

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The Application of Mortuary Studies to  
Colonial Encounters in Peru

By

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August 2021

A paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Master of Arts degree in the Master of Arts Program in the Social  
Sciences

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## **Abstract**

This paper examines the archaeology of mortuary contexts in Colonial Peru (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries). In doing so, I demonstrate both the importance of mortuary analysis in studies of colonial contexts in this region as well as to see what can be learned about the active and fluctuating nature of religious and social interactions between early Spanish Catholic colonists and Indigenous Andean communities. My thesis comparatively analyzes three case studies of sites of intense early colonial conversion efforts, giving appropriate historic context to the variability in both Spanish and Indigenous agendas and the social and religious history of each region. I summarize existing, and apply new, mortuary studies to the research of each of these three case studies; the Collagua of the Colca Valley, the Muchik of the Lambayeque Valley, and the resettled groups at Magdalena de Cao in the Chicama Valley. In each of these three case studies, viewing the early interactions between Spanish and Indigenous groups through the lens of changing mortuary traditions and interactions with the dead yielded insights into the active negotiation of hybrid practices in these regions, which I argue is support for the need of further research in this field.

## **Introduction**

Mortuary studies have been an area of interest to anthropologists and archaeologists since the beginning of both disciplines, yet it only came into its own as a distinct methodology in the 20th century (Rakita and Buikstra 2005, Chapman 2003). Broadly defined, mortuary studies focus on the relationships between mortuary practices and their social contexts. This connection to broader social contexts has situated mortuary studies at a “nexus of anthropological interests”, which has yielded a plethora of interdisciplinary studies and mixed methods approaches focused on the subject (Rakita and Buikstra 2005, 1). Mortuary studies and the analysis of funerary ritual and material remains are applicable to a study of Colonial Era Peru for two reasons. First, the

efficacy of using mortuary studies as a tool through which to study hybridization and ethnogenesis has been demonstrated by scholars like Haagen Klaus and Alberta Zucchi, both of whom used changes in burial styles as a lens through which to study cultural change (Klaus 2013, Zucchi 1997). The resettlement programs implemented in the early years of Spanish Colonialism (which will be discussed later in this paper) resulted in an increase in the amount of interaction between distinct Andean groups, resulting in rapid cultural change and ethnogenesis, making mortuary studies an effective way to study these interactions. The second reason why mortuary studies is an effective paradigm through which to study the Colonial Era in Andean Peru has more to do with the role that death played in Andean communities. Scholars of Andean cultures have for years recognized that deceased ancestors played active roles in living societies, serving both as markers of cultural and familial identity and as active players in communities with continued societal roles (Kolata 2014). Recent interpretations of this relationship between the living and the dead in Andean communities have even included attempts at describing a personhood which bridges the ontological divide between living and dead (Velasco 2014, 455). This unique relationship between the living and the dead in Andean cultures makes mortuary studies, which focuses on the relationship between the dead and society, a useful paradigm with which to conduct a study of colonial interaction.

Formal studies of mortuary practices as a subdiscipline of anthropology began in the 1960s and 1970s, with scholars like Arthur Saxe and Lewis Binford attempting to draw broad connections between mortuary practices and social organization (Chapman 2003, 306). This school of thought which attempted to find and define broad descriptions of mortuary phenomena was a movement which is now known as 'processualism'. The processualism movement sparked debates in the academic community eventually culminating in the post-processualism movement

which was united by its “assertion that mortuary rituals are frequently utilized by the living to negotiate, display, mask, or transform actual power or social relations” (Rakita and Buikstra 2005, 7). The post-processual approach allowed for more variability and agency in the ways that the relations between treatment of the dead and social values were constructed, and defined mortuary sites as areas of active negotiation of cultural change, an approach which gives more agency to the people involved in these interactions (Rakita and Buikstra 2005, 7).

The post-processual approach to mortuary studies will be deployed in this paper as a method with which to study the way that power was negotiated in colonial mortuary spaces. In doing so, it will draw upon the methodologies of the subaltern studies movement in anthropology, which has also contributed to the growing body of research of Andean colonial interactions. The term ‘subaltern studies’ refers to the studies of people who were and/or are subordinated “in terms of class, caste, gender, race, language, and culture” (Prakash 1994, 1477). This broad collection of scholarly work, which has sought to reach and recover the voices of past peoples subjected to hegemonic power dynamics, has taken many different forms and utilized many different methods over the past decades. Scholars like Marisol de la Cadena, through her analyses of the relationships and ways of defining “historical” and “ahistorical” social elements, have sought to apply this academic focus specifically to studies of the people of the Andes (de la Cadena 2015). In the archaeology of the Colonial-Era Andes, this focus on the individual has spurred the examination and re-examination of colonial archaeological sites with a focus on the variability and active creation of each individual situation. It is my belief that mortuary studies are a useful tool with which to help fulfill this shared goal of subaltern studies. Using mortuary studies and a focus on the human body as a lens through which to examine the small-scale variability of colonial interactions will facilitate less ‘monolithic’ portrayals of Indigenous

communities, allowing for a version of history which gives some agency back to Indigenous peoples whose active presence in colonial encounters tends to be overlooked in historical study due to the biased nature of European chronicles and remaining textual sources.

This study will utilize the tool of mortuary studies to analyze the archaeological and historical remains of three sites of intense interaction between Spanish and Indigenous groups in the Peruvian Andes in the 16th and 17th centuries. A focus on interactions between Catholic and Indigenous elements in the location of burials, body positioning, burial shrouds/coffins, associated burial goods, and the continued interactions between the living and the dead, will help facilitate the current disciplinary goals of both historical archaeology and mortuary studies in Peru, uncovering a history of colonialism which shifts away from “acculturation models” towards one which emphasizes “dynamic power relations” and individual agency (Saucedo Segami and Ogata 2020, 4).

### **Mortuary Spaces: A Social and Religious Nexus**

In a colonial situation where Indigenous identities, histories, religions, and lifestyles were all in flux, treatment of the dead and the interaction with concepts surrounding death often sat at the center of the visible performance of identity and world-view. Treatments of the dead and concepts of the afterlife often inherently invoke aspects of religion, societal structure, accepted norms and morals, and historical tradition. In essence, a society’s interaction with its dead is “shaped by the social and political needs of the living” and as such, the human body and its context can be a mirror through which archaeologists and scholars can study these needs of the living (Klaus 2013, 209).

This is especially true in the context of early Indigenous Andean communities. Though burial styles and beliefs varied, the belief that the dead were still active players in living societies remained relatively constant throughout the pre-Hispanic Andes. In a 2014 study of pre-Hispanic Peruvian mortuary structures, Matthew Velasco writes that, “Far from passive observers or objects in the arena of post-mortem politics, human corpses, by virtue of their ideological charge and material immediacy, play a vital and active role in the structuring of social practice, memory, and reproduction” (Velasco 2014, 453). Many Andean communities, before the introduction of Christianity, maintained active relationships with deceased ancestors through offerings and group burials. Alan Kolata succinctly describes this relationship in his 2014 book *The Ancient Inca* where he elucidates that through continued interaction with the physical remains of ancestors, the living could ensure that “corporeal death” did not include “social death” (Kolata 2014, 159).

The physical remains of ancestors, in addition to continuing to contribute as active social members, were, for many Andean groups, also the proof of a community’s heritage and the foundation of visible group identity. One well-known example of this in Andean history is the Inca royal mummy cults. After an Inca king died, his body was meticulously preserved and he would continue to be served by his lords and immediate family members in the same ways that he was in life. In fact, deceased Inca kings maintained the fortune and status that they had amassed in life instead of passing it down to the heirs of the empire (Kolata 2014). The Inca mummies were often taken into public settings for festivals where they served both as a connection to the Inca pantheon as well as a visible claim of the deceased’s living descendants to a noble status. Though this is but one example in a greater practice of ancestor worship which was likely “broadly shared and of great antiquity in the Andean world”, it is a potent example of

the ways in which categories of ‘life’ and ‘death’ are so intertwined in the Andean world and how the bodies of the dead were used as ways to reinforce and reenact social status and social order (Kolata 2014, 158).

Not only was the treatment of the dead an active production of identity, it is also important to note that this was a very *visible* production of identity. As such, treatment of the dead and burial rituals were often contested in very public and visible ways during the Colonial Period as both the Spanish and Indigenous communities attempted to assert power. The Spanish colonial project was centered on attempting to ‘Christianize’ the native communities and the contestation over ‘proper’ treatment of the dead began early on in the Spanish colonial project. In colonial *reducciones*, forced Indigenous resettlements created by early Spanish ‘New World’ governments, Catholic priests and Spanish administrators attempted to control Indigenous populations by redefining the way that lived their lives and the spaces in which they lived them (VanValkenburgh 2017). One method of exerting this control was to move all Indigenous burials from associations with *huacas*<sup>1</sup>, a term used to describe a category of Andean sacred objects which included “a fixed point of the landscape, or any unusual or extraordinary object, place, or person”, into the physical space of local churches, the most visible and significant places in the Catholic religion (Kolata 2014, 269, VanValkenburgh 2017). Yet, as later examples will show, many Indigenous burial practices continued both within, and outside of, church walls.

In order to understand the unique interactions created between Spanish Christianity and Indigenous religion, it is first necessary to understand that neither of these ‘two’ religious beliefs could be considered homogenous. Early Spanish missionary enterprises in Peru were represented by several distinct Catholic orders of priests, then were followed by Spanish administrators, each

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<sup>1</sup> *Huaca* is also often spelled as *wak’a* (Kolata 2014).

of whom had their own agendas and their own ways of attempting to spread Catholicism in Peru. The Andean and Peruvian coastal regions, meanwhile, were made up of several distinct ethnic groups and polities each with their own traditions and practices (Kolata 2014, xiii). Spanish Catholicism and Andean belief systems and mortuary practices each nevertheless contain some identifiable diagnostic elements that are necessary to review in an analysis of how the two religions and sets of practices interacted.

Spanish-style, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Catholic burials contained several consistent motifs. Burial in “sanctified” ground was extremely important and was standard practice in Spanish Catholic burials from the Middle Ages until the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Klaus 2008, Franco et al 2018). Within this sanctified space, which usually included the church itself and the land immediately adjacent to it, there was a hierarchy of burial spaces. Burials nearest to the altar, inside the church itself, were often reserved for noblemen, members of religious orders, or others with high social status. On the other end of this spectrum, were the burials of those who died by suicide, unbaptized children and “baptized ‘pagans’” which were usually buried in associated graveyards or farther away from the altar (Klaus 2008, 530). Typical Catholic burials were extended, with the feet facing the altar, oriented on an east-west axis (Klaus 2008). This was a common practice in Catholicism and was based in the belief that when Jesus returned to the world, the east-facing burials would face the returning Christ in the east and be resurrected (Klaus 2008, 530).

Burial features shared by many Andean communities include an importance placed on orientation and/or proximity to the community’s primary *huaca*, burial goods and or continued offerings of food or trade tools, and continued interaction between the living and the dead (Klaus 2013). In addition, many Andean cultures used secondary burials and multiple internments to create a physical community ancestor within the mortuary structures.





**Figure 1:** Illustrations by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala depicting burial styles from each of the four Incan suyas (1615).

Guaman Poma de Ayala grew up in the Viceroyalty of Peru during the early years of Spanish governance. Descendent from Andean nobility Guaman Poma was provided a privileged education and served as a Quechua-Spanish translator before writing his 1615 chronicle, *El Primer Nueva Corona y Buen Gobierno*, which offered an interpretation of Andean history and a critique of the Spanish government's treatment of Indigenous people (Ballesteros). These images, found in the section titled, "The Chapter of Burials", show the variability in mortuary tradition across the Andes while also speaking to some consistent traits including multiple internments in one mortuary structure and continued interaction between the living and the dead. Guaman Poma's illustrations, which link specific burial practices to specific geographic regions, also show how burial style was a well-known indicator of ethnic identity.

It is important to note that while these are some diagnostic features of Spanish Catholic and Andean burials, that like everything else, they are subject to regional and chronological variation.

For each case study that I review in this paper, I will aim to summarize these variations in both

the Indigenous burial practices, as well as in the varying approaches which different Catholic orders undertook in order to Christianize these practices.

### **Case Studies of Colonial Religious Interaction**

In the remainder of this analysis, I will present three case studies to illustrate the variability in hybrid mortuary practices throughout Colonial Peru, and to see what can be learned when using mortuary spaces as a lens through which to study colonial cultural interaction. The three cases chosen for this analysis, the Collagua population of the Colca Valley, the Muchik people of the northern Lambayeque Valley, and the peoples of colonial El Brujo in the Chicama Valley, span a large region of coastal Peru and into the Andean foothills (Figure 2). Each of these three case studies are located in Peruvian river valleys, at sites of intense early Spanish conversion and ‘civilizing’ projects. The wide geographic and cultural range covered by these sites creates a diverse survey of situations with which to apply this methodology of studying peoples through mortuary studies. These three studies in particular were chosen due to the depth of research that has been done of archaeological sites dating to the Colonial Period. Though they were chosen with accessibility in mind, each one provides a unique set of circumstances which contribute to the broad survey of cultural interactions which I am attempting to craft.



Figure 2: Sites of Relevant Case Studies on Modern Map of Peru

Each of these regions, the Colca Valley, the Lambayeque Valley, and the Chicama Valley, would have been provincial to the Inca, and later Spanish, political cores. This liminal status provides interesting cases of studying hybrid interactions far from the eyes of the main driving forces of empire and Catholic conversion. For each of these studies, I provide historical context on the rituals and religions of the Indigenous groups in the region as this type of regional variability is a point often glossed over in favor of a pan-Andean or Inca-centric history.

It is also important to reiterate the variability in early approaches to Catholic conversion efforts in the Early Colonial Period. When the Spanish arrived in Peru in 1532, they were met by an expansive Inca state which, despite its power and the intense reorganization and economic

efforts, had attempted a type of “cultural unification” and “nation-building” among its subjects that was, at best, incomplete (Kolata 2013, 238). After only approximately 100 years in power, the core of the Inca state in Cuzco fell to Spanish forces in 1533 CE, with the last Inca king holding out resistance in Vilcabamba until he too was executed by the Spanish in 1572 CE (Kolata 2013).

During the early years of Spanish occupancy, many Catholic orders founded churches all over the former Inca empire. With little oversight or central governance, each mission church undertook conversion campaigns according to its own judgements, forming chapels in locations near to large Indigenous communities and displacing many major ethnic groups in order to better convert them to Christianity. This mosaic of religious interests changed drastically in 1569 CE, however, with the implementation of the Toledan Reforms. The Toledan Resettlement Program created hundreds of settlements called *reducciones*, which represented “on a miniature scale, the principal characteristics of Spanish colonial towns” (Scott 2004, 887). Spatial focus in these *reducciones* was centered on the Church in the hopes that a reconfigured landscape and the resettlement of Indigenous groups could ‘civilize’ them into moral and orderly Christians (Scott 2004). The following case studies will focus mainly on these *reducciones* and other early churches as sites of intense religious interaction, drawing attention to the variability in the ways that these interactions were negotiated.



## The Collaguas of Colca Valley: The Yuraqaqa Necropolis, the Malata Chapel, and Santa Cruz de Tuti



Figure 3: Map indicating the location of the sites mentioned in the Colca Valley case study and modern towns. Red highlighted area indicates geographic location of the section of the Colca Valley under study.

Beginning in the Late Intermediate Period (1000-1476 CE) and continuing through the Late Horizon (1476-1534 CE), the Colca Valley was home to two distinct ethnic polities; the Aymara-speaking Collaguas and the Quechua-speaking Cabanas (Velasco 2014, 456). As these two groups flourished in overlapping geographic areas, they developed methods of creating group identities which visibly and symbolically differentiated each one from the ‘other’. These methods of ethnogenesis included, among other elements, differentiations in burial styles and the location of mortuary structures, places where ethnic identity could be created and observed. The struggle for cultural distinction continued as Inca influence reached the valley in approximately

1450 CE. As Inca power in the region expanded and the Colca valley and its inhabitants were brought into more frequent contact with a large and expansive Incan trade network, the “social imperative to define one’s identity” likely grew, making visible ethnic distinctions like cranial modifications and burial structures more important to social identity (Velasco 2016, 264).

The Inca resettlement programs in the Colca Valley both redefined and exaggerated the ethnic and geographic boundaries between the Cabanas and the Collaguas. Recent archaeological studies suggest that while the Inca mapped their major administrative centers in the Colca Valley onto pre-existing settlements, they also resettled the existing populations into more centralized groups (Velasco 2016, Wernke 2007). In doing so, they would have advertently or inadvertently increased the rate of cultural exchange and therefore the importance of visible cultural and social identity markers.

This case study will focus primarily on the Collagua ethnic group and how they interacted first with the early Franciscan friars in the Colca Valley and later with the *reducción* mandates enacted by the Viceroyalty of Peru. The Colca Valley experienced several resettlement programs through Inca and Spanish occupations which makes it difficult to observe changes in mortuary traditions through just one site. Instead, the studies of three archaeological sites, dating to different chronological periods, will be used to create a timeline to follow the changes in Collagua burial practices. Though the focus is on mortuary practices in the Colonial Period, it is important to first begin by analyzing the ways in which the Collaguas treated and interacted with their dead before any Inca or Spanish elements were introduced and to discuss how these interactions with the dead and concepts of death were defining cultural features of the Collaguas.

This analysis begins with an overview of the Yuraqaqa Necropolis (Figure 3), which sits outside the modern town of Coporaque and was actively used throughout the Late Intermediate

Period and Late Horizon. An examination of this mortuary space, conducted by Frédéric Duchesne in 2005, allows several key elements of a Collagua burial to be identified. The type of mortuary structure typical to the Collagua (and greater Aymara-speaking peoples) is called a *chullpa*. *Chullpa*, originally an Aymara word, has been used in translation to refer to a wide range of styles of burial towers (Duchesne 418). However, a Collagua *chullpa*, unlike many highland Aymara *chullpas*, was not a man-made tower. Rather, the *chullpas* in the Colca Valley were structures built directly into the landscape. In the Yuraqaqa necropolis, the *chullpas* took advantage of the naturally-formed indentations and caves in the mountains bordering modern Coporoque, and built outward with mortar-covered stones (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Entrance to a Tomb in the Yuraqaqa Necropolis (Duchesne 2005, 414).

Though many of the tombs in Duchesne's study were looted or in other ways compromised, he was able to recreate a hypothetical reconstruction of an undisturbed tomb using references to more nearby intact sites and combining evidence found across the Yuraqqa tombs. According to Duchesne, a typical tomb in the Yuraqqa Necropolis was comprised of sealed group burials where individuals were seated in a flexed position, wrapped in textiles, and arranged in a circle around a stone center which was likely used as a space for offerings from living relatives (Duchesne 2005). This arrangement created a space for the continued and ongoing interaction between the living and the dead, strengthening ethnic identity as people interacted with their shared ancestors in a public space. It is important also to mention the orientation of the openings of the *chullpas* at Yuraqqa. East-facing, the *chullpas* would open towards Huarancate, an important *huaca* in this region, further establishing an active connection between the living, the dead, the land, and the ancestors long past (Duchesne 2005, 414).

This arrangement of a burial space is not solely restricted to the Collagua people, and similar arrangements have been described in other parts of the Andes. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a European traveler using the name Marcoy chronicled his travels through Peru. While travelling from Arequipa to Lampa, Marcoy encountered a mostly undisturbed Aymara tomb, which contained a group burial similar to the one described by Duchesne (Figure 5).





Figure 5: Sketch of an Aymara Chullpa (Marcoy 1873).

According to Marcoy, this type of burial was considered to be an ethnic marker of the Aymara and Aymara-descendent people. This similarity in burial structures between several Aymara-speaking polities speaks to a greater link between mortuary spaces and a performance of ethnic identity.

As Inca influence spread in the Colca valley, eventually leading to complete incorporation of both the Collagua and Cabana peoples into the Inca imperial structure, the general structure of Collagua burials appears to have remained the same. Yuraqaqa remained in use throughout the Inca occupation, with the only changes in the archaeological record being an increase in Collagua-Inca hybrid style ceramics and an increase in the traditional Collagua cranial modification (Velasco 2016). The reasons for these changes are unknown but Velasco

hypothesizes that the use of Incan objects and the cranial modification may have conferred a type of privilege status upon individuals, which would spare them from some of the Inca state's more extreme methods of social reorganization (Velasco 2016).

This was the system which the Spanish encountered in their first forays into the Colca Valley. The Colca Valley, which was important to the Inca state because of its agricultural resources, quickly drew Spanish attention and was one of the earliest sites occupied by Franciscan missionaries in the Peruvian highlands (Wernke 2007, Wernke 2014). The Franciscans' approach for evangelization in the region was to build their churches on sites which were previously centers of Inca power in the region (Wernke 2007). In this way, they tried to place symbols of the Catholic faith as a visual replacement for the power that the Inca empire had once held in this region.

From these new centers of Catholicism, early priests and friars began a campaign to convert and 'civilize' local populations. Part of this Catholic conversion process was the extirpation of any local practices seen as 'idoltrous'. An early memoir from a Franciscan priest recounts how Fray Juan de Monzón, one of the local leaders of the Franciscan order, undertook the public destruction of "a haul of ancestral mummies and other idols" from the Colca Valley (Wernke 2007, 160). It is of little surprise next to accounts like this, that the Yuraqqa Necropolis shows no evidence of being used past the period of Inca occupation. Similarly, in several other regional pre-hispanic *chullpas* in the Colca Valley, the ceramic record is "abruptly truncated at the colonial interface" as they quickly fell into relative disuse (Wernke 2007). However, this does not mean that the Spanish presence eliminated Indigenous burial practices. Instead, the burial record seems to reappear in a different setting, which I will discuss next.

Malata was a short-lived religious settlement founded by Franciscan missionaries and was likely abandoned during the later Toledan reforms. It was excavated by Steven Wernke as part of a survey for a study on landscape use in the Colonial Period. Sometimes called *doctrinas*, early colonial sites like Malata were Catholic churches built in centers of Andean power, in order to serve as sites to promote the religious conversion of Indigenous groups (Wernke 2007, 161). The importance of a ‘proper’, Christian burial was among the many beliefs which the Spanish Franciscan missionaries were trying to relay to and force upon the Collaguas. Missionary churches like the doctrina-era Franciscan church at Malata, appeared to quickly become the new standard site for Indigenous burials. Wernke identified 18 burials in the Malata Chapel complex, which likely held a congregation of about 40-60 individuals during its active years. While not much is known about these burials, Wernke does mention that their “positions, orientations, and associated artifacts clearly point to a mortuary complex that synthesizes Catholic and Andean practices” (Wernke 2014, 184). Analysis of these burials was outside the field of Wernke’s study which was primarily focused on landscape and settlement changes. However, a few important things can be inferred from his cursory overview. First, that some elements of Indigenous burial styles survived the move into a Catholic religious space. And second, that for a congregation of 40-60 people, 18 burials was likely a significant portion of the population living in Malata, which supports the theory that many Indigenous burials were now taking place in churches.

However, the interaction between Catholic and Collagua practices can be seen much more clearly at the site of Santa Cruz de Tuti, a *reducción* at the site of contemporary Mawchu Llacta. Santa Cruz de Tuti (Figure 4), was a *reducción* church positioned slightly upriver from the earlier Malata site. Early excavation efforts in this church uncovered 21 juvenile burials from

the sacristy (Deitler et al. 2017).<sup>2</sup> Here, like Malata, many burials appear to have moved from traditional burial spaces around the Colca Valley into the symbolic space of the Church. However, it is worth noting that these 21 juvenile burials were placed within the sacristy of the church, not under the floor of the chapel itself, as was seen in the Malata site. The sacristy, in both 16<sup>th</sup> century and modern-day Catholic churches is a chamber adjacent to the main sector of the church where priests prepare for mass and store religious vestments. This “liminal” space for burial, a place both within, and yet separate from, the main church, is possibly a reflection of the “liminal” status of juveniles not yet being full members of the community (Deitler et al. 2017). This suggests that in the blending of traditions happening at Santa Cruz de Tuti, social status and religious standing may have been in some way related. In addition, Deitler et al hypothesized that the Franciscan priests at Santa Cruz de Tuti may have pushed to have children buried within the space of the church so as to bring their families into involvement with the church by proximity. This would suggest that the Catholic priests were both aware of, and exploiting, the importance of continued interaction with the dead in Collagua culture. They were expecting that the repeated trips that living family members would take to visit the mortuary space would strengthen their ties to the church.

Yet, while the Catholic priests may have succeeded in moving at least some portion of juvenile burials into the church, the archaeological record suggests that many Indigenous practices continued within this Catholic space. Most of the sacristy burials at Santa Cruz de Tuti had nearby deposits of red ochre and carbon, likely suggesting either a treatment done to the bones prior to burial or some type of burnt offerings given during the burial itself. The two most well-preserved burials were interred in a flexed position, and all of the burials were oriented

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<sup>2</sup> In this study, the term “juvenile” was used to describe the remains of individuals estimated to be below 10 years of age at the time of death.

along different axes, suggesting that the typical Catholic blueprint of extended altar-facing burials was not being followed.

### **Discussion of Colca Valley Studies**

Excavations at the Yuraqaqa Necropolis, the Malata Chapel, and Santa Cruz de Tuti provide a timeline of cultural change spanning from the Late Intermediate Period until the era of Toledan Reforms. Sites of well-preserved burial practices like Yuraqaqa offer a foundation for studying pre-Hispanic Collagua burial ritual and for establishing the importance for these rituals in the continued and active formation of ethnic and community identity under Inca occupation. The discontinuation of the archaeological record at Yuraqaqa and several other pre-Hispanic burial sites and the simultaneous increase of church burials in the Colca Valley suggest that during early doctrina-era Franciscan Catholic missions, many Indigenous burials were moved into the ‘sacred’ spaces of the Church.<sup>3</sup> The movement of burials into Catholic-controlled spaces appears to have been one of the primary foci of these early priests. Yet it appears that many (if not most) Indigenous burial practices continued within these primarily Catholic spaces. It is possible that church burials were so important to these early missionaries that other Catholic practices were compromised to ensure that they happened. In a 2017 presentation, Deitler et al. hypothesize that “... it is possible that priests were making allowances concerning mortuary ritual, encouraging participation in the ritual from local people and allowing supposedly ‘pagan’ rites to occur in order to draw more people into the church” (Deitler et al. 2017).

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<sup>3</sup> It is important here again to note that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. In this case, I do not mean to imply that apparent discontinuation of sites like Yuraqaqa means that all Collagua burials were moved into church spaces, rather I mean to identify a trend that many of these burials were occurring within church grounds in the early years of the doctrina-era missions.

Though further studies will be needed to better understand the specifics of this region, this evidence shows that while many traditional Collagua burial locations were abandoned, some Collagua funerary preparations continued in the most visible space of the Catholic movement, the church. Whether this was tacitly allowed to happen by the Franciscan friars in Malata or it was done secretly by members of the Collagua people remains to be seen.

In addition, both of the Catholic structures in this section, the Malata chapel and Santa Cruz de Tuti, were built upon the foundations of Inca or earlier structures. It is possible that one of the reasons that the change in Indigenous burial locations was accepted by the local communities is because it still allowed them to be in their own sacred spaces, and allowed for the continued orientations toward *huacas*. Alternatively, it cannot be discounted that some members of the Collagua community were legitimately accepting the teaching of the Church and understood the importance of a church burial in a similar way to the Franciscan friars themselves. Future study in this area would be needed to attempt to identify the intricacies of this complex interaction.

## Lambayeque Valley: San Pedro de Mórrope

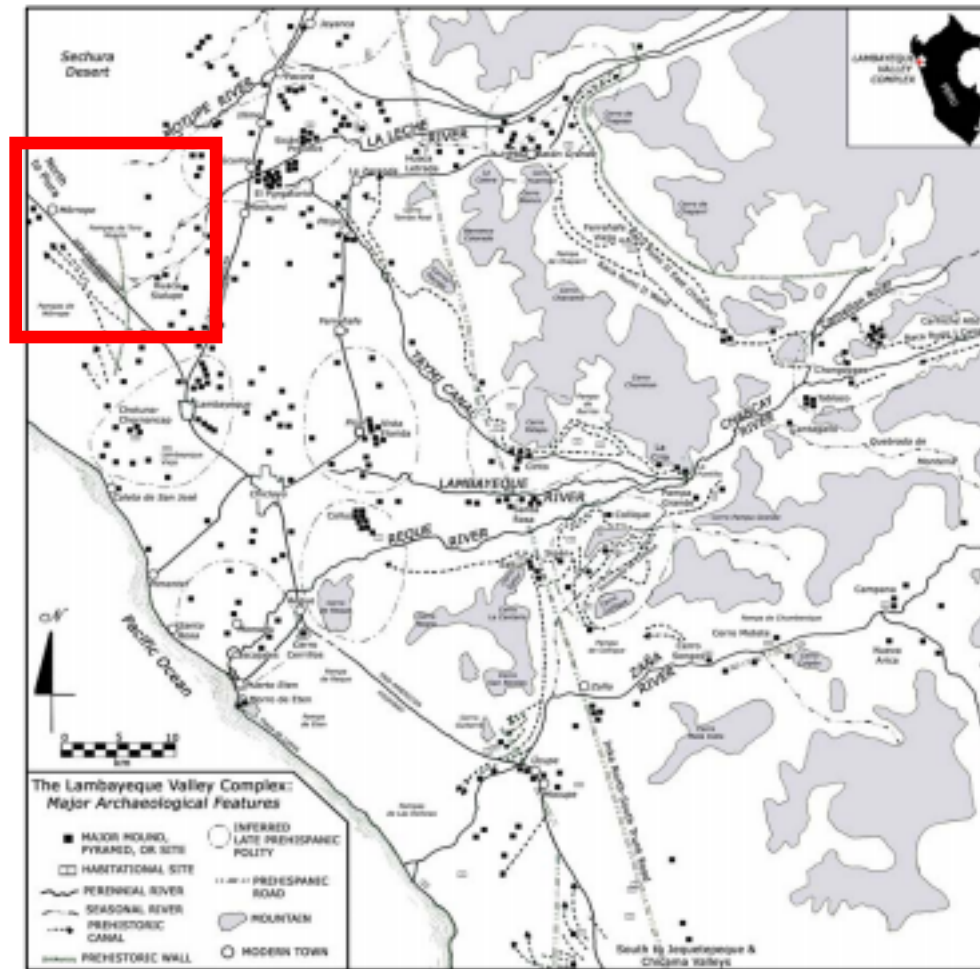


Figure 6: Map of the Lambayeque Valley Complex. Taken from Klaus 2008. Red highlight added to indicate the site relevant to this study, the *reducción* of Mórrope (Klaus 2008, 89).

The Northern valley of Lambayeque has a much different history than that of the Colca Valley. As a “center of independent and influential pre-Hispanic culture for over three millennia”, the culture of this valley contains a mix of influences from several distinct prominent polities from all parts of the Andes. Two influential polities which had strongholds in the Lambayeque Valley are the Moche archaeological culture (100 – 750 CE) and the Sicán archaeological culture (900-1100 CE) also known as the Lambayeque archaeological culture. This case study will focus on one specific ethnic group in the Lambayeque Valley, the Muchik.

It is believed that the Muchik peoples of the Lambayeque valley were descendent, in part, from the Moche culture, combining typical Moche elements with aspects of previous dominant cultures such as the Cupisnique, Salinar, and Gallinao, in order to create the ethnogenesis of a completely unique community. Throughout the Lambayeque culture's influence and onward, the Muchik ethnic identity is expressed in the archaeological record, in part through a "highly conservative mortuary pattern grammar" (Klaus 2013, 212). These elements of a Muchik (or Mochica) burial include the creation of "formal disposal areas", burials oriented northward, and grave goods including ceramic bottles, copper items, and camelid offerings (Klaus 2013, 212).

It is important in a study of colonial interaction between Spanish and Muchik burial elements to understand these diagnostic elements of earlier Muchik burials. The active ethnogenesis of this community in a valley whose cultural influences were constantly changing was likely expressed in the way the dead were interacted with by the living. In fact, Klaus recognizes this in the beginning of his study of San Pedro de Mórrope, saying that, "Participation in these ritual practices that included deeply entrenched regional beliefs about death, the dead, and ancestors was a powerful exercise to propagate, practice, conceptualize, and communicate Muchik group identity" (Klaus 2013, 212-3).

The colonial town of Mórrope was established in 1536, and was the site of a *reducción* from the 1560s until it was abandoned in the early half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Klaus 2008). The church, San Pedro de Mórrope, appears to be one of the earliest "Catholic outposts" in the Lambayeque Valley (Klaus 2008, 336). The study of San Pedro de Mórrope offers unique insight into the architecture of early churches which was not necessarily seen in the studies of the Malata Chapel or Santa Cruz de Tuti. A brief discussion of this architecture can be useful in the context of this analysis, especially if the church is analyzed as a type of mortuary structure itself. In this case,



San Pedro de Mórrope provides a unique opportunity to study the mix of Andean and Spanish Catholic symbols in this place of worship; showing more dynamic interaction and negotiation between these two systems. The first element of note is the altar of the church which is shaped like a stepped-pyramid, an “ubiquitous element of pre-Hispanic north coast art” (Klaus 2008, 221). Next, the orientation of the church itself deviates from the Catholic/European norm. Unlike the typical east-west orientation of medieval Catholic churches, San Pedro de Mórrope is oriented to the North, and so are its burials. This is significant because north-south burials were typical for Indigenous burials in the Lambayeque Valley, possibly dating back as far as 1500BCE (Klaus 2008, 222).



*Figure 7: Stepped Pyramid Altar in San Pedro de Mórrope (Klaus 2013, 222).*

The San Pedro burials are located under the chapel floor, much like those in the Malata Chapel. Here again, the archaeological record shows a variety of different burial styles and orientations. People were interred in either cotton shrouds, as would be typical for a pre-Hispanic Lambayeque burial, or in Spanish-style coffins, in almost equal proportions. Of the 263 excavated inhumations, 124 were interred in wooden coffins, while the remaining 139 were wrapped in textiles with Indigenous-style decoration.

While the styles of burials appeared to continue in mixed formats, a unique feature of San Pedro de Mórrope as compared to the earlier examples in this thesis is the lack of Indigenous grave goods at the site. Beyond the Indigenous burial shrouds, it appears that, “Pre-Hispanic traditions involving offerings of ceramic vessels, metal objects, and llama remains were terminated” and many of the dead were dressed in European clothing prior to internment (Klaus 2008, 222). The only regularly occurring burial goods at San Pedro were flowers and the occasional red-dyed textile placed over the face of the deceased, which may be a reference to an earlier Muchik tradition of painting the faces of the dead with red ochre (Klaus 2008).

Klaus and his team observed that nearly half of the burials at San Pedro de Mórrope were intentionally altered after initial internment. In addition, the complete removal of bones after internment was observed in 92 contexts (28.6%). Of these 92 cases, 34 burials were disturbed by the placement of a later internment on top of, or directly adjacent to the first, 14 cases were identified as “intentional” alteration of the burials by removing bones, and 3 cases showed evidence of full exhumation of a body (Klaus 2013).

The lack of locally traditional mortuary goods and the adoption of Spanish burial spaces, albeit with Andean symbolic elements would suggest that Catholicism was to some extent, locally accepted by the time San Pedro de Mórrope had reached its height. Yet, the removal and alteration of the Indigenous burials below the church tell a different story. Continuous occupation in the town of Mórrope starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and extending into the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century and the large sample of burials beneath the church allowed Klaus and his team to form a rough timeline of how mortuary practices in Mórrope changed throughout the Colonial Period. Klaus proposed a two-stage ethnogenesis, splitting the timeline of the town of Mórrope into an Early/Middle Colonial Era and a Middle/Late Colonial Era. The Early/Middle Colonial era was

defined by more typically Catholic burials. Though the architectural hybridity of San Pedro and some Indigenous elements (such as North-South burials) occur in this early period, these Indigenous elements are much rarer than we will see in the Middle/Late Colonial era. In addition, bioarcheological analysis conducted on several sets of remains from San Pedro show the early consolidation of distinct Muchik groups to form one greater Muchik identity. This was identified through the lack of spatial relationships between the burials of related individuals. Klaus' hypothesis was that families no longer being buried in distinctive units was indicative of a breakdown in the social barriers which separated distinct family groups within Muchik society. The breakdown in family grouping was interpreted as a greater Muchik identity forming in the face of European opposition (Klaus 2013). The Middle/Late Period of Klaus' timeline is categorized by an increase in hybrid mortuary rituals, what Klaus identified as a resurgence of 1,500-year-old Muchik mortuary behaviors" (Klaus 2013, 227).

### **Discussion of Mórrope**

San Pedro de Mórrope offers insight into the religious interfacing in the Lambayeque Valley. Like the Colca Valley, persisting Indigenous religious practices and some elements of Spanish influence coexist in Mórrope. Yet the Lambayeque Valley and the Colca Valley studies demonstrate differences in how these Indigenous and European elements interpenetrated and interacted. While the Colca Valley *reducción* church at Santa Cruz de Tuti showed typically Indigenous burials on Catholic premises, San Pedro's burials appear to have adhered more to Catholic doctrine, especially in earlier years, with Indigenous alterations occurring later in the form of the removal of bones.

The Spanish friars who controlled San Pedro de Mórrope would have attempted to control the style and location of the burial as they did many other parts of the lives of the Indigenous peoples. This appears to have been mostly successful, however, Indigenous elements still appear in the style of these burials, translated into a language that may have been more ‘acceptable’ to the Spanish; red textiles were used instead of traditional red ochre and many of the burials faced the stepped-pyramid altar, an Andean symbol in a Catholic context. All of these seem to show some public acquiescence to a forceful Catholic regime.

However, the continued removal of bones suggests that something else was going on. It is unknown what happened to the disturbed remains after their disinterment from the church floor. Were they taken to local *huacas*? Were they removed as an act of active resistance against the Spanish? Were they interacted with the same way that the Muchik interacted with their ancestors for centuries, following this resurgence of pre-Hispanic Muchik mortuary rituals? Mórrope clearly emphasizes the active and dynamic nature of religious interaction and ethnogenesis. This is a situation where hybrid situations (Indigenous-style burials in Catholic church) occur alongside active resistance to a hegemonic power (removal of bones) and where the nature of dynamic interchange can be observed over time as it was continuously renegotiated.

## El Brujo: Magdalena de Cao



Figure 8: Map of Chicama River Valley showing colonial towns and the site of Magdalena de Cao created by Jeffery Quilter (Quilter 2020, 6).

The last case study centers on the Church of Santa María de Magdalena de Cao.

Magdalena de Cao is a *reducción town* located in the Chicama Valley on a coastal terrace called El Brujo. The Chicama Valley had been continuously occupied since the late Pleistocene Era and was a stronghold for several prominent archaeological cultures throughout the past millennia. Each culture that influenced the region brought with it new artistic and social traditions, creating a myriad of burial traditions and a culture unique among all of those in the Andes. While not much study has been done on the burial traditions immediately leading up to Spanish arrival in the Chicama Valley, the typical burial styles of the preceding influential cultures have been well documented. In order to better understand the cultural dynamics leading into the era of Spanish involvement, I will briefly recount some of the diagnostic styles of these earlier influential cultures.

The Moche archaeological culture began its rise to power in 100 BCE in the Moche and Chicama Valleys. El Brujo's location in the Chicama River valley put it squarely into the most influential geographic area of the Moche culture. While the nature of Moche influence is

debated, it is clear that they had a strong effect of the art and architecture of the regions under their influence. During the height of Moche power, two Moche-style pyramids were built on El Brujo, Huaca Cao Viejo and Huaca El Brujo (also known as Huaca Cortada), leaving “one of the strongest marks on the landscape” (Quilter 2020, 11). Many typical Moche-style burials were excavated from Huaca Cao Viejo, in the form of chambers containing group burials, where the bodies were interred in an extended and supine position. Many Moche burials contained grave goods of various quantities and worth, suggesting that social stratification in life contributed to the form of burial (Titelbaum 2012, 76). In addition, many burials across all of the Moche-influenced regions, including the Chicama Valley, showed evidence of delayed internment and postmortem manipulation (Titelbaum 2012, 76-77).

The Moche culture’s reign of influence in the Andes began to wane in the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE. The reason for the transition of power is not well understood, however, its sphere of influence was replaced in the El Brujo Complex by the Lambayeque archaeological culture in approximately 950 CE (Titelbaum 2012, 86). The Lambayeque archaeological culture rose to power in the La Leche and Lambayeque River Valleys. In terms of burial rituals, the Lambayeque culture brought very different traditions than the Moche to the El Brujo terrace. Where Moche burials are diagnostically identified by extended burials in funerary chambers, the Lambayeque style is typically identified by flexed, textile-wrapped, northern-oriented burials in circular pits (Titelbaum 2012, 88). In addition, Lambayeque style burials in El Brujo are well known for large quantities of burial goods including the remains of llamas and guinea pigs, copper, gourds, artifacts made of wood and bone, spondylus shells, semiprecious stones, and ceramics. Like the Moche, the Lambayeque utilized Huaca Cao Viejo as a mortuary structure, creating a cemetery adjacent to the earlier Moche burials (Titelbaum 2012, 88-9).

When the Lambayeque culture began to decline in the 14th century CE, it was followed by a brief period of political turmoil, and eventually replaced by the Chimú kingdom in 1430 CE. More is known about the Chimú (or the Kingdom of Chimor) than the earlier Moche and Lambayeque cultures. The Kingdom of Chimor was a politically-centralized expanding state which began its rise to power in the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE. Chimú influence at El Brujo is visible through the creation of a new sector of burials in the north-eastern corner of Huaca Cao Viejo containing significant amounts of Chimú and later Chimú-Inca style ceramics (Titelbaum 2012, 89). Autonomous Chimú rule of the area only lasted about 30-40 years before being forcibly incorporated into the expanding Inca empire. This rapid interchange of cultural elements for the 700 years prior to Spanish arrival made the Chicama Valley a landscape of extremely variable cultural traditions. As such, El Brujo terrace provides a case study of colonial interaction between Dominican Catholic priests and a blend of Indigenous cultures which is completely unique throughout the Andes.

In 1578, the town of Santa María de Magdalena de Cao was reestablished by Dominican Order priests after a major El Niño event. People from all over the Chicama Valley (and from even farther according to some accounts) were forcibly resettled at Magdalena de Cao. In the center of the new town, in typical Spanish *reducción* style, a Dominican church was founded in the old Moche plaza about 70m north of the prominent Huaca Cao Viejo (Titelbaum 2012, 90). The town of Magdalena de Cao is an archaeological site that has been studied in depth in recent years due to the work of Jeffery Quilter and his archaeological team at the site (Quilter 2020).

Twenty-eight burials were excavated from the chapel complex of Magdalena de Cao; 23 from the floor of the nave<sup>4</sup> of the church and five from the adjacent church cemetery. I will

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<sup>4</sup> The nave of the church is the main room of the church built to hold mass and the congregation.

address the nave burials first as the five cemetery burials different significantly, both from the nave burials and from each other. The twenty-three burials excavated from under the floor of the church were identified as members of Indigenous populations using craniometric analyses. Compared to the adjacent cemetery burials, these extended church burials were interpreted by the archaeological team to be “Indigenous people who had converted to Catholicism. They likely were town leaders who were accorded the honor of burial in the nave of the church because of the pious works they had carried out on behalf of the community” (Quilter and Jordán 2020, 57). The theory that these individuals were of high status in the community arose from skeletal analyses which showed a low lifetime workload and low incidence of degenerative bone disease, indicating a lifestyle free of hard labor. This hypothesis, if true, would be evidence of a direct link between religious identification and social status in the community.

The orientation of these church burials was north-facing, with feet towards the altar *and* in line with Huaca Cao Viejo. Whether this orientation was standard in order to face and honor the *huaca*, or the Catholic altar is unclear. It is also possible that the church itself was oriented facing the summit of the *huaca* in order to create an analogous orientation to further promotion acceptance of Catholicism. Gaither, Murphy, and their team interpreted the orientation to the altar of the burials along with their extended positions as evidence that these individuals were “buried as Catholics” (Gaither and Murphy 2020, 111). However, whether this conversion to Catholicism was forced, willingly accepted, or a combination of both remains to be seen.

In further compliance with Catholic tradition, the church burials show little to no evidence of graves goods, unlike the earlier Moche and Lambayeque burial patterns. However, this does not mean that the style of burials in the church of Magdalena de Cao were fully Catholic. Looting practices around Magdalena de Cao make it difficult to discern burial rituals



yet certain elements can be observed from the excavated remains. Though the burials were in extended positions, they were wrapped in Indigenous-style textiles unlike the European-style wooden coffins found at San Pedro de Mórrope. In addition, analysis of insect puparia on the excavated burials shows evidence of a two-week period between death and interment (Gaither and Murphy 2020, 127). This is analogous to the earlier Moche traditions of delayed internments described in this section. Some evidence of missing skeletal elements from the church burials could also support the theory that reinternments outside of the church were occurring at Magdalena de Cao. The research team at Magdalena de Cao hypothesized that “the pattern seen at Magdalena de Cao Viejo could represent a local conciliation to native traditions, perhaps in exchange for general compliance with Catholic decrees, specifically those against using the huaca as a burial ground” (Gaither and Murphy 128).

The graveyard adjacent to the church is an interesting component not seen in the other studies discussed in this thesis. The most intact of the cemetery burials were those of a woman and infant buried together in the “native style” (Quilter 2020, 55). These two individuals were flexed, laid on their side, and wrapped in painted textiles, in a similar fashion to the Lambayeque burials of an earlier period. Interred with these individuals were a small bag of twine and other objects used for working textiles. This burial lay directly adjacent to the wall of the church. Though these two individuals were laid in flexed positions, all other identified interments from the cemetery were extended like the burials in the church itself and all appear to be wrapped in painted cotton textiles.

Another interesting point to note is that all four infant burials found at Magdalena de Cao Viejo were discovered in the cemetery not within the church itself. It is possible that this reflects a liminal societal status much like was seen in the study at Santa Cruz de Tuti. Though the

juvenile burials at Santa Cruz de Tuti were found inside the physical structure of their church, their position under the sacristy, instead of under the nave of the church, facing the altar, shows some deviance from the 'ideal' Catholic burial. Similarly, the infant burials at Magdalena de Cao were all in the church cemetery, an area adjacent to the main church. This may be an example of the Catholic tradition of burying unbaptized babies outside of, yet near, the physical church. Conversely, could be an indication that these individuals had yet to reach some other ascribed status in the community which would afford them a burial closer to the altar.

### **Discussion of Magdalena de Cao**

In the conclusion of the analysis of mortuary remains at Magdalena de Cao done by Gaiter and Murphy, they describe the community as having “culturally blended funerary traditions” (Gaiter and Murphy 125). However, in breaking down the specifics of this site and comparing them to the other case studies in the paper, more details and intricacies begin to arise. First to note, is the theory of one’s social status in the community being inherently associated with their religious status in the church. Quilter, Gaiter, and Murphy proposed two different theories for the low incidence of skeletal stress in the remains excavated from the main sector of the church. First, that the individuals buried in the church were of a high status and as such, did less physically taxing work in life. The second theory is that the individuals buried in the church were representative of the Magdalena de Cao Indigenous community as a whole, which collectively had more effective biological adaptations to stress overall (Gaiter and Murphy 132). While the second theory cannot be discounted without further study of the community members not buried in the church, I believe that it is significantly less likely than the first theory. Studies of biological stress done at other forced resettlement *reducciones* show evidence reduced skeletal

health as a community (Klaus 2013). I find it very likely that Magdalena de Cao, which was home to forcibly resettled people from all over the Chicama Valley would also follow this pattern of decreased skeletal health. If the community's high-status individuals were buried in the church nave, which typically required at the very least, a Catholic Baptism, it can be hypothesized that baptized individuals or individuals in some way involved with the Catholic church were more likely to have higher status positions and lower stress lifestyles than others. The link between social status and the position of burials within the Church is also supported by the lack of infant burials within the walls of the Church, which implies a purposeful patterning of certain types of burials, though further study is needed to support this conclusion.

The comparison of burial styles between the church nave and the adjacent cemetery also yield interesting patterns. While the burials within the church appear to comply with the archetype of Catholic burial, there is much more variability in the cemetery. Varying orientations and positions of the bodies, as well as evidence of the removal of bones and delayed interment in the cemetery may indicate less Spanish oversight of the burials in this location. However, while the burials in the nave adhered more closely to Catholic mandate, they also show evidence of purposely removed bones and delayed interment, possibly evidence of a local custom of ritual disinterment, which the Spanish officials likely knew about (Gaither and Murphy 2020, 114-127). That every set of analyzable remains at Magdalena de Cao showed evidence of delayed interment regardless of their position within, or outside of, the church, and regardless of the apparent Indigenous or Catholic style of the burial, may indicate that a locally accepted blend of Indigenous and Catholic mortuary practices that was adopted in Magdalena de Cao.

Magdalena de Cao also provides another interesting example of the Catholic church attempting to draw analogies between Catholic and Indigenous religious spaces by building upon

the *huacas* of past civilizations whose cultures still had tangible effects on the Chicama Valley. By choosing sites like El Brujo on which to build Catholic churches, the Spanish were trying to connect the most visible parts of Spanish religion and culture with the remnants of the Andeans' recent past.

## **Analysis of Case Studies**

Reviewing the cases of the Colca Valley, Lambayeque Valley, and El Brujo in comparison allows one to see several overarching similarities as well as a myriad of variable differences between each. While an overarching summary of these sites might conclude that all three case studies show major themes of the blending of funerary traditions, I am more interested in what makes these cases different, the intricacies of colonial situations which a focus on mortuary studies allows access to.

One example of a shared theme across all three case studies is in the transition to church burials early in the Colonial Period. In all three case studies, Indigenous burials were mandated, coerced, and/or convinced to be on church grounds. Yet, there are differences in the way that the move to church burials were practically carried out in each site. In the Colca Valley, there is evidence of the relatively complete discontinuation of use in traditional burial sites like Yuraqaqa in favor of church burials at sites like Malata and Santa Cruz de Tuti (Wernke 2007, Duchesne 2005). While San Pedro de Mórrope and Magdalena de Cao show evidence of continued purposefully disinterment of bones or entire bodies from the church, which were then presumably moved elsewhere by Indigenous members of the community (Klaus 2008, Gaither and Murphy 2020). In addition, the organization of church burials was not the same across all three case studies. The sacristy burials of juveniles at Santa Cruz de Tuti suggests that social

status affected the type of burial one received in the Church; the liminal social status of juveniles in the colonial Collagua society may have been reflected in the liminal space of the sacristy in the greater church compound. Similarly, burial within the church at Magdalena de Cao appears to have been reserved for members of the town with a higher socio-economic statuses, while lower class individuals could only afford burials in the nearby cemetery (Murphy and Gaither 2020, 128).

The churches and religious officials in all three studies also sought to create analogies between the physical churches and earlier forms of Indigenous power, but the purposeful placement and architecture of the churches differed from case to case. The Malata Chapel in the Colca Valley was built on a site of local and Inka empirical power, drawing on the symbolism of the still-influential empire to establish its own power. The church of San Pedro de Mórrope used Indigenous symbols in the architecture of the church, drawing analogies between the religious symbolism of the stepped-pyramid with the Catholic altar. Magdalena de Cao is built on top of previous Moche structures, the church placed directly on top of the original Moche adobe brick and in orientation with Huaca Cao Viejo, one of the oldest and most important *huacas* in the region. All of these examples show different ways in which Spanish officials attempted to negotiate Catholic elements with Indigenous understandings of power and religion. In drawing these analogies between Christianity and Indigenous religions, the Church attempted to bring people further into the Christian faith.

Another broad theme of Indigenous practice in the Colonial Period which was subject to local variability in these examples is in the ways that interactions were continued between living and deceased members of Indigenous communities. In spaces like Santa Cruz de Tuti in the Colca Valley, the living-dead interaction appears to have been co-opted by local Catholic

authorities, who, understanding the materiality of the deceased's remains in this interaction, likely insisted on the burying of juveniles in the church sacristy in order to bring their visiting living relatives into closer contact with the Church (Deitler et al 2017). At sites such as San Pedro de Mórrope, this interaction is represented in the archaeological record through the post-internment removal and manipulation of Indigenous remains. At Magdalena de Cao and the Malata Chapel, Indigenous burial goods were discovered throughout Magdalena de Cao representing a continuing idea and practice of the dead requiring goods even after death.

Though I am attempting to move away from a heuristic binary of hybridity versus Indigenous resistance in this study, these case studies provide evidence of the subversion of Spanish religious mandates on burials by local individuals, groups, or whole communities. These deserve mention in this analysis, though it is important not to assume group complicity in these acts and to remember that individuals all responded differently in these colonial situations.

The high frequency of the removal of bones at San Pedro de Mórrope is one example of this Indigenous resistance in opposition to the Catholic regime. Yet even in comparison to this high frequency of post-internment manipulation, there were many burials which were intact and undisturbed, which is likely evidence of varying attitudes toward the church burials within the Muchik community. In addition, secondary burials at this site and the postponing of initial burials are further evidence to the continuing existence of burials practices that ran in direct opposition to Catholic mandate. The ability and/or attempt to account for individual or small-scale agency is one of the major benefits to a micro-scale and comparative analysis like the one that I have attempted to undertake in this paper.

However, even in a detailed analysis like this one, identifying the intention behind individual action remains one of the central difficulties in historical analysis. In this analysis, I

have identified the interpenetration of Catholic and Indigenous religions as evidenced in burial practices. However, while I was able to identify Indigenous mortuary and/or religious elements which persisted throughout the Colonial Period, I cannot comment conclusively on *why* certain elements survived over others, and why some Catholic and Andean mortuary elements were more prone to blending or renegotiation. Were the elements that persisted the ones that were most important to a society? Were the elements prone to renegotiation in Indigenous practices those which had analogous components in the Catholic religion? And vice versa? These may remain unanswerable questions, yet micro-level studies of mortuary practices like this one allow the *identification* of which mortuary elements were retained, changed, and lost throughout the colonial occupation.

## **Conclusion**

This comparative analysis has revealed some of the intricacies of Colonial interactions in three separate locations in the early Viceroyalty of Peru. Comparing these small-scale analyses of changing mortuary traditions allowed for the identification of small differences in predominant themes of religious interchange throughout Peru, which would have been difficult to analyze independently. While some themes of mortuary ritual were overarching, such as the blending of Indigenous burial elements in Catholic spaces, each case study demonstrates the unique ways that these elements were negotiated in a specific cultural context. The analysis of these three case studies, when viewed comparatively, allows for the identification of small-scale negotiations of power in the realm of mortuary practices, represented in these examples by the differences in the presence of burial goods at each site, the physical location and orientation of burials, the analogies drawn between Catholic churches and local sources of power, and episodes

of small-scale or individual resistance. Identifying the how mortuary rituals and burial styles were negotiated within individual Spanish colonial projects in Peru allows for a more nuanced understanding of history which gives diversity and agency to Indigenous communities who have been too often glossed over in historical studies of colonialism.

In addition, viewing colonial situations through the lens of mortuary studies, offers a way to study hybridity and cultural exchange in sites where it may not be visible in other parts of the material archaeological record (Klaus 2013). In doing so, mortuary studies of colonial situations contribute to the academic dialogues of subaltern studies, aiming to recover the agency of individuals and viewing cultural interactions in small-scale examples instead of building broader generalizations which may erase some of the variability of the situation. Studies which focus on interactions between the Spanish colonizers and Andean communities are important not only to our understanding of the history of the Americas, but also to the ways that this history is actively lived and experienced by modern people, which is why studies which focus on the variability of cultural interactions and historical contexts and allow for a more nuanced version of history are so important. It is my belief that mortuary studies can be a useful tool through which to craft these diverse histories. More exploratory and variable analyses will facilitate less “monolithic” portrayals of Indigenous communities, accounting for diversity between and within communities.



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