

## INTRODUCTION

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### CONSTRUCTING CASTA ON PERU'S NORTHERN COAST

HOW DID AFRICANS BECOME “BLACKS” and Andeans become “Indians” during the “long” seventeenth century that spilled from the 1600s into the 1700s?<sup>1</sup> Named as “Indians,” indigenous people were considered by the crown as vassals and therefore corporate members of colonial society. In this capacity coastal Andeans were expected to pay tribute, serve labor obligations, practice Catholicism, and (in some cases) function as rural authorities. Similar obligations and protections were not uniformly extended to Africans and their descendants, who, even if considered Catholic, were afforded a much more limited corporate location.<sup>2</sup> Africans and their descendants in rural areas were far from ecclesiastical courts and had limited clerical contact. As a result, they were often excluded from protections articulated by Catholic authorities and left to negotiate with slaveholders and, in a few instances, colonial authorities.<sup>3</sup> As a result, enslaved men and women sold from West and West Central Africa to Peru created kinships and their own sense of justice within slavery, in addition to what they could

gain judicially. Simultaneously, on the northern Peruvian coast, Africans and Andeans developed trading and kinship relations apart from their assigned *casta* locations of black or Indian. The goal of *Bound Lives* is to understand these processes of exclusion and exchange in order to illuminate how coastal Andeans and enslaved Africans with their descendants understood their legal *casta* in their everyday lives.

As recorded in colonial trial records, Africans and Andeans could act from within their juridical locations of “black” and “Indian,” or their *castas* of “black” and “Indian.” One of the main contributions of this book, therefore, is to understand how *casta* terms communicated legal locations—not solely race and class, or how historians have previously glossed these categories.<sup>4</sup> Demonstrating how allegedly separate groups—Africans and Andeans—interacted from their assigned colonial positions of black and Indian, illustrates lived definitions of *casta*. In addition, inhabiting or using *casta* terminologies implies an undoing. More recently, scholars have emphasized how lineage formed the basis for a racial hierarchy or a “caste system,” however unstable or socially constructed.<sup>5</sup> This book continues to destabilize fixed notions of *casta*. By understanding which components within *casta* categories bound Africans and Andeans to colonizers’ or slaveholders’ demands and which elements could be negotiated, the aim is to explore the construction of *casta* from the bottom up.

In addition, focusing on multiplying differences within the categories of “Indian” and “black” (including transatlantic and Diaspora terms such as *bran* or *mina*) reveals the instability of *casta* categories as employed by powerful landholders, threatened indigenous villagers, and protesting enslaved laborers. Irregularity, however, did not mean a lack of consequences. Crown obligations and labor demands were rooted in the inequities of *casta* between Africans and Andeans. Shifting the focus away from identity categories to legal locations that Africans, Andeans, or their descendants could claim, or were denied, reveals how *casta* took its meaning in the interplay between colonial law and daily practice. Most important, by examining Africans and Andeans simultaneously, I argue that indigenous people—as Indians—were awarded more legal access than enslaved people. This is not to say that enslaved men and women did not struggle to gain legal recognition. My point is that Africans and Andeans shared legal agency but were not considered as equals within all permutations of colonial law.

*Bound Lives* adds to a scholarship that challenges an image of the rural Andes as solely an indigenous society colonized by the Spanish. Historians of Peru’s coastal valleys have discussed the significant populations of Africans and their descendants but focused on the rise of landholders and the sys-

tem of slavery rather than the perspectives and actions of enslaved men and women.<sup>6</sup> Although there were glimpses into the daily lives of rural slaves and the strategies of fugitives in the countryside, historians focused on urban areas—especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—to reveal how enslaved people resisted, manumitted themselves and their families, and eventually brought about emancipation.<sup>7</sup> As for the highlands, African-descent populations are beginning to be documented.<sup>8</sup> Still, most historians of the colonial Andes have extensively discussed indigenous communities in the rural sierra, but not explored their contact with Africans and their descendants.<sup>9</sup>

With few exceptions, accounts of the Andean past remain divided between histories of indigenous people and histories of enslaved Africans and their descendants.<sup>10</sup> For example, the encyclopedic study of slavery in colonial Peru by historian Frederick Bowser emphasized that Spanish colonial law separated blacks from Indians.<sup>11</sup> *Bound Lives* dismantles an assumption in Peruvian historiography that indigenous and African people did not interact and, when they did, the exchange was marked with violence and conflict.<sup>12</sup> Regardless of royal mandates to the contrary, I found that local criminal and civil trials, appeals cases to the viceregal capital or the imperial Spanish courts, as well as sales, wills, and inventories, provided evidence of enslaved and free people who traded, celebrated, drank, ate, and fought with indigenous men and women into the eighteenth century. In state and ecclesiastical archives in Lima and on the northern coast as well as in Spain's Archivo General de Indias, copious judicial and notarial documentation attested to dynamic, multiple, and diverse exchanges among Africans and Andeans.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, this book is part of the scholarship of inserting Africans and their descendants into the histories of such Andean cities as Cuzco, La Paz, Lima, and Quito.<sup>14</sup> By moving the focus to the rural and provincial environments, however, I correct previous assumptions that indigenous-African relations tended to be hostile, since blacks were perceived to have served Spanish colonizers.<sup>15</sup> As a result, this book contributes to a history of the highland and coastal Andes, where indigenous people with Africans and their shared descendants were enemies as well as kin, friends and foes—sometimes simultaneously.

Critically, I argue that African–Andean interactions occurred within the impositions of colonialism and slavery. I seek to understand, first, the distinct legal locations of indigenous and African people in colonial Latin American society and, second, to explain how these juridical positions informed strategies of resistance and adaptation to colonial rule and landholder demands. In this sense, the book builds on scholarship that compares the locations of

indigenous and black people in the Americas. Some scholars have found that African and African-descent people occupied separate locations in colonial Latin American society, which meant in some cases that blacks served as intermediaries between natives and Spaniards while in others they worked in the most dangerous and menial positions.<sup>16</sup>

Other scholars concluded that Spanish perceptions and colonial constructions of indigenous and African people also reveal imposed and idealized hierarchies, which in some instances meant that Indians were awarded protection from blacks while in others meant that indigenous people endangered colonial order.<sup>17</sup> All of these positions may be possible, but it does us a disservice to understand Indian-black relations as unchanging. I argue that the colonial constructions of Indian versus black affected each other and the way that Andeans and Africans would act within (and outside) of colonialism and slavery. The main contribution of *Bound Lives* is to understand how Africans and Andeans shaped the constructions, categories, and expectations of property and vassalage that bound them. The point is to illustrate how these locations shifted according to economic realities or particular demands. The contribution is two-fold. The impositions of *casta* may have been clear, but what people did with them was not. Relations between Africans and Andeans were not static, therefore neither were definitions of *casta*.

The demands of the colonial state limited the possibilities of Africans and Andeans but did not secure their locations within hierarchies according to *casta*. To explain, I draw on the work of U.S. historians who have endeavored to understand the conflicting and contradictory nature of indigenous-African relations and identities within larger structures of slavery, colonialism, and nation-state expansion.<sup>18</sup> Context, in this case, is critical. Expanding estates imposed on indigenous villages and rural slavery dictated Africans and their descendants disputed labor practices in the northern coastal valleys (Trujillo, Chicama, Jequetepeque, Saña, and Lambayeque). In these conditions, I explore how Africans, as trading partners or fellow laborers, were integral to economic and social transformations of indigenous Andean communities. In turn, Andeans witnessed the violence of slavery but also served as rural justices primarily to defend their communities, and in the process they supported and maintained slavery. There was a continual back-and-forth. Africans and their descendants stole from Andean neighbors, but also relied on trade with the same members of colonial *reducciones* for sustenance on the rural estates. Also, Andeans assaulted Africans who mistakenly joined special community meetings but defended enslaved men who were unfairly punished by their owners. There are many ways to understand the shifting terrain of these actions, responses, and strategies. Within the parameters

of colonization and slavery, Africans, Andeans, and their descendants employed colonial racial categories or *casta* terms to mark their distinctions from others but not to simply fit into their place in the hierarchies of *casta*.

Lastly, this book corrects a common interpretation in colonial Latin American history that African and African-descent people replaced indigenous populations in coastal and lowland regions. On the northern Peruvian coast, scholars have documented that indigenous populations declined throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a result of epidemics, labor demands, and colonial resettlement.<sup>19</sup> Elsewhere in the Andes, however, these same processes prompted indigenous adaptation to colonial rule—not the disappearance of Andean societies. For example, demographic shifts reflected Andean migration as indigenous people developed new communities in towns, cities, and estates, or incorporated newcomers into their villages.<sup>20</sup> Andeans also developed colonial or urban identities by maintaining regional distinctions or coalescing into pan-Indian collectivities.<sup>21</sup> In other cases, Andeans increased their market interactions and cohabitation with Africans, and in some cases they intermarried or developed shared religious practices as described by historians Jane Mangan, Jesús Cosamalón Aguilar, and Leo Garofalo for colonial Potosí and Lima.<sup>22</sup> Along the northern coast the Spanish established settlements and expanded estates, displacing indigenous landholdings particularly in the Trujillo, Chicama, and Saña valleys. Fewer in number, but certainly still present, northern coastal Andeans transformed their communities, adapted to Spanish colonial demands that included slavery, and developed sustained relationships with Africans and their descendants (as well as Spaniards and creoles).

Both colonized Andeans and enslaved Africans with their descendants made sense of the obligations and the expectations imposed on them because of their social locations and expressed their understandings through their uses of *casta*. Spanish colonial authorities created legal distinctions that made Africans into “blacks” and transformed Andeans into “Indians,” but they could not dictate how colonial inhabitants would enact these terms in everyday life. Analyzing how enslaved and free, indigenous and African acted out their assigned positions in relation to each other also demonstrates the entangled ways in which Africans and Andeans claimed their locations within Spanish colonialism. Africans were excluded from official locations of native vassalage on an everyday basis, partly because Andeans continually claimed their “rightful” place as the crown’s subjects. Even when the regional economies shifted on the northern Peruvian coast and slaveholders privatized communal indigenous landholdings, Andeans continued to articulate their official locations as Indians even as they developed lasting

ties with Africans and their descendants. When understood from the perspectives of indigenous or enslaved people, *casta* categories were legal terms that provided or elided access to royal protections or elite concerns. *Castas* as practiced was not fixed or a stable marker of identity, but could be employed as a powerful marker of distinction.

### The Northern Peruvian Coast: "Between Cold Mountains and a Turbulent Sea"

The northern coast of Peru is located between the sharp rise of the western Andean Cordillera and the turbulent Pacific Ocean.<sup>23</sup> Rivers descending from the mountain peaks wind their way into coastal valleys, and during the rainy season many swell to make their way to the ocean. The fertile, irrigated lands still reach, like fingers, between the sandy expanses and the sparse scrub woods of carob once inhabited by foxes, lions, and deer.<sup>24</sup> Built by coastal people more than thousands of years ago, there is still evidence of a system of managed streams and earthen canals that crisscrossed the valleys of Virú, Trujillo (including Santa Catalina), Chicama, Jequetepeque, Saña, and Lambayeque, the major valleys of the northern Peruvian coast as depicted in figure I.1. The Spanish quickly took advantage of the diverse resources available in the northern valleys. On the ocean, such coastal villages as Eten in the Lambayeque valley and Santiago de Cao in the Chicama valley supplied local markets with a wide variety of fish and shellfish.<sup>25</sup> Indigenous lands and (by the colonial era) private farms in the middle and upper valleys were devoted to the cultivation of corn, potatoes, and garbanzo beans as well as cucumbers and peppers.<sup>26</sup> Spanish and indigenous wheat farms and cattle ranches soon complemented local crops. Scrub forests of carob provided pasture for sheep, goats, pigs, and occasionally cattle.<sup>27</sup> At the high end of the valleys close to the Andean foothills, herders tended their animals while fugitive slaves sometimes took refuge in the dry canyons that quickly ascend into the mountains.

Throughout the colonial period, mule trains connected the coast with northern Andean regional economies surrounding Loja and Quito (in today's Ecuador) as well as Cajamarca and Chachapoyas in the northern Peruvian highlands. Muleteers also complemented the trade along the northern coast by connecting Trujillo and Lima especially when the ocean currents and winds were not amenable to seafaring.<sup>28</sup> Though the northern coastal ports such as Huanchaco (in Trujillo), Malabrigo (in Chicama), and Chérrepe (in Saña) lacked sheltered anchorage, landholders still employed them to ship out flour, wheat, soap, hides, preserves, and sugar from the coastal valleys to Pacific markets.<sup>29</sup> In return, coastal valley inhabitants and other



Figure I.1. Northern Peruvian Coast. Rendered by Bill Nelson.

entrepreneurs purchased slaves, textiles, and wine in the ports of Panama and Callao (Lima).<sup>30</sup> These cities figured prominently within colonial bureaucracy and also in the essential silver shipments from the highland mines to the Caribbean and then transported across the Atlantic. Exports from the Peruvian northern coast suffered in the first part of the seventeenth century due to unstable markets.<sup>31</sup> In the later seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, landholders complained of a wheat blight coupled with

Table I.1. Demographic Estimates for Trujillo City and Valley, 1604 and 1763.

	Spanish and mestizos		Free and enslaved blacks and mulatos		Indians	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
1604 <sup>1</sup>	750	27	960	34	1,090	39 <sup>2</sup>
1763 <sup>3</sup>	4950	63 <sup>4</sup>	2,650	34	214	3

Notes: 1. Anónimo, "Fragmento de una historia de Trujillo," 90–93.

2. This number is inflated because it includes children.

3. Feijóo de Sosa, *Relación descriptiva*, 29–30.

4. This number is inflated because it includes children.

flooding from excessive El Niño rains that supposedly reduced crop production and dampened trade.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, the northern coast remained an essential regional economy within the Peruvian viceroyalty by supplying foodstuffs and other goods to urban areas along the critical trade routes of the Pacific until the end of this study in the early eighteenth century.

On the northern Peruvian coast, prosperity for the landholding elite rested on their ability to secure sufficient laborers to tend cattle on the ranches or plant and harvest on the wheat farms and sugar estates. After the implementation of the *mita* (a rotational system of forced labor) in the later part of the sixteenth century, regional elites relied on coastal and highland *mitayos* (Andeans serving their *mita* obligation) as well as contracted indigenous laborers. By the mid-seventeenth century the labor demands of coastal landholders, compounded with a crown policy of *composición de tierras* (the sale of vacant land), resulted in land privatization and indigenous migration throughout the Andes.<sup>33</sup> In the Chicama valley Andean colonial *reducciones* (indigenous towns created by royal orders) such as Santiago de Cao and Paijan lost arable, irrigated lands as did other communities in the Trujillo, Jequetepeque, and Lambayeque valleys.<sup>34</sup> The crown-appointed inspector resold these so-called vacant lands to private landholders who were mostly Spanish or creoles (Spanish-descent people born in the Americas).<sup>35</sup> The willingness of crown authorities to overlook the sanctity of communal land indicated that coastal Andean communities and individuals would need to defend themselves in other ways besides claiming crown protections due to them as *reducción* Indians.

Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive census for the northern coast. However, in 1604 the magistrate counted the inhabitants of Trujillo (the re-



gion's main city) and the immediate valley. With the exception of scattered calculations of indigenous communities to assess tribute obligations, there is no other census until 1763, when again Trujillo's magistrate counted the inhabitants of the city and its surrounding valley.<sup>36</sup> The thin demographic evidence, as illustrated in table I.1, suggests two points. First, between 1604 and 1763 there was a dramatic decline in Trujillo's identified "Indian" population and an increase in the numbers of Spaniards and mestizos.<sup>37</sup> Andeans, however, did not disappear from the northern coastal valleys; rather, they distanced themselves from *reducciones*. These official numbers suggest that they removed themselves from the location of "Indian" because the obligations no longer were accompanied by protections. Second, during the early seventeenth century the magistrate's count indicates that in the city of Trujillo and its surrounding farms, Africans, Andeans, and Spaniards were proportional percentages of the population. The contrast between 1604 and 1763 suggests that Africans and their descendants remained roughly 34 percent of the total population. In the city and the valley of Trujillo, Africans and their descendants were never in the majority, while the surrounding valleys may have had larger populations of Africans.

Coastal landholders did not immediately profit from their cooptation of communal indigenous lands. In 1641 the Spanish crown ended altogether its slave-trading contract with Portuguese transatlantic merchants.<sup>38</sup> By the early 1640s royal officials in Lima reported that the official importation of African captives had ceased into the Peruvian Pacific.<sup>39</sup> Contraband trade probably continued as Trujillo's slaveholders purchased captive West Central Africans from Panamanian merchants.<sup>40</sup> Enslaved men and women, in turn, would negotiate the experiences of multiple slave trades from the Atlantic to the Pacific by calling on slaveholders to recognize their value as slaves. Meanwhile, colonial officials from Panama to Lima identified a crisis in the labor supply throughout the 1640s as they claimed there was a lack of blacks who could be forced to perform the necessary labor.<sup>41</sup> In 1646 the viceroy warned that without blacks the work on rural estates would cease as well as the local production of foodstuffs and goods.<sup>42</sup> Simultaneously, coastal Andeans increasingly abandoned their assigned *reducciones* that had supplied *mitayos* to landholders.<sup>43</sup> As throughout the Andes, with less land and water but still the impositions of serving *mita* and paying tribute, membership in the Indian towns became more untenable.<sup>44</sup> In short, coastal landholders lacked enslaved Africans when indigenous communities refused (or could not) supply their required labor quota. By the 1650s, more coastal landholders were land rich but labor poor.

Within a few years there were signs that northern coastal landholders were recovering. In the 1650s prices for wheat and flour doubled in Panama, where the tropical climate made these crops difficult, if not impossible, to produce.<sup>45</sup> By the 1660s the Spanish crown renegotiated slave-trading licenses with new transatlantic merchants as the Dutch secured the Caribbean island of Curaçao, thus increasing the number of slaves traded into Portobelo and Cartagena.<sup>46</sup> Contraband trade continued throughout the 1660s as Portuguese, Dutch, and English slave traders sold Africans and criollos along the Caribbean borders of Spanish America.<sup>47</sup> The English, in particular, offered stiff competition. During the 1660s English ships transported captives from Jamaica and Barbados to Portobelo, where its slave-trading company maintained its agents.<sup>48</sup> As a result, sales of captive Africans increased in Trujillo as prices continued to climb.<sup>49</sup>

By 1670, Trujillo slaveholders paid on the average of 650 pesos for an able-bodied enslaved man or woman, the highest mean price in my sample of slave sales from 1640 to 1730.<sup>50</sup> At first, the Dutch supplied slaves from Luanda, but gradually captives from the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin (also traded by the English) were sold into Spanish America.<sup>51</sup> Indicating the keen demand for enslaved laborers, Trujillo's buyers noted only whether captives were healthy and able-bodied and paid the price demanded by the renewed transatlantic slave trade.<sup>52</sup> By the 1690s the Trujillo and Chicama valleys prospered from demand along the Pacific for wheat and flour, which landholders supplied to such coastal cities as Guayaquil.<sup>53</sup> In 1720 Trujillo authorities noted that there were a sufficient number of slaves on the wheat farms, cattle ranches, and sugar estates in the region.<sup>54</sup>

The recovery of the slave trade into the Spanish Americas, however, did not preclude the integration of coastal Andeans into the new economies of the later seventeenth century. With the renewed growth of the slave trade into coastal Peru, sugar production expanded gradually in the northern coastal valleys. Wheat and flour remained valued exports. With more enslaved laborers, landholders planted more cane to take advantage of the rising prices for sugar.<sup>55</sup> Nonetheless, landholders did not completely switch to sugar.<sup>56</sup> Local and regional markets (in Panama and elsewhere) for flour, meat, soap, and hides were still lucrative, as suggested by the number of estates still producing wheat and cattle.<sup>57</sup> With these diversified markets plus the larger landholdings and access to the accompanying irrigation, private landholders intensified their encroachment onto indigenous fields in the later decades of the seventeenth century.<sup>58</sup>

By the late seventeenth century, indigenous towns struggled to defend land and water resources against encroaching private estates as some en-

slaved people took advantage of slaveholders' dependency on their labor to look for new owners. Coastal Andeans continued to migrate into colonial cities and towns to work as artisans and marketers, while others carried on in the countryside as private landholders, day laborers, and even "police." Enslaved laborers, in turn, became fugitives but also firmly defended their sense of just work rhythms to push against the demands of slaveholders in their capacity as colonial officials. Privately-owned wheat farms, cattle ranches, and sugar estates dominated most of the coastal valleys by the later part of the century.<sup>59</sup> Coastal Andeans as laborers, muleteers, and small landholders, however, quickly became essential to getting goods to market and even contributing their own to the Pacific shipments while enslaved laborers became central to the coastal workforce. The eighteenth-century image of black men working in tar smelting operations (from the northern Peruvian collections of Bishop Baltazar Jaime Martínez Compañón) on the cover of this book underlines how laborers and the need for labor—in addition to the legal significance—contributed to the meaning of *casta* categories. The rise of sugar production with the expansion of estates meant an increase in the power of slaveholders that was further solidified through their claims to local offices. By the mid-seventeenth century the crown was selling the position of the magistrate, making it an investment for local elites.<sup>60</sup>

On the northern Peruvian coast magistrates in all likelihood profited from their positions; they were accused of usurping indigenous lands, allowing abuses of enslaved men and women, and selling overpriced alcohol to underpaid indigenous workers.<sup>61</sup> Likewise, landholders and merchants employed their appointments to the municipal council to better their positions such as diverting public water resources to their sugar mills or employing civic funds in order to secure ports for commerce.<sup>62</sup> As such, Trujillo's regional elites were part of the diffusion or decentralization of power that supported the seventeenth-century Hapsburg kingdoms.<sup>63</sup> There are many implications, but the power of the regional elites would also influence African and Andean usages of *casta*. The Spanish crown provided a series of regulations governing the relationships and the definitions of *casta* categories, yet regional elites would choose at which point they would enact or follow these mandates. In some cases their ideal hierarchy of Spanish superiority followed royal expectations, while in other situations local precedent overruled royal orders.

### Legal Entries into Everyday Relations

Regional elites had a stake in the implementation of *casta* categories, but the concern here is how distinct groups of Andeans and Africans occupied,

produced, and changed the meanings of the legal colonial categories created to contain them. To understand how indigenous laborers and enslaved Africans were organized but also employed the *casta* terms, I examine daily interactions within the changing historical and economic contexts of the mid-seventeenth century into the early eighteenth century. Everyday relations can be found in two types of documentation: those records that reveal usual exchanges and other records that illuminate extraordinary episodes. By looking at mundane and unusual events in relation to each other, I examine what enslaved or indigenous people claimed rather than merely what they did in particular situations. Criminal and civil trials, appeals cases, and judicial rulings along with sales, wills, inventories, and other records from notarial records provide details of when, where, and how African and indigenous people interacted. The exploration of the claims-making within judicial records provides a documentary nexus between official expectations and colonized or enslaved actions.<sup>64</sup> An examination of everyday details combined with an investigation of official orders provides an entry into how Africans and Andeans constructed *casta* in the courts and, when contextualized in their lives, can illustrate distinct legal locations of enslaved Africans and coastal Andeans.

Judicial cases are critical because they were one of the few locations where, in highly mediated forms, indigenous or enslaved people articulated their demands or requests. Rather than attempting to “read against the grain” to understand what Andeans or Africans “really wanted,” I attempted to read “with the grain” of the archive.<sup>65</sup> In other words, I read judicial cases for the evidence of how Andeans or Africans were being employed or employed judicial situations. Even if assisted by legal representatives or shunted into specific legal locations, Andeans and Africans were also presenting themselves (or being presented) as witnesses, plaintiffs, and defendants in a legal context that many of them were versed in the logistics of or would quickly learn.<sup>66</sup>

In these settings, I asked how indigenous or enslaved people’s strategies were performative, but not in the sense that made their actions have less impact or be less real. Rather, I understood the performative quality of Andeans or Africans to be a marker of their agency. In the case of Sebastian (an enslaved foreman of *casta arara* discussed in chapter 5), his confession of defying the authority of his Spanish overseer was also corroborated by other enslaved witnesses. Obviously, Sebastian was not considered to be legally equal to the slaveholder who initiated the suit for lost damages and his testimony along with those of other enslaved witnesses could be dismissed given the customary practices of colonial courts. Furthermore, Sebastian could not

make claims to defend his community as a corporate group like Andean laborers. Nonetheless, I asked how Sebastian presented himself in the case given the cultural assumptions within the parameters of a judicial case.

I also juxtaposed the events he recalled with those of other enslaved witnesses and slaveholders. Taking the court case as a performative moment allowed me to see how slaveholders attempted to employ these instances as means to display their readings of enslaved men as violent or unruly, when in fact many enslaved men appeared to have known the rules or were trying to figure out the legal mechanics in an attempt to use them to their advantage. Moreover, by merely being conscious of how black men were criminalized in colonial courts helped me to see the distinction between their location in the law and that of Andean men. Approaching criminal or civil cases as events that contain weighted descriptions of other events helped me to see how participants acted within the judicial moment by presenting, or being forced to present, their evidence or tell their side of the story. Using this approach, I show how laws both acted on and animated categories as well as expectations of *casta* performances.

I apply microhistorical and ethnohistorical techniques to understand how enslaved and colonized people engaged with *casta* in the judicial documentation as well as in the notarial records. The brevity of many criminal and civil trials in the provincial secular courts combined with the formulaic quality of most notarial entries make a microhistorical approach to any one individual a challenge. Small pieces of evidence from multiple sources need to be pulled together to explain why a particular individual acted in a particular way. I employ this microhistorical approach to see how individuals were related to a host of other individuals, communities, and practices. For instance, civil cases intended to transfer a deceased's wealth to named inheritors revealed a whole range of relations, such as the case of Pedro Esteban Peñarán, a native of a Chicama valley *reducción* discussed in chapter 4. By explaining how items of his inventory connected this indigenous man to individuals within his community, but also to many who inhabited non-*reducción* locations (combined with more evidence), I traced the emergence of Andeans who located themselves "elsewhere" in the market economies of the mid-seventeenth centuries. Following fragmentary evidence away from its intended use illuminates rural Andean and enslaved African realities based on a careful (and sometimes time-consuming) correlation of information.

I engage in the microhistorical methods of exploring the discrepancies between testimonies and interrogating multiple possibilities for a subject's actions, including my own doubts.<sup>67</sup> I reconstruct particular events or cir-

cumstances based on a compilation of details regarding, for instance, enslaved marketing practices or indigenous muleteer networks. The details provide the context for understanding colonized tactics and enslaved strategies as well as colonial procedures and slavery's order.<sup>68</sup> By reconstructing how and why men or women claimed certain terms in particular circumstances, I illuminate what Africans and Andeans meant in invoking *casta* categories. The point is to place individual actions within larger communities so that the rare events that were recorded in colonial documentation can suggest what was possible, probable, and expected—not just what was unique or exceptional.<sup>69</sup>

I use the details of everyday life within the context of the judicial documents. Rather than being a barrier to “true” events, court cases can provide evidence of distinct forms of discourse that, if taken in context, provide particular types of facts. In other words, I analyze information provided by defendants, witnesses, or prosecuting legal representatives according to their particular motivation in the court case. In addition, I take rumor, gossip, hearsay, and eyewitness accounts recorded in judicial testimony as significant forms of evidence. When employed in their documentary context, claims to *casta* terms or characteristics were simultaneously based on public and intimate circumstances. Small occurrences that reflect private matters could have a greater impact if discussed, enacted, or performed in public. In this way what people said happened, regardless of actual events, forms a significant part of my evidence base. These events and exchanges made up public culture where indigenous and enslaved people employed official legal discourse even from their marginal positions.<sup>70</sup>

In colonial Latin American society Africans and Andeans would have observed judicial expectations when edicts were announced in the main plaza, people were executed at public gallows, and the justice of the peace arrested individuals in their homes while declaring their crimes to their neighbors or kin.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, enslaved and indigenous people witnessed court activities as litigants, witnesses, and accused criminals as magistrates, bailiffs, notaries, and legal representatives incorporated particular orders or mandates into legal proceedings.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, Africans and Andeans participated in or watched processions or other public events where they articulated their own locations within colonial hierarchies or observed others.<sup>73</sup> Other scholars will surely find new ways of comprehending how Africans and Andeans self-identified or understood themselves. Here, criminal and civil cases provide a framework to understand how Africans and Andeans (and their descendants) claimed and enacted *casta* within as well as beyond the

colonial judiciary, making this book among the few employing legal records to explore how Africans became “blacks” and Andeans became “Indians.”

The secular documentation that forms this evidentiary base presents two challenges. First, the criminal cases—and to a lesser extent the civil cases—that constitute the majority of the records available for the midcolonial period on the northern Peruvian coast focus primarily on the actions of men rather than women. In addition, enslaved men outnumbered enslaved women on rural estates where the labor of indigenous men was documented in terms of wages and required labor contribution. Indigenous men were often accompanied by their wives or female relatives, but women’s work was assumed rather than discussed in civil or criminal cases as well as in notarized estate inventories. The challenge remains to articulate the perspectives of women, whose actions were often ignored in the official construction of *casta* distinctions that constitute the basis for this book. Future researchers may also wish to ask how gender distinctions influenced the ways that Andeans or African descendants, rural or urban inhabitants, *criollos* or Africans could employ *casta* categories.

Second, ecclesiastical documentation is lacking for the northern Peruvian coast. The holdings of the Archivo Arzobispal de Trujillo and the parish records for rural communities are scanty for the midcolonial period. Extirpation trials for the northern coast have been lost, leaving investigation of the records of Lima’s Inquisitorial Tribunal housed in Madrid for other researchers. I have tried to compensate by incorporating the few records of religious and spiritual activity from a variety of archives (including the Jesuit archives in Rome) into the book. Nonetheless, without substantial ecclesiastical evidence that often documents the actions and beliefs of women, a women’s history and a gender analysis of colonial *casta* will be left to future studies. Moreover, future researchers may wish to dig deeper into the type of access that rural enslaved people had to clerics and Catholic institutions to question my assertions regarding their lack of corporate standing.

Finally, I maintain an interest in how enslaved people created meanings from transatlantic *casta* categories such as *bran* (suggesting origins in Guinea-Bissau) and *arara* (pointing to origins along the Bight of Benin) to describe themselves and their communities in colonial Peru.<sup>74</sup> I built on the scholarship that has documented how the African origins of enslaved men and women in colonial Lima changed from Iberia to Senegambia and West Central Africa.<sup>75</sup> In this way I engaged with historians who have focused on specific cultural expressions such as how West Central Africans in Mexico or Cartagena articulated alternative forms of authority through divination,

amulets, and other religious practices.<sup>76</sup> For the northern Peruvian coast, this approach—revealing continuities of religious, warfare, and kinship practices in the Americas—has proved challenging since the necessary ecclesiastical documentation has not survived for the seventeenth-century northern Peruvian coast.<sup>77</sup>

In contrast to following the articulations of one African *casta*, this book focuses on the multiple passages, the repeated market transactions, and the diversity of the African Diaspora populations in the region to illuminate multiple identities.<sup>78</sup> I integrate the discussion of diasporic *casta* in my consideration of colonial *casta* in order to reveal how Africans used overlapping identities rooted in particular African societies and experiences in the Americas to claim political, commercial, and social collectivities depending on particular historical circumstances.<sup>79</sup> Regardless of what they were called by slave traders or slaveholders, enslaved peoples' adaptations illustrate their employment of mutual languages or shared experiences of the slave trade to establish diasporic kinships that fit and did not fit within the colonial or slave trade assignments of *casta*. Still, there is much more to ask about how transatlantic *castas*, African Diaspora identities, and colonial *castas* worked or did not work together. Even more pertinent is asking how men and women employed these terms while they created and sustained kinship networks and communities in the Americas. I challenge myself and others to continue in the work of uncovering this African Diaspora past in the Andes.