

Ryan Weeks
February 11th, 2018

Research Proposal

Title – Our Father: A Comparative Analysis of *La Oración Primera al Hacedor* and the *Lord's Prayer*

Program of Study – Spanish

Presentation Type – PowerPoint

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Category: Textual

Abstract: This presentation examines the similarities between the Incan-Quechua prayer *La Oración Primera al Hacedor* and the *Lord's Prayer* from Matthew 6: 9-13. These two historical texts were written in entirely different continents and cultures, yet they share many characteristics. *La Oración Primera al Hacedor*, or the *First Prayer to the Creator* in English, is an ancient, Pre-Columbian prayer to the supreme divinity of the pantheon of Incan-Quechua gods, Viracocha, who, according to Harold Osborne's *South American Mythology: Library of the World's Myths and Legends*, was regarded as the creator of the world and of humanity, responsible for maintaining life and giving reason to all of existence (68-70). This prayer of adoration and supplication was transmitted orally through the generations by the Inca and Quechua peoples, mainly through the noble families, until the time of the Conquest, when it was then collected and annotated by Father Cristóbal de Molina in 1575 in his book the *Fables and Rites of the Incas*. Later, it was retranslated and included in *The Quechua Poetry* of Jesús Lara (Garganigo et al 38, n.1). Such early Incan accounts of life as preserved in the oral traditions are further memorialized by Colonial Peruvian authors Guaman Poma and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega. Recent research shows that despite widespread evangelization efforts, the Spanish attempts at conversion had difficulty overcoming the ingrained beliefs of the Inca-Quechua

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people, as attested to in Dr. Regina Harrison's book, *Sin & Confession in Colonial Peru: Spanish-Quechua Penitential Texts*. As with *La Oración Primera*, the *Lord's Prayer* began as an oral text that was later written down. The better known of the two, Jesus' words serve as an example of worshiping and seeking God in humility through prayer. The focus of the *Lord's Prayer* is the Christian God described as a father figure and king who provides yet judges, a fact that is key to its liturgical nature according to Dr. Simon J. Kistemaker (*The Lord's Prayer in the First Century*). Written down some fifty years after the death of Jesus Christ, it has been preserved in the Biblical Canon in different Gospel accounts until today; while this analysis prioritizes the prayer as it appears in Matthew, it is also recited in Luke 11: 2-4 and mentioned throughout the New Testament. The present study, then, highlights similarities of *La Oración Primera* and the *Lord's Prayer* through a close reading analysis of the prayers' structure, themes, and representations of their respective deities. This presentation will contribute to the growing body of comparative analyses in the field of Latin American literature, as it examines how religious-historical texts created in different contexts and without any contact with one another use similar language to worship through prayer.