



Ritual and Remembrance in the Ecuadorian Andes (First Peoples: New Directions in Indigenous Studies)

Rachel Corr

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Not every world culture that has battled colonization has suffered or died. In the Ecuadorian Andean parish of Salasaca, the indigenous culture has stayed true to itself and its surroundings for centuries while adapting to each new situation. Today, indigenous Salascans continue to devote a large part of their lives to their distinctive practices—both community rituals and individual behaviors—while living side by side with white-mestizo culture.

In this book Rachel Corr provides a knowledgeable account of the Salasacan religion and rituals and their respective histories. Based on eighteen years of fieldwork in Salasaca, as well as extensive research in Church archives—including never-before-published documents—Corr's book illuminates how Salasacan culture adapted to Catholic traditions and recentered, reinterpreted, and even reshaped them to serve similarly motivated Salasacan practices, demonstrating the link between formal and folk Catholicism and pre-Columbian beliefs and practices. Corr also explores the intense connection between the local Salasacan rituals and the mountain landscapes around them, from peak to valley.

Ritual and Remembrance in the Ecuadorian Andes is, in its portrayal of Salasacan religious culture, both thorough and all-encompassing. Sections of the book cover everything from the performance of death rituals to stories about Amazonia as Salascans interacted with outsiders—conquistadors and camera-toting tourists alike. Corr also investigates the role of shamanism in modern Salasacan culture, including shamanic powers and mountain spirits, and the use of reshaped, Andeanized Catholicism to sustain collective memory. Through its unique insider's perspective of Salasacan spirituality, *Ritual and Remembrance in the Ecuadorian Andes* is a valuable anthropological work that honestly represents this people's great ability to adapt.

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