilize and admire Inca and Quechua practices while excluding the Quechua and maintaining the colonial era hierarchy.

One influential champion of Incanismo was Roberto Ojeda Campana, a Peruvian musician who founded both the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo in 1924 and the Instituto Americano de Arte del Cuzco in 1944. Campana, who attended the Seminario de San Antonio and served as a faculty member at the Universidad San Antonio Abad, was intent on preserving indigenous music. Both the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo and Instituto Americano de Arte del Cuzco presently hold large places in the tourism industry of Cusco Peru. The marketing and theme of tourist attractions such as the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo and the Inti Raymi Festival are steeped with Incanismo, focusing on the
romanticized version of the Inca Empire and contemporary indigeneity in order to promote the national identity of Peru.

**CASE STUDY: CENTRO QOSQO DE ARTE NATIVO**

One of the most advertised, and most visited attractions in the city of Cusco, beyond museums and ruins, are the folk dances put on by the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo. The Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo, or Cusco Native Arts Center, is a folk arts center dedicated to “preserving and collecting the dances and music of Peru.” The establishment of this folk arts center in 1924 took place alongside the Peruvian effort to create a national identity. Influenced by European nationalistic endeavors that focused on popular or folkloric traditions, and the aforementioned scholarly interest in a shared Inca past, this center fit into the larger incanismo ideology of the Cusco elites. The Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo continues to perpetuate the same incanismo philosophy of the early twentieth century through staged performances of “native, indigenous” music and dances.

Musicians, choreographers, and composers of the early twentieth century looked to rural musical forms to find so-called Incaic music to fit into this nationalistic incanismo. To find a purely Peruvian style of music and dance, these elites looked towards rural communities which were considered closer to the Inca past. As folklorist Zoila Mendoza explains, “What was indigenous thus became associated with the countryside, with what

45 Mendoza, *Creating Our Own*, 21.
was farthest from the city of Cuzco, with what was most rustic or less elaborate, with the Quechua language and with everything that was envisaged as being closer to the pre-Hispanic or Inca past.”\textsuperscript{46} Thus, through the push for a national identity founded in a shared connection to, and estimation of a romanticized Inca past, these elites created a folk arts center to display indigenous-influenced Peruvian national music and dances.

In the later twentieth century, the initial push for incanismo as a national identity turned into a way to further tourism. In 1961, a group of individuals belonging to the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo established a new dance troupe by the name of the Danzas del Tawantinsuyu, or dancers of Tawantinsuyu, the Inca Empire.\textsuperscript{47} These Danzas del Tawantinsuyu “had begun a new style trend in Cuzco folklore in order to attract the attention of tourists and other publics,” and in order to do this they employed the Quechua name for the Inca Empire.\textsuperscript{48} The utilization of early twentieth century views of “indigeneity” stemming from this push for a national identity based on a romanticized version of the Inca Empire to draw in tourists continues today. As Mendoza states “what had crystallized in the late 1940s as the parameters with which to judge what was considered “traditionally” Cuzqueño, be it “mestizo” or “indigenous” [is] still highly prominent.”\textsuperscript{49} While it is difficult to determine the exact origins of the dances and music performed at the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo, whether they be mestizo or indigenous, the same rhetoric persists, labelling the performances put on at this center as “native Peruvian dances and music,” and utilizing the Quechua language, and stereotypical clothing of rural

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid 5.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid 175.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid 175.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid 178.
communities to designate that these shows are authentically Peruvian and linked to a pre-Hispanic, Inca past.

Presently, the performers of the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo continue this representation of “traditionally Peruvian, indigenous” music and dances through donning clothing modeled on that which is worn by rural Quechua communities, and perform every night in Quechua. Dances come from numerous backgrounds, some are borrowed from Quechua festivals, including the Catholic-indigenous festival of Quyllurit’i discussed later in this paper, while others are taken from other Andean regions such as Bolivia. However, all of the music and dances are described as natively Peruvian. The dances themselves are themed, and come from a variety of different origins including celebrations, rituals, war or agriculture. Advertisements for the performances proudly describe the dances as “represent[ing] their patriotic and religious feelings through music, dances, costumes, colors and foods.” Tickets are sold from the Peruvian Government as a package with tickets to see local Inca ruins. Proceeds from the tickets are spent on the upkeep of the Inca ruins, thus the Peruvian government fully supports and benefits from the performances at the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo. While the ruins benefit from the ticket revenue, indigenous groups themselves do not, further proving that the main focus of this center is on the romanticized Inca rather than the contemporary indigenous people. Additionally,

50 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
the actors performing at the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo are not from Quechua communities, but rather form part of the urban elite. The exclusion of Quechua indigenous individuals, while using Quechua-inspired clothing, music and dances and promoting it as natively Peruvian, connected to the pre-Hispanic Inca past, demonstrates the coloniality still in place in Cusco.

**CASE STUDY: THE CIVIC PARADE & INTI RAYMI**

Another one of Campana’s institutions is the Instituto Americano de Arte, an institution that “promotes and defends all of the manifestations of art and culture and protects and preserves the inherited cultural heritage of Cusco.”54 One of the implementations of the Instituto Americano de Arte in the 1940s was the reinstatement of the Inca Solstice festival, Inti Raymi.

One of the great mysteries of Machu Picchu takes place during the June solstice. During the solstice, the sun’s rays are in such a position that they shine through the windows of the Inca solar temple on Machu Picchu, signifying the rebirth of the sun. This has become one of the most popular times for tourists to visit Cusco. The solstice celebration was originally a year-end, governmentally organized series of events used to celebrate the sun god Inti as well as give tribute to the Sapa Inca, or Inca ruler, and give him a year-end report regarding his territories.55 During colonization, the Spanish colonizers forbade celebration of this festival and replaced it with a Catholic Corpus Christi festival.

55 Carlos Seminario, (June 22, 2016), Personal Interview.
In 1944, the intellectuals who founded the Instituto Americano de Arte with the help of the president of the time, Manuel Prado, decided to reimplement this Inca festival to commemorate the national history of Peru. In creating the festival, Ojeda Campana and Prado looked to intellectuals and academics to create an “authentically Inca” event. These academics included historians, archaeologists, and writers who looked to the chronicles of the famous colonial Spanish soldier Garcilaso de la Vega. Garcilaso de la Vega, born of a Spanish conquistador and an Inca noblewoman, was formally educated in Spain and remains a significant source of information about the Inca Empire and colonization of Peru. It is no surprise that the founders of the Inti Raymi festival chose to employ his vision of the event, as his writings fit well with the founders’ Incanismo ideology.

De la Vega, who spent most of his life in Spain, was baptized and grew up as a Christian. However he learned from his maternal noble family about daily life under the Inca Empire. Therefore, his writings betray both his reverence for the noble perspective of Inca life, and his desire to portray the Incas in a manner that would be appealing to his fellow Christian colonizers. While the descriptions of Inca festivals seen in his Comentarios Reales de los Incas, provides a description of the festival that would be helpful to someone recreating the festival, it is worthy to note that the source of this description was an elite mestizo, and was used by elites as the primary source for the early

twenty-first century Incanismo movement in Peru.\textsuperscript{59} Instead of looking to living Quechua communities in the Cusco area for information on solstice celebrations, the founders of the Inti Raymi utilized a source reminiscent of themselves: elite and mestizo. By using this source and not considering any input from the actual descendants of the Inca Empire, the Inti Raymi founders continued the legacy of coloniality, where the elite signify what it means to be Inca, and thus Quechua.

The contemporary Inti Raymi festival has built off of the initial implementation of the festival in 1944. It is the culmination of the “Fiestas del Cusco,” a month long celebration of the city and history of Cusco.\textsuperscript{60} Celebration of the Inti Raymi festival begins with a civic parade, where public and private civic institutions from all of the Cusco provinces send employees to dress up in traditional costumes and parade through the streets of Cusco. In 2016, I had the opportunity to attend both the Civic Parade and Inti Raymi Festival.

The 2016 Civic Parade began at eight in the morning and lasted over sixteen hours, involving a parade of more than 250 local institutions. These institutions included the Dirección Regional de Salud Cusco, the Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, the Dirección de General de Defensa Público y Acceso a la Justicia, the Referencia de Restitución de Identidad y Apoyo Social, the Policía Nacional Emergencias Cusco, the Escuadrón de Caballería and many more. The Civic Parade is described as the preamble to the Inti Raymi festival.\textsuperscript{61} Students of local universities perform traditional dances, similar

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
to those seen at the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo, in the parade. Students and adult civic employees alike dress in traditional costumes which they rent for the event. The parade maintains a jovial attitude throughout with the use of tricksters, firecrackers, fireworks, candy, music and dancing, and boisterous drinking.

The most simply dressed participants wear black pants with a woven poncho or vest and a brown, black or green wool hat. Traditionally, ponchos are only worn by men, and the brown, black and green wool hats symbolize indigenous rather than mestizo or Spanish descent. In the parade, both men and women wear the ponchos and the hats solely symbolize traditional costumes. Other participants are more elaborately dressed. Some men choose to dress as qorilazos, or Cusqueñan cowboys, dressed in Hispanic-inspired dress of elaborate over-the-knee leather boots with embroidered horses, stars and horseshoes, with spurs, a plaid button down shirt and plain vest, with a straw hat and a woven cape.62 Other men dress in gaucho inspired clothing, with ponchos, bombachas, or gaucho pants, adding in a traditional Cusqueñan monteras, or flat hats. Many men wear a confluence of all of these influenced by the traditional clothing of the Quechua, wearing woven vests and wool hats, or ponchos and chullus, or woven hats with ear flaps.

Some men, acting the part of tricksters, wear masks. Such masks include the white woven mask of the cápac colla, a representation of traders who would come to Cusco during the colonial era, the bestial sajra mask, symbolizing the devil, negrillos, or black-faced masks that symbolizes slaves, and the most frequently seen, majeños. The Manjeños wear masks with comically large noses, long nostril or moustache hair. Blue eyes and a

wide grin. The Manjeños symbolize the Europeans, and the participants wearing these masks would also wear western style clothing including pants, leather jackets, straw wide-brimmed hats and long handkerchiefs tied around their necks.

Part of the progression also includes a presentation of each province of Peru. Representatives ride through the parade on horses holding up signs that state the name of their province. One such, La Convención, chose to depict a different group of indigenous people than the majority of the festival. Most frequently, participants in the parade wear Quechua-inspired costumes, however the representatives from La Convención chose instead to wear clothing inspired by the Asháninkas, who live in the Manu rainforest and in the state of Acre, Brazil. The representatives wore patterned shifts, with feathered headdresses or flat, woven circular hats, shell and tooth necklaces and carrying bows and arrows.

The women participants either wear ponchos and wool hats, as described above, or style themselves after the Quechua women of the region. This includes polleras, or wide, wool skirts which are often layered one on top of another to create a full skirt look, jobonas, or embroidered wool jackets, and Llicllas, a square woven cloth that is tied around the neck, used to carry anything from babies to cargo. Additionally, participants wear the wide range of hats seen among the Peruvian indigenous communities, including the montera flat hat, and the bombín, which refers to either the Quechua derby style hat, or the Aymara bowler hat. In typical indigenous communities, these woven skirts, jackets, and hats allow for a level of individuality. Traditionally, the different colors, patterns, and fashioning of these items would depict which village the individual woman was from, and the different hats could demonstrate education level. Within the parade, the non-indigenous origins of
these clothing items make themselves known through the identical, machine embroidered skirts and jackets, the use of petticoats instead of layering polleras, and the arbitrary use of different hats. Additionally, while most indigenous Quechua and Aymara wear shoes called Los Yanquis, or “The Yankees,” sandals made out of recycled tires, looked down upon as shoes of the poor, the participants in the parade wear either black heeled shoes or boots for men and women respectively. With all of these differences in dress, it is easy to distinguish the Quechua and Aymara women in the crowd from the costumed Peruvians in the parade.

While the discussion of costuming in the Civic Parade could be an entire paper topic on its own, it is important to note that the Civic Parade, which is a national event, utilizes costumes that depict Peruvian indigenous communities, rather than Western clothing. This furthers the idea that Cusco as a region continues to implement Incanismo ideology, using indigenous groups as a national identity and a shared history, when in fact, this is not necessarily the case. In addition, there are no indigenous groups involved in the parade. It solely consists of civic institutions dressing as indigenous. While some may be able to claim indigenous status via distant relations, the groups who daily dress in this manner are not involved and either do not come to the city for lack of transportation, money or interest, or sit on the sidelines watching as these civic institutions dress up in their traditional garb and local university students perform their dances.

The next day, on the June Solstice, the Inti Raymi reenactment begins. Unlike the Civic Parade, the atmosphere is more serious, though still upbeat. There are no longer any

Quechua or Aymara styled costumes. The reenactment takes place in three separate locations, and spectators line up hours early in each location to get the best positions to watch the action. For the Inti Raymi reenactments, I was invited to join a private tour with a spiritual tour group, who I had previously met at a spiritual retreat in Ollantaytambo, which I will describe in more detail in the third chapter. I met the group at their small, luxury hotel below the Plaza del Armas in Cusco. Out of the ten members in the group, only five wanted to attend the Inti Raymi festival. The others either felt ill or were uninterested in the proceedings. The high altitude of Cusco compared to the valley of Ollantaytambo and longevity and crowdedness of the festival may have contributed to their lack of interest or illness. A private guide also met us at the hotel. A Professor of Tourism at the Universidad Nacional San Antonio Abad del Cusco, Carlos Seminario acted as our private guide and provided me with the majority of my historical background on Cusco and this festival. In addition to working at the University, Carlos offered tours through Belmond LTE, a British luxury travel company, which has a monopoly on luxury hotels and trains surrounding Machu Picchu. Carlos brought us first to Qurikancha, the colonial church built on top of Inca ruins. At this site, the first of three rituals began the Inti Raymi.

The first ritual starts at eight in the morning, and is performed on top of the Inca ruins of the Sun Temple Qurikancha, jutting out from underneath the colonial church. Preluding the arrival of the Sapa Inca and his court is a persistent beating drum. Beneath the ruins on a grassy knoll, Inca warriors in colorful tunics holding wooden shields and plastic weapons stand in formation. Our guide informed me that these warriors are young men from the Peruvian army who are required to perform in the Inti Raymi festival. On the second level of the ruins, professional female performers acting the part of the virgins of
the sun are dressed in long white dresses with embroidered stripes of color at the bottom, thick cloth belts, square cloth red and blue capes and flat hats. On top of this protruding rock structure, stand the Inca officials, the four Suyus, or governors of Tawantinsuyu, and the high priest and subordinate priests wrapped in colorful square woven cloth, with elaborate woven headdresses stuck with feathers, and with fake-gold earrings and bracelets adorning their bodies. The Sapa Inca makes his first appearance here, addressing the crowd in an embroidered tunic, llautu, or a crown-like headdress with two rare feathers protruding upward, golden earrings and bracelets and a necklace with a large gold sun pendant. The Sapa Inca addresses and sings to the crowd in Quechua backed by purple smoke. All of the participant’s wear Los Yanquis, the tire rubber shoes of the Quechua and Aymara.

Our group arrived late to Qurikancha and missed all but the address of the Sapa Inca. Our tour guide mentioned that had we arrived earlier, he would have brought us to a classroom situated across the street from Qurikancha, and on the second floor of another colonial building to watch the event. He explained that many international private tours take advantage of these classrooms to watch the proceedings away from the crowd. This was also the case for the second performance of the Inti Raymi festival which takes place in the Plaza de Armas. For this second performance, we joined two other international tour groups in a restaurant located on the second floor, on the left side of the Plaza.

Our tour guide had a relationship with a local restaurant owner, whose business was located on the Plaza de Armas. Therefore, our group was permitted to watch the Inti Raymi festivities from windows overlooking the square below, provided we bought food at the restaurant while watching. On the way to this restaurant, other members of the group wanted to make purchases from the numerous adventure clothing shops littered between
Qurikancha and the Plaza de Armas including The North Face, RFK Outdoor and Tatoo. Once we arrived at the restaurant, and while waiting for the next performance to begin, members of the spiritual tour group discussed their opinions of the event we had just seen at Qurikancha. Specifically, they compared the events to the spiritual retreat in Ollantaytambo we had all just come from, stating that the shamanic rituals they had experienced there were much more authentically Andean than what they called the “commercialized” Inti Raymi festival. We chatted about their dislike of the crowds and pageantry of the event over fresh fruit and bread while waiting for the parade of the Sapa Inca and his court to arrive in the Plaza de Armas.

The second performance in Inti Raymi festival took place over the entire Plaza de Armas. Along the colonial buildings surrounding the plaza, the crowd stood behind a rope. The most important spectators sat in the shadow of the Catedral Cusco, where there was a covered stage hosting governmental officials including the newly elected president of Peru. On either side of the stage were bleachers where more spectators sit. The first part of the second performance involved an elaborate procession of the Sapa Inca and his court. During this time, members of the Inca court danced, swept the ground and threw flower petals in preparation for the arrival of the Sapa Inca. Directly in front of the audience, Inca warriors marched in place. As the Sapa Inca was carried in on a gold litter, a member of his army blew a conch shell, which our tour guide informed us would have been a prized object in the Inca Empire as it would have been traded for and traveled all the way south from the Caribbean. After he and his court processed in, they set up in the center of the plaza. It was here that the Sapa Inca addressed Inti, the Sun God, in Quechua and sent a
sacrifice of coca leaves to him. After this, the Suyus or governors of the four provinces of Tawantinsuyu, gave their yearly reports to the Sapa Inca. This portion of the festival ended with the procession of the mummified remains of a previous Sapa Inca on a litter followed by the current Sapa Inca, and the procession begins their ascent to the final performance at the ruins of Sacsayhuamán, located about thirty minutes away walking. This final portion of the Inti Raymi is the only portion where the audience need pay for a seat. During the final act at the Sacsayhuamán ruins, spectators can purchase cushioned seats surrounding the reenactment for a minimum of $240 USD. Because the group and I had not bought tickets for this third act, our participation in the Inti Raymi festival was at an end.

The final performance of the Inti Raymi takes place at the Inca ruins of the fortress Sacsayhuamán, the location of the unsuccessful siege of Manco Inca in 1537, who fought against Spanish conquistadors in the attempt to reinstate the Inca Empire. Upon arrival at the ruins, the Sapa Inca and High Priest perform speeches and sing in Quechua, and the high priest goes through the motions of symbolically sacrificing a llama. The llama is not actually hurt during the performance, and the priests only symbolically go through the motions of the sacrifice, including reading the future in the sacrificed llama’s heart. At the end of the performance, performers set stacks of straw on fire and dance while the Sapa Inca and his court process out, signaling the end of the festival.

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The Inti Raymi celebrations promote a collective past through the utilization of the Incanismo concept of the romanticized Inca to celebrate the history of the country while also stimulating international tourism. Like many other Peruvian tourist attractions, the Inti Raymi focuses heavily on the spiritual characteristic of the Inca and appropriates contemporary Quechua practices to capitalize on the concept of the “Sacred Inca.” The civic parade exemplifies the use of indigenous clothing and dances to promote a national identity while ignoring the indigenous communities themselves. The following day, the Inti Raymi reenactment, created and performed by the Peruvian elite, demonstrates the romanticization of Inca culture, and use of indigenous practices to further promote nationalism and international tourism.

As the Inti Raymi celebrations continue to attract international tourists, the ability for local and especially indigenous groups to take part in the activity decreases. Many local Peruvians still participate in the various events of the Inti Raymi festival, but struggle to afford the persistently rising costs of accommodation and food in Cusco. The average cost for a hotel room in the historic center of Cusco, near the sites of the Inti Raymi is about $115 USD. During the final act of the Inti Raymi festival, held at the Sacsayhuamán ruins, seats surrounding the reenactment cost a minimum of $240 USD, an incredibly steep price considering the average monthly income for all of Peru, including Lima, is $544 USD. Rather ironically, the indigenous descendants of the Inca are excluded from participation.

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participating through their inability to travel to and afford the expenses. Additionally, while local Peruvians make up the actors in the festival, the few Quechus who are able to attend the festivities are deputized to looking on from the outside as they do not participate as actors in the reenactments but rather sell sundries and trinkets to the crowds. The Inti Raymi exemplifies the maintenance of coloniality through appropriating indigenous ideas and practices while excluding indigenous groups from participating in this national activity. While the Quechua are pushed out, international tour agencies are creating specific tour packages catered to tourists who are interested in the spiritual aspects of the festival.

International tour operators describe the festival as “exotic” and a “theater representation of an Inca religious ceremony,” they further explain the ceremony as “evok[ing] memories and values that are still excellent in our days,” specifically “the memory of a time that lives in the heart of the town of Cusco.”68 Each description of the festival mentions the ancient practice of sacrificing a llama, but assures its readers that this barbaric, uncivilized practice is no longer used in contemporary reenactments.69 The imagery evoked to sell the tourist packages to international clients is reminiscent of a lost era, a way to bring back the “exotic” and mysterious Incas whose primitive ceremonies and ideas are long gone. The ceremony itself is highly dramatized, with colorful Inca costumes, slaves carrying the Sapa Inca on a litter, women sweeping away evil spirits with brooms and other “indigenous” practices. The actors are five hundred local Cusqueños, or non-indigenous residents of Cusco. Tourists have the privilege of watching events unfold from

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various spaces along the route, including my location in a second story restaurant, and the aforementioned cushioned seats at the final act of the Inti Raymi. The only other way to view the final performance of the Inti Raymi is to climb the hills surrounding the ruins and look on from afar.

In addition, international tour groups emphasize the theatricality of the event, reminding tourists that this is not a contemporary practice, but rather a reenactment of ancient acts put on by actors thereby positing contemporary Peruvian society as distant, and different from these practices. However the performance utilizes the Quechua language, which is still spoken by 4.5 million speakers just in Peru itself. By emphasizing the theatricality of the event, the spiritual tourists and tour operators maintain their distance and superiority over the Quechua people. In insisting that this is not what modern Cusco looks like, they are purposefully marking themselves as more modern, and less primitive, than the people who used to participate in these types of religious ceremonies as well as determining what is authentically “indigenous.”

It is interesting to note that my group of spiritual tourists were disappointed by what they considered to be the “commercial” and “inauthentic” nature of Inti Raymi. Insisting that this event is not what spirituality looked like in the Andes. Rather, they insisted that the smaller, more intimate shamanic ceremonies they had experienced at their spiritual retreat, which I will detail in chapter two, were the authentic Andean religion. When I asked our tour guide about the growing interest of shamanic rituals within tourism, he explained that as a child, his mother had brought him to “shamans,” however these were simply called

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doctores and were looked down upon by the general population. He described that when his mother brought him to one, it was a very secretive affair. Additionally, he stated that his doctores differed greatly from the shamans tourists tend to visit. He noted that the main difference was in payment, namely the tourists’ shamans wanted payment in the form of money and each ritual cost a fixed fee. In addition, these shamans would offer material items for sale after the ritual was complete. Doctores, according to Carlos, would never ask for payment, but simply take whatever the family had to offer, whether it was livestock, food, or sometimes nothing at all. While he did not discredit all tourist shamans, only the ones he supposed were taking advantage of tourists, he did consider the Inti Raymi festival to be more authentically Peruvian, as it was a national event that celebrated the collective history of the country.

Quechua language, history and practices are used to entertain and evoke memories of the romanticized Inca without acknowledging contemporary Quechua people, and without any profit from the tourism industry going to Quechua communities. The ticket revenue from Inti Raymi festival, to which thousands of tourists flock each year, goes towards the upkeep of the ruins and the cost of the festival. The Quechua communities are relegated to selling their handmade products and begging in the streets of Cusco as their culture is appropriated for nationalistic and tourist purposes. This festival draws many spiritual tourists, including the aforementioned group I spent time with.

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CHAPTER TWO: SPIRITUAL TOURISM IN PERU

My group of spiritual tourists defined themselves as such. They referred to their trip as “spiritual travel” and labelled themselves as “spiritual but not religious.” While scholars of this new branch of tourism often conflate spiritual tourism with pilgrimage and spiritual tourists with New Agers, the group that I travelled with would reject both of these notions of spiritual tourism.  

Spiritual tourism is a term, popularized through novels and movies such as *Eat, Pray, Love*, that denotes a specific type of Western traveler participating in an “intentional search for spiritual benefit.” This type of religiously based travel differs from pilgrimage in that the latter participants are of a specific religious tradition, visiting a place of importance to that tradition. Spiritual tourists however, “have little or no everyday connection with the practices or traditions in which they are taking part.” Additionally, while the locations are important to spiritual tourists, there is not one specific location or tradition within spiritual tourism. The spiritual tourists often participate in numerous journeys to vastly geographically and culturally different places to find the same spiritual benefits.

While there are a lot of similarities between the practices and ideology ascribed to New Age practitioners and spiritual tourists, the main difference lies in self-definition. Both New Agers and spiritual tourists draw from numerous religious practices, such as

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72 “New Age” is a difficult term, as its origins and practices and the way it is applied contemporarily often differ. In this case, I am using the term as defined by Steven Sutcliffe, describing the New Ageism that gained in popularity in the late 1960s and early 1970s. See Steven Sutcliffe, *Children of the New Age: A History of Spiritual Practices* (London: Routledge, 2003) for a more detailed definition and description of the New Age.


74 Ibid.
Gnosticism, Wicca, Paganism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Indigenous Religions from around the world. Both practices are also universalistic, meaning all cultural and religious practices from any time period, location or ethnicity are related and open for personal use.75 This will be evident through my description of the activities of the spiritual tour group I joined in Cusco, Peru. Spiritual tourists in particular look to indigenous religious practices from around the world, seeking a pan-indigeneity to further their self-discovery. Additionally, both New Age and spiritual tourism center on what Heelas describes as “self-religiosity.”76 Self-religiosity emphasizes self-discovery, self-spiritualism, self-practice and self-growth and is at the forefront of both New Age and spiritual tourist ideology. Spiritual tourists principally concern themselves with participating in a spiritual journey that will help them connect to their inner-selves. While New Agers and spiritual tourists appear to be consuming the same practices and ideology, the difference between them lies in their self-identification. In Peru, spiritual tourists specifically utilize indigenous ideas and practices to achieve this self-religiosity, and through this appropriation of indigenous culture, continue the coloniality present in Peru.

In the introduction to Jürgen Osterhammel’s book Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview” Roger Tignor states that

Colonialism is a relationship between an indigenous…majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial ruler in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the

colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule.\textsuperscript{77}

Spiritual tourism fits under this definition of colonialism. In the hierarchical system of Peru, the spiritual tourists take the place of the Spanish as the foreign invaders, who make decisions such as appropriating Quechua beliefs and practices, and through their desires for a pan-indigeneity, they drive the tourism industry in Peru to redefine indigenous Peruvian practices to fit into this concept of a pan-indigenous peacefulness, spirituality and connection to the earth. Through this redefinition of Peruvian indigeneity, the spiritual tourist, with the help of their cultural broker, the tourism industry, signifies what it means to be Quechua, and exploit and export the perceived inherent spirituality of the Quechua people for their own practices. Through this exploitation and exportation, the spiritual tourist maintains their position of superiority through their ability to signify the Quechua and extrapolate the ideas they deem laudable and disregard those they find worthless, all while continuing the unequal power relations between the spiritual tourist, mestizo tourism industry and Quechua. In the words of Charles Long, the Quechua are signified by the tourism industry, allowing for an oppression of the Quechua culture and community reminiscent of colonialism.\textsuperscript{78}

Spiritual tourism, much like general tourism in Peru focuses on the concept of the “Sacred Inca,” a fabricated envisioning of the Inca Empire as a peaceful, traditional, spiritual utopia in stark contrast to the violent Spanish conquistadors who brought with

them all the trappings of modernity. Spiritual tourists visit Peru in order to see the remnants of this utopian civilization by visiting Inca remains and Quechua communities, participating in “shaman ceremonies” including the use of medicinal plants such as ayahuasca and San Pedro, meditation, yoga, and self-reflecting spiritual retreats. Through these retreats, the Quechua community and their connection to the spiritual Inca become the exhibition, and therefore are unable to control their own image within the spiritual tourism industry. Instead, the tourism industry, or the “dominant representative of national culture” takes the role of cultural broker and through its translation of the Inca and Quechua cultures to spiritual tourists, defines what it means to be Quechua. Thus the tourism industry relegates the Quechua to their subaltern position in the racial strata.

CASE STUDY: WILLKA T’IKA & MINDFUL RETREATS

While in Peru in 2016, I spent three days at a spiritual retreat in Urubamba, a small town located in the Sacred Valley between Cusco and the famed Machu Picchu. This spiritual retreat, called Willka T’ika or “Sacred Flower” in Quechua, was founded by owner and California native Carol Comes in 1994. She explains “I first visited the Sacred Valley in the 80s and was so captivated by the powerful healing energy that I continued to return year after year.” This draw eventually led to her purchasing a plot of land in Urubamba and creating what she calls a “conscious tampu [or a] spiritual resting place to the Inkan people.” She credits Pachamama, the Andean Earth Goddess, with guiding her and helping her to complete this self-defined luxury spiritual retreat: “Pachamama has helped

80 Ibid.
me to create a most nourishing and revitalizing wellness center in the Sacred Valley that is infused with the abundantly healing potent energy of its rich Chakra Gardens.”81

The rhetoric of Willka T’ika is heavily focused on terms such as “wellness” and “healing” and utilizes practices from many different religious traditions to achieve this goal of overall wellbeing. Specifically, Cumes opened the Willka T’ika with the goal of “creat[ing] a retreat center synergizing Andean culture and cosmology with yoga philosophy and lifestyle.”82 Along with yoga, other practices guests can take part in at the Willka T’ika are hot stone and shiatsu massages, aromatherapy, solar baths, crystal light therapy, and “Andean Ceremonies.” These Andean Ceremonies are marketed as “traditional and creative ceremonies” and include spa treatments such as Andean massage, facials and breema sessions, and shaman ceremonies such as “Offerings to Pachamama, Earth Dance to energize your Chakras, full moon, solstice or equinox ceremonies, and Andean Art Workshops. While the spa treatments are open to anyone willing to pay, the shaman ceremonies are only available to groups of ten or more, and each participant is charged.

The facility specifically focuses on the connection it has to its natural surroundings, fitting with the spiritual tourist idea of the innate connection between the Inca and Quechua and nature. It boasts that it offers more ecological benefits than the required international criteria to qualify as an Ecolodge. Each guest receives a private adobe-styled room, complete with a private bathroom, views of the surrounding mountains and organic toiletries. The rooms each take the Quechua name for an Andean medicinal plant, and are

81 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
arranged using Feng Shui. Other facilities on site, are two spa rooms named after the Andean Sun and Moon gods, a dining room covered in murals of Andean gods and goddesses, as well as the ubiquitous Andean Puma, Snake and Condor. In addition, crystals can be found littering the property within and outside of buildings. There also is a yoga studio named Yogawasi, meaning house of yoga in Quechua, equipped with mats, blankets and yoga accessories as well as a room called the Takiwasi or Temple of Sound and Music. This is a space for meditation and Andean rituals filled with hand drums and maracas. Both the yoga studio and the meditation studio are equipped with sound systems and decorated with statues of Buddha, Hindu deities and Andean animals. There is also a Yachaywasi, Quechua for Temple of Wisdom, which is a small room with a few books and a computer.

The grounds of Willka T’ika the most marketed part of the retreat center. Cumes has even published a photo book of the seven Chakra gardens found within. The entire grounds are covered in an overwhelming amount of plant life. Walking along the paths it is easy to get lost between buildings as the overgrown plant life makes it difficult to see beyond the short path before you. There are seven gardens that are called the “Chakra” gardens, each designed with a specific chakra in mind, and symbolized through individual shapes, sculptures and medicinal plants. While these symbols were sometimes difficult to suss out, the easiest to find were the heart chakra, which is a heart-shaped grassy spot surrounded by red and pink flowers, and the third eye chakra which has a mural of an eye above it. One of the chakra gardens is dedicated to the Andean Sun God Inti. This garden is in the shape of the Chakana, or the stepped, Inca cross, and filled with yellow flowers. This symbol is also used in the Willka T’ika logo, which Cumes explains: “the symbology
behind the logo is the chakana, the Andean cross embodying all Andean cosmology."

Interestingly enough, the chakana is not associated with Inti, and in actuality is an invented tradition. It is often promoted as a pre-Inca symbol that is worshipped and used for spiritual or mystical interpretations. In actuality, the spiritual mythos behind the Chankan was created in 2003 in a book called *Andean Awakening*. \(^8^4\)

While Willka T’ika emphasizes the spiritual, healing properties of the facility, it also promotes its luxurious nature. Completely isolated from the surrounding town by not one but two high fences, there is a clear differentiation between the Willka T’ika grounds and the town of Urubamba. Beyond the limits of Willka T’ika are small farms and dusty roads. Within the fences, Willka T’ika provides a safe, isolated community for international tourists. Along with numerous spa treatments, guests are treated to three organic vegetarian meals a day, free Wi-Fi, private rooms, organic toiletries and hot water, things that are quite rare in this part of the country.

While at Willka T’ika I had the opportunity to spend time with Michele, the founder of a LA-based spiritual travel group called Mindful Retreats. Michele is a former body builder from Los Angeles who now owned a gym training other women for body building competitions. Her training focuses on gaining both physical and spiritual strength. She also takes small groups on spiritual retreats through her company Mindful Retreats once a year. Previously her groups had traveled to India, Bali, and Ojai, California. We spent two days alone at Willka T’ika before her tour group arrived. On the third day, I met her group.

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which consisted of ten individuals, seven women and three men. Of the group, eight of the individuals were from Southern California, one was from Ohio, and one from Dubai. Most of the members of the group had a previous relationship with Michele, or were brought by a friend or significant other who had a relationship with her. The outliers from Ohio and Dubai had found Michele on her exhaustive Instagram and Facebook accounts.

Michele and I spent quite a lot of time together as we were the only guests at Willka T’ika. We ate all of our meals together, spent a day walking through the chakra gardens, and another visiting the nearby Salt Flats. During this time, she explained her history and how she came to found her travel company. She explained to me that she started her career as a body builder in her early twenties, but after a few years of competing and opening her own gym to train other body builders she grew tired of the superficiality surrounding body building, and decided to change her training techniques to also offer spiritual training and from this she formed a travel company based on combining physical activities with a focus on inner spirituality.

Her yearly tours now focus on having clients push their limits and connect to their inner selves through practices such as meditation, physical exertion, yoga, and what she deemed “mindfulness.” She explained that mindfulness was the practice of being aware of yourself and your surroundings without outside interference. She brought her clients around the world to find different ways of being mindful. Specifically, she looked to indigenous religious practices and beliefs throughout the world, seeking ways to connect to an inner spirituality, which would allow for happiness. Littered throughout her speech were allusions to many different religious practices. She believed in the ability for yoga and meditation to promote connection with the inner being, and referred to her use of reiki
alternative healing techniques, as well as a belief in reincarnation, karma, astrology, and other practices commonly referred to as “New Age practices.” The main goal of her retreats is to help individuals transform themselves, to find their inner selves, and awaken themselves spiritually.

Each retreat focuses on a specific culture of the region that the retreat takes place in. These cultures that Mindful Retreats focus on are exclusively non-Western and exoticised religious traditions. In Bali and India, the retreats focus on Hindu ideology and practices, whereas in Peru and Ojai, the retreats focus on indigenous practices from the Quechua and Chumash communities. Throughout these regions, Mindful Retreats looks to indigenous, non-western communities to find a pan-indigeneity which will provide them with what Troeltsch calls a “mystical religion” based on individuality and inner spirituality. In Peru, the retreats focused on the aforementioned romanticized “sacred indigenous” while combining Andean practices with numerous other religious practices and beliefs from around the world. Within Peru, the practices they were most interested in were shamanic offerings, and they participated in shaman rituals at Willka T’ika including a fire ceremony and a coca leaf ceremony. In each, the Mindful Retreat group heavily focused on the concept of “authenticity:” the authenticity of their travel experiences, including the shamanic ceremonies and the people performing them, as well as finding and being their own authentic selves. After their time finding inner spirituality at Willka T’ika, the group planned to hike up to Machu Picchu to participate in the physical portion of their trip, as well as witness the perceived spirituality of the Inca ruins.

THE SPIRITUAL TOURIST ITINERARY: MACHU PICCHU
The itinerary of Mindful Retreats exemplifies the standard spiritual tourism packages offered to those wanting to visit Peru. Generally, these packages will include a visit to Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley, and participation in at least one Andean Ritual. Machu Picchu, the symbol of the Sacred Inca, is one of the most important aspects of these spiritual retreats.

Machu Picchu, the “lost city of the Incas,” continues to hold a strong position on the world’s top travel destinations lists. With over 2.5 million tourists traveling annually to Machu Picchu, the Government of Peru needs to enforce strict limits on the number of travelers per day and the mode of getting to Machu Picchu. These limitations, put in place by the government to ensure the protection of the site, have created a monopoly for a very small group of private tour companies. There are only two regulated ways to visit the ruins of Machu Picchu, a four-day trek through the mountains with a licensed guide, or a half-day luxury train and bus ride to the site. Tickets into the site are about $51 USD, and the Peruvian government, which only profits from the entrance tickets, reported a profit of $35.9 million dollars in 2014. The director of the Archaeological Park, Fernando Astete, states that this revenue goes towards park maintenance and funding for archaeological studies in the surrounding area. These $35.9 million dollars do not include the revenue from train and bus tickets to the site or revenue from guides and porters through private companies for the four-day trek to the site.

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The train to Machu Picchu is privately co-owned by the Peruvian company Peruvian Trains & Railways, and the British company Belmond Ltd. The owner of Peruvian Trains & Railways, Lorenzo Sousa, also owns the only hotel next to the site of Machu Picchu the Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge, and Belmond Ltd. owns the Hotel Plaza de Armas, the Hotel Monasterio, and the Machu Picchu Inn, which are the hotels with the highest occupancies in Cusco. The train alone costs $96 per person and generates over $105 million USD a year. Meanwhile the Machu Picchu Sanctuary advertises its cheapest, viewless rooms for $1,025 USD a night.

If tourists would like to hike the four-day trek up the famed Inca Trail, there are 188 licensed, private tour companies both local and with UK and US tour operators, who offer the trip for the starting price of $595-$745 USD. Each trek employs Quechua porters to carry tourists’ packs, tents and food during the trip. For a more luxurious option, tour operators offer private, customizable tours for upwards of $750 USD depending on the tourist’s needs. These customizable tours can include spiritual tours, hiking with a spiritual guide from the base of the Inca trail, or even a day trip such as one offered through the luxury hotel Sumaq. Sumaq is located at the base of the bus route to Machu Picchu in Aguas Calientes and offers mystical tours to Machu Picchu led by “an authentic shaman.

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from the Sacred Valley of the Incas who, using his natural gifts, will introduce you to the mystical and cosmic world of the Andean belief.”90 This particular excursion promises an in-depth explanation of the energy sources which will “uncover the mystery of Machu Picchu as well as the magical connections with the Pachamama.”91 In addition, participants will receive a cleansing session by the shaman guide and a Pachamama mystical kit. This is just one example of a spiritual themed tour of Machu Picchu.

Pack animals such as horses, mules and llamas are banned from the trail with Quechua porters taking their place.92 The tour operators and tour guides leading the expeditions up to Machu Picchu are primarily not from indigenous groups, as these positions require competency in Spanish and English, which generally are not taught in underfunded rural Quechua schools. Thus, only the porters carrying supplies up the trail come from Quechua communities. Porters are generally mistreated by the companies they work for, and earn at most $15 USD a day. Like the pack animals they replaced, porters are frequently ignored by those whose items they port up the mountain, and are considered part of the ambiance and scenery of the trail. Tourists hiking the Inca Trail overlook the fact that Quechua porters are descendants of the Incas who built Machu Picchu, live in the surrounding agricultural regions of the famed ruins, and are knowledgeable of the environment and culture surrounding Machu Picchu.

91 Ibid.
The reality of Quechua porters’ treatment as a subordinate other is demonstrated by an online guide detailing how to interact with your Quechua porter while enjoying your trek to Machu Picchu. It states:

The Quechua race has a history of being downtrodden, first by the Incas, then by the Spanish and then by the landowners. Only in fairly recent reforms have the Quechua people started to own their own land. Because of their long history of being dominated by others many have a low self-esteem. It is important on the Inca Trail to try to involve the porters in your group. Take some coca leaves to share with them and try to learn a couple of basic words in Quechua (your guide will be pleased to help you). Many of the porters have amazing stories to tell about traditions and life in their villages. At the end of the trek don’t forget to show them that you appreciated their work and valued their contribution towards the trek by thanking them verbally and giving them a tip.  

This guide for treating Porters comes from one of the most frequented websites discussing the Inca Trail. The demeaning tone of the instructional guide demonstrates the general treatment of Quechus as a subordinate race. Quechus are described as “down-trodden” with “low self-esteem.” The last remark regarding treatment of porters further elucidates the superiority of the writer:

I have heard many stories where trekkers have wanted to show their appreciation of the porters by tipping hundreds of dollars! Over-tipping can often be as bad as leaving no tip at all. Unfortunately it is a fact that if they receive large tips they often end up drinking in Aguas Calientes or Urubamba for several days after the trek and little of the intended benefits reach their families who often need it most.  

The coloniality of the hierarchical system put in place during the Spanish colonization denoting indigenous people as inferior have not changed. It is still thought that to give the indigenous population too much freedom, or too much money in this case, is to their

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93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
The colonial stigmatization of the Quechua as sub-human, lazy and drunk persists.

There is no mention of the existing Quechua groups with regards to Machu Picchu beyond as porters or during trips to the Sacred Valley included in the Machu Picchu tour packages, where the Quechua people are put on display as people who live in the same way as they did hundreds of years ago. The Quechua villages and communities are vaguely connected to Machu Picchu, however the overarching idea of the “lost, pure” Incas conflicts with the contemporary views of indigenous peoples in a way that cannot allow for a full connection of the two peoples. The Inca Empire then, in the minds of tourists and the tourism industry, becomes a glorified empire of one unified ethnic group, rather than the unification of different ethnic groups under one governmental force that it was in actuality.

Machu Picchu is marketed towards international spiritual tourists as a piece of the lost Inca history. It is often referred to as “the lost city of the Incas,” and many websites, articles and novels have been written about its spiritual nature and the mysteries of the community that built them.95 This concept of the “lost city” comes directly from National Geographic’s marketing of the “discovery” of Machu Picchu by The 1911 Yale Peruvian Expedition headed by Yale professor Hiram Bingham.96 The goal of this expedition was reminiscent of the searches for El Dorado. Instead of looking for physical gold, the explorers searched for historical gold in the form of the “Last Capital of the Incas.”

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last capital was explained as the last Inca stronghold, where it is said the Inca ruler Tupac Amaru hid with Inca gold. Upon discovering Machu Picchu, Hiram Bingham incorrectly declared it to be this “lost capital” of the Incas, and this false image of Machu Picchu continues to the present day.

The spiritual tourism industry thus signifies the Incas as a spiritual people, long dead and only remembered through history. Thus visiting Machu Picchu serves as a way to go back in time, to another age where these majestic, peaceful, complex and yet still primitive people existed. Tourism agencies specifically market spiritual tours or “journeys,” where tourists can stay in a spiritual center of the world. One such agency, Divine Travels, writes a letter to the “Eagles of the North” from the “Kondors of the South” marketing their Shamanic Tours by saying:

Breathe in the sacred wisdom of the ages. Meditate in temples thousands of years old. Participate in life-changing ancient ceremonies and experience the magnificence of your own being. Picture yourself breathing the mystical air at the heights of the Andes Mountains. Your spirit will soar as you experience one of the most beautiful sacred lands on earth. Walk in the footsteps of the ancient Inkas. The ancestors of the Andean people still live in this precious “Paradise in the Sun,” where the heart of the masters still reigns.97

“Divine Tours” offers guided shamanic tours, including participation in, as they advertise it: “ancient rituals and ceremonies, whose secrets have been guarded from time immemorial” put on by “famous Andean shamans.” While these rituals and ceremonies are attributed to the Incas, Divine Tours also includes activities that do not relate to the Incas such as guided meditations, crystal healing and UFO gazing, all for the purpose of discovering and awakening guests’ spiritual self.98 These activities take place at Machu

97 “Heart of the Inkas Mystical Peru”
98 Ibid.
Picchu and other nearby Inca ruins, using Quechua porters to help guests unburden themselves to fully achieve this spiritual awakening. Guests appropriate these “Inca ceremonies” mixing them with other religious and spiritual practices. Through this, they take parts of the Quechua religion to fit their own needs thereby extending the colonial practice of maintaining a racial hierarchy, where the tourist group can pick and choose the aspects of Quechua culture and religion that they deem most valuable, and leave the rest.

The tourist cultural brokers, in the form of companies such as “Divine Tours,” take the position of the mestizos, bridging the distance between the spiritual tourists and the indigenous groups, by favoring the tourists and offering new ways to appropriate indigenous religions and culture through spiritual tours to Machu Picchu. Tourists look to the fabricated “spiritual Inca” for an “authentic” spiritual experience. Spiritual tourists are still visiting Machu Picchu looking for El Dorado, but unlike Pizarro and Bingham it is not physical or historical gold but rather the perceived spiritual and internal “gold” that the Incas possessed.
CHAPTER THREE: SIGNIFICATION AND QUECHUA AGENCY

While it is easy to say that the tourism industry in Peru abuses the powerless Quechua through defining what it means to be Quechua and appropriating their culture, this would not be entirely true. Even though they maintain their position at the bottom of the colonial hierarchical system, through the tourism industry’s signification of what it means to be indigenous, the subaltern Quechua, like all colonized communities, maintain some power and agency from within their subordinate position.\textsuperscript{99}

For the purpose of this paper, I define agency sociologically rather than philosophically. While the philosophical concept of agency is built off René Descartes’ concept of cogito ergo sum, or “I think therefore I am,” meaning the capacity of a human to act, I instead employ the sociological concept of agency, or the ability of an individual “to make autonomous decisions based on their own beliefs, desires and goals.”\textsuperscript{100}

In addition, I define “signification,” “signifier,” and “signified” based on Charles Long’s definition, in which he states: “By signification I am pointing to one of the ways in which names are given to realities and peoples during this period of conquest this naming is at the same time an objectification through categories and concepts of those realities which appear as novel and “other” to the cultures of conquest.”\textsuperscript{101} Signification, therefore is a naming process. However, this process often comes with a latent power hierarchy between the signifier and the signified. As Long explains, “the active existential and self-

identifying notae through which a people know themselves is almost completely bypassed for the sake of the conceptual and categorical forms of classification." 102 Within colonialism in Peru, the Españoles, who held the power, signified what it meant to be an indigenous Peruvian. These significations have persisted through the stigmatization and racial nomenclature found in the colonial hierarchy and contemporary coloniality in Cusco. The tourism industry furthers this signification through modifying what it means to be Quechua to fit the desires of the spiritual tourist. One could argue that through the coloniality of Cusco, and specifically through spiritual tourism, the Quechua groups lose their agency and ability to self-define through the signification of the tourism industry. This, however, is not fully true.

SILENCE AS PROTEST

In her discussion of Q’ero Munay-ki healing rites at an American-run spiritual center in the Sacred Valley of Peru, Macarena Gómez-Barris addresses the lack of participation from one Q’ero female: 103

Juana was often the only Q’ero female present at most ceremonies, and, though I spend more than a week in her presence, I hardly heard her speak…Perhaps we can read Juana’s silence as resistance to the notion of interculturality…In fact, silence may be the only proper answer in the face of New Age appropriations of Andean cultural memory. 104

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102 Ibid 5.
103 The Q’ero are an ethnic subgroup of the Quechua primarily found in the Paucartambo province of Peru, which is east of Cusco. The term Q’ero is now often used to mean any indigenous person located near the Cusco region and has become a holdfast for spiritual tourists. Many spiritual tourist agencies and participants now exclusively refer to the Q’ero when discussing Inca spirituality or mysticism, and link them to the fabricated history of Inca Shamanism.
While Gómez-Barris falls into the trap of spiritual tourism by utilizing the term Q’ero to refer to Quechua people from the Sacred Valley in the Urubamba region, and fails to explain what she means by “New Age,” her article points to an important manner in which Quechua communities react to the spiritual tourism industry: silence. The concept of silence as resistance is not new, but rather the discourse on silence ranges from discussing the act of silencing to the power of remaining silent. It is clear that the Peruvian spiritual tourism industry silences the Quechua community through appropriating Quechua culture and ultimately defining what it means to be Quechua. However, as seen through Gómez-Barris’ description of Juana, the Quechua are purposefully taking this silence, and using it as a means to make statements on the tourism industry.

Juana’s silence during the healing ceremonies is not a unique occurrence in Quechua relations with the tourism industry’s use of Quechua culture, however there is a lack of a unified, public response from the Quechua community to spiritual tourism. This is somewhat surprising as traditionally, the Quechua of Peru have been very vocal in their demand for rights, and have historically led many protests of the treatment of the indigenous people of Peru, as well as environmental issues stemming from mining and oil pipelines. Perhaps cultural appropriation does not rank high on their list of issues compared to environmental degradation, forced sterilization or educational inequalities. Nevertheless, the lack of a public decry of spiritual tourism does not mean Quechua communities are not resisting or reacting to this new form of coloniality. One way in which I posit the Quechua community demonstrates their disapproval is through the act of silence, such as that of Juana. During the Civic parade, I found another Quechua woman who
demonstrated her silent resistance. This woman, who distinguished herself from those wearing costumized versions of her attire through her simple, unembroidered and western-influenced versions of the traditional Quechua skirt and bowler hat, stood out in particular to me. Amidst the raucous crowd pushing for better views of the parade, she alone sat on a stone wall, her back to the parade, with a tray of candy bars to sell. Unlike other vendors, she was completely stoic, silently looking away from the dancers who were imitating her culture, passively resisting the touristic display of indigenous culture.

In his work on the functions of silence, Johannsen explains that silence is a form of communication because both listeners and observers attach meaning to silence whether the non-speaking person wants them to or not. He then lists potential meanings of silence. The three meanings of importance to this article are: “(7) The silence expressed disagreement... (13) The person’s silence is a means of punishing others, of annihilating others symbolically by excluding them from verbal communication... (18) The person uses silence to enhance his own isolation, independence, and sense of self-uniqueness.” These three meanings of silence can be employed as a means to resist, and could be the reasons behind the aforementioned examples of Quechua silence in response to the tourism industry. While we cannot be certain as to Juana’s use of silence in the healing ceremonies, or the candy-vendor’s silence in response to the civic parade, the concept of colonized people using silence as a form of resistance is well recorded. Montoya explains that First Nations people in Canada use silence as a means to resist the persistent effects of colonization, specifically using the example of First Nations writers who purposefully

incorporate silence into their writing as a way of “eluding the problem of mimicry…by reconfigure[ing] colonial language and discourse and represent[ing] English.” By writing in a way that incorporates silence into the text, these First Nations writers are challenging traditional English-writing techniques through the calculated use of silence.

Regardless of intent, silence is always contextual, and this context can often be misinterpreted. In the case of the Quechua silence, it can be easy to argue that the silence of Juana and other Quechua people comes from the silencing of the tourism industry. They do not want to be silent, but rather are forced into it. While this could be the case in some contexts, this argument belies any agency that the Quechua possess. Basso explains, with regards to silence in the Western Apache culture, that stereotypes portraying American Indians as inherently silent and therefore possessing an “instinctive dignity,” an “impoverished language” or a “lack of personal warmth” are seriously misunderstanding the role of silence within the Apache community. Instead, he argues there is not one specific meaning of silence within the Apache community, but rather silence is contextual. But within these different contexts, he comes to the conclusion that “keeping silent among the Western Apache is a response to uncertainty and unpredictability in social relations”. The silence of the Quechua when faced with spiritual tourism could also be a response to the uncertainty and unpredictability of their place within this new form of tourism which reveres their culture, but adjusts it to fit their own preconceived notions of indigeneity.


While silence is one way that I suggest the Quechua demonstrate their agency within their subjugated position, it is not the only way.

THE SHAMANIC AGENCY

As previously mentioned, some Quechua individuals, when faced with the emerging spiritual tourism industry, employ silence as a means of resisting, others find ways within the industry itself to assert their agency. One way in which the Quechua do this is by becoming a source of knowledge and highly sought after piece of the spiritual tourism industry, namely a Shaman.

Shamanism, a key part of spiritual tourism in Peru, is a frequently discussed and contested term with reference to indigenous populations of South America.110 “Shamanism” or “Shaman” were never terms used in South America, but rather were put upon traditional indigenous healers or religious leaders by white anthropologists who saw the indigenous peoples of South America as congruent to those of North Asia, where the term originates. Contemporarily, the term Shaman is used ubiquitously throughout Peru to designate indigenous, or self-proclaimed indigenous, individuals who are said to have esoteric knowledge about the universe, and perform “shamanic rituals.” These shamanic rituals are a big draw for spiritual tourists, who want to not only learn about “the mystical qualities of the indigenous populations of Peru,” and gain the “sacred knowledge passed down from the Incas,” but also to physically take part in ancient ceremonies to influence their lives and the cosmos in general. Due to this focus on shamanism within spiritual

tourism, Cusco is now littered with posters and stores advertising shamanic rituals. While some simply offer coca leaf tea readings or crystal healing, by far the most numerous are advertisements for Ayahuasca and San Pedro retreats. It is interesting to note that none of these practices would have been performed in Cusco during the short reign of the Incas. While these new offerings further demonstrate the impact of the spiritual tourists’ search for a pan-indigenous spirituality on Peru, they also allow for Quechua individuals to further express their agency within the coloniality of spiritual tourism.

The tourism industry really benefits from these new offerings geared towards spiritual tourists, as they are mostly offered through agencies that also offer tickets to Machu Picchu, ecotours and bus and plane tickets to other Peruvian cities. However, Quechua individuals can also profit from this focus on indigenous “shamanism,” as spiritual tourists look to indigenous communities for their perceived esoteric mystical knowledge and ancestral connection to the earth. While there are some individuals who “play the game” and take advantage of tourists through taking on the role of a “shaman,” some genuinely enjoy helping tourists and sharing their knowledge with others. Furthermore, by becoming a shaman for tourists, Quechua individuals can take control of the term “shaman” and provide a platform for introducing tourists to Quechua ideas and practices – albeit in a way that is catered to tourists’ preconceived notions of indigeneity.

One individual who is actively engaging in the shaman industry in Peru is Mallku Aribalo. Mallku, as he prefers to be called, is famous within the spiritual tourism community and is based in Cusco, Peru. He has been an active shaman since he first published his book *Inka Initiation Path: The Awakening of the Puma* in 1997, and now guides international tourists on spiritual journeys for the aforementioned Portland, Oregon
based company Divine Travels, which also organizes spiritual tours to India, Egypt, Peru, Bali and Greece. Mallku solely offers shamanic journeys in Peru and Bolivia, mostly based in Cusco. During these “Sacred Journeys” Mallku brings tourists to the famous Inca ruins of Machu Picchu, Ollantaytambo, and Sacsaywaman where he will share “zealously guarded [Andean] secrets.” Participants will also participate in fire ceremonies, as well as “bathe in the waters of initiation in the temples of the masters of time.” His advertisements for these sacred journeys betray the key concepts and goals spiritual tourists look for within spiritual tours: self-love and acceptance, cleansing of and connecting with the inner self, and forming a relationship to the earth. Mallku promises all of these through his spiritual tours. In addition to leading spiritual journeys, in the past three years Mallku opened a “Vegan Raw Shaman Restaurant” and Shamanic Healing Center in Cusco.

Mallku is clearly catering to the spiritual tourists through his use of the term shaman, his rhetoric of the mystic nature of Peru, his sacred journey tours and most recently his focus on veganism and healing. However, while working within the tourism industry, functioning under a US-based company, he is maintaining his agency through reconstituting the term shaman and defining it and Peruvian spirituality in his own terms. Individuals like Mallku resist the colonial vision of the “mysterious,” “wild” and “primitive” shaman created by Western bias through reclaiming the term and rebranding “shamans” in a more positive light that fits the aspirations of spiritual tourists. While some individuals demonstrate their agency through taking control of the loaded terminology used

112 Ibid.
by spiritual tourism, others simply show their agency through maintaining their own identity, however they self-define.

SELF-DEFINITION: MAINTAINING THE QUECHUA IDENTITY

The Quechua do not fully alter their own religious practices and traditions to fit into the tourist vision of the “Sacred Indigenous” regardless of pressure from the spiritual tourism industry. They maintain their own religious beliefs, and continue to have their own festivals that are not yet marketed to tourists. One such festival is the Quyllurit’i, or Shining Snow, which is a festival held around the pilgrimage to Quyllurit’i. This pilgrimage takes place a week before Corpus Christi, and thus around the same time as the Inti Raymi. Unlike the Inti Raymi, which was reimplemented for the sake of nationalism and tourism, the Quyllurit’i is a continuing Catholic/indigenous festival that dates back to 1780. This event takes place about seventy kilometers east of Cusco, in the district of Ocongate, at about 15,800ft. The festival draws indigenous groups from all over Peru, and is celebrated by indigenous and catholic communities. The festival and pilgrimage follow the story of Marianito, a young indigenous shepherd:

Sad and overwhelmed by false accusations, Marianito, an indigenous shepherd boy, left his alpacas in Sinaqara and started to ascent toward the glacier. He met a white boy who comforted and played with him while the flock of alpacas miraculously improved and increased. Having heard about these events, the priest and neighbors of the town of Ocongate went to investigate. When they got close to the white child, he turned into a shining light... Shocked by this vision, the indigenous child died and was buried in front of a large rock that is at the center of the shrine.113

113 Guillermo Salas Carreño, “The Glacier, the Rock, the Image: Emotional Experience and Semiotic Diversity at the Quyllurit’i Pilgrimage (Cusco, Peru),” Signs and Society 2, no. S1 (Supplement 2014): S190.
While the Catholic version of the story states that when the child turned into a shining light, it momentarily showed a crucified Christ, the Quechua version does not mention this crucified Christ. Instead, the Quechua story places importance on the white child as an Apu, or “spirit of the mountain.”

Even though there are two versions of the story, the Quechua and the Catholic, the pilgrims who come to Quyllurit’i do not neatly confine themselves to one identity, Quechua or Catholic. Rather, the pilgrims can identify with either category or both, and the entire festival demonstrates a hybridized indigenous-catholic identity within this community. Some participants also consider the young white boy to be both a Jesus apparition and an Apu. Pilgrims from both Catholic and indigenous religious backgrounds find meaning in the story of Marianito. Furthermore, numerous Quechua people within the area of Ocongate identify as Evangelical and thus refuse to participate in the pilgrimage as they view it as idolatrous. These evangelicals instead use the opportunity to make money through renting horses or selling food and handmade goods.

Because Quyllurit’i takes place in the high mountains outside of Cusco, and it is not a governmentally controlled event, it is not subject to the same monetary and accommodation issues that the Inti Raymi poses. In addition, the tourism industry has not yet started to push this event as a tourist attraction, most likely because it is difficult to get to and not as well structured as the Inti Raymi festival in Cusco proper. However, there are

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114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
116 For a discussion of hybridization, see Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge 1994).
117 Ibid S205-S206.
118 Ibid S189.
still spiritual tourists who learned of this festival and attend for its indigenous spiritual aspects and connection to nature. These tourists, following the rhetoric of the aforementioned Incanismo, see the Quyllurit’i as an ancient Inka ritual that has maintained despite Catholic appropriation of the event. One such person explains “the Catholic version is a myth designed by the Church to superimpose a foreign belief system on the local indigenous population.” In addition, the tourists attending Quyllurit’i bring their own spiritual guides and shamans from outside the community to perform their own versions of indigenous rituals outside of the Catholic traditions of mass and blessing already in place. These tourists denigrate the Catholic parts of the event while looking to use their preconceived notions of indigeneity to “reconnect with nature and to purify themselves from the contaminated and alienating modern life of the industrialized metropolis.”

While I will not go into full detail as to a description of the festival itself, I will point out that this festival is an example of the Quechua maintaining agency within the coloniality of the spiritual tourism industry. The spiritual tourism industry signifies one version of the indigenous population of Peru: a descendant of the Sacred Inca that will fit into the rhetoric of a pan-indigenous “Spiritual Indian” that spiritual tourists look for. While some embrace this role, others reject it through maintaining their own identity regardless of whether it fits into this signification or not. The Quechua who take part, or do not take part in the Quyllurit’i pilgrimage do so because of their own position, and make meaning out of it based on their individual religious beliefs, whether indigenous, catholic.

119 Ibid
120 Ibid S195
121 See Carreño “The Glacier, the Rock, the Image: Emotional Experience and Semiotic Diversity at the Quyllurit’i Pilgrimage (Cusco, Peru),” for a full description of the festival.
or evangelical. Even with the presence of spiritual tourists the local participants maintain their identities and use the festival for their own purposes.

CONCLUSION

Through this paper, I have argued that coloniality, or the mindset of colonialism maintains in Peru. This coloniality can be directly seen in the relationship between spiritual tourists, the Peruvian tourism industry and the Quechua indigenous group, which preserves the colonial racial hierarchy put into place during colonization. While the colonial hierarchy was originally based on race, racial qualifications that existed during colonization can no longer be determined in the same manner, and thus this hierarchy has morphed. This hierarchy still operates under coloniality which determines that indigenous populations are inferior to non-indigenous and utilizes terms and stigmatization used during colonialism. Thus the racially based system now becomes one of ethnicity.

Peruvian tourism furthers this coloniality. Using concepts such as Incanismo that praise the romanticized elite Inca class rather than support the contemporary Quechua communities, the tourism industry maintains this colonial hierarchy. Incanismo becomes a main draw for international tourists as seen through the main tourist attractions of the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo, and the Civic Parade and Inti Raymi festival. Now, the subcategory of spiritual tourism further feeds off of this concept of Incanismo, fueling an industry based on the “Sacred Inca.” While looking for a pan-indigenous spirituality on spiritual retreats and tours such as Willka T’ika and Mindful Retreats and visiting the spiritual hot-spot of Machu Picchu, spiritual tourists end up furthering this coloniality thereby becoming the elite class that signifies what it means to be Quechua.
While the Quechua maintain the lowest position within this colonial hierarchy through their signification under the spiritual tourism industry, they still have agency. Through rejecting spiritual tourism with silent protest, reclaiming the westernized term “shaman,” and maintaining identity regardless of pressure from the tourism industry, Quechua individuals demonstrate their reactions to and rejection of spiritual tourism’s cultural appropriation.
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