the social sciences in general as intervening agents in social change. Though today there is little agreement on the nature, beneficence or impact of the project either on the discipline or even on the community itself (where it is only a vague local memory), it continues to be a singular milestone in the fertile history of applied anthropology in the Andes.

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John Charles, *Allies at Odds: The Andean Church and its Indigenous Agents, 1583–1671* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2010), pp. xii + 283, $27.95, pb.

In any study of a church or a political movement, the obvious subjects of interest are the charismatic leaders and the movers and shakers who make things happen. In this work on the colonial Andean Church, however, the intermediaries and subordinates are the centre of attention. The Indians were sacristans, secretaries and translators, but as author John Charles argues, they were much more: they worked closely with the priests, but at times they cleverly used their knowledge of the conqueror's language and legal system to advance their own interests and those of the local community.

As Charles shows in this well-documented portrayal of the colonial world, the Indians were not the passive and silent victims of an imposed order, as they were sometimes portrayed in older historiography. They acted as conscious intermediaries between the two worlds, and in so doing regained much of the power over their lives and their communities that they had lost after the conquest. Thanks to Spanish paternalism, the Indians used the legal system to their fullest advantage, often overwhelming the courts with unending litigation, much to the chagrin of colonial officials. Other studies have focused on Indian revolutions or outbreaks of idolatry, but in the long run, it was in their manipulation of the system itself – their mastery of Christian doctrine, the language, and Spanish legal procedures – that the Indians were most successful in resisting the system and maintaining their identity.

In the multifaceted colonial world, the Indians were both allies and potential subversives. What most concerned officials were the Indian catechists who, preaching in Quechua or Aymara, presumed that they knew as much or more than the priests. The chronicler Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, who depicted life in early colonial Peru, is a case in point: he drew pictures in which he both praised priests and ridiculed those who, in his opinion, fell short of the mark. Charles aptly describes the ongoing warfare between priests who accused their Indian wards of idolatry, but they frequently did so in retaliation because the Indians had first denounced them for their abusive ways. Even the *quipus*, the apparently innocent cords the Incas used for accounting purposes, were potentially subversive. The Indians used the cords in confession to give account of their sins – or were they mocking the priest by introducing pre-Christian accounting methods in the context of a sacrament?

Charles draws upon a wealth of colonial documents – legal papers produced in court proceedings, testimonies used in the idolatry campaigns and petitions drawn up by the native assistants themselves – to reconstruct this insightful portrait of colonial Andean society. The documents strengthen the argument that Guamán Poma and other well-known Indian or *mestizo* chroniclers were not the exception: they were but the more famous among a great number of native scribes, translators and local caciques

who entered the fray and made their voice heard. The Indian *lenguas*, or interpreters, were especially important. They had a command of both Spanish and the Indian languages, which many priests did not. Even if he knew the languages, the priest was always an outsider who depended on his native 'allies' to communicate to his wards.

Charles' work contributes significantly to the growing body of literature, duly cited by the author, which aims to penetrate the world of the Andean native subordinates who worked closely with colonial authorities and especially the priests. The overall impression which this work conveys is that the real movers and shakers in colonial Andean society were the native assistants who adroitly moved from the Indian world to the Spanish world and back, while at the same time using their knowledge of both worlds to advance their own interests. The stereotype of passive and ignorant native subordinates has for some time been giving way to a more realistic view of colonial society. This fascinating study of native church assistants should serve to finally do away altogether with that stereotype.

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Ennis B. Edmonds and Michelle A. Gonzalez, *Caribbean Religious History: An Introduction* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2010), pp. x + 269, $75.00, $24.00 pb.

Religion is central to Caribbean life and culture. This welcome study examines the development, emancipation and transformation of diverse Caribbean religious traditions and constitutes the first comprehensive one-volume religious history of the Caribbean to be published in over 25 years. Edmonds and Gonzalez correctly point out that the Caribbean has been – and continues to be – a 'microcosm of global religions' (p. 203). The authors successfully capture the diversity of Caribbean religious expressions (aboriginal, European, African and Asian) and give ample attention to the interplay of these traditions. *Caribbean Religious History* supersedes Dale A. Bisnauth's ambitious *A History of Religions in the Caribbean* (1980) and covers considerably more ground than Nathaniel Samuel Murrell's *Afro-Caribbean Religions* (2010). Murrell's book, as its title implies, focuses on Afro-creole religions and does not include chapters on the interplay between aboriginal, European and Asian faiths.

Chapter 2 addresses native religions of the circum-Caribbean, with special attention given to the Taíno of the Greater Antilles, the Ciboney of Hispaniola and Cuba, and the island Caribs of the Lesser Antilles. Edmonds and Gonzalez skilfully incorporate recent archaeological findings that had previously been unavailable to researchers, such as the works of Samuel Wilson, William F. Keegan and José R. Oliver. Chapter 3 offers a survey of the role of the Catholic Church in the Caribbean, while chapter 4 examines the inroads made by Protestantism. In chapter 4, Edmonds and Gonzalez document the growth of European missionary churches as well as the challenges these churches posed to the Catholic Church's religious monopoly on the islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Hispaniola. Co-author Michelle A. Gonzalez is a specialist in Cuban religions who has previously authored *Afro-Cuban Theology: Religion, Race, Culture, and Identity* (2006), and the fruits of her earlier research are very much evident in chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Chapter 5 highlights creole and African-based religions, focusing on forms of African/Roman Catholic syncretisms in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Puerto