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BOLTS OF CLOTH AND SHERDS OF POTTERY: IMPRESSIONS OF CASTE IN THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY AUDIENCIA OF QUITO*

People use domestic material culture to create an image of themselves that they project to others who live in, or visit, their homes. This was as true in the Spanish colonial city as it is in any city today. If, therefore, we wish to investigate status and ethnicity in the Spanish colonies, domestic material culture is an excellent source of information on how people imagined their own place, and that of others, in society. The first step toward this is the reconstruction of the material culture of urban colonial houses. There are two main bodies of evidence available to accomplish this. The first is descriptions of household goods in the notarial archives of the colonies, and the second is the physical remains of household refuse found in archaeological contexts in cities. Each body of evidence can make unique contributions to our understanding of social relations in the colonial city, but each also has unique limitations.[1] I use the interplay between colonial notarial documents and archaeological remains to help define the role of material culture in the study of caste relations in Cuenca, Ecuador. The Spanish colonial *régimen de castas* was a system that categorized people by caste, using a complex mixture of legal status, ethnicity, racial (or physical) categorization, and economic roles.

Since at least the 1970s, archaeologists interested in the Spanish colonies have been using the physical remains of the past to understand issues of

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[1] On the use of notarial documents by historians of colonial Latin America, see particularly Susan Kellogg and Matthew Restall, eds., *Dead Giveaways: Indigenous Testaments of Colonial Mesoamerica and the Andes* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1998).

status and ethnicity. They make several assumptions in order to undertake such research. Methodologically, historical archaeologists of Spanish colonial urban sites have carried out a program of "backyard archaeology" first proposed by Charles Fairbanks, and realized at St. Augustine, Florida by Kathleen Deagan.[2] Urban properties in the Spanish colonies were subdivided with walls, fences, or hedges, and a particularly important assumption of this methodology is that each household discarded its refuse in its own rear yard. This assumption allows archaeologists to tie recovered archaeological remains to a particular property. Using documents to create a history of house ownership, specific owners at specific time periods can then be associated with recovered archaeological remains.

There is, in postmodern historical and archaeological scholarship, a concern with our profound disconnection from the past. Our interpretations of social relations in the past can be problematic if based on only a single line of evidence, but the use of several independent lines of evidence, as initially put forward by R. G. Collingwood, greatly strengthens interpretations of past social relations. Historical archaeologists have the opportunity to use the "radical independence of archaeological from documentary evidence" to further strengthen this idea of independent historical sources. As Alison Wylie has argued, we can buttress our arguments about the past through building cables of evidence. Wylie has used the analogy of a cable, rather than chain, of evidence to express this idea. Evidence garnered from multiple sources provides the strands that make up the cable. For the study of caste in the colonial Andes notarial documents and archaeological excavation provide two very different, but complementary, strands to create a strong cable of evidence about social relations and material culture in the colonial Andean city.[3]

[2] Charles Fairbanks, "Backyard Archaeology as a Research Strategy," *The Conference on Historic Sites Archaeology Papers* Vol. 11 (1975): pp. 133-139, outlines the methodology. Kathleen Deagan in her work at St. Augustine provided the first serious archaeological treatment of ethnic relations in the Spanish colonies, identifying material culture associated with those of Spanish, African and Native American ancestry. See Kathleen Deagan (ed.), *Spanish St. Augustine: The Archaeology of a Colonial Creole Community* (New York: Academic Press, 1983).

[3] R. G. Collingwood's approach to evidence, particularly as outlined in *The Idea of History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1946), was taken up by a new generation of archaeologists such as Ian Hodder in *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). Alison Wylie, "Invented Lands/Discovered Pasts: The Westward Expansion of Myth and History," *Historical Archaeology*, Volume 27, Number 4 (1993): pp. 1-19, and her "Archaeological Cables and Tacking: The Implications of Practice for Bernstein's 'Options Beyond Objectivism and Relativism'," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* Vol. 19 (1989): pp. 1-18, provide her interpretation of archaeological "cables" of evidence and their relationship to historical archaeology and material culture. The complexities of comparing archaeological to archival evidence of material culture in the Andes is discussed by Joanne Rappaport in "Cultura material a lo largo de la frontera septentrional Inca: Los Pastos y sus testamentos," *Revista de antropología y arqueología* [Bogotá] Volume 6 Number 2 (1990) p. 12.

There are several reasons that neither the documents nor the artifacts provide the whole picture. The first is preservation of materials in the ground. As an archaeologist sitting down to read a household inventory in a Latin American notarial archive, my first consideration is one that is almost guaranteed *not* to be on the mind of most historians of the Spanish colonies. It is this. How well would the listed objects in the inventory survive if buried in the ground from the time the inventory was conducted until the present? Objects of wood and of cloth, for instance, were both very important in the colonial household inventory, but are rarely encountered archaeologically.

The second factor is the selectivity of a notary public in conducting an inventory. The intention of the people conducting the inventory is the key to this question. An inventory was related to inheritance, and thus the monetary value of the items was a key to the likelihood of their being recorded. There was great concern to record portable wealth, as these were items that could be significant to those about to inherit the household, and could be spirited away from the deceased's residence by relatives or creditors if not recorded in the inventory. Many things of lesser monetary value went unrecorded by the notary, and yet may have been of great social value in signaling ideas about status or caste. The tableware used for dining and the foods served in the house come easily to mind. These items were rarely inventoried because of their low monetary value, and yet this lack of monetary value may have given people greater flexibility in expressing themselves through these categories of material culture.

A part of individual expression in colonial situations is the attempt to fit into, change, or reinforce the social categories that one is living within. The act of colonization is profoundly tied to the formation of new social categories, and domestic material culture is an important part of this. Traditionally, archaeologists of the Spanish colonies have used the material culture that colonized and colonizers left behind in the ground as a form of evidence for the examination of issues of ethnicity, race, and status. These categories of social science research have, however, been challenged over the last twenty years by both historians and anthropologists. Race has come to represent not innate biological attributes, but instead a constantly reinvented social construct. The construction of ethnic categories under colonial domination has, in turn, been challenged and examined through concepts such as ethnogenesis and creolization, representing the reinvention and alteration of ethnic identities as a response to colonial domination. Thus race and ethnicity can be seen as inextricably tied to each other and tied to ideas of status within the colonial system.[4]

[4] On race as a social construct see B. J. Fields "Slavery and Ideology in the United States of America," *New Left Review* Vol. 181(1990): pp. 95-118, and D. T. Goldberg, *Racist Culture: Philosophy and*

This is not to imply, however, that individual human agency is entirely bounded by social identity. The idea that humans are individual agents has always been present in historiography, and has been an important part of current historical practice at least since E. P. Thompson's 1970s critique of structural Marxism. In anthropology this realization came to the fore in the 1990s, while historical archaeologists have only very recently come to embrace the idea that all individuals, even in the midst of colonial oppression, are agents who are capable of perceiving advantages around them, and using this knowledge to advance themselves.[5]

Material culture is an important arena for human agency. Historical archaeologists delving into practice theory, particularly through the work of Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu, have become aware of the relationship between our use of objects and our formation as social beings.[6] Archaeologists have come to realize that people can use and manipulate material culture to redefine their role in society. A child brought up in a colonial Andean household was profoundly affected and socialized by the way that houses were spatially arranged, and by the signals of the material culture around them. At the same time, however, houses can be altered, and material goods made or purchased to challenge an individual's assigned role in society. Material culture is a useful window on the past because individuals can express themselves through the manufacture of goods, the purchase and consumption of those goods, and through the display of items in their home. The idea of agency on the part of individuals in their relationship to the material culture around them is now well accepted by archaeologists.[7]

the Politics of Meaning (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993). On the idea of ethnogenesis see Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), and G. Sider, "Identity as History: Ethnohistory, Ethnogenesis and Ethnocide in the Southeastern United States," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, Vol. 1 (1994): pp. 109-122. On creolization see Leland Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground: Archaeology and Early African America, 1650-1800* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992).

[5] In historical practice see E. P. Thompson, "The Poverty of Theory," in *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays,* ed. by E. P. Thompson (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978): pp. 1-210, in anthropology the work of Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution, Volume I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) or Sherry Ortner, "Reading America: Preliminary Notes on Class and Culture," in *Recapturing Anthropology,* ed. by R. G. Fox (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1991): pp. 163-189. The recent acceptance of historical agency as a concept useful to historical archaeologists is outlined by Laurie A. Wilkie and Kevin M. Bartoy in "A Critical Archaeology Revisited," *Current Anthropology,* Vol. 41 Number 5 (2000): pp. 747-777.

[6] Wilkie and Bartoy, "A Critical Archaeology Revisited," summarizes this recent turn toward practice theory, which is also emphasized in Kent Lightfoot, Ann M. Schiff and Thomas A. Wake (eds.), *The Archaeology and Ethnohistory of Fort Ross, California* (Berkeley: University of California Archaeological Research Facility, 1997) and in Ross W. Jamieson, *Domestic Architecture and Power: The Historical Archaeology of Colonial Ecuador* (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Press, 2000).

[7] James Bell, "On Capturing Agency in Theories About Prehistory," in *Representations in Archaeology*, ed. by J. Gardin and C. Peebles (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992): pp. 30-55, Matthew

The concept of agency, combined with an analysis of social categories in colonial society, leads us toward a vision of material culture as both an echo and a means of expressing ideas about gender roles, ethnicity, status, or caste. We can thus use household goods as a way of seeing the social categories of the colonial past. This is not a simple task, however, as an object does not represent ethnicity, race, gender or class in a simple one-to-one relationship. Instead, any household object can have multiple meanings, even for a single user of that object.[8]

Our use of the concepts of race, ethnicity and status in the Spanish colonies is in itself problematic, as these concepts were profoundly intertwined in the colonial worldview, and must be carefully defined. Rather than tackle each separately, it is more fruitful to explore these issues through the concept of caste. This was not a fixed system of inherited categorization, but instead a fluid and contested ground in which people could shift labels depending on point of view, changed circumstances, or conscious cultural action. The proliferation of caste designations can be seen as "the result of ordinary people in everyday life pushing, expanding, and testing the categories by grading themselves up and others down."[9]

Thus, when we look at material culture in the Spanish colonies it is necessary to keep in mind that concepts of race, ethnicity and class were not really separate constructs, but instead intertwined ideas which came together to label people of a certain caste. These labels were not, however, applied in the same way in all times and places. The idea of unstable or locally situated reasons for assigning caste labels to colonial individuals suits postmodern scholars because of their penchant for studies of the local and of human agency. These unstable caste categories vexed a previous generation of historians of Latin America, who at times found the application of caste labels to colonial individuals as irrational, or who dismissed some usages as simply incorrect on the

Johnson, "The Conception of Agency in Archaeological Interpretation," *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology,* Vol. 8 (1989): pp. 189-211, and Dean Saitta, "Agency, Class and Archaeological Interpretation," *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology,* Vol. 13 (1994): pp. 201-227, are all treatments of the relationship between human agency and material culture from an archaeological viewpoint.

[8] Wilkie and Bartoy, "A Critical Archaeology Revisited," p. 749. Ian Hodder, "Reading the Past" was an important work in redefining how archaeologists look at material culture.

[9] Richard Boyer, "Negotiating *Calidad:* The Everyday Struggle for Status in Mexico," *Historical Archaeology* Vol. 31, Number 1 (1997): pp. 66-67. John K. Chance, *Race and Class in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1978), Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), and John K. Chance and William B. Taylor, "Estate and Class: A Reply," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* Vol. 21 Number 3 (1979): pp. 434-442, all show the evolution of historians' treatment of the caste system, and the ways that its categories could be manipulated.

part of colonial people themselves.[10] Historians of colonial Latin America have for many years recognized the fluidity of caste labeling, but the movement toward postmodern scholarship has changed this from a difficulty to be grappled with into a proof in and of itself that local conditions and personal agency were key features in the way Spanish colonialism operated.[11]

A person's caste was not immutable in the colonial Andes, but it did limit his or her ability to move within the social system. Many social groups, such as free blacks, *mulatos,* or *mestizos,* were fighting for greater recognition and status in the colonial urban environment. They often attempted this through the acquisition of European (or more accurately colonial elite) culture, whether in language, household furnishings, or personal alliances. The essence of this struggle is encapsulated by the term *ladino,* a term (not always complimentary) signifying a person of non-Hispanic background who had integrated him or herself into the cultural norms of the colonial elite.[12] Others, however, had more limited options. The legal status of such groups as slaves left them little possibility of changing their caste position. They could, however, still use material culture in creative ways to express social differences, as artisans, owners of portable possessions, and consumers.[13]

Enslaved Africans in Latin America appear in the documentary record in very different ways from other people. Because of the unique challenges of "reading" the lives of slaves from documents, archaeological evidence becomes even more important. Yet archaeologists of colonial Latin America also face challenges in illuminating the lives of enslaved Africans. The archaeology of the African heritage of Latin America has had success in excavations of escaped African (or maroon/*cimarrón*) communities. Escaped slave communities existed in many areas of South America, and the spatial isolation of *cimarrón* communities, both in the Spanish and Por-

[10] Boyer, "Negotiating *Calidad,* " pp. 65-66 particularly points toward the examples of David A. Brading and Celia Wu, "Population Growth and Crisis: León, 1720-1816," *Journal of Latin American Studies* Vol. 5 (1973): p. 9, and Marcelo Carmagnani, "Demografía y Sociedad: La Estructura Social de los Centros Mineros del Norte de México, 1600-1720," *Historia Mexicana* Vol. 21 (1972): pp. 426, 445.

[11] The complex roles of the many caste groups in 17th century urban Latin America are admirably covered by R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994).

[12] Rolena Adorno, "Images of *indios ladinos* in early colonial Peru," In *Transatlantic Encounters: Europeans and Andeans in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. by Kenneth J. Andrien and Rolena Adorno (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): pp. 232-270.

[13] In colonial Quito becoming a godparent, a skilled artisan, or a reseller of stolen goods were just some of the ways that enslaved Africans participated in the urban power structure. See Martin Minchom, *The People of Quito, 1690-1810: Change and Unrest in the Underclass* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994) and Kris Lane, "Captivity and Redemption: Aspects of Slave Life in Early Colonial Quito and Popayan," *The Americas* 57:2 (2000): pp. 205-246.

tuguese colonies, makes them archaeologically visible. The existence of the caste term *cimarrón* is, in itself, interesting as a form of social classification specific to people who had escaped the status of slavery.[14]

An archaeology of slave life in urban areas of the Spanish colonies is a more difficult proposition. The identification of those of African descent in the material culture of Cuenca archaeological contexts has so far eluded us. This was a community that was small in number, and whose members generally lived as household slaves in houses they did not own. Many African slaves presumably slept in the corridors of their masters' houses, and used ceramics and other material culture bought in the local market from makers who were not of African descent. There can be little doubt that a distinctive African-American material culture existed in colonial Cuenca, as it did in other parts of the New World, but our knowledge of the archaeological aspects of this material, and the locations of African households within the city, is minimal.[15]

The notarial archives show that there were both enslaved and free people of African descent in colonial Cuenca. They appear in slave sale documents, in the wills of their owners, and in legal statements of emancipation. An example would be the 1664 inventory of the house of Doña Luisa Maldonado de San Juan, a wealthy *vecina,* or citizen, of Cuenca. Four slaves are listed in the inventory: a *moreno* slave named Domingo Angola, about forty years of age; a slave named Antonia, from the Bran nation, about fifteen years old; a slave named Ursula, of the Angola nation, about thirty; and the daughter of Ursula, named Maria, four years old. Thus slaves born in Africa and living in colonial Cuenca were specified as *esclavos,* but at the same time their origins were noted, often with a term for a particular "nation" in Africa, such as Bran, or Angola.[16] Enslaved Africans could, at times, attempt

[14] Frederick P. Bowser, T*he African Slave in Colonial Peru: 1524-1650* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974) and Peter Blanchard, *Slavery and Abolition in Early Republican Peru* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1992) provide excellent overviews of slavery and slave resistance in the colonial Andes. For the archaeology of African colonial communities, runaway or otherwise, in Latin America see Charles E. Orser, "The Archaeology of the African Diaspora," *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 27 (1998): pp. 63-82.

[15] Certain archaeological finds in domestic contexts, such as the colonoware pottery in Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground,* can be characterized as "typical" of African ethnicity, but as Paul R. Mullins, "'A Bold and Gorgeous Front': The Contradictions of African America and Consumer Culture" In *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism,* ed. by Mark P. Leone and Parker B. Potter Jr. (New York: Plenum Press, 1999) cautions, the demonstration of the unique nature of African New World material culture can come through the study of consumption patterns, rather than through a simple search for material culture of "African" origin.

[16] ANH/C C116.404a, f.3r (1664). All references to primary documents are from the notarial section of the Archivo Nacional de Historia, Cuenca, Ecuador, referred to hereafter as ANH/C. Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

to change the designation of their "nation" in order to change their position within the hierarchy of the colonial slave system. In the larger-scale change from a designation by "nation" to that of "slave," however, we can see the genesis of "the African" as a colonial subject, no longer a person from a particular place in Africa, and instead defined by social status and skin color.[17]

The only example of a colonial period will and testament from someone of African decent so far encountered in the notarial archives in Cuenca is the 1690 will of Sebastiana de Isla. Sebastiana declared herself to be "*color parda criolla y natural de esta ciudad"* (dark-skinned, born in the New World, and a native of this city), never married, with one *hijo natural*, or son born out of wedlock. She owned eight hectares of land in the village of Racar, outside Cuenca, which she had purchased from a priest. She grew grain and ran 21 head of sheep on the property. She also owned the following list of personal possessions:

8 worn *camisas de lienzo de la tierra*[18] [shirts of local plain-weave cotton cloth] *labrada con lana de diferentes colores* [with multicolored wool decoration]
4 worn *enaguas* [slips/petticoats][19] of the same material
2 new *lliglias* [shawls][20] of *bayeta ancha de la tierra* [wide local plain-weave wool cloth],[21] one blue with *vueltas de tafetán amarilla* [yellow taffeta bands], the other black with *tafetán rosada* [pink taffeta]
2 worn *polleras de bayeta de la tierra* [skirts of local plain-weave wool], one *mora* [purple] with three *vueltas de sevillaneta de oro falsa* [bands of false gold *sevillaneta* cloth],[22] the other *azul* [indigo-dyed], decorated with a band of false gold *sevillaneta* cloth

2nd ed., 2000), and John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) both discuss the complexity of the analysis of such "tribal" identities of enslaved Africans in the New World, given the complexities of the assimilation of subject peoples into other ethnic groups in Africa, and the stereotypes of Europeans and colonial elites in the use of such terms. Thornton, "Africa and Africans," p. xvi, identifies Bran as a cultural group in the region of what is now Dakar in Senegal.

[17] Terrence W. Epperson, "The Contested Commons: Archaeologies of Race, Repression, and Resistance in New York City," In *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism*: p. 88 gives a British colonial example of such changes in "national" designations by enslaved Africans.

[18] *Lienzo* is a plain-weave cotton fabric, according to the glossary of *Costume and Identity in Highland Ecuador,* ed. by Ann Pollard Rowe (Washington D.C.: The Textile Museum, 1998): p. 284.

[19] Tamara Estupiñán Viteri, *Diccionario básico del comercio colonial quiteño* (Quito: Ediciones del Banco Central del Ecuador, 1997), p. 151 suggests that colonial *enaguas* for women were always made of white *lienzo* fabric.

[20] A *lliglla* is a Quechua word for a woman's square or rectangular shawl, usually without fringe, worn with the ends brought together and pinned with a *tupu* at the chest, according to Lynn A. Meisch and Ann P. Rowe, "Indigenous Ecuadorian Costume," in *Costume and Identity* ed. by Rowe, p. 45.

[21] *Bayeta* in modern Ecuador is a coarse plain-weave wool, made on a treadle-loom, according to the glossary of Rowe (ed.), *Costume and Identity*, p. 283.

[22] *Sevillaneta* was a type of textile, and is also mentioned in a 1596 Quito will by Frank Salomon, "Indian Women of Early Colonial Quito as seen through their testaments." *The Americas* 44 (1988),

1 mattress of *lienzo de la tierra* [local plain-weave cotton], 2 blankets, and 1 bed sheet of same, all used
1 *paño de lienzo de la tierra* [shawl of plain-weave cotton][23] *listado con lana azul* [with indigo wool stripes], 3 *varas* in size
4 pounds of spun wool for 20 *varas of bayeta* [plain-weave cloth]
4 pounds of cotton, 2 of them spun, the other 2 not
1 *topo* of gilded silver with 6 pearls, 4 fine corals[24] and 3 Castilian garnets
1 rosary of coral with *seda morada* [purple silk] and silver thread
1 necklace of coral and fine pearls with garnets and 11 small stones
1 necklace of fine coral with its black *sevadillas* [sic—*cebada*, barley/grain-shaped?] and *higuitas* [pear-shaped pieces?]
1 black wooden chest with lock and key
1 cedar chest with lock and key
1 pair of bracelets of false garnets
1 pair of silver earrings with crystals and pearl pendants
1 pair of silver earrings with *girasoles* [girasol opals][25]
1 small wooden chest with lock and key
1 leather case[26]

Sebastiana's inventory allows us a glimpse into the personal belongings of a woman of African descent, but the very fact that this is the only known inventory of such a woman for the city during the colonial period suggests that her property ownership and level of wealth was exceptional, or perhaps that those of African descent participated less often in the legal written culture of wills and inventories.[27] As with any colonial notarial inventory, particularly of a woman, clothing and jewelry are the focus of description of her portable wealth, presumably because these are the portions of her belongings that had

p. 335, and as part of a 1722 shipment of cloth into Cartago, Costa Rica by Juan Carlos Solórzano Fonseca, "El comercio de Costa Rica durante el declive del comercio Español y el desarrollo del contrabando Ingles: Periodo 1690-1750," *Anuario de Estudios Centroamericanos* 20:2 (1994): p. 36.

[23] A *paño* in modern Cuenca usage is a woman's shawl, according to Lynn A. Meisch, "Azuay Province," In *Costume and Identity*, ed. by Rowe, pp. 257-258. It is different from a *lliglla* mainly in the way it is worn, wrapped around, rather than draped over, the shoulders, in "European" style.

[24] For the ongoing role of coral as prehispanic and colonial jewelry item, usually set in silver, see Rappaport "Cultura Material," p. 13 and Chantal Caillavet. "Caciques de Otavalo en el siglo XVI: Don Alonso Maldonado y su esposa." *Miscelánea Antropológica Ecuatoriana* 2 (1982): p. 44.

[25] In gemology a girasol opal is a type of fire opal with an effect of light that floats or moves as the stone is turned. See Julia A. Jackson, *Glossary of Geology* (Alexandria, VA: American Geological Institute, 1997), p. 269.

[26] ANH/C L526f840r-841v (1690).

[27] The first official census of the city, in 1778, showed that the 484 people of African descent (both enslaved and free) made up about 3% of the total urban population of 14,763. The slightly higher (7%) numbers in the San Blas neighborhood to the east of the city core suggests that this was where the majority of free people of African descent lived in the late 18th century. See Jacques Poloni Simard, "Formación, desarrollo y configuración socio-étnica de una ciudad colonial: Cuenca, siglos XVI-XVIII." *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 54:2 (1997): p. 440.

the most monetary value. The presence of a *topo,* an Inka or Andean woman's shawl pin, and a *lliglla,* or traditional Andean woman's shawl, is interesting. In the colonial Andes this clothing appears to have gone from being a symbol of Native Andean femininity to a form of dress worn by women of many social classes. Her *pollera* skirt and *paño* shawl have more European antecedents, but again crossed ethnic lines in the colonial Andes.[28] There is no mention of any household furniture, tableware, or other goods, suggesting that Sebastiana lived with and perhaps rented from someone else in the city, a common practice for people of lesser means. The likelihood that many of the poorer inhabitants of the urban core rented rather than owned their living space makes for a difficult archaeological problem.[29] The assumption of the "backyard archaeologist" that the excavated material culture was owned and discarded by a homeowner is not valid in poorer neighborhoods, where absentee landlords rented to multiple families, with frequent turnover of tenants.

The situation of Native peoples in the colonial Andes was different from those of African descent, in the sense that Native Andeans retained a parallel culture within the colonial system. Many Native Andean communities had some linguistic, political, and cultural autonomy. Such factors complicated the desire on the part of Native peoples to use European cultural norms as a path to further their power in the colonial system. The situation of Native Andeans, in maintaining and altering an existing social and ethnic system despite the pressures of colonial domination, can perhaps best be understood through ideas of ethnogenesis, as they generated new cultural identities within a system imposed from outside.[30]

There are a large number of inventories and wills available to us from the notarial archives for colonial Cuenca, representing considerable variation in ethnic, economic, and social situations in the city. One such example is that of Juan Clemente de Bustamente. We know nothing of him except that he

[28] On the use of the *topo* by an elite woman in seventeenth-century Cuenca see Ross W. Jamieson, "Doña Luisa and Her Two Houses: Widowhood as Power in the Colonial Andes," In *Lines That Divide: Historical Archaeologies of Race, Gender and Class,* ed. by James A. Delle, Stephen A. Mrozowski, and Robert Paynter (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press), p. 158. Salomon "Indian Women," pp. 334-337 discusses Native Andean elite women's clothing in the 16th century.

[29] In late 17th century Cuenca we know that, at least in the case of the income of priests, rental of part of their houses was common. See Jesús Paniagua Pérez and María Isabel Viforcos Marinas, "El poder económico del clero secular cuencano en la segunda mitad del siglo XVII." *Estudios de Historia Social y Económica de América* 13 (1996) p. 62. In Quito many colonial households consisted of an upper floor where the property owners lived, and ground floor rooms for servants, rental to the urban poor, or to small businesses, according to Minchom, "The People of Quito," p. 29.

[30] Boyer, "Negotiating *Calidad,* " p. 67 treats the "parallel culture" of Native peoples within the Spanish colonial system. Salomon, "Indian Women," pp. 325-341, discusses the great distance between the most powerful and most humble of Native women in early colonial Quito.

was a *forastero,* a term meaning an immigrant, but giving little indication of ethnic identity.[31] This information comes to us from an inventory of some of his belongings in two locked leather cases in the house of Lieutenant Juan Ortiz de Lusuriaga, just off the main square in Cuenca, upon the death of Lusuriaga in 1696.[32] There is no indication of where Bustamente was, or why Lusuriaga was holding some of his belongings.

In the first leather case:

1 new *lliglla* [shawl] of *bayeta azul de la tierra* [local plain-weave wool dyed with indigo] with a *vuelta* [band] of pink *tafetán* [taffeta]
4 $^1/_2$ *varas* of *bayeta verde de la tierra* [local plain-weave wool, dyed green]
11 medium "Flanders" locks with their keys
18 small locks with their keys, plus another 3 with no springs or keys
47 $^1/_2$ *varas* of *bayeta de la tierra azul de la angosta* [narrow]
8 pairs of scissors
41 heavy sewing needles
22 Flanders knives
8 black goatskins
14 *varas* of *cristal mezcla verdosa*[33] [green lustrous wool cloth]
$^1/_2$ pound of cumin seeds wrapped in a *trapo* [rag]
2 leather bags of *tinto añil* [indigo dye][34] weighing 24 pounds with the bags

And in the second leather case:

8 *varas* of *camello de rosa seca de la angosta* [narrow pink "camlet" cloth][35]
12 $^1/_4$ *varas* of *pelo de camello de la angosta tornasol* [narrow iridescent camlet cloth]
8 *varas* of *bayeta verde de Castilla* [green plain-weave wool from Castile]
4 $^2/_3$ *varas* of *bayeta morada de Castilla* [purple plain-weave wool from Castile]
3 *varas* of *tafetán morada de Pisa* [purple Pisa taffeta]
almost 3 *varas* of *tafetán carmesí de Granada* [red Granada taffeta]

[31] *Forastero* means "outsider" or "immigrant," and thus it is clear that Bustamente was not from Cuenca, most likely because he was an itinerant trader. His background is entirely unknown. On the many implications of the term *forastero* see the contributions in David J. Robinson, ed., *Migration in colonial Spanish America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[32] ANH/C C94.124f1r-2v (1696).

[33] Estupiñán describes *cristal* as a thin wool cloth with a luster to it in "Diccionario básico," p. 124.

[34] Ann P. Rowe, "Dyes," In *Costume and Identity*, ed. by Rowe, p. 20 describes *añil* in Ecuador as indigo dye from the *Indigofera suffruticosa* plant; a blue dye, processed into cakes and traded extensively to Ecuador from Central America until the 1970s.

[35] *Camello/ pelo de camello* refers literally to camel/camelhair, and probably refers to a cloth (known also as *camelote,* or camlet in English) that was a woven mix of camelhair and sheep's wool, according to Estupiñán "Diccionario básico," p. 87. *Camello* could also refer to a lot of different mixes of camelid/goat hair, as well as silk or other fibers.

almost 3 *varas* of *tafetán de Pisa a musgo* [moss-colored Pisa taffeta]
1 *corte de puntas negras* [length of black lace] $^1/_2$ *vara* wide called *de buena cara* [?]
almost 8 $^1/_2$ *varas Ruán florete* [flowered Rouen cotton][36] and another piece 15 $^3/_4$ *varas* long
10 *balones de estopilla de Cambray* [bales of Cambrai gauze][37] with *encajes* [lace] four fingers wide
8 pairs of *calcetas de hilera de Génova* [fine Genoa stockings][38]
8 pairs of *medias de Bruselas* [Brussels stockings], four of them *nácar* [pearl-colored], the others *rosada* [pink]
18 *varas* of *bayeta azul de Quito* [indigo-dyed Quito plain-weave wool]
6 *varas* of *encajes* [lace] in 6 pieces, 4 fingers wide, *de Flandes* [from Flanders]
3 whole pieces of *listón de Venecia* [Venetian silk ribbon], blue, green, and purple
3 iron picks
3 pounds of *lana de la tierra* [local wool], 2 *color amapola* [bright red] and 1 *azul* [indigo]
26 *varas* of *listón de Venecia* [Venetian silk ribbon], black and white
23 $^1/_2$ *varas* of Venetian silk ribbon, yellow, in two pieces
18 *varas* of Venetian silk ribbon, pink
16 *varas* of Venetian silk ribbon, purple
23 *varas* of Venetian silk ribbon, green
2 pairs of *media de seda verde* [green silk stockings] for a woman
5 rosaries, 3 of *frutilla*,[39] 2 of *coral negro* [black coral]
12 pieces of *listón negro de Córdova angostos* [narrow Cordoba black silk ribbon]
7 packaged ribbons in different colors
26 $^1/_2$ *varas* of *listón de raso* [satin ribbon] 6 fingers wide
6 pounds of *listones de Génova y Nápoles* [ribbons from Genoa and Naples] in different colors

[36] Ruán is a type of cotton "broadcloth" stamped with colored decoration, made in Rouen, France, according to Estupiñán, "Diccionario básico," p. 297 and *Diccionario de Autoridades* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1726-1739) p. 647. The Rouen broadcloth industry is examined in Jean-François Belhoste, "La maison, la fabrique et la ville: l'industrie du drap fin en France (XVe-XVIIIe siècles)," *Histoire, Economie et Société* 13:3 (1994): pp. 457-475.

[37] The town of Cambrai in Flanders in the 17th century produced fine, plain-woven, white linens, as described by Philippe Guignet, "Adaptation, mutations et survivances proto-industrielles dans le textile du Cambrésis et du Valenciennois du XVIIIème au début du XXème siècle," *Revue du Nord* Volume 61, pp. 27-59. *Estopilla* was finer than regular Cambrai cloth, a type of gauze, according to the Real Academia Española, "Diccionario de Autoridades," p. 642.

[38] In the 17th century silk stockings were one of the major industries of Genoa, as described by Carlo Belfanti in "Fashion and Innovation: The Origins of the Italian Hosiery Industry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Textile History* 27:2 (1990): pp. 132-147.

[39] *Frutilla* is listed as a species of *coquillo,* or small palm nut/seed, which rosaries are made from, and with a Latin translation of *Globuli indici,* in the *Diccionario de Autoridades* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1726-1739) p. 804. Unfortunately this Latin name does not appear to correspond to any modern scientific botanical name.

1 pound *seda de calabria* [Calabrian silk][40] in different colors
29 *madejas* [skeins] of *seda floja color de lino* [loose linen-colored silk]
1 pound of *hilo* [thread] *de clemen* [sic?]
3 *masas de hilo* [bunches of thread] *de galera* [galana? sic?]
1 gross and 8 dozen buttons of silver and silk thread
$^1/_2$ gross of black silk buttons
40 $^1/_2$ *varas* of narrow black Cordoba silk ribbon
1 *pecho bordado azul con lentejuelas de plata* [embroidered blue *pecho*[41] with silver sequins
22 small notebooks of white paper and 2 quires of paper
9 small notebooks
4 ounces of thick silver thread
23 large notebooks
$^1/_2$ pound of *hilo de mariposas* [silk thread?] with *petaquilla* [small case/pouch] and *papel de estraza* [cloth wrapping][42]
13 ounces of raw *solimán*[43] with its case and cloth wrapping
8 packages of straight pins
28 brass thimbles
36 pairs of brass hoop earrings with small blue glass beads, among them one pair with *girasoles* [girasol opals]
2 bunches of small beads, yellow and white
33 strings of *granates falsos* [false garnets]
5 ounces of Quito *pita* [agave fiber][44]
12 $^1/_2$ *varas* of *bayeta verde de la angosta de Quito* [narrow green Quito plain-weave wool]
3 pounds of *sevillaneta de oro falso* [false gold cloth from Seville?] with paper wrapping
1 measuring stick with hinges

The quantity and nature of these goods of course indicates that Juan Clemente de Bustamente was a cloth merchant. The goods in the boxes were not part of his personal image, as his own clothing or house would have been.

[40] On the silk industry in Calabria in the seventeenth century see Antonio Calabria, "The Seventeenth-Century Crisis Revisited: The case of the Southern Italian Silk Industry: Reggio Calabria, 1547-1686," *Essays in Economic and Business History* 19 (2001): pp. 1-15.

[41] The *pecho* could be what is now called in Ecuador a *pichu* (Quechua pronunciation of Spanish *pecho*, or "chest"). This is a traditional woman's wrapped dress, resembling Inca women's costume, as described by Laura M. Miller and Ann P. Rowe, "Majipamba, Troje and Cacha," In *Costume and Identity,* ed. by Rowe, p. 187-189

[42] Estupiñán *Diccionario básico* p. 165 describes *papel de estraza* as a rough wool fabric used to wrap market goods.

[43] *Solimán* is corrosive sublimate, or mercuric chloride ($HgCl_2$).

[44] *Pita* and *cabuya* are both terms used in Ecuador for fiber made from *Agave americana* or *Furcraea andina* plants. See Ann P. Rowe and Lynn A. Meisch, "Fibers," In *Costume and Identity*, ed. by Rowe, pp. 16-17.

They were, however, an important part of his role in society as a highly mobile trader in cloth, clothing, and tailor's supplies. The list of cloth is a fascinating mix of Andean textiles and European imports from Italy, Spain, and the Low Countries. His intended market could have been quite wide-ranging, as local *bayeta* cloth would have been worn by people of many social classes, while laces and silks imported from Europe were used by urban Creole elites but also by Native Andean peoples with the income to afford them.[45]

There are parallels between archaeological and documentary evidence in the study of caste in colonial Cuenca, and yet at the same time there is also a profound disjuncture. I don't know why Bustamente's mercantile goods were being stored in Lusuriaga's house, but we could propose that they were friends, relatives, business partners, or perhaps that Bustamente owed money to Lusuriaga. These mercantile goods stored in a house demonstrate the lack of a dichotomy between domestic and business spaces in the early modern Andes, presenting another challenge for the archaeologist of domestic sites. In any case, the goods give us a single example of the many complexities of the notarial and archaeological study of material culture in the Spanish colonial city. We would probably assume that the trunks, and the goods in them, were eventually removed from the house, and that the material culture recovered archaeologically from the property would relate to the daily life of the Ortiz de Lusuriaga family, rather than to the life of Juan Clemente de Bustamente. His mobile life as a *forastero* merchant gives the archaeologist pause in thinking about colonial mobility and how it affects our interpretation of the colonial archaeological record.

Excavation in the core of Cuenca has so far revealed intact seventeenth century contexts only in houses located near the main plaza. In two of these houses a similar pattern of finds was made. The vast majority of artifacts are ceramics, a category of artifact rarely mentioned in archival documents. Most of these are red-slipped, locally produced earthenwares. These were most likely made by Native Andean potters in villages outside the city, and sold by them in urban markets. Are these an indication that the homeowners near the plaza were poor Native Andean families? The archival documents associated with these properties show that this was clearly not the case. Instead it is clear that in elite houses, Native Andean ceramics were used as cooking wares and kitchen wares by Native Andean servants to create meals for *vecino* homeowners.

[45] Arnold J. Bauer, *Goods, Power, History: Latin America's Material Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 110-113, discusses the consumption of fine European cloth in the colonial *Audiencia* of Quito, while Salomon, "Indian Women" pp. 334-336, shows that Native Andean women of wealth were heavy consumers of such cloth, at least in the early colonial period.

It is in the smaller percentages of imported ceramics that the archaeological record shows us the elite status of the homeowners near the plaza. Sherds of *botijas,* or olive jars, make up a significant portion of these. Manufactured in Spain, these large vessels were used to ship many of the essential foodstuffs of Spanish colonial rule, including wine, olives and olive oil. The vast majority of the glazed majolica recovered from these seventeenth-century contexts is from Panama, where an industry supplied Andean elites with tablewares that echoed the majolica styles of Spain.[46] Blue underglaze porcelains, recovered in small quantities in each of the seventeenth-century excavations near the plaza, came from China, and represented an important status indicator in the décor of any elite seventeenth-century colonial house. Add to this the presence of some glass tablewares from items such as enameled bottles, and a range of faunal remains indicating that the colonial elite was consuming quantities of beef, pork, mutton, and deer, and we can picture a group of houses near the plaza where colonial elites used a mix of Spanish, New World, and Asian items to signal their status to those who visited and took meals with them.[47]

Recognition of a complex and ever-changing system of caste in the Spanish colonies leaves those who study material culture with a whole new set of questions to be answered. We cannot be satisfied simply to assign types of material culture like coarse red earthenwares, or Panama majolica, to particular classes or races of people, such as “Indians” or “Spaniards.” Instead, material culture itself is seen as part of the way that people expressed their caste, denied it, or even transformed it. Historians have frequently seen lawsuits, the baptism of children, or the negotiation of marriages as key situations where caste labels were contested. The simple acts of purchasing and using clothing, or kitchen ware, or food were also of great importance, allowing an individual to contest the caste category they had previously lived within through the use and display of material culture.

As an example, marriage was a point in one’s life where caste could be altered. Some people improved their caste through marrying well, and acquiring the caste of their new spouse. The opposite, however, could also

[46] For details on Panama majolica recovered in the Andes see Ross W. Jamieson, “Majolica in the Early Colonial Andes: The Role of Panamanian Wares,” *Latin American Antiquity* Vol. 12 (2001): pp. 45-58, and Beatriz E. Rovira, “Presencia de Mayólicas Panameñas en el mundo colonial: Algunas consideraciones acerca de su distribución y cronología,“ *Latin American Antiquity* Vol. 12 (2001) pp. 291-303.

[47] On archaeological excavations in houses near the *plaza mayor* of Cuenca see Jamieson, “Domestic Architecture,” and Ross W. Jamieson *Informe al Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural del Ecuador de la Prospección Arqueológica Realizada en Tres Casas del Centro Histórico de Cuenca, Azuay.* (Cuenca, Ecuador: unpub. manuscript, INPC, 2001).

occur, with the possibility that a rival could denigrate the caste of a person's spouse, whether by pointing out racial characteristics, or challenging his or her ancestry or their cultural practices. This would in turn throw doubt on someone's own caste label.[48] If we consider marriage from the archaeologist's point of view, of space and material culture, it was an opportunity to set up a new household, perhaps in an entirely new neighborhood or city. The furnishings of such a house could be used to put forward a new image, a physical space where the couple's cultural practices were manifest. Thus through clothing, meals, or other means, the couple could show visitors that they were of a certain caste, perhaps different from that of the household they had come from before marriage.

Notarial documents and archaeological excavation can each provide valuable evidence about the negotiation of caste in colonial Latin America, but each has its limitations. The cloth, jewelry and household furnishings inventoried for a testament show a different aspect of the material culture of a household than do the ceramic sherds and faunal remains that were discarded in a rear yard. From these two separate cables of evidence we can better approach questions of ethnicity or status in the colonial Andes.

Those who study material culture have emphasized the multiple meanings that a single artifact can hold, while recent research on the concept of caste in the history of colonial Latin America has emphasized the fluid nature of social labels. Thus it is incorrect to emphasize the simple association of a single artifact category with a particular race, class, or ethnicity in the Andes. Those who study material culture instead realize that an artifact, be it a piece of Flanders lace or a sherd of Panama majolica, had multiple meanings in defining several of these social categories at the same time. The combination of archaeological and notarial evidence shows us that the houses of seventeenth-century Cuenca contained items manufactured all over the world, but these items were placed in new contexts as they moved through the colonial system of markets, inheritance, and consumption. Individuals of all castes used items of clothing, food, and other furnishings in strategic ways to create a uniquely colonial, and very complex, system of identity. Both the archaeologist and the historian must use caution, and all the evidence available to them, when interpreting what those signals meant.

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[48] Boyer, "Negotiating *Calidad,*" p. 70.