

PREFACE



One makes an ethnography by weaving research experiences together with threads of friendship. We are deeply indebted to many Tupicochans who shared their knowledge with us. For some fifteen years they have enriched our research with their kindness, generosity, and wit. Don Alberto Vilcayauri and his daughter Elba Vilcayauri literally kept us going with their help in lodging and feeding. By sharing their family tradition of community-bonded learning—even walking us to the doors of those who care for the local document legacy—they helped us bring papers to life in conversation. Don León Modesto Rojas Alberco, Tupicocha’s homegrown paleographer, has proven a true colleague in working with both documents and oral traditions. Aurelio Ramos Antiporta, a young Tupicochan full of curiosity and enterprise, guided us in learning about his ancient-rooted *ayllu* (the kinship corporation of Cacarima) through its archive. In Huarochirí (the provincial capital), Abelardo Santisteban Tello afforded memorable insight into the long trajectory of his region’s Andean mythology. Celso Alberco, Lidia Ramos, Rómulo Velapatiño Navarro, and Doris Alberco gave invaluable access to their documentary heirlooms. We regret that the sacristan of San Damián, Roberto Sacramento, did not live to see the fruits of our lively conversations in print. Two mayors—Roy Vilcayauri and his successor, Armando Rojas Capistrano—enabled us to study municipal papers. The officers of Tupicocha’s ten ayllus rotate yearly, so our debts to them and the people they represent have multiplied beyond counting, but we

are indebted to all of them. We feel humbled by their gift: every single ayllu allowed us to study the papers and *kipus* that form its consecrated legacy.

Likewise we are deeply grateful to the friends and colleagues who helped us find our way to scholarly happiness in Lima. The Scurrah-Mayer family and the Vich-Zavala family gave our research the kitchen-table treatment, helping us see specifically Peruvian uses of theories and data, and they were also incalculably generous with practical help. Among linguistic colleagues, Susana De los Heros, Bonnie Urciuoli, and Jorge Pérez Silva enriched our sense of Peruvian language and writing. Emilio Chambi, of Puno, contributed fieldwork insight into the life of scripts in the countryside. Many of the far-flung historians, anthropologists, and literary humanists who enliven current debate about the media world of “the people called Indians” have proven valuable interlocutors. Among them are Kathryn Burns, John Charles, Tom Cummins, Marco Curátola, Alan Durston, Sabine Hyland, Catherine Julien, Patricia Oliari, Tristan Platt, José Luis de la Puente, Rocío Quispe-Agnoli, Joanne Rappaport, Karen Spalding, Gary Urton, and Germaine Warkentin. We thank them all.

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