

## **Viceregal Fashions: Collections of *Mantos*, *Sayas* and Golden Buckles in Colonial Peru**

Fashion in viceregal Peru, which was heavily influenced by popular trends in early modern Spain, not only played a pivotal role in the process of identity construction and social mobility, it was also the source for significant literary and discursive production. Satirists, intellectuals, song and playwrights as well as travelers, ecclesiastical authorities and legislators wrote about the myriad fashion collections used among the women of colonial Peru. Trends such as the *tapado* fashion, which consisted of *manto*, a *saya* and a pair of small and delicate shoes, were according to these authors and lawmakers, the root of “immoral behavior, great offenses to God and notable harm to the republic.” For these reasons, several ordinances issued by city councils, the *audiencia* (the royal court of justice), and the different viceroys of Peru attempted to curtail what was seen as excessive and dangerous fashions. This legislation, however, had little resonance among the majority of the female population as shown by the extant literature produced about women’s disregard of these decrees.

In this paper, I argue that despite the intense rhetoric against the *tapado* fashion, and the constant denigration of *tapadas* in the literary sources and the images of this period, the women of colonial Lima seem to have experienced relative independence and assertiveness regarding the fashions they chose to wear. The attacks on these feminine fashions, more than simply a misogynist discourse, form part of the flow of information required to make individuals accountable for their actions in a society where male domination was not absolute.