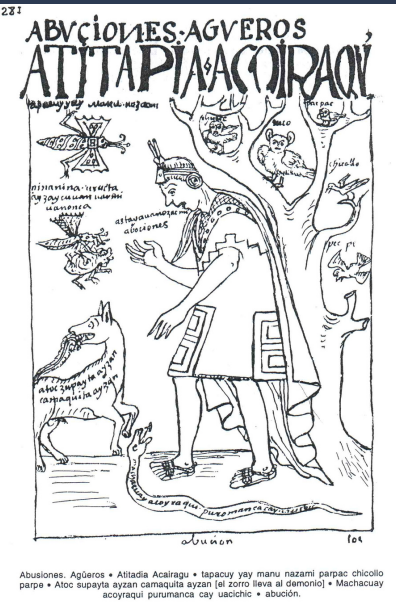


## Supay and its Narrators: Ambiguous Sacredness and Elusive Evil in Early Colonial Peru

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4:30 pm Central



In this presentation, I address examples of early modern European perception of the sacred in the Americas to confront them with Indigenous responses to the distortion of native religious entities and their representations as agents of evil. Understood as a divine entity or a privileged mediator with divinity, the idea of Andean sacredness may be found in Quechua terms such as *camac*, *huaca*, *samay*, and *supay*. These terms, and the concepts they may have originally referred to, were colonized by the Christian Church and distorted into manifestations of the devil. For my study, I focus my attention on the Quechua term *supay*, used to refer to the Andean lord of the underworld who was also described as a ghostly entity. Similar to Peter Martyr's reconceptualization of *cemíes* as demons, *supay* provided a convenient early colonial translation to refer to the devil in the Andes. By analyzing the intricacies of the possible original meanings of *supay* before the arrival of the Spaniards, its distortion in Spanish dictionaries, its manifestation in colonial Andean stories collected in the *Manuscrito de Huarochiri* (1598-1608), and its elusive treatment in Guaman Poma de Ayala's *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615), I seek to understand how the Andean sacred was transformed into the Christian idea of the devil but remained an ambiguous sacred entity for the Indians.

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Rocío Quispe-Agnoli is William J Beal Distinguished Professor at Michigan State University. An expert in Latin American literature, Indigenous studies, and Gender and Sexuality studies, she has published extensively on Latin American Indigenous and mestizo writers, both men, and women, with an emphasis on the literary and cultural production of the Andean region. Publications include *La fe andina en la escritura* (2006), *Nobles de papel* (2016), 2017 Flora Tristán Book Award, LASA-Peru Section; *Women's Voices and Textual Negotiations in Latin America, 1500-1799* (2017), and *Colonial Latin American Literatures in Transition* (2022). She is the Editor in Chief of *REGS/Journal of Gender & Sexuality Studies* since January 2020. For more information: <https://rocioquispeagnoli.com/>