

Re-Stor(y)ing Theatre History in the Americas:  
Professional Players and the Callao Contract of 1599

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Abstract

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In neglecting Peruvian theatre history, theatre studies has kept a branch of American theatre's genealogical tree nearly invisible, despite the fruits of its growth thriving in plain sight. In investigating a contract drawn in Callao, Peru, 1599, I reveal a culture of secular, professional performance in sixteenth-century Lima. Inarguably creating the first professional company in the Western Hemisphere, the contract features male and female signatories, democratic structure, business sophistication, and a synchronicity with the evolution of the profession in Shakespeare's London. Players were onstage in the Americas more than a hundred years earlier than current narratives dictate. The contract's neglect, and English language scholars' neglect of the Peruvian archives reveal pervasive biases in historiography.

Asking how an abundance of archival evidence and the repertory of Peru persist without influencing theatre history in the Americas, I investigate genetic elements in the *americanity* of Peru, a term defining influences from indigenous, invasive and *mestizaje* cultures. I theorize with scholars Michel de Certeau, Carolyn Dean, Diana Taylor, Odai Johnson and Joseph Roach, among others, how slow-to-change narratives of theatre history in the Americas lack a hemispheric consciousness and are ruled by a series of persistent hegemonic assumptions. I examine dominant textbooks in order to establish Peru's absence. Peruvians

Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Guillermo Lohmann Villena and Maria Rostrowowski help track cultural formations in Peru before and after Contact. Examining the contract's moment in history with a feminist lens enables new perspectives on actors coming to the Spanish Americas.

This project registers cultural influences from an understudied Peru, contributions of under-recognized scholars of colonial and pre-Contract Peru, and the collections of Abraham Simon Rosenbach, the Jewish American bookseller who purchased the contract and in 1939 published a paper on his finding. The legacy of Peru's theatre history reveals the implications and rewards of a hemispheric consciousness for the Americas, and the critical role performance can play in cultures surviving traumatic violence.

*para María*

*sin ella, esto no fuera posible*

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## Introduction

“The other is the phantasm of historiography, the object that it seeks,  
honors, and buries.”

Michel de Certeau  
*The Writing of History*

On 28 June 1599, eight actors gathered at the port of Callao, the nautical entry to the colonial *virreinato* of Lima, Peru. They were joined by witnesses and an official notary of the Spanish Crown and Inquisition; their business to contract together as a company of players for the theatre. They were theatre professionals—Spaniards, *Hidalgos* and *Mestizos*—all *comedienes*.<sup>1</sup> The leading lady and wife of fellow actor Francisco de Pères de Robles made a mark over her name, which was written by the notary, as she could neither read nor write. Yet Ísabel de Los Angeles, the first professional actress of the Americas, had left her imprint on the record.

The port of Callao was one of the most geographically welcoming yet politically contested natural ports of the western hemisphere. It was there this group of eight actors formed a shareholders’ company in an arrangement that was common business in the cities of Madrid and London. Just outside the city of Lima these *comedienes*, men and

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<sup>1</sup> *Comedien*, not as in comic actor, but as in player, usually of the *capa y espada* genre of Lope de Vega’s plays. An Hidalgo/a was of Spanish parentage, but born in the Americas. The mestizo, in these times, meant one of the parents was Inca, or “indian”—as these categories further complicated definitions. For guidance of this stratification and identification, I rely on Marisol de la Cadena, in her book *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco Peru*; she offers racial and class designations in context. The term “indian” or “indio” was, especially in colonial times, used widely and derogatorily to refer to any indigenous person who was not of the noble class of the Inca. Today it is still considered a slur.

women, joined forces to optimize their chances for financial success in a town that not only demanded entertainment, but had more than enough silver and gold to pay for it.

More than three hundred years later, Dr. Abraham Simon Wolf Rosenbach purchased the document I've come to call the Callao Contract along with a large lot of Peruvian materials dated between 1554 and 1610. Dr. Rosenbach gave a paper to the antiquarian society of which he was a member entitled "The First Theatrical Company in America," in which he reported on the significance of the contract; it was published in 1938. In it he translates the document, and reports that the signatories formed, in the language of sixteenth-century Spanish theatre, a *compañía de parte*, or a company of shareholders. The signatories, six men *and two women*, were contracting together as a licensed company for a period of three years, agreeing to divide the shares of the profits from their enterprise according to their tasks as actors, managers, investors or stars. The agreement was similar to the standard professional contracts used in London and Madrid of its exact year. The document was witnessed and signed just outside the city we know now as Lima in the Port of Callao, Peru, 28 June 1599.

When I purchased the treatise written by Dr. Rosenbach from a bookstore in Massachusetts it arrived in the next day's mail mindfully packaged in several layers of protection. I read the short paper in a sitting of just a few minutes and my breath caught in my chest. If the contract proved authentic, Dr. Rosenbach's interpretation accurate, and my historical imaginings even partly true, this contract and sixteenth-century Lima would change everything I thought I knew about American theatre history.

The Callao Contract was signed nearly one hundred and fifty years prior to Hallam and Company's first American performance of Shakespeare, more than fifty

years before Aphra Behn wrote her novel *Oronooko: The Royal Slave*, or Sor Juana wrote *The Second Celestina*, and several decades before Tirso de Molina produced his dramatic mythologizing of Pizarro's conquest of Peru. There were no English or European actors of any kind in the Americas, let alone actresses, who were not legal on the stages of England until the Restoration of Charles II more than sixty years later. In London the new professional theatre was at its height, with Shakespeare performing in his history plays as part of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and likely writing *Hamlet*. Later in the year 1599 The Globe would open. The first company of professional actors in the Americas was assembled and proclaiming themselves legitimate in synchronicity with their counterparts across the oceans. The end of the sixteenth century brought the professional theatre to the Americas, at the same moment in history Shakespeare was taking the stage.

This dissertation begins by regarding the contract itself, an archival holding English-language theatre historians of the early Americas have either or alternately neglected, ignored, missed altogether, not read in Spanish, or until this moment, not yet rediscovered. An interpreter of this document must demand a reorganization for how we trace theatre's development in the Americas and the trans-oceanic movement of old world performance from the European continent and England, to the far older world of Indigenous performance in the Americas—one shockingly new to the colonizers. The existence of the contract disrupts and upends the dominant narratives for origins of professional theater in the Americas, while creating dramatic reversals—geographic, artistic, chronologic, within the ways of imagining, and, I argue, the teaching of theatre history in the Americas.

In *The Writing of History*, Michel de Certeau redefines historiography through the lenses of psychology, religion and history, and in doing so, creates a powerful vocabulary for understanding theatre history, and the historiography employed in telling it. His philosophies on absence, and the “ruptures” in history as written, provide theories useful for encountering and interpreting the Callao Contract. Consider his words on learning to “listen” to otherwise incongruous discoveries:

The violence of the body reaches the written page only through absence, through the intermediary of documents that the historian has been able to see on the sands from which a presence has since been washed away, and through a murmur that let us hear—but from afar—the unknown immensity that seduces and menaces our knowledge (2).

This is the very murmur I heard when presented with the existence of the Callao Contract. This dissertation enters into the “unknown immensity” from the presence that was nearly, but not completely, washed away. The women and men who drew this agreement together left their ghosting presence in the repertoire and their marks, however faint, in the archive. I am fortunate enough to have landed upon the archival sands cradling the vellum of the Callao Contract where their presence is not yet erased.

After I read Dr. Rosenbach’s paper, I needed to determine if theatre historians, Americanists or scholars of the Spanish “golden age” of theatre were aware of this critically important piece of theatre ephemera still housed in the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia.<sup>2</sup> I surveyed a range of texts and spoke to countless scholars. I

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<sup>2</sup> Lohmann Villena published his finding of the contract in 1947. Already archived at the Rosenbach, Villena had no concern with the origins of the profession in the Americas, but rather maintained a local reading of actors, managers, and patrons of plays, primarily

represent that survey in the latter part of this project. After determining that no one had written about the contract in the English language since Dr. Rosenbach's paper, I determined to proceed not only with a study of the Contract's history, but also of the implications of its erasure.

For this dissertation, I pose a series of questions to and with Dr. Rosenbach's pamphlet in hand, and to and with the Callao Contract, all too quietly archived far away from its original home in Lima. The questions I pose through this research alternately examine how and why the contract came to light and then, for all intents and purposes, disappeared. I investigate Lima's archival holdings for the final decades of the sixteenth century to discover theatre people hard at work in the contested, conflicted and complex culture within Lima's early modern sensibility. I agitate the orientation of ancestry for American theatre history, and the perspectives on the machinations of historiography, highlighting what narratives scholarship draws, perpetuates, buries or worse, erases. I examine the historical moment of 1599, in particular for the challenges presented to an actress in both peninsular Spain and early modern Lima, and more broadly to examine the various genetic elements, from Spain, Indigenous Peru and colonial Lima, likely forming the DNA of early modern American theatre. ESTABLISH ABSENCE while restor(y)ing Lima into the discourses and scholarship of American theatre history.

For theatre artists and cultural scholars, the Contract, regardless of archival status as "ephemera," insists in its sheer materiality upon a radical re-thinking of the way we track and teach historical pathways of theatre arts in the Americas. My concern lies with

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for the Corpus Christi cycle, and thus, beholden to the church and its liturgical imperatives.

the implications of this *re-stor(y)ation*, a process that will place theatre professionals in the so-called “new” world far earlier than anyone has imagined, restored to their proper place in history’s events, and re-storied into narratives of theatre history. Why would this group of Spanish actors have left the continent and ventured to Lima, and not Mexico City, the first vice-royalty of Spain? What about colonial Lima was so inviting and what might actors, an already transient breed, have expected to find there? Where, for whom, and what did they perform? Are the ruins of a sixteenth-century theatre buried in Lima for historians and archeologists to still discover? What intersections might Spanish actors have had with Indigenous Peruvians, or with performance practices of faith, celebration, magic and subaltern messages all intended to protect Indigenous culture? On a larger scale of imaginings, what does it mean for American history that they (Spanish *comedienas* of both genders) were there (in sixteenth-century Lima) then (1599), at the precipice of the new century? How must we now consider the arrival of Spanish actors *and actresses* and their effect on the development of theatre and cultural history in the Americas of this hemisphere if we accept they arrived here a century prior to their English counterparts? If we can accept this contract’s ephemeral insistence that any mapping of European theatre’s exportation to lands known to be known Spanish, English and French colonies must now include the fact that Spanish actors were here first, in the other Spanish *virreinato* of Lima, Peru, then how must the family tree of theatre’s early American ancestry be altered? And most provocatively for the repertory and for my ongoing research, when professional Spanish actors came to Andean Peru, what kind of performance culture from the collision of indigenous communities and colonizing forces might they have encountered when they ventured outside the city of Lima?

History marks theatrical activity in the (ancient) new world, as the colonizing forces of Spain brought numerous performance and literary traditions across the oceans. Now cherished by theatre scholars as the first professional playwright in the Americas, Sor Juana Inéz de la Cruz was born in Mexico of *hidalga* heritage, and entering the convent she found relative autonomy as she nurtured her literary voice writing poems and plays. Legends and historians place puppeteers with Cortez in the early sixteenth century but we do not know if they brought their puppets: heirs, living and/or inanimate, have yet to be traced. At the vice-regal courts there were musical performances and masques no doubt influenced by the courts of Europe they sought to reify in the colonies. Indigenous communities had processional performance practices deeply entrenched in festivals of their cultures long before the Spanish Catholic church brought their own processions and use them as part of conversion strategies. Court and church performances had the display of power at the core of their purposes. Performance was a means by which to influence, at the very least, with conversion or execution expressing the extremity of possibility in the reach of theatre's power. Yet with the forming of a shareholders' company, the Callao actors intended to produce *comedias*—popular and full-length comedies and dramas for public consumption. For sale in the open marketplace—*and more than a hundred years before any current history teaches the profession and its professionals came to the Americas*. This is, as I stated above, nothing less than a revolutionary change for how we must consider the development of the theatre profession in the Americas. Moreover, this idea of theatre as part of a city's economy/ecology, and plays as part of a community's discourse, does not enter into the narrative of American History until more than 150 years after our Spanish *comediennes* signed their names and presumably went to work. Little did

they know their arrival would remain unnoticed by theatre historians, and the historiographical power of the contract they signed would stay buried in the archives, like Pandora's unopened box, awaiting re-discovery.

How extraordinary to be able to pose a set of questions regarding historiographic practices at the collision of the most obsessively escorial of any early modern European culture (the Spaniards of the so-called Golden Age) with ancient peoples not using a written language at all (the many peoples comprising the vast Inca empire). Inca royalty and Andean peoples, unlike the Indigenous peoples surrounding the other viceroyalty of Spain's colonies (Aztec and Mayan cultures had printed alphabets), may have had very good reasons for not employing the written word. It was hardly a matter of intelligence, given the sophisticated engineering of the Inca empire, however temporary its existence and sudden its fall. Questions of historiography find a unique matrix of contradictory powers in this moment of chronologic time and geographic space. Add to that, my interrogations are provoked by a document tracing the presence of players/performers/composers of the written word, or perhaps better stated, the memorized word. In other words, in early colonial Lima a culture of words from Spain collided with a culture of performance in Indigenous Peru. After examining the contract's appearance and disappearance through the ushering of Dr. Rosenbach, and interrogating the cultures of Isabel de los Angeles' cities of employment, I backtrack in order to examine how we, as students and scholars, currently narrativize theatre history of the Americas. The glaring absence of Lima in those narratives becomes apparent very quickly.

In an earlier iteration of this project, I used a section to explore the mission and cultural production of *El Grupo Yuyachkani* Theatre, the longest running professional theatre of South America and living archive of Peru's contested history. Yuyachkani began to serve as a site to bear out the argument that not only should we restore Peru's rightful place in the origins of professional theatre in the Americas, but we should put Lima front and center in our research and discourse regarding how performance serves communities—even entire cultures—struggling to survive. If the tenacity of Peruvian culture is any reflection, performance may be part of what makes that survival possible. For the time being, my embedded research with the collective, and in particular my observational and embodied research with founder Ana Correa must wait until a future project. My research and interviews yielded an embarrassment of riches; it was necessary for me to focus my lens more tightly on the contract: its appearance, disappearance, and the implications it presents. A full history of Yuyachkani, called for and timely, will have to wait.<sup>3</sup>

At the center of any imaginative leap necessary to connect 1599 Lima with today's contemporary moment in this strangely off-the-radar city is the faith intrinsic to all historical imaginings. In *The Writing of History*, when Michel de Certeau writes, “The past is a fiction of the present... [T]he same holds true for all veritable historiographical labors” (10), he was striving to articulate the essential truth that no matter the evidence, we cannot know how things “really were.” We cannot. The necessity of drawing an

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<sup>3</sup> The best writings on at this time are from Diana Taylor, who brought their work to theatre discourse, and in Cynthia Milton's work, *Art From a Fractured Past*, in which an essay by Cynthia Garza re: Yuyachkani's contribution to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is an essential element to the newly opened museum archiving the terror and recovery from Shining Path violence.

historicized fiction, or a fact-driven narrative (and likely along with being an actress myself), helps me argue what it might have been like for a woman such as Ísabel to act in Spain, need to leave the Iberian Peninsula for the furthest Spanish colony, and what she might have found when she arrived. In crafting a narrative to contextualize the Callao Contract for its time, place and people, a researcher must, as de Certeau suggests, practically write a play:

In the case of historiography, fiction can be found at the end of the process, in the product of the manipulation and the analysis. Its story is given as a staging of the past, and not as the circumscribed area in which is effected an operation characterized by its gap in respect to power (9).

Never is a theory better applied than de Certeau's to the circumstance of Peruvian History. Never was it better applied when considering what has happened to a narrative of American Theatre History given we have left out the part regarding Spanish professionals arriving first, and the *first* first actors being Indigenous. This language of performance and performers of language were already here, and these actors of Indigenous practices found a way to continue to perform their rituals and reenact their histories. With the existence of the Callao Contract, one can no longer tell the history of American Theatre by telling the history of English Theatre arriving in New England. It is like telling the history of an entire body by describing only one of its arms.

This is not a lightly made claim. For there has not been an English language scholar who has argued, much less evaluated evidence for, the beginnings of American drama gestating in Lima. There is scholarship rattling the rigidity of the master narrative of the Hallam brothers and the American Company, widely agreed to be the first

professional company of performers in (North) America, circa 1732-33. The work of scholars focused on Mesoamerica and the evidence for Tlaxcala language religious plays in the sixteenth century is well established.<sup>4</sup> The presence of an independent, entrepreneurial, professional theatre culture in the Americas, however, and the early modern consciousness necessary to create it in Lima at the end of the sixteenth century, is missing from the narratives. The evidence I present offers that Lima was a center of early modern thought, action, agitation, and invention. The ideas in this dissertation should alter the way scholars, students, and practitioners conceive of the emergence of theatre profession in the Americas, and the genetic code, if you will, of American Theatre. On a more global and interdisciplinary canvas, these ideas could transform the way contemporary readers think about the building of an early modern trans/americanity in cultural expression.<sup>5</sup>

I will return repeatedly to the terms “americanity” and “restor(y)ation” during this work. Americanity was coined by trans/oceanic collaborators; the Peruvian social scientist Aníbal Quijano and Cuban Immanuel Wallerstein are concerned with systems of power and traumatic cultural change. “Americanity as a Concept” was the title of their 1992 essay that argued the Americas were “born as a geosocial construct” by a “constitutive act of the world system” (134). Americanity was a construction, they argue, comprised of colonial fervor, mass destruction and near annihilation of Indigenous

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<sup>4</sup> Versényi, Underiner, and Ybarra all write on this topic. There is excellent scholarship regarding these plays, which were still conversion tools for the priests, and yet, given that they were performed in the Indigenous language, retained symbology, and cosmology that was rooted in Indigenous spirituality and belief systems. I will suggest they remain medieval in nature, and dominated by the presence of the Catholic church and its missionaries.

<sup>5</sup> Junot Diaz, Jose David Salizar,

communities (notably, Wallerstein and Quijano make exception of Peru where they surmise more people and therefore culture survived), slavery of African humans and stolen resources—including metals, plants, humans and germs—from Indigenous lands, along with exchanges in multiple directions of old and new worlds. “The mode of cultural resistance to oppressive conditions was less in the claims of historicity that in the flight forward to ‘modernity’” (135), Wallerstein and Quijano write, with their eyes on the strange hybridity that became the “americanity” in the nature of the Americas. Wallerstein and Quijano, along with theatre scholars Joseph Roach and Rebecca Schneider, inspire me to exchange the “New” of the Americas with the “Old” of European culture. For it is Indigenous Andean Peru which is the ancient world, and I consider the sensibilities of a culture that produces actresses willing to travel thousands of miles to an unknown place to seek their stardom an impulse of modern sensibility, one obsessed with the “new.” Lima was and is a space of colonial destruction/creation and also can be rendered as a place where this americanity in professional theatre began to form. The current narrative of American Theatre History has excluded (neglected? missed?) the primary link of Lima’s theatre culture in the dominant narrative leaving a gaping vacuum when drawing an ancestral chart of American theatre lineage. Historians teach the movement of professional theatre flowed from North to South, much as American history teaches us of movement from Europe west to the Americas. This dissertation reverses these dominant hegemonic constructs and presents evidence for turning the American hemisphere upside down; at least when it comes to the flow of cultural currents expressed on the public, professional stage.

It is within that upsidedown-ness that I wish to employ the term americanity in this project. I will use the lower case, as I intend the term as an adjective, not as a proper noun. Leo Cabranes-Grant in his recent book, *From Scenarios to Networks: Performing the Intercultural in Colonial Mexico* (2016) studies four events in the Viceroyalty of New Spain (Mexico City) that took place between 1566 and 1690. Cabranes-Grant resists using racial categories to describe alterations of identity. Instead he frames his research within issues of experimentation, rehearsal, and the interaction between bodies and objects. He critiques those who attempt to appropriate Homi Bhabba's theory of hybridity, and suggests the term is essentially employed recklessly, even unconsciously. Cabranes-Grant claims "[o]nce we realize that hybridity is not an exception, but the constitutive tissue of life [in the Americas], we are able to ask why we spend so much work hiding it under generic nouns like societies, nations, races, and genders" (Grant 5). In the *mestizaje* of Peruvian identities, forced thereto by the actions of colonization, mass murder, enslavement, and the collision of cultures which otherwise would not have happened but for the need to conquer, to colonize, to convert, hybridity is, by definition, American-ness. The hybridity of today's Americas is, in part, what requires a new consciousness for defining the "American" from which one draws the boundaries for American theatre history. Current interrogations of cultural histories in the Americas will benefit, rather than suffer, from agitating and locating americanity throughout the Americas. If and when we claim the heritage which is yielded from colonial destruction and collision of cultures the Americas have in common, I argue we can effectively restore and re-story the impact of Indigenous, Hidalgo, Spanish, and most importantly, the *mestizaje* of professional theatre's origins in the Americas.

Further, I employ the term “americanity” first and simply to submit Peru as part of the Americas, and Lima as one of the most dynamic and fascinating coastal colonial creations of the sixteenth century. Secondly, I use the term to umbrella the elements of what is culturally an expression of americanity, and which must therefore pertain to any and all of the lands colonized by European, and in this case, theatre-employing, cultures. The English, French, and Spaniards were all colonizers of the lands that came to be known as the Americas. There are connective elements in the theatre practices in each and every of the separately identified nations which could be examined through a lens similarly focused through americanity: forced hybridity of cultures, stolen land and lives through colonization, systems of power during violent trauma of change, collisions of language and visual expression, and clashing epistemologies that contradicted nearly every basis for understanding---all encased in historic assumptions of European supremacy, Indigenous savagery, and violent oppression. It is these events that define and link the Americas, and create an americanity in cultural production. The americanity of the performance created in the unfortunately named “new” world has common, connecting elements as well. Yet scholars and practitioners can only begin to recognize these factors if we acknowledge that in this americanity, the factors of Spanish, and to an even greater extent, Indigenous, influences are rarely given their proper weight in the study of American theatre.

I acknowledge from the outset that this work was catalyzed by the discovery of a single archival item. There can be folly in resting a whole set of assumptions on a single primary source, no matter how provocative. A recent collection of essays edited by Stephen M. Johnson is entitled *A Tyranny of Documents: The Performing Arts Historian*

as *Film Noir Detective* for this very reason. In Tracy C. Davis' review of the collection, she gives credit to the necessary creativity of the archivist, writing "[i]nterpretability rests partly on a scholar's ingenuity." I was met by a reasonable amount of skepticism as I spoke to teachers and colleagues about my discovery. In essence, Davis summarizes the temptation of the detective's first discovery, "Shaggy dog stories outnumber eureka moments." She issues a warning and some serious advice:

Historians can become enthralled by evidence...yet [should] force themselves to be duly skeptical, to seek verification, to distinguish between circumstantial corroboration and counterfactual proof... (D)iscovery is never the endpoint, but rather a new beginning that might entail many more journeys to archives as historians ponder research as a process, not a destination (353).

I am keenly aware of my own positionality in the world: as a western, white, Jewish woman, a scholar, and one deeply invested in the theatre. Could it be possible I find the theatre where there isn't any as I want so much for it to be there? Juan Villegas, who collaborated with Diana Taylor in the editing of *Negotiating Performance: Gender, Sexuality and Theatricality in Latino/a America* (1994), believes this can be exactly the problem. This inherent bias is a matter of mediation of information. "The belief that the description of interpretation of a specific culture is always mediated by the historian's social imaginary, her/his system of values and degree of cultural competence in reading the signs and the context in which the signs were produced" (306), in Villegas's words is also a description of the sand trap waiting for me. I chose to proceed methodically, to identify biases and assumptions during the process, and to balance methods of inquiry.

Critique of historiography had to be organized along with questions of provenance, archival research, biography, and historically imagined connections between the present and the past, one dependent upon the timeless languages of performance and performers.

The dissertation is divided into three sections. Different questions, methods, and sites of inquiry define the sections, yet are all connected by the Callao Contract and its path from 1599 Lima and the hands of eight ambitious actors, to Dr. Rosenbach and finally, to this present scholarship.

The first section, “A Lens for Historiography and Ephemera(l) Matters: The Contract, the Archive and the Collector,” interrogates the contract as a concrete piece of material history. First, how has this contract, well-preserved and protected in the archives of the Rosenbach Library and Museum, written about not once, but twice in the twentieth century, escaped the attention of cultural and theatre historians? Are we examining a case of archival neglect or the opposite, over-protection? Is it a case of monolingual ignorance? Cultural elitism? I detail the stipulations in the contract, and put the contract into the context of its historic moment. After a close reading of its content to interpret the intentions of the signatories, I next ask a set of questions rooted in the methods, or more generously, the patterns of historiography. In order to track its provenance, I offer enough biography of Dr. Rosenbach to understand his appreciation of Peruvian history and theatre practices to recognize the value of the contract. The second part of this set of historiographic interrogations regards Rosenbach as a collector. Why did Rosenbach purchase this particular collection of Peruvian documents, or for that matter, choose to highlight these vellum sheaths of theatrical ephemera and hold it back from his subsequent resale of the entire lot? What can be found about Dr. Rosenbach’s

intentionality in his collection of this material? What was it about Rosenbach's moment as a collector and scholar that would have allowed the metaphoric burial and literal invisibility of this finding? Dr. Rosenbach published several of his own books, with a surprising variety of styles. From the gossipy *Books and Bidders* that relates anecdotes about fabulous deals, dramatic auctions, and the whims of the wealthy, to an academic bibliography of eighteenth-century American Jewish writers, much can be puzzled together by putting his publications in conversation with the singular biography by Edwin Wolf.

I investigate possible theories for how and why, after Dr. Rosenbach's presentation of his finding, the contract virtually disappeared from the discourse. It has only been written about once since Dr. Rosenbach's paper. *Limeño* historian Guillermo Lohmann Villena (1915-2005) published prodigiously during his life; but the colonial period in Lima was unquestionably one of his specialties. Published in 1946 and still not translated into English, his history provides much of the missing pieces of the puzzle of theatre history in the Americas. I rely on the faithful and only biography of Dr. Rosenbach, written by his longtime employee Edwin Wolf. At the end of Section I, I conclude with the essential argument: no matter how ephemeral might be the period of a contractual agreement, or the life of a human being, nonetheless their signature and their actions leave a mark for history, a ghosting presence some collectors are gifted to perceive. Section I argues for the restor(y)ation of the signatories of the contract to their proper place in history.

I pose a second set of questions with the contract in hand, having established its

authenticity and the record it contains. Section II, “A Lens for History: The Callao Contract as Departure Point; the Genetics of Americanness Developing in Early Modern Lima” requires four separate parts to establish the genetic code of americanity planted by those performers, Indigenous or otherwise, who found themselves in Lima at the precipice of the new century. The first departure takes me to the archives from which the Callao Contract had been removed in the early twentieth century and subsequently sold to Dr. Rosenbach. In the National Archives of Peru (AGN) in Lima, I detail documents from the last twenty-five years of the sixteenth century that offer evidence of actors, theatre managers and theatre performances. I regard these documents as being directly related to the contract; some were witnessed by the same notary Julián Bravo, some mention the signatories of the contract engaged in borrowing funds, going to jail, renting space for performance or purchasing slaves. After this survey of archival documents between 1575 and 1600, and propelled by questions regarding life for an actress in Spain and why she might have travelled halfway around the world to ply her trade, I organize the next three parts of Section II by geography. In Part Two, I offer details of the challenges Isabel would have encountered in the fraught years of changing power in Spain. Why did these Spanish actors seek to practice their profession in the impossibly distant City of Kings? In 1599, Shakespeare’s history plays commanded the notorious entertainment district of the Liberties outside the boundaries of London. It was as exciting a time in Madrid, Cordoba, and Valladolid as plays and players occupied the center of popular imagination, much as did the legends being told about the Spanish Americas. I will show through the sturdy, now classic, lens of theatre scholar Hugo Albert Rennert along with that of feminist scholar Joan Cammarata how in Madrid the

dynamics in popular performance culture directly reflected anxieties about women in the population.<sup>6</sup> Women were banned from the stage in England, but on the continent the presence of women was persistent and necessary in the family-driven troupes of Italy and Spain. Lope de Rueda and Lope de Vega, two key playwrights of the Spanish stage, wrote plays that often had the lives of women at the center of their plots. Until the end of Phillip II's reign, women in peninsular Spain had been permitted to perform. By 1597-8, women, and the players, generally speaking, endured a rash of legislation regarding their activities that changed nearly every month. Women had been temporarily driven from the stage by the anxiety behind the changing throne.<sup>7</sup> The Spanish Armada had been defeated, and England and Spain's colonial "projects" were in earnest. Lima was more than fifty years established, and in the third part of this section, I show the city drawn as a spider-webbed and sticky collision of colonizer, Indigenous serf, African slave, and a growing *mestizaje* of mixed-race people who soon self-define as Peruvian. Imagining the transoceanic exchange of humans and products between the European and African continents and the Americas, I suggest the iconic list of germs, guns and steel (in this case, gold) should include performance.

The third part of this section travels with Isabel to Lima, the city of Kings. Why would an actress be drawn there? At the cusp of the seventeenth century, the colonial

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<sup>6</sup> I rely on Rennert's text, even though it was published more than one hundred years ago as nearly every scholar of the period cites from his work without critique. His text is particularly helpful as it seeks out and researches the lives of women in this period. I include other feminist scholarship on the Spanish "Golden Age" of Drama in the bibliography including Sánchez and Sains' *Spanish Women in the Golden Age: Images and Realities* (1996), Cammarata's *Women in the Discourse of Early Modern Spain* (1994) and *The Perception of Women in Spanish Theater of the Golden Age* (1990) by Anita K. Stoll and Dawn L. Smith.

<sup>7</sup> Phillip II to Phillip III.

vicerealty of Lima was hardly a rugged outpost of renegade conquistadors. It had been just sixty-seven years since Pizarro set foot into the Inca empire, yet the Inca had fallen, land was re-distributed (along with “Indians” to work it) to Spanish nobles, the Andean population was decimated, enslaved and/or converted, the gold and silver melted and flowing in dangerously heavy ships back to Peninsular Spain. Lima was the “other” viceregal center of power after Mexico City, and a far more accessible port for trade and not incidentally, naval conflict. Lima was entirely constructed by the invading Spaniards, with the intention of demonstrating/building/wielding/imprinting the spectacular power of Crown and Church. With a linear design of avenues and plazas, cathedral, churches, schools, hospitals, businesses of all kinds, and people from all over the world, Lima was a sixteenth-century metropolis. Flowing with trade up and down the coast of the continent, along with transatlantic, transpacific, and trans-panama exchange, Lima and the port of Callao itself was a center of global activity. Business, yes. But also the activity of cultures-in-creation, languages-in-collision, subaltern resistance and transgression, conquerors, priests, thieves, disguises and stolen wealth beyond description. This was the world these actors entered and joined, bound together by their craft and contract, laden with valuable costumes and led by a woman.

Throughout this work the scholarship of women historians is as key for me as is my own lens seeking evidence of the presence of women and their changing agency in a changing world. Scholars Joan Cammarata and Margaret E. Boyle have written incisive works about women in early modern Spain; their feminism is as inherent to their investigations as it is to mine. Much has been made of the changing legitimacy of women on the stages of Europe during the blossoming of professional theatre. I never lost sight

of the fact that there were two women in the company of this contract: Isabel, wife of Francisco, set to receive a share and a half as the company's star and acting with agency in her own legal standing, and the unnamed wife of Miguel de Burgos, who though anonymous, was nevertheless real, would be onstage and slated to receive a half share of her own. In my thread of connectivity between the centuries, consciousness of my place on the continuum of performing arts practices affords me the sensibility to connect Ísabel de los Angeles with the quartet of women, two sets of sisters, who are founding members of Yuyachkani. Again, this imaginative link will be constructed in a future project.

Returning to the sixteenth century of Section II, I interrogate the state of the Corpus Christi procession in Lima, and whether Isabel might have found, or for that matter, sought, employment in the Catholic processions, as actors would have in Peninsular Spain. Lima was constructed, the populated river basin was swept of the villages that clustered near fresh water, and Indigenous indentured human beings from throughout the fallen Inca *tahuantinsuyo* were imported via the *mita*, or forced labor, to build Lima stone-by-stone. By the mid-seventeenth century, the City of Kings would be surrounded by a wall, the medieval manifestation of the desired separation between the "indians" of the invaded, colonized and blood-soaked land and the "civilized" conquerors. As I will demonstrate, at least during the time under investigation at the end of the sixteenth century, those desired separations were an illusion. As historians of Latin America have argued, the Spaniards were determined, unlike their English counterparts, not to murder every last "Indian" but rather to convert them to Christianity and exploit their labor to build Spanish cities, and mine for gold, silver and any other ore of value. Andean men and women populated Lima, but they were very likely not the Indigenous

people born there. The redistribution of land also included the forced movement of native people. By 1599, Andean people, invading and settling Spaniards, and those Marisol de la Cadena helps us understand as “indigenous mestizos,” are beginning to recognize, craft and carve out a Peruvian identity. Yanna Yannakakis and Gloria Ramos’s *Indigenous Intellectuals* is an excellent study tracking not just the growth of literacy amongst Andean individuals, but also the philosophy of Indigenous ways-of-knowing protected as it must have been during the brutal centuries of colonial rule. This brings me to the fourth part of section II, a discussion of Indigenous performance. Building an argument for the need to re-map the narrative of the americanity of the theatre profession in the Americas, and restoring, or *restor (y) ing* Lima into the beginning of that narrative, requires agitating long-held hegemonies of print culture and the English language in theatre history. Moving away from dramas, or printed plays, and towards performance, or the actions of the players, empowers researchers of cultures that did not, at least prior to Contact, privilege the recorded word over the acted act. It is necessary then, and prudent, to discuss the *first* first actors, while considering the arrival of the Spaniards or the formation of the first professional company in the Americas. The practices of Inca and Andean people existed before any contact with the invading Spanish, and tenaciously, miraculously, have sustained through centuries of cyclical and repetitive nation-wide trauma. Scholar Carolyn Dean writes about Andean performance including pre-colonial practices of re-enactments, mask play, and death rituals. She has also written extensively about the Corpus Christi in Cuzco and her perspectives on performance have proven to be invaluable to this project. In my work in the archives, and in secondary research by Peruvian scholar David Estenssoro Fuchs, I encountered evidence of the Church’s actions

outlawing performances including, in the late sixteenth century, the “dancing sickness” known as the *Taqui Onquoy*. It is the Church’s injunctions against the dance performances that let scholars know they existed in the first place, rather than texts of the performances themselves (which are non-existent) nor any material, visual culture. Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (1539-1616) born in Peru the son of an Incan princess and a Spanish Captain, went to his father’s country as a young man for formal education. No one, then or since, has told the story of his mother’s people and their stories better than he. Though I rely on his *Commentarios Reales de las Incas* (1609), as a primary source for Inca mythology and the historiographic report crafted by Guamán Pomo de Ayala relating what happened to the Quechua people at the hands of the Spanish King’s soldiers and priests, these texts have been thoroughly researched. Secondary sources on Garcilaso and Pomo are important to my knowledge framework, but not central to my questions.

To summarize Section II: In four parts I use the contract as a departure point to investigate the historical moment in time which allowed, even caused, its creation. Part One investigates the National Archives of Lima for documents related to the contract, Part Two queries Isabel’s life as an actress in Spain, Part Three offers a new historicism of 1599 Lima with a lens seeking women, and Part Four details the *first* first actors of the Americas, the indigenous and mestizo practitioners of Andean or Incaic performance. Together these parts portray the genetic code for the americanity in the missing Peruvian branch of American theatre’s history, and offer ample evidence of the richly varied languages of performance in the city of Kings. Lima, it will become clear, was ripe and ready for professional, popular theatre.

There are only a handful of books touching theatre and performance history in Peru. Mid-twentieth-century Spanish language theatre histories by José Juan Arrom (*El Teatro de Hispanoamerica en la Epoca Colonial*) and Guillermo Villena Lohmann's previously mentioned work discuss theatre history in colonial Lima, but neither have been translated into English much less made an impression on (North) American curriculum. Lohmann's book specifically reports on Dr. Rosenbach's finding, and once again publishes, this time in Spanish, the content of the contract. There are provocative openings in the work of Diana Taylor pointing towards the southern cone of the western hemisphere and specifically, case studies involving Yuyachkani Theatre, but current theatre/performance history discourses have not picked up on the potential genealogy of Peruvian performance, so much as on Taylor's theory of a living, historicized repertoire. Even with the growing contributions of Latin Americanists linking politics and performance, Peru seems to be faint on the historiographic radar, under-investigated by Hemispheric cultural historians and theatre scholars alike. There is sturdy scholarship on performance history with a focus on the southern hemisphere, but by presenting the Callao Contract, asking questions about its absence and the implications of its historical moment, my work will not only bring new appreciation for existing, Americanist and Hemispheric scholarship, but contribute new evidence and theory to re-store actors and actresses into the historical era of the under-researched early modern Lima. The Callao Contract's very existence, along with its absence and implications triggers an avalanche of questions. This dissertation thoroughly examines the arenas I define in this introduction, but I sincerely hope it will also inspire probing new scholarship into performance histories of Peru and translations of critical Spanish language texts.

As Section I is grounded in questions of historiography and archival processes, Section II is rooted in methods of formal history: archival research in Lima, geography and chronology. I am not by nature an archivist and chose not to include Spanish archives for this narrowly focused project given the singular challenge of the national archives of Peru. The Spanish age of drama and literature reached its proclaimed zenith in this epoch, and as a time is nearly unequaled for popular and religious devotion to the drama; that passion is matched by the plethora of publications, then and now, in secondary and tertiary research. In other words, the Spanish golden age produced an enormous volume of work, and the current age has produced an enormous volume of scholarship about it. This would have grown to an unwieldy, unachievable project. Despite the abundance of printed material, Spanish theatre of Hapsburg Europe and/or theatre in the Spanish or otherwise Latin Americas, much less Peru, are virtually absent from the textbooks of American theatre history. It is Peru's absence from theatre history and the discourses of theatre academicians that provokes the third section of this project.

As I argue that Peru in general, and Lima specifically are missing from the narratives of American Theatre history, I recognize it is important to survey what exactly those persistent narratives are, and how the inclusion and/or exclusion of a hemispheric consciousness of the Americas has affected those narratives. In addition, in considering reception of the Callao Contract in this historical moment, I am provoked to examine contemporary Lima for evidence of a flourishing theatre, one rooted in historical consciousness yet sophisticated enough to be considered an important, world theatre. The third and final section of this dissertation examines current narratives in the foundational texts of America theatre history to demonstrate the absence of references to Peru, or

acknowledgement what I demonstrate was an active presence of theatre professionals in Lima at the end of the sixteenth century. In early modern Lima, the americanity of American theatre was in full flower.

To provide the critical and scholarly foundation for this project, I needed help conversing, if you will, with the ghosts and codes in historicized imaginings of Lima's past. I am fortunate to depend on and be challenged by the writings of key scholars whose works transcend categories, and who recognize often the absence of evidence contains the very information one is seeking. With the exceptions of particular Spanish language secondary scholarship and the primary documents, with English as my first language I chose for the purposes of this project to work in English language texts. Imperative for contextualizing theatre history within disciplines of storytelling, memory and a living repertoire are the writings of the playwright Suzan Lori Parks, and scholars Joseph Roach and Rebecca Schneider. As I consider the workings of history, memory and co-memorialization, Schneider's theories re-shaping time help collapse the perceived distance between colonial and post-colonial Peru, and to apprehend ghostly presences waiting to be recognized. When considering collapsing (or better, compressing) time, agitating hegemonic assumptions driving historiography, or redrawing frameworks for interpretation of evidence, Michel de Certeau offers powerful tools for interpretation. For visual evidence messaging through art and image in the context of Inca history, the virtual mentorship of scholar Carolyn Dean works like a guidebook in a vast museum. For clues in the empty spaces of rock and ruins, Odai Johnson provides tools for reading performance history in the absence of knowing what texts might have been performed.

Susan Griffin in her essays from *A Chorus of Stones* provides a poetic foundation for stepping gingerly, if not reverently, on ruins mortared in blood and worn smooth by time.

Cynthia E. Milton's edited collection, *Art from a Fractured Past: Memory and Truth Telling in Post-Shining Path Peru* (2014), is a stunning series of essays reporting from the front lines of artistic activism in contemporary Peru. Art becomes a weapon of public testimony in each of these chapters, and Milton regards visual art alongside performance, public testimony, and collective memorial-making. Milton's urgently relevant book pairs with the body of Diana Taylor's work when first introduced to the violent history of Peru, and, in particular, the artistic responses and professionalism of Yuyachkani in context. Though my work with Yuyachkani will be presented in a separate project, the writings of Taylor and Milton's collection were nonetheless foundational for my grasp of contemporary performance arenas in Cuzco and Lima. For a broad understanding of Peru's post-colonial half millennium of history, the texts of Peruvianists Steve J. Stern and Charles Walker are essential. They examine the turning points of Peru's evolution: Inca dynasty, Hapsburg colonialism, the change to Bourbon power, the Tupac Amaru revolution of the late eighteenth century, war for independence in the 1830s, Indigenismo movement at the turn of the twentieth century, then jumping forward to the bloody devastation of late twentieth-century internal terror of Shining Path.

Peruvianists Stern, Walker and Milton are not theatre scholars per se; nor is Peru, much less early modern Peru, on the radars of theatre scholars Johnson, Schneider or Roach. Diana Taylor's foundational theory of the archive and the repertoire also serve my research, and in fact, every section of this work.

No determined scholar of Peruvian performance, or for that matter, Latin American performance, should begin a research process without the body of work by Taylor firmly in hand. Her invaluable books, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, *Holy Terrors*, *Disappearing Acts*, *Negotiating Performance*, and *Theatre of Crisis*, provide not only in-depth analyses of contemporary performance in the Southern half of the Western hemisphere, but apply razor-sharp scalpels for incising the body politic, the work of women, the impact of violence and trauma, and the mechanism of non-centralized, artistic responses by communities-in-crises to the events engulfing them. As a feminist and bi-lingual Mexican woman educated by Catholics in Canada, Dr. Taylor is a global citizen of the Western hemisphere, whose further contributions are channeled through the conception, founding and sustaining of The Hemispheric Institute for Performance and Politics under the auspices of New York University. Taylor has altered the paradigm, forever I might suggest, for discussion of evidence in performance history, not to mention for discussion of the nature of America. Arguing for an embodied memory/history/record carried by the living performer, and within the re-performed repertoire of dances, masks, mythologies, and codes woven into the fabric of daily life, Taylor has opened the doors to bodies of evidence that have been steadily available, but just as steadily under-recognized by theatre historians, if less so by ethnographers or musicologists. Taylor offers case studies on Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani's performances, and major works that focus on the performance craft and politics of women throughout Latin America. Though her studies have been broadly based across the hemisphere, her theories are still central to supporting my work in Peru. In short, Diana Taylor, as a virtual mentor, has provided me a theoretical framework to track nearly every step of the research project.

In the first section, when I examine Dr. Rosenbach's discovery of the contract, and in section three, when exposing dominant hegemonies ruling the histories of American I argue that neglect of material and immaterial evidence from the Global South, or a lack of hemispheric consciousness by archivists and historians should be held to account. Members of my committee asked that I take clear historic chronology in mind, namely that theatre departments per se, and theatre-oriented archival collections did not even arrive as a concept until the middle of the twentieth century. Drama studies had been housed largely within English departments, and later sandwiched with Dance and Music. To paraphrase one committee member's question, how and why should historians be held responsible for neglecting evidence from a place like Peru? Even Diana Taylor's institute for Hemispheric Studies of Performance and Politics had only been around for seventeen years. How could scholarship be expected to pick up the cues so quickly? I grant that materials archived out of context can disappear before history's eyes. The contract was stolen and/or sold from the archives in Lima; its absence legible through the torn edges remaining in the folio where three pages had been sliced away. Archived in another country having been purchased by a collector's collector, and stored too deeply, away from the Spanish language, away from Peru and Spain, away from documents pertaining to the theatre or documents signed by the notary Julián Bravo. How can historians be held accountable for neglecting something they didn't know was there in the first place?

It is a fair question. How to compare the nearly two decades of the Hemispheric Institute to the advances in, say, digital technology in that same twenty years? Technologies of war? Of film? If in fifty years there is a sophisticated plethora of drama

departments in virtually every institution of higher learning in the United States, and in those same fifty years of the twentieth century we have put all of our available media in the palm of our hands, then why is it such a stretch to suggest that in those same fifty years the United States should have embraced the multiplicity and plurality of what is American? Yet the point is taken, and I acknowledge fully the limits to the arguments I make.

Other scholarship that forms critical foundations for my research includes ideas that help dissect the palimpsests of history burying geographies or architectures of the past, and those obscuring cultural practices that were stolen, traded, subsumed or otherwise hidden. In his singular *Cities of the Dead*, Joseph Roach limits his circum-navigational history of exchange routes to lateral crossings of the Atlantic Ocean, yet nonetheless offers sturdy and provocative theories to support the currents which carried flesh, plants and diseases round the cape of Patagonia to the Pacific Ocean, or those physically carried overland of the Panamanian peninsula, and eventually reaching Lima's port of Callao. Roach discusses slavery at-length in his case studies. Though he does not mention Lima or Mexico City, the slave trade to Peru represented just as dense traffic in human flesh as that to the other America, and traversed more than one ocean and in more than one direction in doing so. Trans-oceanic trade routes brought similar cultural collisions to those delineated by Roach in his study of Mardi Gras season in New Orleans. Roach's definition of surrogation helps readers to understand how one body can stand in for another, whether in performative/definitive opposition or in one's stead. These ideas have particular applicability in Peru, as the notion of a pure indigeneity becomes as slippery as attempting to establish the singularity of any race in the multi-

cultural, lingual and racial realities of Peru's version of *mestizaje*. Sarah Rachel O'Toole's recent book, *Bound Lives: Africans, Indians and the Making of Race in Colonial Peru*, is a rigorously researched monograph that examines the colonial slave routes to Lima and northern Trujillo, and how the influx of African slaves changed the status of Peru's native peoples. O'Toole's scholarship supports my research as I parse the dramaturgy of racial constructs in the constructed city, along with attempting to understand representations of race in Catholic and pagan imagery.

I regard the scholarship of Taylor and Roach at the top of a scholarship tree concerning theories of a performed repertoire of historical evidence, especially within colonial and post-colonial performance. Branching out from Taylor and Roach are Rebecca Schneider and Cynthia E. Milton and, in a different orientation, Peruvianists Zoila Mendoza, Juan Carlos Estenssoro Fuchs and Karina Pacheco Medrano. Schneider takes on Taylor's theory of the embodied repertoire and broadens it boldly to consider the additional bodies of evidence made possible by curving time with as much theoretical force as Taylor or dance historian Susan Leigh Foster curves the body in motion. Schneider considers evidence in *what remains after* history has cemented its spin, and housed what historians have chosen, or directed, to archive. Her book, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Re-Enactment* is directly applicable to researching *Inti Raymi* in contemporary Peru, or the re-enactments of battles performed for the Inca in pre-colonial Andean Peru.

Writers Alice Walker and Suzan-Lori Parks and historian Steve Stern, in his epilogue to *Art From a Fractured Past*, each call for recognizing the contribution to history made by writers of fiction, especially for communities-in-crisis, or those rendered

invisible in histories written by the winners of wars and the traders of slaves. Parks writes, “Hear the bones sing” as she encourages dramatists to listen to their ghosts in order to craft stories *because* they are crafting history. Walker and Stern, quoting Adorno, both argue for the power of fiction in times of unspeakable truths.<sup>8</sup> Their collective poetics empower this researcher to again search outside walled archives when seeking stories of, and evidence for subaltern performance cultures.

Peruvian Edward Villena Lohmann and Cuban Juan José Arrom were the scholars who wrote thoroughly researched histories of theatre during viceregal Peru, and in Latin America in general. Lohmann’s *Historia Del Arte Dramático En Lima Durante El Virreinato* (1941) and Arrom’s *El Teatro De Hispanoamérica En La Época Colonial* (1956) look distinctly at the cities of Lima and Cuzco to examine European and Indigenous practices during the vice-regal period. Villena and Arrom’s studies were published in the mid-twentieth century, and provide important information regarding Spanish performers in Lima with a picture of the tensions between indigenous communities and the Church that played out on the stage of religious practices. Neither book has been translated into English, yet they provide some of the only documentation we have of European and indigenous performance practices colliding in Spain’s other viceroyalty. As such, I rely on them as key secondary sources.

Historical novels written in a quasi-Michener-epic style by new historicist Charles Mann draw vivid pictures of the Western hemisphere before contact in *1491* (2005), and

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<sup>8</sup> Parks, Suzan-Lori. “Possession,” pg. 4.

after contact in 1493 (2011).<sup>9</sup> These targeted calendar moments are only metaphoric, as Mann's histories track a century or more of the movement of human, germ, insect, plant, stone, ore and animal during the early traversing of the hemispheric divide. There is overlap here again with texts including Menoçal's *Ornament of the World*, Roach's *Cities of the Dead*, and Sarah Rachel O'Toole's *Bound Lives*, because it is far more useful and accurate to think of the pollination of culture traversing in both directions. In other words, not only were Spanish actors bringing their theatre to the Americas, but the first performers of Andean lands brought their visual culture with them as their country became Peru, and Peru became part of the Americas.

Tamara Underiner's book, *Contemporary Theatre in Mayan Mexico: Death Defying Acts* (2004) and Patricia Ybarra's *Performing Conquest: Five Centuries of Theater, History, and Identity in Tlaxcala, Mexico* (2009) provide broad pictures of the resilience of a Mayan community and an overview of performance in Tlaxcala reaching back to the sixteenth century. Both offer excellent models for building scholarship around collisions of indigeneity and innovation. These writings are integral for establishing a survey of Peru's astonishing past (or reflecting on Mayan ones, as in the case of Ybarra's work), and the diversity of historiographic styles, if rather few complete studies, used to try and capture it. Odai Johnson's book, *Absence and Memory in Colonial American Theatre: Fiorelli's Plaster* specifically addresses North American colonial locales, but he is after a similar conversation with the ghosts of a colonized, obliterated past.

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<sup>9</sup> I mean no insult here. The best of James Michener's epic histories *Alaska* or *The Source*, for example, set a standard for how popular reading could include well-researched but nonetheless fictionalized history.

Outside this purview of this project are the fascinating dramatic texts that offer representations of Peru told through Pizarro's exploits, the Inca's fall, Ollantay's survival, or the Black Legend of Spain as evil colonizers. Though Tirso de Molina's trilogy of the conquest was written in 1632, just three decades after the Callao Contract was drawn, it as an understudied piece of dramatized history and historical drama requires a dissertation project all its own.<sup>10</sup> I also do not examine key eras of theatre culture and the works of playwrights in particular during Peru's seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth century, though not for lack of material.<sup>11</sup>

Nor will I be putting the Callao Contract, an "ordinary document in an extraordinary geography" into conversation with other theatrical contracts of its era. My interest lies in that "(E)xttraordinary geography," the destination culture of Lima, and so my historical questions will be centered on that early modern creation of a city at the precipice of the sixteenth century. I will not be focused on the early years between 1532 and 1575, during which Pizarro's small force took the land and murdered the Inca, the Spanish Crown organized the power, the Catholic church built its conversion armies and battle plans, and the City of Kings was built. My historical interests lie in the already bustling city that became the destination for these actors determined to find a paying and public audience.

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<sup>10</sup> Sheridan's Pizarro, Tirso de Molina's Pizarro, The authorship of *Ollantay* is not known, though it was written in Quechua and published by the priest Antonio Valdez in 1832, it may have been performed from oral memory for more than two centuries prior.

<sup>11</sup> It was my good fortune to meet the daughter of Manuel Moncloa y Covarrubius, the writer of the *Diccionario Teatral des Perú* (1905). His unpublished text, *La Historia de Popular de Perú*, handwritten and in two large manuscripts, has been made completely available to me. It includes astonishing information about popular performance beginning in 1550. It is my intention to work with colleagues on its translation in the near future. I include the title page from his text in the appendices.

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I am driven to re-introduce the Callao Contract to its proper place in the world of scholarship, a place of visibility and recognition by the scholars who will know what to do with all the Contract offers by its very existence. I am also driven by the harder work, the need to bring an under-researched Peru, blessed by an astonishing and resilient performance culture, into the discourse of theatre and cultural history, Latin American studies, and scholarship of the diaspora of performance practice. Addressing these two goals will bring what I trust will be stimulating, and hopefully, agitating contributions to theatre scholarship. I believe if I follow these two imperatives, I will make significant contributions to the discipline of theatre history, but moreover, to interdisciplinary and global dialogues regarding how we narrate the development of culture during and in recovery from colonial conquest.

## **Section I**

### **A Lens for Historiography and Ephemera(I) Matters: The Contract, The Collector and The Archive**

## Introduction

Budding Collectors do not despair. Who knows but there are nuggets hidden this very minute, at your hand! Hidden because you do not realize their potential value.

A.S.W. Rosenbach

*Books and Bidders*, 267

In this first section of the research, I begin with the material history of the documents that changed the trajectory of my investigations into Peruvian performance. At the center of all questions and arguments in this section is Dr. Rosenbach's pamphlet, *The First Theatrical Company in the Americas*, which came into my possession by a happenstance purchase as I explained in the introduction. In the pamphlet, Dr. Rosenbach reports on his historical interpretation of the significance of the Peruvian contract, a new part of his permanent collection of historical documents of American history. The Callao Contract itself, by archival definition an item of ephemera, is the second document, lives at the Rosenbach Library and was never sold again. In that regard, this first section investigates matters of ephemera, and argues that the ephemeral matters matter very much indeed.

I divide this section into three parts. The first part, called "The Collector and the Contract," explores the questions regarding the Contract's provenance, in other words, how and why the Callao Contract came into Dr. Rosenbach's possession. I explore Rosenbach's life to find motivations behind his collecting and trading, and to understand the place he occupied in the communities of antiquarians, collectors, philanthropists and

public institutions of which he was a part, or in some way served. Who was Abraham Simon Wolf Rosenbach, and why did he care about Peruvian Americana altogether, much less a contract between a group of actors? Rosenbach left behind many writings besides this pamphlet, which is a transcription of the address he gave to the Boston antiquarian society reporting on the importance of the contract. Through his devoted and longtime employee's biography and Dr. Rosenbach's publications, it becomes possible, through the lens of historical inquiry, to come to know the man. I argue that however important a contribution Dr. Rosenbach has made by conserving documents, maps and books telling the narratives of American history, he made a particularly perceptive step in noting the significance of the Callao Contract. As historiography reveals, his perspective was not always valued and the challenges of the archival process, along with the implicit biases of historians, and history makers, proved to bury the Contract in plain sight.

The second part of this section, "Disappearance," focuses on how Dr. Rosenbach's newly acquired document remained unexamined, and why the meanings behind the signatories' action never entered the discourses of theatre history. After studying the contract's appearance in 1938, this second part of Section I examines the Contract's virtual *disappearance* from that year forward to the moment of this dissertation. Save for a single page in a Spanish language history by Peruvian scholar Guillermo Lohmann Villena, and to the best of my knowledge, not a single historian of theatre in the Americas, or cultural historian of South America knows of the existence of this first contract between actors and actresses in the so called "new world." How can an item of such significance disappear from history's scope, while archived so carefully? What explanations can be offered for the neglect, by theatre historians, specifically, and

by historians of Americana generally, of Rosenbach's paper, and the item of ephemera so important to American theatre history over which he was enthralled? By examining American society in the fall of 1938, and contextualizing Dr. Rosenbach's historical moment in time and space, I offer some explanation for the Contract's neglect at best, and at worse, erasure from its proper place in the historical record, not to mention our historical imaginations. After examining Dr. Lohmann's text, I offer some theories regarding disappearances, willful or otherwise, in historiographic processes. By zeroing in on Dr. Rosenbach's moment in 1937—the height of the civil war to topple Franco in Spain, and the rising clarity of the Third Reich's numbing tyranny—the theory that an American Jewish collector's findings regarding Spain's contribution to the Americas might have fallen on deaf ears is relatively easy to accept.

The third part of this section offers a close reading of the contract itself. Contracts, and other ephemera such as posters, programs, memorabilia, and another kinds of “remains” whose impact were only meant to be temporary, are nonetheless material. The contract is tangibly real. The three soft and sturdy vellum sheaths are filled from edge to edge on both sides with handwriting showing no sign of fading. The meticulous notary, or *escribano*, carefully labored to fill every usable space with the important words that would capture the agreement being made. The business partnership between six men and two women was only meant to last a short period of time, but the underlying intention of its parties and the imprint left by the signatories themselves is what begs our attention. In the last part of this section I offer a close reading of the contract's content in translation: the basic agreement, stipulations detailed, and the intentionality of the signatories in the context of their profession. Their names are in the record. The historical

moment of the Contract nearly begs that the contract be examined next to comparable documents of the theatre profession of its historical moment in Elizabethan London and Charles III's Madrid. I demonstrate the symbiotic relationships between actors in their time, regardless of their nationhood or lack thereof, at least as represented in their practices and values.

After examining the life and imperatives of Dr. Rosenbach in purchasing and reporting on the Callao Contract, then investigating historiographic and archival processes to determine how and why the Contract remained unacknowledged, and finally, reading the Contract closely for its content, intent, and historicized meanings, I conclude with a number of arguments and a new set of questions. The arguments lay out the cost to cultural history, cultural imperatives, and culture itself, when neglect of the *americanity* of the Americas persists. If we, as historians, artists, thinkers, educators and students, persist in turning a blind eye and/or a deaf ear to the hemispheric evidence of the theater profession in the Americas growing first in Early Modern Lima, we stand to lose sight altogether of the complexity of the genetic strains of American performance. In fact, we have already done so. The signatories of the Callao Contract left their mark for the record. I seek to restore their place and their story for the record, and in that restor(y)ation, widen the lens of our historical and theatrical imaginations.

## **Part One**

### **The Contract's Appearance and the Collector's Imperative**

It was his longtime and devoted employee Edwin Wolf (1911-1991) who stepped up to write what remains the only biography of Abraham Simon Wolf Rosenbach (1876-

1952). Dr. Rosenbach was born into a well-established Ashkenazi Jewish family of Philadelphia, significantly the fourth generation of his mother's people to be born in the Americas.<sup>12</sup> Wolf argues persuasively that Dr. Rosenbach was an integral part of one of, “[t]he greatest eras in the history of book collecting,” those years which encompassed the exact parameters of Rosenbach's life (7). His infamous business, The Rosenbach Company, along with so many other distinctions, eventually helped amass the collections of the Huntington Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Library of Congress and Yale's Beinecke Library of Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Edwin Wolf was by his employer's side until the day of Dr. Rosenbach's death from the ravages of alcoholism, and after more than thirty years in the collector's service knew the Doctor and his proclivities well. Wolf introduces his book by suggesting he was able to keep a balanced perspective

I told the story of Dr. Rosenbach as I knew him, my personal knowledge buttressed by the records, without portraying him as always right always proper and always good but also without emphasizing his faults and his mistakes. I hope he emerges for the reader who did not know him as the greatest bookseller and warmhearted human being that I thought he was (8).

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<sup>12</sup> Wolf writes of the conflicting histories exactly how Aaron Levy, an Amsterdam Jew came to sail to Philadelphia sometime between 1760 and 1770. Aaron Levy would be Dr. Rosenbach's first American relative, and the uncle of his maternal grandmother, Rebecca Polack. Levy started as a merchant, and became a landowner. Wolf offers extensive research on the establishment of the Levy/Polack side of Rosenbach's family, and argues that it was his mother who shaped him. Dr. Rosenbach's mother, Isabella, born in 1834, was the youngest of her family, seventeen years younger than her brother Moses, and twenty-two years younger than Sarah. The Doctor who lived until mid-twentieth century, had grandparents born in the eighteenth century.

Given that Wolf's book is the only biography, I considered its comprehensive depth and breadth, while finding mostly corroborative material in publications written or edited by Dr. Rosenbach himself, along with secondary sources. In addition, that the Rosenbach Library and Museum remains an active part of the Free Library System of the city of Philadelphia speaks volumes within a language of visual and material culture, about who Dr. Rosenbach was, and what was important to him. With these factors in mind, Wolf presents a balanced portrait of Rosenbach—drawing his roots, detailing his vulnerabilities, sketching in the mysteries, and most of all, giving every single detail about the purchases, sales and very passions Dr. Rosenbach found in his love for books, manuscripts, maps, autographs of historical figures, Americana, Judaica, British literature and the theatre.

In grappling with questions relevant here, I will attempt to hone in on how Dr. Rosenbach's path drew him to a hemispherically conscious American historiography, specifically one that told *histories* of the Americas. In addition, there was in Dr. Rosenbach a fortuitous blend of passions that would allow him to particularly recognize the implications of a contract between actors made in the “new world” at this moment, 1599, in *World History*. I argue that as a collector and one of the greatest book traders in history, Rosenbach cultivated a specific taste that drew him to South and Central American documents of historical import just as he was drawn to United States history, and to documents concerned with the theatre specifically. His interest in Jewish history, and in Jewish publications was planted early. The Doctor's family identified as Ashkenazim Jews on both sides. However, his grandmother Rebecca Polack and her entire family joined Temple Mikveh Israel, a prestigious Philadelphia congregation that

embraced the faith traditions of Sephardic Jews of nobility, or Sephardim.<sup>13</sup> Dr. Rosenbach remained a member until the day of his death. I will show how these influences become quite important when considering how Rosenbach valued the Callao Contract, a piece of historical ephemera evidencing theatrical origins in the Americas linked to Spanish actors, and later, how they served to erase the finding from the moment of his discovery.

Dr. Rosenbach was known as “Abie” through his childhood and his mother’s endearment for him was no wonder. Abie was the youngest of Isabella’s children, rosy and precocious. His mother Isabella, biographer Wolf argues, made sure Abie was “[o]verly fat for a young boy, [that he] ate gluttonously and was encouraged to do so. That was an old, Jewish, middle-class custom. So far as his mother was concerned, if his mind was developed and his company manners were good, he could do no wrong” (22). She had good reason to focus obsessively on her youngest, as many of her hopes for the future were shattered by a string of tragic events. Her husband, born Meier Rosenbach in Gunzaevhusen Germany in 1820, came to the United states in 1844 and “took the first, still-Jewish-sounding name Morris” (Wolf 22). Though his merchandise business did

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<sup>13</sup> Wolf writes of Temple Mikveh Israel, “The congregation followed the Sephardic, or Spanish/Portuguese, ritual, and the order of aristocracy still clung to the practices of the noble Jews of Spain. Most of the founders of the Philadelphia congregation have been of German or Central European origin, Ashkenazic Jews, but the maintenance of the customs of the elite and affiliation with the synagogue that followed them had been steps up the social ladder. The Rosenbachs, probably because they were of unmixed Ashkenazic origin, were proud to be known as “Portuguesers” and in that title Isabella Rosenbach found some compensation for her misfortunes. Her children accepted their position as Jewish nobles without questioning the facts. It was important to the doctor to be able to speak of his Jewishness with a colonial American flavor. To his non-Jewish friends, who did not know the difference between Sephardim and Ashkenazim, Dr. Rosenbach’s Portuguese-ness added a touch of mystery and antiquity. To them, of course, he was always a Jew — he evidenced so openly and proudly — but he was a special kind of Jew, who might have a coat of arms and blue blood” (28).

well through the Civil War, as such businesses will in wartime, soon thereafter it failed. Morris and the other two men who married Polack sisters had, in 1865, been known as “The three richest Jews in the city” of Philadelphia (Wolf 23). In 1876, the city celebrated the centennial of the independence of the United States, and “turned itself inside out to entertain the world.” Morris Rosenbach got caught up in the fervor and entrusted his dream of a golden future to an expensive investment in a catalogue of goods for sale. During the tumultuous exhibition, Abie was born. A year later, Morris was bankrupt.<sup>14</sup> The Polack family, including Abie’s Uncle Moses and Aunt Sarah, “Assumed a greater share of responsibility for the large Rosenbach family.” To his biographer, it was clear from the late 1870s forward that, “[w]omen and the maternal line were in control,” of the Rosenbach legacy (24). Though Isabella had great aspirations for her eldest son Hyman, he failed her. By his writings and his work as a journalist, he may have been intellectually brilliant. He attempted a first, brief history of Jews in Philadelphia, printing, “A small pamphlet but a pioneer[ing] attempt when there was no precedent in the field” (24). Hyman drank excessively, traveled restlessly, gained a scandalous reputation, and most hurtfully to his mother, was absent. In painting a picture of why Isabella would have poured so much of herself into her youngest child, and protected him with such ferocity, Wolf writes

A moralist to her proper Victorian core, his mother was shocked by her eldest’s excessive and notorious drinking and philandering. Morris

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<sup>14</sup> Wolf draws a persuasive portrait of how Dr. Rosenbach became the focus of his mother’s ferocious intention. He uses a full chapter to describe how Jewish leadership in the Polack family as a whole drove them towards “pioneering, books and piety.” This promise of intellectual, religious, and American ambition all coalesced in the “mass of contradictions that was the doctor” (Wolf 29).

Rosenbach, who had been able to exert little influence on his intellectual, wayward son, died in 1885. By the time Abie was ten, his older brother, verging on thirty, was almost the stereotype of the star reporter with alcoholic tendencies, already suffering from the disease, which contributed to his early death (29).

Isabelle had lost her financial dignity through her husband's bankruptcy, her eldest son to the "depths of his dissipation," and Morris himself to an early death. Isabella's daughter Miriam was found to be mentally disabled. "No matter what," writes Dr. Rosenbach's biographer, "Abie was to be protected and made something of" (25). Isabella would see to it that Abie had the best of education, kept his hands soft, and as history would unfold, never leave her side.

Uncle Moses, Abie's "Uncle Mo," was the first bibliophile that Abie came to know and love. Uncle Mo had his bookshop at 406 Commerce Street. Abie found a father figure to replace his own, but more importantly, a man who lived his passions until his dying day. From the Doctor's writing one can find an entry that opens so much for understanding the doctor's hunger for collecting books, the value of stories of the Americas, and specifically, to the history of Peru. He even makes a connection between Shakespeare's tale of colonialism being inspired by actions in the Americas. Here, from his *Books and Bidders: The Adventures of a Bibliophile* (1927), Dr. Rosenbach tells of one day when a giant lot of books arrived at Uncle Mo's store, needing to be unpacked:

I looked despairingly at my uncle. Where were these to find room? Each corner of the place, the chairs, tables, and his desk, was already filled; and the shelves of course, were laden. I sighed. Why was Uncle Moses forever

buying, buying, buying and never—hardly ever—selling? And what was all this newly arrived lot worth? It didn't look like much to me. It was then that he caught the trend of my thought and boomed at me from the other end of the room. I was, you must remember, only sixteen at the time, and had yet to learned that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Uncle Moses quickly came down from his ladder, and gloated proudly over the newly arrived pile of books. Then he fairly beamed as he turned to me. "My boy," he exclaimed. 'Americana!' That's the stuff to collect!" He picked up a volume, opening to the yellowed title page and read aloud: "Here is *A Discovery of the Bermudas*, otherwise called the Isle of Devils. It is the work of Sylvester Jourdain, 1610. Americana! Even Shakespeare knew the fascination of it. It was this little book which in part inspired him to write *The Tempest*... Heaps of people," he continued, "can't seem to get it into their heads that there is just as much drama in the history of our own country as in any of the Old world empires. Hasn't my friend Prescott made the conquerors of Mexico and Peru live before our eyes? Talk about William the Conqueror! What is the matter with Columbus, Cortes and Pizarro? Think of the capture of the last Inca! Why, it is far more exciting that the battle of Agincourt (323).

As in much of his own writing, Dr. Rosenbach inclines towards theatrical flair, and thus, tells a good story. In this anecdote, from the article called "Talking of Old Books," he explains how his Uncle surrounded him with what at first seemed an obsession. Uncle

Mo's obsession became Abie's and Abie became Dr. Rosenbach, with a keen eye for the theatricality of Americana, and, as luck would have it, by the Americanness of theatre.

Young Abie had scratched the surface of his own addiction to old books long before his teenage years in his Uncle's shop. The first purchase he made was at the age of eleven and with passive premonition, from an auction house. Stanley V. Henkels' auction room was on Chestnut Street, and Abie's winning bid for an illustrated first edition of *Reynard the Fox* was twenty-four dollars.<sup>15</sup> Rosenbach reports that Mr. Henkels later boasted, "I've seen it start at an early age, and run in families, but in all my experience this is the first baby bibliomaniac to come my way" (11). In Rosenbach's own words one can find the expressions of joy and pleasure he gained from knowing a book or item of historical import or beauty would become his. Uncle and nephew bought into the mania they shared. The nephew writes, "Giving him [Mr. Henkels] all the money I possessed, ten dollars, I marched from the auction room feeling for the first time in my life that swooning yet triumphant, that enervating and at the same heroic combination of emotions the born bibliomaniac enjoys so intensely with the purchase of each rare book" (12).

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<sup>15</sup> *Reynard the Fox* is the central character in a cycle of medieval folk tales from Belgian/French/Dutch/German sources. He is a meddling, even dangerous trickster. Anthropomorphic, he appears on two legs or on horseback earliest in illustrated manuscripts of the thirteenth century. Dr. Rosenbach's purchase was the book *Reynard the Fox After the German of Goethe* by Thomas James Arnold, Esp. published in late eighteenth century England, and including the original plate of anthropomorphic animals in a Victorian orgy. Today on [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com) one (like it) would sell for \$2150.00, where it claims that, "A VERY FINE AND HANDSOME PRODUCTION; This 1870 production is superior to the American issue printed by Robert Brothers in Boston seventeen years later...with 36 full page engravings plus the engraved title page all by Wilhelm von Kaulbach and printed from the 1846 Stuttgart plates. Includes the suppressed plate of the "erotic cat" which was banned from some editions. Large quarto, in the publishers' original red morocco over red cloth covered boards, covers with triple decorative boarder [sic] around finely stylized gilt lettering..." ([abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com)). Dr. Rosenbach's first edition remains in his archives and is often on view in the public galleries of the Rosenbach Library.

From his childhood on, Dr. Rosenbach would buy and sell many books, it was true. More important was how many books young Abie was destined to keep. *Reynard* was the very first, and the first of a distinguished collection of art and books for—and sometimes not for—children.<sup>16</sup>

The anecdote for the purchase of *Reynard* grew mythic, as it, along with the story of Uncle Mo up the ladder, is reported nearly verbatim in both Edwin Wolf's biography and Rosenbach's first attempt at a memoir in *Books and Bidders*. The news of eleven-year-old Abie's successful first negotiation traveled fast around the neighborhood, as Abie needed credit to purchase his longed-for prize.<sup>17</sup> Henkels had negotiated for a weekly deduction from Abie's school allowance,<sup>18</sup> an auspicious beginning for the man who would become the "Napoleon of the auction room" (Wolf 13).

From 1890-94 Abie attended Central Manual Training School, where his high school classmates called him Abe. When his older brother Hyman died in 1892, his father already gone, Abe slipped into place by Uncle Mo's side, destined to follow in his path. Dr. Rosenbach's required high school senior papers were entitled "Bibliomania" and "The Rise of Art in America." In a class history just a few years later, his classmates recorded in jest that

For a number of years after graduating, Abe Rosenbach edited a family and matrimonial paper. But the paper was not a success. The common

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<sup>16</sup> Just for example, Dr. Rosenbach purchased the original artwork and first edition of *Alice in Wonderland*, and the entirety of Maurice Sendak's papers, artwork, and literary estate are archived at the Rosenbach. Maurice Sendak wrote and illustrated the children's classic *Where the Wild Things Are*.

<sup>17</sup> This anecdote also captures the beginning of another lifelong passion of the Doctor's—children's literature.

<sup>18</sup> It was paid in full and on schedule.

people could not digest the words which appeared in the editorials. And what little money Abe did make he immediately squandered in paying fabulous prices for first editions and unique copies of the works of standard authors. You may remember he was something of a bibliomaniac while at school (Wolf 30).

In his yearbook, and in the tradition of reunions where gentle roasting of each other was all the rage, Abe had gained a reputation for himself as decidedly bookish and brilliant, though underachieving, at least for the time being, in the matters of grades, girls and profits.

With his mother's smothering support, Abe went directly to the University of Pennsylvania, at the turn of the century considered an Ivy League school, though far from East Coast Ivy. Abe was not an excellent student academically to the extent that he did not do well in exams; his passion and attention was for books. In the class record, his classmates summarized and trivialized him in a rhyming couplet: "A reading machine, wound up and going. He mastered what was not worth knowing." The doctor they prodded, "Used to boast he had read every Elizabethan play ever written," and his biographer argues in fact, he had. In examining the doctor's journals, Wolf finds

[a] surviving list of books he read day by day in the autumn of 1896 shows an appetite nothing short of prodigious: September 7, Greene's *Orlando Furioso* and *A Looking-Glasse For London*; September 9th, three more plays by Greene; September 10 to 12, eight plays by George Peele; September 13 to 14, four by Lyly; and then on successive days virtually

everything then in print by Kyd, Field, Nabbes, Shirley, Chapman, Heywood Wycherley, Congreve and Otway (Wolf 32).

Young Abie was a budding drama buff, prolific writer, an awkward but willing socialite and of determined scholarly ambition. From his graduating class prophecy, biographer Wolf includes this prediction from a good-natured roasting of the senior class. Abe's future writing, they predict, will be auctioned to his satisfied, if not obese, delight:

The last work I offer today is the famous "What I Know About Books" in twelve volumes by A.S.W.X.Y.Z. Rosenbach, official bargain hunter for the University of Pennsylvania. The gifted author is here today and should see his work bring a good price. And indeed there sat portly Rosenbach, whom I had not identified before, because his form had lost all sense of mere dimension, and had developed at its own sweet will topmost inenviable rotundity. His work sold well, which seem to please him greatly (33).

Consistently, and at least from an initial read good-naturedly, Abe Rosenbach is prodded, mocked and satirized for his small stature and wide girth. Little Abie was always encouraged, even praised for being chubby. Now the young man Rosenbach was fat enough to evoke the insults above; at least his classmates predicted financial success in his future. In the long run, they would be right.

As he did not take Greek and instead substituted math and physics, Abe's undergraduate degree was a Bachelor of Science. Rosenbach who "did not know a helix from a hexagon," would often joke about the deceptive degree. The doctor's PhD would be in the Elegant Arts and Humane Letters, a degree moniker living in a "fossilizing

hegemony of the classics.” His chosen field would be Jacobean and Elizabethan literature, in which “he had read so extensively that his college grades had suffered.” Felix Schelling became Dr. Rosenbach’s mentor, and, “understood that [Rosenbach] was a researcher at heart and recommended Rosenbach as an acceptable and desirable candidate for a doctor’s degree.” Schelling was editing his own *Elizabethan Drama, 1558-1642* and with his help, Dr. Rosenbach was able to identify what aspects of the field had not already been covered by others. Wolf writes that, “It was during this investigative period that Rosenbach became interested in the Spanish influence on early English Drama and found that it had been overlooked” (Wolf 36-7). As I discovered that Rosenbach’s dissertation would address the influence of Spanish Theatre on the English and not the other way around, the connection was made. This was the very man to understand the importance of the Callao Contract; the Spanish professional players were in the Americas more than a hundred years before their English counterparts and Rosenbach knew that was an overlooked chapter of American history.

At the same time Rosenbach and his classmate John Haney pitched an impossibly ambitious idea for what would become *A Bibliography of English Literature, Being an Exhaustive List of Works relating to the History and Development of English Literature and Language: Including a complete Finding-List of the Books, Pamphlets, Theses, Monographs and Magazine Articles Dealing with the Individual Authors*, the doctor was developing his ideas for the dissertation he would eventually write.<sup>19</sup> The former project was a shock to the University of Pennsylvania faculty, who deemed the idea of a bibliography of their proposed scope and size impossible to achieve given the necessary

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<sup>19</sup> The recent edition of the text is in the bibliography under another co-editor, Robert Darnton and was republished in 1976.

expense and times. When George Matt Brett, publisher and president of the MacMillan Company sent a letter requesting Rosenbach and Haney come to New York to discuss their project, the faculty took note. In June of 1900 Abe and Henry set out. Wolf exclaims that the boys believed they had hit the proverbial big-time, “Never before was a pair of biblio babes in the literary woods more convinced that they had found the way out” (38). They pitched their project to include the documentation of 200,000 titles, require six years to prepare, and cost between \$40,000 and \$60,000 dollars (a number suggested by the partners’ skeptical professors). Nonetheless, the project was accepted. Rosenbach had in a sense, “arrived,” and the two young men contributed over 8,000 titles in their two years of work.<sup>20</sup>

Dr. Rosenbach’s dissertation, “The Influence of Spanish Literature in the Elizabethan and Stuart Drama,” focused on *La Celestina*.<sup>21</sup> Wolf offers the anecdote wherein the librarian at the University would prod Abe to return the fifteenth century text, saying, “the Professor (Professor Hugo Rennert) needed the play back soon!”<sup>22</sup> Rosenbach would earn his PhD in 1901.

His first great find connected to the knowledge he so carefully nurtured for English Language Theatre notably was not a play. He purchased at Henkels’ a tempting pamphlet called, “Miscellaneous Poetry” in which the doctor’s sharp eye found a “Fine

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<sup>20</sup> In 1940, *the Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* was published in four volumes, under editor F.W. Bateson.

<sup>21</sup> The *Tragicomedy of Calisto and Melibea* known in Spain as *La Celestina* was published in 1499. It is attributed to Fernando de Rojas, a descendant of converted Jews. The character of La Celestina is often considered the first literary Picara, a concept I address in section when regarding the transiency of actresses and women in general during the sixteenth century.

<sup>22</sup> Rennert would publish the *The Spanish Stage in the time of Lope de Vega* in 1909. I depend on his research and refer to it in Section II.

copy of *Gray's Odes*, the first book printed at Strawberry Press” tucked between the pages. That was enough for him to bid and buy. The real treasure would not be found for some time. “As the account goes,” Wolf writes, “some months later in examining the volume more carefully he found—and one may well imagine became ecstatically excited at—a thick leaflet sandwiched between *An Ode Sacred to the Memory of Her Late Majesty* by Matthew Tomlinson and Lady Montagu’s once popular *Town Eclogues*” (39). We don’t have to imagine how the doctor felt, because he wrote of the incident in his *Books and Bidders*:

I could hardly believe my eyes. For in my hands I held, quite by accident, the long lost first edition of Dr. Samuel Johnson’s famous prologue which David Garrick recited at the opening night of the Drury Lane in London in 1747. Having nothing but my future to mortgage I desperately decided to offer that, whoever the purchaser might be. It became mine for the same of \$3.60. I sat as one in a trance (14-15).

The little work was the *Prologue and Epilogue Spoken at the Opening of the Theatre In Drury-Lane 1747*, the former by Dr. Johnson, the latter by David Garrick. What a find, and one that Dr. Rosenbach would parlay over the next few years into his first publication and a refused offer.<sup>23</sup>

While his bibliomania was nurtured and the doctor matured, his book trading was balanced with his involvement with the Philadelphia Jewish Community and other causes. The specific identity of Jewish Sephardim embraced by the Polack (his mother’s) side of his family, and community issues to which Dr. Rosenbach’s mother was

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<sup>23</sup> The Epilogue and Prologue are held by the archive and are often on display.

dedicated, were maintained by the doctor with a filial sense of philanthropy if less religiosity. He maintained a leading role with the Philadelphia Jewish Heritage Society and on the board of the Jewish division of the New York Public Library for his entire adult life. He was a member of societies for Jewish philanthropy as well. As part of the large system called the Free Library of Philadelphia his involvement as member and director was such that after his death, when the Rosenbach could no longer maintain its economic independence, the Museum and Archive became a part of the Free Library system. Dr. Rosenbach was active in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Antiquarian Association in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, where he would give the paper regarding the Callao Contract. As one of the earliest American collectors to recognize the value of Shakespeare's folios, he was instrumental in building libraries for Folger and Huntington as mentioned earlier, but also conducted philanthropic purchases on behalf of the Harknesses, Yale, the Library of Congress and Columbia University. The doctor was destined to buy and sell more than one of the once available folios more than a dozen times. Along with English poetics, theatre and children's literature. Dr. Rosenbach remembered his Uncle Mo's advice and would collect and otherwise dedicate himself to the preservation of American histories in texts and art. A life-long Philadelphian, he was also a fourth-generation, "New world" Jew. It was his fascination with the writings and artists of the theatre and manuscripts and autographs of history makers that resulted in the Rosenbach Museum and Library archiving precious materials from history of the Americas along with the works of Maurice Sendak, Mercedes de Acosta, Lewis Carroll, Bram Stoker, Charles Dickens, Phyllis Wheatley, early drafts of Dylan Thomas' *Under Milkwood*, the original copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and first

editions of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. Of concern for this moment, Dr. Rosenbach also had the sensibility to recognize the importance of The Callao Contract. Infamously writing, "I've known men to hazard their fortunes, go long journeys halfway about the world, forget friendships, even lie, cheat and steal, all for the gain of a book" (*Books and Bidders* 37), his comments might also explain his self-published pamphlet. Writing, "I cannot resist reading a pamphlet, whether it has value or not. The potentialities between slim covers play the devil with my imagination. It is true that books are my real love, but pamphlets flaunt a certain piquancy which I have never been able to resist. One might call them the flirtations of book collecting" (13). It is easily imaginable that Dr. Rosenbach chose to publish his paper in the small pamphlet merely because he loved the form.

Dr. Rosenbach achieved in his lifetime no small modicum of notoriety and fame. By 1917 he was already so notorious that when magician Harry Houdini addressed a letter to "Dr. Rosenbach, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, finest bookshop in the world" it was enough of an address to reach him without delay (9). He was frequently the subject of editorial cartoons, which alternately lampooned his eccentricity and large size while bringing attention to the perceived extravagance of the prices he paid and secured for individual volumes.<sup>24</sup>

At the time he was negotiating with Conway for the Spanish-American documents, he was also paying for a research assistant so that Conway could write some

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<sup>24</sup> In the appendices I include a group of cartoons drawn of Rosenbach between 1920 and 1940.

articles on trials of Muranos, in Mexico and Peru, for the American Jewish historical society.<sup>25</sup>

Rosenbach was not just a book trader, he was a joyous intellectual, and a participant in civic and social good. In the studying of Latino Muranos he wrote,

“How I should have rejoiced, in the old days, when I was making original investigations into the beginnings of the English Drama under the guidance of my beloved teacher, Dr. Felix E. Schelling, to study these papers, with a chance of finding something that would add, if only a trifle to our knowledge of the subject” (*B and B* 259-260).

It is one thing to study the prices for which Dr. Rosenbach bought and sold some of the greatest literary treasures known: the Gutenberg Bible, James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, a first folio of Shakespeare’s works, first editions of Mark Twain. A different kind of study of the man is possible when studying the items he chose to keep—whether he could not or would not part with them—that became priceless, a part of his life, and ultimately, a part of the permanent archive.

He prioritized English literature and Americana in such a way that this intersection allowed him to become, “The Man who Bought Alice.” “Alice” refers to C.S. Lewis’ first, magnificent manuscript of *Alice in Wonderland*—the price in 1928 was 15,400 pounds sterling. Dr. Rosenbach purchased a First Folio of Shakespeare’s plays for 8,600 pounds sterling in 1922 and 14,500 for another in 1933—prices considered outrageous in their time, yet became the twentieth century platform from which prices for

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<sup>25</sup> Also known as crypto jews, or conversos, these were Jews living under Spanish rule who converted, as required by the forces of the inquisition, yet continued to practice Judaism secretly.

the priceless folios leapt beyond imagination, after which the existing folios became unavailable. Rosenbach would go on to buy and sell the Folios more than a dozen times in his life. Rosenbach purchased one of the few Gutenberg Bibles for \$106,000, which became a part of his permanent collection, and secured another for Yale. His collections, and the library of books, historical documents, ephemera, maps, graphic prints, autographs, manuscripts and other incunabula is one of the most important collections of this nature in the Americas. In terms of work that is particular to the questions posed by this dissertation, I recognize Rosenbach as a scholar of theatre historiography, with a keen eye for the connections between England, Spain and the Americas. Secondly, an overview of his own writings lends clarity to his commitment to Judaica and the dis-ease closest to his heart, bibliomania. Finally, his collection reveals a broad assumption and keen understanding that American history, and historiography regarding the founding of the Americas, requires a lens wide enough to regard a hemisphere of activity, and not just the actions of a landmass that came to be known as the United States. His consciousness empowered a collection of materials drawing from the several invasions of the hemisphere from all oceans and the landmasses that forms its continents. He valued without judgment the writings of conquerors and the conquered, priests of the varied brotherhoods, liars and poets, playwrights and cartographers, botanists and a most average man, yet one imperative to actor and viceroy alike, the tailor.

In *Book and Bidders* Dr. Rosenbach that writes that as much as he loves books, “It is the little things” (275) that he falls in love with, which help him to capture history:

For instance, I found and purchased the first tailor bill in the New World. It was the original invoice set to Hernando de Soto in 1536, several years

before he made his momentous discovery of the Mississippi River. The bill was dated from Lima, the city of the Kings, which had only been founded in 1535. There were forty items listed [such as], “Bolts of the finest black velvets and satins, yards and yards of scarlet taffeta for linings.” Can you see the great *conquistador* flashing his way through some primeval jungle, clad like the king’s courtier that he was, even in the wilderness? But to me, the most startling things about this bill of \$1400 for one month’s raiment was that it was —receipted! How the tailors on Fifth Avenue would gloat over this relic of their earliest predecessor. Perhaps some way will be found to make a facsimile of the first receipted weapon of their trade. Although the clothes and the tailor who made them, as well as the customer who wore them, have all long since evaporated, Juan Ruiz, the tailor’s name, will live” (*Books and Bidders* 276).

As with the collecting of historically significant signatures, “even a poor tailor” can be remembered when he signs his name.<sup>26</sup> In Dr. Rosenbach’s mind the contract made between eight actors in 1599 was singularly important as it is complete with signatures, it captures the names, professions and intentions of the people who signed it; in other words, the contract captures their spirit. Dr. Rosenbach believed, as I do, that in the contract he had the signatures of the first actors in the Americas. For him, this was a priceless find and therefore would not be sold.

Dr. Rosenbach, raised within the ferocious piety and community of his mother’s congregation, manifested his faith in a devotion to collecting Judaica, books and

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<sup>26</sup> Motel, the tailor from *Fiddler on the Roof*, sings to Tevye, his father-in-law-to-be, as he begs for Tzeitel’s hand in marriage, “even a poor tailor deserves some happiness.”

manuscripts that captured a story of the (Western) hemisphere's earliest Jews. Among Dr. Rosenbach's own heartfelt, yet relatively self-involved memoir-type books, he also published a book of a very serious and long-lasting relevance. Determined to preserve Jewish contributions to early American history, Dr. Rosenbach assembled and published a bibliography of books by Jewish American authors published before 1850.<sup>27</sup> It was the first, and for many decades the only guide of its kind in the world. Perhaps his most important contribution is *An American Jewish Bibliography* (1926). Noted by Salo W. Baron, editor of the important collection, *Steeled by Adversity: Essays and Addresses on American Jewish Life*, (1971) as an example of the fact that, "[g]ood bibliographic aids are doubly imperative" for the survival of the Jewish community, the bibliography documents all the volumes by Jewish writers published in America before 1850. The bibliography is, "A good example" of a volume which necessarily offers a, "Reconstruction of publications accumulated by past generations," memories of which were at risk of being lost altogether (*Adversity* 39). Rosenbach's self-styled memoirs are *Books and Bidders*, *A Book Lover's Holiday* (1936), and his attempt at sensational self-reporting, *The Unpublishable Memoirs* (1924) in which he dishes and gossips and brags about the size of his ... sales. (*Unpublishable*, 3-14). Rosenbach's bibliography was reprinted as *Jewish Americana: A Catalogue of Books and Articles by Jews or Relating to Them Printed in the United States from the Earliest Days to 1850 and Found in the Library of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati* in 1954, and has proven to be an essential resource for any serious historian of American Jewish history. In further demonstration of its commitment to literacy, Philadelphia's Jewish

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<sup>27</sup> This bibliography is separate from his joint project with Henry. This guide is listed in the bibliography here

community organized the first literary society of its kind in their city in 1850, called at the time the Young Men's Hebrew Literary Association.<sup>28</sup>

I've established Dr. Rosenbach's academic credentials and collecting proclivities, his early love for plays, being urged towards the value of Americana by his inheritance of his Uncle's spirit and much of his bookshop, his obsession for great finds, beautiful books, and artifacts. Let's return to the inquiry most relevant here and visit Dr. Rosenbach's words about his love of the autograph—not such as we think of a celebrity seeker today but in this regard:

Although the printed books relating to America are fascinating and instructive, autographs make the incident they describe alive and vivid for us. Every true collector is strongly moved when he sees the autography of a great personage in his country's history... Words, written by the actor himself as he helps to complete the drama, are personal things which unfailingly appeal to the imagination (*B and B* 284).

In this response, Dr. Rosenbach was not speaking about the autographs of the Callao Contract, but to autographs in general, wherein the signer becomes an actor in history; the corollary is inviting. In unearthing the Callao Contract, we have the happy instance of double entendre that works in favor of the metaphor coming to life. The actors acted, as a company and with their autographs, on their own behalf.

In Dr. Rosenbach's pamphlet, *The First Theatrical Company in America*, he describes the contract, and how he obtained it, "It is written in ink on six folio leaves. It was probably at one time among the papers of the notary public Julián

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<sup>28</sup> The first YMCA was not organized until 1851, a year later (*Steeled by Adversity*, 351).

Bravo. I secured the document from that indefatigable collector and remarkable student of early American history, the late Bertram T. Lee” (*The First* 8). Lee had already earned his reputation as a traveler (and more than likely, thief) of Peru when he translated early accounts of the Peruvian Amazon in this same period.<sup>29</sup>

In Wolf’s biography, he comes to an important turning point in the welfare of the entire Rosenbach family. In 1927, the Rosenbach Company was in economic turmoil. Wolf describes what was not the largest, but arguably was the most important purchase Dr. Rosenbach ever made. This purchase included hundreds of documents as will be described in the biographer’s words to follow, quite possibly the acquisition of the Callao Contract, and which as a whole proved large enough to rescue and stabilize the fragile company. Wolf casts the sale in cosmic terms:

All great events, the Elizabethans believed, were spelled out in the conjunction of planets. All great sales are made in the conjunction of goods, the buyer, and the coalescing force that brings them together. At this juncture in the fortunes of the house of Rosenbach, the goods were the accumulation of original documents relating to the early history of Mexico and Peru, which had been secured a little more than a year earlier for \$37,500, together with separate purchases from the mining engineer and indefatigable prowler through forgotten Spanish-American archives, G.R.G. Conway. Conway had written Jerome Brooks, who had left Rosenbach to become a professional on his own and the rare book editor

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<sup>29</sup> Carvajal, Gaspar De, Medina, José Toribio, Fernández De Oviedo Y Valdés, Gonzalo, Lee, Bertram T., translator, Heaton, H. C., and Jay I. Kislak Reference Collection. *The Discovery of the Amazon According to the Account of Friar Gaspar De Carvajal and Other Documents*. New York: American Geographical Society, 1934. Print.

of *The New York Times*, about the pioneer printing of Ricardo in Lima. Brooke said suggested that he, “Ought to stop in to see Dr. Rosenbach when you next came to New York.” The introduction was a felicitous one. Archives in Latin America were in the hands of underpaid keepers who were only too ready to supplement their income by selling what they were charged to preserve. The story is told that Conway, having bought an important Cortez document from a private party, recognized it as one stolen from an archive. Generously, he bought it and returned it. A second time it was offered to him for sale, and his second time he bought it and returned it. The third time the same document came on the market Conway bought it and sold it to the Doctor. From monasteries and from old Spanish colonial families who did not want to bother with them, Conway channeled his finds to Dr. R. Both were satisfied; Conway was making his hobby pay and Dr. Rosenbach was quietly amassing an impressive collection of hitherto unknown and unexploited material of supreme historical importance (300).

There is a contradiction here. The pamphlet indicates the purchase was made from Lee, and in the biography Wolf credits the sale to Conway. Both men were established as traders with Rosenbach. Whether the seller of the Callao Contract was Conway, or if Dr. Rosenbach purchased the Contract in a separate sale from Lee, the anecdote demonstrates the doctor’s intentionality in securing items of importance to American history by securing items of South American history. The “cosmic” timing referred to above is applied due to the fragility of the Rosenbachs’ state of affairs. They needed a major sale

in part to stave off the extravagant buying spree that had seized the Doctor's surviving elder brother Phillip, a trader of antiques.<sup>30</sup> Phillip's aspect of the Rosenbach business simply did not turn the profit that a single book could, and it required a great deal more space. Yet for the doctor to purchase a lot of Americana of \$37,500 when the business was at stake proved to be not foolhardy, but providential and auspicious.

A buyer came seeking the unprecedented lot of Americana; he was Edward S. Harkness.<sup>31</sup> The doctor already knew that Harkness was not interested in adding to his personal collection but rather in doing significant purchases towards the purpose of donation towards major institutions. The doctor had the goods, now he had the buyer.

The third element, the force that evinced a great sale, requires discussion. Wolf describes the event that stabilized the Rosenbachs' fortunes in 1928, and though likely stolen or otherwise traded away from Peruvian archives, the documents were about to be archived permanently in North America:

[The] Coalescing force was a stage set in the paneled dining room.... A large pile of obviously very old papers was impressively arranged on the table against the background of Jacobean woodwork. The doctor, with the usual preliminaries to such an event, food and drink inside him, was keyed up to his role as super salesman. What the doctor was attempting to sell

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<sup>30</sup> Phillip is the doctor's still surviving older brother. They lived together until Phillip married. Phillip traded antiques, *objets d'art* and furnishings, and the Doctor lived the rest of his life with his mother and sister.

<sup>31</sup> 1874-1940, an American philanthropist whose wife Mary Stillman Harkness continued his generosity well after his death. Contributions to the libraries of Yale, Columbia, Harvard, Phillips Exeter Academy and the Metropolitan Museum of Art were made possible through the representation of Rosenbach. In 1918, Harkness was the fifth richest person in the United States. He inherited his fortune from his father, whose wealth was earned through Standard Oil. <http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/>

was worthy of his metal. It was, in effect, a whole archive of the early history of Peru, with the names of the early explorers shining in it like Inca Gold. There on the table on October 12, 1928 was the bill of sale received by Pizarro for the Armada of ships which he and his fellows bought from Pedro de Alvarado's on August 26, 1534, for 100,000 pesos of gold. There was Alvarado's transfer to the same explorers of his grant from Charles the Fifth to discover, conquer, and pacify the islands and coasts of the South Sea. There was the order of the Viceroy of Peru in 1580 calling back the Indian runners who had been stationed along the coast to convey the news of the passage through the Straights of Magellan into the Pacific Ocean of the English freebooters understood [sic] Francis Drake. The collection, however, was not merely a choice handful of colorful documents by and related to a few great figures in history; it was a mass of hundreds of documents telling the story of an epic. The soldiers, the monks, the nobles, the Indians of 16th and 17th century Peru came alive and filled the dining room with the aura of blood, iron, gold, and incense (300-01).

Despite the painful allusion to stolen Inca gold and the blood of millions murdered, I am sure that Uncle's Mo's voice was ringing in the doctor's head, "Americana my boy!" and the metaphor shines to illuminate the value of names. The autographs of early explorers of the Americas spoke eloquently of their value to Dr. Rosenbach, they made heavy bars of solid gold seem insignificant in value. Knowing his family business was on the line, but also aware of how much history was at stake, he nearly begged Harkness to buy the

entire collection for the Library of Congress. Wolf reports that Dr. Rosenbach cried out with great emotion, “Jesus Christ, it's the greatest lot of Americana in the world!” and Harkness, as much as anything due to his care for the doctor replied, “Don't cry doctor! I'll take them” (301). The \$550,000 Harkness paid for the Americana was “[t]he largest sale the Rosenbachs ever made and the largest sale of its kind, except for whole libraries, ever made in the rare book business” (302). Rosenbach, as had been his custom for years, chose a few items to take home as remembrances of the tremendous sale:

Before the South American and Mexican documents were offered to the Harknesses, he extracted from the mass of material: a handful of Cortez letters, a few Pizarro papers, what was repeatedly said to be the only known as signature of Fernando de Soto, the discoverer of the Mississippi River, and a dozen or so other, not too insignificant, items, that Vesey [Rosenbach's employee] quietly put into a bookcase in the DeLancey Street living room. There most of them remain, emerging occasionally in later catalogs and prices ranging up to \$33,500 per document and returning again when no takers were found. Many are still in the collection of the Rosenbach foundation, distinguished mementos of the biggest sale the greatest dealer ever made(303-4).

At this time, it is uncertain whether the Callao Contract was among those documents Dr. Rosenbach extracted. Or if his purchase of the Callao Contract was to come later, closer to the year in which he gave the paper on its implications.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The archivist at the Rosenbach, Elizabeth Fuller, was unable to tell me when and from whom the Rosenbach purchased the Callao Contract. The Contract is listed in *A Calendar of the Peruvian and Other South American Manuscripts in the Philip H. and A.S.W.*

With this sale to Edward Harkness now on the record as one of the greatest sales of his or any time, the doctor became a sensation. These are the doctor's words about one of his buyers, Lessing Rosenwald, but he could just as easily be describing himself:

It is hard to explain to one unsympathetic to bibliophilism what it is that makes a man want to buy old books. That indescribable desire to collect partly because of man's inward drive to collect something. Partly because of a deep appreciation of the beautiful and the significant, and partly because of an altruistic wish to preserve the best of past history for the benefit of the present (464).

Dr. Rosenbach might have been the only collector, perhaps the only historian, who was prepared to recognize the value of the contract. I would argue it was no accident that he held back the contract as a moment of this life-changing sale. It was not until 1937 however, that he gave the paper in which he presented the importance of his find.

It is no surprise he used the pamphlet form to publish his address on *The First Theatrical Company in America*. The first words of Rosenbach's remarks at the annual meeting of the Boston Antiquarian Society set the stage, or captured the drama between Spain and England at the end of the sixteenth century, in addition to establishing his bona fides as a scholar of European history

The sixteenth century was drawing near its close. In England, Elizabeth reigned supreme. The victory over the armada of Spain was still ringing in

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*Rosenbach foundation, 1536-1914* compiled and edited by David M. Szewcyk in 1977. I met with Dr. Szewcyk who runs an important rare book store in Philadelphia. He had no documentation as to how Rosenbach came into possession of the contract. Neither Fuller or Dr. Szewcyk could tell me if anyone else had ever inquired about the contract, as privacy laws, at least as of this writing, still apply to library borrowings.

everyone's ears. Drake and Hawkins had already died. Raleigh, though his Roanoke colony had failed, had sailed on to find the fabulous wealth of El Dorado in Guiana. (Rosenbach, *The First* 3).

Along with knowingly reporting on the pulse of the tension between the nations of England and the Hapsburg empires' Protestant and Catholic monarchs respectively, Dr. Rosenbach also makes evident his knowledge of historical theatre practices. He places Shakespeare in a broad context that includes the lasting aura of the morality plays and mystery cycles, lesser known English writers and events most important to theatre folk, starting with the murder of Christopher Marlowe. In one sweeping sentence he summarizes how liturgical theatre began to transform into a profession:

Marlowe had been killed six years before in a tavern brawl. Shakespeare was flourishing in London as an actor-manager. His first play *Titus Andronicus*, had appeared in 1594; in 1597 were published, *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*; in 1598 *Loves Labors Lost* and *Henry IV*. To be sure, other of his plays had been produced by 1599, for Francis Meres, in the excessively rare *Palladis Tamis*, mentions ten. The theatre, having passed through many stages of religious celebrations, the homely biblical cycles of merchant guilds, the morality plays and the interludes, had finally reached its maturity (3).

Dr. Rosenbach, with his erudite knowledge of Mere's manuscript, and the generally agreed upon narrative of theater's development from streets to purpose built houses, established that he understood the profession's history. With a knowledge grown in his own dissertation, he knew the vigor of Spain's theatre and her dramatists were as

essential to a picture of sixteenth century theatre history as was Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Drawing a genealogy from Lope de Rueda to Lope de Vega, he locates Calderon and Cervantes among the generation of writers appearing to define the literary cusp of the two centuries.

Next in his remarks, Dr. Rosenbach brought his audience to the Western hemisphere, and made the useful corollary between the more recent fervor for gold in California and the rush for wealth that preceded it by three hundred years—in other words, he set the tone of the torrid greed for gold and human souls for which conqueror and priest alike ventured across the oceans to the western coast of South America—and why players for the stage would have followed

Peru in 1599 stood in the same position to Spain as did California to the United States after the discovery of gold in 1849. Every great treasure ship brought back to Spain the gold of America and exciting tales of the great new country. We can well believe that the conquistadores and their immediate successors, their pockets filled with gold, desired something more than precious jewels, paintings, ornaments and objets d'art. These hardy early pioneers wanted to be amused. Thus to the new world trooped actors and actresses, quite ready to entertain and at the same time to reap their share of the golden harvest (5).

Once Rosenbach gave a birds' eye view of the English and Spanish cultures developing a professional theatre at the end of the sixteenth century, he at last presented his extraordinary finding

We know from a recently recovered manuscript that in 1599 a number of comedians [sic] came to South America and formed themselves into a stage company. This hitherto unknown document is the earliest record of any theatrical company in the western hemisphere. Nothing has been known in the annals of the theater in the New World of this first association of actors (6).

There were some forms of drama present in the religious festivals celebrated in Peru and I go into some detail in Part II. Certainly in Spain from the Middle Ages mummery and loosely constructed religious dramas had been acted, especially on the Feast of Corpus Christi. They combined pageant, ritual and biblical history. That such religious dramas existed in Lima we know, from Luis A. Sanchez's *La Literatura Peruana* where it stated that the first Council at Lima in 1582 presented plays treating religious matters (xix). There was any numbers of reasons for an anti-theatrical prejudice in the city of Lima, and as scholars of Colonial North American theatre history argue, evidence of an anti-theatrical authority is sure proof that there existed theatre in the first place, and is often the only evidence we have at all that theatre performances existed.<sup>33</sup> Such censorship existed when it came to the church's attempt to control the performance traditions of the Indigenous peoples of the Andes, and I discuss this dynamic in Section II. For now however, we do not have legislation against theatre, rather, we have the record of professional theatrical practices, and the longed-for (voices? echo? reverberation? ghosting?) of actors themselves, now present with their autographs, captured at the moment of their business and collective intent. With this next excerpt, Rosenbach

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<sup>33</sup> Odai Johnson makes such arguments; Sections II and II attend to this arena of evidence.

demonstrates his knowledge of the timetable of theatre history in the Americas, England and Spain, and the connection between publishing and the business of theatre, both practices associated with the emergence of early modern culture:

A printing press had been established at Lima in 1583, and a dramatic company was in existence before the turn of the century. So we see an advanced stage of European civilization existed in Peru during the Golden age of both the Spanish and English drama, before there was a single permanent English colony in North America... Whereas we can be sure this company produced the dramas of Lope de Vega in South America, no play of Shakespeare is known to have been staged in North America until Thomas Kean opened in *Richard III* at the theatre in Nassau Street in New York City in 1750 (9).<sup>34</sup>

He gave the paper presenting his findings to his own society of historians, antiquarians, booksellers, book collectors and very likely relatives. Yet the evidence of actors at work in Early Modern Lima failed to raise interests among historians of either the Theatre or of the Americas. Why was no one interested in what Dr. Rosenbach had found, and what he suggested were its implications?

Now that I've given a portrait of the collector, explored his motivations for interest in the Callao Contract and offered his documentation of his find, next I investigate within the archival process possible explanations for the virtual disappearance

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<sup>34</sup> Rosenbach refers to one of the master narrative of American theatre history, one driven and perpetuated by the dominance of Shakespeare in historic and contemporary imaginations. I address these narratives in Section III.

of the Callao Contract from the record, and why there have been no further investigations whatsoever about the implications of its existence.

## **Part 2**

### **Collecting Matters: The Contract and Archival (Dys)functions**

If one could but catch the vandals in the act of disappearance.... the  
denotation moment, if you will, in which the invisibility is articulated...

Odai Johnson

Afterword—Scarred Texts: Etudes on Absence  
*A Tyranny of Documents*

There are two kinds of disappearances in the case of the Callao Contract. As this dissertation will present in Section II, the contract was torn from the bound folio of documents witnessed by the Notary Julián Bravo in the last decades of the sixteenth century, thus disappearing the contract in the most literal way, a disappearance via theft and profiteering from its place in the historical record.<sup>35</sup> In this second part of Section I, however, I am concerned with a different kind of disappearance, one better described as invisibility. As I had discussions with noted historians and searched the record, I could find no other mention of the Callao Contract in English language publications. The contract, carefully archived in a library of a noted collector, and presented to scholars and patrons of the Humanities, had disappeared in plain sight. For all distinct purposes, it was rendered invisible. I ask how this could have happened.

By conversing with scholars and researching secondary and tertiary Americanist scholarship on early modern and/or colonial theatre, Indigenous performance in South

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America, and Latino Theatre for knowledge of either the Callao Contract, and/or of Early Modern Lima as a site of the emergence of the profession in the late sixteenth century, I struck one dead end after another. I asked when and where each of these scholars understand the emergence of theatre profession occurred in the Americas.<sup>36</sup>

Carolyn Dean and Raquel Chang-Rodriguez are both Peruvian historians, and not incidentally, historians of Peru. Both focus on Indigenous and pre-Contact practices that have sustained over time, and with the syncretism of performance practices of one faith co-existing within, beneath, or side-by-side the practices of another. They both argue for the sources of performance in ritual and religious practices, and locate these practices outside the colonial centers of Spanish powers.<sup>37</sup> Neither discusses professional theatre, or theatre artists, regardless of racial designation or religion.

Latin Americanists in theatre history of this period focus on “New Spain,” and the regions surrounding what would become Mexico City, even as Lima emerged early as a matrix of viceregal and church authority in a far more cosmopolitan (if the term might apply) trade and transient zone. Patrician Ybarra’s study of Tlaxcalan theatre, in *Performing Conquest: Five Centuries of Theater, History, and Identity in Tlaxcala, Mexico*, creates a fascinating parallel narrative to Lima’s in the Central lands of the Americas, yet Ybarra does not acknowledge or cite concurrent performance practices in Lima, the “other” center of Indigenous and by 1535, Spanish authority. Historian Adam

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<sup>36</sup> I offer a survey of these conversations, and more so, with the scholarships of those I spoke with, in Section III.

<sup>37</sup> Chang’s reading of syncretism called *Hidden Messages* proved critical to my interpretation of visual art and performance. Dean’s essay *Theatre of War*, regarding pre-contact performative reenactments of battles by the Andean peoples, became irreplaceable for the high-quality reproductions of the visual arts in the coffee table collection called *Conflicted Messages: in Inca Culture*. More on all of this in section II.

Versényi in his book, *Theatre in Latin America: Religion, Politics, and Culture from Cortés to the 1980s* (1993) had not considered Lima in his survey. For activities prior to the year of the Callao Contract, his writing was primarily concerned with religious and conversion-oriented texts and performance. He does acknowledge that among the crew on the 1518 voyage of Hernán Cortez (1485-1547), which would eventually land at Vera Cruz and lead to the fall of the Mayan and Aztec people, was a sailor who listed “puppeteer” as his profession. Whether or not he practiced puppetry in the new world is, as Versényi told me personally, unknown.<sup>38</sup>

In pursuit of questions regarding how and why the contract could have remained unexamined for so many years, and further, how Lima remains off the radar of Americanists of theatre history, I employ theories of historiographers Joseph Roach, Michel De Certeau, Odai Johnson, and contributors to the collection, *A Tyranny of Documents*—theories of absence, of memory as container, of the power of ephemera, of neglect. Finally, after arguing that there has been nothing written in the English language of the existence of the Callao Contract, much less of the performing culture of early modern Lima, I examine theories for how and why the archives can willfully disappear the past. Just as surely as the volcano Vesuvius buried the ancient city of Pompeii, or the jungle growing around the sky-high ruins of Machu Picchu hid its very existence, the archival process worked in a similar, though hardly organic, fashion. The contract was going to be unearthed, at some point, by this reader or another. Yet I only found the Contract because Dr. Rosenbach published the paper he gave to the Massachusetts Antiquarian society.

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<sup>38</sup> Written correspondence with Dr. Versenyi was during December of 2015.

After I purchased and read Dr. Rosenbach's pamphlet, I needed to determine if theatre or cultural historians, Americanists or those scholars studying Spanish Golden Age theatre were aware of this critically important piece of theatre ephemera still held in the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia.<sup>39</sup> In short, had anyone else ever written about The Callao Contract, aside from Dr. Rosenbach, who gave his paper in 1938?

Only one man, to the best of my knowledge and inquiry, had acknowledged the existence of the Callao Contract after Dr. Rosenbach. Guillermo Lohmann Villena (1915-2005) was a Peruvian diplomat, lawyer, an historian specializing in the Colonial era, and not incidentally, the former patron of the National Archives in Lima which holds the folios of Julián Bravo and the other notaries of sixteenth- seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Lima. In his comprehensive Spanish-language, *Historia del Arte Dramatico en Lima Durante El Virreinato* (1956). Lohmann narrates the step-by-step, decade-by-decade development of the profession and its practitioners in a very matter-of-fact historiography covering the years of the Hapsburg viceroyalty, and before the Bourbon dynasty ruled Peru.<sup>40</sup> Lohmann documents Isabel de los Ángeles' biography through a registry of actors in Lima, along with describing the (by now familiar) trope in which religious practices for both indigenous and colonizing peoples evolved into secular, and eventually, popular theatre. Remarkably, Lohmann describes a performance culture along with details of its key biographical figures, over a period of nearly two hundred years, as

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<sup>39</sup> The Rosenbach Museum and Library lives in two nineteenth-century townhouses on Delancey Street in Central Philadelphia one was the last home of Dr. Rosenbach, his mother and sisters.

<sup>40</sup> *History of Dramatic Art in Lima during the Viceregal Period* For the most comprehensive scholarship on violent transitions in Peru, see Steve Stern's body of work on Peru's history.

though the history were common knowledge and he was just responsible for the task of writing those events, names and dates for the record. Never translated into English, Lohmann's publication offers a complex portrait of a missing genealogical branch of American theatre history. He provides (most of) the text of the contract, acknowledging it was in the possession of Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach in Philadelphia, while offering no explanation why it was there and not in Lima. Though Lohmann is an important historian of Peruvian theatre, he offers no interpretation in his work regarding the implications of this early American theatre culture.<sup>41</sup> He considers the period of late sixteenth century part of the "Viceregal" period; others might call it "colonial." Perhaps by casting this era as early modern the Callao Contract can begin to shake off its archival dust and facilitate a vital new interpretation of historic Lima. That would only have happened, however, if scholars had acted on either Dr. Rosenbach's address or on Lohmann Villena's book of *Limeño* history.

Given that the Callao Contract essentially disappeared in plain sight, I ask what circumstances might have caused, or allowed this to happen for nearly a century. The contract had been erased by removal, sanctioned or otherwise, from its home archive in Peru. Once brought to the United States, did archivists and/or historians, motivated by hegemonic imperatives and ideas of supremacy, willfully ignore provocative evidence of an entire arm of theatre history in the Americas—or was this (just) neglect and oversight?

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<sup>41</sup> Cite *Cubano* José Juan Arróm (1910-2007) who was a professor of Hispanic Studies at Yale for forty years and wrote at this juncture. Pané, Ramón, and Arrom, José Juan. *An Account of the Antiquities of the Indians: Chronicles of the New World Encounter*. A New Ed. / Introductory Study, Notes, and Appendixes by José Juan Arrom; Translated by Susan C. Griswold. ed. Durham, N.C.: Duke UP, 1999. Print. Arrom, José Juan. *El Teatro De Hispanoamérica En La Época Colonial*. Habana: Anuario Bibliográfico Cubano, 1956. Print.

Was there something about Dr. Rosenbach's historical moment which could explain why no one was interested in his scholarship, much less his purchase? This is the matter to consider: the methods of theatre historiography that would allow the Callao Contract to lay unexamined, at the very least neglected, and Dr. Rosenbach's pamphlet acknowledging its existence and importance failing to enter into historical discourse.

It is a good moment to pause, and examine the larger quote of scholar Odai Johnson, from which the epigraph at the opening of this section was excerpted. Dr. Johnson, in writing about the eighteenth century, agrees with Roach that we need a new kind of historiography to capture the lives of actors, which seem to him unknowable:

Through most of the history of the profession, the lives of most actors weand remain historically unavailable ... for the most part, the profession itself was immemorial for centuries, and the long 18<sup>th</sup> century was no different. Perhaps to leave it so is to honor the culture of the century, to honor its own hegemony of memory, one that frankly preferred actors below the threshold of visibility, one that acknowledges a nodding acquaintance to the great, but content in the back pews, and out of civic office, out of courts, present on the playbills, but in the drawing room of history, but seen than heard. That indeed, their very absence may represent its own kind of record, equally authentic, as subjects largely unworthy of attention, if one could but catch the vandals in the act of disappearance...And occasionally we do find exactly such moments and they open up the century in more authentic ways that direct evidence cannot (*Tyranny* 341-2).

The Callao Contract presented exactly that opportunity to open up the sixteenth century and the western hemisphere in just this way—authentic as evidence could be, as the actors authored their own evidence, and were in that way, preserved by their own authority. But what good is this evidence if no one is interested? The preference of having actors just out of visibility seemed to be perpetuated by historians whose eyes or ears were closed to new information.

When historian Dr. Joseph wrote his masterwork, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (1996), he too was grappling with the mysteries of disappeared histories, memories that survive in gestures and not words, or in performance of “othering,” his described theory of surrogacy. Consider here his argument for how the methods of genealogists may serve the theatre historian in the excavation of buried histories, the disruption of dominant hegemonies, and the notion that a history has disappeared:

Genealogists resist histories that attribute purity of origin to any performance. They have to take into account the give and take of joint transmissions, posted in the past, arriving in the present, delivered by living messengers, speaking in tongues not entirely their own. Orature is an art of listening as well as speaking; improvisation is an art of collective memory as well as invention; repetition is an art of re-creation as well as restoration. Texts may obscure what performance tends to reveal: memory challenges history in the construction of circum-Atlantic cultures, and it revises the yet unwritten epic of their fabulous co-creation (286).

Dr. Roach's strategy for historicizing the exchange of culture in more than one direction and at more than one time allows a researcher to experience a new way of inquiring into theatre history. Performance, in practice, is everywhere *except* the archive. Roach's theory of circum-Atlantic transmission of culture can be geographically expanded, as the circulation of flesh in slavery, riches in ore and spice, and cultural practices were exchanged from new world to old as well as vice versa. Writ large, the new world of the Americas was in fact the ancient world, and Old World Europe was the naive civilization, proven by its reliance on the written word and a history easily stolen and destroyed.

Returning to Dr. Rosenbach's historical moment, I needed theories to help explain why Americanists of theatre/cultural history were not discovering Peru's extensive theatre history, not finding their way to Rosenbach, much less to Lima's archives. Was it simply that the writers and students of "American" history assume collectively and individually they are only and exclusively writing about the United States, and in the English language? Or were more factors at work, including the Rosenbach's Jewish identity, and in daily practices, Jewish visibility in life of quotidian Philadelphia in the late 1930s? In trying to apply Roach's theory of transmission and Johnson's theories of absence to the conundrum of neglect concerning the Contract, I felt it was time to look past the message and consider the messenger.

As the machinery of Nazi Germany's attempt to eradicate the Jewish people was grinding its horrifying wheels toward unimaginable Final Solutions, the United States attempted to maintain official neutrality. The attitude among Jews of North America towards Spain, a target for Hitler's fascism, originated in a medieval peninsula enacting the same kind of solution in establishing the Inquisition.

American Jews, frustrated with the inaction of their government against the growing atrocities of Nazi Germany, saw a way to fight back by volunteering for the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. Stopping Franco's overthrow of Spain's democratically elected leader was the last stand, many felt, against the rise of Mussolini and Hitler's regimes of terror. American Jews felt Franco's Spain was a continuum of the country's historic genocidal policies towards Jews.<sup>42</sup>

American Jewish men and women volunteered to fight and work with the Spanish Republican army, the resistance to Franco's regime. In 2007 Amy Goodman, longtime broadcaster for National Public Radio's *Democracy Now!* covered the making of a documentary entitled *Into the Fire: American Women in the Spanish Civil War*. Those fervent volunteers, many of them Jews and/or socialists and/or communists, were convinced if Franco, backed by Mussolini and Hitler, could be stopped, then the Third Reich could be as well. It was perceived as a last stand against Hitler's vision for the future.

In these excerpts from testimonials broadcast on 30 April 2007, Goodman discusses the lives of those American women who volunteered. She introduces Salaria Kea, a Black woman who commiserated with the Jewish people when it came to certain kinds of oppression.

AMY GOODMAN: Almost 80 [women] fought or went to Spain to participate in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939. We hear [next] an African-American nurse describing her experience. What about the

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<sup>42</sup> *Spain, the Jews, and Franco* (1999) draws a convincing narrative building to Franco's eventual inaction to protect Jews fleeing across the Spanish peninsula; Franco is implicated in Hitler's massacre of those Jews.

forces, the veterans being integrated, those who fought, the volunteers?

SALARIA KEA: I was not a political person, because you shifted too much. See, I didn't know about fascism. Here's the thing that brought everything to me. It was the way Germany was treating the Jews. I never really thought that white people do against white people, because we don't look at you as French or Italian. You're white. I have met a lot of Jewish people who had left Germany, and they told us about what Hitler was doing to them. It was like the Ku Klux Klan. So now, we're matching what is happening in Germany to the Jews to us here in the United States. So I went downtown to this meeting, and the meeting was all these people from foreign countries, and they said to me that they hoped to go to work with the republican side. So they said, "Would you like to go with us?" I said yes. The next thing I knew, I was accepted to go to Spain.<sup>43</sup>

Goodman reminds her listeners about the motivations driving American citizens to act against the both the American and Spanish governments.

AMY GOODMAN: In July 1936, right-wing military officers led by fascist General Franco attempted to overthrow the newly elected democratic government of Spain. Hitler and Mussolini quickly joined in support of Franco. In response, nearly 3,000 Americans defied the US

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<sup>43</sup> [https://www.democracynow.org/2007/4/30/fighting\\_fascism\\_the\\_americans\\_women](https://www.democracynow.org/2007/4/30/fighting_fascism_the_americans_women)

government to volunteer to fight in the Spanish Civil War, calling themselves the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.<sup>44</sup>

Many of the volunteers were in the medical profession, and as could be expected, many of the women were nurses. Their skills of women such as Irene Goldin were sorely needed, and the women felt an urgent need to go.

IRENE GOLDIN: Somebody mentioned that nurses were needed in Spain, and I decided I would apply. And I was accepted immediately, and I was to leave in one month. There was one question they asked, "Why do you want to go to Spain?" And I all I wrote was: "To fight against fascism." And I was accepted.

The American volunteers went to fight fascism, to try and stop Hitler, and to act when their own North American government seemed incapable of doing so. The Spanish Civil War spanned 1936-1939, with the battle in the town of, captured in horror forever by the masterwork of Pablo Picasso, taking place 26 April 1937. Rosenbach gave his address in June of that same year. Jews stepped forward, women stepped forward, people of color stepped forward—all to fight a fascist Franco and an anti-Semitic Spain.

Given the rampant and murderous anti-Semitism throughout Europe, and the creeping anti-Semitism threatening American society, there is ample argument that in 1927 scholars would be less than enthusiastic about Rosenbach's presentation. It could easily be interpreted that Jewish Americans, in particular those who might normally have been willing buyers and/or audiences vying for Rosenbach's representation, would turn away when Rosenbach came forward with historiography concerning Spain's

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

contribution to American History. The American Jew was no friend, as a rule and especially during the reign of terror in Hitler's Europe, of Spain. Rosenbach's normally eager audiences may have expressed no interest whatsoever in lending new gravity or value, from a North American perspective, to Spain's contributions in the creation of the Americas.

As Jewish historian Abraham Rosenbach reported on his discovery of Spanish players in Lima, his year was 1938. Anti-Semitism had much of Europe by the throat, the Third Reich was rising and in Spain, Civil War was at its apex. The war reach its peak with the massacre at Guernica in 1937, the year Rosenbach presented his paper on the first actors in the Americas being from Spain, not England. What need or desire would Jewish Americans, or any Americans for that matter, have to know about the Spaniards' past? What interest would theatre historians have in the scholarship of a Jewish philanthropist even as Jews, Roma, homosexuals and very likely, itinerant actors, were being gathered by the Nazi death machine for an "ultimate solution?" Very little, I might guess. It is easy to imagine Rosenbach himself turning his focus elsewhere at such a critical time for the survival of the world's Jews. Theatre history would have to wait.

Franco's rise and Jewish Americans anti-Hispanic passions were not the only factors influencing the tumultuous world occupied by a man such as Rosenbach, a relatively well-off and elite American Jew, before and during the second World War. In *Steeled by Adversity: Essays and Addresses on America Jewish Life* (1971), Jeannette Meisel Barn collects remarks given by scholar Salo Wittmayer Baron into a single volume published by the Jewish Publication Society of America, not incidentally, housed in Philadelphia. In remarks concerning the decade of 1915-24, Baron theorizes the years

were a time of intense creativity. He then offers that in his current decade, before and during the Second World War, the leadership of American Jews in a position to intervene in the “Catastrophe” may have meant the difference between life and death for countless human beings:

This decade saw the emergence of an increasing group of American born leaders and scholars upon whose shoulders began to rest the every more important task of synthesizing American and Jewish cultures. In other words, the decade of 1915-24 will forever remain in the annals of American Jewish history an era of memorable creativity and of qualitative as well as quantitative expansion.... If during the First World War American Jewry came to maturity, the Second War has placed in its hands undisputed leadership of world Jewry, with all the challenges and responsibility which it entails. Should we live up to these exalted demands in a measure at all comparable with the achievement of our predecessors earlier in this century, we would lay the ground for an even more unique communal structure and earn the gratitude of generations. Should we fail, however, we would fail not only for ourselves but for the Jewish people as a whole and, to a certain extent be justly called to account by mankind at large. Not that we may envisage immediate progress. The road to the immediate future is strewn with great difficulties, indeed grave pitfalls. Hundreds of thousands of young American Jews have been or will be, drafted into the armed forces of the United States. The dislocation of private and family life, occasioned by such a transition from civilian to

military life is bound to affect every phase of communal life as well. The larger, more comprehensive, and more efficient our communal superstructures are, the more they depend upon long range planning. Under wartime conditions all long-term planning and especially such as depends in execution on a particular personnel, is well nigh impossible. All communal activities, particularly those centering around civilian life, are therefore bound to rely on improvised programs and rapid adjustment to changing and usually unexpected situations (460).

As can be seen in Baron's broad scope on his historical moment and on what he correctly recognized as a turning point for Jewish survival, times for the American Jew were complex indeed. There were numerous factors working against not just the content of Rosenbach's message, and stubborn hegemonies of American Theatre history. Everything about the moment worked against Rosenbach, at least as an intellectual, thriving in the public eye. The private buyers continued to buy, but the sociopolitical pressure on the Philadelphia community of Jews had to be overwhelming.

Consider how these mounting difficulties for the American Jew in 1938 are drawn by editor Jeffrey S. Gurock in his collection *American Jewish Life, 1920-1990* (1997). Gurock brings a group of writers into conversation in order to examine key turning points in his designated decades. Key to the collection and for this dissertation is writer Lloyd P. Gartner's essay, "The Midpassage of American Jewry, 1929-1945" wherein Gartner delineates the massive shifts in attitudes towards American Jews before, during and after WW II, and the kinds of responses various American Jewish communities had towards those shifts. Gartner describes the effects of the year 1929, not limiting his analysis to the

crash of the stock market. He discusses the joyous founding of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, and the sudden death of its recognized leader, Louis Marshall, just three weeks following the Zionist Congress that formed the new agency. The sudden trauma to its leadership structure left a vulnerability and lack of visibility during the “bloody onslaught by Arabs on the Jewish National Home, along with Great Britain’s retreat from the agreements of the Palestine Mandate.”<sup>45</sup> As banks collapsed, a serious of stock market collapses added to a perfect storm of crises for Jews living in America, whether poor twentieth century immigrants, or long established families such as the Rosenbachs. Gartner chooses an outlook point of 1929, useful for gazing forward to the shifting attitudes that could have shut down Rosenbach’s reception:

Zurich. August. 1929. The new agenda of American Jewry was outlined during that summer and autumn of 1929, while the death of Marshall symbolized the weakening of its patrician leadership.... An Arab attack on the National Jewish Home in Palestine... Depression in America on a scale never known before had to turn the concerns even of prosperous American Jews to making a living and holding on to what they had. The world depression helped the Nazis to power in 1933 ... [all this and] the

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<sup>45</sup> On August 23 and 24 in 1929, the massacre in the Palestinian city of Hebron took the lives of more than a hundred Jews. The violent riots in British-controlled Palestine were Arab actions protesting the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe. But those who died were Arabic-speaking, and Arab-identified Palestinian jews, Hajj Yussef Hijazi, now 95 years old, witnessed the tragedy. He lived in the old city and remembers that houses there were small and close to each other. A section of his family's house was rented out to a Jewish hacham, or rabbi. Both sections of the house were connected through a back door.

"Jews in the old city were mostly shopkeepers, doing business. We used to visit each other," he says speaking through an interpreter. "We used to go to each others' places for tea. They were our Palestinian Jews, they spoke Arabic and they dressed like us Arabs." [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/8219864.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/8219864.stm)

sinking fortunes of East European Jewry became the main agenda of American Jewry in 1929, and a hesitant, uncertain leadership had to cope with it all” (Gartner 1, 2).

The turning point of 1929 encompassed so much more than the economic sledgehammer of the Stock Market crash. For Jews the world over, it was a perfect storm of catastrophes, and a trumpet call for those in Europe who faced annihilation. A man like Abraham Simon Wolf Rosenbach—highly educated, of financial mobility and privilege-driven credit, from a family established as leading philanthropists and Jewish community activists for nearly one hundred and fifty years—was called. This man could not go to war; at the age of 53 he was far too old. Neither did Rosenbach volunteer for service through the medics or as a driver; he was neither, and given his weight, use of alcohol and more, was more than likely not inclined or acceptable. Rosenbach kept his head in the books, auctions, limited travel, and his mother’s and siblings’ financial needs. It was the doctor’s book trading the family relied upon through the depression, as Phillip’s spending was proving to be a constant burden.<sup>46</sup> The important connectivity in 1928 was the growing pressure on established American Jews to help, if not rescue, European Jewry and the National Jewish Home in Palestine, not to mention their critical support of American Jewish organizations. For Dr. Rosenbach, this would include the libraries, cemeteries, philanthropic contributions and care for the aging

Dr. Rosenbach gave his paper on the Callao Contract in 1937, at the height of the Spanish Civil War. Jews were under enormous pressure, especially in the East coast cities

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<sup>46</sup> Wolf goes to great length to discuss the dysfunction of Dr. Rosenbach’s siblings, including the early death to suicide of his eldest brother, his sister Rose’s mental limitations, and his brother Phillip’s less than profitable antique business.

where Jewish populations were the largest. Despite the New Deal, Gartner surmises that, “Even in 1938 there was heavy Jewish unemployment, said to be 14.7% in Pittsburgh,” and further, Gartner looked at the United States broadly to argue persuasively that, “Unemployment and depression that affected American people as a whole, but since [the New Deal] there was a ‘dangerously anti-semitic atmosphere’” (Gartner 5). It was extraordinary that the Rosenbachs, via Dr. Rosenbach’s abilities in book trading, navigated these decades successfully in their callings as collectors of antiquities and texts, as

All Jews knew of the large areas of the labor market which were practically shut to them. They had lost no chance in banks, insurance firms except as brokers selling policies to other Jews, large corporations, department stores, as lawyers in large law firms, as scholars in universities or as physicians in hospitals (Gartner 4, 5).

The Jewish community in America in 1941 as America went to war was, “A troubled, hesitant Jewish community of some 5,000,000 souls” (Gartner 10) and 550,000, “sons and daughters of American Jews (went) to war, some those very refugees from the demonic persecutors they were now sent to destroy” (11). Gartner tries to draw for the reader the whirling matrix of threats that confronted American Jews at his conception of transition to collective maturity. He summarized the decade of 1928-1938 by the, “[o]ften hesitant, fearful responses of American Jewry to overpowering, inscrutable problems [that] came during its mid passage from immigrant times to a more secure era of affluence, ready assimilation and generous action” (12). Gartner did not imagine an American Jew who had his fortune held in the pages of books. How was the scholarship

of a notorious Jewish bookseller regarding Spanish contributions to history to be received at an Antiquarian society at this moment in world history? The United States was gripped by depression, young American Jews had proven their pride by volunteering to fight Franco and were now ready to prove their patriotism by fighting Hitler. Older American Jews had to remain financial stable, funnel money to European Jewry, and fight for a Jewish State of Israel. I argue that Dr. Rosenbach's familiar world could hardly have cared less in this moment about a troupe of actors from Spain making American history. In that moment, for that messenger, with that message, the show closed on opening night.

Broadly reading the circumstances of the culture during this decade of Rosenbach's life, between making the purchase and sale of Peruvian and Mexican historical documents that essentially saved his family's business, and giving the paper that described the import of an item he held back from the sale helps to explain why Rosenbach's scholarship would have found little reception. The larger questions which lie at the heart of this dissertation seek theories for the nature and reasons of continued invisibility, and what implications are unleashed when items reappear, unearthed after being stolen from their source, archived too deeply, and preserved too well. What might be expected when a missing link of a genealogy is restored?

The French philosopher of the social sciences, Michel de Certeau (1925-1986), was in the line of French historians who discover then argue that memory and history can be interlinked or entirely separate in the preservation of culture. By de-centralizing the power, and even the ideology or possibility of a singular historic narrative, de Certeau and American historians Odai Johnson and Rebecca Schneider

examine the crevices indicated by absence, disappearance, an imprint or fossil; a place where existence is proven by resistance to it.<sup>47</sup>

History is in the ruptures claims de Certeau and others. There are a hundred ways to cite this concept, from biblical metaphors to the poetic use of the terms and their inverses by those scholars I include in this research. The statement asks historians to understand the task is to enter and investigate the ruptures—invisible histories are there for discovery. Missing stories are driven by willful disappearances or neglect, and sometimes by a kind of adoration in possession—burying something so deeply into a “collection” it no longer is known at the source from which it was taken, as such, it is lost in the rupture. Disappearances are caused and tolerated. In de Certeau’s irreplaceable essay, “The Historiographical Operation,” he will not tolerate complacency or assumptions about the responsibility or nature of history. He poses these reverberating questions: “Is history a science? or a literature? something you make? or something you accumulate?” and then he argues history is constructed from, “A combination of a social *place*...scientific *practices*, and *writing*” (de Certeau 57, emphasizes his). In other words, history is not just the formal annals and written chronicles, not only a matter of location and date in a given society, nor is it just the un-writable activities passed from ancestor to descendant. It must be all of these, and reflect the sociology from which it is created as “[h]istorical practice is entirely relative to the structure of society” (66). De Certeau is grappling with what history is *not*, while attempting to re define different forms history can take. Finally, by examining what history is limited by, where it comes from, and who

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<sup>47</sup> Rebecca Schneider’s “Theatre And History,” is a tiny and efficient treatise that jars the terms and the conjunction that joins them; the essay by the above mentioned is included in Bruce Mazlish’s “Ruptures in History.” in *Historically Speaking*, vol. 12 no. 3, 2011, pp. 32-33. Project MUSE, doi:10.1353/hsp.2011.0044.

is writing it—not to mention how much of it is never written down—De Certeau defines the boundaries of formal history and challenges his readers to venture beyond them. De Certeau is examining the limitations of the archive—limited by hegemonies, systems of production, and the written word itself—and then to think past it as, “if it is true that the organization of history is relative to a place and a time, this is first of all because of its technique of production” (70). The technique of producing history, in this case, involved a scholar preaching to a more than likely uninterested choir, at a time when likely everyone’s mind was elsewhere altogether.

In 2011 historian Bruce Mazlish (1923-2016) wrote *Ruptures in History* to reflect on a system, or methodology to agitate those historians persistently accepting dominant narratives, and narrative containers (to use Johnson’s metaphor), into which they can pour the foundation of well-established core stories that have been used to explain history, or define its turning points. Mazlish starts bluntly with his thesis, “Humans have a need to make some sense of the past by dividing it up” (32). Those divisions are driven by historians and/or scientists naming generations, ages, epochs, periods, dividing up time whether by Christ’s birth or geological traumas. Mazlish goes on to challenge the reader to investigate the ruptures between those delineations, and recognize that each historian’s narrative could offer another interpretation of a series of facts:

Given this background of how we measure change in the past, we must remind ourselves that historians generally see the past is both continuous and discontinuous. Stringing together facts, in what often appears to be a functionally deterministic way, historians draw a smooth line through the past. Both the facts and the continuity are, we now realize, constructed.

We construct what is a fact and recognize that we could have emphasized other ones. And we impose continuity upon those we have selected.

Equally important, however, is the recognition of ruptures in history (32).

In an organized way, Mazlish invoked a doctrine for historians to embrace their roles as interpreters of facts, and not only as reporters of them as list makers of dates, names, events, births and death.

In Odai Johnson's book *Absence and Memory in Colonial American Theater: Fiorelli's Plaster*, he gives historians a recipe of ingredients to work with, recognizing a container must be filled with more than just words.<sup>48</sup> Johnson often renders or structures his writing out of fragments splattered with punctuation to express—or locate—the spaces in his thoughts—and the necessary interchange between what is memorable and what must be re-remembered: “In many ways the two halves of the project, absence and memory, are reciprocal: what we call history — the narrative apparatus that forms the container of memory — is bound up with the surviving evidence and artifacts, even absent evidence and decomposed artifacts” (3). Johnson’s keen observation, that the decomposed and the invisible are already at work, in alchemy if you will, with tangible, material “evidence,” and the visible arti(n)facts that can be touched, challenges historians and the otherwise curiosity, to, put simplistically, think outside the box.

I juxtapose Johnson’s theory of absence and memory with Joseph Roach’s provocative tools, keys to understanding how, “...Circum-Atlantic societies, confronted

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<sup>48</sup> Johnson’s key device in igniting the historiographic lens in this book is in examining the casted imprint discovered on the plaster poured by Fiorelli into the gaping crevices of volcanic ash left in the ruins of Pompeii. In those ruptures, and captured on the casting of that plaster, were the imprints of human beings, caught in their terror at the moment of their volcanic burial.

with revolutionary circumstances for which few precedents existed, have invented themselves by performing their pasts in the presence of others. They could not perform themselves, however, unless they also performed what and who they thought they were not” (Roach 5). Between these two thinkers, there is an illuminated path into grasping the invisibility of the Callao Contract, and the implications of its neglect.

Odai Johnson awakens the historian, drama student and those specifically interested in the colonial {British} Americas who search for scripts, biographies or formal histories of marginalized figures as actors with questionable morals, women who have financial agency, or freed slaves, just for example, with new orientation for evidence. Writing, “There are two challenges to the historiography of the field of colonial American theater: the first concerns a sizable body of documentary evidence — particularly in the early period (1665 to 1752) derived from the legal record and not from actual performance records” (4); Johnson is finding evidence of anti-theatrical prejudice in edicts issued by the Puritans. This methodology for archival research is effective such that, “[t]his rhetorical, essentially dramatic device of pitting Puritans against players has informed the history of the discipline to such an extent that the story of the early theater in America was not so much told as told against. And it has been this way since the very beginning” (5). Sixty-six years earlier, further south in the hemisphere of the Americas, theatre practice can be found by following Johnson and de Certeau’s theories. Though Johnson theorizes that history is in the ruptures, he nonetheless remains in the space of what’s known by steadfastly reiterating the origins of English theatre in the Americas. Insisting that, “[i]t is an unfortunate trope of colonial American theater that the oldest evidence of any theatrical presentation in the British colonies comes to us from court

records of the detractors and not from actors, or even audiences, play deals, or costumes” (5); the dominant hegemony here is in the complacency of limiting the investigation to the British colonies. Rebecca Schneider recognizes what Wallerstein and Quijano called ‘americanity’ encompasses, “[t]angled temporalities and crisscrossed geographies that inter-animate a United States imaginary” and further that, “[c]ontemporary scholarship on US performance has made it abundantly clear that thinking genealogically about US performance requires thinking in terms of circum-Atlantic, Pacific Rim and hemispheric exchange” (Schneider, *Remains* 2). If Johnson had embraced Roach’s and Schneider’s Americas of shifting borders and traversed oceans, he would have found the theatre exploding with activity in sixteenth-century Lima, arguably the most cosmopolitan port of trade in the hemisphere. From and in Lima, there is precisely the kind of evidence he provokes readers to consider, delivered by the hands of actors, the value of their clothes, witnesses to their business, the spaces in which they played and the spectators that received them and their work.

Certainly, the theft, sale, and archiving of the Callao Contract and hundreds of items of Peruvian and Mexican history outside their nation of origin helped to disguise, if not disappear, the narratives these documents invite. The disinterest in Rosenbach’s finding and Villena’s publication can be attributed to issues of neglect, anti-Semitism or anti-Latinidad, and supremacist hegemonies that dominate historical discourses, create privileged languages and archival methods. I would deflect any argument however that would suggest there was a willful erasure or what Johnson describes as,

[a]cts of mnemocide, (the willful destruction of memory) (these are) perversities of a more brutal nature. They are the opposite of the archive-

impulse: they vandalize memory. Mnemocide defaces the past and seeks to lock its records into a memorial contract that outlives their authenticity (*Tyranny* 337).

In this excerpt, Johnson is referring to the purposeful destruction of parts of statues, places of burial, or locations of events, in the collective “remembering to forget” intrinsic to the practices of Greeks in Antiquity. In other words, neither the Peruvian who stole these documents from national archives, nor the trader(s) who sought to profit by their sale, nor the collector who craved possession or more magnanimously, to protect “history,” wanted to erase Peruvian history generally, or the action of a cadre of lowly actors, specifically. Their goals were as stated and intertwined: preciousness, protection and profit. Nonetheless, each of these historical actors created a rupture in history, and when I found it, inspired by the theories of Johnson and others I entered.

There is no evidence to my knowledge, or discovered during my conversations and email exchanges with numerous theatre historians, of any historian of any language, theatre or otherwise, reporting on the Contract since Lohmann’s book. The Rosenbach pamphlet and the Callao Contract in all likelihood have passed unexamined since that time. Now that the contract is a matter of fact and not at all ephemeral, I’ll move past the matter and examine the content.

### **Part Three**

#### **The Contract and Its Content: A Close reading**

In this final part of Section I, I look at the content of the contract itself, parse its meanings/interpretations, and compare it to theatrical contracts contemporary to its era.

As Dr. Rosenbach was a lover of philography, and for that very reason may have kept possession of the contract in the first place, I will close by considering the signatories—witnesses and contractors—who left their names for the record.

What follows are the articles of agreement of the first theatrical company in America dated Callao 28 June 1599, in the English translation by Dr. Rosenbach.<sup>49</sup> The opening paragraph of the contract gives the essence of the business at hand. These eight actors are forming a company, with collective investment, interest, and commitment. As this is the first time since 1938 that the contract has appeared in print, I offer its uninterrupted entirety:<sup>50</sup>

Let it be known to all who may see this document that we, Francisco Pérez de Robles and Isabel de Los Ángeles, his wife, and Andrés Gonzales, and Miguel de Burgos and Juan Chrisóstomo and Bernardo Martinez and Luis de Mayorga and Barthólome Suarez, *comediens*, are at present resident in this port of Callao of the city of the Kings, with license and express consent; that I, the said Isabel de Los Ángeles, do ask and demand the said Francisco Pérez de Robles to make and grant this contract; and I, the said Francisco Pérez de Robles, do give and concede it to the said Isabel de Los Ángeles, my wife, in accordance with and in consequence of that which is asked of me by her, which I promised to revoke neither now nor at any

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<sup>49</sup> Dr. Rosenbach's translation is easily available online now, via the Boston Antiquarian Society at [www.americanantiquarian.org/proceedings/44806984](http://www.americanantiquarian.org/proceedings/44806984).

<sup>50</sup> The Spanish original is included verbatim in the appendices. I also included photographs of the contract itself, as all of the holdings in the Rosenbach Archive are in the public domain and may be photographed and those photos published, without cost or impunity.

time whatsoever; and in accordance with it we all eight jointly, together and separately do agree and recognize by this present document that we shall form and act as a troupe, one with another and together, for the time and space of three years which shall run and be counted from the said present day, for the performance of comedies as well in the City of the Kings [Lima] as in the rest of the districts where it seems to our interest. The aforementioned we will perform as a company with the following conditions and interpretations, penalties and conventions:

Firstly it is a condition that we place as capital all the costumes and ornaments with which the said comedies are presented, which belong to the said Francisco Perez de Robles, a member of the company, and which we assess and value at six hundred and sixty-eight current pesos at eight reals each peso; And that such a sum shall be deducted as the comedies are presented, taking from each comedy a part for the said costumes in conformity with the entrance fees that come from each comedy, until the said Francisco Perez de Robles, our companion, is completely recompensed for the said sum of six hundred and sixty-eight pesos of eight reals.

Item, it is a condition that, deducting first and before all else from the full income that which this company is obliged to pay to the actors, there shall be made a division of the money that is collected for each company as was agreed, in such a manner: To the costumes,

one part; to the said Francisco Pérez de Robles another part; to the said Isabel de Los Ángeles a part and a half: to the said Miguel de Burgos one part; to Bernardo Martinez one part; to the said Juan Chrisóstomo another part; to Barthólome Suarez a half part; to Luis de Mayorga a part and a quarter for him and his wife, and it is understood that the half part shall be for his said wife, and it shall run from the day that their performances begin if it be sufficient for the said performance.

Item, it is declared that this company obligates itself to pay the musicians according to a contract made in Chuquiago, which is in the possession of Manuel Rodriguez Azevedo, which shall be paid by all this company jointly and together and by each one of them *in solidum*; and the exempt the said Andrés Gonzalez from his share of the obligation to pay the said musicians.

Item, it is declared that this company obligates itself to pay to Francisco de Meneses a sum which appears to be owing him by a contract made in the City of the Kings by Andrés Gonzales, which all this company jointly and each one *in solidum* will pay in accordance with and in such a manner as they are obligated by it on the date agreed.

Item, it is a condition that from the gross receipts of the money that this company makes from each comedy there shall be taken a quarter part in addition to those declared, that shall be given

to with this said Francisco Perez de Robles for the care that he shall have taken in seeing that everything necessary to the comedies is provided for.

Item, it is declared that all the costumes included in the inventory that have been assessed at the said six hundred and sixty-eight pesos, are to be held in the position of the said Francisco Lopez [*sic*] de Robles, which we place as the chief assets of this company so that once the full six hundred and sixty-eight pesos are paid all the members of the said company as individual parties shall keep and retain the said costumes.

Item, it is a condition that the said three years of this company having elapsed each one of us may sell that part of the said costumes, which belongs *pro rata* to him, to whom he pleases and as he sees fit.

Item, it is a condition that, if anyone of us the above mentioned shall wish to leave and withdraw from this company and not comply with that contained in this document and its conditions, he shall be pressed by all the rigor of law; and we obligate ourselves to pay two hundred pesos of current money which, should he not fulfill his duty, shall be applied to the redemption of captives, and for which, should it not be restored, we hold ourselves liable; and what ever he does to the contrary, we shall nevertheless keep and comply with this document.

Item, it is the condition that if it be necessary and seem right to expel any companion it shall be done by paying him for what he has performed, and if it be necessary to take on another companion it shall be in this form and manner.

Item, it is a condition that, if during the term of this company any one of us should owe any sum of money to another companion, he may not be imprisoned nor exacted for it.

With which said conditions and declarations above referred to we do make inform this said company in the tenor of that contained above for the said term of the said three years, and we promise and do obligate ourselves to keep and comply with its conditions in accordance with and in such a manner as conforms with them and each of them, and that we will not go against nor twist the meaning of that which is said, and for the performance and payment of that which is stated we pledge our persons and goods, those we now hold or may hold, and we do give and Grant our complete power to all and any judges or justices of his Majesty of any jurisdiction whatsoever, civil or privileged, which together and separately we submit so that they may force us as though by the sentence of a competent judge rendered against us and passed into a matter adjudged; with regard to which we renounce our proper *fuero*, jurisdiction, domicile, district, and the Law *sit convenerint de jurisdictione omnium judicum* and all other laws, *fueros* and rights in

our favor, especially the law which says that the general renunciation of laws made is not valid; and I, the said Isabel de los Ángeles, renounce the laws of emperors Justinian and Velleianum *senatus consultus* and the new Constitution and laws of Toro and the advantage thereof, having been advised and warned of their effect by the present notary public; of which I, the said notary public, do certify that this instrument was drawn up in the said port of Callao of the City of the Kings on 28 June, 1599, and at the said negotiating parties, whom I, the said public notary certify that I know, I did sign, except the said Isabel de Los Ángeles who did not sign because she did not know how, and at her request one of the witnesses signed for her.

Witnesses: Pedro Salcedo de Salinas and Antonio Zamudio and Balthasar Seran. Francisco Pérez de Robles—Andres Gonzales—Bernardo Martinez—Francisco Hurtado—Luis de Mayorga—Bartholome Suarez—Miguel de Burgos—At the request of the actor Pedro Salcedo de Salinas, Before me, Julián Bravo, public notary.<sup>51</sup>

In examining the contract as a whole, certain clauses—those regarding costumes and touring for example, along with the breakdown of who is to earn what share—point to a glaring aspect of the Callao Contract that is remarkable: the fact that it is quite *unremarkable*. Language regarding shareholders' interests as actors, investors or managers, stipulations attending to debt, early departure, gradual

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<sup>51</sup> English Translation by A.S.W. Rosenbach, *The First Theatrical Company in America*, 1938.

ownership of costumes, all were status quo for contracts in late sixteenth-century England and Spain.<sup>52</sup> This commonality of contract forms, along with common interests in values-based materials, suggests that the profession in Lima was evolving in comprable and even parallel ways to the early modern sensibilities taking hold in the cities of London and Madrid. In fact, using legal paperwork to establish business partnerships for the stage meant that in Lima, the Early Modern profession of the players, managers and writers for the stage caught the surging tide of trans-oceanic greed for land, riches, gold and ultimately, “the (conquerable) new.” Theatre folk, replete with the sensibilities integral to their profession, were just as ambitious as any merchant, conqueror or speculator. The players craved riches and fame, and more than likely, longed to be free of the shifting whims of the Spanish throne. Lima would prove to be just the place to spread their wings.

The contract gives us the critical historical data as would be required by the annals: names, professions, residency, dates, intentionality of the signers and the primary binding agreement between husband and wife. Isabel’s status in the company as a business partner is acknowledged from the onset in an assertion that may reflect the culture’s shift towards women in the business sector of the new city. I am struck by the language that binds these people together. *Todos, mancomun, compania, los unos con los otros*—each of these terms binds the signers, and those they will take on later, together, each for the other, within the trust of company, with forgiveness for and protection from debt, and debt collectors. For the terms of the agreement at least, they intend to protect each other.

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<sup>52</sup> A discussion of contracts for shareholder companies can be found in *Playhouse Law in Shakespeare’s World*, by Brian Jay Corrigan.

In specific stipulations the players agree to terms regarding costumes and their value, early departure from the three-year term of commitment, and how each player may earn their costume(s) over time. Francisco owns the valuable garments; each performance will dedicate a full share to him amortizing all costumes over three years, along with another quarter share for, “[t]he care he shall have taken in seeing that everything necessary to the comedies is provided for.” As leading actor, Isabel is to earn *una parte y media* (a share and a half). The company agrees to set aside money for musicians. The commitments, each and to the other, are equitable from any reading, with the forethought of addressing past and potential future debt. Such legally protected equity and Isabel’s emerging agency as a woman of legal standing are hallmarks of an early modern standard: workplace democratization. This was in part possible because, given details and vocabulary regarding distribution of profits, early departure from the agreement, costumes, musicians’ fees, and potential debt, these were thoroughly competent and forward-thinking professionals. As we shall see later, among the signatories were the professionals newly arrived from Spain, but also *hidalgos* already established in Lima, and *mestizo* individuals with (at least) one Peruvian-born ancestor. With these gestures, Lima’s professionalizing polis and the city itself was experiencing, even compelling and creating, intersections of gender, class and race. As she would have been on the European continent (now that companies were again being licensed), Isabel’s leading lady status was acknowledged by way of her increase in share, whereas in Britain, her presence on the stage was still illegal. In many countries of the world, she would not have been allowed to earn a wage at all. It could be argued that the theatre of sixteenth century Lima was ahead of

the curve in modernity's surge; women were onstage there long before English actors ever stepped on "New" England's soil. In Spain, the representations of women in the plays of Lope and Calderón were an entrée into understanding the lives of women of their time. Perhaps the contract is another kind of entry point.

In her book, *Women in the Discourse of Early Modern Spain* (2003), Editor Joan F. Cammarata assembles a series of essays that seek out women in sixteenth century Spanish environs, and attempts to flesh out if, how, and when, their agency began to take hold. She locates the evidence she needs, at times heavily disguised, in the actions of women in the theatre, and indeed, in the roles Spanish (male) writers were creating for women in their plays. Writing, "Spanish literature and theatre, far from ignoring the debate about the role and place of women in society, reflect [it], with all the ambiguity and complexity of a codified message" (9), Cammarata recognizes that the roles of women in Spanish society was changing, and the messages being conveyed, even historicized, were often disguised beneath actions, dramatic texts, and shifting laws. Defending the need for her collection, Cammarata notes that,

[t]hese essays are fundamental for this volume inasmuch as they make explicit the ways in which social constructs determine female authorial voice in history and in literature. Silent and silenced by their exclusion from the patriarchal institution of literacy, women speak from a marginal status (11).

In participating in this contract, Isabel is making clear she cannot sign her name but nonetheless agrees to the stipulations, and importantly, in agreeing that she (and she alone) will "renounce the laws...of Toro," at once, Isabel de los Ángeles, the leading

lady, is acknowledging that laws have changed largely to protect inheritance rights of women and children born illegitimately, and that in the City of Kings, she will not be protected by those new laws. A strange contradiction. She gains agency as a signatory to a business contract, and she signs some of that agency away by agreeing that, for her and in Lima, the new Laws of Toro will not apply.<sup>53</sup>

As Cammarata examines the plays of Lope de Vega, and the female roles he has left behind for embodiment by actors and analyses by historians, she calls out truth in fiction writing, “We need to acknowledge these texts not only delineate women’s role in literature, but also in history” (15). I argue this same imperative is necessary in the examination of Isabel’s signature that is not a signature, her new found empowerment, that is also, by signing, disempowered, and her very presence as an actress in the Americas of the sixteenth century, a representation that until now, history assumed did not exist. As Cammarata writes, we seek to gain if we

Decode the voices, texts, and images of women in the past...ramifications beyond the theme of women and literature in early modern Spain, they [the contributors to her collection] are urging us to reassess the economic,

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<sup>53</sup> “Promulgated in 1505, soon after the death of Queen Isabel, the Laws of Toro represent a modification of the ways and means that the aristocracy could use to preserve wealth over generations and modernized rules regarding legal procedure and practice. The previous major work on these issues was the *Siete Partidas*, written in 1265 A.D. by Alfonso X. Castile was in the high middle ages when that code sort of went into effect. By the time the Laws of Toro were promulgated, Spain had experienced an awakening brought on by many factors, including the discovery of a new world in the western hemisphere with the promise of bringing much wealth to Castile and Spain. Its aristocracy was growing in power and wealth and the Laws of Toro became a means to further aggrandize wealth and power. The original text of the Laws, are comprised of 83 laws, a topical index, a conversion table of provisions between the Laws and the Nueva Recopilación, and an English translation of the Laws.” Posted on 5 December 2014 by Pat Werner. <https://www.nicaraguanpathways.com/category/books-published/laws/laws-of-toro/>

legal, political and religious systems that articulate the parameters of women's access to power and self determination in the past, as well as in the present (15).

Seeking evidence, traces, or as Rebecca Schneider has poetically summarized, "remains" of women's actions and access requires reassessment. The hunt for information about women's lives at the end of the sixteenth century is expanding, given the work being done by theatre historians looking for women, and by scholars of women's history and women in history, finding actresses hard at work in the economies of several nations.

Cammarata posits the emerging presence and agency of women in Spanish urban centers even as she counterpoints the improvements with the edicts being published, shaming women who dare, for instance, to learn to read and write. She offers "The Instruction of a Christian Woman," issued in 1523 by Juan Luis Vives in *Institutio Feminae Christianae*, in which, "he concludes with a condemnation of women in public life and women's public display of learning" (2). Cammarata is recognizing how the actions of women in the Spanish public sphere are in direct contradiction to the edicts of the governing bodies. If she found these contradictions in the cities of peninsular Spain, I submit we can find them in the culture of early modern Lima. Many of the strictures and scriptures dictating the behaviors of the various racial designations in the viceregal colony were openly opposed or simply ignored with impunity. Authorities in Lima, in asking a woman of business to recognize that the Laws of Toro, essentially the laws of

the Crown in Hapsburg Spain, will not protect her in the City of Kings, is already in legal contradiction to the laws that made it a place of supposed laws in the first place.<sup>54</sup>

Wife and husband Isabel and Francisco first enter in agreement together, “Of that which is asked of me by her,” before they widen their circle of entrepreneurship to include the six others. With “License and express consent” of either the governing body of Lima, the Inquisition, or the viceregal representative of Phillip II, the troupe one way or another will be legal and intends to be visible in the culture. It is clear from the division of shares that Francisco made the key investment as he owns the costumes, and Isabel holds the value of being the featured player. Between them and in total they will drawn three and three quarters shares. Isabel and Francisco were the brains, brawn and beauty behind this enterprise. The business language of theatre practitioners, “one with another and together” was standard for this most collaborative of art forms, and the Callao Contract included the conditions, interpretations, penalties and conventions common in contracts amongst their peers in England.

Each item of the contract re-asserts the troupe’s savvy concerning the profession, and reifies the ephemeral remains they left behind. Covering the value and exchange rate of their costumes, conditions and penalties for departing the company early, fees to be paid to musicians, an extra quarter percentage to be paid to the de facto production manager Francisco for, “[t]he care he shall have taken in seeing that everything necessary to the comedies is provided for” demonstrates that the theatre manager is key to a company’s success. Each item of the contract comes together to form a complete picture of thoroughly competent professionals.

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<sup>54</sup> In Section II, there is more detail provided about the unspoken laws that were guiding principles for living outside the written laws of Lima.

The final words of the contract summarize that Julián Bravo, the notary, attests to knowing each of the signing parties, and to knowing the party who did not sign, as the “Said Isabel de Los Ángeles (who) did not sign because she did not know how, and at her request one of the witnesses signed for her.” Isabel de Los Ángeles neither reads nor writes. Presumably she has learned the languages, lessons and characters of her craft as did so many of her peers, through the use of consistent scenarios, a repertoire of plays well-known to a theatre-savvy culture, and the age-old practices of apprenticeship in a life on the road where every and anything could become a stage. An illiterate woman could make her name and fame in the family business with hard work, good timing and quick study, a nimble business sense, and an excellent ear. If a woman’s education, or demonstration of learning, is shamed by the governing bodies of society and soul, no wonder a woman’s illiteracy would assist in hiding, or coding if you will, her actions. Much the same argument could be made for a culture that does not use a written language, as was the case in the Inca *Tahauntinsuyu* before the Spaniards arrived.<sup>55</sup>

The signers themselves are the most important part of the Contract in my mind, as in their marks they leave their ghosting personages on an otherwise ephemeral document, one only meant to remain in force for a period of three years, the terms of the companies’ partnership. Philography, the collecting of signatures, was, in Dr. Rosenbach’s mind, a way to protect the ghosting remains of a maker of history. The Callao Contract captured eight of those ghosts, and one of them had to ghost herself even more so. However

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<sup>55</sup> Maria Rostrowowski (the late historian of Inca culture beloved as “Maria of the Andes” had specific reasoning for never using the word “empire” when referring to Inca lands and people, as she felt it was a word of colonial ambition. She employed the word *Tahuantinsuyu*, the ancient Quechua term that refers to the four directions/sectors of Inca lands.

limited in time, its initial intent, or ephemeral may be the lives of human beings, or even their fingerprints upon the material of vellum, it seems that ink has allowed their mark to remain.

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The Callao Contract came into Dr. Rosenbach's possession not by accident or happenstance, but due to his peculiar, specific, and cultivated pursuit of printed texts that unlock histories of the American hemisphere and its exploration, governance, and settlement. Dr. Rosenbach, as a one of North America's early Jewish citizens and intellectuals, loved the contract so much that he over protected it in an archive that never, in more than fifty years of museum exhibits, displayed it in the context of other important Peruvian historical items. He presented his finding in 1937 to an uninterested audience; scholars, philanthropists, antiquarians, many of them Jewish, who were caught up in the tensions and atrocities at work in Fascism spreading through Europe and putting Rosenbach's extended community at risk. Archival methods have their blessings and their curses, and though the contract was protected, its removal from its original holdings, along with historians' collective proclivity towards accepting durable narratives, driven by stubborn hegemonies of dominant cultures and cemented in place by repetition, prevented recognition of the implications of the nearly invisible document. Villena's unique contribution to theatre history is nonetheless a formal history, which asks no questions, but merely reports a series of facts. Creative historiographers challenge the curious to think past, or at the very least, outside of those dominant methods and

narratives. Historians can draw a narrative through a series of facts in any number of different ways. In those differing interpretations, and in the investigations of disappearances, attending to areas of neglect, by searching in predictable places (than published plays) for evidence of actors and their ilk, we can maybe open the inquiry into the genealogy of theatre history in the hemisphere of the Americas. The contract these actors left behind is a standard one in the emerging profession of their early modern impulses expressed first and foremost in their growing independence from the church's edicts and liturgies, and the agency of women both onstage, and represented in the characters of the great Spanish playwrights.

Next, I bend to listen to the voices of the long-dead actors, silent from history until now and yet emanating in all directions from the carefully preserved pages containing their signatures. The actors' ghosts seem to seek agency in this moment of re-emergence, as they did in the flesh over four hundred years ago when they formed a company. They are speaking from the same vellum sheaths upon which they signed their names to join forces in their new world, seeking fortune as they had in the old, as players on the stage. With my reader, I hope to imagine what these actors want us to remember.

In Section II, I explore the environs in which these actors plied their trade, in old world and new, what performances they may have encountered when they arrived in Peru, and what other documents in the National Archives of Peru can tell us about theatrical activity and activity of the players at the cusp of the sixteenth and seventeenth century in Lima, City of Kings.

## **Section II**

### **A Lens for History: The Callao Contract as Departure Point and The Genetics of Americanness Developing in Early Modern Lima**

## Introduction

The Americas are the historical product of European colonial domination. But they were never merely an extension of Europe, not even in the British-American zone. They are an original creation, which have taken long to mature and to abandon their dependent posture *vis a vis* Europe, especially in Latin America. But today, if one listens to the sounds, the images, the symbols, and the utopias of the Americas, one must acknowledge the maturation of an autonomous social pattern, the presence of a process of reinvention of culture in the Americas. This is what we are calling the Americanization of the Americas, which is sustained by the crisis of the European pattern.

Aníbal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein

“The Americas: 1492-1992 A Multiplicity of  
Historical Paths and Determinants of Development”

*Como las paga el vulgo, es justo hablarle en necio para darle gusto.*

Since after all it is the crowd who pays, why not content them when you write your plays?

Lope de Vega

*Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*

*The New Art of Writing Plays*

In this section, propelled by the initial evidence and analysis of the Callao Contract, I demonstrate the professional theatre in the Americas began in the last quarter of the sixteenth century in the one of the most culturally complicated, racially diverse,

and politically subversive metropolitan locations of its time: Lima, *la Ciudad de los Reyes*, City of Kings. After less than seventy-five years of Spanish presence, I establish by the end of the sixteenth century the viceroyalty that had become a center of power, trade and cultural conflict, included a culture of popular performance. The Callao Contract of 1599, until now neglected by English language scholarship, is the very piece of material evidence required to launch this argument. The *americanity* of American theatre history was cultivated in early modern Lima; the restor(y)ation of a theatre history of the Americas must begin here as well. Yet as I mentioned in from the onset, as inspired by the work in *A Tyranny of Documents*, a scholar is well advised not to depend exclusively on a single archival find when delving into a hidden history.<sup>56</sup> The women and men that joined together to form a shareholders' company in 1599 impress upon us in their absence to imagine their moment in time, the precipice of the new century, filled with hopes for their lives in the ancient Peruvian world the Spaniards intended to make New. In the first section of this dissertation I examined the materiality of the contract's history and offered a close reading of the content. In this section, I examine the signatories' moment in space, place and time. In the first section of this dissertation the Callao Contract was the singular destination of the research goal. In this second section, I use the Callao Contract as a diving board into a historically imagined Lima, at the beginning of its Early Modern era.

This second section of the dissertation is divided into four parts, starting at the Rosenbach Library, where we left off at the end of the previous section. My archival

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<sup>56</sup> Johnson, Stephen Burge, and McNamara, Brooks. *A Tyranny of Documents: The Performing Arts Historian as Film Noir Detective: Essays Dedicated to Brooks McNamara*. New York, New York: Theatre Library Association, 2011. Print.

search follows the trail of the contract from Philadelphia back to the National Archives of Peru (AGN) from which it had been removed, then gradually widens a feminist historiographic lens to seek particular persons, examine actions, resistances, and imagine collisions of performance practices imprinting on the culture, yet not from a printed page. I focus my research of the temporal space and time of the Contract by starting at the trail left behind in the folio records of Julián Bravo, the notary who witnessed its signing, and searching for other traces of the signatories or any associates in the business of the stage. I studied documents strictly between 1575-1600 in order to stay as near as possible in time to discover circumstances the signatories might have encountered. By seeking Bravo's name in legal records, I demonstrate discovery of the very folio from which the Callao Contract was taken nearly a hundred years ago. In the AGN, my search yielded over two dozen contracts, debts and/or court records that place *autores de comedias* (company managers), *dramaturgos* (playwrights) and *actors/actrizes* and *comicos/as* (gendered designation of the players) in the center of the constructed capital.<sup>57</sup> In viewing the documents with this broad lens, a picture of Lima emerges as a whirling urban center of colliding races, languages and commercial interest.

After this review of legal documents associated with the players and/or activities of the theatre, my lens pans away from the archive to review secondary sources that draw possible circumstances of Isabel's journey. I follow paths and people Isabel might have encountered, as actor and woman, colonizer and transient, business co-owner with costumes as assets, with power on stage in representations, and little elsewhere. Asking first why Isabel might have left the active theatre culture of late sixteenth century Madrid,

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<sup>57</sup> The job descriptions of these occupations are gathered from Rennert's *The Spanish Stage in the Time of Lope De Vega*, cited frequently during this section.

and then how or if a woman such as Isabel could find agency in the new world, I again use a feminist lens to locate and examine actions performed by women on the stages of Isabel's larger world, before and after her journey.<sup>58</sup> In other words, in the second part of this section a discipline of feminist historicism empowers my research to follow the lives of women, trying to imagine why an actress from the Hapsburg empire might have come half way across the world to start a new life, and what she might have found when she began to ply her craft with the company she led.

Next, I offer secondary research organized in such a way as to grasp a picture of how Lima was staging itself at the end of the sixteenth century, i.e., how the city of Lima performed. Created as a fantasy of Spanish imperialism, it could be one's first instinct to examine Lima from the centers of power, looking outward to edges of its created society. The Court of the Inquisition, judgment of the Catholic church, an empty throne where a King never held court, viceroys of unaccountable authority, colonial buildings erected from the stones of Inca architecture—all sat at the center of the sixteenth century's most

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<sup>58</sup> Though a very tempting subject, and worthy of a study all their own, this section will not explore the *tapadas*, widely understood and recognized continually in visual, literary, and representative arts since the seventeenth century. The *tapada*, a specifically *Limeña* figure, was known for her clothing—heavily draping skirts and veils with nothing but a single eye showing through densely rich fabric. She was not religiously withdrawn in the sense of a Muslim veil but rather, the *tapada* was in disguise to move freely in the nighttime culture of Lima. Dress of the *tapada* allowed a woman—or for that matter a man—whether a wealthy Spaniard wanting *in cognito* passage through the city's night, a courtesan seeking to avoid an old customer, or an outlaw finding her way through the streets—to avoid recognition or capture. The *tapada* as a *Tipo de Limeña* could have appeared in Lima far earlier, but evidence is scant. I examine their understanding in current culture in the third section of this research.

powerful colonial city in the world.<sup>59</sup> I suggest that Lima might be interrogated from points on the perimeter surrounding these centers of Spanish control. In Gloria Anzaldúa's now infamous argument, the center is defined by the periphery, and not the other way around.<sup>60</sup> With this feminist methodology, the emergence of Lima as a place of early modern consciousness, resistance, inversions of power can be apprehended. The life of an actress has not yet been historically imagined in Lima, c. 1599. By doing so, I hope to historicize Lima on the cusp of the seventeenth century as an early modern city of strange reversals, bold representations, persistent resistance, with avenues for a woman's livelihood.

Following notary Julián Bravo's signature into the folios of legal documents he left behind, and examining Isabel's departure from one world and arrival in another, I next take an important step backwards. In the fourth section, Scholar Bianca Premo assists my argument in urging histories of Peru to begin earlier than is customary, enabling tracking of racist caste systems, for example, or the paths of women of Indigenous, Peninsular and Peruvian *mestizaje*.<sup>61</sup> Before the first professional actors of the Americas signed a contract forming their company in Callao, the Americas' *first* first actors and their cultural practices had barely survived the near genocidal invasion of

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<sup>59</sup> Mexico City, far more difficult to reach as it required overland travel, was still the first Spanish viceregal center of enormous consequence. But Spain's southern colonies were too far away to control, and the Caribbean viceroyalty was moved to Lima in 1535.

<sup>60</sup> *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Woman of Color* just celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary with a reprinting. In her essays, Anzaldúa calls for a total reversal in how we can understand power, examine culture, re-tell histories. By examining culture from a multitude of locations on the periphery gazing in, rather than from the singular center of power gazing out, Anzaldúa gives us an essential tool for understanding Americanness.

<sup>61</sup> Premo, Bianca. *Children of the Father King: Youth, Authority, & Legal Minority in Colonial Lima*. Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina, 2005. Print.

Spanish conquistadors, conversion forces of the Catholic Church, and devastating impact of work in the mines, forced movement of communities and loss of ancestral land.

Indigenous performance instilled one of the key ingredients in the americanity of theatre history. A restor(y)ation of how the theatre profession emerged in the Americas should begin with what remained, or better, sustained after near annihilation, in the performance practices of Andean, Quechua, and Inca peoples.<sup>62</sup> What remained of Inca and pagan practices, along with indigenous epistemologies and sacred knowledge, was protected, hidden, disguised and passed on in what Diana Taylor calls “vital acts of transfer.” A restor(y)ation of theatre history in the Americas must embrace the genetic strain of Indigenous performance flowing through Andean Peru. Andean performance, perhaps of all indigenous performance cultures, is present in the daily life of every Peruvian today. The sheer tenacity of preservation, vital acts of transfer, and embodied memory have insured the continuity of these practices and the cultures from which they were created. The third part of this section examines those *first* first actors at the end of the sixteenth century, and imagines how Isabel and company might have encountered this entirely “new” language of performance, which was as ancient as the land itself, or the very first dance to be danced.

Assembling these elements, revealed is what Peruvian sociopolitical anthropologist Anibal Quijano and social scientist Immanuel Wallerstein called the “americanity” of the Americas, the early modern impulse as expressed in the zeitgeist of conquest, conversion, and identity in the unfortunately named “new” world. Quijano and

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<sup>62</sup> For discussion of Indigenous performance, and medieval, liturgical performance under the auspices of the conversion forces of the Catholic Church and importantly, syncretism(s) in religious practices, I will rely on the narratives drawn by Adam Versenyi, Carolyn Dean and Raquel Chang-Rodriguez.

Wallerstein ask, “What was this ‘newness?’ The newnesses were four-fold, each linked to the other: coloniality, ethnicity, racism, and the concept of newness itself” (551). Early modern Lima’s zeitgeist, by these questions and arguments, produced actors to reflect back to culture its personalities, power, and foibles. Historian Rebecca Schneider in her pocket-sized *Theatre and History* (2014) re-constructs the new and the old from a collision of the two. No matter which temporality is assigned to which civilization, she writes, “We shouldn’t forget that it’s often in the babble of different languages that “new” ideas, “new” theories, “new” practices are hatched and “old” ideas, “old” theories, “old” practices might be discovered” (83). That is precisely what happens when revisiting an Early Modern Lima, where everything is being turned upside down, and, by crossing the oceans and rounding the cape, the planet itself.

In the unearthing of the Callao Contract and research provoked by its discovery, the evidence offers that the actors were in place, ready for their entrance to the Americas before 1600. To prove this assertion, I begin with the searching of national archives for evidence of theatre people in Lima’s urban culture during the swerve to the sixteenth century.

## **Part One**

### **Peru’s National Archive; *Autores de Comedias* in the AGN, 1575-1600**

In order to pursue evidence in the archives that would support the Callao Contract, and to develop the theory that the city of Lima *c.* 1600 had an early modern professional theatre, my hunt for materials took me to the national archives in Lima that

held the notarial documents during the year of and before 1599.<sup>63</sup> I began with the notary of the Callao Contract. There was only one rather small box to hold the folios from Julián Bravo's term of office. It proved auspicious I went to his box of folio documents first, not only because he notarized other documents of particular interest to research questions posed here, but because his folio, unique among all the notarial documents between 1534 and 1600, was missing three parchment sheets. They had been clearly and cleanly sliced from the hand-stitched binding. In the margin of page 249, were the words "*Sustraides compania teatral 250, 251, 252.*" *Sustraides* translates as "subtracted," "taken away," or "missing." In any case, someone at the AGN knew, and noted, these pages were gone.<sup>64</sup> Further, someone, or someone else, knew the folio sheets were of value, worth stealing, selling or both. I had found the equivalent of an empty grave. The pages of the Callao Contract, folio sheets 250, 251 and 252, had been removed. Bertram T. Lee had bought and/or stolen these pages, along with dozens of other items of historical interest to colonial Peru and New Spain, and then sold the entire lot, en masse, to either Conroy or Dr. Rosenbach during or before 1937.

Searching the names of the signatories, and terms "*autores de comedias*" and "*comedia*," I found thirty-two separate documents between 1575 and 1599 mentioning these terms and/or naming players of the Callao Contract or their competitors, as every notarized item required the name and profession of each signer.<sup>65</sup> By limiting the scope

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<sup>63</sup> The story of the provenance of The Callao Contract, and how it came to be held at the A.S.W. Rosenbach Library and Museum in Philadelphia is told in the previous section. My search focused, for the purpose of this dissertation, on the Archivo General de la Nacion (AGN), or the National Archives.

<sup>64</sup> Re: internal theft at the national archives, and Lima's national library see [ojopublico.com/bibliotecanacional](http://ojopublico.com/bibliotecanacional)

<sup>65</sup> Each of these manuscripts will be detailed in the bibliography of primary documents.

of the search up to and including 1599, and parsing language of the theatre to find corollaries in colonial *Castellano*, otherwise ephemeral primary documents reveal the presence of actors and theatre managers in the recognizable culture of the growing city beginning in 1575. In these contracts, promissory notes and other documentation of legal actions, one finds *Castellanos* and *Hidalgos*, *Indios* and *Esclavos*, engaged in all of the activities of a bustling urban economy: renting buildings, making purchases, entering into financial agreements for business propositions, and spending time before a judge or notary to sign off on a loan.<sup>66</sup> Actors of both genders and managers are revealed borrowing money and carrying debts, entering into business arrangements, renting property, purchasing enslaved human beings, and going to jail. In short, these notarized documents offer a picture of theatre people as an integral part of Lima's legal activities in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. The documents further reveal theatre professionals at first resisting, and then emerging from the conversion/worship practices of Christian performance into a reality where they began to thrive as independent men and women professionals, pl(a)ying their trade, and their plays, in contexts free of church control—exhibiting, in other words, early modern sensibilities.

The first mention of theatre culture in the AGN comes twenty-four years before Francisco and Isabel gather their cohorts. On 26 May 1575 Joan de Morales, a resident of Lima, agrees to persuade Joan Baptista, a theatre manager, to produce a play for Corpus Christi at the Cathedral.<sup>67</sup> The document makes no mention of financial exchange between the patron Morales, and Baptista, the *persona que suele representar comedias*

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<sup>66</sup> I rely on the texts *Indigenous Intellectuals, and Indigenous Mestizos* to grasp the terminology of caste designation in historical context.

<sup>67</sup> Archivos General de la Nacion (AGN) Protologo (P.) 151, folio (v.) 162-3. 6 May 1575.

(the person who usually presents the plays). Instead, it concerns the patron's *obligación* to the city, as resident and likely, property owner. This legal document bears the echoes of medieval performance impulses, compelled by Church and Crown.<sup>68</sup>

Two years later the man now known as Joan Baptista Durán is engaged to create plays for the Corpus Christi, this time by a *regidor* (council member) of Lima, Luis Rodriguez de la Serna. On 4 April 1577, Serna's agreement to work with Baptista creating *representaciones sacras alusivas* is notarized by Blas Hernandez.<sup>69</sup> Though the representations are to be liturgical, at least we learn Baptista is still at work making plays. This contract is called a *concierto*, as opposed to an *obligacion*. It is interesting to infer a new tone in the change of terms.

On 13 June 1582, the first mention of Francisco de Morales appears.<sup>70</sup> This is the man Lohmann Villena calls the most important theatre manager and playwright "no one remembers" (147). Morales appears in documents concerning *comedias* right through the year of the Callao contract. In this *obligación*, Morales is to be paid an unidentified sum by an *alcalde ordinario* (district mayor) to create *comedias* for the Corpus Christi festival. We see financial exchange for players' labor—the verb *pagar* can only be translated as "to pay"—but the obligation is still to the Church.<sup>71</sup> In the same month there is an *obligación* for one Matteo de la Quadra, citizen and carpenter of Lima, to build carts necessary for the Corpus Christi plays later that season. Apparently, the

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<sup>68</sup> "Corpus Christi in the New World," Carolyn Dean's *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ*.

<sup>69</sup> AGN, P. 28, v. 122. 4 April 1577.

<sup>70</sup> AGN, P. 94, v. 156-7. 13 June 1582.

<sup>71</sup> "*Jusepha de Rivera, alcalde ordinario, se oblige por el cabildo de Lima, a pagar a Francisco de Morales por las comedias que debe hacer el dia Corpus Cristi.*" AGN. P. 94, v. 157. 13 June 1582. Blas Hernandez, escribano.

plays—as definitively shown for a later year, 1587—were performed on the same kind of wagons used in the mystery-cycle plays presented in England in the same era, with communities involved (at times by force) in processions, and guilds of particular types of workers taking on each of the stories.<sup>72</sup>

In documents from 1586 and 1587 Morales appears as *maestro de comedias y representaciones* (impresario of plays and representations); with this distinction we begin to see a separation between performances prepared as an obligation to the Church, and those for public consumption.<sup>73</sup> The *comedia* is something separate and distinct; the word stands in for “drama,” “play,” or “short play,” and can have comic, romantic, and tragic content, though the latter is less likely. Diego Sanchez de Toledo distinguishes himself more than once as a sturdy patron of the plays necessary for Holy Week, meeting his *obligación* as a citizen of the elite to pay for the necessities. The first necessity? A manager for the play’s production. Francisco de Morales’ services were very much in demand. And the second? A space in which to perform.

Susan Castillo, in her book *Colonial Encounters in New World Writing: 1500-1786: Performing America* (2006) structures a rigorous examination of early dramatic texts in the Americas, and includes urban architecture in Lima as used by the players to support her unique research:

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<sup>72</sup> “Matteo de la Quadra, carpintero residente en Lima, se oblige ante el regidor Simon Luis de Luzio, presente en nombre de la ciudad, a hacer dos carros para la representación de unas comedias que se realazarán el día de Corpus Cristi.” AGN. P. 94, v. 101-102. 12 May 1582. Blas Hernandez, escribano.

<sup>73</sup> “Diego Sanchez de Toledo, residente de Lima concierta cono Francisco Morale[s] (*sic*) maestro de comedias y representaciones...” AGN. P.45 v. 1233. 21 August 1586. Notario Rodrigo Gomez de Baczo. “Diego Sanchez de Toledo, residente en Lima, da poder de su hijo Juissepe Hernandez de Oviedo y Crespín Lopez, estantes en el Cusco para cobrar a Francisco de Morales maestro de comedias, por el servicio de su hijo.” AGN P. 36, v. 1286. 30 September 1587.

The first *corrales* or theatres were rudimentary in the extreme; plays were performed standing with audience in the open air in the back patios of private houses, with other spectators from the wealthier classes looking on from the balconies and windows of neighboring houses. The stage and the sides of the patio were roofed, and the patio itself was covered with a tent to protect spectators from the sun, as most performances took place in the afternoon (22).

Castillo could be describing the outdoor playhouses of Elizabethan England, except that these *corrales* were the courtyards within the homes of private citizens.

The early 1590s bring the commission of plays and rental of *corrales* in various buildings or corners in Lima's center.<sup>74</sup> April of 1595 finds Francisco Sanchez de Merlo and Francisco Rodriguez Pantoja, merchants and residents of Lima, loaning funds to Francisco de Morales through the last day of Corpus Christi festival so that he can pay his debts.<sup>75</sup> The loan highlights that labor of theatre workers is valued, and to some degree trusted. Even so, when Morales takes out another loan the following year, he must first be released from jail for a different unpaid debt so he can go ahead and produce the plays for the 1596 festival.<sup>76</sup> Once his labor for the festival was complete, back to the jail he presumably did go—though later that year Morales must be free as his next loan serves as

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<sup>74</sup> In Lima's National Archives, there are no less than twelve separate documents related to the rental of buildings, courtyards or urban corners for performances in the last decade of the sixteenth century. Should this kind of ephemera have been discovered in the English colonies one hundred years later, there would have been little argument in establishing the trade of the players in the Americas.

<sup>75</sup> "*Francisco Sanchez de Merlo y Francisco Rodriguez Pantoja, mercederes residents en Lima, dan fianza por Francisco de Morales, autor de comedias, sujeto a prision por demand de Domingo de Noguera Sastre, para aseguir que regresará a la carcel pasados los dias del termino de la fianza*" AGN. P. 3, v. 992. 8 April 1595.

<sup>76</sup> AGN. P. 3. V. 1154. 17 February 1596

down payment for the plays to come in the new year. All of this activity involves one impresario, commissions from the Church, and complaints regarding Morales' outstanding debts.<sup>77</sup>

Next, Maria Rodriguez and her husband, the same Francisco de Morales, agree in 1597 to hire a woman for a year.<sup>78</sup> Mencia de Alcazar's name seems *criollo* in its blend of etymological indicators, but in the contract, she is called *natural de Ica*, born in the Americas, and so indigenous.<sup>79</sup> Here she is to be employed by a household of people who work in the theatre; we must imagine how busy she was in the household, and wherever the players might play.

As we close in on 1599 there is a flurry of business in Lima's performance scene. The theatre people of early modern Lima are pulling away from the Church, creating secular plays for commercial consumption, competing for an apparently robust spectatorship, and forming partnerships. The occupation of *autor de comedia* between 1575 and 1599 in Lima was held by, at the very least, Francisco de Morales, Balthasar Velez, Juan (Joan) Melendez, Manuel Rodriguez de Azevedo, Damien de Moya, Manuel de Moya, and soon, Francisco Pérez de Robles. None have yet formed a company.

On 23 March 1599, two signatories of the Callao Contract appear for the first time. Pérez de Robles and Andres Gonzales make an agreement with Martin de Torres, a resident of Lima, to use the patio, or *corral*, of his house, on the *Calle de* (street of) San

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<sup>77</sup> AGN. P. 3 v. 1244-1245. 25 September 1596.

<sup>78</sup> "Maria Rodriguez, mujer de Francisco de Morales, autor de comedias, asienta a Mencia de Alcazar, natural de Ica, para servirle por un año."

<sup>79</sup> Cite Marisol de la Cadena here.

Agustin.<sup>80</sup> It is a good thing Francisco is making plans, as on 19 May 1599 Velez is granted a commission to write new *autos* for the coming festival and also to create secular plays to perform in the *corral* he has secured.<sup>81</sup> The plays, *Urson the Fisherman* and *Valentin, the Judge*, offer characters whose names are not biblical. Given the other play commissioned is called *The Tribulations of Christ*, it is not too difficult to imagine Urson and Valentin separate from scripture and importantly, to contain satirical or romantic content.<sup>82</sup> On 22 June 1599, just days before the signing of the Callao contract, Francisco purchased, “*Una negra esclava llamada Catalina de Tierra de Santa Tomo, de Juan de Garelo*” (a black [woman] slave called Catalina of Santa Tomo from Juan de Garelo, a public notary). Garelo was an “*escribano publico*,” or notary.<sup>83</sup> Perhaps Garelo advised Francisco to form a legal company. It was just six days later that Francisco and Isabel brought together their team to sign the Callao Contract, forming what collector A.S.W. Rosenbach called, and I shall now second as, “The first professional theatre company of the Americas.” (Rosenbach, *The First 3*)

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“*Martin de Torres, vecino de Lima, adminstrado de los bienes de Francisco de Talavera, arriendo a Francisco perez de Robles y andres gonzales autores de comedias, el patio de su casa uicado en la calle de San Agustin. Notario Antonio Corvalan. AGN. P. 25, v. 265-266. 23 March 1599.*”

<sup>81</sup> “*El capitan Juisepe de Ribera Alcalde ordinario en Lima, el doctor Francisco de Leon y otro, regidores se conciertan con Grabiell de Rio, Balthasar Belez y otros, oficiales cómicos, en la realización de dos comedias para el día del Corpus Cristi y para su Octava, las cales se titulan ‘Los Trabajos de Cristo’, ‘Urson, el Pecador’ y ‘Valentin, el Justo’.* Blas Hernandez, escribano. AGN. P. 97, v. 707-709. 19 May 1599.

<sup>82</sup> Both secular plays appear to be lost, but *The Tributions of the Cross* would be a prototypical name for one of the cycle plays in Christian liturgical theatres.

<sup>83</sup> AGN. P. 59, v. 92-94. 22 June 1599. I’d like to refer readers to Guman Pomo de Ayala’s drawing of the Inka noble working as Notary. And from *Indigenous Intellectuals*, the edited collection of essays, which tracks the litereracy of Inca nobility as they are trained to read and write, and then serve as cabildos or alcaldes in their villages. They were in service to the crown, and simultaneously became agents for the voices of their own people.

Francisco and company would add membership July 28. Two men by the names of Rodriguez (o) de Azevedo and Manuel de Moya, (who appeared earlier), were contracted “[p]ara le sirvan en calidade artistas de musica, comedias y otros por tiempo de uno ano.”<sup>84</sup> This language perks my interest, as not only does Francisco and Isabel require more workers for success, they are also acknowledging some of the new employees will be the musicians for whom a part has been set aside. The shareholders who signed together one month earlier had consigned for a period of three years. Here, it seems Rodriguez and Manuel will have a year to prove themselves. Market demands at work once again. Francisco and his wife Isabel, the leading lady who does not read or write, have joined forces with theatre people and servants born in Spain, Peru, and from Africa, born of native people, born of colonizers, stolen into slavery or hired into service. This theatre company becomes a multi-cultural alternative family banded together to succeed as voices of entertainment, possibly with images of the sacred, likely using masks of the profane, and as business people, who, we shall soon see, were an integral part of the bustling and complex center of colonial power and urban experiment for the future.

This brings us to the turning point at the end of the century, which reveals accelerating activities of theatre people in Lima.<sup>85</sup> In what now has been established as the veritable performance scene of the viceroyalty, one could begin to draw Greenblatt’s curve with a sharp rise from the medieval to the modern.<sup>86</sup> The theatre people of early colonial Lima begin to pull away from the church, create secular plays for commercial

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<sup>84</sup> AGN. P. 61, v. 201-204. 28 July 1599.

<sup>85</sup> Most of the documents mentioning theatre people are concentrated in the last two years of the century.

<sup>86</sup> As previously noted, Greenblatt will be offered in fuller view in the Introduction.

consumption, and compete with each other for what appears to be a robust spectatorship.<sup>87</sup>

There are now two companies, forming in direct competition, preparing for a year of performance inside and outside *obligaciones* to the Church or civic authority. Another month passes by, and Belez and Company on 27 August 1599 join forces with Damian de Moya, the brother of Manuel, “[p]ara que trabajarán en la compania que tiene junto con otros en Lima.” Following in Francisco’s and Isabel’s footsteps Belez has formed a company of his own.<sup>88 89</sup> Forming partnerships and companies for enterprises of all sorts was a strong indicator of the early modern mentality emerging as the residents of Lima attempted to invent themselves for the invented city.<sup>90</sup>

At the end of 1599 there is one more contract in which Diego de Rojas, part of the team of *autores* mentioned in documents of the 1580s, signs an agreement with two women, Ana Ruiz y Mariana de Esquivel, to rent them two houses located, “a la esquina

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<sup>87</sup> Please see vigorous arguments regarding this evolution/transition with a broad overview of Latin America in Adam Versenyi’s *Theatre in Latin American: Religion, Politics and Culture from Cortez to the 1980’s* and regarding Peru’s Andean performance specifically in Raquel Chang-Rodriguez’s *Hidden Message: Representations and Resistance In Andean Colonial Drama*. Also, for tracking the anti-theatrical prejudice in “New Spain” and use of theatre practices for purposes of presenting liturgy and conversion plays, especially by the Jesuit church, see works by Daniel Breining, *Censorship Practices in Sixteenth Century New Spain*, and Carolyn Dean’s *Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial Age*, a collection of essays regarding colonial practices of indoctrination.

<sup>88</sup> AGN. P. 97, v. 845-846. 27 August 1599.

<sup>89</sup> Interestingly, this document is not legal as it is noted that the contract has “*no firma el escribana; Inconcluso*”—there is no signature from the Notary and therefore the document is considered, “inconclusive.”

<sup>90</sup> In 2016, during the months of January-March and during my last research visit to Lima, the AGN featured a gallery display of the history of print culture in Lima. Emphasizing that the end of the sixteenth century, after the city of Lima had already been established for more than fifty years, the movement towards documentation of the city’s activities were nearly fervent. The curators included the formation of business partnerships in written form and with contracts, as part of that zeitgeist.

*del corral donde se hacen las comedias, junto a convento de Santa Domingo.*” By 1599 the corner where “they perform the plays” was common knowledge.<sup>91</sup>

It is with the arrival of theatre manager Francisco de Morales scholar Villena marks the emergence of the theatre profession, separate and distinct from religious plays and civic obligations to the Church or Crown. Morales, who Villena calls a *maestro del arte comyco*, came to Lima in 1576, yet did not begin his professional practice until six years later. Villena calls him a man with, “*Dotado de un vigoroso temperamento de organizador, fue sobre todo, un experto y competente empresario teatral y el constructor, en las postrimerías del siglo, del primer corral de comedies en nuestra ciudad*” (49).<sup>92</sup> This secondary research is evidence of a purpose-built performance space in Lima existing before the year 1600. Villena calls it *El Corral de San Andres* and claims it came to first use on 24 September 1601 (49).

Examined together and in light of the Callao Contract, these documents reveal people of the theatre profession engaged in activities of performance inside and separate from the church while carrying debts, entering into business arrangements, purchasing enslaved human beings, and going to jail. In short, these notarized contracts offer a picture of actors and “*autores de comedia*” integrated into Lima’s quotidian culture in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. The documents reveal theatre professionals with early modern sensibilities, at first dependent upon, then resisting, and at last emerging from the conversion/worship practices of medieval performance culture of the Catholic Church into

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<sup>91</sup> AGN Dec 23, 1599 P. 7, v. 130-132. 23 Dec 1599. Please note, this is NOT the Santo Domingo church built on top of the Inca palace *Qoricancha* in Cuzco.

<sup>92</sup> My translation: “Equipped with a vigorous temperament of an organizer, he was above all, an expert and competent impresario, and the builder, at the end of the century, of the first *corral* in our city.”

a world where they began to exist as independent men and women professionals, pl(a)ying their trade in the “new” world as fervently as any other trader. The first mention of theatre culture in the National Archives of Peru comes just twenty-four years before Francisco and Isabel gather their cohorts.<sup>93</sup>

Now that I have detailed the documents in Lima’s national archive associated with the Callao Contract either by proximity in dates, participants, agreements or arrangements for performance, I leave the archive of documents and move into the time, space, and geography of Isabel’s journey from Spain to Peru.

## **Part Two**

### **Isabel in Spain; Staging a Journey, 1598**

In this second part of Section II, I examine Isabel de Los Angeles’ moment in time, the city she left behind and the reasons that may account for her willingness to leave Spain. In imagining her impetus for leaving all she knew behind, I also construct a picture of what a woman such as she might have encountered as she struggled for agency in a world shockingly new for her, and under yet another new set of laws.

Though Spanish and English-language plays dramatizing Peru did not appear until the 1620s, in 1598 Isabel and her unemployed contemporaries in Madrid would have been still awash with what Peter Bradley calls “[a]n irresistibly tantalizing blend of myth and fact” when regarding the furthest of Spain’s colonies (Bradley and Cahill, 79). Were these actors traveling across the ocean to try their hands at their profession to flee the

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<sup>93</sup> Again, I examined only the documents in the National Archives notarial records. There are other archives long overdue for study, along with the National Library.

governing bodies attempting to govern their bodies? Did they hope to strike it rich? To bank on Isabel as a commodity? In short, were they in flight from something or sailing away towards something new, or for that matter, the “New?” In the unearthing of the Callao Contract and research provoked by its discovery, the evidence is clear actors were in place, ready for their entrance to the Americas.

As I’ve noted the end of the sixteenth century was a time of explosive growth for theatre culture in Shakespeare’s London, certainly, but also on the European Continent. The cusp of the two centuries saw the blossoming of the theatre profession outside the extravagances at the Italian Court or the medieval cycle plays compelled by the English Church. Popular theatre in streets and alehouses, the playhouses of England and *corrales* (courtyard theatres) of Spain, heralded the expression of an early modern phenomenon—the public stage. In peninsular Spain, perhaps it was the stolen ore of the Inca Empire that provided the metaphoric gilt of the Spanish drama’s so-called golden age. Lope de Vega was by far Spain’s most famous playwright at the end of the sixteenth century; soon to come would be Cervantes and Calderon.<sup>94</sup>

Though there is ample scholarship on sixteenth-century Spain’s fertile period of professional theatre, less comprehensive is scholarship seeking out women in general, and actresses making their way in Madrid and Seville during this time. Revisiting the

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<sup>94</sup> Lope Feliz de Vega Carpio, Oscar Brockett calls, “Flamboyant...sailed with the (Spanish) Armada, secretary to a nobleman, participant in many businesses and love affairs,’ writer of 1800 plays, 331 extant, 200 other surviving plays attributed.” (Brockett 140). Brockett, and now Franklin Hildy, have been the lead writers on the textbook of theatre history upon which most established English speaking theatre programs rely. This quote is from the tenth edition of the massive textbook, published in 2008. There will be other citations from this text, as my argument that Peru, and Lima specifically, have been neglected, if not totally unacknowledged in stubbornly dominant narratives of theatre history. Those arguments will appear in Section III and the conclusion.

now classic and unimpeachable work by Hugo Albert Rennert regarding the life of the players and the plays in Lope de Vega's Spain, and with a lens honed by recent scholarship by feminist historians Joan Cammarata and Margaret E. Boyle, I first find, and then strive to understand, the lives of women in Spain's professional theatre, and why one talented individual might have left.<sup>95</sup> Cammarata writes when focusing on women's history in early modern Spain, the contributors to her collection feel the responsibility to "[d]ecode the voices, texts, and images of women in the past." Her contributors, she writes, urge us, "[t]o reassess the economic, legal, political and religious systems that articulate the parameters of women's access to power and self determination in the past, as well as in the present" (Camm 14-15). In other words, when we seek out women's stories in the past, we will have access to understanding women's circumstances in the present. Cammarata recognizes how much Iberian history and literature can add to the absences of women in the narratives when she claims, "Spanish literature and theatre, far from ignoring the debate about the role and place of women in society, reflect [it], with all the ambiguity and complexity of a codified message" (9). If we seek out women in Spain and throughout the imperial project, not only in the texts of the dramatists but in the performative actions of theatre practices, Cammarata argues we may find the codes we need to discover women's lives.

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<sup>95</sup> Boyle's *Unruly Women: Performance, Penitence, and Punishment in Early Modern Spain* (2014) and Cammarata's *Women in the Discourse of Early Modern Spain* became texts essential to this research. Neither of them know about the existence of Isabel de Los Angeles, nor of Villena's *Registro de Actores* in Lima. After all, their focus is on Iberian Peninsula. Both writers track the "performances" of women, onstage and off, tracking how women seeking work, independence and/or financial agency, ended up existing on the margins of the culture

As stated earlier, it is broadly understood that women were permitted to perform in Spain and Italy before the laws allowed the biological female body on England's stages. Guillermo Lohmann Villena constructs a brief biography of Isabel de los Ángeles in the appendices of his comprehensive *Historia del Arte Dramatico en Lima Durante El Virreinato*. Villena documents Isabel's presence in a *Registro de Actores* he constructs for Lima up until the year 1700. Isabel de Los Angeles was born in Madrid in 1573 to Portuguese parents, Gregorio de Pérez and Susana de Meyreles (176-7). At sixteen, she married the well-known *comedien* Francisco Pérez de Robles in 1589, “[c]on quien vino al Perú diez años más tarde” (with whom she came to Peru ten years later).<sup>96</sup> She came of age during a decade of acting in one of the most exciting cities in the world for a young woman performer. Had she been born any of a hundred other places she would not have been permitted on the stage at all. The late-sixteenth century would have found Isabel hard at work in Madrid's performance economy, competing with thousands of actors also seeking employment. Many formed their own companies, seeking independence from Court and Church, or at least more bargaining power. In the world Rennert reveals, secular roles and portrayals of religious figures in the Corpus Christi were all part of an actor's employable repertoire; Isabel might have portrayed the Virgin Mary in April, then spent the summer months as a witty servant in a *comedia* by Lope De Vega.

When Isabel and Francisco came together as a team, regardless of her gender or age, they would have had more agency in negotiations (Rennert 191). Husbands and wives were numerous among the teams listed as actor/manager cohorts in the annals.

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<sup>96</sup> Francisco's bio is much briefer, stating his place of birth and death, both Madrid, and noting his voyage to Lima for a period of nearly 12 years.

Rennert reports on partnerships such as, “Miguel Vasquez and his wife Wanda,” and “Luis Molina and his brother, one Im\_\_o Lemos, both with their wives in Shrovetide of 1584,” among the many combinations of actors or family members who contracted as a team of one sort or another (199). An actor had to carefully consider whether to go on the road with (or without) her family, book contract-to-contract, show-to-show, character-to-character, or Shrovetide-to-Shrovetide, while staying in the city (Rennert 114).

Everything depended on whether the Crown and/or Church would keep the companies licensed, and the theatres open.<sup>97</sup> Their lives would have been livable, provided there was work. Rennert gives carefully structured evidence actors rarely left Spain and touring was decidedly in-country, and quite importantly, exclusively in the Spanish language (221).

Not able to read or write, Isabel was required to memorize by ear and eye any number of performances, boast several characters in her personal repertoire, command multiple scenarios, demonstrate good improvisational skills and comic timing. She would have needed to gain command of all these aspects of her craft in order to make a life in the theatre. The competition would have been fierce, and partnerships were fragile. Histories aside from Rennert’s also document the chaos of the time. Even Oscar Brockett’s foundation text, *History of the Theatre* states, “It is difficult to estimate the number of acting companies in Spain between 1550 and 1600, for many lasted only a single season and mergers or separations were frequent” (Brockett 142). Brockett also offers a description of the ways in which actors in Spain were doing business

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<sup>97</sup> Rennert is specific regarding numbers of legal companies during the last 20 years of 1500s. By 1598, only three were licensed. A chart in his book exhibits graphically the extraordinary number of unlicensed companies that could be documented in just a ten-year period.

There are two kinds of licensed companies {in Spain}, sharing troupes (*compania de partes*) and salaried actors working for manager under one- or two- year contracts. *Companias de la legua* or companies of the road, which performed anywhere they could outside of the cities reserved for the licensed companies, and sharing the takings. Companies from 1 to 16 members included men, women, children, apprentices, and number from 1 to 16 members” (Brockett 143).

These distinctions become important when considering the agency of the signatories of the Callao Contract forming a shared company; they were determined to try and control their own earning power, and thus, their destiny.<sup>98</sup>

Nothing about the professional theatre work was glamorous. The standard charge for admission to performances was one *real*, with about ten *reales* to a ducat (Rennert 77). If Isabel, her husband and one other actor worked together, for a single performance they might receive “Nine 1/2 *reales* for three persons at the end of each performance, ...,” i.e., not even a ducat (Rennert 79). Isabel might have considered a standard year-long contract as long as it included her transportation, room and board, and if as per custom it specified a duration from “Shrovetide to Shrovetide for the sum of 100 ducats and besides [s]he is to receive food, drink, and lodging, and to have [her] clothes washed, and is to be conveyed on horseback whenever necessary” (80).<sup>99</sup> Touring was part of a player’s life, but limited to distances possible on horseback with no more than a day or so

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<sup>98</sup> Despite this particular detail from Brockett, as I discuss in Section III, largely his histories neglect Spanish drama during this period in Hapsburg Spain, and completely ignore Spanish theatre in the Americas until the tenth edition.

<sup>99</sup> Shrovetide was the pagan-based festival appropriated by the Catholic Church and converted to occupy the time before Lent. It became *Carnivale*, a time of excesses, and Lent the time for abstaining from the very same vices indulged during Shrovetide.

between performances. Necessity dictated that Spain's *compañias de comedias* had wives, daughters and sisters working together with husbands, brothers, fathers and sons, all contributing to the traveling players' economy; the theatre, in other words, was a family business.

Each actor built a repertoire, as is evident from contracts specifying characters actors were slated to portray, as opposed for example to numbers of performances. The moral character of actors, even more so, actresses, was called into question. How could a young girl portray the Virgin for the Corpus Christi procession then turn up in the streets of Madrid, portraying a prostitute in a comic farce? Rennert remarks on this conflict, citing it as one of the reasons actors were constantly on the move, trying to avoid authorities (201).<sup>100</sup>

The question remains, why did Isabel and Francisco leave Spain?<sup>101</sup> If she were in fact a leading lady with box office attraction, why would she have left the country? Though much scholarly attention has been paid to the opening and closings of the theaters in Elizabethan London given plagues, politics and the Interregnum, little is discussed about a brief few years in Spanish history during which the throne, badgered by the church, and the church, pressured by the throne, hurled a chaotic series of prohibitions at the players.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> In Boyle's *Unruly Women*, she surveys representations of transgressive women in the fiction of the culture, and the transgressions of female criminals in quotidian culture.

<sup>101</sup> Remember, we discovered from the contract that several of the signatories were already living in Peru, and appear in the AGN in early contracts. It is through Villena's registry that we can know the location of Isabel and Francisco's birth, and that they were still in Madrid as of 1597. Lohmann Villena's photo is prominently hung in the reading room of the AGN holding the notarial papers upon which this study depends.

<sup>102</sup> In Andrew Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's England*, the writer tracks the effect of the plague on the opening and closing of the public playhouses.

Rennart's history gives a picture of the ways in which throne and church tried to suppress the theatres and the women players within it, during the final years of the sixteenth century:

The dissolution of the actresses, who were frequently disguised as men upon the stage, and the dangerous influence of these performances upon a people among whom the craze for theatrical representations had become universal, caused a few eminent theologians, in 1587, to step into the breach and attempt to stem the tide that was sweeping everything before it. They failed, as we have seen, for the indecent songs and dances, which the government made a feeble effort to suppress, were succeeded by others not more decorous, and the result was that in 1596 women were forbidden, "To act in the said comedias." Whether this prohibition was ever enforced, however, is open to serious doubt; at all events, the death of Princess Catherine, Duchess of Savoy and sister of Philip the third, on November 6, 1597, offered an opportunity for putting a stop to the comedia, and the king accordingly commanded the theaters of Madrid to be closed (26-7).

Whether at this time Isabel would have to have been disguised as a man in order to play a girl, could be a woman while dressed as a man, or both, is not clear. What is apparent is that amid a rising tide of intolerance after 1587, she could no longer play a girl while also being one.<sup>103</sup> In fact, her very body on the stage caused the "dangerous influence," turning songs only "indecent" into ones presumably even worse. The King and/or the

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<sup>103</sup> There were no doubt stowaways in Shakespeare's obligatory homosocial environment. Charlotte Charke's autobiography about her cross dressing for the stage and in life was not published until 1755, yet gives quite a taste for what a woman would go through to appear on stage in England, even when she was legally permitted to do so.

Church first tried to stop women from performing, and then to close the popular theatre altogether. Actors working outside protection of the court or church would have been especially vulnerable to the prejudices of those enforcing the slippery and transitory laws. In 1598 King Phillip, "Submitted the matter to a council of three theologians" who, in deciding against the theaters, pressured the King to issue a royal edict to match their own. On 2 May 1598, the King issued a ruling declaring that, "No comedia should be represented" so even closing the theaters was not enough; the players themselves were shut down as well.<sup>104</sup> Rennart brings our attention to the wording of certain phrases in the suspension of the plays, suggesting the crown knew the closure would be temporary, and was intended for application only in the city of Madrid and, "Not elsewhere in these kingdoms." Citing a document "only recently discovered" (Rennart was published in 1907) called the *Bibliograofía Madrileña*, it included the edict of 1598 and gave Rennart the chance to study the exact wording of Phillip's shifting policies. In any case, by 17 April 1599, the theaters were open again and the next day Phillip married, with plenty of theatrical entertainment at the festive nuptials. In the following decade, another barrage of laws restricted the content of the plays, morality of the players, their actions on the stage, the licensed companies would be limited to just four, and women were not permitted to act in Spain for any number of years. Theaters in Madrid were re-opened to male actors just ten weeks before the signing of the Callao Contract (Rennert 188).

Given the restrictions placed upon Isabel's legitimate appearances on stage, the unpredictable and seemingly capricious changes to performance requirements, and the otherwise intolerably restrictive controls placed on plays, players and the actions of

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<sup>104</sup> Rennert cites primary sources of the writings of Phillip II.

women, it is quite conceivable that Francisco and Isabel decided to leave Spain and try their luck in one of the Spanish speaking colonies. There were plenty of reasons for Isabel and Francisco to consider a life elsewhere besides her agency as working woman in the theatre. They probably wouldn't have survived the yearlong closure without work, and besides, they couldn't have foreseen the ban would last less than a year. They were a childless couple, relatively young. Travel was difficult under any circumstance, but at least they were healthy and fit. The most obvious limits for an actor with a repertoire would be that concerned with language. Strategically, the development of the colonies served precisely this kind of need. Or should I say this kind of need provoked the development of the colonies? In either case, Lima, City of Kings, became their very real destination.

The players' interpretive minds would have been hard at work imagining life in the Spanish colony. As much as one English-language narrative of Spanish colonization draws the so-called Black Legend of greed and blood-and-gold-thirsty conquistadors, another tells of exotic flora and fauna and untold riches for the taking, and a third theorizes on the wide-ranging and tireless fervor of Catholic thirst for souls, pleading for the human dignity of Indigenous people.<sup>105</sup> Rarely has the language of potential riches been quite so florid as when seafarers boasted in their journals of the treasures of Peru—

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<sup>105</sup> Histories by Agustin de Zarate, *The Strange and Delectable History of the Discoverie and Conquest of the Provinces of Perú*, (1581) John Hemming's *The Conquest of the Incas* (1970) William H. Prescott, *The History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847) , and Charles Mann *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* (2005) give wildly divergent accounts of the taking of the Inca Empire. Bartholome de Las Casas published his treatise *A Short Account on the Destruction of the Indian* in 1542. He never traveled to Perú.

even when they had never seen it for themselves.<sup>106</sup> The official chroniclers had more perspective. “It seems as if we had wanted to turn these kingdoms into a republic of enchanted men, living outside the natural order,” wrote González de Cellorigo, *Arbitrista* of 1600, nearly acknowledging the irony of his own empire’s fantasy (Cahill and Bradley 24).

By 1599, seven decades into Spanish rule, Lima was filled with Peninsulars, Hidalgos, and Mestizos, Africans brought as slaves, some now freed, and Indigenous peoples from the highlands, trapped in domestic servitude or slavery-like forced labor for the Crown. Spanish, French, English, and Chinese had all come to seek or steal their fortunes. Actors were no different; it is only strange that historians have neglected to imagine players coming to Lima as part of the transoceanic movement of humans, labor and resources. Their expectations and hopes for success were informed by the stories crossing the oceans in as much a flood as did material exchange. As it happened, and found in documents in the national archives, groundwork for the profession of the theatre had been laid over the previous twenty-five years. Lohmann Villena writes actors travelled outside the city and then returned with information about venues or audiences to share with the next tour to depart:

*Fue tradicional dentro del ambiente histriónico del virreinato peruano el que mientras una agrupación realizaba una expedición artística por el interior hubiera otra en Lima hasta que aquella retornara a esta ciudad permitiendo a esta a su vez emprender en la misma gira. Llamada*

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<sup>106</sup> André Thevet was just such an explorer. Cite his chronicles here, and that he had never been to Peru, but wrote of it as though he had. Quote the chronicle of his seafaring, and also quote the english Sir Richard who wrote of the danger of the Callao Port.

*company ya garnacha en los cuales además de la dama solía haber un muchacho que quisiera de segunda dama y reza como sigue (57).*

According to Lohnmann Villena, one company would go to the “interior” of the country, and another would stay in the city. Each would share with the other, so that those going out could take the same tour, *la miasma gira*. He suggests there will be a boy to play the second lady, but we know from the signatories there are two women in this company, Isabel, and the as yet unnamed wife of Luis Mayorga, who is contracted to earn her own half-share. The signers agree to the terms standard to a contract of this era. This report could be interpreted as though a touring company in sixteenth century Peru was the most logical thing in the world, and entirely status quo for the times.

### **Part Three**

#### **Early Modern Lima: Americanity Stages a City**

The americanity of the Americas would be particularly manifested in the second viceroyalty of the Spaniards. Consider the distinction provided by Wallerstein and Quijano in their essay, “Americanity as a Concept,” between the evolution of the northern and southern sectors of the invaded hemisphere:

Coloniality in the Ibero-American zone did not consist only in the political subordination to the Crown in the metropole, but above all in the domination of Europeans over Indians. In the British-American zone, on the other hand, coloniality meant almost exclusive subordination to the British Crown. This meant that the British colonies constituted themselves initially as European-societies-outside-of-Europe, whereas the Iberian

colonies were societies of Europeans and Native Americans. The historical processes would therefore be very different” (552).

And it was shockingly different. Lima was a creation of the conquistadors’ hubris, the King’s invisible royalty and the imperialism of those viceroys who represented him, the machinations of an international zone of exchange, or more succinctly as we are reminded by Quijano and Wallerstein, coloniality, racism, globalization, and the concept of “newness” itself. Callao was a port of good shelter when considering geography, but violent conflict when considering the potential embattlement between peoples of the ships from distant ports. The English would hover in Callao, harboring not only their boats, but also their suspicions about the outpost of colonial Lima, the horror of the Catholic Spaniards as bloodthirsty papists, the imagined fantasy of the savage hovering next to their fear of the conquering Spaniards. Some never left their ships, seeking less risky ports.<sup>107</sup>

Lima was inhabited by 200,000 souls in 1533, when Pizarro chose this valley for his fantasized center of power of the newest colony of Spain’s empire.<sup>108</sup> Small villages were scattered up and down the great rivers Rimac, Chillón and Lurin that flow from the Andes into the ocean’s natural harbor of Callao. Clearing the indigenous peoples out of the valley in a combination of genocide and resettlements, the Spaniards were able to

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<sup>107</sup> Thevet, just for example. In *Re-Reading the Black Legend: Discourses of Religious and Racial difference in the Renaissance Empires*, the essential collection edited by Walter Mignolo and Margaret Rich Greer, Mignolo draws a crystallize argument for how English language histories have erased Spanish ones, by reinforcing the hegemonic narrative of exclusively Spanish Colonial and Catholic brutality.

<sup>108</sup> In Charles Mann’s recent text, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus*, he presents new information regarding population before and after contact, paying particular attention to Peru rather than exclusively focusing on North America.

start from scratch in building what would become the most powerful viceroyalty in the center of the western hemisphere.<sup>109</sup>

In trying to grasp the scope of empire the Pizarro and his army encountered, consider how it is expressed by historian Charles C. Mann, who wrote in his book, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*, about the state of American civilizations before the arrival of Europeans. Here, he is portraying the vastness of the Inca (Inka) empire in context with other dynasties of power:

In 1491 the Inka ruled the greatest empire on earth. Bigger than Ming Dynastic China, bigger than Ivan the Great's expanding Russia, bigger than Songhay in the Sahel or powerful Great Zimbabwe in the West Africa tablelands, bigger than the cresting Ottoman Empire, bigger than the Triple Alliance, bigger by far than any European state (125).

Mann gives a new historian's history of the lands of America Before and After, with titles of *1491* and *1493*, his books do not evoke not a specific moment in a calendar but rather, the watershed moment, as expressed in separate events, over years of time—before and after Contact. In the Americas there were three independent cradles of civilization, and the Spaniards could not just flip a switch and suddenly colonize the Hemisphere.<sup>110</sup> I am provoked by Mann's wide lens of historiography, and his examinations of

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<sup>109</sup> The ancient Inca capitol of Cuzco could never have served as the Spanish *virreinato* (viceroyalty), much less the *real audiencia* (main court of Inquisition). Far too difficult to reach for the invaders, Cuzco had been the ancient Inca capital, and many indigenous people still surrounded it, even as Spaniards used slaves and native people to built on top of the ancient temple and deconstruct ruins to use the giant stones for their own foundations. What is important here is that Ciudad de Los Reyes, Lima, was a Spanish invention of essential urban peninsular life.

<sup>110</sup> *The Swerve* helps again, for drawing the historiography of slow change that is easy to historicize as though it were instant.

documents/events/resources considered ephemeral, performative, and otherwise unarchivable.<sup>111</sup> Mann's methods in writing, virtually free of citations, targets readers of popular culture. His research, in any case, is rigorous.

The communities who filled the basin defined by the Port of Callao and the rivers meeting the sea in Lima had been "removed" to clear the way for the construction of the new Spanish *virreinato*.<sup>112</sup> They fled to the altiplano or were murdered in vast numbers. Nonetheless, Lima still had an Indigenous population, as native peoples "resettled" by the Crown would be brought to Lima. In short, everyone who would come to inhabit the colonial city would have been uprooted from elsewhere.<sup>113</sup> Indigenous populations were brought from the highlands for forced labor, the African population brought as slaves and/or became freed peoples, and the Spanish, French, English, and Chinese all coming to seek their fortunes, as unfortunate a phrase as that has proven to be.

Even those recording the activities of the Spanish empire meaning to report on issues of body and soul recognized that something beyond the real was at work in both imagining and ultimately, manifesting, Spain's blood-soaked, yet somehow "enchanted" new satellite kingdoms.<sup>114</sup> The rush to find, steal, and return to the Spanish peninsula with the Indigenous riches of Perú could be compared in ferocity with other great movements for the earth's organic wealth—the rush for gold in California or Alaska's

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<sup>111</sup> Including maps, medical records, crop production, death records, all are post contact. Pre-contact, he examines geography, geology, crop production, death rituals, architecture and more.

<sup>112</sup> See Mumford's *Vertical Empire* and Maria Rostrowowski's *Historia de Tahuantinsuyu* for essential narratives historicizing Andean re-apportionment and the design of empire behind the use of forced Andean labor.

<sup>113</sup> Consider descriptions of forced labor, and resettlement enforced by the colonizers to subjugate and exploit the labor of indigenous peoples. *Vertical Empire*, and the works of Steve Stern and Charles Walker.

<sup>114</sup> Jose de Acosta, for example.

Klondike, the trade of spices in India or mining of diamonds in Southern Africa. In 1599, after less than seventy-five years of Spanish occupation, Peru's City of Kings was filled with Peninsulars and Hidalgos, Africans, Mestizos, and Indigenous peoples trapped either in domestic servitude or slavery-like forced labor for the crown. Karen Graubart, in her book *With Our Labor and Sweat: Indigenous Women and the Formation of Colonial Society in Peru, 1550-1700* (2007) and with her research focused on the lives of Indigenous women, describes Lima as, "A colonial settlement organized for access to maritime trade as well as local labor and resources like water and wood. Lima would rapidly grow to become a major hub of movement, of people as well as commodities" (39). Lima was a bustling, cosmopolitan center.

In *Children of the Father King: Youth, Authority and Legal Minority in Colonial Lima*, feminist scholar Bianca Premo argues that legal authority in Lima was not always what it seemed, or as legislation dictated. This becomes important when regarding Isabel and company in the context of Indigenous communities, and the agency of women in general in early modern Lima. The Spanish conquerors intended to construct Lima as a separated place for the light skinned colonizers. By 1664 Lima would be walled in the Spanish custom of separation, but at the end of the sixteenth century the dictated/imagined boundaries, or idealized separation between the colonizers and colonized, were porous with the movement and labor of human beings.

In describing late sixteenth-century Lima, Premo helps one visualize how the intersections of race and caste were impossible to avoid. Writing, "[n]o way would the Spaniards build or work or sweat if there were Indians to do the jobs," she documents the constant presence of workers in the capital, intersection of races and genders, and the

development of the *cercado* at Lima's outskirts (111).<sup>115</sup> The population grew and shrunk exponentially with the arrivals and departures of ships full of adventurers, outlaws and priests, slave traders and African slaves, representatives of the Hapsburg throne and merchants from Pacific and Atlantic trade. Separation of the races was impossible.

As a woman determined to ply her trade on a continent utterly new for her, Isabel would not only be allowed on stage, she would be the star attraction. There was plenty of audience out there. In citing a census just over a decade later, Graubart suggests while, “[p]opulation counted by one contemporary source as 25,447 in 1614..., the real figure is certainly higher than this not to mention the regular groups of Mita workers that came through the city” (15). Aside from the census, the transient population affected the numbers of people in the colonial center greatly on any given night.<sup>116</sup>

While Premo writes that “[w]omen were, in many legal arenas, stridently restricted in ways that men were not,” she goes on to argue and prove, despite laws that would dictate otherwise, women could and did “[m]anage their own assets, possess property if not always usufruct over it, and even represent themselves in court” (18). Isabel was just such a case. Premo carries her argument from the large canvas of governance in the city to the microcosm of the often homosocial, female household, where gender separation was expected, and separation of the races was even more glaringly an illusion. Premo finds

Colonial Lima's homes and institutions contained a dizzying network of cross caste and intergenerational relationships of dependency, intimacy,

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<sup>115</sup> The *cercado*, discussed shortly, was the designated living area for Indigenous peoples, located outside the central square of the Cathedral.

<sup>116</sup> Graubart calls it an, “ebb and flow of thousands” (112).

and authority. The ideology of patriarchal household governance-based on generation as well as gender-imposed an imaginary order on this diversity— naturalizing the multiple hierarchies that existed in the city (20-21).

Premo observes that the family structure was intended to imitate governing hierarchies modeled by Spanish law, but the structure was “imaginary.” She surmises that boundaries, especially between women, would be particularly difficult to maintain when the lady of a household depends on her servants and slaves for everything from breastfeeding to sewage, and those who serve are living under the same roof as those served. Lima, she argues, never provided a separate place for the light-skinned Spaniards.

Graubart presents detailed evidence that women, married or widowed, Spanish, Indigenous or *Criolla*, owned property in Lima’s first century. Property becomes a source of income, and renters created intersections of cultural types who might otherwise not interact. Agreeing with Premo, Graubart writes, “The two republics were expected to be interdependent (Spanish needing Indian labor and Indians needing Spanish religious guidance) yet segregated” (24).

Graubart gives us a vivid description of Lima to support her argument that separation was a myth of Spanish hubris:

The culture of daily life even more insistently demanded integration, since Indian men and women held crucial jobs as marketeers, artisans, domestic servants, and construction workers. All manner of people were dependent upon Indigenous and *casta* vendors, and store owners for staple goods; middle and upper income homes (of all ethnicities) had African slaves and

indigenous African and European domestic servants; people of all classes and ethnicities sought out indigenous and casta healers. It would have been a sheltered Spaniard indeed whose path did not cross with other ethnicities regularly, and even those Spaniards most notable for being sheltered—cloistered nuns—lived among Indians Mestizos and Africans in their convents” (16).

Certainly an actress—surrounded by a diverse collection of people born in different continents, speaking different languages, and used to scrapping to get by in the muddy outreaches of the Spanish provinces and now in the outpost of Lima—could hardly be considered a sheltered woman. In fact, a Spaniard such as Isabel would be living with and needing Indigenous women in nearly every aspect of her daily life. Indigenous women

[p]roduced and sold much of the food and clothing consumed in the colony, they raise[d] children and clean[ed] houses for the upper and middle classes, they provided midwifery and healing services, they owned real estate and even slaves and, on occasion, held political office. As a result we can see them as indispensable to the construction of the incipient colonial society, and we can also watch colonial society develop through them” (Graubart 25).

Again, colonization is a two-way interchange. To grasp the history, we need to look at the center of power from locations on the periphery, rather than the other way around.<sup>117</sup> The

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<sup>117</sup> Theories of the power of the periphery are in, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, and other key feminist texts of the late 1970s.

*cercado* was on the periphery of colonial Lima.<sup>118</sup> It was women of the *cercado* who would have the most movement through the community, to and from the homes they kept, and who would have had a daily effect on the Spanish women whose households they managed. It is relatively straightforward to imagine that the mestizo and indigenous women intersected with Isabel would have had an effect on her daily life, and on her performances.

The *cercado* was intended to create separation of the races, but whatever the objective, Graubart, like Premo, tracks carefully how the *cercado* became a zone of empowerment and visibility for indigenous men and women alike. She presents evidence of Indigenous women owning parcels, or *solares*, in the *cercado*. This ownership of urban parcels, especially for populations who had been uprooted from their land and brought to Lima for labor, gave the population chances to earn income from rent: “Colonial cities teemed with rooming houses and crowded multiple falling dwellings, and small garden plots or large agricultural plots were likewise easily rented out” (Graubart 147). Francisco Morales’ wife Maria Rodriguez rented the *corral* of her home in Lima for the period of one year to Balthasar Velez for performances of his *representaciones*. Rodriguez had agency in that the property with the *corral* suitable for performances was in her name. Rodriguez, along with an Indigenous woman owning a parcel down the road, could count on income and the autonomy it could provide.

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<sup>118</sup> Premo, p. 62. As defined, the *cercado* was the area designated for the caste of *indios* (any Peruvian born non-Spaniard regardless of language, etc. to live. The word in today’s usage refers to a fenced enclosure. Often used to mean “suburb” in Lima, in 1599 the *cercado* was the ghettoized, controlled area for those designated as “Indians” to live. There were brought from other areas of Peru, forced to work in building the city and serving its Spanish inhabitants.

Primary sources also show women owning slaves and although this is a troubling way to track agency, it advances Graubart's and Premo's arguments—and in turn lends depth to earlier observations about Francisco and Isabel's purchase of a black woman slave, Catalina. The authors' illustrations of Lima make it easier to imagine that Isabel's company, which we know now included an African or *Criolla* enslaved woman, a mestizo servant, peninsular Spaniards and Lima-born Hidalgos was the Early Modern manifestation of a familial-like intersection of race, gender and class. Importantly for this study, the company also may have created a cross-pollination of spoken languages and cultural practices affecting the actors' performance vocabularies.

By 1599, after less than seventy-five years in the lands of Peru, the Spanish Crown and Church had already established infrastructure and governing bodies, with missionary systems of the Dominicans, Franciscans, and importantly for their dependence on theatre, the Jesuits, splaying out across the former Inca empire. By 1543, the *Real Audiencia* of the Inquisition had been established in Lima, and the University of San Marcos opened in 1551, making it the first university in the Americas; it is operating to this day. Hospitals were established almost immediately, with three in Lima by the end of the century. Historian of colonial Peruvian medicine Adam Warren assembles provocative evidence for a hospital's metaphoric location at the center of the zeitgeist of a successful colony. This becomes important in a global perspective on theatre history as peninsular Spain had practices in which hospitals and theatres worked together to raise money through benefits for both. Hospitals would provide land for performances or the

construction of a temporary *corral*, and donations would be made in exchange. The same would prove to be so in Lima.<sup>119</sup>

Isabel was afflicted with a serious illness in 1611, and the medical records provided by Villena provide more information about her life. She was devoted to the Franciscan priest Fr. San Francisco Solano, and he was at her bedside when she was close to death from gout, arthritis and other dangerous maladies in 1611. She recovered, and took the religious robes of the Franciscan convent until her death in 1631 (201-2). Pérez de Robles returned to Spain; his death is registered there in 1632 and he had given testimony with Isabel in Lima, 1619. In the registry, there are as many women as there are men. Villena tracks them as born in Seville, Madrid or Lima, and further identifies some as of legitimate or illegitimate birth, and the nature of their marriages. Actresses Maria de Espinosa and Lucia de Medieta for example were both born in Chusquisaca, legitimate daughters of Spanish men and Peruvian, Indigenous women. In Villena's registry we can find the unnamed wife of actor Luis de Mayorga. Luis was born in Sevilla, but his wife was not. She was Luisa de Loaysa, born in the city of Lima, daughter of Julian Bautista and Ana de Placencia. They were married in 1597 in Lima. One must therefore surmise that the signers of the Callao Contract did not step off a boat *en masse* from Spain and form their company. Several of them were already living, and presumably working in Lima. It was when Isabel and Francisco arrived that the diverse company came to be (201-208).

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<sup>119</sup> Warren describes the patronage relationship between theatres and hospitals in Lima, which is in harmony with Rennert's descriptions of funding arrangements in Peninsular Spain.

Frustratingly for an argument about an americanity in the cross-pollination of Spanish, Indigenous and Peruvian performance influences, we do not know what happened after our actors left the port of Callao, contract in hand, costumes in trunks, ambition in their throats, and headed for the City of Kings and the “districts of interest” to find their audiences. What we do know is that when Isabel and company arrived in Peru at the end of the sixteenth century, they would have found the city already awash with performance culture, not only from Spaniards who had arrived before Isabel, but as an integral part of the daily lives of the Indigenous communities that had lived in these lands, one of the so-called cradles of civilization, for thousands of years.

## **Part Four**

### **Andean Peru: The *First First* Actors**

Before the actors of the Spanish peninsula came to Lima to begin their profession anew, there were already actors in Peru, the *first first* actors of the Americas. The *danzas*, masks and sincretism of images in performance and visual culture make up a body of texts that played out in an otherwise non-texted world. In the performances of mask, drama, and visual culture, the destruction of Andean culture was prevented by the very immateriality of unwritten performance. The actors of the Callao Contact contributed to a collision of performance languages in displays of power, protected and/or hidden practices, conversion methods and satire of the culture. These collisions of performance practices from Indigenous, Hispanic, African, and, for all its complexity, the *criollo* of Peruvian identity, are what would grow to define the emerging americanity of professional performance in the Americas.

There is a precious historic chronicle that preserves the ancient stories, dramas and performance practices of the Inca Empire, and it is written outside the institutions of crown and church by a man who was nonetheless a product of both. Inca Garcilaso de la Vega wrote his commentaries to “preserve the stories of my people.”<sup>120</sup> Garcilaso’s father was Captain Sebastian Garcilaso de la Vega. His mother was Princess Inca Chimpu Oello, granddaughter of Inca Tupac Yupanqui. César Chacón Rosasco, the co-editor of the English text of Garcilaso’s commentaries, framed Garcilaso’s authority and the definitions of Indigeneity by writing, “Garcilaso was born from two races, the conqueror and the Indian. Historically, he is the first Peruvian” (17). The first Peruvian wrote in his father’s language of his mother’s history, and left testimony that the cultures of his mother’s people had widespread and distinct traditions of dance, performance and ritual. He tells us legion about the historicity of the practice of dance with these few words he wrote in 1565, “One should also know that all over Peru, in the provinces each group of natives has a different way of dancing, and they also wear different headdresses. These dances are perpetual, and never change” (188). These words are impactful when asking how a dance comes into being, and how, without written, archived evidence, it has persevered: “perpetual,” implying forms are treasured, preserved, passed on. Most importantly Garcilaso wanted history, or better put, the future, to know those origin myths, dances and masks—along with sophisticated engineering, surgical medicine and a larger, more durable systems of roads than the Roman empire—all existed before the Spanish arrived. If we can imagine the *taquis* were a combination of dance, mask, drama

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<sup>120</sup> I cross-reference two translations of the *Commentarios*. One by Alain Gheerbrandt, who updated his work in 1971. The other by César Chacón Rosasco, updated in 2001. All the quotations here will be from the Chacón.

and mythology, then we are looking at a culture with as highly developed a system of myth-making and satire as their irrigations systems, one tenacious enough to survive, restore and re-create itself. Garcilaso, by recording his mother's oral traditions with his own Spanish literacy, became the first Peruvian intellectual.

In the introduction to their invaluable collection of essays, *Indigenous Intellectuals: Knowledge, Power, and Colonial Culture In Mexico and the Andes*, editors Gabriella Ramos and Yanna Yannakakis define terms of wisdom, literacy and intellectual mobility that was and is unique to Indigenous peoples of these lands. When introducing their central theory that, "The relations between conquerors and conquered was not a one way process" (16), they are using a wide scope of interpretation to analyze the exchange of power, influence and knowledge. They argue the colonization of the Spanish Americas must be examined past the grotesque crimes of erasure: genocide, removal, and conversion. Continuing, they write, "A closer reading reveals that Spaniards maintained an ambiguous relationship to [I]ndigenous intellectuals; they often feared [I]ndigenous knowledge, (yet) longed to capture, control, and make it their own" (17). The editors scaffold an argument for the emerging literacy of Andean intellectuals, as these members of the Inca nobility were chosen to serve as assistants to clergy and scribes, *caciques* or *escribanos*, to the Spanish machine of governance.<sup>121</sup> They argue in the introduction for

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<sup>121</sup> The *cacique*, also known as *kuraka* in the Andes, was an indigenous member of Inca (or for that matter, Aztec and Mayan) nobility designated to serve part of governance under Spanish rule. The term cacique has persisted, and morphed in meaning over the centuries. The relevance of the term today will be visited in Section III. I cannot help but think of how the enslaved African was often employed by the slave owners to serve as overseer over their own people, and yet be coerced into thinking they were favored by the slave holder. The caciques and other members of Inca nobility learned to read and write Spanish, and to use the Quechua lexicon and alphabet. There was more than just the Inca mythology however. The Huarochiri Manuscript, for example, "Holds a summation of

the adaptive survival techniques of the Indigenous populations. “In an effort to make colonial life feasible, native people quickly engaged with and adapted to new media, ideas and practices in order to advance their own interest with the often difficult circumstance of Spanish colonial rule” (2). Yannakakis and Ramos give us the tools for understanding the sheer tenacity of Peru’s Indigenous, and growing Peruvian, population.

In fact, the populations that were gathered in Lima at the end of the sixteenth century by force, by choice or by circumstance began to adapt their literacy as well.

Over the course of the sixteenth century and afterward, alphabetic writing became the dominant means by which many indigenous intellectuals encoded knowledge. At the same time, images and other forms of inscription persisted and influenced alphabetic writing, making Spanish colonial society semiologically plural” (Ramos/Yannakakis 5).

While developing the necessary code switching for their new reality, native peoples were upended at every level.

Hereditary leaders were deposed, and ritual specialists were forced underground...In this regard, colonialism worked along two lines: it

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native Andean religious tradition and an image of the superhuman and human world as imagined around A.D. 1600. The tellers were provincial Indians dwelling on the west Andean slopes near Lima, Peru, aware of the Incas but rooted in peasant, rather than imperial, culture. The manuscript is thought to have been compiled at the behest of Father Francisco de Avila, the notorious "extirpator of idolatries." Yet it expresses Andean religious ideas largely from within Andean categories of thought, making it an unparalleled source for the pre-Hispanic and early colonial myths, ritual practices, and historic self-image of the native Andeans. In the appendices, I include, among others, etching #212, “Indigenous Escribano” from Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala’s extraordinary illustrated codex intended for Phillip II, *The First New Chronicle and Good Government: On the History of the World and the Incas up to 1615*. Guamán is indicting the Spanish for their treatment of the Indians in the King’s name.

undermined the authority of some while allowing social mobility for others. This socially mobile group became scribes, notaries, legal agents and interpreters, and as a group they constituted the fulcrum of colonial institutions and flourished in the colonial world (7).

It is in this argument that Ramos and Yannakakis help us see the cultivation of the nimble, multi lingual, double consciousness of the Peruvian living under, and developing coping mechanisms for, Spanish colonial dominance.

More clearly stated, and for the purposes of my arguments, Indigenous performers (in daily life) had to become multi lingual. Actors, particularly a non-reading or writing woman such as Isabel, would have had access to the same kind of learning/understanding modalities.

Susan Castillo builds a powerful argument for “polyphonic” communication among the cultures in the encounter of colonization. In concluding, “Inhabitants of the Americas and the European invaders were familiar with the symbolic and political resonance of polyphonic texts and performance, whether bodily enacted or transmitted in print,” she is describing the range of spaces of encounter within which performance occurs, and the texts and narratives that can and will be passed on one way or the other. Colonial performance culture was an early modern chemistry set bringing together multilingual and multi-expressive spheres of power, oppression, engagement and entertainment, with subversive, polyphonic messages buried in the comedies, dramas, masks and scenario-driven plays of the Spanish-language popular theatre, as well as in the syncretism of Catholic and Pagan faiths in performed processions.

When Isabel and company came together in Callao to form a shareholders' company, it was not as if they landed in a place filled with indigenous theatricals by any stretch of the imagination. The Indigenous peoples had been murdered, relocated, and apportioned to various Spanish elite as though they were acres of land or indeed, beasts of burden. Each *encomienda* (land grant) came with a certain number of indigenous human beings for each parcel of land they would be needed to work.

In documenting the ways Spanish invaders attempted to eliminate the peoples and their cultures, Historians Mann and Hemming reported on martyrdom and mythmaking being the unlikely result of the colonizers' brutal tactics. Hemming writes,

Toledo [Viceregal authority in Peru, from 1565-1581] failed in his stated intention of destroying the descendants of the Incas. His execution of Tupac Amaru made a martyr of that last ruling Inca. The Inca name retained its magic, and the few royal descendants who survived into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reveled in their ancestry, even if they had long since lost any real power (475).

The ancestry of the Inca, first remembered, then mythologized, was historicized forever by the colonizers most determined to wipe it out.

Consider the public and tactically staged execution of Tupac Amaru in 1572. The assassination took place in the greatest stage of Peru, the *Plaza de Armas* in Cuzco, just as festivals, performances and protests have been in the centuries since.<sup>122</sup> The so-called

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<sup>122</sup> Historians Steve Stern and Charles Walker document the use of the major plazas in both Cuzco and Peru as “centerstage” for baroque deomonstrations of power in public executions, indoctrinations, protests, processions and performances. Both Tupac Amaru in 1572 and his namesake descendant and leader of revolution in 1781, were murdered publicly in the Plaza de Armas of Cuzco. The de facto leader of *Sendero Luminoso*, or

Last Inca was drawn and quartered, and this after first seeing members of his family executed. Thousands were required to be in attendance, and the event is held now as part of sacred, or better, popular history, taught in contemporary school curriculum. Rather than eliminating the Inca, Toledo contributed to a sustaining history/mythology of Inca martyrdom. *Las Plaza de Armas* in both Lima and Cuzco have proven to be the great stages for spectacles of power, and communal enactments of history and memory in contemporary and Incaic eras. Graubart reflect from a vantage point nearly five hundred years in the making when she writes, “[t]he public plaza would become integral to the performance of power relations and hierarchy throughout the baroque colonial period;” her argument resonates with a half millennium of evidence (12).

To further re-stor(y) the influence of Indigenous performance on the americanity of theatre history developing in late sixteenth century Lima, it is helpful to seek actions or legislations of anti-theatre, in other words, edicts prohibiting performance. Consider the historic treatment and eventual censorship of the dance/story called the *taqui* (sometimes ‘*taki*’) by the colonizing forces. The Quechua word *taqui* encompasses a collective dance/song/story event, and may have included a chaotic state of intoxication. The *taqui* is critical to the embodied historiography of danced performance in Andean Peru. When Peruvian scholar Juan Carlos Estenssoro Fuchs writes “*No existe una palabra en Castellano que sea equivalente al termino quechua TAKI*” (353), not only is he telling us that there no word in Spanish to express the meaning of the Quechua term, but also that the colonizers lacked understanding how dance, song and mask could work together to tell story, re-tell myth and at the deepest level, shape identity. Once they recognized the

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Shining Path, Abimael Guzman, was paraded in a cage in the *Plaza de Armas* in Lima before his trial for crimes against humanity.

power of the dance, the Church and Crown prohibited the practice. Estenssoro tracks the prohibitions back to Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, sent in 1569 by Phillip II to bring the Inquisition to Peru and “[s]olve the native problem.” Estenssoro writes Toledo determined controlling *culture* of the indigenous people was key to controlling them as a whole. Using the word *Tzuki* to pursue research into the history of the dance dramas of Peru opens new avenues, at least in the Catholic archives, where for five hundred years the word “dance” (much less “theatre,” “mask” or “drama”) is simply never recorded.<sup>123</sup>

Before the Spaniards banned the *taqui* they had fully colonized the ceremonial events occurring each Winter Solstice in June.<sup>124</sup> Andean people of the Inca Empire gathered to honor the Sun God, sacrifice an animal to ensure good crops and worship the Inca, as the Son of the Sun. The festival was and is called *Inti Raymi*. The ceremonies take place when the sun was farthest from the earth, and the days dark and short. The Inca and the people would pray for the sun to return and celebrate for many days on end with dances and feasts. Then they would fast, refrain from physical pleasures and bring offerings to the Inca. In 1572, Viceroy Toledo banned *Inti Raymi* celebrations as pagan and contrary to the Catholic faith. The church inhabited those days of the year with the pageantry of the Corpus Christi. Following the edict, the ceremonies went underground. There is ample documentation in the written archives about the outlawing of the dance/dramas known by the Quechua term *taqui*. Estenssoro’s research work in the Archbishopric archives and at the house of Bartholomé de Las Casas (both in Cuzco) has

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<sup>123</sup> Juan Carlos Estenssoro Fuchs is a Peruvian scholar currently teaching at the University of San Marcos. Estenssoro contributes important scholarship on Peru’s colonial history to the discourse; he is however another scholar of Peru not translated into English.

<sup>124</sup> The calendar is reversed, the solstice on June 21 would be Peru’s winter solstice.

connected the banning of the *Taqui Onquoy*, another large processional of Inca origin, with the arrival of the Viceroy Toledo as early as 1565: *Hacia 1565, coincidiendo con las noticias y extirpacion del taki onqoy y con la elaboracion del proyecto colonial que triunfara finalmente con Toledo, comienza las prohibiciones a los takis (bailes tradicionales, no cristianizados* (Estenssoro 381).<sup>125</sup>

A turning point had arrived for the colonizers, who realized Indigenous performance practices presented a threat to the conversion forces of Catholicism. But, as cultural anthropologist Peter Miller tartly observes:

The Spanish were very clever. They knew that the Incas celebrated the return of the Pleiades constellation and the sun with grand processions in which the twelve leaders of the Incas—their mummies or their effigies, it is not sure which—were paraded around the sacred city. The Spanish replaced these twelve effigies, or “Incan saints” with twelve Christian Saints which the Spanish priests allocated to the twelve parishes that made up the city and surrounding countryside of Cuzco (40).<sup>126</sup>

Who knows who was cleverer than whom? The *taquis* told stories preserving myths of Inca origins and religious practices. When the *takis* and other practices were outlawed, it seems the people transformed them, hiding them in plain sight in the Catholic

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<sup>125</sup> “It was 1565, coinciding with the news of the banishment of the *Taqui Onqoy* and with the expansion of the colonial project that triumphed with (Viceroy) Toledo, that began the prohibition of the *Taquis* (traditional dances, not Christianized)” (my translation).

<sup>126</sup> The argument of usurpation of indigenous forms of worship into catholic conversion strategies is effectively argued by Daniel Breining, Carolyn Dean, and Chang-Rodriguez as well.

processional practice of the Corpus Christi, which happens just days before the solstice.

Think how Indigenous wisdom is at work under syncretism

Indigenous forms of knowledge were embedded in deep and wide-ranging contexts of ritual practice and social and cultural authority. Thus the historical traces of this knowledge—primarily in written form—lack the crucial contexts in which they were produced. It is not only one voice that speaks in the texts they produced, but also the voices belonging to people who never put pen to paper” (Ramos/Yannakakis 4).

It is in tracking the practices of censorship by Crown and Church of Indigenous peoples’ rites and festivals that we can begin to recognize how much performance was actually going on, and how threatening it was to the governing bodies of the Catholic church and Spanish throne. They knew performance was a powerful messenger, and soon determined to use its methods to further their own message.

Scholar Daniel Breining, in his book on the censorship of theatrical practices in the “new” Spain of Mexico City, recognizes that anti theatrical prejudice was deeply rooted in fear of what those performed representations could generate. Explaining “[w]hy the censorship of theatrical pieces and their written texts were a major concern for the ecclesiastical and secular authorities in New Spain,” he writes,

This pandemic paranoia is based in part on the long standing indigenous practice of using representations to preserve and promote historical, religious, and other social and cultural traditions. This native art form was well established prior to the arrival of the first Europeans and continued well into Mexico’s colonial period. Upon their arrival, the early religious

orders saw just how central were mimetic performance to the natives' lives. Picking up on this representational dependency, the Spanish clerics used theatrical depictions as a means of communicating Christian dogma and Western values to the non-Spanish-speaking Indians of new Spain. The combination of the entrenched representational indigenous tradition with the new catechetical drama produced a third entity. This new artistic form was a hybridized theatrical and dramatic product that was neither completely European nor entirely autochthonous in nature. Hybridized drama [allows] for the possible misinterpretation of the Catholic message by the native catechumens and Indian audiences in general. The mixed drama, also, and perhaps more importantly, permitted the potential reinterpreting of the intended Western message. This is significant because the reworking of the message by the native audience and actors was a means for empowering the recently conquered Aztecs (219).

Though Breining is not discussing the “other” viceroyalty of Lima, his argument nonetheless holds up. In *Limeño* society, this syncretism of messaging in both Indigenous practices *subrosa*, and in the growing independence of professional theatre people, was in the chemistry of Lima's americanity.

In his history of theatre in early Lima, Villena draws the origins of performance as I do, first from the representations created by Indigenous communities in their religious rites, ritual re-enactments, and regionally specific *danzas*. As the Catholic church introduced the Corpus Christi festival, the priests incorporated Quechua/Inca images, clothing and dances into the otherwise Catholic procession. The syncretism at

work in the collision of these procession-based performances have intensified over the centuries, and today still, the constant religious processions that take place throughout the Peruvian calendar year are electric sites for study of the dualities of religious beliefs in an otherwise Catholic country.

Diana Taylor's critical question should be posed at this juncture. "Is performance," she asks, "that which disappears or that which persists, transmitted through a non-archival system of transfer that I came to call the repertoire?" (35). Zoila Mendoza, ethnographer and dance historian, seems to respond throughout her book *Shaping Society through Dance: Mestizo Ritual Performance in the Peruvian Andes*, as she is watching craft and story taught to one dancer and then passed on the next, and in the process, she argues, a community is defining itself. Taylor surmises, "Performance functions as vital acts of transfer transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity" (53). With these words, Taylor has carved out a place for a hemispheric consciousness of pre-colonial history to be found in living re-membering sources, people and their knowledge, movements, and the dances they pass along as inheritance. Performance is that which persists.

In the four parts of this Section II, I have used my unearthing of the Callao Contract of 1599 as a crow's nest from which to gaze on the culture towards and from Peru. I considered Lima before Peninsular performance culture arrives, and examined the performance traditions, and necessary subversions, of Peru's Indigenous communities. The evidence compels a picture of the *first* first theatre; it is a picture of persistent, tenacious and sometimes secretive use of performance, re-enactments, participatory

procession and dance, with layers of *Sincretismo*, as a means of protecting identity, origin stories, and belief systems. To understand theatre in an early modern Lima, I argue one must grasp the richness of performance in a pre-Hispanic, Indigenous, Andean Peru. While gazing widely at the threads of performance from Peninsular and Indigenous communities tangling together during the colonization and creation of one of Spain's most significant urban colonial centers of power, I examined Lima's culture in the moment of the contract itself. The actors joining forces and the contract they sign serve as a perch to examine the emergence of the profession in Lima, at the same moment in history it reached a zenith in Elizabethan England, as expressed in trans-cultural, trans-oceanic, and trans-philosophical agitations. We can see Stephen Greenblatt's swerve from the Medieval to the Early Modern turn precipitously in this moment, but should recognize that in terms of theatre, and therefore cultural history the steep swerve is happening as early in the performances languages of the Americas as it is in the English language in London.

### **Conclusion and A Bridge**

Despite the fact that Peru is virtually off the radar of scholars when it comes to performance history, on popular websites one can find a tidy history regarding a famous corner in Lima. *Calle de las Comedias*, near the old *Teatro Municipal*, is the site of the first performances of plays in Lima. Consider this easily accessible entry to a tourist site for the old Center of Lima, which brings a reader's attention to the important corner where today sits the *Teatro Principal*:

*La historia del teatro en el Perú esta muy ligada a esta antigua construcción que desde principios de la colonia albergo a los actores y músicos que se presentaban en la capital. bien desde 1599 se llevaron adelante representaciones teatrales en este solar de la ciudad de Lima, fue en 1615 que se levantó el primer Corral de Comedias por iniciativa del vecino limeño don Alonso de Ávila.<sup>127</sup>*

The same year as the signing of the Callao Contract, popular culture tells us the theatre began early in Lima, why has scholarship been blind to what is in plain sight? The corner is still called a *solar*, the old colonial designation for a city parcel of land. The closer one's *solares* were to the Cathedral and the main plaza, the higher one's status in the colonial power structure and/or the eyes of the ever-absent King. Tourist culture, accessible through the web and the legion of agencies in the city today, will tell you about the first performances of the *comedia* in Lima and will direct you to the corner marking the site, just around the corner from the *plaza mayor* in the center of Old Lima. Again, the artists, the locations, and the patrons are all mentioned. From a website called *houseofperu.org* this declaration comes without citation: "In 1568, the first play was performed in Peru. It was presented in the plaza of San Pedro in Lima."<sup>128</sup> Academics would argue those performances were liturgical, but that would be a far too easy

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<sup>127</sup> In Translation: The history of theater in Peru is closely linked to this ancient construction site that from the beginning of the colony, hosted the actors and musicians who were present in the capital. Since 1599 theatrical performances were carried out in this site of the city of Lima, it was in 1615 that the first Corral de Comedias was erected on the initiative of Limeno neighbor Don Alonso de Ávila.

<http://limalaunica.blogspot.com/2011/03/el-teatro-principal.html>

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.houseofperu.org/culture.php>—House of Peru is actually located in Arizona; they are a colloquium of people desiring to re-create Peruvian culture in a museum-like setting in their community.

dismissal of what was unfolding in Peru. Although one could argue these popular social media cites are not “historically” legitimate, they are still a popular cultural memory-maker at work. A tourist can witness that this site, once the site of a purpose-built *corral* for the players, remains the site of popular theatre and dance to this day.

The current theatre, rebuilt after earthquake damage in 1786 and again from ruins in 1920, has changed names more than once.<sup>129</sup> The theatre was in Lima to stay. Whether in glorious opera houses styled in the fashion of Baroque splendor, processing through the streets in Catholic, Quechua or Pagan practices of faith, celebration and prayer, re-emerging in the Indigenismo movement of the twentieth century, in intimate houses of contemporary drama, on a hastily assembled platform in the public square, or in the collective consciousness and extensive archives of *El Grupo Yuyachkani*, the theatre has proven central to Lima’s Peruvian, or better still, American, identity.

Given that the sturdiest of all theatre history texts, supervised by Oscar Brockett and, in the most recent editions, Frank Hildy, recognizes the building of theatre courtyards in the Spanish Americas early in the seventeenth century, it seems astonishing that this is the singular mention of the words Peru or Lima in the entire textbook:

By 1601 there were three acting companies based in Mexico City. In 1597

Francisco de León built the first *corral* theatre there. A second was built

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<sup>129</sup> I attended a free performance of closing and dance “para la familias” on a Sunday afternoon in spring of 2016 at the Municipal Theatre in the old location and at the newly remodeled state theatre around the corner. Both are modeled as European Opera Houses, and these architectural gestures are important to consider when tracking the language of performance. The proscenium kept the work framed, distance, in a separate and imagined space, not at all the same space as inhabited by spectators in expensive seats in the balconies or cheaper seats on the floor. In any case, an entirely different sphere of encounter than the outdoor corral, which might just be the interior patio of a private home or a purpose built outdoor platform rigged for special effects, costume changes, and some seating in balcony type structures.

sometime before 1602, and others were built at Lima (Peru) and New Vera Cruz. Throughout the seventeenth century theatre was performed in many parts of the Spanish territories, but New Spain, and especially Mexico City, continued to be the focal point. (150)

The authors acknowledge the companies existed in Mexico City, but there is no mention of Lima in this regard. Peru is so far off the radar of these scholars that they feel the necessity to parenthesize the country of which Lima is the capital, and which this dissertation argues is in fact the site of the beginning of professional, entrepreneurial theatre in the Americas. The hegemonic narratives perpetuated by foundational texts such as the Brockett are the focus of the first part of Section III to follow.

I have fused some of the essential points of this section into an argument for how and why an Early Modern culture can be defined by the very presence of the players: upon a purpose-built stage, in non-liturgical texts or scenarios, and in competition with others of their stripe. At the end of the 1500s Lima had languages of performance, both within Indigenous practices and practices of mestizaje, imported by the colonizing culture of Peninsular Hispanics, and more than likely influenced by enslaved cultures from the African continent. The populations were entrenched in the use of performance, representations, masks, and demonstrations of power in daily culture, and for various methods of conversion. Spain was unfolding into what came to be known as her golden age of literature and theatre. Perhaps the golden theatre and drama of Spain was drenched with the riches stolen from conquered lands of the Americas? Or perhaps by transporting

literature, print and the professional players to the Americas, some unintended trade-off was created for the stolen ore.

I examined the AGN for the ample evidence of theatre people in the culture between 1575 and 1600. With a feminist lens, I've investigated why Isabel might have left the Iberian Peninsula and what kind of city she might have found when she arrived, particularly as a woman in a colonial setting. In continuing to build the argument for restor(y)ation of the americanity of American theatre history, I also surveyed the influence of the performance traditions of the Indigenous, and thus first performers of the Peruvian Americas. The evidence I present offers that Lima was a center of Early Modern thought, action, agitation, and invention, and the presence of players for the stage is the best evidence for this interpretation. The ideas in this section should alter the way scholars, students, and practitioners conceive of the emergence of theatre profession in the Americas. On a more global and interdisciplinary canvas, these ideas could transform the way contemporary readers think about the building of an early modern trans/americanity in cultural expression. At the very least, at this point in the dissertation, I bring to English language discourses the work of Peruvians Guillermo Lohmann Villena and Juan Carlos Estenssoro Fuchs.

As the professional theatre of the Americas began first in Peruvian America, the implications for the genetics of American theatre history are profound. If this Early Modern iteration of performance culture has managed to evolve with the centuries of colonization, republicanization, independence, terrorism and globalization, what does that say about the capacity of performance to protect, and for the living archive of the repertoire, transfer a culture into the future?

### **Section III**

#### **A Lens for Relevance:**

**What Must Be Re-Stor(i)ed; or  
The Contract and Redressive Actions against  
Hegemonic Assumptions and Dominant Historical Narratives**

## Introduction

“Vivifying absence is something of a poet’s calling.”

O dai Johnson  
 “Afterword—Scarred Texts: Etudes on Absence”  
*A Tyranny of Documents*

In all this discussion of the contract and how it disrupts dominant narratives of American theatre history, I have yet to define what exactly those master narratives are. To establish the important of drawing Peru into the dialogue I demonstrate that as of now and in current discourses, textbooks and curricula on American theatre history, Peru is barely to be found. Isabel left her mark, even as acknowledging it was not her own hand which made it. Peru is missing; Isabel is missing. Peru’s very legible absence demonstrates the need for redress.

In continuing my argument for re-stor(y)ation of sixteenth-century Lima into the discourse of cultural history in the American hemisphere, I first present the dominant narratives of American theatre history, the assumptions driving and perpetuating them, and the legible absence of Peru. Absent, but actually never present in the first place, as Lima’s early modern theatre culture, simply put, has not been on anyone’s radar since Villena’s Spanish publication in 1947. I examine the major assumptions in the field driving and keeping the historical lens on the global North, the English language, and published texts. The costs of this focus are that Drama (preserved dramatic texts) has been preserved at the expense of theatre (broadly defined, inclusive of cultures without

printed language); the geographic North has been privileged at the exclusion of the Global South; and the English language has been prioritized at the exclusion of all others.

After establishing these powerful assumptions, I survey the perspectives on theatre history in texts dominating university reading lists. I examine major texts on American theatre history, history of the profession's beginnings in the Americas and books that contain particular points of view, including a history of puppetry in the Americas. Following this overview of current scholarship, I argue that contemporary Peru belongs in today's urgent discourses and scholarship on theatre history, intercultural performance, performance integral to legacies of social justice struggles, and of theatremakers who are historiographers of their communities' memories.

Peruvian theatre not only serves as the custodian of the taproot system of ancient Indigenous practices, but also demonstrates the rhizomatic growth of Hispanic poeticism, *mestizaje* of languages, syncretism of Catholic and Pagan belief systems, and the sophistication of influences and rituals from all over the world. The signatories of the Callao Contract could be imagined as the artistic forebears of a company such as Yuyachkani. The argument of this dissertation, for the recognition and inclusion of Peruvian theatre history into discourses informing our practices and scholarship, can rest on a secure and sturdy foundation of evidence; ephemeral yet material, archivable, yet performed.

### **Hegemonic Assumptions, Dominant Narratives, Slow Change**

First, I examine the current narratives of American theatre history: the hegemonic Eurocentricity of the art form's self-reflection, and how the arrival of the profession in the Americas is consistently historicized through what Odai Johnson succinctly terms,

“British America” (*Oxford History of Drama* 17) at the expense of what is excluded from that lens. In *The Writing of History*, when Michel de Certeau claims, “[i]t is impossible to eliminate from the labor of historiography the ideologies that informs it” (28) he is describing a process wherein a cycle of inwardly spinning exclusions—driven by those who win wars, control wealth and throne, and presume supremacy of religion or race—reconstitutes its own truths. De Certeau writes:

The vindication of facts repeats the form of their identification.... [i]ts implicit corollary is one of the preservation of norms and ideologies which determine the divisions, classification and organization depending on the same postulates. The vindication of facts therefore indeed ‘illustrates’ a doctrine...but a doctrine which is invisible (119-120).

Here, de Certeau examines how a teaching, in this case a narrative, dominates a culture and self-promotes, while the belief system driving it remains invisible. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in the stubborn narratives of American theatre that turn a blind eye and deaf ear to the americanity of the plural Americas, perspectives obscured by the assumptions determined to maintain the status quo.

I survey major twentieth-century texts of theatre history, American theatre history, Latin American theatre history, religious theatre history and surprisingly, a seminal history of puppet theatre, in search of any mention of Inca, Quechua or Peruvian performance history, the Callao contract, or the early modern *Limeño* culture which produced it. By identifying assumptions then examining the narratives, it becomes relatively straightforward to identify legible absences.

The deeply ingrained assumptions in the parameters of American theatre history are easily identified. Let me offer each major assumption, and how it might be powerfully liberated.

First, the assumption of Geography: The global North over global South. “American Theatre History” is, by invisible doctrine, “Theatre History in/of the United States.” Theatre and cultural historians are slow to pluralize their sense of the Americas; this would require a hemispheric consciousness to empower an expansive historical understanding of performance, politic, culture and change.<sup>130</sup> Whatever historic lens for theatre does expand to the South stops at Mexico City or jumps to Portuguese Brazil. In Mexico, study of the profession begins with the era of Sor Juana de la Cruz, roughly 1670-90, or with examination of religious plays in Spanish, Quechua and/or the Nahuatl language, for the presence of indigenous representation in otherwise conversion-oriented theatre.

Second, assumption of Language: The English language is the language of and for theatre history in the Americas. Though the United States is a country of immigrants, and by 2050 more people will speak Spanish in the States than in any other country on the planet, American theatre history would be better characterized as Theatre History of the English Language. By broadening the research ear to include Spanish in particular and any of thousands of indigenous languages, understandings of performance histories in these Americas would grow exponentially.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> The Hemispheric Institute for Performance and Politic in the Americas, founded in 2000 by Diana Taylor and under the auspices of New York University, declares this very mission.

<sup>131</sup> Quechua, just for example, is by no means an obscure or dying language, it is mandated in the schools of Peru, a bilingual country.

Third, assumption of the Art's form: The printed drama *is* and *as* theatre history. Theatre history is dominated by study of printed/published/written, archivable, language-driven dramatic literature. Historians define their discipline by documents, often at the expense or neglect of memory, visual culture, performance traditions, and documents such as contracts, meant otherwise to be ephemeral. In the case of American theatre history, the document prized above all else is the play. We follow language, as it is printed and published, and language itself stands in surrogation for history. Neglected therefore are the cultures that have or had no written language. Excluded from the very definition of theatre are those cultures that tell their stories—re-enactments, transitions of power, spiritual beliefs—through dance, visual culture, mask and unwritten narratives. Literacy and print take dominance for naming what is history, what will be archived, what is archivable. The standard trope is winners of wars, wearers of crowns, holders of wealth, keepers of the printing press, and those deciding whose G-d is most Righteous, control the writing of history. Consider de Certeau as he, in destabilizing this very system in his *The Writing of History*, offers another formula for discovering historical shifts: “Ideas become a mediation between the Spirit (*Geist*) and sociopolitical realities. They presumably form a level where the body of history meets its consciousness—the *Zeitgeist* (27). By daring to apprehend the zeitgeist of the late sixteenth century, we find the rise of an early modern consciousness. One can observe a kind of synchronicity; more than one urban center at this cusp of two centuries is developing a professional theatre. The zeitgeist— “the [em]body[ment] of history meeting its [performed] consciousness,” is observable in cities with blossoming professional theatre such as London and Madrid. Various societies manifest the need to see representations of themselves, to hear/see

(adjust, control, erase, get paid for) their histories and memories, and to tell stories as those in positions of spectacular power want them told. Amongst the polis, that zeitgeist is manifested in the desire to control, in the words of a recent Pulitzer Prize-winning musical, “Who lives, who dies, who tells your story.”<sup>132</sup> In short, as the professional theatre is emerging in London, Spain, Paris...and if one follows the zeitgeist of the time (and not just the published histories), a historian would search and find theatre in one of the other great centers of early modern urges at this juncture of history, the port city of Lima, City of Kings, Peru.

Keeping these powerful and controlling assumptions in mind, next I examine academic texts they have produced. Editors Don B. Wilmeth and Christopher Bigsby introduce *The Cambridge History of American Theatre, Volume One: Beginnings to 1870* (1998) with a plural consciousness of the Americas, but this awareness is abandoned once the English language takes hold. Wilmeth and Bigsby agree with other major historians in writing that the first play performed by professionals in America was Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* in 1752. Urged by legal documents, the lens widens to argue that the first known *performance* of a play in America, was *Ye Beare and Ye Cubbe* in 1665. This event is only known because of legislation against it, and not because of its dramatic text, which is lost. The editors purposefully deploy the word “theatre” as distinct from “drama” to demonstrate their intention not to limit their lens to the written drama but also to include “major popular and para-theatrical forms” (xiv). *Ye Beare and Ye Cubbe* thus makes the cut, as we know *something* with this title was performed, even though we don’t know the words/content spoken. In the first volume of the *Cambridge History*,

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<sup>132</sup> From the libretto of *Hamilton*. Lin-Manuel Miranda, et al. *Hamilton: An American Musical* original cast recording, 2016.

editors mark puppeteers on Hernando Cortés' ship in 1524, but do not count their presence a "Theatre Event in America" in their chronological chart. The puppeteer(s) were tracked in the category of "Historio-cultural Events" as puppets, according to these editors, are not actors, and the event is cultural, but not theatre history. According to this chronological annal, there is no theatre event in the Americas until 1606 when the French masque, *The Theatre of Neptune in New France* by Lescarbot, was seen in Nova Scotia (24). Below is an examination of the *Cambridge History's* chronology of "Theatre Events in America" prior to the time of the Callao Contract, including anything related to performance whether in Spanish language or not, whether actions of the church or not, regardless of equatorial geography, and/or evidence of a corroborating dramatic text:

1567 Two *comedias* performed at Spanish mission in Tequesta, Florida  
[near Miami]

1570s Records Corpus Christi festivities in Cuba

1590s *Comedias* and Interludes performed in Cuba

1598 A Spanish language *Comedia* by Marcos Farfán presented north of  
Rio Grande River in New Mexico (deals with Farfán's conquests there).

Also religious plays by Juan de Oñate's band of colonizers (20-3).

At the end of the sixteenth century, Wilmeth and Bigsby note under "Selected Historio-cultural Events through the World" the first Globe theatre being built in London, along with premieres of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Marlowe's *Faustus*. No events of theatrical significance are noted in Lima, Peru, much less on the stages of Spain (23). Though this history is expansive with less than twenty years on the shelves, there is a decided neglect

of Spain's great age of dramatic literature and a near invisibility of theatre history in the Spanish Americas.

In their tenth edition, Oscar Brockett and Franklin Hildy include Bartolomé de las Casas' (1484-1566) description of the Corpus Christi spectacle in Mexico City, which predates the above annal date in Cuba.<sup>133</sup> Bartolomé's *In Defense of Indians (Apologética Historia de las Indias)* is one of the most important documents in existence and written by a Spaniard, describing the horrific treatment of Indigenous Americans at the hands of Spanish colonizers. Yet the priest's chronicles become important for other reasons. Here is his extraordinary description of theatre in the Americas of 1543 as related by Brockett and Hildy. The Corpus Christi is nothing less than the equivalent of a Baroque extravaganza of spectacular power, with religious and imperial supremacy weaponized in the propaganda of every gesture:

In the Plaza de México there were large buildings like artificial theaters, tall as towers with many elegantly appointed *mansiones*, one over the other. Each one had its performance and function with singers and minstrels bulging with ...musical instruments so that I believe they gathered from throughout the province more than 1000 musicians and singers..." (152).

Textbook search engines *Abebooks* and *Amazon* describe Oscar G. Brockett's *History of the Theatre* without irony as, "[t]he 'bible' in the field, [it] is the most comprehensive and

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<sup>133</sup> Bartolomé de las Casas, who wrote extensively and for whom an invaluable archive and library in Cuzco is now named, described the festival in the Plaza Mayor in New Spain, the first viceroyalty, soon known as Mexico City.

widely used survey of theatre history in the market.”<sup>134</sup> Dominating more than fifty years of academic reading lists, *History of the Theatre* has been reissued in ten editions since 1968.<sup>135</sup> The seventh edition has just two pages subtitled “The Spanish Theatre to 1700.” By the tenth edition in 2008, a fuller chapter has evolved, now titled, “The Theatre of Spain and New Spain to 1700.” It is helpful to examine this dominant textbook, and to note how Brockett and co-author (in newer editions) Franklin Hildy have variously historicized the profession’s beginnings in the Americas. By 2008, there is a new subsection called “Theatre in the Americas.” It is one page in length and contains two references to Peru, which I will visit shortly.

The Brockett's sixth chapter of the tenth edition identifies the years of the *Siglo de Oro*, the golden century, spanning 1580-1680. The major influences on the so-called Golden Age of Spanish drama, argue Brockett and Hildy, along with colonizing fever and greed is Spain’s sense of its own position as a world power. Charles the First became the Holy Roman Emperor after Columbus’ voyage, and Brockett/Hildy suggest the Spanish Empire did not begin to decline visibly until 1640.<sup>136</sup> The establishment of the Inquisition in 1480, with Imperial Spain ruling over all of peninsular Europe, designated that the “richest part of the Mediterranean was Moorish Spain” and this, along with the expulsion or murder of heretic Jews and Muslims who would not convert, all informed the development of Spanish language drama. Brockett and Hildy track the development of sacred drama under the Catholic church, and as discussed in Section II, the medieval practices in this performative manner of delivering liturgical teachings (136-7). Brockett

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<sup>134</sup> *abebooks.com*

<sup>135</sup> Later editions include Frank Hildy as contributor; by the tenth edition he has emerged as coeditor and heir-apparent to position of editor.

<sup>136</sup> This, despite the defeat of the Spanish Armada before the end of the sixteenth century.

and Hildy provide an overview of traditions of pageantry and procession in biblical and morality plays in England and Spain, and this is an important change from earlier editions in which Spain's practices were not recognized. Along with the *autos sacramentales* commissioned directly by the Catholic seat of power, and the Inquisition's deadly control over the definition of G-d, these influences on the drama in Spain are all identified. In editions prior to the year 2000, *History of the Theatre* makes no mention of the theatre's transoceanic interchange with what would become the Spanish Americas, much less any Spanish influence on the earliest performance in the Americas. Despite, "The performance of plays by Plautus and Terence [being] mandated at Salamanca University in 1538, and Jesuit schools, which spread rapidly throughout Spain during the 1540s, us[ing] drama as an important component of their teaching systems" (139) *History of the Theatre* does not follow this theory to the centers of Catholic conversion fury in the Americas, nor suggest those same practices would be employed by the Jesuits in the Spanish Americas, and as in Spain, that the profession would emerge. Brockett and Hildy mark *The Comedy of Calisto and Melibea* as, if not the first, the "most important" early secular drama (attributed to Ferdinand Rojas (c. 1465 - c. 1541) and further that, "All early secular drama in Spain was aimed at an aristocratic audience and its influence on the professional theatre was negligible. Nevertheless, these plays established a foundation which later Spanish dramatists recognized as the source of their own practice" (139). Given this theory, why wouldn't it have occurred to the editors it could be applied perhaps to an even greater degree in the Spanish Americas? New Spain is recognized by Brockett/Hildy, driven by hegemonic assumption number one: geography. Scholarship

focuses on Mexico City and the Aztec and Mayan culture as though the viceregal center and international port of Lima did not exist.

I turn now to various ways the emergence of the theatre profession is historicized in American theatre history. Nowhere is this specific aspect of theatre history more dominated by aforementioned assumptions. Front and center are the brothers Hallam and Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, which they performed in "British America" in 1752.

I begin with the first theatre history written by William Dunlap (1766-1839). In *A History of the American Theatre* (1832) Dunlap enshrines the New England coast as the place where theatre professionals first do business in America and ironically at the same time tracks the thirst for dramatic fictions about Pizarro's bloodthirsty ruin of Peru in the early American repertory. Dunlap's editor Tice Miller writes that, "William Dunlap was the first American to attempt a history of the *professional* [italics mine] theatre in this country. He begins his chronicle with the arrival of the Hallams from London in 1752, and he ends with the engagement of the English star George Frederick Cooke in 1810-12" (xix, italics mine). The Hallam brothers came to America motivated, I argue, much as were their Spanish counterparts a century earlier, by economic stress and to evade confusing censorship and controls under shifting governing bodies.<sup>137</sup> "Under the appellation of the American Company," the Hallam Brothers claimed the continent by naming their company in ink (9). Dunlap chronicles the American repertory of plays and remarks on the culture's obsession with dramas relating, and demonizing, Spanish colonial fervor:

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<sup>137</sup> ...having consented to cross the Atlantic and seek their fortunes in what might then not improperly be called the western wilderness, the ex-manager's next step was to find suitable persons to fill up the *corps drama-tique*, and to induce them to join his brother and sister in this theatrical forlorn hope. (Dunlap 7-8)

Two of the theatre's most popular attractions of the 1799-1800 season were Kotzebue's *The Virgin of the Sun* and its sequel, *Pizarro in Peru; or, The Death of Rolla*, the latter by Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Both plays dealt with the Spanish conquest of Peru and Inca resistance, subjects of special interest to Western audiences at the end of the eighteenth century” (xiv).

Dunlap narrates the beginnings of the profession of the players for the stage through the Hallam lens, and dramatic texts for the stage through the colonial gaze. His focus is on the long eighteenth century, and British America.

Other historians wrote about *Ye Beare and Ye Cubbe*, the performance without proof of a text, the players in a tavern with no tickets, and a theatre event that escaped the historic gaze for quite some time. There seems to be a consensus, best summarized by a more recent study:

The first substantiated instance of an original Colonial American drama is found in the arrest in 1665 of Cornelius Watkinson, Philip Howard, and William Darby for performing a work entitled *Ye B[e]are and Ye Cubb[e]* at a tavern in Accomack County on the eastern shore of Virginia. While no copy of the piece exists, the judicial record gives clear evidence that a play was indeed performed. Moreover, in a curious bit of jurisprudence, the judge demanded that the defendants perform the offending play in court (Davis xii).<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Davis, P. A. *From Androboros to the First Amendment: A History of America's First Play*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2015. Project MUSE, Online resource. America's first play is also documented in the Oxford and Cambridge collections.

With both methods, historians locate these English players at work, using Shakespeare mid-eighteenth century, and the other of unknown content performed a century sooner, yet lost. Both events are firmly housed within the three prominent assumptions of geography, language and form. There is no mention of Spanish language plays performed professionally in the Americas, much less anything going at all below the latitude of Mexico City.

Yet still, besides the Hallams, how do we historicize the beginnings of the profession? When did people start getting paid to be professional actors in the colonized Americas, whether for the church, the aristocracy or the polis? The story of the Elizabethan theatre is told only too well and is omnipresent in theatre and English departments. Most theatre history programs will teach, as a matter of course, the Western Civilization arc of dramatic texts from the Greek to the Roman to the Medieval religious, to Shakespeare. Textbooks, as demonstrated, now include the beginnings of the profession in Catholic Spain, with many of the similar features as in Protestant England. Both countries had a pipeline of talent from the religious to the secular, with dramas developing alongside improvised farces, dances, and pantos. Both countries, along with Italy, depended on a company/family driven culture, purpose built pageant-wagons, and the gradual use of purpose built structures and theatre technologies. In the liberties of London and the urban centers of Spain, performance spaces were established by the 1580s. In the public square, whether sanctioned or criminalized, public performance persisted. Purpose-built theatres came to Spain roughly at the same time as England.

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*Androboros* is presented here as the first play written and published in New York, 1715. Written by governor Robert Hunter, it as evidence of theatrical traditions, but not of professionals at work. It is also acknowledged in the Cambridge History of Theatre, page 32.

In the contemporary Brockett/Hildy (as well as in other histories), Lope de Rueda (c. 1510 - c. 1565) is widely accepted as the first important professional Spanish playwright. Rueda, “[r]eceived payment for his performance in several religious plays at Seville in 1542,” and the King paid Rueda a “considerable annual salary” to supervise the Corpus Christi festivities at Valladolid, the capital. Rueda, “[p]erformed frequently at court...toured widely” and was best known for his, “farce sketches” which allowed him “earthy humor and picaresque dialogue.” Although Rueda is, “[a]lmost universally considered the founder of the Spanish professional theatre [as a playwright], in actuality he was merely the most successful actor-manager of his day” (139-140). In *History of the Theatre*, mirroring the events I evidenced in Section II regarding early modern Lima, the editors write that in Spain, “between 1565 and 1590 plays were contrived primarily by the actor managers of theatrical companies, a fact which led to the continuing designation of managers as *autores de comedias*” (139-140). Brockett and Hildy establish the lineage from Rueda to Lope de Vega, the far better known playwright, due to the extent of dramatic literature, “300 extant and 200 attributed” credited to him. Lope de Vega himself claimed far more, anywhere from 800-1800 *comedias*, the word he used to describe, “[a]ny full length play, whether serious or comic” (140).

*History of the Theatre* offers a brief discussion of Spanish and Italian acting companies (142-3) and includes a sentence about regulations after 1600 without acknowledging the legislations that flurried under the change of the Charles’s between 1598-1600. Brockett and Hildy mark 1610-1620 as the highpoint of the historic age of Spanish theatre. *History of the Theatre* tracks censorship, licensing, will of the crown, and morality of the players. In the entire book never do the authors examine the

possibility that professional actors would have left Spain and journeyed to the Americas, as did their artistic brethren from England when a viable theatre scene became untenable in London under licensing laws a century later. Brockett and Hildy do discuss Spain's persistent, "[a]mbiguity about morality of the actors" (144-5), noting that actors were not allowed the sacrament until the middle of the twentieth century. Feminist consciousness insists on a lens for women, and Brockett/Hildy only find that in Spain, "[a] major concern of those opposed to the theatre was the presence of professional actresses" (143) and that, "[w]omen can be tracked back as far as the fifteenth century, and by the mid-sixteenth century, they were included in several acting troupes" (143). Brockett/Hildy do mention the same years of conflict I detail in the Section II, and even note the pressure on women and girls. "After a bitter controversy in 1598 and 1599 the [edicts of the] royal council declared that no actresses were to perform unless their husbands or fathers were in the company and that neither sex might appear in the dress of the other. Further, the laws were confusing and, "seem[ed] not to have been enforced" (143). Nonetheless, none of the evidence nor their theories led the editors to investigate whether Spanish players of either gender ventured to the new world.

In *History of the Theatre*, the influence of Indigenous cultures in the Americas is quickly summarized and dismissed as having been destroyed by colonization. "Among hundreds of cultures they [English and Spanish] conquered, there were certainly traditions of storytelling, narrative dance, epic songs, rituals ceremonies and popular entertainment that would be of great interest to the study of theatre," write Brockett and Hildy, claiming the "conquerors didn't care about performance" and therefore, by mid- to late-sixteenth century, "much had changed in Indigenous performance before any

Spaniard wrote anything down.” The editors do track the use of performative elements in conversion strategies, and acknowledge the slave trade was present, and thus so were African influences on Indigenous American performance. “As early as 1512 Europeans began to insert Christian elements into native performance traditions,” they write. “By 1523, the Spanish were introducing large number of African slaves into the region and their performance traditions soon merged with those of the native peoples.” *History of the Theatre* verges on claiming African and African American influence on American theatre, but stops short (149). In perpetuating the myth of a culture completely destroyed, Brockett/Hildy argue there was cultural annihilation, placing part of the blame on a culture that did not prioritize written language: “With the exception of the Maya and the Aztec (whose written records were systematically destroyed) the cultures of the Americas were not literate and had not recorded their own traditions. It is therefore difficult to assess the remaining evidence for pre-Columbian performance traditions” (149). Carolyn Dean’s scholarship on Inca performance and current discourse on indigenous culture in Peru makes it straightforward to argue otherwise.<sup>139</sup> There are two mentions of professional theatre in the early Spanish Americas in the entirety of the tenth and most recent edition of *History of the Theatre*:

In 1586 *autor* Alonso de Buenrostro brought his acting troupe from Spain and by 1601 there were three acting companies based in Mexico City. In 1597 Francisco de Leon built the first corral theatre there. A second was built sometime before 1602 and others were built at Lima (Peru) and New VeraCruz. Throughout the seventeenth century theatre was performed in

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<sup>139</sup> Dean’s *Inka Bodies and the Bodies of Christ* is the definitive text on sincretisms in the Corpus Christi festival of early colonial Peru.

many parts of the Spanish territories, but New Spain, and especially Mexico City continued to be the focal point (150).

The parentheses are the authors; perhaps they felt it was necessary to define which Lima was intended, or thought perhaps readers would not know where Lima was. What an extraordinary tidbit offered to archeologists of theatre buildings in that phrase, “Others were built at Lima.” This is the only mention of Lima or Peru in the entire text. The theatre culture of Lima, the other Spanish viceroyalty, and the active world port for slaves, gold, silver, spices, merchandise and culture, remain invisible.

Before proceeding to search for mention of Peru or Lima in theatre histories centered on African American Theatre, I want to look first through the offerings of the *Oxford Handbook of American Drama* (2014). Editors Heather S. Nathans and Jeffrey H. Richards have assembled top-of-the-field contributors inclusive—not just representative—of women, writers of color and diverse generations. Self-proclaimed as “[t]he most comprehensive multi-authored book on American drama currently in print” (1), its mission to survey origins in North America is defined immediately as a geographic parameter. While keenly acknowledging, “Drama is tied intimately to cultural formation in ways that other literary genres are not even in times when drama was scorned” (2), the editors nonetheless limit their survey to how that is manifested exclusively in the United States. They also define their mission towards the literature of “drama” and not the actions of “theater.” The, “[t]itle is crucial,” Richards writes in the Introduction. “Despite the inmate relationship between drama and theatre, they are not the same.” The frame of this volume refreshingly makes clear it will, “stress the text more than the performance” (3). Yet their first important essay, Odai Johnson’s “Theatre

Companies before the Revolution,” orients the reader back to the actions, not the texts, of the players. The dominant narrative of the beginnings of the profession in the defined North American orientation of this volume emerges again, not via the drama, but via the actions of and against the players. By following anti-theatrical legislations and evidence of the activities of the players, Johnson puts his readers into 1730s Williamsburg, as colonists were “Establishing theatre in British America” (17). The Hallam Brothers’ narrative follows, but only after Johnson identifies players in the community through legal documents. This is a method appreciated by other scholars pouncing on *Ye Beare and Ye Cubbe*, but Johnson finds evidence where before there was a dearth of it. “It would not oversimplify the matter to claim that professional there in America began with a murder in a London greenroom. The unfortunate death of Thomas Hallam in 1735 at the hands of Charles Macklin dashed the last best hope for this large family of actors.” With the passage of the Licensing Act of 1739 legalizing just two companies at the outset, illegal theatres opened and closed, and an on-again-off again existence meant constantly “evading the law” (19). Johnson discovers the presence of the players by examining actions against them, their absence from the logs, and further, their disappearance from family chronicles.<sup>140</sup> In Johnson's methods, though a direct contradiction of certain parameters defined in the Introduction, we find a more versatile lens for discovering beginnings of the profession, at least in British and English-speaking America.

Searching for the African contributions to the americanity of American theatre history in scholarship, I consult the foundational text by James Vernon Hatch and Errol

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<sup>140</sup> Johnson’s chapter focuses not on dramatic texts, but on the appearances of players’ names in birth and death records, and on legal actions against them.

Hill, *A History of African American Theatre* (2003). In this critical book, researchers can be reminded of the sheer numbers of African people spread by slavery through the Americas, along with the dependence on unwritten performance practices for communication, and protecting stories from hands controlling print culture and their very lives. In the introduction to this monumental text, there are a few words about Peru and Mexico, as the writers follow the conquistadors Cortés and Francisco Pizarro into their imagined empires. Agreeing with the population statistics gathered by Charles Mann in his post-Columbus study *1493*, these historians of African-American culture offer research suggesting, “From Portugal and Spain, 12-15 million *survived* the horrors of the crossing” (4-5, italics mine). Hatch and Hills gives us the essential historic background to understand that there were millions of Africans in the Americas by 1600, with a slave trade driven by Portuguese, Spanish and soon, English greed. *A History of African American Theatre* however, does not contain a single reference to the viceregal center of Lima, Peru, make note of the extent of the slave trade via Peru’s northern port city of Trujillo, nor the deep roots of Afro-Peruvian dance and performance pervasive throughout Peru to this day. This could be due to the assumption of geography; so much historicizing of the slave trade focuses on North America. Joseph Roach uses only the Atlantic Ocean to draw his circumference of exchange in *Cities of the Dead*.<sup>141</sup> Hatch and Hill refer to the plays dramatizing Spanish conquest of Peru in Sheridan’s adaptation of Kotzebue’s tales of *Pizarro*, taking interest as African-American actor Ira Aldridge (1807-1867) and the African Company performed these English language plays telling

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<sup>141</sup> Please see Rachel Sarah O’Toole’s *Bound Lives: Africans, Indians, and the Making of Race in Colonial Peru* for a discussion of the early presence of Africans in Peru, and racial stratification. Not incidentally, O’Toole is the niece and namesake of the recently passed Sarah Nash Gates, chair emeritus at the UW School of Drama.

stories of the Spaniard's conquest of Peru. The book, urgently needed by scholarship along with other important books detailing histories of African American performance, has a decidedly Northern assumption about what African American theater would mean, where it would live, and even in what language it would be spoken.

Before examining histories of Latin American Theatre in which I hoped to find more citations of Peruvian histories, playwrights or players, I turn to one last paragraph from the Brockett/Hildy. This text addresses performance in the Spanish Americas, but qualifies the evidence variously as not as part of the profession, not legitimate until published, and/or related (only) to religious practices and/or historical re-enactment:

For example in Nicaragua, sometime in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, a comedy called *The Old Man (El Güegüence)* was composed incorporating what are thought to be pre-columbian traditions of a comic buffoon character, but the play was not transcribed until 1883.<sup>142</sup> Kachina dances had a trickster when Spanish encountered them in 1540. The Spanish observed as well a thriving performance tradition of social satire among communities subjugated by the Incas in Peru. In the 1780s Antonio Valdés produced *Ollantay* an epic drama he claimed was also of pre-Columbian origin, which he had transcribed from the oral tradition of these people. Its authenticity is questioned by many scholars” (150).

The editors question, not once, but twice, the pre-colonial authenticity of both *Ollantay* and Nicaragua's trickster. Contrast these caveats with the importance of these

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<sup>142</sup> Please see the newest work of E. J. Westlake, who is researching early origins of *El Güegüence* using historiographic methods connecting to dance history, and performance history, as the text itself came after earlier performance.

contributions to theatre history of the Americas. We erase, or delegitimize a trickster in Cortés' New Spain from theatre history, yet consistently historicize Shakespeare's fools because the words are captured. Can we not recognize that if the community is "subjugated by the Inca" (somehow not mentioning subjugation at the hands of the colonizing Spaniards), is it not part of theatre history that this oppressed community found a messaging system within "performance traditions of social satire?" What are these erasures and minimizations accomplishing if not perpetuation of a hegemonic narrative?

In John Russell Brown's *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Theatre* (1998), the writer summarizes Indigenous performances in the central, or Mesoamericas, with several brief observations, none of which include Peru, but which do embrace multiple modes of performance:

Ritual dance-dramas and farces were a conspicuous feature of pre-Columbian Meso-American civilization. Early Spanish accounts speak of comic and dramatic *bailes* [dances] with actors dancing in a variety of human and animal masks, of *comedias*, *entremeses*, *farzas* and *representaciones*, of training schools, professional buffoons, humpbacked clowns and contortionists. Post-conquest suppression of religious ceremonies, the burning of indigenous texts, and the substitution of Christian *bailes* ensured that most of this rich panorama of native theatre was lost. Traces survive—in the Tigre masks and costumes for example, of contemporary Mexican fiestas, and in ceremonies such as the Game of

the Flying Dancers; *el Juego de Los Voladores*.... ‘We are sacred birds that fly with the four winds to the four cardinal points (102-3).<sup>143</sup>

Brown’s only acknowledgement of Peru is on page seventy-seven, inexplicably within the chapter entitled, “Theatre in Roman and Christian Europe.” In the margin of the page, one finds a painting, famous to students of visual art in Peru, but presented here without citation or date. The painting is of a Corpus Christi festival, and the prominent feature is a pageant wagon, as in the medieval cycle plays of Spain and England’s early religious theatre.<sup>144</sup> The figures enacting the play on the wagon could be puppets, as they are tiny in comparison to the figures observing the procession, or those that process alongside the wagon. Those spectators and *spect-actors* are the elite of early Peruvian society.<sup>145</sup> The Cardinal is represented, as are the Inca Kings, depicting a moment history where the syncretism of the two thrones in power were strategically illustrated as equal. The figures on the pageant wagon could have been puppets, yet likely were actors, scaled small to demonstrate the lowly actor next to the mighty king or priest. The pageant wagon in the *Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre* depicts St. Sebastian, but in this pageant there would have been many such wagons, each with a different Christian story. The

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<sup>143</sup> This dance of the flyers can be seen in the central parks of Mexico City today. Staged with a very tall, central and fixed pole, the dancers ascend and inexplicably hang upside down from cords suspended in four directions from the pole, which twists ever faster and faster. They do not collide, they do not become ill, to the contrary, they become part of the wind itself, and the exclamation of the awed spectators. Their spectacular ascent is as theatrical as their spinning, which is as dramatic as their descent, when they finally re-humanize, allowing gravity once again to rule their movement. No spectator of this performance could walk away and call it anything but a ceremony, unless they were completely shut down to the extraordinary embodiment of flight taking place.

<sup>144</sup> I include the painting in the appendices.

<sup>145</sup> The “Spect-actor” is a term coined by Augusto Boal, to refer to audience members who become instrumental in crafting the end of a play during its performance. The spectator is a participant, and becomes an actor if they so choose.

significance of the Corpus Christi being in Peru at all is not made clear; the painting is included as part of the practices of “Theatre in Roman and Christian Europe.” The *Oxford History of Theatre* does not date the painting, and its caption is the only mention of Peru or Lima in 575 pages of scholarship. It is worth noting that every single contributor to this 1998 publication is a male writer. Assumptions are so strongly in place that the geography, chronology and performance history of the event is virtually erased. Just a little research takes us to the already mentioned scholar Carolyn Dean, whose book *Inka Bodies and The Bodies of Christ* (1998) not only includes the painting above (c. 1674-1680) but introduces the entire series of paintings depicting this Corpus Christi festival in the late seventeenth century. The Catholic festival’s syncretism with Quechua practices was sophisticated in dress, costumes, color, and representations. The Indigenous and mestizo participants were Catholic yet still Andean; the paintings capture the syncretism of religious systems. In short, Inca and King were equally spectacular in their distinctive dress. As far as the editors and contributors of the *Oxford History of Theatre* are concerned, the historic theatre of Peru did not exist. And when it appears in plain sight, as in the paintings of the pageant wagons in Cuzco from mid-seventeenth century, the geography seemed unimportant to Brown. The painting itself is undervalued as it is undated, and unaccredited. It happens to be anonymous in the making, yet much like an unattributed play-text this does not mean it was not made.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> It is important to note here on the existence of The Cuzco School of painting, which was established a genre in the early seventeenth century, and was largely composed of Indigenous men trained to paint the chosen biblical narratives of the Church, who held them in service via their artistry. The Indigenous painters, anonymous in 80 percent of the work, became soon collectively notorious for including Andean images in otherwise catholic liturgical paintings, such as the *cuy* (guinea pig), a delicacy of the Peruvian diet, at the center of the table is the gargantuan *Last Supper* c. 1700, hanging in the Cuzco

Brown and company try to embrace the America hemispherically, yet instantly erase its global south by questioning sustainability, legitimacy, and via taxonomy that separates masked performance from western, read: civilized, theatre. Writing “[t]hroughout the Americas, masking also seems to have been a primary source of theatre—in hunting economies, among agricultural tribes, as well as in archaic urban civilizations,” the editor’s big sweep includes Tierra del Fuego, Vancouver Island, Southwest Arizona, Texas, and Nevada, along with masks in Guatemala and mentions of El Güegüence” the writer simultaneously dismisses masking as a “source,” but not as the thing itself. Again, Peru is not mentioned (99).

At least when Glenn Hughes wrote his essay *A History of the American Theatre 1700-1950* in 1952, he establishes on his first page what he will and will not write. He notes that by limiting his study to the United States he makes his task more achievable, and yet he remarks repeatedly that anthropologists seem to give him no end of trouble by claiming that Indigenous performance existed. He uses hegemonic vocabulary to describe “primitive” performance by “red” people as he writes in 1952, “[Even as we] limit ourselves geographically to the area now known as the United States of America, we are faced with the problem of primitive drama, for the anthropologists have [made it] easier [for] us [to know] that the native red men were not lacking in theatrical rites.” He then mentions the Potlatch, the antelope dance, as part of that bothersome complexity and argues that, “One chooses for obvious reasons to define the American theater as that which began with the settlement of Europeans on our shores, thus adding time and race limitations to the geographical.” This is on page one, and though he never defines the

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cathedral. The cuy is the middle of the painting, dressed and ready to eat, is a subject to which every docent at the cathedral draws attention, usually with humor.

“obvious reasons” for his limits, at least Hughes outlines that his limitations would exist, and names them. His parameters are clear and his doctrine transparent. Later volumes often saw no need to describe such limits, they assumed their readers would share the same set of assumptions as those of the author.

Next I go to a book where I hoped to find mention of Peru, or performance in Lima. In *Theatre in Latin America: Religion, Politics, and Culture from Cortés to the 1980s* (1993) Adam Versényi sets out specifically to find the intersections of culture and politic, religion and performance, and embrace it all through a lens searching for theatre throughout the ecology of Latin America. A wise move, as within thousands of years of theatre history through the Western gaze, the intersection of the three, that which compelled performance in the first place, is often rendered invisible, or worse, irrelevant. When Versényi acknowledges Indigenous performance traditions, he theorizes the use of performance to establish and hold power. Writing, “[t]heatre and spectacle were an integral part of the maintenance of the empire” (15), he addresses the Aztec empire, not the Inca *Tahuantinsuyu*, yet it could be argued the same was true. With the arrival of fervent brotherhoods of Catholic Spaniards hungry for souls, Versényi writes simply and succinctly, “They communicated in order to convert, and the method of communication was the theatre” (19). He goes on to identify the intersection of Indigenous performance and Christianizing doctrine, and reveals interdependencies in form and content:

We have seen how both the indigenous ritual spectacle and the evangelical theatre that was built upon its foundations sought to eliminate the line dividing actor from spectator in order to achieve certain religious and poetical ends. But there was another aspect to theatrical representation, its

magical possibilities, its ability to entrance and appeal in a way that dry dogma could not, that attracted the friars to theatrical forms (30).

These magical possibilities were not a strange concept to the Indigenous communities, who lived in close, daily interactions with the notion of spirit and power of nature in land, water, air and fire. It could be said that Indigenous people were attracted to the friars as more theatre was used for their evangelism. It certainly worked. Peru is nearly 95% Catholic, and it is clear that more Indigenous people and practices have survived in the Spanish Americas than in the United States. Versényi writes that the native peoples of the North “[w]ere all but exterminated” and that because of the hunger for souls the native peoples of the Spanish colonies were killed in fewer numbers, women and children spared. Intermarriage, along with rape, created an identifiable *Mestizaje* in South America; indeed, a Peruvian identity is by very definition and as discussed earlier, an identity of *mestizaje*. *Mestizaje* as an identity doesn't proliferate as a proud identity in the Northern Americas, at least in terms of mixing Indigenous (or First Nations, or Native American, or First Peoples') blood with that of colonizers.<sup>147</sup>

The Spanish priests also recognized talent when they saw it. As demonstrated earlier, this was the case as the Cuzco School was established as the excellence of indentured Indigenous artists was recognized. Versényi finds a corollary with theatrical practitioners. Here, he quotes from Fray Diego Durán's, *Historia de las Indias de Nueva Espana e Islas de la Tierra Firme* (1586). Durán (1537-1588) was a Dominican friar

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<sup>147</sup> Again, I rely on Marisol de la Cadena, for Mestizo, Indigenous and other terms of identity making in Peru, and on Ramos/Yannakakis for historic perspectives on these designations. I am not referring here to identities such as “mixed race” or “bi-racial” or “multi-racial,” all terms I do not read of or hear used in Peru. *Mestizo/a* or *Mestizx* identity, and *Mestizaje* as a culture, are uniquely Peruvian.

whose journals on Aztec culture, known as the Durán codex, has become an irreplaceable source of Spanish and Catholic observations of the Aztec people. Durán spoke Nahuatl, and translated the Bible into Nahuatl and Nahuatl texts into Spanish. Versényi considers Durán a critical source when searching for theatre history

Durán speaks of ‘*dramaturgos*,’ who were the indigenous priests and monks that ran the schools where they composed “very pleasing dances, farces, interludes and songs.” As the early Franciscan friars moved from province to province constructing churches and monasteries with the Indians’ aid, they also invoked their prerogative of control over education, founding schools as they went along. In doing so, they discovered the existence of the Indigenous trained professionals and lost no time in incorporating their skills into the theatrical forms they were creating. By employing a theatre of pageantry and display, similar to the native rituals and ceremonies they had observed, the friars sparked the enthusiasm of the professionals and awed the populace, both reactions that hastened the indigenous peoples down the path to conversion (21-22).

In this keen observation of a Spanish chronicle, Versényi notes the interchange between colonizers and colonized during a time of shifting power. Theatre was effectively used by the Spanish to convert, and conversely as we have seen, performance has been just as effective in preserving cultures under siege of colonization and conversion. It is safe to say there was more than one thing going on, and both constituencies’ very survival was at stake. Though he does not make this connection, Versényi, with Durán, in addressing the

northern center of Viceregal power in the former Aztec empire, the observations could have been made about Cuzco and Lima

In his few words concerning historic or contemporary Peru, Versényi does detail the extraordinary performance traditions of the previously mentioned Quechua festival called *Inti Raymi*, Festival of the Sun (Son), yet he names only the ruins of *Saksayhuamán* above Cuzco where this festival is performed and does not even name the Inca ritual itself:

Among the Quechua in Peru, religious rites were performed for fertilization of both the earth and of women, for exorcism of malignant spirits, and for purification of the earth and its inhabitants. The purification festival is particularly striking for its performative nature. In it a warrior, carrying a lance in his hand as the sun's messenger, and adorned with many colored feathers, came running out of the Sacsahuamán [*sic*] fortress. He ran to the center of the principal plaza, where four other warriors awaited him. He touched their lances with his own, and they then each ran towards one of the four roads which, leaving Cuzco, led to the four corners of the empire. Though a performance, the Inca empire was transformed into a purified state" (13).

It is important that Versényi has included the description of the *Inti Raymi* in his text. Revived after the turn of the twentieth century, this procession and performance is now staged every year at the June Solstice. There are literally thousands of performers, and many more thousands of spectators. Versényi does not acknowledge, however, that the festival has a contemporary life, and never mentions Peru again after this early citation.

Mexico remains firmly in the center of Versényi's frame. He writes succinctly about the nun, poet, scholar and playwright, Sor Juana Ynés de la Cruz (1651-1695), and though today she is widely held as the first professional playwright born in the Americas. In 1993 Versényi's framing of her was limited by her gender and ethnicity. Calling her "One of Latin America's greatest writers and first female playwright," he writes of her commitment to her craft and the profession:

[Sor Juana] was an educated, articulate, independent female within the highly conservative masculine environment of the church. Sor Juana's very existence made a forceful political/religious statement... [W]hat is germane here, however, is her work for the stage. For an American of her time, her dramatic output is rather impressive. She wrote eight *loas*, three *autos*, two *comedias*, two *sainetes*, and a soiree piece" (41).

Living just forty-four years, Sor Juana would be commissioned to write plays—which may have only been read and never performed—by throne and aristocracy alike. Whether her output was "rather impressive" for her short life is perhaps an understatement. She likely hid many of her plays and become known as The Tenth Muse.<sup>148</sup>

It was in the refreshingly hemispheric, *The Puppet Theatre in America: A History 1524-1948* (1949) by Paul McPharlin (the supplement, *Puppets in America Since 1948* is by Marjorie Batchelder McPharlin), where I found a consciousness of the plural in the Americas. McPharlin has a wide lens for puppet appearances in both Indigenous and colonial landscapes. He is aware of how puppets serve as surrogates for humans, and

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<sup>148</sup> The play *The Tenth Muse*, by Tanya Saracho is rigorously researched and brings an imagined life of one of the earliest playwrights to the stage. It premiered at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2014. My review can be found at [www.dramainthehood.net](http://www.dramainthehood.net)

allow for the coding of narratives of resistance and satire. Like Joseph Roach, McPharlin identifies and connects global exchanges of performance traditions alongside exchange of (other) material wealth. After citing the puppeteers (but not the puppets or the puppet plays) aboard Cortés' crew, McPharlin theorizes,

It must be assumed that they continued to bring puppet shows to the New World. Only scattered records of them have so far come to light. In 1569 Juan de Samora petitioned the authorities for permission to play during the Lenten season in the town of Texcucu, Mexico, "Three puppet shows, which would give the gentry no cause to blush." On 15 July 1597, Jusepe Hernandez proposed to show the public upon the payment of an entrance fee, 'An invention called the Castle of Marvels.' Was this a puppet booth? (7).

McPharlin's next citation brings Peru to light. It is in Lima, July 1629, where "a puppet show is given in the cloisters of the Convent of St. Francis." No further record of puppet theatre, commercial and for the price of a ticket, is given in Lima until 1761 (74).<sup>149</sup> The writer's conjecture regarding the Castle of Marvels is positioned historically near to the moment of the Callao contract; it is surprising that no historian would have found such a clue as a "castle of marvels" inviting for further research. In 1949, McPharlin had the wherewithal to acknowledge evidence of the first woman puppeteer to appear in the records—and she is in Lima. She was Leonar Godomar, and, "Though there are only

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<sup>149</sup> Interesting for the centuries-old argument of the interdependence between the theatre and the hospitals of Spain and now Peru, the puppet show in 1761 was a benefit paid for the Confradia of the Hospital of San Andrés for the sum of 3000 pesos delivered to "authors and musicians" for a "maquina Royale de Muñecos"—royal mechanism of puppets—in the Dramatic Coliseum, Lima's "regular theatre" (*Puppet History* 74).

scattered references to puppets in Peru [until the eighteenth century] it is evident that there was continuity between the work of Leonar Godomar and those who followed her” (255).<sup>150</sup> McPharlin demonstrates his capacity for gazing outside the center of formal history not only with a feminist lens, but with a lens for the non-human surrogate.

This history of puppetry demonstrates that by expanding our notion of what theatre can be, and recognizing the assumptions which create obstacles to research, roots for performances in the Americas with historic continuity trace back half a millennium to the moment of Contact. When one studies Indigenous performance, the view reaches back thousands of years. McPharlin’s history of puppets and puppeteering in the Americas has the plural and hemispheric consciousness to embrace the cultural complexities and opportunities for discovery, McPharlin begins with the early citation recognized by Versényi, that, “[i]n conformity with the practice of the period, Hernando Cortés had a puppeteer among his servants when he set out on 12 October 1524 from Tenochtitlan, which is now Mexico City, on a six month’s march to rumored gold fields in Hibueras (Honduras).” McPharlin looks deeper than Versényi, first by detailing the ship’s course from New Spain to Honduras. Further, he cites the writings of Bernal Díaz del Castillo, the diarist Cortés took along with him, to find the ship’s manifest included, “Five players on the oboe, sackbut, and dulcimer, and an acrobat and another *-otro que jugaba de manos y hacia títeres* [who did sleight of hand and worked puppets] (6). He documents five players, but only three of them were musicians. The fourth was a physical performer, and the last a magician and puppeteer. McPharlin is proud to claim the cutting

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<sup>150</sup> I cannot yet find biographic references to Godonar’s life. For now, the extravagant and extensive history of puppetry and mask in Peru gains historiographic footing by the 1750s.

edge for puppets, and writes that the first European play to be done with human actors in America within conversion practices was not performed until 24 June 1538, fourteen years after [European] puppets made their debut. Quoting Joaquin García Icazbalceta from his *Los Coloquios de Gonzáles Eslava* (1538) McPharlin translates, “Four sacred dramas were then presented in Mexico for the edification of the Indians.” McPharlin has found an early date for the americanity of American theatre in vitro. As for the prescient role of the non-human players, he writes, “Puppets have always been in the vanguard as the theater has followed explorers to the frontiers of America” (6). This early historian of puppetry, one of the performing arts forms that appears in nearly every culture on the globe and was often employed to tell stories that were otherwise forbidden to speak, knew that performance would follow various Europeans to the Americas. In fact, they prioritized it such that performers of various stripes were in the very first crews.

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To the detriment of many and as demonstrated by Joseph Roach, boundaries between the disciplines, artificial or otherwise, have served as impediments to breakthroughs in research. What is difficult to apprehend is the motivation for the easy dismissal of various historiographic methods due to hegemonic taxonomies that separate and organize hierarchically by discipline, race, print culture, or in this case, living and artificial actors. The Peruvian branch of theatre is deeply rooted in history, yet fails to register with any number of reputable texts and journals in the decades since Rosenbach’s finding and Villena’s scholarship. Peru, in all of the above texts and in my discussions with scholars, remains largely off the radar of American theatre history, and does not register as integral to the profession’s beginnings in the American hemisphere.

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In exposing hegemonic assumptions that have controlled dominant narratives of American theatre history, a new genealogy is not only suggested, it is imperative. When, in 1999 Diana Taylor writes, “Yuyachkani, Peru’s internationally acclaimed collective theatre group, actively stages Peru’s social memory,” she might not have imagined the company thriving for another twenty years. Yet they have, and given their school, touring schedule and sustainability plans, the future looms brightly. It is upon their *americanity* one can discover the persuasion behind an argument for the beginnings of American Theatre having *Limeño* roots. Consider how Quintano and Wallerstein herald the changing attributes of identity building and decolonization in the culture of the hemisphere:

In the future perspective of the Americas, certain processes should be underlined. First there is a trend to a more systematic articulation of the Americas under the hegemony of North America (including now Canada, in a secondary way). This includes the growing migratory flux from south to north and especially to the U. S. Secondly, there is greater internal articulation within Latin America, despite the contrary pressures of global capital, Europe, Japan, the U. S. Thirdly, there is a growing decolonization of the production of culture, of the arts, and of scientific knowledge. In short, the Americanization of the Americas is coming into full bloom.

(556)

Yuyachkani’s mission and history is evidence of that harvest, evidencing their imperatives as historians and artists, curators and archivists of historical truths and

endangered memories, feminist women and men who are creative determinants of Peru's present and future. They, and their predecessors, may very well be the invisible warriors that protected Peruvian culture. "Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational," Homi Bhabha wrote in *Location of Culture*:

It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement...culture is translational because such spatial histories of displacement—now accompanied by the territorial ambitions of 'global' media technologies—make the question of how culture signifies, or what is signified by *culture*, a rather complex issue" (172).

An understatement, yet one that captures in its irony many of the reasons that Peruvian culture, despite the odds, has in fact, survived and, like other living things, adapted. Performance in the culture is a, "...Historical necessity for elaborating empowering strategies of emancipation, [and] staging other social antagonisms" (Bhabha 171). Bhabha goes a step further in describing the necessity of culture and reminds us that culture is also a source of transformation. "Culture becomes as much an uncomfortable, disturbing practice of survival and supplementarity—between art and politics, past and present, the public and the private—as its resplendent being is a moment of pleasure, enlightenment, or liberation" (175). The connection between Isabel's time's is no further in distance than the commonality of requiring culture, its pain and pleasure, to preserve its very nature.

Given my argument that the Callao contract suggests ancestry of theatrical lineage from the days of Early Modern Lima as an influential genetic branch of americanity in

performance, then Yuyachkani could be embodied proof this branch of the theatre's family tree is propagating its next generation of artists and activists. What are the important, even urgent implications suggested by the presence of theatre and theatre practitioners in a country historically beleaguered by imperialism, colonialism, genocide, revolution, independence, republicanism, communism, terrorism, and now, globalization? Theatre perseveres, and as Rebecca Schneider has written, performing remains.<sup>151</sup> Bhabha adds resonantly, "Culture [is] a strategy for survival."

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<sup>151</sup> Her book of the same name.

## Conclusion

The first company of professional men *and women* actors formed in the Americas long before anyone imagined. Peru was the site of that arrival, and importantly, Lima was a complex and constructed culture wherein the language of performance became central for the tools needed to preserve and re/create identity, protect and or preserve history and origin myths, for conversion, comic subversions, and cultural survival. Lima was the site of the emergence of an early modern consciousness in the Americas, one was generated by a multi-racial and gender-disruptive culture. Performance cultures depend on the power of representations, reenactments, and processions to provide versions of religious dogma and cultures in collision. With the beginnings of a professional theatre however, parody, subversion, trans-racial encounters and *sincretismo* in visual ways of knowing, informed much performance culture existing (just) outside the power structures of the church, state, and (Incaic) temple. Performances reached a public hungry not just for versions of power and history, but for subversions, and the freedom to create and perform interpretations of their own.

In this dissertation, I (re)introduce the Callao Contract, a legal document signed in 1599 outside Lima, Peru. An acting company of six men and two women left their marks on the contract forming the first professional theatre company in the Americas. Asking how and why the contract remained buried in the archives, I research the document's provenance, disappearance, and the powerful implications suggested by its re-emergence. I restore, and *re-stor(y)* the Callao Contract to a place of recognition, and bring the theatre culture of Peru into global discourses on cultural practice. The contract not only

proves the first professional actors in the Americas were Spaniards and Mestizos of the Peruvian world, but also insists upon re/mapping the genealogy of performance practices churning between the European continent, England, and the Indigenous Americas. I construct and defend this argument having researched in the archives of the Rosenbach Library in Philadelphia and the National Archives of Peru, or *Archivos General de la Nación*, in Lima. The secondary scholarship of performance and cultural historians who focused variously on historiography of American theatre, Peruvian cultural history, or interdisciplinary questions of evidence and methods of writing has been invaluable in scaffolding these arguments.

Despite the vigorous scholarship of Latin Americanists, specialists of Indigenous performance of the Americas, or Spanish drama's greatest age, genetic material of theatre ancestry from the Spanish Americas, and through my lens, Peru, is rendered nearly invisible in what is historicized as American Theatre. The stubbornly dominant narratives of American theatre history are decidedly Northern in orientation, to the extent that most people studying or traveling still must be reminded that there is more than one America, much less more than way to tell a history. Hallam and his players most certainly arrived on the Atlantic coast of North America in 1752 and are vigorously historicized as the first company to perform for a paying public in the Americas.

The problem of western(ized) history is the manner in which hegemonies control the narrative by establishing Anglo, and English language, supremacy. De Certeau surmises, "Intelligibility is established through a relation with the other; it moves (or "progresses") by changing what it makes of its "other"—the Indian, the past, the people, the mad, the child, the Third World" (2), and with this, puts his finger on the inherent

dysfunction of americanity. In order to progress, someone, or something, must be repressed. Without the Callao Contract and other evidence of sixteenth century Peruvian theatre, cultural history in the Americas is missing a key link to the past and so perpetuates a narrative that is systemically blind to astonishing evidence from the Global South, truths within plain sight. I bring an under-researched Peru, blessed by a resilient and omnipresent performance culture of sacred and secular practices, into discourses of theatre and performance scholarship. Acknowledging historiographic practices that have enabled its invisibility, I place sixteenth century Spanish and Mestizo/a actors and actresses into a world of Andean indigeneity, destruction, and coloniality, one in which we, scholars grappling with Quijano and Wallerstein's theory of americanity, have yet to imagine them. Ancient Quechua actors, seeking to protect to their lives, identities and the practices of their religions and art, may have encountered these early modern actors, skilled in story, mask, improvisation, and playing the roles of Christianity in Catholic feast day processions. The results of these collisions may have yielded the beginnings of a Pan-American performance vocabulary.

As the first professional actors arrived in the Americas more than a century earlier than anyone or any history has maintained, the imperatives to redraw the genealogy of theatre practices and texts in this hemisphere are vivid. Given the resilience of Indigenous performance practices in rural communities of Andean Peru and in the techniques of a world theatre such as *Yuyachkani*, the power of theatre in the very survival of a people becomes evidentiary in the archive and the repertoire. To understand how historians have neglected, missed, and/or misunderstood the content of the Callao Contract and associated sixteenth century materials in the Spanish Americas requires research beyond

the scope of this project, but hypotheses including anti-Semitism towards Dr. Rosenbach, along with anti-Hispanic fervor from American Jews and progressives during the rising of Franco, are worth considering. This dissertation agitates macro-histories of American theatre that consistently privilege text-based cultures, the Northern hemisphere, and the English Language. In addition, as fragile cultures under violent siege seek pathways to sustainability, performance can be newly understood as a strategic cultural weapon. Andean Peru has survived destructive forces of empire building, terror and globalization for almost five hundred years. My dissertation presents powerful arguments for how performance practices have contributed to that survival, and how a broadened genealogy of theatre history in the Americas could enlighten the making of a twenty-first century global consciousness.

Approaching the ranks of senior scholars of performance and/or Peru, Juan Carlos Estenssoro, Carolyn Dean, Juan Jose Arróm, Steve Stern, Marisol de la Cadena, Zoila Mendoza, Adam Versenyi, Diana Taylor, Joseph Roach and Rebecca Schneider, I offer these stunning archival findings, which suggest theatre culture was well established long before Shakespeare was ever spoken in the Americas.

Diana Taylor provides the lens for seeing how theatre can function in sustaining culture and empowering collective memory, using Yuyachkani's mission for her argument:

Witnessing is transferable...the theatre, like the testimony, like the photograph, film or report, can make witnesses of others. The (eye) witness sustains both the archive and the repertoire. So, rather than think of performance primarily as the ephemeral, as that which disappears,

Yuyachkani insists on creating a community of witnesses by and through performance. The group counters the performance-as-disappearance model of colonialism that pushes autochthonous practices into the oblivion of the ephemeral, the unscripted, the understudied, the uncontrollable. For many of these communities, on the contrary, when performance ends, so does the shared understanding of social life and collective memory.

Performances such as these fiestas, testimony and theatrical productions warn us not to dismiss the I who remembers, who thinks, who is a product of collective thought (*The Archive and the Repertoire* 211).

These reminders of the “I” who witnesses an event, through the “eye” of a witness to the event, can apply to monumental events of collective history, or the intimate exchange between the audience member who witnesses the testimony of the actor on the stage. Perhaps the Callao Contract, like Diana Taylor’s theory of the repertoire in concert with the archive, will crack open a paradigm-shifting window of interpretation.

In his introduction, Michel de Certeau’s translator Tom Conley explains how, in de Certeau’s visions, fiction and history have necessary intersections; it is creative writers traversing disciplines who are collapsing boundaries:

*The Writing of History* implies that the aims of historiography and literature have been converging since the Enlightenment. The task of the archivist involves deciphering hidden relations held in discourses of other times, while the creative writer weaves those same relations, whether with

death or posterity, into a fabric of poetry fashioned from contemporary life  
(xi).

I strive to be one of those creative writers.

I believe this will project will instigate a wave of new inquiry into Peruvian theatre. It was Tracy C. Davis who, in her review of *A Tyranny of Documents*, wrote, “Discovery is never the endpoint, but rather a new beginning that might entail many more journeys to archives as historians ponder research as a process, not a destination.” Certainly that applies to the (re) discovery of the Callao Contract. The time is urgent for these inquiries. The early part of the twenty-first century has brought the deaths of irreplaceable Peruvian scholars María Rostworowski Tovar de Diez Canseco (1916-2016), Jose Juan Arróm (1910-2007), and Lohmann Villena (1915-2005). With them passes a national memory bank; they are arguably the greatest historians of Peru from the twentieth century. Only Rostworowski, known and beloved as “María de los Andes,” has had any of her materials translated into English. In addition, the unpublished text of Manuel Moncloa y Covarrubius, entitled *La Historia del Peru Popular*, is a treasure being protected by his family as the libraries and archives of Lima today are rife with unexplained disappearances and obvious theft of archival treasures.

The port of Callao was so excellent a harbor that in the sixteenth and seventeenth century it served the entire west of coast of the South American continent as the primary port. Today, it largely serves a local fishing industry and is a shadow of its former self. The sinking, crumbling, earthquake ravaged and wave-drowned stones of the port of Callao is largely beneath the surface of the water, submerged and as yet unexplored by treasure hunters and archeologists alike. What remains above ground in Callao is a

strange cross between a small but blossoming upscale shopping district, and the worst slums of greater Lima. Callao is an independent jurisdiction, one widely known for its corruption, confusion and violence. Yet the architecture holds its history, as does the ocean, which, for the time being, provides a watery, translucent grave. Much like the archives of the Rosenbach, the story is there, in plain sight, waiting for someone to agitate the complacency keeping the truth submerged. In the stones of the ruins of *Saksayhuamán*, Inca stones buried beneath the palimpsest of Spanish architecture, stones embedded in the central plazas of Lima and Cuzco, the stories of Peru's past await. Poet and anthropologist Susan Griffin reminds us that nature itself, the earth mother *Pachamama* in Quechua culture is the ultimate archive.

“The hard surface of the stone is impervious to nothing in the end. The heat of the sun leaves evidence of daylight. Each drop of rain changes the form; even the wind and the air itself, invisible to our eyes, etches its presence. All history is taken in by stones” (*A Chorus of Stones: the Private Life of War*).

My final question, and the one I can only pose in a conclusion inviting more study and more scholarship, is what shall scholars, practitioners and educators of theatre in the Americas do now that the Callao Contract, and the ghosts of the actors who left their imprint on it, has re-entered our memory? How will we act, as the contract acts upon us? For myself, I will be inquiring into the cultural production of Yuyachkani and the legacy of the sisters amongst the founders, the tenacious traditions of processional performance, and the archetype of the *tapada*. Lima has been a place of costume, disguise and performance since its strange beginnings. Peru's indigenous and mestizo/a cultures, and

the americanity of Peruvian identities and cultural production hold the codes to deeper understandings of Performance histories in the Americas. To restore history, the curious must only learn to read what is in plain sight with a new set of eyes.

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