Decadent Wealth, Degenerate Morality, Dominance, and Devotion: The Discordant Iconicity of the Rich Mountain of Potosí

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Claudia A. Cornejo Happel, M.A.

Graduate Program in Spanish and Portuguese

The Ohio State University

2014

Dissertation Committee:

Lisa Voigt, Advisor

Lúcia Costigán

Elizabeth Davis

Copyright by
Claudia A. Cornejo Happel
2014

Abstract

The rich mountain of Potosí, with its famed silver mines, has commanded the attention of Europeans, creoles (Americans of Spanish descent), and indigenous Andeans since the Spanish colonizers of Peru were made aware of its existence in 1545. Soon after its discovery, the rich mountain was represented in a variety of written and visual texts created by writers and artists from the Andes, Spain, and other parts of Europe. Independent of its physical form, in these representations the rich mountain assumed a discursive meaning, functioning as an icon that, depending on the context, represented abstract ideas of wealth, immorality, dominance, and spirituality. This dissertation brings together texts, images, and maps to discuss the multifaceted iconicity of Potosí and its cultural salience in these representations. Besides functioning as an icon that supported Spain's "official history," a discourse that presented Spanish achievements as heroic and providential, other representations of the rich mountain supported alternative discourses regarding Spanish colonial history. To advance individual and nationalistic agendas, authors, artists, and mapmakers strove to control the meaning associated with the iconic rich mountain. My dissertation shows that for an early modern audience the mountain of Potosí was more than just a source of silver; it was also an icon that contributed to discourses negotiating issues of economy, morality, spatial and political dominance, and spiritual expression.

Dedication:

This document is dedicated to my family:
Mama und Papa, Martin, Leandro, and Asiri.

Acknowledgments

Accounts of the infamous past of the rich mountain of Potosí have fascinated me since, in 2010, I was first introduced to Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela's *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí*, as part of a course taught by my advisor, Lisa Voigt. Dazzled by the spectacles, fascinated despite myself by the descriptions of crime and immorality, and dismayed by the injustices committed against the indigenous population, Potosí and its mines became the focus of my academic work. As my interest made me more perceptive to references to Potosí and I began gathering information on the *Cerro Rico,* my attention was drawn to the ubiquity of the rich mountain in a variety of textual and visual representations. For the past years, I have gathered information on Potosí in books, the internet, in archives, and at the mountain itself, which I was able to visit in 2012. While this dissertation can only address a part of these materials, I am incredibly grateful to everybody who has supported me in my research and through the writing process.

I am particularly grateful to Lisa Voigt, who introduced me to Potosí and who has supported me on my path through Graduate School. Her advice and insightful suggestions have been an incredible help not only in the process of writing this dissertation, but, more importantly, from the moment I started working towards the doctorate degree at The Ohio State University. I would also like to thank my dissertation committee members, Lúcia Costigán and Elizabeth Davis for their interest in my work, their flexibility in helping me meet my goals, and the encouragement they have offered

for the past five years. In addition I have benefited greatly from the feedback on my work from Byron Hamann, who, in addition to much appreciated comments and suggestions, has provided me with many helpful resources. My appreciation also goes to Maureen Ahern; the memory of her encouragement to question "common knowledge" and to consider different perspectives has been instrumental in helping me define the approach I take to the discussion of Potosí's iconicity in this dissertation.

The archival research for this dissertation would not have been possible without the financial support from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and the Office of International Affairs at The Ohio State University. I would also like to thank my colleagues at UCAT, Stephanie Rohdieck, Laurie Maynell, Lindsay Bernhagen, Elizabeth Brewer, Amy Collins-Warfield, Phil Edwards, Sarah Holt, Teresa Johnson, Alan Kalish, Michael Murphy, Jennie Williams, and Wonneken Wanske, for their support and for giving me a space to think outside the box about academic work. I appreciate the comments and suggestions from fellow Dissertation Writing Group participants, Blake Wilder, Julia Averill, Eunbin Chung, Rachel Mauk, and Dries Vandorpe, who challenged me to express my ideas more clearly and question the "so what" of my ideas. Finally, I am deeply appreciative of the support from my family and friends who provided moral support, an open ear for listening to my frustrations, and, most importantly, reasons to laugh.

Vita

1998 .... Abitur, Engelbert Kämpfer Gymnasium, Lemgo, Germany

2005 .... A.A. Foreign Languages, Gainesville College

2007 .... B.A. Spanish and French, University of Georgia

2009 .... M.A. Spanish, University of Florida

2007 to 2009 .... Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Florida

2009 to 2012 .... Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, The Ohio State University

2012 to present .... Doctoral Intern, University Center for the Advancement of Teaching, The Ohio State University

Publications

Cornejo Happel, Claudia. "You are what you eat: Food as expression of social identity and intergroup relations in the colonial Andes." Cincinnati Romance Review 33 (2012): 175-193.Web.

Happel, Claudia. "El Brasil restituido de Lope de Vega, ¿un caso de propaganda política?" Del barroco al neobarroco: realidades y transferencias culturales. Ricardo de la Fuente and Jesús Pérez Magallón (Eds.). Valladolid: Universitas Castellae. 2011. 111-124. Print.

Fields of Study

Major Field: Spanish and Portuguese

Table of Contents

Abstract .... **ii**

Dedication .... **iii**

Acknowledgments .... **iv**

Vita .... **vi**

Table of Contents .... **vii**

Abbreviations .... **ix**

List of Tables .... **x**

List of Figures .... **xi**

Chapter 1: Introduction **1**

The *Cerro Rico* of Potosí as an icon and discursive token 10

Organization of the dissertation 13

Chapter 2: Creating a Legend – Echoes of Potosí's Treasure in Colonial Texts 20

Crafting and Propagating a Legend: The Image of Potosí as the Rich Mountain 24

The Downsides of Potosí's Silver and the Discourse of Scarcity 40

The *Cerro Rico* in Potosí's Spectacles: Enacting Wealth and Excess 56

European Echoes of the Rich Mountain: Conclusion 69

Chapter 3: Degenerate Wealth – Moral Corruption and Abuse in the Shade of the *Cerro Rico* **73**

Thou Shalt Not Covet 78

The monstrous mountain and its gates to hell 88

The "Black Legend" of Potosí 100

Temptation, Ambition, and Moral Decadence: Conclusion 113

Chapter 4: Mapping Potosí – Alternative Narratives of the Cerro Rico as an Icon of Spanish Dominance **116**

Establishing Potosí as an Icon of Authority within Geographic and Discursive Spaces 119

Ego Fulcio Columnas Eius: I Support Their Pillars 129

Putting Potosí on the Grid 138

Competing Spatial Narratives 147

Cultural Translation and Appropriation of Representation: Conclusion 152

Chapter 5: Debating Spirituality – Potosí's Place within the Sacred Landscape of the Andes and the Catholic Spanish Empire **163**

Potosí and the Sacralized Landscape of the Andes 168

The "Virgin of the Mountain": Convergence of Spiritualities 184

Bringing Light into the Darkness – The *Cerro Rico* as a Miraculous Place 201
Potosí Between the Virgin, the Cross, and the *Huaca*: Conclusion 208

Conclusion 211

Bibliography 215

Appendix A: Income to the Spanish treasury from the *Quinto Real* tax on minted silver in Potosí (1560-1699) 232

Abbreviations

ABNB:	Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia
AGI:	Archivo General de las Indias, Seville, Spain
CNM-AH:	Casa Nacional de la Moneda, Archivo Histórico de Potosí, Bolivia

List of Tables

Table 1 *Quinto Real* collected in Potosí from 1560-1599. 232

Table 2 *Quinto Real* collected in Potosí from 1600-1699. 233

List of Figures

Figure 1 *Comme les esclaves fouillent & font fondre la mine.* André Thevet. 1575.. ... 104

Figure 2 *Wie die Indianer das Gold aus den Bergen graben.* Theodor de Bry. 1601. .. 105

Figure 3 "Frontispiece" *Tratado de confirmaciones reales...* António de León Pinelo. 1630 ... 128

Figure 4 *An accurate description of of all the harbours rivers ports islands sands rocks and dangers ... in the south sea of America.* William Hack. ca.1698. ... 142

Figure 5 *Haec Pars Peruvianae*. Petrus Plancius. 1592. ... 150

Figure 6 *Cerro de Potosí*. Pedro Cieza de León. *Primera Parte de la Crónica del Perú*. 1553 ... 154

Figure 7 *Cerro de Potosí*. Pedro Cieza de León. *Primera Parte de la Crónica del Perú*. 1554 ... 154

Figure 8 *Potosí.* Arnoldus Montanus. *De Nieuwe en onbekende Weereld*. 1671. ... 158

Figure 9 *America Nova Descriptio* Abraham Goos and Nicolaes Visscher. 1633. ... 161

Chapter 1: Introduction

In 1545 the indigenous servant Gualpa climbed the mountain of Potosí in the province of Charcas, today located in the Andean nation of Bolivia then part of the Peruvian viceroyalty. He was pursuing a group of deer, according to some sources, or possibly herding a group of errant livestock, according to others. The sources coincide in asserting that this indigenous man stumbled upon high quality silver ore, the value of which he was quick to recognize due to his experience as a miner in the nearby mining settlement of Porco. Soon after stumbling upon this unexpected treasure, Gualpa or one of his acquaintances shared the knowledge of the *Cerro Rico* of Potosí and its rich silver with a Spanish *encomendero*[1], Juan de Villaroel. Villaroel capitalized on the "discovery" and was the first to lay claim to one of the mountain's rich mines, initiating a rush to Potosí as people from all walks of life and different ethnicities came together to acquire a share of the *Cerro Rico*'s treasure. From 1545 until the early nineteenth century, the

---

[1] The American *encomienda* has its origin in the initial explorations of Christopher Columbus. When Columbus returned to the Caribean for his third voyage in 1498 he saw himself forced to recognize grants of Indians a political rival had made to individual Spaniards (Burkholder and Johnson 43). These grants, termed *encomiendas*, provided the Spanish *encomendero* with the right to require the indigenous to provide a labor tribute. "With modification this basic institution for organizing labor followed the conquistadors to the American mainlands as *encomienda*, a term long associated with nobility and conquest and its rewards in Spain" (Burkholder and Johnson 43). An *encomendero* was the recipient of this grant from the Spanish Crown. As the grantee he was entitled to receive tribute in material goods and labor from the indigenous population within the determined territory; he was also responsible for the instruction of the Indians in Christian faith.

Spanish Crown claimed the rich mountain as part of their colonial possessions, benefiting in particular from the tax income on the silver it produced.

After Potosí was "discovered" by Spaniards the word of its rich silver mines spread rapidly to other mining settlements and towns in its immediate vicinity as well as other parts of the Spanish American colonies, but the renown of the mountain, which soon reached mythical proportions, also reached Spain and other European kingdoms. The legendary mountain of silver attracted indigenous miners, European colonists, and Spanish mine owners, several of whom already owned mines in the nearby mining town of Porco. In addition, the silver also beckoned many of the desperate Spaniards for whom the American colonies were a last resort. This influx of people spurred the growth of one of the biggest settlements of the early modern period, which was considered by some to be "el centro de todas la Indias, fin y paradero de los que a ellas venimos" 'the center of all the Indies, goal and destination of all of us who come to them' (Lizárraga 86; my translation).[2] The community in this unlikely urban center, located in a peripheral space within the Spanish empire, was defined by social diversity and rigid divisions between social groups. In colonial texts, both the city – the Villa Imperial de Potosí – and the mountain – the Cerro Rico de Potosí – were often referred to simply as Potosí. This dissertation, however, is dedicated to a discussion of the rich mountain and the name

[2] Cervantes, in his exemplary novel of "El celoso extremeño," describes the hardship that motivated his protagonist, as well as many other Spaniards, to leave Spain in search of "refugio y ámparo" 'refuge and shelter' (Cervantes, "Celoso" 99; my translation) in the Spanish Indies.

Potosí, when it is used, refers to the landmark rather than the settlement that grew at its base.[3]

A large number of widely circulated and more private primary texts dating from the mid sixteenth to the early eighteenth century portray the rich mountain in more or less detail; these primary texts form the basis for this analysis.[4] More recently, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century the *Cerro* Rico has inspired a number of scholars and artists to either revisit its colonial history or to re-present Potosí's modern reality in terms of the colonial past. Colonial and modern representations of Potosí show more than just a physical landmark: they communicate idea(s) of the rich mountain as an icon emplaced within specific cultural contexts.[5] My analysis of these representations shows that, while they purport to represent the same thing – the *Cerro Rico* –, these written and visual texts did communicate different ideas to diverse audiences. As we will see, the rich mountain was interpreted and reinvented in different cultural contexts. In the process of crossing cultural boundaries, the visual and written texts can be said to fall into

[3] The use of Potosí in this dissertation always indicates a reference to the rich mountain, which is alternatively described by the terms "rich mountain," "*Cerro Rico,*" or "mountain of Potosí." The city of Potosí on the other hand will be indicated by the terms "Villa Imperial," "Imperial City," or "City of Potosí."

[4] Texts representing Potosí have been produced since the rich mountain was discovered in 1545. While primary texts on Potosí were also produced in the nineteenth (for example, Pedro Cañete y Dominguez *Potosí Colonial* [ca. 1808]) and twentieth century, these will not be addressed in my research.

[5] According to Michel Foucault, "l'emplacement est défini par les relations de voisinage entre points ou elements" 'emplacement is defined by the relations of vicinity between points or elements' ("Des espaces autres" n.p.; my translation). Emplacement thus refers to the location of an object or person in relation to its surrounding environment, including natural and artificial landmarks.

interstitial[6] spaces of imperfect connections between groups, where they are accessible to many observers who each bring their own perspective to the contemplation of this iconic landmark. A sampling of this plethora of perspectives can be found in the visual and written accounts of Potosí created during the colonial time period by artists representing indigenous, creole, and Spanish groups as well as groups from other parts of Europe; considered collectively, these representations provide an insight into the complexity of Potosí as a culturally significant object and discursive token.

The diverse early modern sources show that the rich mountain had not only attracted a slew of adventurers to its remote location in the Andes, but also the attention of European and American intellectuals as early as the end of the sixteenth century. The representations of the rich mountain portray the *Cerro Rico* as an icon that held different meanings for people within Potosí and abroad. An analysis of these representations shows that for an early modern audience the mountain of Potosí was more than just a source of silver: as an icon it was also invoked as a source of authority, a means for political criticism, and a site of contested spirituality in early modern texts. Only by considering these different perspectives in combination we can begin to understand the

[6] The idea of "interstices" between cultures is elaborated by Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*. He claims that singular and communal "selfhood" is produced and negotiated in "the articulation of cultural differences." This articulation results in "the emergence of interstices – the overlap and displacements of domains of difference" where the "collective experience of *nationess*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated." These interstices, Bhabha claims, are also "sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself" (2). Related to the analysis of Potosí's representations, Bhabha's idea is useful for understanding that these representations helped in creating as well as expressing an idea of "selfhood" for their creators as well as the groups they represented. Where representations overlap – where the idea implicitly or explicitly evoked is shared – the image of Potosí gives an indication of the shared discourses that connected the different social groups.

significance of Potosí as a spatially transcendent icon that was mobilized in support of different politically motivated goals rather than a geographically and culturally emplaced landmark.

The image of the *Cerro Rico* that emerges from the holistic consideration of these distinct representations is a kaleidoscopic construct – an image that is ever-changing in relation to the perspective of the beholder. Nevertheless, an analysis of the various sources also shows an emergence of common themes that are represented across the diverse portrayals of the *Cerro Rico*. Michel Foucault might have called the emergent, complex idea of Potosí a "monstruosity of contamination" (Foucault, *The order of things* n.p.), the result of a blurring of boundaries, which are destabilized without disappearing. This process threatens conventional understandings of categories and their relation to each other.[7] The combined analysis of diverse representations of Potosí in this dissertation similarly challenges the perception of Potosí as a phenomenon that is easily understood. The *Cerro Rico* that emerges from this analysis is a "monster" that does not fit the simplified and categorical perception of the mountain as either representing a divine reward and bearer of immeasurable riches and benefits for Christianity or a physical reminder of Spanish cruelty. The historian Ward Stavig, for example, postulates

[7] The seventeenth-century chronicler of Potosí's history, Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa introduces the mountain to his readers as a "monstruo de riqueza" 'monster of riches' (I, 3); his epithet unconsciously presages the discordant iconicity of the rich mountain that is inherent in its conflicting representations. Foucault coins the expression "monstruosity of contamination" in his discussion of a text by the modern Latin American writer Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986), who in one of his short stories includes an imaginary encyclopedia entry in which the definitions offered to represent a category entry (animals) for a Western audience seem rational in isolation; the grouping of the diverse defintions and, consequently, their joining in a shared discursive space creates a "dangerous mixture" that threatens the Western understanding of this category.

this twofold significance of Potosí when he states that in the colonial period "if the name Potosí became equivalent with riches, it also became synonymous with colonial exploitation" (*The World of Tupac Amaru* 170). More recently, the latter image of Potosí has been propagated by scholars including Eduardo Galeano, who in his popular work *Las venas abiertas de América Latina* alludes to Potosí's past claiming that all that is left of it is "la vaga memoria de sus esplendores, las ruinas de sus templos y palacios y ocho millones de cadáveres de indios" 'the vague memory of its splendors, the ruins of its temples and palaces and eight million cadavers of Indians' (61; my translation). Galeano's work is an influential example of the perception of the rich mountain only as a site of exploitation and moral decadence.[8] In this context, thinking about Potosí as an idea that emerges from a plurality of voices differs from the conventional approach of many historical and literary studies, which provide a focused analysis of a text or historical event from one perspective, whether a hegemonic or subaltern point of view.

Some of the louder voices in this discourse that negotiated the significance of the *Cerro Rico* within the political, social, and religious discourses of the early modern period are represented by a few sixteenth-century publications that explicitly introduced a wide European and American audience to information related to the mountain of Potosí and its treasure. These works began to circulate in the broader Atlantic space and beyond

---

[8] Galeano's *Las venas abiertas*, first published in 1971, has been widely read and thus is an important influence on the idea of Potosí held by a modern audience. At least seventeen editions of the text have been published in Spanish since 1971, the most recent one in 2013 (Madrid: Siglo XXI). The text has also been translated into at least thirteen different languages including Chinese, Danish, English, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Swedish, Slovene, and Turkish. Even though Galeano recently disavowed his book, according to an article published in the New York Times (Larry Rohter, 23 May 2014), it is an influential text that was and still is widely read by a broad, global audience.

in the mid-sixteenth century. The first of these texts is Pedro Cieza de León's *Crónica del Perú*, which was published in 1553. Later the publications of Agustín de Zárate's *Historia del descubrimiento y conquista del Perú* (1555) and José de Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1580) added to the information on Potosí that was readily available to an audience in Europe and the Americas. Entering into a dialogue with these early works, Andeans, creoles, Spaniards, French, English, Dutch, Germans and even the odd Ottoman Turk repeated, re-interpreted, and responded to the ideas introduced in several editions and translations of the works created by these Spanish authors. Beyond the published texts that circulated widely, other voices expressed their ideas in correspondence and unpublished or less widely circulated texts as well as in visual representations of Potosí. All these texts contribute to the dissemination of information on this landmark and add depth and variety to the image of Potosí that is available to a modern audience. More importantly, these published and unpublished sources are indicative of the ongoing negotiation of the meaning of Potosí as a culturally relevant icon; a meaning that was embedded in public opinion and shaped by the political climate in the Atlantic world. Early modern writers and artists appropriate the rich mountain as a discursive token representative of their perspective and goals. Writers and artists appropriated the landmark to advance individual and nationalistic agendas in the Spanish Empire as well as other parts of Europe; their representations of the *Cerro Rico* simultaneously demonstrated and propagated different versions of the social and political impact of Potosí in the Andes and beyond.

Several modern scholars have discussed the history of the mining boomtown of Potosí and its significance for various social groups, which might be broadly divided into

communities of indigenous, creole, and European people. My research has benefited greatly from the inquiries of others, but whereas previous studies focus on Potosí as a physical landmark and concrete location within its geographical, social, and historical context, my dissertation discusses not the physical form of the rich mountain but its representations and discursive function as an icon representing wealth and corruption, spatial and spiritual dominance allowing me to address its circulation and significance in the Atlantic world. The exploration of the representations of the rich mountain in this context is an important contribution to the significant existing research on Potosí that has been completed especially in the last three decades.

Several of the existing studies have focused on the economic history of Potosí and its mines. Peter Bakewell's *The Miners of the Red Mountain* (1984), Jeffrey A. Cole's *The Potosí Mita, 1573-1700* (1985), and Enrique Tandeter's *Coercion and Market* (1993) have explored the working conditions of the indigenous miners and the economic impact of the *mita*[9]. Jane E. Mangan's *Trading Roles* (2005) has discussed the market economy that blossomed in the Imperial City of Potosí during the colonial period and its participants. A group of Bolivian authors have published an edited volume, *La construcción de lo urbano en Potosí y La Plata* (2008), in which they present the development of the Imperial City of Potosí and the neighboring administrative center of La Plata (present day Sucre) as urban centers, exploring their politics, religious practices, trade, and everyday life. While historians have uncovered Potosí's past in the archives,

---

[9] The *mita* was a labor system introduced by the Peruvian viceroy Francisco de Toledo in 1573 that exacted a labor tax from the indigenous communities; most of these communities were required to provide their services in the mines and refineries of Potosí as I elaborate in more detail in Chapter 3 (*p. 88).

anthropologists and archaeologists, including Pascale Absi and Pablo Cruz, have examined the physical remains of pre-Hispanic and colonial *huacas*, indigenous shrines representing divine beings, and have situated Potosí on the map of the Andean sacred landscape. These studies have been immensely useful in helping me understand the historical context that forms the backdrop for the representations of Potosí I am discussing.

Literary scholars have explored the discursive role of festivals and other spectacles that were staged in the Villa Imperial. For example, Stephanie Merrim ("Spectacular Cityscapes" 2004; *The Spectacular City* 2010) has described the city of Potosí as a "Sin City" where the shock at society's lawlessness and violent crimes competes with the positive awe occasioned by spectacles (Merrim 2004, 50). Leónardo García Pabón and Lisa Voigt, though they consider the festivals of Potosí from different angles, conclude that the narrative record of the celebrations staged by the residents of Potosí served as an opportunity to assert and define a creole identity. While these literary studies base their observations in part on an analysis of the representations of the rich mountain, which formed part of the celebrations, their conclusions are limited to the role of the rich mountain in defining the identity of the creole population of the Imperial City.[10]

The publications with historical, anthropological, and literary foci significantly contribute to the knowledge about Potosí available and accessible to a modern audience.

---

[10] The term distinguishing the American-born creole, or *criollo*, population from European-born immigrants originated in Brasil where slaves born in the new world were designated as "crioulos." Starting in the second half of the sixteenth century it was also applied to American-born descendants of European immigrants. (Bauer and Mazzotti 3)

They illuminate details about the organization and impact of the mining industry, the administration of the city, and the life of its population, adding depth to the information communicated in primary sources on Potosí. The studies place an emphasis on showing the relevance of Potosí to the economy and the society of its immediate geographic context – the Andes. However, previous studies have not yet accounted for the reach of Potosí as an icon that was recognizable and meaningful for an early modern audience composed of individuals from diverse cultural, social, and geographical backgrounds. My analysis of the propagation of the rich mountain within a larger context indicates a far-reaching cultural and political impact of the *representations* of Potosí: the *Cerro Rico* was transformed into an incorporeal icon representative of certain values and ideas, a discursive token that was practically independent of the landmark itself. The diverse representations of the rich mountain sustained a dispute over the meaning and significance of Potosí in its iconic form, which constituted one aspect of the ongoing negotiation of political authority and territorial control in the early modern American and European space.

The *Cerro Rico* of Potosí as an icon and discursive token

The conceptualization of the rich mountain as an icon is an important assumption that underlies the discussion of the diverse manifestations of this landmark in its representations. For the purpose of this dissertation, two definitions of icon/ iconicity are relevant. First, an object or image is frequently described as an icon based on its cultural potency and historical significance. To gain cultural potency, an icon needs to be

considered meaningful in a given cultural context.[11] However, its larger historical significance also depends on the circulation of an image. While the circulation of an image indicates its perceived relevance (the more relevant, the more likely it is to be circulated further), it is also key to its potency and recognition. Representations of the rich mountain of Potosí circulated widely and held historical and cultural meaning for different social groups, who often appropriated the icon and embedded it into a culturally determined discourse. In representations the *Cerro Rico*, thus, served as an icon that was accessible and meaningful to a large and widespread audience. A discussion of Potosí's iconicity depends on this reach, which made it possible for the representations of the rich mountain to serve more than one discursive function.

Secondly, however, the rich mountain can also be conceived of an icon based on the presence of ideas that are manifest in its visual and textual representations. This alternative conceptualization of iconicity, suggested by Eric Jenkins who draws on ideas underlying the iconography of the Orthodox Church, is more useful for my analysis of the *representations* of Potosí, rather than the actual landmark, and the iconic function they served within the discourses of the early modern Atlantic space. Jenkins begins the discussion of his theory by introducing the difference between "the realistic and symbolic modes of seeing" (471): in the context of Orthodox iconography those subscribing to a realistic perspective, in regard to depictions of the divine, would interpret these portraits as a mimetic replication of a real subject, whereas those subscribing to a symbolic

[11] Art historian Erwin Panofsky, for example, indicates that iconography identifies an icon based on motifs, or a combination of motifs, that are embedded in culturally determined traditions of expression (26-30). For an object to serve as an icon, then, it needs to speak to culturally significant ideas.

perspective would perceive these portraits as an allegory or moral personification. According to Jenkins, however, the orthodox icon

> was neither wholly secular nor sacred, neither body nor spirit, neither concrete nor abstract, neither mere appearance nor mere representation, neither grossly material nor solely symbolic. The icon was a mode of seeing that fused the *lux* [human sight] and the *lumen* [the eye of the mind]. (473)

In short, an iconic representation does not only represent the material reality but also the idea that is inherently linked to the subject of the representation. Jeffrey Alexander similarly describes an icon as a material object rooting social meaning and significance (11). This is the case with representations of Potosí, which beyond showing a more or less accurate image of the physical landmark depict the rich mountain as an embodiment of specific abstract concepts of social significance including wealth, corruption, dominance, and spirituality.

The literary and artistic representations of the *Cerro Rico* are an expression of the diverse efforts of various social groups to understand the information they received about Potosí through a process that renders familiar that which is strange (White 5). This process, advanced through interpretations and appropriations of representations, results in a dialogue defined by the exchange of ideas and a constant back and forth between two or more parties who each have alternative ways of encoding reality as Hayden White has suggested in *The Tropics of Discourse* (4). The representations of Potosí further provide evidence of the discourse as an intercalated and communal activity: representations of Potosí were not consistent or static as writers and artists (re-)interpreted the understanding of others. Not surprisingly, the different understandings of the rich mountain were consistent with the culturally determined perspectives of the writers and

artists, both individuals and communities, who – consciously or not – evoked images of the rich mountain that would support them in accomplishing their goals, focused either on asserting authority or on contesting existing power structures. As a result, the *Cerro Rico* as a kaleidoscopic icon is not limited by geographic boundaries despite the specific geographic emplacement of the mountain itself within the Andean landscape. In the early modern period, it is invoked to support communal and individual political and religious goals. As an icon it operates within the context of a larger, ongoing discourse concerned with the negotiation of power in the European, Atlantic, and American spaces.

Organization of the dissertation

My dissertation can be roughly divided into two parts; in the first part I address representations of Potosí's financial and moral economy, whereas in the second part I discuss Potosí's representations within the landscape of political and religious discourse. In Part I (Chapters 2 and 3), my discussion of the financial and moral economy of Potosí is focused on showing its impact on the negotiations of authority in the Andes and in Europe. The primary sources for these sections are predominantly textual representations of Potosí in written accounts and documents authored primarily by writers of European origin in the Americas, many in Potosí, as well as writers from Spain and other parts of Europe. The emphasis of these chapters will be a discussion of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century but documents dating from the mid-sixteenth century to the eighteenth century are referenced to provide additional context to the discussion. In Part II of my dissertation (Chapter 4 and 5) I discuss Potosí's role in defining the political and spiritual space in the Andes and beyond. While written sources still play an important

part in providing a context for discussing the relevance of the *Cerro Rico* in space, visual representations of Potosí on maps, drawings, engravings, and paintings constitute another main sources for my analysis. Chronologically, the emphasis of these chapters is on the time period from the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth century, but information available on the pre-Hispanic Andes also plays an important role in Chapter 5 – the discussion of Potosí's role within the sacralized landscape of the Andes. An underlying consideration addressed in this dissertation is the contribution that representations of Potosí made to an "official history," a discourse that presented Spanish achievements as heroic and providential. The official history of Potosí provides a context for looking at alternative perspectives—stories that challenged the record and interpretation of events created by Spanish authors, often with the support of the Spanish Crown. However, alternative narratives were produced not only by those critical of the Spanish Empire, including indigenous authors and those representing the perspective of other European kingdoms, but also by some Spanish writers and artists in Europe and the Americas.

Chapter 2 of my dissertation introduces the representations of Potosí as a fabled mountain of silver and divine reward for the Spanish defenders of the Catholic faith, an image that was introduced, for example, by the canonical works of Pedro Cieza de León and José de Acosta. These portraits of Potosí were the first to circulate widely in Europe, America, and beyond and helped create a lasting conceptualization of the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of wealth. These representations of Potosí supported the image of the Spanish crown as an authority that had access to significant resources to support their territorial claims and political goals, including the defense of the Catholic faith in Europe and the Americas. Because of the conception of the *Cerro Rico* as an unending source of silver,

many Spanish texts portrayed it positively, claiming that its silver served the greater good of the community and represented a justly deserved divine reward that had been bestowed on the Spaniards for their services in defense of the Catholic faith. References to the rich mountain as an icon of wealth also served an important function in the correspondence that connected Potosí to the viceregal and regal authorities. Local authorities and individuals of the Imperial City created a contradictory discourse in their reports and petitions to the king and viceroy: on the one hand they highlighted Potosí's contributions to the Spanish kingdom as a whole, but on the other hand they petitioned for allowances from the king because of a decline—presumably temporary—in the mines' productivity. The *Cerro Rico* was repeatedly represented as a paragon of wealth in this correspondence as well as in accounts of Potosí's celebrations. The Potosí-born author, Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela recorded descriptions of numerous spectacles that were enacted in the city of Potosí throughout the colonial period in his *Historia de la Villa Imperial*, which he wrote between 1700 and 1736.[12] In these celebrations, representations of the rich mountain play an important part in creating a display of

[12] Arzáns's text is an important source for the discussions of Potosí's iconicity. Arzáns was the descendent of immigrants from Bilbao in the Basque country; he started writing his voluminous *Historia* around 1700 and throughout his life continued to collect information and anecdotes to illustrate this account of Potosí's history that spans almost 200 years, from Potosí's discovery in 1545 until Arzáns's death in 1736. Arzáns started writing the *Historia* between in the early eighteenth century but the text was not published until 1965 (edited by Lewis Hanke and Gunnar Mendoza). The text did have a limited circulation as a manuscript and parts of it were presented during Arzáns's lifetime to an audience in Potosí, where they were included in sermons. Arzáns also recorded events that occurred before his birth starting with the discovery of the rich mountain in 1545. For his report of these events he relies on several sources historians have not been able to discover to date. Some historians have suggested that several of the *Crónicas* Arzáns cites as his sources might have been a product of his imagination (Hanke, "Bartolomé Arzáns" lxxxviii).

wealth. For Europeans and creoles residing in Potosí, the exaltation of the rich mountain and its fabled treasures also contributed to the establishment and perpetuation of an identity centered on wealth and the political influence it provides even in the face of steady decline. These primarily celebratory representations of Potosí introduce the image most widely circulated in the predominantly Spanish texts. However, there were as many, if not more, authors who criticized the immoral comportment of the Spaniards and in particular, the exploitation of the indigenous workers who were coerced into providing their labor for minimal compensation in the mines and refineries of Potosí.

Chapter 3 addresses this flipside of the economic reality in Potosí. The creole author Arzáns heavily criticized the immorality of the residents of the Imperial City that informed their interactions with each other. More influential, however, are the representations of the rich mountain as a place of gloom and misery, which especially affected the indigenous population. Spanish authors familiar with the mountain and the mines of Potosí lamented the dire situation of the indigenous miners, which they attributed to the perilous work these individuals performed in the "monstruous" mountain that "devoured" men. Outside the Spanish empire, these images of indigenous suffering in Potosí were inserted into a discourse that denounced the perceived ambition of the Spaniards and implicitly contested their claims to authority based on divine election. Political leaders and intellectuals, such as the William of Orange from the Low Countries or Walter Ralegh from England, furthered this anti-Spanish discourse, which is often described as Spain's "Black Legend." Representations of Potosí created by the Flemish engraver, Theodor de Bry, the French author, André Thevet, as well as other British authors support the larger discourse of the Black Legend and portray the rich mountain as

a site where the behavior of the Spaniards justified the accusations of excessive ambition and abuses leveled against the kingdom as a whole. In this discourse the *Cerro Rico* denotes an icon representative of the presumably corruptive force of its silver and of the abuse and suffering it occasioned. Andean indigenous miners—who often lacked a voice in the colonial time period—were the primary victims of this abuse in Potosí. These narratives of Potosí as an icon of exploitation and moral depravity serve an important discursive function in several texts, which denounce the excessive ambition and moral decadence of the Spaniards.

Chapter 4 discusses the emplacement of Potosí within a politico-geographic space. Illustrations of the rich mountain published, for example, in Cieza de León's *Crónica del Perú*, Antonio de León Pinelo's *Tratado de confirmaciones* reales, as well as Iberian maps of the early seventeenth century, picture Potosí within its geographical context. These representations facilitate the perception of the *Cerro Rico* as an icon closely associated with the political accomplishments of the Spanish monarchy as well as an important cog – if not the motor – of international trade networks maintained by the Spanish crown. European and indigenous writers and artists, however, created spatial representations of the rich mountain that questioned and negotiated the importance of this landmark and, by extension, the political puissance of Spain's monarchy and its control over the expansive territories it claimed. While Andean depictions created by, for example, the indigenous intellectual Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, generally confirm Potosí's centrality, these representations simultaneously advance claims for an increased recognition of indigenous contributions and rights. On the other hand, some of the portraits of the *Cerro Rico* originating outside the Spanish Empire reimagine the spatial

representation of the rich mountain. They show Potosí as a landmark in a marginal location – geographically and discursively – relegating it to a niche amongst other exotic curiosities.

Turning away from representations of Potosí within a political space, **Chapter 5** discusses the *Cerro Rico* as an important religious icon within the spiritual landscape of the Andes and the Catholic Spanish Empire. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century accounts, including those of Luis Capoche and Diego de Ocaña, described the rich mountain as a pre-Hispanic *huaca* – a sacred object in the Andean spiritual world. Reports from religious missionaries and extirpators, such as Bartolomé Álvarez and Pablo Joseph de Arriaga, imply that Potosí continued to be venerated as such throughout the colonial period. Perhaps in an attempt to control this perception of the mountain as *huaca*, Spanish accounts and visual representations indicate efforts to impose a Christian significance on the *Cerro Rico*: in parades and paintings the rich mountain was shown as a pedestal for the Virgin Mary whose blessing of the mountain and its mines was solicited for the greater good of Christianity. In several accounts, the Virgin is also portrayed as a Saint whose presence and miracles saved the lives of indigenous miners who suffered severe accidents in the entrails of the rich mountain. Despite these efforts to Christianize the mountain, the seventeenth-century paintings of the *Virgen del Cerro* – the Virgin of the Mountain – indicate that the indigenous religions remained a vital part of spirituality in Potosí, a spirituality, which continues to be shaped by the Andean sacred landscape.

This dissertation maps the significance of Potosí, not only as a place imbued with historical relevance, but also as an icon that created and shaped history. It adds to existing

research on Potosí by addressing the discursive function of the representations of the rich mountain – both in alphabetic and visual texts – within a more global context. My discussion of the mountains iconicity traces the threads of perspectives that, however divergent, are intertwined as they echo, interpret and refute each other.

Chapter 2: Creating a Legend – Echoes of Potosí's Treasure in Colonial Texts

The representations of Potosí that are most easily accessible for both an early modern and modern audience often emphasize two almost contradictory categories regarding the significance of the mountain in an economic context. On one hand, Potosí is depicted as the legendary mountain of silver, an icon of wealth and abundance that facilitated the economic success of individuals as well as the Spanish monarchy as a whole. On the other hand, this success relied on the forced labor system – the *mita* –, which exacted a toll of labor from the Andean indigenous community.[1] Regardless of the economic benefits to the European mine owners, merchants, and – by extension – the Spanish crown, many who worked closely with the indigenous population in the New World as well as European detractors of the Spanish empire denounced this exploitative regime. These two visions of the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of both economic success and exploitation can be considered to represent the two sides of a coin, which show very different but both fundamentally important aspects of a single, shared reality. This and the following chapter will analyze in more detail the representations of Potosí that describe these aspects related to the significance of Potosí's fabled wealth. Together these descriptions contributed to the creation of a discourse in which the value of the *Cerro Rico* – in terms of its economic wealth but also its impact on the greater "common good" – was debated. This debate also reflected the turbulent relations between European

[1] See Chapter 3 (*p. 88 ff.) for a more detailed description of the *mita*.

kingdoms during the early modern time period, which were shaped by often violent claims for authority and dominance within European, Atlantic and American spaces.

While both of these elements – the rich mountain's wealth and the moral decadence and exploitation presumably motivated by its silver – play a vital role in understanding the economic significance of the *Cerro Rico*, a detailed analysis of primary and secondary sources shows that this reality was more complex than a cursory reading of the most widely circulated accounts of Potosí would suggest. In the discourse centered on economic concerns, Potosí emerges as a place where the financial success of Spanish investors and the economic benefit to the Spanish Crown were not guaranteed, where silver lost its glamour in a moral morass, and where not all indigenous people accepted their subaltern role in the unjust labor system but inserted themselves in the quest for silver.[2]

[2] During the first two decades, approximately, of Potosí's exploitation, indigenous miners entered into agreements with Spanish mineowners to exploit sections of a mine in return for a share of the silver extracted, which served as lease payment to the Spanish owner of the mine (see *p. 47f. for more details). However, indigenous miners continued to mine Potosí's veins for their own profit throughout the colonial period. Initially, indigenous miners were given the right to extract ore from the mines during the days when they when regular labor rested – generally the weekends. This practice was termed *kapcha* (also *kajcha/ caccha*). While this right to *kapcha* was revoked in 1590 by the viceroy of Peru, Marqués de Cañete, the practice continued and it allowed some indigenous workers to accumulate wealth for themselves (see Cole 63). One infamous example of such an indio, Agustín Quespi, is described in Arzáns's *Historia*. In 1725, Arzáns himself made the acquaintance of this indio who was accepted as the leader of a group of *kapchas* and he claims that Quespi "con los minadores españoles tenía amistad, y como él es magnánimo y liberal y se hallaba muy descansado por los muchos marcos de plata que sacaba" 'was a friend of the Spanish overseers of the mines, and because of his maganimity he was comfortably situated because of the many marks of silver he extracted' (III, 201). This anecdote suggests that some indigenous individuals created for themselves an opportunity to take part of the mountain's wealth by making alliances with Spaniards and by participating in the practice of corruption – "magnanimous" giving – that was widespread in Potosí.

Without the circulation and translation of published texts representing Potosí to a wide audience it would have been impossible for the mountain to stand as an icon indicative of wealth and economic power. Widely circulated texts, such as those authored by the soldier turned chronicler Pedro Cieza de León and the Jesuit friar José de Acosta, might have reached the largest audience, but more private correspondence about the rich mountain also maintained Potosí's claim to fame. A variety of texts from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century represent the rich mountain as an important source of income for the Spanish Crown. Furthermore, several authors explicitly state the presumed connection between the mountain's economic significance and its importance for bringing about the "greater good" for the population of the Spanish Empire and, some authors claim, all Christianity. The propagation of representations of Potosí as an icon of wealth was especially prevalent in texts created by Spanish authors in the late sixteenth century, but the idea of Potosí as a legendary mountain of wealth survived – at least in the Spanish—speaking world – well beyond this time period and into the present.[3]

References to Potosí as a pillar of economic support for the Spanish empire and the "greater good" appear in a variety of texts throughout the colonial time period. However, the context in which these references are employed changes over time. In the late sixteenth century, the accounts of Pedro Cieza de León (*La Crónica del Perú,* 1553) and José de Acosta (*Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, 1590) introduced the mountain of Potosí to a primarily European audience. They reported on its wealth and its sizable contribution to the king's coffers based on their eyewitness testimony in the city

[3] For example, the expression "Vale un Potosí" 'It's worth a Potosí' has survived in the Spanish-speaking world until the present to refer to things of great value. The Dictionary of the Real Academía Española (rae.es) defines Potosí as "riqueza extraordinaria."

and mines of Potosí. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts, especially letters, Potosí's financial contribution to the tax income of the Spanish monarchy is often employed as a political argument. References to the mountain as an important source of wealth are cited in letters addressed to royal or viceregal officials by authorities in the Imperial City and the owners of mines and refineries in Potosí. Most of these missives were motivated by specific request for favors, which included petitions for changes in policies and pleas for the enforcement of specific laws, such as the deferral of debt payments (i.e. AGI Charcas 36, 1562) or a reduction of the tax burden (i.e. AGI Charcas 32, 1620).[4]

The rich mountain and its mining industry had a far-reaching and distinct impact on the economic reality of various social groups in Potosí. However, its impact on the imagination of early modern societies from Europe and the Americas was just as significant. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources written by European authors – of Spanish origin and from other European kingdoms – frequently propagate the idea of Potosí's fabled wealth. Their narratives contributed to the legend of the *Cerro Rico* as an inexhaustible font of precious metal that was so abundant that it was frequently and extravagantly displayed during the many spectacles enacted in the Imperial City of

[4] Lewis Hanke, based on his significant research on the existing historiography of Potosí, confirms that "Muchas de las relaciones que actualmente forman parte apreciable de la historiografía de Potosí iban enderezadas a influir las decisions de la corte vicereal en Lima o en la corte real en España" 'Many of the relations that presently constitute a significant part of Potosí's historiography were designed to influence the decisions of the viceregal court in Lima and the royal court in Spain' ("Luis Capoche" 43; my translation). Hanke is a preeminent scholar on Potosí who made the research of Potosí's historiography the center of his scholarly work. He is also the editor of the modern edition of Arzáns de Orsúa's *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí* (written ca. 1700-1736; modern edition 1965) as well as the *Relación general* written by Potosí miner Luis Capoche in 1585 (modern edition 1959).

Potosí. Written correspondence and less circulated accounts, however, show a more critical picture of the rich mountain and its mines, which, if we believe these writers, entered into a steady decline shortly after the mountain's "discovery" in 1545. On the European side of the Atlantic Spanish intellectuals and economists asserted that the influx of silver from the Americas – including Potosí – was irrelevant, or worse, damaging to the economy of the Spanish empire as a whole.

In this chapter I will first address the creation of Potosí as a legend and how the resulting icon of wealth served to advance the imperialist discourse that was endorsed by the Spanish monarchs. I then introduce the counter-discourse that questioned the value of American silver and suggested that the precious metal from Potosí might undermine the financial health of the empire and its subjects. Finally, taking into account both written correspondence and the narratives of ephemeral celebrations, I show that the European and creole population of Potosí identified with the "official" image attributed to the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of wealth and skillfully employed it in their accounts and petitions to keep Potosí on the mind of the authorities even in the face of its steadily declining silver production.

Crafting and Propagating a Legend: The Image of Potosí as the Rich Mountain

Cieza de León, who visited Potosí as part of a tour through the Peruvian viceroyalty in 1549, and Acosta, who travelled to the rich mountain with viceroy Francisco de Toledo in the early 1570s, arguably authored the representations of Potosí that circulated most widely in Spain and other parts of Europe and the Americas in the early modern period. Their accounts were cited as sources by several authors including

the Potosí-born chronicler Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela and the Peruvian mestizo el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega. The information contained in the original accounts circulated in Europe in several editions of the Spanish text, translations of the text into English, French, German, Italian, and Latin, as well as in adaptations of the text for edited volumes and historical treatises by other authors. Based on these "secondary" texts, which rely heavily on earlier texts and authors – sometimes without explicitly marking their "borrowing" – it is evident that the accounts by Cieza de León and Acosta significantly shaped a general idea of the legendary mountain that was shared by a broad early modern audience.[5] Simultaneously, the repetition and interpretation of the

---

[5] Theodor de Bry, Samuel Purchas, Miguel de Cervantes, the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega are but a few examples of authors referring to Potosí, some of them explicitly acknowledge an influence from the texts published by Acosta and Cieza de León. Manuel Ballesteros Gabrois, in the introduction to his edition of the first part of Cieza de León's *Crónica del Perú*, provides an overview of the publication history of this text. He traces publications of this work from the sixteenth century to the early twentieth century noting an interesting lacuna of publications in the seventeenth century, which he attributes to the publication of Garcilaso's *Comentarios Reales*. The *Crónica* was originally published in Seville in 1553, in 1554 three editions were published in Antwerp, and Italian translations were edited in Rome and Venice in 1555; from 1557-1560 four more editions were published in Venice. Theodore Hornberger has traced the publication history of José de Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*. It was originally published in 1590 in Latin. "There were later Spanish editions in 1591, 1608, 1610, and 1792; an Italian translation appeared in 1596; a French translation of 1597 was reprinted in 1600, 1606, and 1616; a Dutch translation came out in 1598 and 1624; a German translation appeared in 1601; a Latin translation was printed at Frankfort in 1602 and 1603; Edward Grimston's English translation was issued in 1604" (Hornberger 141). Agustín de Zárate authored another account of Potosí, which was first published in Antwerp in 1555. Zárate's account is not based on eyewitness testimony, but it is possible that he had access to information on Potosí through his relative Polo de Ondegardo, the first *Corregidor* assigned to Potosí after its discovery. Where Cieza de León and Acosta place significant emphasis on Potosí's treasure, Zárate, after relating his version of the discovery of the mines, briefly indicates the challenges of providing maintenance and supplies to the rapidly increasing population before moving into an account of a tangentially related, failed insurgence against the *capitán* Francisco de Carvajal who benefited financially from providing food to the mines of Potosí.

eyewitness accounts of Potosí for use in these secondary texts not only provides an insight into the circulation of the original texts, but also serves as evidence of the relative importance ascribed to the rich mountain within the intellectual discourse on the Americas from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.[6] The relative dearth of readily accessible firsthand information on the mountain and the mining industry of Potosí did not deter European authors from regurgitating and embellishing the little information that was available to them.[7] Even though the rich mountain was not the focal point of any single publication, the fact that it is referenced in a number of historical treatises indicates its significance.

In these accounts the mountain is frequently referenced in association with economic profit. Whether they were produced in or outside of Spain, the early modern

---

[6] The mostly uncritical repetition of information contributes to the initially surprising observation that many accounts of Potosí published in seventeenth-century English texts do not criticize Spanish behavior in the Andes. Rather, they echo the generally positive accounts of the rich mountain as an icon of wealth. However, it is important to take into account that this borrowing was a well-established practice. For example, Walter Ralegh's text shows a heavy reliance on Spanish sources for information on the Carribbean and Spanish Indies; referring to Ralegh, Louis Montrose has observed that the English explorer paradoxically grounded "his own credibility upon the credibility of the very people whom he wishes to discredit" (192; see also notes on Ralegh's text relating his *Discovery of Guiana* below, *p. 37). Lisa Voigt has indicated that, more generally, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English navigators and writers, such as Hakluyt and Purchas, appropriated the knowledge gained from foreign writers, but also more directly from "captives" taken during exploratory and privateering voyages (*Writing Captivity* 258-60).

[7] By the end of the sixteenth century, Cieza de León and Acosta had published the only widely circulated accounts authored by writers who had experienced Potosí firsthand. In the seventeenth century very little information on Potosí was published by authors who had actually visited the *Cerro Rico*, but one exception is Antonio de Calancha's *Crónica moralizada*, which was published in Barcelona in 1638 and was translated into Latin (1651), French (1653), and Dutch (1671). The text was written towards the early 1630s and published in two volumes, the first volume in 1638 in Barcelona and the second volume in Lima around 1680 (Otero iii-xxvii).

texts that repeated and restated information from firsthand accounts, such as Cieza de León and Acosta, place a notable emphasis on the economic significance and implications of Potosí. In 1656, Antonio de León Pinelo published a treatise titled *El paraíso en el Nuevo mundo* in which he provides an interesting overview and commentary regarding the existing reports on Potosí's silver production. Based on these numbers he calculates that "dado a cada vara en quadro, veinte Barras de Plata, se pudiera hacer de Madrid a Potosí (suponiendo que haya 2,071 leguas) un camino o Puente de Plata maciza, que tuviera quarto dedos de grueso, y catorce varas de ancho" 'using for each square yard, twenty bars of silver, one could build a road or bridge of silver from Madrid to Potosí (assuming that the distance is 2,071 leagues), that measures four fingers thick and fourteen yards wide'(371; my translation).[8] The exaltation of Potosí's treasure, however, was not limited to Spanish authors; the Cambridge educated English intellectual Thomas Philipot wrote a treatise on *The origin and growth of the Spanish monarchy*, published in London in 1664, which he "extracted from those Chronicles, Annals, Registers, and Genealogies that yield a faithful Representation" (Title page).[9] He asserts, "the inexhaustible mines of Porco and Potosí" make the Peruvian province of Charcas, where they are located, "unparrallel'd with any Province in Peru" (114). Potosí, he further elaborates, seems to be a "bottomless Exchequer" (114) for the king of Spain. Thus, Philipot, based on other's "faithful representations," presents the rich mountain as adding value not only to its immediate surroundings – the province

[8] Antonio de León Pinelo was born in Peru and educated in the Jesuit College of Lima. He travelled to Spain in 1612 where he served as a *relator,* a court reporter, of the Council of the Indies.
[9] Based on Philipot's description of the mining labor, which coincides in details with Acosta's text, it is likely that Acosta was one of the sources Philipot consulted.

of Charcas – but to the Spanish Monarchy in general: the king can rely on unending funds from its "bottomless" mines. Early modern intellectuals across national and cultural boundaries seem to have shared this idea of Potosí's economic significance, even if they did not always concur with Cieza de León's and Acosta's claim that Potosí's wealth had an overall positive impact on society.

Potosí's claim to fame was based on the perception that its mines provided an inexhaustible and steady income not only for the mine owners but also to the Spanish Treasury in the form of the *quinto real,* a tax assessed on all silver minted in Spanish America, which allocated the fifth part, or 20%, to the Spanish king.[10] The idea that the mountain constituted an economic cornerstone of the Spanish treasury is an underlying concept in the representations of Potosí included in Acosta and Cieza de León. Both authors explicitly express the wealth of Potosí's mines in terms of the tax income it provided to the monarch. Their accounts thus facilitate an understanding of Potosí's wealth primarily in terms of its contribution to the Spanish treasury, as they highlight the economic connection between the remote Andean location and the administrative center of the Spanish empire.

Before further discussing these texts, I will introduce additional information on the *quinto real* of Potosí. John Jay TePaske and Herbert S. Klein's collection of tax records from several colonial cities and mining centers of the new world, including Potosí, offers an overview of the income received by *The Royal Treasuries of the Spanish*

---

[10] The *quinto* was reduced from 20% to 10% in the silver mines of New Spain as early as 1548, but the full 20% was collected in Potosí until 1736, despite periodical complaints and petitions by mine owner and refiners (Brading and Cross 561). One of these petitions from 1620 is referenced below in this chapter (AGI Charcas 32, 1620).

Empire in America (1982). The data assembled by TePaske and Klein helps contextualize the references included in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts I address in this chapter. During the colonial period, financial information was recorded in "the libros mayores and libros manuales of royal accountants; originally three sets existed — one to be retained in the seat of the royal treasury, one to be sent to the Tribunal de Cuentas, the viceregal auditing bureau in Lima, and a third for the Contaduría Mayor of the Council of the Indies in Spain" (TePaske and Klein xv). Their research reveals that the series of accounting records for Potosí is nearly complete; only 23 accounts are missing from 1560-1823. The tax income was generally recorded in *pesos ensayados*, a currency unit that was used by accountants throughout the Spanish Indies although in Spain the *maravedí* was used as the standard unit for accountants.[11] The tax records reporting the silver *quinto* that was collected in Potosí in the sixteenth and seventeenth century show that incomes from the *quinto* for the first years, the 1560s, for which records are available fluctuated between 200,000 and 300,000 *pesos ensayados* annually, but fell below 200,000 in the early 1570s (see Appendix A). Starting in the second half of the 1570s, the introduction of the amalgamation technique for refining silver ore and the construction of the *Ribera*, a series of refineries and mills constructed alongside a canal that provided them with waterpower, allowed silver production and consequently the tax income to

[11] "In Spain and in the Indies *maravedís* were standard units for accountants. Monies shipped from the Indies to Spain, for example, were always listed in Sevilla or Cádiz in *maravedís* to enable pensinsulars to convert the value of colonial coins or bullion into units of currency used in Spain. In the Indies, throughout the colonial period a *peso de ocho* was 272 maravedís and a *peso ensayado* normally 450 *maravedís*" (TePaske and Klein xvi). The accounts recovered by TePaske and Klein record tax income collected in *pesos ensayados* and *pesos de ocho* separately from 1560-1578. For the sake of comparison, I have used the above information to convert the income recorded in *pesos de ocho* to *pesos ensayados* and added both numbers for each tax year.

surge to previously unknown heights before it entered into a steady decline in the seventeenth century.[12] In the first decade of the seventeenth century the *quinto* averaged over 850,000 *pesos ensayados* annually, but in the 1650s the annual average had decreased to around 510,000 pesos, and in the last decade of the seventeenth century it was just over 330,000 pesos a year (based on TePaske and Klein 249-417).

How do the narratives created by Cieza de León and Acosta fit within the context provided by this data? In the first part of *La Crónica del Perú* Cieza de León states that when he visited Potosí towards the end of the 1540s, "cada sábado … se hacía fundición, y de los quintos reales venían a su majestad treinta mil pesos, y veinte y cinco, y algunos poco menos y algunos más de quarenta" 'every Saturday … the silver was melted, and from the royal fifth His Majesty received thirty thousand pesos, and twenty five [thousand], and some days a little less and others more than fourty [thousand]' (374; my translation). Acosta, who visited Potosí in the 1570s, confirms that

> según parece por los libros reales de la Casa de Contratación de aquel asiento … en tiempo que el Licenciado Polo gobernaba … se metían a quintar cada sábado de ciento y cincuenta mil pesos a doscientos mil; y valian los quintos treinta y cuarenta mil pesos, y cada año millón y medio, o poco menos. (105)
>
> It appeareth by the Registers of the house of contraction of that Province … whenas the licentiate Pollo governed that Province … they did every saterday enter a hundred and fifty and two hundred thousand peeces, whereof the Kings fifth amounted to thirty and forty thousand peeces; and for every yeere a million and a halfe or little lesse. (Acosta, *Natural and Moral History* 202) [13]

[12]Peter Bakewell in the chapter on "Technological Change in Potosí: The Silver Boom of the 1570s" credits the introduction of the new refining process but also the organization of the *mita* for the recovery of Potosí's mining industry in the late sixteenth century.
[13] This English translation published by Markham in 1880 claims to be a "Reprint from the English translated Edition of Edward Grimston, 1604" (Title page).

The accounts coincide in the claim that the king's share of the silver registered in Potosí each week varied between twenty-five and forty thousand pesos, while Acosta adds up these weekly amounts and concludes that in all, the king should have received more or less one-and-a-half million pesos annually from the tax income raised in Potosí.[14]

While the records for the time period referenced in these quotes by Cieza de León and Acosta — the late 1540s — are not extant, a look at the tax income recorded in 1560 reveals that the annual *quinto* did not approach the "millón y medio, o poco menos" claimed by Acosta. Indeed, the average annual tax income in the 1560s was only slightly more than 260,000 pesos ensayados. Even accounting for the rapid decline of high quality ore shortly after the beginning of silver exploitation in Potosí, this considerable difference in the tax income recorded by Cieza de León and Acosta on one hand and the official tax records on the other hand seems to be an indication that the Spanish authors overestimated the actual contribution of Potosí's silver to the Spanish treasury. In 1587, the year Acosta returned to Spain, he reported that the silver *quinto* originating from Peruvian mines, including Potosí, valued approximately a little over 3 million pesos. While this estimate is closer to the tax income recorded in the official documents – in

[14] Antonio de León Pinelo in his *Paraíso en el nuevo mundo* [1656] provides an interesting overview of the different sources providing information on the tax income from the mines of Potosí (II, 365-372). Even though he uses these sources to propose his own estimate of the overall quantity of silver extracted from Potosí, León Pinelo observes that some of the sources are not clear about the origin of the data they are including in their narratives and therefore cannot be considered entirely reliable. For example, concerning the account of Alonso Barba, he asserts that "para señalar esta cantidad no trae fundamento alguno, ni dice haverla verificado por los Libro Reales, ni echo para saberla con certeza otra diligencia de las que pudiera; es probable que siguió la fama común" 'to show that this quantity has no basis, [Barba] does not say anything about having confirmed it with the royal accounts, nor that he made other diligences, of those open to him, to know with certainty [the accuracy of his data]; it is probable that he followed the common fame [of Potosí]' (*Paraíso* 367).

1586 the *quinto* from Potosí alone valued close to 900,000 pesos without counting the contributions from other silver mines in the viceroyalty of Peru – it still represents an inflation of the amount of silver Potosí actually contributed to the Spanish treasury. Overall these comparisons of narratives and tax records call into question the reliability of information conveyed in the accounts of Cieza de León and Acosta.

Given this discrepancy, the image of Potosí conveyed in these accounts should be analyzed in light of its rhetorical rather than its informational function. Significantly, the data Acosta includes in his narrative refers to the tax income recorded right after mining had begun, rather than from the time he visited Potosí in the 1570s—a time when, according to the tax records collected by TePaske and Klein, silver production had reached an all-time low.[15] Beyond just representing Potosí in a positive light by omitting this period of decline in his account, the use of information dating from the initial exploitation of the rich mountain's silver mines allows Acosta to establish Potosí's *longstanding* contribution to the royal treasury. After setting up the image of Potosí as a phenomenon that is not just an uncertain novelty, Acosta further demonstrates the continuing economic importance of the *Cerro Rico* by asserting that at the time of his writing the wealth transported to Spain from Potosí had surpassed even the extraordinary amount of silver provided to the crown in the early years of exploitation. Acosta's 1587 estimate of the value of annual silver shipment to Spain, derived from his eyewitness report of the cargo transported by the fleet in which he returned to Europe, supports this claim. In the *Historia Natural y Moral*, he elaborates on the observations he made during his return voyage to Spain claiming that "fueron once millones los [pesos] que vinieron

[15] Acosta travelled with viceroy Toledo who visited Potosí in 1572-73.

en ambas flotas de Piru y México; y era del rey casi la mitad, y de está las dos tercias partes del Pirú" 'There were eleven million [pesos] that came in both fleets from Peru and Mexico; and half of those were the king's, and of those almost two thirds came from Peru' (106; my translation).[16] It is a fairly simple calculation to determine, based on the information provided, that the amount of the silver *quinto* originating from Peru only amounted to about three million pesos, a number that, as we have seen, was still a high estimate based on information recorded in official accounts. However, Acosta's statement makes it easy for the reader to pass over the calculation and focus on the only number explicitly noted, eleven million—a strategy that presents a rhetorically inflated idea of the significant contributions of the Peruvian mines. Acosta's account helps to affirm the continued importance of Potosí as a stable pillar of the Spanish empire, which now in 1587, even more than in the previous few decades, contributes to the funds available to the monarch. Thus, while the details of Acosta's account might not align with the presumably objective facts recorded in the official tax records, they clearly convey the idea of Potosí as a significant contributor to the Spanish treasury and Spain's political potency.

Acosta most explicitly makes this connection in his concluding remarks on Potosí; as he justifies his "digression," which interrupts a more general treatise on the natural resources of Spanish America to provide details on Potosí, he explains:

> He querido hacer esta relación tan particular [de Potosí] para que se entienda la potencia que la divina Majestad ha sido servida de dar a los reyes de España, en cuya cabeza se han juntado tantas coronas y reinos [...] debemos suplicarle [al

[16] It is important to note that many private individuals and merchants also sent coined and uncoined silver to their families and business partners in Spain. These monies constituted the other half of silver included in the shipment.

> señor de los cielos] con humildad se digne de favorecer el celo tan pío del rey católico dándole próspero suceso y victoria contra los enemigos de su santa fe, pues en esta causa gasta el tesoro de Indias que le ha dado, y aún ha menester mucho más. (106)
> I thought good to set this downe particularly, to shew the power which his heavenly Maiestie hath given to the Kings of Spaine, heaping so many Crowns and Kingdonies vpon them [...] We ought, therefore, humbly to pray that He will be pleased to favour the pious zeal of the Catholic King, giving him prosperous success and victory against the enemies of the holy faith. In this cause he spends the treasure of the Indies, which have been given to him, and he even needs much more. (Acosta, *Natural and Moral History* 204-5)

Acosta's statement announces to his audience that Potosí plays a key role in supporting the political decisions of the Spanish monarchy, which were outwardly motivated by religious goals that represented "the pious zeal of the king." This reference to the "cause" of the Spanish monarch against the enemies of the faith calls to mind, in particular, the military initiatives in which the Spaniards engaged many of their European neighbors and the less obviously violent efforts of conversion in the Andes and other parts of the Americas.

Acosta's reference to Potosí as a divinely appointed pillar of support for the Catholic king bears witness to a conception of the economic, political, and religious realms as being closely connected. Other texts written, but not widely circulated, in the early seventeenth century offer an indication that Acosta's contemporaries shared his perception of Potosí as an icon of significance within the political designs of the Spanish monarchy based on the interrelation of these three domains. For example, in his *Historia general del Piru,* written between 1590 and 1615, the Mercedarian friar, Martín de Murúa, refers to Potosí as a "bolsa de Dios" 'God's pocketbook' (*Galvin MS* 142v), which supported the Spanish initiatives. Murúa further explains that the economic benefits Potosí provided to the Spanish crown were to be considered just rewards for

Spain's considerable efforts to illuminate the Andean space with the light of the Catholic Faith. According to the Mercedarian, the *Cerro Rico* provided "todos los años a españa el devido tributo de ynestimable rriqueza *por los grandes beneficios q della y de los españoles este rreyno a reciuido, pues de españa le vino la luz de la fe catolica q firmemente confiesa y tiene esta primitiba yglesia yndiana*" 'every year the proper tribute of inestimable riches to Spain because of the great benefits this kingdom has received from the Spaniards, after all from Spain came the light of the Catholic faith which is firmly confessed and held by this primitive Indian church' (*Galvin MS* 142v; my translation and emphasis). Murúa's statement indicates his belief in divine providence as motivated by concrete human actions: because the Spaniards established the Catholic Church in the Americas among Indian infidels God rewarded them generously with a natural *bolsa* of silver.[17]

While Murúa looks to the past to explain the discovery of Potosí's silver in terms of Spain's religious merit, Reginaldo de Lizárraga in his *Descripción breve de toda la tierra del Perú* [1603] connects the treasure from the rich mountain to Spain's present

[17] Many of his contemporaries shared the Mercedarian Murúa's belief in a reciprocal relationship between humans and the divine. The first reports of Columbus's journey and discoveries depict the Indies "as a golden land bestowed on the Spanish monarchs by God, a providential donation that resonates with imperial ideology" (Vilches 12). More specifically, Elvira Vilches has pointed out the recurrent theme in sixteenth-century Spanish accounts in which the "windfall of the Indies" became part of "a celebratory imperial discourse that marveled at the treasures that Providence had granted to assist the endeavors of Charles V" (26). The firm belief in reciprocity became more materially manifest, for example, in the practice of ex-votos offered to a Saint after being redeemed from a perilous situation including disease and accidents at sea. Elizabeth Davis observes that "implícito en todas las variedades de ex-voto está el concepto de reciprocidad …, el cual implica un grado de interdependencia y obligación mutua" 'implicit in all the varieties of the exvoto is the concept of reciprocity…, which implies a degree of interdependence and mutual obligation'(Davis 111; my translation).

and future endeavors to defend and propagate the Catholic faith. Lizárraga, who was born in Spain, arrived in the Indies in 1560, where he entered the Church. He served as the bishop of La Plata at the beginning of the seventeenth century when he composed his *Descripción breve,* which he dedicated to the Conde de Lemos, president of the Council of the Indies. Lizárraga boasts that Potosí "es la riqueza del mundo, terror del Turco, freno de los enemigos de la fe y del nombre de los españoles, asombro de los herejes, silencio de las bárbaras naciones" '[Potosí] is the wealth of the world, terror of the Turk, obstacle for the enemies of the Faith and the [good] name of the Spaniards, astonishment of the heretics, and silence of the barbarous nations' (86; my translation). Without explicitly connecting the great economic benefit that Potosí's silver bestowed upon the Spanish crown to a concrete obligation in the service of the Catholic faith, Lizarrága seems to nonetheless assume such a commitment, which he presents as an ongoing investment in the fight against the enemies of the faith. Despite these slight differences in perspective the accounts of Lizárraga and Murúa, as well as Acosta, conflate Spain's moral investment in religious causes with a financial investment; they clearly attribute the perceived favorable economic situation of the Spanish Empire in general, and its income from Potosí in particular, to Spain's engagement in religious conversion and the defense of the Catholic faith against infidels and heretics in the Spanish Indies, Europe, and the Mediterranean.

Outside the Spanish Empire, even though the discovery of Potosí was not ascribed to divine providence, the connection between silver from Potosí and other parts of Peru and Spain's religiously motivated endeavors in Europe and abroad was recognized. "If

we consider the many millions which are daily brought out of Peru into Spain," exclaims Walter Ralegh in the account of his failed search for El Dorado [1598],

> […] we find that by the abundant treasure of that country, the Spanish King vexes all the Princes of Europe, and is become in a few years from a poor king of Castile the greatest monarch of this part of the world, and likely every day to increase, if other Princes […] suffer him to add this empire [of El Dorado] to the rest, which by farr exceedeth all the rest: if his gold now endanger us, he will then be unresistible. (53)

In Ralegh's assessment, Peruvian silver is not the just reward for Spain's tireless defense of the Catholic faith; on the contrary, his observations suggest that Peru's treasure motivates and facilitates the Spanish King's vexatious quarrels with "all the Princes of Europe."[18] The religious element of these disputes, highlighted by Spanish authors, does not merit mention in Ralegh's text. His silence regarding the religious motivation of Spanish imperial endeavors indicates that either the English explorer was unaware of this link claimed in Spanish texts, which is unlikely, or that he rejected the validity of this claim, assuming instead an imperialist ambition of the Spanish king to be the driving force behind its armed engagements with other European kingdoms.[19]

---

[18] The "vexations" include the violent suppression of rebels in the Netherlands following the revolt that began in1566. Philip II intended to avoid a secession of the Dutch provinces, his intervention, however resulted in a drawn-out conflict that was inherited by Philip's son and grandson, Philip III and IV, and was formally resolved only in 1648 with the Peace of Münster. In 1580, Philip II had laid claim to the throne of Portugal, which was bestowed on him by the representatives of the Portuguese Cortes in 1581, cutting out his Portuguese rival don Antonio, the Prior of Crato, in the bid for the crown. In 1588, the Invincible Armada reached England with the intent to conquer the island nation and failed. Along with Spain's engagement in Mediterranean conflicts with the Turkish navy, these events exemplify the vexation the Spanish king caused "all the princes of Europe." Despite their ultimate failures, these efforts evoked in England and the Netherlands in particular an anti-Spanish sentiment and a marked "Hispanophobia" that was expressed in the public discourse (see, for example, Griffin 356-357).

[19] Frequent citations of Spanish texts in Ralegh's account of the *Discovery of Guiana* indicate that he was very familiar with many Spanish chronicles including Cieza de León.

In fact, in the political discourse of the sixteenth century, Spanish ambition had become a topos that circulated widely in polemic treatises published outside of Spain. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, for example, two texts written by political opponents of Philip II denounce the ambition of the King of Spain and Spanish population in general. The *Apologie,* published in 1581 by William Prince of Orange – the main leader of the Dutch revolt against Spain – as a reaction to accusations leveled against him by Philip II, presents the nature of the Spanish people as "cruel, auare, orgueilleus" 'cruel, avaricious, proud' (30). In 1585 a treatise, published "by the commaundment and order of the Superiors" (Title Page) in English under the name of Dom António, Prior of Crato, a descendant of King Manuel I of Portugal and unsuccessful claimant to the Portuguese throne in 1580, further confirms this idea of the ambitiousness of "the King of Castile" who would

> inuade not onely all christiandom, but also al the rest of the worlde, & that vnder the faire colour of maintaining the Catholike Romish religion, vnder pretence whereof he hath thus manye yeeres afflicted thinhabitantes of the lowe countreys… to thintent that vpon the subduing of the according to his fãtasie, he might easily & freely spred his armies ouer England, Germany, France & other nations. (53)

In addition to denouncing the ambition and greed of the Spanish king, this source indicates that outside the Spanish empire, the religious discourse that motivated authors such as Acosta and Murua to perceive the silver of Potosí as a divine reward was interpreted as a political pretext to easily and freely spread Spanish armies over many nations. This perception, which differs from claims included in the previously cited Spanish texts, indicates that authors inside and outside of Spain obviously conceived of

---

It is thus reasonable to assume that he was also familiar with the religious motivation claimed by Spanish authors as the justification for conquests in the Americas.

the Spanish imperial project in the New World as well as in Europe in very different terms. While Spanish authors lauded the efforts to extend the true Catholic faith throughout the world, by force if necessary, the authors who write from outside of the Spanish Empire interpreted the overtly religious discourse of conquest as a pretense that justified the excessive ambition of the Spanish Monarchs in adding – or attempting to retain – a growing number of territories to the *de facto* Empire in which the sun never set.[20]

Spanish authors might not have succeeded in convincing their audience outside the Spanish territories that the global spread of Spain's armed forces as well as missionaries was motivated by religious zeal. However, the European audience in general did accept the idea that the treasure from Potosí and other Peruvian mines provided an effective financial boost to these efforts and in consequence bolstered Spain's claim to political dominance and its ability to "endanger" European neighbors. A notable exception to the public acceptance of Potosí as an icon of wealth are the critiques of Spain's financial reality voiced by a number of Spanish intellectuals. Their criticism, as we will see, was determined by the historical circumstances of seventeenth century Spain.

[20] This perception might have been fueled, at least in part, by one of the texts that has frequently been indicated as a cornerstone of the Black Legend (Maltby, *Black Legend* 12-19): Bartolomé de Las Casas *Brevissima Relación de la destrucción de las Indias* 'Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies' which was printed in Spanish in 1551 and later was published in several English editions, the first of which appeared in 1583. In this text Las Casas describes how upon seeing the continuous abuses that the early Spanish conquistadors and settlers committed against the indigenous population – in this case specifically in the Yucatan – the friars, who had come to introduce the indigenous population to Christianity, saw themselves forced to abandon this province: "y así quedó sin lumbre y Socorro de doctrina, y aquellas animas en la oscuridad de ignorancia y miseria" (52). Las Casas's description implies that the majority of Spaniards settling in the Spanish Indies prioritized the pursuit of riches over an effort to "save the souls" of the indigenous population.

The Downsides of Potosí's Silver and the Discourse of Scarcity

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the representations of Potosí continue to rely heavily on the model of Potosí as a bottomless treasure established in the sixteenth-century accounts. Several editions and translations of Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* continued to be published in the early seventeenth century, and other references to Potosí dating from this time period are found in texts that appropriated information from the sixteenth-century eyewitness accounts. As previously noted, the most commonly accentuated property of the *Cerro Rico* in these representations is its abundant treasure, a quality that seems to have been widely accepted as the defining feature of Potosí. Few new accounts containing recent information on the actual situation of Potosí and its mines were published and none were as widely circulated as the sixteenth-century chronicles by Cieza de León and Acosta.[21]

[21] One example of a text containing news on Potosí that was published in the seventeenth century [1639] is Antonio de Calancha *Crónica moralizada* (see above, *p. 26n.6). However, even though Calancha visited Potosí, most of the information he includes on the rich mountain is a repetition and expansion of information also available in the chronicles by Cieza de León, Acosta, and Zárate among others. The new information he includes refers to the population growth in Potosí, and offers a very optimistic image of the rich mountain, which he continues to depict as an important support of the Spanish treasury through the taxes collected on its silver. He claims that Potosí is "un tesoro, que a enriquecido el Orbe, i un escándalo, que a trabucado las naciones; oy parece que comiença de nuevo, i si se le allara el verdadero beneficio al metal negrillo; diera más en un año, que da aora en quarto" 'a treasure, which has enriched the Globe, and a scandal, which has upended the nations; today it appears that it starts again, and if the true way to refine the *negrillo* metal were found, it would provide more [silver] in one year than it gives now in four'(V, 4; my translation). In his *Historia* Arzáns explains that even in the early eighteenth century the metal *negrillo* was "rebelde" 'rebellious' as it could not be refined using mercury; he further indicates that there were four different manifestations of *negrillo* metal: the most common, called *mayor* and three variations of metal tinted in various shades of pink, which were collectively called *rosicler* (I, 142-143).

Why did the repetition of the almost mythical story of a mountain of silver introduced by Cieza de León and Acosta take precedence over information on the "real" Potosí, which from the beginning of the seventeenth century experienced a steady decline in the silver production? The representation of Potosí as a divine reward for Spanish service to the Catholic represented a meaningful perspective on the relevance of the rich mountain for authors such as Acosta and Murúa. Furthermore, it also represented Philip II's ideal for "an 'official' history that defended his policies and, most importantly, Spain's right to imperium in both the Old World and the New" (Kagan, *Clio and the Crown* 94). This officially sanctioned history, according to Richard Kagan, was a *historia pro patria*. For Philip II, as Kagan describes, this included a determined effort to control the type of information on Spain and the Indies that became accessible and to suppress, to the best of his abilities, the circulation of texts that were critical of Spanish imperial endeavors (*Clio* 150-200).

By the time Philip IV assumed the Spanish throne, the purpose of and motivation for writing history had changed only slightly. Both Philip III (ruled 1598-1621) and Philip IV (ruled 1621-1665) conceived of history as having a utilitarian purpose aligned with "a larger political program predicated on the concept of *conservación,* the need to maintain the Catholic Monarchy's power and prestige as a political actor" (Kagan, *Clio* 202).[22] This need impacted the production of texts – both the writing and the printing –

[22] "*Conservación* as then understood derived primarily from the idea of prudence as formulated by Justus Lipsius, the Neo-Stoic writer whose works were especially influential in Spain at the start of the seventeenth century. Different monarchs, however, interpreted *conservación* in different ways. For Philip III, and Lerma, it meant ending the wars they had inherited from Philip II, a policy that culminated in the Twelve Years Truce with the Dutch in 1609. For Philip IV, and Olivares, it entailed policies of

beyond the official histories produced by chroniclers appointed by the court. José Antonio Maravall in *La cultura del Barroco* has described the "pretensión dirigista" – the interventionist politics – of the Spanish monarchy in the seventeenth century that found expression in "una literatura comprometida a fondo en las vías del orden y de la autoridad" 'a literature fully committed to the course of order and authority' (Maravall 133; my translation). In this context it seems likely that the continued circulation of those representations of Potosí contained in the sixteenth-century texts cited above, which explicitly connected the rich mountain to the success and power of the Catholic monarchy, aligned with the interests of the Spanish monarchs in conserving the prestige of their Crown. Simultaneously, the absence of more recent information on Potosí might have been an expression of the Crown's reluctance to make public some of the less than auspicious news that made their way across the Atlantic in letters, which announced in many different voices the decline of the mines.[23]

Despite theses efforts to control the information available and to shape public opinion through the strategic use of texts and other forms of art, especially theatre, many

---

economic and social reform that were coupled, somewhat uncomfortably, with a foreign policy predicated on ''just wars''—first in the Low Countries, then Italy and Germany—fought to defend Philip IV's territorial inheritance, to defend Catholicism, and also to bolster the king's reputation as Europe's most powerful monarch."(Kagan, *Clio* 202) John H. Elliott further connects the ideal of conservation to the Italian Giovanni Botero, who in his *Ragion di Stato*, first published in 1589, asserts that it is a greater task to preserve a state than to extend it: "to keep them stable when they have become great and to maintain them so that they don't decline and fall is an almost superhuman undertaking" (Elliott, *Spain and Its World* 114).

[23] Maravall has claimed that the official art of the Spanish Barroque can be considered "una poesía encargada" – poetry upon request. Aware of the sway artists hold over the public opinion, seventeenth century leaders took advantage of this "tool" to influence public opinion inside and outside of their territories to their benefit (Maravall 159). The discourse of scarcity is discussed below in more detail (*p. 47ff.).

authors continued to be explicitly or implicitly critical of the monarchy and its policies in general, but more specifically some also criticized the publicly promoted image of Potosí: a mountain of silver, a divine reward in recognition of Spain's services to the Catholic Faith, and a mainstay of the Spanish finances. As Spain continued to be mired in economic difficulties that aggravated the social crisis dating from the last decades of the sixteenth century, Spanish authors reveal a critical attitude regarding the economic reality and impact of Potosí.[24] Elvira Vilches has described the rapid change in the economic system that occurred following the Spanish colonization of the Indies. With the expansion of trans-oceanic commerce, economic exchanges increasingly relied on credit transactions through which individuals as well as the monarchy gained access to funds, goods, and services based on the promise of future repayment of the accumulated debts. American treasure played a central part in the growth of this "credit economy." The role of the imported wealth is made explicit anecdotally in the claim that Charles V obtained a

[24] In his seminal work *Imperial Spain 1469-1716*, J.H. Elliott observes that, indeed, "less than a quarter of the King's annual revenues came from remittance of American silver; the rest was borrowed, or was paid for by taxes raised primarily in Castile" (285). Throughout his reign Philip II collected heavy taxes from the Spanish population, including taxes on essential foodstuff and articles of consumption (*alcabala*, *millones*, and *sisas*). However, the extreme expenses of the Spanish monarchy, especially on military engagements with other European nations, such as the prolonged conflict with the Netherlands from 1568-1648, quickly drained the coffers of the Crown. In 1557, Philip II had first suspended payments to the bankers, who had supported his father – emperor Charles V – in his imperial campaigns, and thus effectively declared the bankruptcy of the Spanish monarchy. Internal (i.e. the conflict in the Netherlands and rebellion of the Alpujarras) and external (i.e. the Mediterranean initiatives against the Turks) conflicts required continued investments into the Spanish military force, an investment that provoked the second (1575) and third (1590) bankruptcy of Philip II's regime. Thus, even though there was and still is a perception that only the funds from the Americas made it possible for Spain to sustain the military pressure on its European oponents (see for example Hillgarth 505), both bankruptcies and military losses make it obvious that neither the American silver nor the excessive taxation of the Spanish population were sufficient to fund Spain's (quasi-)imperial policies.

loan to buy votes in support of his bid for emperor against Francis I of France after he displayed the first Mexican treasures – recently arrived to Spain – to his prospective lenders (Vilches 29).[25]

The change in the economic structure coincided with "a rampant escalation of prices," as Vilches explains (31). Unaware of modern economic principles, "people could not understand how the value of gold and silver could ever fall when the whole country was reveling in a shower of gold. Their confusion and anxiety increased as credit money expanded, inflation ruled society, and the value of the national treasure declined" (Vilches 31). Spanish observers and foreign intellectuals pondered this surprising phenomenon and looked for explanations. One tentative explanation for the increasing poverty and inflation was humorously summarized by the Venetian ambassador Vendramin (1595), who stated that silver from the Indies "has just the effect on the [Spaniards] that rain does on the roof of a house": it quickly runs off (qtd. in Casey 68). The silver that arrived in Seville did not remain there long; this was a perception shared by others including the poet, Francisco de Quevedo, who in a polemical *letrilla* also observes that silver, personified as "Don Dinero," comes to Spain for no one's benefit, but passes through only to "expire" and is ultimately "laid to rest" in Genova.

---

[25] In his treatise on *The Reign of Charles V* William Maltby indicates that the practice to elect the Holy Roman Emperor by vote of seven Electors dates back to 1356. Charles's grandfather, Maximilian I, had the intention of having the Electors name his grandson the King of the Romans – marking him as his chosen successor – but was unable to do so before his death in January 1519. As a result, several candidates vied for the imperial crown, including Francis I of France, Henry VIII of England, and Frederick the Wise of Saxony. Charles was able to secure his election "through massive bribery backed by the threat of force. […] Neither Francis nor Henry could match his effort" (Maltby, *Charles V* 19).

> Nace en las Indias honrado,
> Donde el mundo le acompaña;
> Viene a morir en España,
> Y es en Génova enterrado. (202)
>
> In the Indies did they nurse him,
> While the world stood round admiring;
> And in Spain was his expiring;
> And in Genoa did they hearse him. (Walsh 312)

Producing mainly raw materials for consumption and export, Spain relied heavily on foreign exports for finished goods, including everyday items such as knives and cloth but also luxury goods imported through trade with Asia.[26] The dependence on foreign goods led the Spanish army paymaster, Luis Ortiz, to make a provocative statement in a memorial addressed to the king in 1557; he claimed "that foreigners treated Spaniards like Indians because, in return for their gold and silver, they got things of lower value" (Vilches 43). Ortíz implicitly criticizes the greed of foreigners, who siphoned the silver from the Spanish purses through trade as well as through collecting payments on the loans they extended to the Spanish monarchy. However, this foreign greed was only one explanation for Spain's economic crisis. Others, including Martín González de Cellorigo, indicated that it was in fact the influx of precious metals from the Indies that caused the economic crisis as it discouraged Spain's population from actively engaging in "virtuous occupations" or sensibly investing in commerce, especially with Spain's European neighbors.[27]

---

[26] John H. Elliott states that Europe in general "possessed an insatiable thirst for silver, which it needed both for its own transactions and to balance its chronic trade deficit with Asia" (*Empires* 95).

[27] More specifically, Cellorigo admonishes in the *Memorial de la política necesaria y util restauración a la república de España* [1600] that "what is most certain is that our republic has declined so greatly from its former state because we have disregarded

In light of the economic problems Spain faced throughout the seventeenth century, it makes sense that the less than auspicious news from Potosí were generally relegated to more private official and personal correspondence. After all, these reports of the *Cerro Rico* in decline did not coincide with the more desirable idea of the rich mountain as an inexhaustible mountain of silver supporting the goals of the Spanish monarchs. Shortly after the beginning of silver mining in Potosí the easily accessible, high quality ore, which had quickly enriched the first miners of Potosí and contributed to the spread of the legend of the *Cerro Rico* as an endless source of precious metal, had been exhausted. It was necessary to dig deeper at a higher cost to extract mineral that did not match the quality of the initially rich ores of Potosí. Profits, while still notable, declined along with the rising cost of mining, a situation that was likely perceived as

---

natural laws, which teach us to work, and because we have put wealth, which is acquired through natural and human industry, into gold and silver, and because we have ceased to follow the true and right path. […] This is what so obviously has destroyed this republic … because in relying on these payments [of interest for loans] they have abandoned the virtuous occupations […] So one can indeed say that the wealth that was supposed to have enriched has instead impoverished, because it has led the merchant not to trade and the farmer not to farm" (qtd. in Cowans 133-4). Elvira Vilches summarizes Cellorigo's argument and asserts that he "proposed that the solution to Castile's economic decline would consist not so much in restraining the heavy spending of the upper classes as in reversing the widespread disregard for investment. He stressed the fact that Spain, dazzled by the gold and silver of the Indies, had overlooked and disregarded commerce with its neighbors" (Vilches 44). In *Cervantes and the New World,* Diana de Armas Wilson suggests another possible criticism implied in references to Potosí, which, she claims, had become "routine and commonplace" in the seventeenth century (94). For example, Don Quijote, Cervantes's famous anti-hero, directs an exclamation of gratitude at his loyal squire Sancho Panza: "Si yo te hubiera de pagar, Sancho …, el tesoro de Venecia, las minas del Potosí fueran poco para pagarte" 'If I were to pay you, Sancho …, the treasure of Venice, the mines of Potosí would be insufficient" (1084; my translation). Referring to this statement, Wilson suggests, "when Don Quijote imagines a silver mine in Peru as an insufficient reward for Sancho's sacrificial self-flagellation … the careful reader cannot forget that the original American connotations of *Potosí* involved other victims of sacrifice" (94) – the indigenous miners.

more dire based on the unrealistic expectations that had been established during the first years of unparalleled success for Potosí's miners. This disconnect between expectations and outcome motivated a recurrent theme in the petitions and reports sent from Potosí to the royal and viceregal authorities starting in the sixteenth century, only a little over a decade after the "discovery" of Potosí. This theme, which I describe as a *discourse of scarcity*, alternates between emphasizing the perceived and real decline of the silver output on the one hand and, on the other hand, the past and expected contributions of its silver to the Spanish treasury. The strategy is employed especially in petitions where the scarcity is cited to justify the *need* for royal support, whereas Potosí's contributions serve as a reminder of *merit*.

The enormous profits produced in the first years of mining the rich mountain had been shared among a relatively small number of mine owners. In these early years, indigenous miners, too, had shared in the profit. As Peter Bakewell has described, many indigenous miners – *indios varas* – had entered into agreements with Spanish mine-owners where they essentially leased part of a mine, a certain length measured in *varas*, a unit of measurement comparable to yards. According to this agreement the Spanish mine-owner would receive the richest ore mined, the *cacilla* ore, while the *indio vara* received the lesser quality *llampo* ore, which surrounds it. Often the *indio vara* also had the opportunity to buy back the rich ore from the owner and either sell it for a profit or smelt it himself (Bakewell *Miners*, 49-51). In the early years of mining in Potosí, Spanish mine owners benefited from employing knowledgeable indigenous miners – both *yanacona* and *encomienda* Indians – at the same time as the indigenous workers were able to profit from their labor either individually or collectively as "mining provided them with the

tribute that their encomenderos demanded, and that … was difficult to produce elsewhere" (Bakewell *Miners*, 44).[28] This distribution of labor was initially of mutual benefit. However, early on it contributed to the establishment of a clear division of labor roles in Potosí: indigenous workers performed the actual mining labor for the European mine owners, who financially thrived on doing nothing but collecting rent income. This division created a reliance on indigenous labor that was formalized by viceroy Francisco de Toledo with the establishment of the *mita* in 1572.

If indigenous miners had voluntarily moved to Potosí to provide their labor in the mines, why was it necessary to create a policy that coerced their labor by force and threat? Bakewell suggests that it was, at least in part, the Indians' good business sense that motivated the viceroy to approve the *mita*, because "…as Toledo well knew, many Indians *had* worked voluntarily out of 'covetousness' at Potosí, but had stopped doing so precisely because their profits no longer matched their expectations" (Bakewell *Miners*, 66). The decline of profitable mining soon after Potosí had been discovered did not escape the attention of the experienced indigenous miners performing the actual labor in

---

[28] A *yanacona*, according to Inca Garcilaso de la Vega was a "hombre que tiene obligación de hacer oficio de criado" 'man who has the obligation to serve as a servant' (*Comentarios Reales* 374). The class of *yana* (sing.) or *yanakuna* (pl.) was used in the Inca Empire for those servants in service to the State or the cult of the Sun, rather than a local community; they constituted a labor force not subjected to the traditional rules of reciprocity (Rostworowski 247-9). In the Spanish Empire, *yanaconas* served the Spanish without having to fulfill other obligations, such as the *mita*, which were imposed on the indigenous communities. For a description of the *encomienda* system see Chapter 1 (*p. 1n.1)

the mines on their own account; consequently, they decided to move on while the Spanish mine-owners stayed, reluctant to abandon their investments.[29]

A letter written by Cristobal López Chito in 1564 to his sister in Spain provides insight into the story of but one disillusioned investor. López Chito explains somewhat resentfully that

> gastado lo que tenía en este cerro en seguimiento de estas minas, con esperanza cada día de dar en alguna cosa rica, la cual espero en Dios la tendré presto, porque estoy en víspera de ella, y a esta causa no me he ido a esa tierra [España]. Y querer deshacerme de esta hacienda y venderla para irme no hallaré quién me dé de ocho partes la una de lo que yo he gastado en ello.
>
> As I have spent all I had on this mountain and exploring of these mines, with the daily hope that I might come upon something rich, which I hope to God I will have soon, because I am on the eve of [discovering] it, and because of this I have not gone to that country [Spain]. And wanting to get rid of this property and sell it in order to go [to Spain] I won't be able to find anybody who would give me even one eighth part of what I have invested in it. (López Chito, qtd. in Otte 519; my translation)

López Chito's letter reveals the tension between the fear of stagnancy and decline tempered by the constant hope of being on the verge of discovering "alguna cosa rica" 'something rich.' Mining in Potosí more often than not was a game of chance, a gamble on the fickle treasure of the silver mountain.[30]

---

[29] Some scholars claim that the mita became the actual source of income for Potosí's mine owners as those drafted for the *mita,* if they were able to do so, paid the mine owners for allowing them to not serve in the mines. This practice was also described as *indios de faltriquera* or pocket Indians (see for example Cole 57; Bakewell, *Miners* 123-24).

[30] Since its discovery, the rich mountain had attracted numerous settlers expecting to make their fortune in Potosí. Agustín de Zárate [1555], for example, describes that as soon as news about Potosí's mines became known "por la riqueza que se halló se despoblaron todas las otras minas de la comarca" 'because of the wealth that was discovered all the other neighboring mines were deserted' (299; my translation). The influx of people, not only from other parts of Peru but also from Spain, was so overwhelming that in 1593, in a memorial sent to the king, the *cabildo* of Potosí

Interestingly, it is in part the optimistic and almost desperate hope of the gambler, constantly betting on the small chance of getting lucky with his next move, which seems to have had an important influence on the official correspondence directed from Potosí to the royal authorities from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. The discourse of scarcity is a recurrent theme in the correspondence and information originating from Potosí. In the late 1540s, only four years after the exploitation of silver started, some of the conversations among residents of the Imperial City, which Cieza de León recorded in his *Crónica del Peru*, might be the first indications of this discourse. During his visit to the city and mountain of Potosí, Cieza de León recollected that "con sacar tanta grandeza que montaba el quinto de la plata que pertenece a su Majestad más de ciento y veinte mil castellanos cada mes, decían que salía poca plata y que no andaban las minas buenas" 'even though the wealth taken from the mines is so great that the silver *quinto* belonging to His Majesty exceeds one hundred and twenty thousand *castellanos* each months, they said that little silver was extracted and that the mines were not going well' (*Crónica* 374; my translation). Implied in this observation of an ebbing output, however, is the paradoxical and fallacious expectation that the current unsatisfying production is actually an indication of a future increase in output: if the great quantity of silver recorded as the

---

petitioned "que se use del rigor que antes se usaba para que en las flotas que vienen de España no pase nadie a Potosí, porque de 2,000 hombres que vienen a Indias en cada pasaje 1,000 vienen a parar en Potosí y provincia a consumir el fruto de las labores y beneficios fuera de otros cien mil géneros de inconvenientes" 'that the previous rigor be used to prevent that in the *flotas* coming from Spain nobody comes to Potosí, because out of 2,000 men who come to the Indies in each voyage 1,000 come to remain in Potosí and its province to consume the fruit of the labors and benefits aside from another onehundred-thousand types of inconveniences [that these immigrants cause]' (qtd. in Arzáns I, 220n2; my translation). Certainly, this petition shows that the immigrants arriving in Potosí from Europe were considered more of an affliction than an asset.

tax due to the king was an indication of weak production, then under good conditions, the overall income from the mines will exceed this already tremendous treasure.

A letter written by the *cabildo (*town council) of the Imperial City in 1562 confirms that the implied expectation of increasing future profits was not immediately realized. The letter laments that the *cabildo* had been unable to fulfill their monetary obligations to the king because "los dueños de las minas que a la sazon [de entrar en el compromiso con el Rey] estaban rricos y que suplieran mucho no lo an podido hazer a causa del poco probecho que de tres años a esta parte les a dado y los excesibos gastos" 'the owners of the mines, who at the time [of entering into the contract with the king] were rich and supplied a lot have not been able to do so because of the poor profit they have had in this region for the past three years and [because of] the excessive expenses' (AGI Charcas 32 1562; my translation). This letter is an early example of the type of official reports that throughout the colonial period offered proof that Potosí was not the legendary, ceaseless font of silver propagated in the widely circulated representations of the *Cerro Rico*. However, the reports continued to be forward-looking; in 1562, in the face of decline, officials asked the Crown to "bet" on the promise of future windfalls, as becomes obvious in the contradictory plea inserted in this letter asking to extend the term for paying the monetary obligation owed to the king of Spain:

> A V. Al[a] sea servido de nos hacer mrd. de mandallo rremediar, con que como las pagas de para cinquenta y quatromillpesos que a V. Al[a] se rrestan pagar en los cinco años venideros que se nos haga mrd que sea dentro de diez años porque en este tiempo facilmente se cumpliera y se dara contento a estos vezinos y ser a causa que en esta billa y labores de minas y tratos que en ella ay de que V. Al[a] es muy servido bayan en grandisimo cresamiento y poreste camino la hazienda y quintos de V. Al[a] serían mas acresentados y queriendose cobrar como esta obligado y se capitulo tiene ser por muy gran carga y con este tenor muchas personas dejan de benir a bibir a ella y aun de los que en ella biben an dado

> muestra de querer hacer mudança porque a esto las costas son muy grandes y los ynterese delgadas y los gastos de las minas excesibos y de poco probecho y entendido esto V. Al[a] para questo no venga en diminución es menester que lo faboresca.
>
> His Highness be served to remedy our distress, by allowing us to pay the remaining fifty-four thousand pesos owed to your Highness in ten years instead of the five coming years because in this time easily it will be easily fulfilled. And it would content the citizens and this is because in this city and mining operations and commerce, from which his Highness benefits greatly if they were to experience a great increase and in this way the property and taxes (*quintos*) of your Highness would grow. But if you were to collect as was accorded and as we have commited it would be a very big burden and accordingly many people would cease to come to live in this city and even some of those who live here have shown signs of wanting to move because the costs are very great and the profit thin and the expenses of the mines excessive and of little benefit and understanding this, your Highness, for it [Potosí] not to fall into decline it is necessary that you favor it. (AGI Charcas 32 1562; my translation)

Representing the voices of the *cabildo* of the Imperial City*,* the author of this letter emphasizes the little profit that had been gained from the mines in the past three years, a circumstance that makes it impossible for the *vecinos* of Potosí to meet their obligations to the Crown. At the same time, however, he calls to mind the future financial benefit the king might claim from the city if he were to extend the term of payment. The promise of the future growth of the royal property and tax income is based on a presumed recovery and "great increase" of the mining industry, which is projected in the letter provided that the king does not enforce the contractual payment of the city's debts. Despite relating the difficulties faced by the mining industry of the rich mountain the *cabildo* expresses confidence in the possibility of increasing mining profits in the future and petitions Philip II to also wager on this uncertain future.

In 1620, a letter sent from the *oficiales,* the officers, of city of Potosí to the Peruvian viceroy, implies that, again, the residents of the Imperial City were facing

economic difficulties. Petitioning for a decrease in tax obligations, the official sending this letter describes the decline of the rich mountain's prosperity due to its long history of being exploited:

> Este cerro se a combatido mas de 73 años que ha que se descubrio sin cesar, con el gran numero de gente que es notario echando mano al principio de la flor de los metales y despues siempre de los mejores que a llegado a que el dia de oy y aun años ha los beneficio estan tan flacos.
>
> This *Cerro* has persisted for more than 73 years since its discovery the ceaseless assault of a notoriously great number of people who have exploited in the beginning the prime metal and later always taken from the best [parts of the metal]; this has resulted in the consequence that today the profits are thin. (AGI Charcas 36 1620; my translation)

For years now, this letter indicates, Potosí's miners had to be content to extract the scraps of silver ore left by the great number of those who came before them and took the prime metals. In fact, the letter continues to empathically and vividly describe the plight of the – presumably European – miners of Potosí; these unfortunate adventurers are left

> sin fructo de su trabaxo y adeudados en los caudales de los que los an ayudado a buscarle en las benas del cerro y oprimidos de la necessidad y deudas, engañando con sperancas de buen successo oy a uno mañana a otro y de no tener otro modo de bivir en esta tierra continuan la lavor de las minas.
>
> Without the fruit of their labor and indebted to those whose money has helped them search the mines of the Cerro; and oppressed by necessity and debt, misled with hopes of success – someone today and another tomorrow – they continue working in the mines as they do not have another way of living in this place. (AGI Charcas 36 1620; my translation)

The miners' desperation becomes tangible in these sentences that aim to convince the viceroy of the need to make allowances for these unfortunate subjects of the Crown by lowering the tax rate. While the hardship of the miners might not have been exaggerated, the letter also employs the discourse of scarcity strategically to achieve the political goals of Potosí's officials. Just as Potosí and its real as well as imagined treasure served –

whether intentionally so or not – as an argument in support of the politics of the Spanish monarchs in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, so was Potosí's treasure (both its decline and its promise) leveraged as a rhetorical strategy by local officials to underscore the priority of their demands.[31] The promise of profit served as the carrot while the threat of decline represented the stick, which, the petitioners might have hoped, would ensure prompt attention to their requests. The strategy is obvious, as the 1620 letter to the viceroy does not fail to invoke the glimmer of hope for future profit, refusing to concede that the decline is permanent. After all, Potosí, according to this letter, is a survivor: for 73 years countless laborers have hacked away at its prosperity and yet it continues to produce ore, even if this ore is of lesser quality. The letter provides a glimpse of the possibility of Potosí's decay only to emphasize the urgency of providing assistance in order to ultimately ensure the permanence of the rich mountain in anticipation of its return to prosperity.

Indeed, in a separate letter directed to the Crown in 1620, the "Cabildo, justicia y regimiento de Potosí" claims that the rich mountain continues to be fundamental to upholding "[e]l bien comun de aquellos [ibéricos] y destos [americanos] reynos cuya conservación consiste en la labor y benefficio del dho Zerro" 'the common good of those

[31] Regarding the correspondence initiated by Potosí's authorities, an "ynformacion sobre el estado de Potosí y Oruro" 'information about the state of Potosí and Oruro' sent in 1607 by the Audiencia de La Plata, explicitly expresses the opinion that information about Potosí is strategically used with an ulterior motive. The author of the "ynformación" asserts that "la declinacion del cerro de potossi es cierta y el no acabarsse de entender esto alla es por que se quiere encubrir" 'the decline of the mountain of Potosí is certain and the reason why this is not understood here is because they want to conceal it'(AGI Charcas 32 1607). While a rivalry between the Potosí and La Plata might have impacted the objectivity of the author of this "ynformación," the comment does imply awareness that information about the rich mountain of Potosí was alternately shared or withheld based on the motivation of those writing a given text.

[Iberian] and these [American] kingdoms whose conservation consists in the work and benefit of the said Cerro' (AGI Charcas 32 1620; my translation). The idea of Potosí as an essential element of the *bien común* – the common good –, which was introduced by those sixteenth-century authors who presented Potosí as the divine reward that both validated and facilitated the propagation and defense of the Catholic faith in Europe as well as the Americas, is expressed again in this letter; it shows that this notion was also accepted by later generations even though their motivation for adopting this discourse might have been self-serving, after all, the oficials of the Imperial City mention the rich mountain of Potosí as essential to the common good to further their petition.

Not everyone who alluded to the rich mountain in a similar tone, however, seems to have had these ulterior motives. One of the few firsthand accounts of Potosí published in the seventeenth century, Antonio de la Calancha's *Crónica moralizada,* also connects Potosí to a larger purpose, claiming that its silver benefits "a los pobres del mundo, al culto de la Iglesia, al castigo de ereges, i al remedio de tantos" 'the poor people of the world, the cult of the Church, the chastisement of heretics, and as a remedy for so many' (V, 6; my translation).[32] Even in the early eighteenth century, when Arzáns was writing his *Historia de la Villa Imperial*, the notion of Potosí as ensuring the common good still survived; the Potosian author professes to be torn between the defense or the critique of the mita: "Y ciertamente yo me hallo confuso sin poder determinarme o a defender esta calamidad de indios que padecen con la mita, o abonarla por ser para ayuda del bien universal" 'and certainly I am confused without being able to decide whether to stand up against the calamity suffered by the Indians of the *mita* or to credit it for being a support

[32] See above (*p. 26n.6) for more information on Calancha and his text.

of the universal good' (II, 189; my translation). His professed inability to categorically condemn the exploitation of indigenous workers, despite his acknowledgment of their "calamity," is based on the persistent assumption that the rich mountain of Potosí offered an essential contribution to the Spanish kingdom and the greater good of humanity in the form of financial support for the Spanish monarchs and their political agenda in favor of the Catholic faith.

The *Cerro Rico* in Potosí's Spectacles: Enacting Wealth and Excess

The image of Potosí as an icon of wealth was also important locally. Accounts of festivals celebrated in the Imperial City throughout the colonial period indicate that the rich mountain was an integral part of these celebrations, which glorified its wealth and political significance. The Imperial City touted its abundance and an overall lack of concern for financial management in the excessive display of this precious metal, both in decorations created for public celebrations and in extravagant clothing and accesories. Bars of silver were even used, on at least one occasion, to line the streets of Potosí for a procession. This was the case in 1661 when Potosí celebrated the birth of the Prince of Spain, Carlos II. A seventeenth-century French travel writer, Acarete du Biscay who published under the pseudonym Mr. R.M., reports on the celebrations that commemorated the birth of the heir to the Spanish throne that year. He describes the multicultural group – Spaniards, foreigners, Indians, and Africans – that came together and the great variety of activities on this multi-day festival ranging from parades, games, and plays to masquerades and balls. On the last day of the celebration the rejoicing was concluded by a procession of the clergy from the main church to another church of the

city “and because the way from one of these Churches to the other had been unpav’d for the Celebration of the other Rejoicings, they repav’d it for this Procession with Bars of Silver, with which all the way was intirely cover’d” (Acarete du Biscay 89-90). This seemingly careless use of silver to literally pave the streets of the Imperial City manifests the use of the precious metal as an everyday commodity. However, it also shows the extravagant wealth that constituted the public image of the Imperial City, an image that was put forth by its residents in this and other festivities.

Implicitly and explicitly authors—especially those close to Potosí—represented the rich mountain as the motivation and source for the extravagant spectacles and decadent displays of wealth. In these festivals the European and creole residents of the Imperial City enacted an ideal image of the social relations in the city and mines of Potosí and affirmed for themselves a position of power within the Spanish Empire. One text in particular, the *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí*, written by Arzáns during the first decades of the eighteenth century, provides several examples of celebrations in which the *Cerro Rico* was displayed in such a way that the idea of Potosí – the mountain – as an icon of wealth was extended to include the city of Potosí. Arzáns’s text is unique because it provides privileged insights into the social history of Potosí. As a creole resident of the Imperial City Arzáns has a privileged insight into the ideas that in the eighteenth century defined social interactions in the colonial mining center of Potosí. His account represents and comments upon the discourses that shaped the identity of its residents of European descent – a point of view that would have been unavailable to those who did not spend most of their life in the shadow of the rich mountain. Even as Arzáns proclaims his desire to celebrate the history of the mountain of Potosí and the Imperial City, he is very critical

of the sinful behavior of Potosí's residents. A part of the *Historia* is dedicated to the description of the discordance and immoral social interactions among the European residents of the mining boomtown, which is not addressed in any detail in other texts of the colonial period. Arzáns's text offers an alternative albeit parallel account of the social divisions and moral decadence that, according to other accounts, plagued Potosí as a result of the residents' ambition and greed. Arzáns's critical references to the moral corruption that defined social interactions in the Imperial City seem to contradict his dazzling accounts of its spectacles, in which those who had found their luck in the mines of the rich mountain (or those who were able to extract their share of this wealth from the rich miners) were able to flaunt their grandeur.[33] However, the celebrations should not be considered as separate from the sinful behavior denounced by Arzáns; rather, they can be considered a manifestation of the same self-serving ambition that was especially denounced in texts created outside the Spanish empire, a discourse that is addressed in more detail in the following Chapter 3.

Looking back to April 1555, Potosí's self-proclaimed historian Arzáns describes the celebration of the acclamation of patron saints in the *Villa Imperial de Potosí* – the Imperial City of Potosí: The Holy Sacrament, the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, and Saint James. For this occasion, the city's residents erected 30 altars – 15 of these

---

[33] Stephanie Merrim observes that Arzáns *Historia* is the account of "a fallen city that had abandoned all morality. […] Nostalgic for its greatness, remorseful of its decline the *criollo* author imputes the city's fall to the sins occasioned by its wealth" ("Spectacular" 50). While Arzáns's account includes a critique of poor government leveled against certain officials, Merrim asserts that overall he is more concerned with "exposing the social and ethnic tensions of his milieu" (50). These tensions manifested themselves in the ready acceptance and use of violence, an overall climate of corruption, and abuses against the property and body of Spaniards, creoles, and indigenous alike – although the indigenous workers faced the brunt of this.

sponsored by the Spanish residents and 15 by the indigenous population – dedicated to the Holy Sacrament and the Virgin and adorned with scenes from the New Testament. The streets were richly decorated with silver mirrors, paintings of saints and other "colgaduras" or decorative hangings. Along the path the procession was set to take the floor was covered by rich wool and cotton blankets as well as flowers and fragrant herbs donated by the *indios*, who had brought them to the Imperial City from a distance of up to forty leagues (Arzáns I, 96). The celebration, as it is described by Arzáns, is a display of wealth. In this account of events that presumably occurred in 1555, as well as in other parts of his text, Arzáns's emphasis on recounting details about the material aspect of the spectacles suggests that by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the idea of abundance and extravagant wealth had been adopted – at least by the residents of European descent, whom Arzáns represents – as a defining element of the identity they assumed based, at least in part, on the legendary wealth of the rich mountain.[34] The identification of the city of Potosí as an extension of the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of wealth, however, was based more on the myth of the mountain's interminable treasures that on reality. In light of the steady decline of the amount and quality of silver extracted from the mines and consequently the waning of the cumulative wealth of Potosí's residents, Arzáns expresses nostalgia for the former greatness of Potosí's mountain and city, but also an unwavering

[34] In his text, Arzáns, a Potosí native, presents his perspective on Potosí's reality, a perspective that, I suggest, would have been shared primarily by the creole and European population residing in the Villa Imperial. It is also important to remember that while Arzáns is describing events that presumably took place in the sixteenth century, his writing is informed by the cultural and historical context of his time period – the early eighteenth century.

belief that the grandeur that according to his account defines the city and the legendary fame of the rich mountain still was and always had been merited.

The celebration of 1555 is one of many spectacles realized in the Imperial City of Potosí throughout the Spanish colonial rule. Indeed, Stephanie Merrim has proposed that in this city that lacked other types of cultural productions, "the principal cultural manifestation of this materialistic boomtown were the spectacles that vaunted its wealth and grandeur" ("Spectacular" 49). In several of these fiestas the Cerro Rico itself played an important role beyond providing the funds to finance the celebrations.[35] The rich mountain was an active and consequential participant in the festivities as Arzáns, the chronicler Juan de la Torre, as well as the painter Melchor Pérez Holguín have recorded in texts and paintings that feature representations of the *Cerro Rico* as a memorable part of the processions and celebrations. The semblances of the mountain, as described by these authors, conveyed political and social messages to the crowd in attendance. More importantly, though, they allow modern readers to gain an insight into the ways in which the *Cerro Rico* impacted the understanding that the residents of the Imperial City had of themselves and their place within the Spanish Empire.

Describing the festivities of 1555, for example, Arzáns provides specific information about the participants and sights of the procession that progressed through the city of Potosí on streets strewn with rich blankets and fragrant flower. A central part of the celebration acclaiming the patron saints was the parade, which included "un carro

[35] The fiestas and celebratory culture of Potosí have been explored in publications by Stephanie Merrim ("Spectacular Cityscapes"), Leónardo García Pabón ("Indios, criollos y fiesta barroca en la Historia de Potosí de Bartolomé Arzáns."), and Lisa Voigt ("Spectacular Wealth"). However, the importance of the mountain itself as an integral participant of these celebrations has not been addressed in much detail.

triunfal dorado y encima el Cerro de Potosí de plata fina, en cuyo remate estaba la imagen de María santísima" 'a golden triumphal wagon and on top the mountain of Potosí made from fine silver, at the peak of which was the image of the virgin Mary'(Arzáns I, 97; my translation). In the midst of the human participants advancing the procession on foot the *Cerro Rico* stands out in its place of honor. The special status attributed to this representation is emphasized by its placement on a golden triumphal wagon, which was pulled by twenty Indian youths. This seems especially extravagant as Arzáns explains elsewhere that, during the rapid growth of the city following the discovery of silver in 1545, the first settlers "formaron una gran población aunque sin orden, concierto ni medidas de calles pues […] cada cual hizo su casa con tanta prisa que careciendo de la forma hubieron de quedar sin calles por donde pasar" 'they built a great city, although without order, coordination, nor measurements for the streets […] everybody built their house in such a rush that lacking the [proper] shape they had to be left without streets on which to pass' (Arzáns I, 42; my translation). In this description Arzáns provides us with an image of the narrow streets of the Imperial City that would be nigh impossible to navigate for an elaborate triumphal wagon.[36] Given these physical limitations the choice to place the mountain on a triumphal wagon instead of using *andas*, which in this procession were indeed used for the statue of the patron saint Santiago,

[36] According to some documents, the city was later reorganized spatially by viceroy Toledo in the early 1570s (see for example Arzáns I, 145-47). At this time the city also constructed the *Ribera*, the canal providing waterpower for the silver mills and refineries that effectively divides the city into two parts.

draws further attention to the value attributed to the rich mountain by the city's residents responsible for this installation.[37]

The *Cerro Rico* is represented upholding the image of the Virgin Mary, one of the Saints formally adopted as patrons for the Villa Imperial on this occasion. As we will see in the last chapter, the visual association of the rich mountain, which had been identified as a pre-Hispanic *huaca* (an indigenous sacred object or landmark) by sixteenth-century writers, with the Catholic Virgin likely represented an attempt to counteract the continued practice of indigenous belief by imposing a European, Christian Saint on the indigenous idol and thus replacing the pagan belief with Catholic tradition. However, in the description of the 1555 parade this missionary goal takes a backseat to the display of civic pride.[38] The representation of the rich mountain on a golden triumphal wagon, upholding the Virgin Mary, alludes to the notion of Potosí as a divine reward granted to the Spanish Crown in recognition of their defense of the Catholic Faith. In Arzáns's text, the rich mountain is represented as capable and worthy of its role in upholding the

---

[37] In her book on Corpus Christi in Cuzco (*Inca Bodies and the Body of Christ*) Carolyn Dean addresses the use of triumphal wagons, *carros*, in these celebrations. Even though several of the seventeenth-century paintings of the Corpus Christi procession, which she analyzes in her book, included *carros* the artist(s) had likely copied from a 1663 Spanish festivity book, she claims that "carros were not a feature of Corpus Christi (or any other annually repeated festival) in colonial Cuzco until 1733 […] The statues of patron saints were traditionally elevated on *andas*" (84-85). The *anda* was a litter frequently used in religious processions as a platform for saint images, but this method of transportation had also been used by the Inca.

[38] It is important to remember that all the accounts included in Arzáns *Historia* postdate the events they pretend to record by over 100 years. There is little evidence that the celebrations actually took place in the way Arzáns describes them. For the 1555 celebration in particular there is no evidence that the representation of the mountain/ Virgin was a part of this procession. Thus my analysis focuses on the textual representation and the message it conveys about ideas held by the population of Potosí at the time of its composition in the early eighteenth century.

Catholic Faith and the Spanish Empire. In the local context the *Cerro Rico* is thus recognized as a central element to the success of the Spanish Crown, a representation that supports the mountain's presumably important role in the imperial power structure. The emphasis on Potosí's role within the Spanish Empire is significant as, by extension, it allowed the residents of the Imperial City to confirm their own sense of centrality. The inclusion of the mountain of Potosí as a participant in this parade would have reminded the residents of the Imperial City of the idea that the rich mountain and by extension those who operated this "machine" – as the silver industry including mining and refining operations was described – were important contributors to the Spanish Empire and its goals. By celebrating the *Cerro Rico* in this parade, the Imperial City also celebrated its presumed consequential position within the empire's political structure.

In another spectacle, which Arzáns dates to 1600, a representation of the Cerro Rico was paraded in front of the town, allowing its residents to celebrate themselves under the pretext of honoring the marriage of Philip III to Margarita de Austria. Potosí's mine-owners organized a parade where

> en el ultimo carro … estaba el rico Cerro de Potosí de fina plata, a sus faldas la Imperial Villa en figura de hermosa y grave doncella … puesta de rodillas ante un retrato de la majestad de Felipe III […] La Villa tenía en la mano diestra un Cerro de Potosí de plata y en la siniestra unas barras del mismo metal.
>
> On the last wagon … was the rich mountain of Potosí made from fine silver, a its side was the Imperial Villa in the shape of a beautiful and serious maiden … kneeling in front of a portrait of Philip III […] The Villa held in her right hand a silver mountain of Potosí and in her left some bars of the same metal. (Arzáns I, 244; my translation)

This artistic installation of the mountain(s) presents the audience with an intriguing visual: taking into account the real geographic context of this procession, we are

presented with an image that takes the representation of the rich mountain *en abîme* and raises question about how the three distinct instantiations of the *Cerro Rico* relate to each other – the real landmark, the likeness of the mountain on the wagon, and the even smaller representation offered to Philip III by the virginal Villa Imperial.[39] What stands out in this *mise en scène* is the overwhelming presence of the mountain. Ostensibly, the installation parading through the Villa Imperial on a triumphal wagon offers homage to the Spanish monarch, whose marriage to the Austrian princess is honored by the spectacle and, more tangibly, by the ceremonial offering of the rich mountain and its silver in tribute. Underlying this expression of recognition towards the Spanish monarch, however, is the assumption that being the recipient of the greatness of the rich mountain is an honor coveted by many. The dominant presence of Potosí's mountain in this scene suggests that the symbolic offer was not extended in an act of deference to the king but as a gesture of pride; the representations of the *Cerro Rico* seem to proclaim that indeed Philip *should* feel honored to count Potosí as a part of his territories.

The virginal representation of the Villa Imperial as a *doncella* in this installation might have been chosen to represents its residents' righteousness to the Crown and to

[39] Lisa Voigt analyzes a similar display that formed part of a parade organized by Potosí's creole youth and nobility in 1608, a story equally related by Arzáns in his *Historia*. Voigt describes the rich display that includes an elaborate representation of Potosí as an attempt of the creole population to prove their gallantry and inventiveness ("Spectacular Wealth" 274). The rich mountain, in this festival, "suggests a distinctive feature of the production of creole identity in mining boomtowns: the importance of negotiating the concept of wealth, whether it is celebrated, exaggerated, elided or redefined" ("Spectacular Wealth" 290). My argument in this section closely aligns with her assertion about the important role of wealth in the definition of identity in Potosí, but differs from it in the assertion that, in the context I am considering, the defining factor is the uncritical *expectation* of wealth by Potosí's residents of European origin, which is communicated in the accounts of spectacles.

confirm their position, as humble subjects to the Spanish Monarch, within the Catholic Spanish Empire. The rich mountain, however, is not humble in front of the king. As the mountain of Potosí visually grows in this scene, from the small token presented to the king's image to the life-size landmark in the background, the *Cerro Rico* overshadows the king and asserts its own power and authority. In the contexts of the celebrations, the display of wealth thus takes on political meaning: beyond displaying the excessive abundance frequently connected to the Villa Imperial and the rich mountain, these representations of the *Cerro Rico* as part of a larger spectacle provided an opportunity for the residents of the Imperial City to invoke and affirm their powerful, central position within the Spanish Empire, a position that was grounded in the wealth Potosí was able to contribute to the Treasury.

During a celebration that honored the archbishop and newly-appointed viceroy Diego Morcillo Rubio de Auñón's visit to the Villa Imperial in 1716, a representation of the rich mountain again becomes a platform for asserting the continued importance of Potosí within an imperial context. The narrative of this event is especially interesting because the "Entry of the Archbishop Morcillo" is represented both visually, in a painting by Melchor Pérez Holguín, and narratively in eyewitness accounts by Arzáns and Juan de la Torre, the official chronicler of this event. Both the fact that contemporaries who witnessed the actual event recorded this spectacle and the availability of more than one source set it apart from those described in the accounts previously cited.

In the 1716 celebration, the representation of the rich mountain again reminded the audience, including the viceroy, of the central importance of Potosí within the Peruvian viceroyalty and the Spanish empire more generally. Its staging, however, also

represented an idealized concept of Potosí's wealth as a function of effective collaboration between the different cultural groups who, voluntarily or not, joined forces in exploiting its mines and sustaining the "machine" of the mining industry. In a nocturnal masquerade honoring the archbishop-viceroy the Cerro is once again placed on a wagon and paraded through the street of the Imperial City; yet several details differentiate this installation from previous ones. Arzáns describes that on the wagon

> debajo del dosel estaba un hermoso niño que hacía a su excelencia con vestiduras preciosas, sentado en su silla con bastón en las manos. En el carro a sus pies estaba el Cerro de Potosí con sus propios colores, y en el resto seis niños vestidos de ángeles y otro en figura de niña indiana, o princesa de los ingas.
>
> Under the canopy there was a beautiful child who pretended to be His Excellency with costly clothes, seated in his chair with a staff in his hands. On the wagon at his feet there was the Cerro of Potosí with his own colors, and on the rest six children dressed like angels and another as an Indian girl, or Inca princess. (III, 50; my translation)[40]

Unlike the representations of the rich mountain that were paraded through Potosí in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this eighteenth-century likeness is not fashioned from silver – at least not obviously so – but rather shows the Cerro's real reddish-brown hue, marked by the darker mine entrances as is evident also in Holguín's painting of the *Entry of Viceroy Archbishop Morcillo into Potosí*. Furthermore, the figure of authority – in this case the viceroy rather than the king himself – is embodied rather than represented by a portrait: Morcillo is impersonated by a child who is identifiable for wearing the archbishop's clothes and paraphernalia. The rich mountain, again, is symbolically offered in deference to the imperial authority represented by the archbishop-viceroy. On the

[40] The account of Juan de la Torre deviates slightly from Arzáns's narration as de la Torre describes that the child representing the viceroy-archbishop was seated on the model of the rich mountain – "en la cima del cerro" (20) – demonstrating the viceroy's dominance over 'the metals of this silver obelisk' (20; my translation).

pedestal, a boy dressed as an Incan princess sings the praises of the archbishop-viceroy while two other children represent Europe as the cleric's cradle and America as the source of his episcopal powers and government: "… y luego representaron dos niños que hacían a Europa y América: la una manifestaba haberle sido su oriente y dándole su cuna, y la otra sus dignidades episcopales y gobierno" 'and later two children acted, who played the role of Europe and America: the first manifested that she [Europe] had been his [Morcillo's] cradle, and the other [America] had given him his episcopal dignity and government' (Arzáns III, 50; my translation). The Spanish viceroy Morcillo is thus represented as providing an important link between Europe and America, while the *Cerro Rico* represents the site where these two aspects converge, where Europe and America meet to celebrate the Spanish authority – represented by the viceroy – that brings them together.

De la Torre includes a transcription of the dialogue enacted on the triumphal wagon, which includes "Potosí" as one of the actors. The words pronounced by this actor shifts the emphasis away from Morcillo as the link that connects Europe and America in this particular context by indicating the rich mountain as a natural meeting place: magnetically attracted by the "Argentum vivum" – the living silver of the *Cerro Rico* (23) – a multitude of people come to the rich mountain. Both Arzáns and de la Torre portray Potosí as having a key role in the success story of productive contact between European and American peoples that is portrayed in this display – either as a backdrop or a more active agent. In the scene, which is described by Arzáns and de la Torre and visually depicted by Holguín, the model of the rich mountain forms the backdrop for the enactment of an idea that was communicated in many of the sixteenth-century accounts:

the assumption that the indigenous people appreciated and benefited from the religious conversion and the "civilization" introduced by the Europeans. The dressed up "Inca princess," who metonymically represents the Andean indigenous population, lauds the Spanish archbishop-viceroy in a *loa*, an act that implicitly confirms the perception that the indigenous people appreciated the immaterial benefits of religion and civilization that the Spaniards had brought in return for material riches.[41] Outwardly the scene confirms the idealistic perception of a collaborative and harmonic exchange between indigenous groups and people of European origin.

On the other hand, the dramatic interlude to the procession once again emphasizes the economic relevance of the *Cerro Rico* in general and its relation to the Spanish finances. Interrupting the singing of the *loa* praising the viceroy,

> salió de la boca de una mina de aquel Cerro, dispuesta al propósito, un indiecillo vestido a la propiedad de cuando labran las minas con su costal de metal (que llaman cutama) a las espaldas, su montera y vela pendiente de ella (como lo hacen de las minas a la cancha de vaciar el metal) y así lo hizo derramando del costal oro y plata batida y se tornó a entrar con linda gracia.
>
> From the mouth of the mine of this *Cerro*, which was placed there for this purpose, emerged a *indiecillo* [a little Indian] dressed according to the custom of those working the mines with his sack of metal (which they call *cutama*) on his back, his cap and a candle hanging from it (as those from the mines do at the court where they empty the metal) and in this way he did it spilling hammered gold and silver from his sack and he reentered with fine grace (Arzáns III, 50; my translation).

The *indiecillo*, imitating the actions of the mountain's miners, empties his sack of gold and silver at the feet of the representative of the Spanish Monarchy – a grandiose gesture that serves as a visual reminder of the important role ascribed to the mountain of Potosí

---

[41] See, for example, the quote from Murúa cited below (*p. 131)

as a pillar of the Spanish monarchy.[42] Tales of the Imperial City's dazzling spectacles certainly present the modern audience with some of the most stunning presentations of the city of Potosí and its mountain. However, the discursive function of the rich mountain as an icon of wealth far exceeded its symbolic role in local performances.

European Echoes of the Rich Mountain: Conclusion

Most claims regarding the difficulties faced by the mining industry of Potosí, which was articulated especially in letters and petitions, likely never reached an audience beyond the authorities to whom they were directed. While Spanish authors by the mid-seventeenth century seem to have lost interest in Potosí, as evidenced by a relative absence of new publications or re-editions of older texts, the rich mountain is featured in several texts published outside the Spanish Empire starting in the late sixteenth century. Many of these texts rely on the information that was published several decades and up to a century earlier, echoing the description of Potosí as a legendary silver mountain that was introduced in the sixteenth century by Cieza de León and Acosta. As we have seen, Thomas Philipot, the English intellectual who relied on "Chronicles, Annals, Registers, and Genealogies that yield a faithful Representation" for his treatise on *The original and growth of the Spanish monarchy*, published in London in 1664, trustingly repeated the story of Potosí as a pillar of the Spanish Empire; the *Cerro Rico*, he proposed, serves as a "bottomless Exchequer" from which "does the King of Spain load that Fleet whence he

[42] In De la Torre's account the lines of the actor representing Potosí refer more explicitly to this connection between the Spanish Monarch and the rich mountain. Potosí demands "tributad los thesoros [de Potosí] a su invicto dueño" 'offered in tribute the treasures [of Potosí] to its invincible owner' (23). Of course, this invincible owner is none other than the king of Spain.

extracts so much Income and profit" (115). Philipot thus propagated the image of Potosí as an icon of wealth that was introduced in the early texts of Spanish eye-witness authors; these texts, as I have indicated above, formed part of the "official history" of Potosí, which represented the rich mountain in a manner that presumably benefited the Spanish Empire.

Only towards the end of the seventeenth century, over a century after news from Potosí had first indicated a decline of the silver output, did texts published in England start to question the representation of Potosí as an icon of wealth. In 1671 John Ogilby, appointed as His Majesty's cosmographer, wrote and published his work *America: Being the latest and most accurate description of the New World*, which he claims to have based on information he "collected from most Authentick Authors" and "Augmented with later Observations, and Adorn'd with Maps and Scupltures" (Title page). One of these later observations likely allowed him to dispel any illusions of Potosí's inexhaustible wealth created by the sixteenth-century Spanish accounts; Ogilby taunts, "the Spanish judge that at the Root of the Rich Vein is an incredible Treasure, though Experience hath hitherto taught us, that the Silver lessens in price and quantity the deeper they dig in the Ground" (464). However, he offers no concrete evidence that this decrease had actually occurred in Potosí. Evidence for the decline in silver production is, nevertheless, included in Robert Morden's *Geography rectified* published a little over a decade later in 1688. The work of the writer and cartographer includes several maps as well as textual descriptions of various regions of the world; one of these descriptions portrays information about Peru and highlights the province of Charcas (where Potosí is located) in particular among the several Peruvian provinces. Charcas, he elaborates, is "the best inhabited place in all the

West Indies" and "the silver mines in her Mountains are certainly the richest in the World" (529). Despite this confirmation of Potosí as an icon of wealth, Morden also points out that even though "the king of Spain had from thence a Million of Ducates formerly of his fifth, [f]or some time since the Rent has fallen" (529). Again, the wealth of the mountain is measured in terms of the income it provides to the Spanish Monarch. Now, however, it is the decline of silver from Potosí that determines not only the waning wealth of the mountain but also of the king. Regardless of these almost speculative references to Potosí's decline at the end of the seventeenth century, the abovementioned texts published in England are an indication of the successful creation and propagation of the *Cerro Rico* as an icon representative of wealth inside and outside the Spanish Empire. Even in the face of decline, Morden still expresses confidently that the mines of Potosí are "certainly the richest in the World."

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Potosí served as an icon of wealth in various discursive contexts. Its representations as an endless source of wealth bolstered the claims to authority of the Spanish monarchs and provided a point of pride for the Spanish and creole residents of the Imperial City, a pride that was showcased in the elaborate festivals of the mining boomtown. The significant financial contributions of Potosí's silver to the Spanish treasury allowed the city's residents to perceive of themselves as situated at the center of political relevance. References to the the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of wealth also served to offset the reports of decline in correspondence originating from the Imperial City and to attribute merit to the petitions advanced by the city's governing bodies. Despite the overwhelmingly positive representation of the *Cerro Rico* de Potosí in published and widely circulated texts, critical voices emerged in Spain

proposing that the influx of silver from the Indies had initiated an economic crisis based on the drastic price inflation to which it had contributed. Even though this relationship likely was not entirely obvious to seventeenth-century Spaniards, several references to Potosí in literary texts indicate that the wealth of the rich mountain might have been interpreted as an illusion without substance, given the fact that the average Spaniard never benefited from its silver but rather suffered the economic consequences of the excessive spending, financial mismanagement, and corruption of the Spanish government.

Chapter 3: Degenerate Wealth – Moral Corruption and Abuse in the Shade of the *Cerro Rico*

As we have seen in the previous chapter, in 1716 a number of festivities, including an extravagant nocturnal masquerade organized by Potosí's *minadores*, honored the newly nominated viceroy and archbishop Diego Morcillo Rubio de Auñón, who passed through the Imperial City on his way to Lima.[1] Arzáns and de la Torre, contemporaries and eyewitnesses of the event, described the theatrical interlude that dominated this event and Holguín represented it visually in his painting: a child dressed as an "Indian princess" sings a *loa* in praise of the viceroy, while two actors representing Europe and America enact the elusive ideal of their harmonious coexistence, and in this case, the benefit each of these continents had held for Morcillo; staged on a triumphal wagon a model of the rich mountain sets the background for this scene. Interrupting the harmonious display, another child dressed as an indigenous miner emerges from a "mine" in the miniature mountain calling attention to the landmark that defined the Imperial City and justified its perceived political importance in the Spanish Empire. After emerging

[1] Arzáns describes that besides the indigenous workers there were several employees who kept the mining industry running: the *minador mayor* and *menor* would have been in charge of the mines along with the *guardas de la labor*, the guards. Regarding the *minadores* the author claims that "en este ejercicio solo se ocupaban los criollos … así por saber el idioma indiano para hablarlo con los naturales como por tener más inteligencia en la disposición de la labor y conocimiento de los metals" 'only the creoles were occupied in this employment … both because they knew the indigenous language in order to speak with the *naturales* and because they had more insights into the order of the work and knowledge of the metals'(Arzáns II, 158; my translation).

from the mine, the *indiecillo* empties his pouch of silver at the feet of a figure representing the viceroy, Morcillo, and disappears back into the artificial mine. The interactions of the actors in this scene, or rather their lack of contact, are reminiscent of social interactions in the city and mines of Potosí, where Europeans and American *criollos* lived and worked alongside the large indigenous population. However, just as the lone "Inca princess" on the triumphal wagon stands aside and with the song provides an auditory backdrop to the actions of "Europe" and "America," the primary function of the indigenous labor force of the rich mountain also consisted in setting the background for the principal actors, primarily of European origin. The *indiecillo* in the dramatic interlude has an equally passive role as he is confined to the rich mountain, except for the purpose of providing the Spanish authorities with access to the mountain's wealth. While exceeding the European population in numbers, the indigenous residents of Potosí, in general, had a limited impact on the political and social decisions that determined the (inter-)cultural environment of the rich mountain.[2]

While the display references the cultural diversity of the population who were drawn to the rich mountain of Potosí, it portrays a constructed, idealized version of the complex and tense reality that was less than harmonious. The scene displayed on the parade wagon – which has been reconstructed for a wider audience by Arzáns, de la Torre, and Holguín – relies on the ethnocentric assumption that it is possible to construct a harmonious image of the rich mountain of Potosí and the economic and social relations it motivated in the Imperial City as well as the wider Andean region. Assuming a singular

[2] I have discussed the representations of this event, the entrance of the viceroy-archbishop Morcillo, in more detail in Chapter 2.

experience of reality that is shared across different cultural and ethnic groups, this enactment of harmony attempts to impose a vision of Potosí that does not reflect the lived experience of many of those residing in the shade of the rich mountain.

This idealization particularly stands out in the performance of the "little Indian" mine-worker who, in this theatrical interlude, offers tribute to the Spanish authorities. According to Arzáns, the character is dressed like an indigenous miner, carrying the *cutama* or pouch used to carry ore on his back and a cap on his head with a candle to illuminate the darkness (III, 50). As he emerges from the stylized mountain the *indiecillo* represents a decontextualized and glorified version of the actual miners. The tidy miner represented in this procession suggests that the indigenous workers held an important stake in the fortune of the city – which they did. By emptying his *cutama* for the Spanish authorities, the representation of the little Indian miner also implies that the role of the indigenous population in the larger *maquina* of Potosí's mining industry was collaborative and their contributions offered gladly and voluntarily – which was not the case. This spectacle, as well as others recorded by contemporary artists and authors, offered an opportunity to enact an idealized representation of social relations. As certain social divisions were suspended during the celebrations, the memories of these events convey the impression of the harmonious coexistence of indigenous and European groups, regardless of the divisions that separated the population of the Imperial City on other days. The enactment of equality as part of the celebrations provides a counterpoint to the critique of the exploitation of the indigenous miners, which circulated in many texts of diverse authorship.

Despite the perception of a momentary suspension of social divisions during the celebrations the inequalities, on which these divisions were based, were impossible to erase in daily life. However, it is not the social inequalities *per se* that are criticized in several texts from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth century. Many texts denounce the single-minded pursuit of material riches, an outlook, which, motivated by the rich mountain's wealth, defined the activities of residents and authorities in the Villa Imperial and Potosí's mines. Arzáns in particular laments that the pursuit of riches left no time for those impassioned by the promise of wealth to contemplate the consequences of their frequently unscrupulous dealings. Other writers and artists of various nationalities implicitly or explicitly linked the rich mountain – the icon of legendary wealth – to the moral decadence of Potosí's residents. They further indicated that the *Cerro Rico* played a significant role in the abuses and injustices that characterized social interactions especially between the Europeans and indigenous population residing and working in the mines and the vicinity of the rich mountain: more than just the location where abuses were committed, the mountain of Potosí is represented as the cause for these transgressions, its silver and promises of unimaginable wealth constitute the temptation that motivated moral degeneracy and exploitative behavior among Potosí's residents.

Throughout the colonial period European intellectuals, local residents, and indigenous workers leveled accusations of exploitation and cruelty against both the mine owners of Potosí and the authorities that sanctioned this abuse in the form of the *mita* regulations.[3] The accounts of the indigenous miners' *de facto* slavery contributed to the

[3] See below, *p. 88, for a definition of the *mita*. Accusations against the injust exploitation of mine workers, an exploitation that is now facilitated by mining companies

creation of an alternative, but equally formalized, history that reacted to the representation of the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of wealth. This narrative, which was not sanctioned by the Spanish Crown but rather by those who opposed them politically, is often described today as the "black legend." It represents the perspective and rhetorical efforts of those who benefited from calling into doubt, among other things, the gallant legend of Potosí as a divine reward for the heroic Spaniards, a legend that had been propagated in the sixteenth and seventeenth century by several of the Spanish intellectuals, including those referenced in the previoous chapter.[4] However, corruption and violence not only defined the oppressive relationships between the indigenous miners and those enforcing the fulfillment of their *mita* obligation; even among the residents of European origin, social dissent, envy, and corruption created a climate of distrust and explosive hostility.

The critique of the social climate was not limited to texts created by authors writing outside the Spanish Empire. A number of Spanish writers, many of whom had experienced these problems firsthand, also voiced criticism against perceived social problems and abuses. Representations of the *Cerro Rico* in these critical texts come to indicate the degenerative force associated with its wealth: texts and images portray the rich mountain as an icon of corruption and immorality. The analysis of this element of Potosí's iconicity will begin with a discussion of the representations of Potosí as a driving force behind the sinful behavior of Potosí's residents of European origin in their

---

rather than colonial authorities, continue until today, although a discussion of these denunciations, recorded for example in the movie *The Devil's Miner*, is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

[4] See below for a discussion of the Black Legend and its origins (*p. 108)

interactions with each other, a discourse that is primarily advanced in Arzáns's *Historia*. Then, the discussion will turn to an analysis of the discursive function ascribed to the mountain of Potosí in the criticism voiced by both Spanish authors and writers and artists from outside the Spanish Empire, against the abuse of the indigenous mine workers.

Thou Shalt Not Covet

The portrayal of the *Cerro Rico* in texts associated with the black legend and the denunciation of the Spaniards as ambitious and cruel in their exploration and exploitation of the treasures of the New World constitute only one dimension of the representations of Potosí as an icon of moral corruption. The narrative that links the immoral behavior of Spanish and creole residents of the Imperial City, in their interactions with each other, to the temptation of the mountain's silver indicates another dimension of the multifaceted icon. Arzáns, who resided in the Imperial City his entire life and interacted with its residents from many different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, represents in his *Historia* a rare perspective on the moral decadence associated with the enticing force of Potosí's silver, which cannot be found in the texts of those who experienced the mining boomtown as visitors, or who were presented with information about the rich mountain through other written, visual, or oral sources. While his text does not shy away from criticizing all the social groups who made the Imperial City their permanent or temporary home, the majority of his text is dedicated to the history of the European and creole population who resided in the Andean mining center. Thus, even though Arzáns was not the only or the first author to denounce the moral morass of Potosí, his criticism of the transgressions committed by Potosí's European and creole is unique.

The corruption of Potosí's officials in their pursuit of the riches promised by the rich mountain and the general disregard for the welfare of others is illustrated in Arzáns's account of the events he has described as the final "azote de Dios" – a Divine strike – against Potosí and the residents of the Imperial City; according to Arzáns this is the third in a series of divine scourges that destroyed Potosí.[5] From approximately 1643 to 1648 a group of Potosí's officials around the *mercader de plata* Francisco Gómez de la Rocha endeavored to increase their own fortune. Several of the factory's smelting silver mixed increasing amounts of copper into the amalgam used to strike Potosí's coins and set aside the silver they saved in the process for themselves. While the fraud was quickly discovered in Spain it was not until 1647 that a royal emissary, Francisco de Nestares Marín, was sent to Potosí to bring justice to those who had committed this fraud. Upon the arrival of Nestares Marín, the Imperial City of Potosí suffered a severe economic hit when the royal emissary determined to devalue the coin – *pesos de a ocho,* each worth eight reales – in circulation; for some coin the value was reduced by one real, for others by two, and a significant amount of coin lost half of its value and was removed from circulation. This loss affected all of Potosí, rich and poor, Spanish and indigenous, and beyond that all of Peru. While the *Potosinos* collectively endured heavy losses at least

[5] Arzáns identifies three principal "azotes" (II, 125): 1.) The civil war between Potosí's American-born creole population and their sympathizers, the vicuñas, and the vascongados, Potosí's residents of Basque origin that officially lasted from 1622-25, but was preceded by many armed encounters before its escalation; 2.) The breaking of the dam of Caricari, a lagoon that provided water for the hydro-powered mills along the Ribera in 1626; and 3.) The devaluation of the coin minted in Potosí in 1648 based on the ploy by several of Potosí's rich miners and authorities to "cargar la mano en la liga cuando se fundian las partidas" 'have a heavy hand with the alloy when the components were smelted' (Arzáns II, 115), producing coin that did not contain the proper amount of silver in its amalgam.

one of those who had provoked the economic disaster through their avarice had quietly put aside millions of pesos worth of unadulterated silver.[6]

This example is one of many anecdotes included in Bartolomé Arzáns's *Historia* that highlights the self-interest of officials, mine-owners, and refiners who, along with many others of the Imperial City's general population, demonstrated an often unconscionable pursuit of their own material gain at all costs. Combined, these stories create an image of moral corruption that surged in the shade of the *Cerro Rico*; this moral decay, evidenced in the amoral behavior and willful abuse of others' bodies and properties committed by the residents of the Imperial City, was attributed to the greed and ambition inspired by the rich mountain's treasure.

Arzáns communicates that in the city of Potosí the pursuit of material wealth motivated by greed eclipsed all other considerations; concerns about the morality of one's actions, the suffering of others, and the damage to the immortal soul, were insignificant to those presented with an opportunity for personal gain, an opportunity to ill-gained wealth embodied by the *Cerro Rico*. This connection is made evident in Arzáns's accusation against

[6] Arzáns describes the developments leading up to the "destruction of Potosí" (II, 123) in Book VIII, Chapter XXVII (II, 114-118), and the devaluation of the coin in Book IX, Chapter I (II, 123-128). One of Arzáns's major complaints regarding the punishment devised by Nestares Marín is that it mainly affected those innocent of the crime: "… pero fuera bueno que se ejecutara el castigo en los culpados y no en tanto número de caudales, porque es de advertir que de más de 40 ministros y oficiales que tenían cargos en la Casa de la Moneda … sólo el ensayador Ramírez y el capitán Rocha fueron castigados en las vidas" 'but it would be good if the punishment were executed at the expense of those who are guilty and not to the detriment of a great number of [personal] fortunes, because it is noteworthy that out of more than forty ministers and officers who were in charge of the mint… only the assayer Ramírez and Captain Rocha were punished with capital punishment' (II, 125; my translation). The events leading up to the devaluation also provide the background story for a 2009 novel by Annamaría Alfieri, *The City of Silver*.

> algunos españoles, que sin ser idólatras idolatraron en el oro y la plata de estos indianos reinos de tal modo que como malos cristianos han hecho por el oro y plata excesos tan grandes, y así la riqueza del Cerro Rico a muchos ha llevado a la perdición por el mal uso de ella.
>
> Some Spaniards, who, without being idolaters, commited idolatry in [their adoration of] gold and silver of these Indian realms in a way that as bad Christians they have committed grave excesses for gold and silver, and thus the wealth of the *Cerro Rico* has caused the perdition of many because they abused [its wealth]. (II, 134; my translation)

In this complaint voiced by Arzáns, the rich mountain becomes the biblical golden calf, an idol that replaces the true, Catholic God and tempts the residents of Potosí to fall from His grace.[7]

The debasement of currency in the late 1640s and the financial hardship that ensued for many residents of the Imperial City was only one of several divine punishments unleashed, according to Arzáns, upon the population in response to the cardinal sins they committed, including but not limited to greed, pride, wrath, and, based on the accusation cited above, an idolatrous reverence for the *Cerro Rico* and its silver. The events Arzáns relates describe a downward spiral where the sins committed by the residents of the Imperial City in pursuit of Potosí's material riches occasion divine consequences that provoke the decline of the mountain's silver and a decrese in the wealth of the *potosinos*. Yet, instead of repenting their transgressions, they renewed their – often immoral – efforts to strike it rich, after suffering an "azote de Dios." At the time Arzáns composed his *Historia*, his assessment of Potosí's reality indicates that this

[7] The rich mountain is represented as a religious icon – a "false god" – venerated by the Spaniards for the material rather than spiritual wealth it conferred upon them. In this way, the heretical veneration of the rich mountain by the Spaniards, denounced by Arzáns, differs from the indigenous veneration of the mountain as *huaca* – as a spiritual being (see Chapter 5).

vicious circle had left traces especially on the Imperial City, which "agobiada y sin fuerzas no puede ya casi decir esta Villa: 'Yo soy la grande en riquezas,' sino: 'Yo fui, y mis soberbias me han puesto ahora por los suelos.'" 'exhausted and without strength this Villa almost can no longer say: 'I am the one great in riches,' rather: 'I once was [great in riches], and my pride has brought me down''(Arzáns II, 123; my translation). This assessment responds to the image of Potosí as an icon of wealth, an image that was still idealized in the early eighteenth century when Arzáns composed his *Historia*. While he is not ready to concede the complete decline of the greatness associated with the *Cerro Rico* and the Imperial City, he laments that in the present neither measures up to its former greatness.

Disheartened by the corruption and greed he observes in his city, Arzáns quips in a pointed question that requires no response,

> ¿Quién no sabe la fuerza del interés con que se adquiere cuanto se intenta, quién no el valor del poder de la soberbia cuando se apodera del hombre que se ve superior? Todo lo acomete la ira, a todo se rinde la codicia. Porque los presentes ricos con que el indigno adquiere lo que pretende, aun en las casas de los reyes ejecutan lo que no debieran, pues no hay puerta tan cerrada que no se deje abrir con la llave de oro.
>
> Who is not familiar with the power of [economic] interest that allows one to obtain whatever one sets out to achieve, who is unaware of the valor resulting from the power of pride once it takes hold of the man who sees himself as superior? Wrath overcomes everything, greed conquers everything. Because the rich presents, with which the unworthy person acquires whatever he pretends, achieve even in the house of kings what they are not supposed to, after all there is no closed door which cannot be opened with a golden key. (Arzáns II, 158; my translation)

The rich mountain of Potosí provided this golden – or silver – key to many who were interested in opening doors that should have remained closed. In this cynical comment that critically addresses the behavior of Potosí's residents – even though it is phrased in a

more general context – Arzáns explicitly links their display of entitlement and self-interest to a perception of superiority that is based, at least in part, on an understanding of the wealth of the *Cerro Rico* as conferring a singular level of importance to the Imperial City and a feeling of being above the law to the residents holding political and economic power in the city. The above-cited account of those officials, who for several years brought adulterated silver coins into circulation, without being concerned about possible consequences to themselves and others, is but one example of this cavalier attitude toward crime.

This pursuit of wealth at the expense of everything else might be explained, though not justified, by a consideration of the socio-historical context of Potosí. As we have seen in the displays of excess during the festivals, described in Chapter 2, many Europeans and creoles in the Imperial City constructed their individual and group identity around the wealth that they were able to extract from the *Cerro Rico* and the place of significance they were able to claim based on this wealth within the microcosm of Potosí and within the Spanish Empire more generally. To preserve this conception of self it was necessary to consistently enact an image – and sometimes an illusion – of abundance, a display that was not limited to communal celebrations.

In the early eighteenth century, when the income from the mines had fallen to its lowest level yet, Arzáns acerbically observed that "los usos e invenciones nuevas de cada día desasosiegan las gentes y acaban las haciendas, porque somos todos tan locos que ninguno hay que conforme con lo que puede" 'the daily new customs and inventions upset the people and diminish the properties, because we are all so mad that there is nobody who conforms himself with what he can do [financially]' (Arzáns III, 2; my

translation). According to Arzáns, the residents of the Imperial City were not content with those things they were able to afford, but consistently coveted the most recent inventions and sought to flaunt the most recent trends. This extravagance was more widely perceived as a problem and to address one of its manifestations an ordinance was passed limiting the excess displayed both through the liveries of pages and riding mounts: "se ordenó … que en atención a los exorbitantes gastos de libreas para los pajes y aderezos de la cabalgaduras, éstos fuesen medianamente decentes y las libreas de paño de Quito de colores vivos con guarnición llana" 'it was ordered… that in regard to the exorbitant expenses of the liveries for pages and decorations for riding mounts, these should be moderately decent and the liveries made from cloth from Quito of vivid colors and and plain decorations' (Arzáns III, 1; my translation).[8] Despite this effort to curb the excess of dressing servants in uniforms made from rich silk and expensive lace, Arzáns's observation reaffirms that even those who were "medio rico" 'half rich' strove to display this wealth, and those who were less fortunate strove to change their situation by licit and illicit ploys. In general, Arzáns reflects an awareness of the fine and often ambiguous line that divides the behaviors of those who take pride in their identity (based in part on the wealth from Potosí's silver and the extravagant displays of its abundance), from those who are motivated by excessive ambition to seek out wealth at all cost.

The ruthless pursuit of wealth is also linked to the rich mountain in accounts of legal disputes over mining rights, which were not always resolved in the courtroom.

---

[8] Sumptuary laws were passed not only in Potosí. On Septermber 7, 1725, the Peruvian viceroy reaffirmed sumptuary regulation from the previous year that sought to moderate the excess of the clothes worn by negros, mulatos, indios, and mestizos (Konetzke, *Colección de Documentos* v. 3 pt. 1, 187).

Arzáns relates a conflict that occurred in 1676 between Don Luis Farfán and Simón Pimienta who "traían un reñido pleito por una mina en que entrambos eran interesados" 'had a bitter lawsuit for a mine in which both were interested' (Arzáns II, 253; my translation). The conflict is resolved through a fight in the plaza that leaves both plaintifs dead. Driven by the ambition to claim a vein of the rich mountain, the two Spaniards did not hesitate to commit murder or to risk their own lives in order to obtain what they had set their eye on.[9] Archival records show that at least one such lawsuit as the one described by Arzáns was indeed brought before the court of the *audiencia* in 1674, when the *maestre de campo* Antonio López de Quiroga asserted that Manuel de Campos was exploiting a mine that López de Quiroga considered his. De Campos and his partners refuted this claim, stating that they were, in fact, exploiting a mine that ran parallel to the one López de Quiroga had indicated in the lawsuit (CNM-AH CGI-063 1674). The legal documents do not provide definitive information about how the dispute was resolved, but the petitions from both parties clearly communicate an underlying anxiety, which seems

---

[9] Arzáns attempts to explain this recklessness stating that "las contiendas entre los que tienen poder y riquezas más veces se determinan por armas que por razón ni justicia" 'because the disputes between those who have power and wealth are more often determined by weapons than by reason and justice' (Arzáns II, 253; my translation). Arzáns's acerbic comment further supports the idea that those who boasted wealth and power perceived of themselves as above the law as they sought "justice" for themselves through the use of weapons and violence rather than relying on a court, in which, for all they knew, "justice" was bought by the highest bidder. There could be no expectation to receive justice at the hands of the authorities as corruption fueled by ambition had corroded the system's integrity. In the *Historia* explicit accusations of corruption are mostly leveled at authorities who held a position previous to Arzáns's composition of this text: for example, the general Zárate in 1593 for improperly exacting a fine from the merchants (I, 219), the corregidor Felipe Manrique in 1623 for elevating the coca prices for his own benefit (I, 356), and the corregidor Juan Vázquez de Acuña in 1641 for receiving a bribe from candidates wishing to be nominated for the position of *alcalde mayor* (II, 83).

to stem from more than just their desire to safeguard what they presume to be rightfully their own. López de Quiroga's final correspondence in this file indicates that his confidence in the authorities' ability – and likely their desire – to effect justice was frail, as he denounces the lack of competence of those sent to assess the veracity of his initial complaint (CNM-AH, CGI-063, 1674).[10]

These archival records as well as Arzáns's representations of litigations indicate that the mines of the rich mountain were a cause for contention and social dissent. The tense social climate and explosive violence, which seemed to be an everyday occurrence in Potosí, are immediately linked to the competition that arose from the pursuit of wealth in the mines of the rich mountain. In the context of the larger discourse related to Potosí the lawsuit clearly shows that, despite claims to the contrary, in the Imperial City the rich mountain was not regarded as "el bien común" – the common good in a material sense – of all of Christianity. Rather, individuals laid claim to the mountain and its silver and were prepared and willing to sacrifice the lives of their opponents and – if necessary – their own life and immortal soul in their pursuit of wealth and the heretical worship of the

[10] The complaint recorded by Quiroga is the following: "digo que abiendo ido los beedores a rreconocer si en la pertenencia de mi persona haian gente algunas personas parece que por no auerse comunicado desde el rregistro de dha beta declaran no poder reconocer si es la beta de mi persona y para hacer este rreconocion solo llevaron los titulos suios y no el pedimto y rregistro que hico el Capan Manuel de Campos por el qual se aberiguara con certeca como estan comiendo la pertenencia de mi p. Por que lo que pasa es que abiendo registrado el dho Manuel de Canpos un ramo que se apartaua de la beta principal de polo y iendole sigiendo se encontro con la beta de S. Marcos donde se incorporo … en grave perjuicio de mi p y para que esto se aberigue. A VM pido y supco mande que el presente escrivo haga testimonio del que hico el dho Manuel de Campos y con el baia un beedor al dho parage y rreconosca donde hico el rregistro el dho Manuel de Canpos" (CNM-AH CGI-063 1674).

Cerro Rico and the material wealth it represented.[11] Arzáns criticizes the moral decadence that informed much of the interaction of the city's residents, while implicitly or explicitly connecting this behavior to the pursuit of wealth in the mines (or associated industries) and to the temptation the rich mountain provided for Spanish and creole residents in search of a fortune. The criticism of this self-interested pursuit of silver in the rich mountain and its detrimental consequences for morality and the "common good" in the Imperial City represents a discourse that did not circulate widely beyond the immediate environment of the *Cerro Rico*. In this discourse, the rich mountain still functions as an icon of wealth, but Arzáns in particular considers the material wealth of Potosí in opposition to the immaterial goods of faith and compassion; in this comparison, the *Cerro Rico* and its treasure fall short and come to represent the moral degeneracy of those who irresponsibly pursued the promise of wealth. Looking at the references that link the moral corruption of Potosí's residents to the degenerative influence of the rich mountain's wealth helps a modern audience understand the wider social and economic context that informed the abusive and exploitative relationships between the indigenous workers in the mines and those who oversaw their work both physically, administratively, and legislatively.

[11] As soon as individuals had claimed the silver, many of them freely donated part of the money especially to religious causes, as Arzáns describes. However, this generosity can be considered as an alternative display of wealth that ultimately served to empower the individual.

The monstrous mountain and its gates to hell

Many texts created by European intellectuals, American observers, and, to a limited extent, the Amerindians who experienced the hardship of the mines, emphasize the indigenous suffering that occurred in the shadow of the rich mountain. The exploitation of indigenous miners is linked to the ruthless pursuit of the wealth, which European and creole lawmakers, mine-owners, and overseers expected to extract from the rich mountain. The accounts describing the gloom of the mines represent an image of the mountain that is in stark contrast to the superficial glitter of the spectacles, which seemed to constitute an important part of the identity created by residents of the Imperial City. Nevertheless, tales of the spectacles and the extravagant display of wealth allow us to better understand the motivation behind such cruel excesses against the indigenous miners: the residents of the Villa Imperial were concerned with keeping face for their own benefit and pride as well as with the maintenance of a place of privilege in the Spanish Empire. The accounts representing the exploitative relationship of Potosí's rich *mineros* and *azogueros* with the indigenous workers, aside from challenging this locally important idea of a glamorous Potosí, also questioned the widely distributed image of Potosí as a divine reward that provided the means to defend the Catholic faith in Europe and advance the conversion of the Amerindians in Peru.

Representations of the *Cerro Rico* indicate the mountain not only as the location, but also the cause of the abuse suffered by the indigenous miners, confirming its negative iconicity with respect to the moral corruption that facilitated this suffering. Several texts specifically criticize the *mita* system that allowed Spanish mine owners to exact a labor toll from indigenous groups assigned to their mines and refineries. The *mita* was inspired

by the Inca practice using the same term. Before the Spanish conquest of the Inca territories, the Andean communities were required to perform their *mita* service to the benefit of the Inca ruler and the community.[12] This service might have included the construction and maintenance of the elaborate road system that connected Cuzco, the administrative center of the Inca Empire, to the four provinces of the *Tahuantinsuyu*, labor in the agricultural plots dedicated to the Inca or the Incan deities, such as the Sun, or labor in the mines. Introduced in 1573 by the Peruvian viceroy Francisco de Toledo, the Spanish *mita* was specifically designed to ensure an adequate labor force for the Peruvian mines. The seventh part of the male population of certain indigenous communities – mostly the communities surrounding Potosí but some as far away as the province of Cuzco – were required to present themselves in Potosí and offer their services in the mines or refineries to which they were assigned for the term of a year. During these 12 months the workers, or *mitayos*, were required to work for one week after which they were entitled to a *huelga*, or period of idleness, of two weeks; for these two weeks they would be free from the obligation to serve in the mines "no para que los dichos indios estuviesen ociosos, sino para que pudiesen andar en sus tratos, trajines y aprovechamientos" 'not for them to be idle, but for them to pursue their own business,

[12] María Rostworowski in her *Historia del Tahuantinsuyu* explains that during the reign of the Incas, the *mita* constituted a rotational labor draft that required *ayllu* members – members of an Andean family group or community – to lend their labor for diverse tasks in the service of the community, the local leaders (*curacas*), the sacred idols (*huacas*) who often had their own property, but also to work the land of the Inca government and the main deity, the Sun. The tasks, Rostworowski claims, were completed with "music, songs, and food at the expense of the beneficiary of the labor" (259-60, my translation). Finally, Rostworowski stresses that "the term mita indicates more than just a organization system for labor tasks, a certain Andean philosophical concept of an eternal return is inherent in the term" (260, my translation).

transports, and benefits'(Toledo 359; my translation). For each day the *mitayos* worked they were supposed to receive a *jornal*, salary, ranging from three and a half *reales* for those who worked in the mines to two and three quarter *reales* for those who worked in the mills and refineries; for each day that was spent travelling to the mines and back the indigenous workers were supposed to receive half of their daily salary.[13]

That these rules were not always observed is obvious from complaints and petitions filed by indigenous authorities on behalf of their communities. One such complaint was registered in 1600 by don Carlos Vissa, principal *cacique* and captain of the province of Chucuito. Vissa sent a letter to don Luis Quiñones Osorio, the royal treasurer, indicating that the *mitayos* frequently did not even receive the full salary they were entitled to:

> Auiendo trauajado el miserable del ynº toda la semana con sus noches y dias sin cessar y harto de rrecevir açotes [...] al cabo de la dha semana le pagan lo q a trabajado en toda ella y en sus noches, rreputandole el metal q a labrado e sacado a montones e tarea e por este ynfernal y cruel camino pagan al pso e meo [peso y medio] o dos pso y el que mas dos pso e meo auiendo mui al doble gastado e puesto de su caudal el pobre del ynº.
>
> The miserable Indio, having worked all week during night and day without rest and sick of receiving lashes [...] at the end of the said week they pay him for his work throughout the week and the nights, considering [only] the metal that he has worked and extracted in piles and according to the target and by this infernal and cruel method they pay him one and a half or two pesos and to him who extracted the most two and and half pesos, even though the poor Indio has well spent twice that much [on supplies] from his own belongings. (AGI Charcas 45 1600; my translation)

[13] These rules were established by the Peruvian viceroy Francisco de Toledo between 1573 and 1575 and are summarized in his "Repartimiento general de indios para trabajar en las minas e ingenios de Potosí" which is dated August 6, 1578. Jeffrey A. Cole has published a detailed historical analysis of the mita in *The Potosí Mita, 1573-1700* (1985).

Vissa's account suggests that the mine owners disregarded the regulations of the *mita* that were established by Toledo with the intent to protect the indigenous workers. Furthermore, he describes the wider impact of this abuse on the indigenous communities as a whole, which were affected by the illegal deduction of wages. As individuals saw themselves obligated to abandon property and expend funds to ensure their survival, the communities and families who depended on them also suffered.[14] Based on the account of another indigenous leader, Juan de Cuevas Herrera, Alcira Dueñas has similarly asserted that "Cuevas Herrera's discourse of social justice … highlighted forced labor as an illegal practice that destroyed indigenous social networks and the pre-established forms of reciprocity" (128). The accounts of Vissa and Cuevas Herrera, however, not only hint at the larger impact of the abuses against indigenous communities, but also represent the ongoing negotiation of social control and power relations relative to the rich mountain.

According to Vissa's statement, those in control – likely a combination of the primarily creole mining foremen and mine owners – determined at the end of each week

[14] Aside from denouncing these abuses, Vissa petitioned for an increase in the daily salary the *mitayos* receive for their work to match the salary of voluntary laborers. Vissa argued that since the time when the salary had been determined by Toledo in 1573 the work demanded of the *mitayos* had changed, because the mines were now deeper and more dangerous, and at the same time the prices for food had increased making it necessary for the mineworkers to supplement their income with their own *hacienda*, which might have included their land, homes, and livestock, as well as any savings. Vissa asserts that it was impossible to survive on the salary the *mitayos should* receive, much less on the reduced salary they *actually* obtained at the end of the week. The financial hardship suffered by the indigenous attending to Potosí had come to the attention of the viceroy don Fernando de Torres y Portugal as early as 1586. In a letter addressed to the *capitán* Juan Ortíz de Zárate, *visitador* of Potosí, the viceroy shares his concern about the fact that "los naturales … para sustentarse gastan demas de sus trabajos sus carneros y otras cossas que traen de sus cassas" 'the natives… spend excessively from their work, their livestock, and other things they bring from their homes in order to sustain themselves' (ABNB CPLA 5 1586; my translation).

the amount of wages each worker deserved to receive based on a *tarea* (weekly or daily target) that was imposed by those holding authority over the mines. Enforcing these expectations made it possible for those in a position of power to assert psychological control over the mineworkers in addition to the physical force they employed. As the *mitayos* along with their families and communities depended on the income from their work to sustain themselves, it was paramount to fulfill these quotas, so that the *mitayos* likely found themselves between a rock and hard place in deciding whether to risk their safety or their sustenance in trying to meet these expectations. The far-reaching consequences of the forced labor exacted from the indigenous communities are not generally addressed in the early modern texts that decry the abuse of the indigenous miners. The criticism in texts produced on both sides of the Atlantic by Catholic as well as Protestants is focused on the more easily visible physical abuse and danger of the work performed by the indigenous workers.

In 1588, Luis Capoche, the owner of a refinery – *ingenio* – in the Imperial City of Potosí sent his *Relación general* to the Conde de Villar, the viceroy of Perú at the time. He describes the history of Potosí dating back to its discovery in 1545, but, being engaged in the mining industry himself, he also provides an overview of the processes of this industry and the labor involved in them. Capoche's description of the labor performed by the indigenous *mita* workers presents a vivid and disturbing insight into the conditions of labor in the mines.

> El modo general como al presente [...] labran las minas unos barreteando el metal y otros sacándolo y subiéndolo por unas escalas de tres ramales hecho de cueros de vacas [...] de manera que puede subir un indio y bajar otro. Tienen estas escalas de largo diez estados y al fin dellas está otra que comienza [...]. Sacan los Indios el metal que ha de llegar a dos arrobas [aprox. 23 kg] en una manta suya

[…] y suben de tres en tres y el delantero en una mano lleva una vela para que vean por donde suben y descienden por estar las minas oscuras sin ninguna claridad y la vela da poca luz y las mas veces se le apaga con el viento y con entrambas manos lo mejor que pueden se vienen haciendo y ahechando y subiendo con arto trabajo ciento y cincuenta estados y otros tantos de descendida […]. Allegan los Indios sudando y sin aliento y robada la color y el refrigerio que suelen hallar para consuelo de su fatiga es decirle que es un perro y darle una buelta sobre que trae poco metal o que se tarda mucho o que es tierra lo que saca o que ha hurtado y menos a de cuatro meses que sucedió que a un minero queriendo dar a un Indio sobre esto temeroso del palo con que le quería herir, se fue a guarecer a la propia mina y con la turbación cayo y se hizo cien mil pedazos.

The general way in which presently … they work the mines, some are breaking the ore and other carry it out and bring it up by way of some ladders of three strands made from cow hide … in this way one indio can walk up while another descends. These ladders are ten *estados* high and reaching their end another one begins … The indios bring out the metal in a blanket, the weight of which approximates two *arrobas* [aprox. 23 kg], … and they climb up in groups of three and the first one carries a candle in one hand so that they can see where they are climbing and descending because these mines are dark without any light and the candle provides little light and most of the time it blows out with the wind and with both hands, as best as they can, they proceed working and sifting and climbing and descending with extreme effort the onehundred and fifty *estados*. The indios arrive sweating and out of breath and robbed of color and the reward they generally to alleviate their fatigue is somebody telling them that they are a dog and giving them a tongue lashing accusing them of bringing little metal or of tarrying or of bringing out dirt or of stealing; and less than four months ago it happened that as a *minero* was going to beat one of the Indios – this [Indio] fearful of the club with which he was going to hit him, returned to the mine for shelter and in his discomfiture, he fell and smashed into a hundred thousand pieces" (Capoche 109; my translation).

Capoche provides an idea of the grueling and dangerous work performed in the mines by indigenous laborers who had to carry a heavy load of ore through the narrow passages of the mines and up the unsteady ladders fabricated from cowhide. Following the veins of silver, by 1588 the mines had reached a depth of up to 150 estados (approximately 250 meters) only in height difference, a measure that did not take into consideration the distance miners had to travel on sometimes narrow paths cut into the mountain horizontally. Beyond describing the hard work of the miners, however, Capoche

references the abusive interactions between the indigenous miners and those who oversaw their work in the mines. According to Capoche, upon exiting the mines exhausted by their heavy load and dangerous passage, the miners experienced additional verbal and physical abuse from those in charge.[15]

Despite the very concrete observation of abuse committed by the frequently creole *minadores* (mining foremen), it is the mountain, rather than the people, that is most frequently represented as the "monster" in text authored by Spanish writers.[16] As early as 1550, even before the instauration of the *mita* as a forced labor toll collected from the indigenous population of the Andes, the Dominican friar Domingo Santo Tomás described Potosí in a letter to the Council of the Indies as "una boca del infierno por la cual entran cada año … gran cantidad de gente, que la codicia de los españoles sacrifica a su Dios" 'An entrance to hell through which enter every year… a great number of people, whom the Spaniards' greed sacrifices to their God' (15; my translation). This sentiment was echoed by Capoche in 1585, who, after describing several accidents that had

---

[15] The *Relación* written by Capoche also addresses the geographical context of the *Cerro Rico* and provides a very detailed overview over the mines that had been discovered as well as the "minas, y la cantidad que cada uno posee, con distinción y la manera y hondura en que están y los indios que por la visita general … les señalaron" 'the mines, and the quantity [of silver] which each posses, with a distinction of their manner and their depth and the Indians that were assigned to them based on the General Survey' ("Capoche" 79). Regarding the text, Lewis Hanke, the editor of the modern edition, mentions that the original manuscript seems to have been lost, and the copy he used for his edition is a coetaneous manuscript copy of the original text preserved in the Archive of the Indies (AGI) in Seville, Spain. Capoche's text, though unpublished, achieved a limited circulation and has been referenced in a few codices published since 1585 (Hanke, "Capoche" 43-44). A second document in the AGI contains a copy of Capoche's *Relación* that omits the specific lists included in the original (AGI Charcas 134). Capoche's description of the work performed in the mines elaborates and confirms details also included in Acosta's [1590] description of mining labor.

[16] See *p. 73 for more information on Potosí's *minadores*.

occurred in the mines in a short period of time, proclaims that "y así está el hospital [lleno] de indios heridos, y mueren cada año más de cincuenta, que esta fiera bestia se traga vivos" 'thus the hospital is full of injured Indios, and each year more than fifty of them die, who are devoured alive by this savage beast [the mountain of Potosí]' (159; my translation). In several of the accounts written by Spanish authors, the mountain thus takes on a life of its own as a fierce beast that consumes those who venture into its realms, becoming an enticing but formidable "monstruo de riqueza; cuerpo de tierra y alma de plata (que con más de 1.500 bocas que tiene llama a los humanos…)" 'monster of Wealth; a body of dirt and a silver soul (who with its more than 1,500 mouths calls to the humans…)' (Arzáns I, 3; my translation).[17] Representing the rich mountain as an entity with an independent, and presumably malicious, agency, the culpability for the indigenous suffering is surreptitiously shifted away from the authorities who enact the unjust legislation that allows the exploitation of the indigenous people in Potosí, and away also from those who see themselves in a position to enforce the rules.

Fray Diego de Ocaña, a Spanish missionary who towards the end of the sixteenth century spent several months in Potosí promoting the adoration of the Virgin of Guadalupe among Potosí's European and indigenous residents, was one of the few Spanish authors reporting from personal experience on the ordeal of the mines. He remembers that,

---

[17] A similar idea is communicated in Arzáns's report on the collapse of a mine, which killed 300 workers in 1595; he concludes that this "no fue el primero ni el último [accidente], pues son innumerables los indios que este monstruo de riqueza se ha tragado" 'this was not the first nor the last [accident], afterall this monster of wealth has devoured an innumerable quantity of Indios' (I, 227; my translation).

> Yo entré por el socavón de Juan Ortiz a ver estas minas, para poder escribir esto que escribo, hasta que no pude pasar adelante por la estrecheza del lugar y por los hábitos que llevaba; donde miraba a una parte y a otra y veía tantas luces y oía tantos golpes, que me pareció que estaba en el infierno.
>
> I entered through the *socavon* [tunnel] of Juan Ortíz to see these mines, in order to be able to write what I am writing now, until I was unable to proceed further because of the narrowness of the space and because of the [religious] habits I was wearing; wherever I looked I saw so many lights and heard so many bangs, that it seemed to me I was in hell. (257-8; my translation)[18]

Even though Ocaña did not have to perform the grueling labor of hewing the ore from the mountain's rocky walls, nor did he carry a load of silver along the narrow paths that hardly allowed him to pass, his impression of the mines is an image of darkness, confusion, and oppression. The visceral reaction he experienced during his exploration of the mines, which he describes vividly in his text, provokes him to also compare the mountain's interior to an inferno dominated by an onslaught of visual and auditory stimuli that in the darkness provoke such confusion for the author that he cannot discern his position after progressing through the narrow passages for approximately two miles. Taking into consideration that Ocaña voluntarily entered the mines and was able to leave them at his own discretion, it is difficult to imagine the impression that the sights and sounds of the mines must have left on the indigenous miners who did not usually have the option to leave at will. Arzáns confirms the great impact an exploration of the mines could have on those who entered into the mountain's labyrinth. Several of those who entered out of curiosity, Arzáns claims, "han salido robado el color y (dando diente a

---

[18] A similar description of the mines is also included in Antonio de Calancha's *Corónica* "en las entrañas del monte resuenan ecos, de los golpes de las barretas, que con las vozes de unos i gemidos de otros, semejan los ruidos al orrible rumor de los infiernos" 'in the bowels of the mountain the echoes of the pickax blows resound combined with the voices of some and the sighs of other the sounds appear as the horrible buzz of hell' (V, 5; my translation).

diente) ni pronunciar palabra han podido (efectos del horror que acaban de experimentar), y sosegados, no han sabido cómo ponderarlo ni referir los asombros que hay dentro … y todo es confusion cuanto se ve allí dentro" 'They walked out robbed of their color (chattering their teeth) unable to pronounce a word (the effects of the horror they had just experienced), and even after the calmed down, they did not know how to analyze or describe the shocking surprises that are inside… and all that is seen in there is confusion' (Arzáns I, 66; my translation).[19] Arzáns describes the experience inside the bowels of the mountain as an ordeal that leaves the explorer speechless and out of his wits – and again, this is the experience of a "visitor" who did not perform any of the dangerous tasks the indigenous miners were charged with. The authors, who all have first hand experience of the mines of Potosí, describe the mountain as enlivened by the mining operations. It is represented as more than just a frightful location: the *Cerro Rico* actively creates the shocking scenario portrayed by Arzáns and Capoche. Nevertheless, the rhetorical strategies that present the mountain as a "monstruo," an "infierno," and an active participant in shaping the horrendous reality of the mining operations, permit Spanish

---

[19] Arzáns would have been able to adequately represent this experience since he also ventured into the mines and discovered that in the mines, he and his guide "[fueron] discurriendo por varios suyos, con tanta fatiga que en mi interior maldecía mi curiosidad pues unas veces caminabamos a pique, otras valiéndonos de los brazos y pies para subir a otros pasadizos y barbacoas en que él [guía] estaba tan diestro en caminar cuando yo me mostraba con tanto temor que me parecía a cada paso llegaba al ultimo de mi vida. Pasos había tan estrechos que era necesario arrastrarme y siempre con el cuidado de que nos e me apagase la luz" 'we passed through several of his [mines] with much effort so that I cursed my curiosity [to explore the mines], because sometimes we walked hurriedly, and others using our hands and feet to climb passages and shelves in which [my guide] walked with much skill while I felt so much fear that it seemed each step would be the last of my life. There were passages so narrow that it was necessary to drag myself and always with care not to let the light go out' (Arzáns II, 283; also qtd. in Baptista Gumucio 177).

authors to voice their criticism of the abuses without having to give up the positive self-image of themselves as defenders of the Catholic faith and redeemers of the immortal souls of the indigenous. Yet, the description of the mines as gates to hell creates an image of the mountain as a place where salvation was not likely contradicting the proclaimed goal of the Spaniards to use Potosí's mineral wealth to save the souls of the indigenous.

Calancha was likely aware of this conflict between the two representations of the mountain – as both an important support for the Spanish efforts to Christianize the indigenous groups in the Andes, and as a "monster" that "consumed" the Indians who ventured inside the labyrinth of its bowels, the network of mining shafts. In his *Crónica moralizada* [1635], he states that "a no aprovechar la plata de Potosí … al remedio de tantos, pensara que el Demonio guió por allí los venados o espantó los carneros para abrir dos mil puertas al infierno" '[I]f Potosí's silver did not benefit … to remedy of so many [souls], I would think that the devil guided the deer this way or scared the sheep [llamas] in order to open two-thousand doors to the inferno' (Calancha V, 6; my translation).[20] Explicitly, the mines of Potosí are likened to the biblical underworld and Satanic temptations; indeed, their silver proved to be a temptation that was difficult to resist, a temptation that enticed several of Potosí's residents to stray from the virtuous path and commit violent acts in addition to the cardinal sins of greed, envy, and pride. However, Calancha, unlike Arzáns who strongly criticizes the sinful behavior of those connected to Potosí's silver industry, seems to consider the reality of moral corruption a lesser concern in light of the benefits that the mountain's silver had brought to a great number of

---

[20] The reference to the *venados/carneros* alludes to the tale of Potosí's discovery, according to which, the indigenous Gualpa discovered Potosí when his herd of llamas strayed off the path he had intended to take from La Plata to the mines of Porco.

individuals. He exculpates the acts of immorality and violence as an acceptable, if not ideal, means to an end, even as he speculates on the *Cerro Rico* being an enticement of the devil to descend into the darkness of sin.

Calancha's statement is another example of the ongoing negotiation of the meaning and significance attributed to the rich mountain as an icon: in regards to Potosí's significance for the financial and moral economy of the Spanish Empire, the representations of the *Cerro Rico* alternate between depicting the rich mountain as an icon of wealth and denouncing it as an icon of the moral decadence that was associated with its wealth. Calancha attempts to straddle the gap between those two seemingly contradictory representations. His explanation, however, fails to convince, as the mere mention of the possibility of demonic intervention communicates the doubt inherent in this statement: the wealth of the mountain of Potosí and the good that has been worked through this wealth might not be sufficient to atone for the sins committed in the pursuit of the mountain's riches. Regardless, Calancha does not directly represent the mountain as a harbinger of evil. The rhetorical strategy he employs, however, provides an alternative excuse for rejecting responsibility for the moral transgressions committed against indigenous people primarily by the Spanish and creole figures of authority. If Potosí's silver had not contributed to the salvation of many souls and the common good of the empire, then the moral transgression could only be explained by the involvement of the Devil who must have guided the poor llamas to discover the mountain's wealth, Calancha claims. Even though it is clear that he is a proponent in favor of the first part of the statement – his version of the truth – the sentence leaves it up to the audience to decide to either agree with Calancha and attribute a redeeming value to Potosí's silver, or

to alternatively interpret the mountain as a diabolic temptation that has led astray those who commit abuses in the name of the greater good. Either choice, however, removes the responsibility for these transgressions from the shoulders of those who committed them.

The "Black Legend" of Potosí

In texts and representations of the rich mountain that originated outside the Spanish empire the criticism was more directly leveled against the human facilitators of the abuse. Some of the earliest published texts to criticize the treatment of indigenous workers in the mines of Potosí were those of the French author André Thevet (in 1558 and 1575) and of the Flemish printer Theodor de Bry (in 1601). Thevet had travelled to Brasil with the French Commander Nicolas Durand de Villegaignon, who attempted to establish a *France Antarctique* by invading present-day Rio de Janeiro in 1555. During this stay in the Americas Thevet had sought out information and collected some of the "singularitez" – the rarities both in the form of materials and stories – of the lands that were unknown to him (Gaffarel xiii-xv). Upon his return to France he determined to compose an account of the impressions and information he gathered and "afin d'ajouter plus de crédit à ses déscriptions, il voulut les accompagner de gravures reproduisant les scenes étranges, dont il avait été le témoin, où les objects curieux qu'il rapportait avec lui" 'in order to add more credit to his descriptions, he wanted to accompany them with engravings that reproduced the strange scences, which he had witness, or the curiosities , which he brought with him' (Gaffarel xvi, my translation). He published the *Singularitez de la France Antarctique* in 1558, and later adapted the information included in this text for the *Cosmographie universelle*, which was published in 1575.

The Protestant printer Theodor de Bry, to avoid religious persecution by the Spanish in his native city of Liége in present day Belgium, settled in Frankfurt (Main) after brief stays in Strassbourg, Antwerp and London. Between 1590 and 1634 the print workshop of the de Bry family published the series of *Great Voyages*, which reproduced texts written by various explorers of the New World in translation. De Bry's contribution to these texts are the illustrations that accompany and interpret the written descriptions; through these images, Bernadette Bucher claims, "de Bry offered a broad view of European conquests in America and the first contacts with Amerindians" (4) to an audience that had access to few visual representations of these events.[21] Information on Potosí was included in the *Neundter vnd letzter Theil Americae* of the *Great Voyages* published in Frankfurt am Main in 1601. The text itself is a translation of José de Acosta's *Historia natural y moral* and thus provides limited information about how the original text had been received and interpreted by an audience outside the Spanish Empire. Rather, it shows the continued circulation of Acosta's positive representation of the *Cerro Rico*. However, de Bry adds to this translation a series of engravings through which he communicates his interpretation, which more generally represents a Protestant perspective, of the details described by Acosta.

Unlike Thevet's text, then, the written part of de Bry's publication did not communicate original ideas, but rather constituted a collection of texts created by other

---

[21] According to Bucher, "nothing comparable to de Bry's *Great Voyages*, the imposing group of large folio volumes illustrated by several hundred copperplate engravings, yet existed" (4) at the time of its publication. Walter Mignolo points out that, in addition to the demonstrative function of the illustration indicated by Bucher, de Bry's illustrations serve a constructive function in their contribution to "building the imaginary of European identity and its difference from the rest of the world" ("Crossing Gazes" 177).

authors. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that in both of these publications the written and visual representations of the work that occurred in the mines of Potosí was based on secondhand information that the authors had gathered through their investigations of other written (de Bry) and oral (Thevet) sources.[22] The representations of Potosí included in these texts, rather than providing "true" historical information about the rich mountain, are useful in determining the image of Potosí that circulated beyond its immediate geographical space. More specifically, the images included in these two texts significantly shaped the European perception of the labor performed by the indigenous miners – primarily de Bry's *Great Voyages*, which, despite the success of Thevet's work in France, had a wider circulation and was held in higher regard than the *Singularitez*. The influence of de Bry's work is made evident in a series of later visual and written representations that are based on his original engravings.[23]

---

[22] De Bry clearly indicates in the text that the information contained in the volume I am referring to here was a translation of the "niederländischer Beschreibung [von America] Iohan. Hugen von Lintschotten" – the Dutch description of America by Lintschotten, which was itself a translation of José de Acostas *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*. De Bry did not actually translate the text, the translation is attributed to Iohannem Humberger. On the other hand, the inconsistencies contained in Thévét's text, i.e. his assertion that Potosí was located on a Caribbean island rather than in the Andes, suggest that he relied on oral information, which he had gathered from his informants during his stay in Brasil.

[23] De Bry's *Great Voyages*, and in particular the engravings of Potosí, have influenced representations by other European authors, for example Johann Ludwig Gottfriedt, 1655; Atanasius Kircher, 1678; *Voyage de Marseille à Lima*, 1720; Franz Ernst Brückmann, 1727. Thévét was considered to "ne pas avoir un jugement très sûr, et, à une époque où le Français était manié par tant d'auteurs avec une grâce naïve qui nous enchante encore, il n'écrivait que lourdement, parfois meme avec pédantisme" 'not have a very sure judgment, and during a time period when the French were accustomed to so many authors with a naïve grace, which still enchants us, he only wrote clumsily, and sometimes even pedantically' (Gaffarel i). Regardless of his lack of grace, the *Sigularitez* were popular in France and earned him the title of cosmographer to the French court.

The images contained in the two texts share a representation of the mines that puts an emphasis on the hard physical labor performed by the workers. Thevet represents in his image "Comme les esclaves fouillent & font fondre la mine," or 'the manner in which the slaves excavate and smelt ore from the mine' (Figure 1). This illustration shows diverse processes that were part of the mining industry: breaking the ore from the rock, transporting the ore to the refinery, and smelting the silver in a smelting oven.[24] In the background of the image two workers balancing on a narrow rim are hacking away at a rock wall with pickaxes while on the ground below the rim two bodies – seemingly broken and carelessly discarded – warn of the dangers inherent in this work. In the foreground of the image several slaves, identified as such by their (half-) nakedness as well as by the chains confining their limbs, carry heavy loads of metal to a smelting oven; their progress is hurried along by a figure in European dress swinging a club. While the natural environment in this image represents the Caribbean setting in which Thevet locates the mines of Potosí (*Singularitez* 381), the cruelty and disregard for human life depicted in this engraving are consistent with the observations of hardship and injustice included in the firsthand accounts, especially Capoche, discussed above. However, Thevet's representation attributes those who enact this cruelty against the "slaves" with the agency that in the accounts authored by Spanish writers is attributed to the monstrous mountain.

[24] This image was included in the 1575 edition of Thevet's *Cosmographie Universelle*; Vol. 2 verso leaf 984; held by the John Carter Brown Library.

Figure 1 *Comme les esclaves fouillent & font fondre la mine*. André Thevet. 1575. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

In de Bry's representation of the mines, the mountain of Potosí is represented in the foreground of the image. Steep inclines and a mine entrance that is pictured at the peak of the mountain give it the visual likeness of a volcano. A transversal cut allows the audience an opportunity to peek inside the mines: a dark space illuminated only by the candles carried by several of the mineworkers. Unlike Thevet's representation, de Bry's image does not depict a specific agent exerting force over the workers. However, similar to the activities of the slaves depicted by Thevet, the scene pictured in this engraving is filled with action: each person is actively performing a task and the positioning of some of the figures in the scene – especially the workers crowding the ladder during their ascent – suggest that the work is performed with haste. There are no idle bystanders; this

almost frantic activity implies that despite the apparent lack of enforcement, the workers perceive an exterior force pushing them to perform their assigned tasks without delay. The resulting impression communicated through this image is one of anxious energy filling a precarious and severe space (Figure 2).

Figure 2 *Wie die Indianer das Gold aus den Bergen graben*. Theodor de Bry. 1601. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

These images, which successfully communicate the tense atmosphere inside the rich mountain and the physical hardship of those working in the mines, suggest a critique of the abuse and exploitation. Yet such a critique does not seem to derive from empathy

for the human beings suffering in the mines, but rather from the disapproval of the exploits of the Spanish. Just as the hard work the indigenous are required to perform in the mines renders them *de facto* slaves in the power of the foremen and mine owners, a dehumanizing process, the representations included in Thevet's and de Bry's text present a stereotypical image of the workers that denigrates and de-individualizes them and discounts the suffering that each of them would have experienced.[25]

The indigenous miners and "slaves" represented in the engravings are reflecting the oft-repeated stereotype of the naked savage as they are depicted either completely naked or dressed with nothing but a loincloth. Their body stature is uniformly shaped after European models. In de Bry's image, individuals can be differentiated based on a variety of hairstyles: several "indios" sport a tonsure, others wear a bun that seems to have an Asian inspiration, and finally some of the miners wear a hat that might actually have represented an Andean *chullo* hat but could as well have been inspired by the caps worn by Europe's working class (as represented, for example, in several paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder). It stands out that in this engraving, none of the miners' faces is easily visible as they are either hidden by shadows or turned away from the viewer. In short, the image represents the mineworkers as a collective of faceless human beings made strange because of their nakedness and eclectic mixture of exotic hairstyles. Without being able to see the suffering in their faces, the torturous hardship of the work

---

[25] Walter Mignolo more generally describes this process as "an assertion of *humanitas*, of Europeans as the *subject* of human knowledge imagining their human nature by inventing *anthropos*, the newly encountered indigenous peoples imagined as the *object* of human knowledge" ("Crossing Gazes" 179). The depiction of indigenous workers in de Bry's illustration are not representative in nature, but rather they are "inventions in the sense that European images of Indians are not neutral but racially charged" (180).

in the mines is visible only in the posture of the twisted bodies of the *cargadores* carrying the ore and the *barreteadores* breaking loose the rock with their axes. As such the workers and their suffering remains the hardship of anonymous beings who are easy to discount and disregard. This detail suggests that the accusation against the abuses that was communicated through the images was not about the miners and their suffering. Rather, just as their labor in Potosí presumably served to help the Spanish mine owners achieve "the greater good" of the Spanish Empire, the indigenous miners represented in these images served as instruments to achieve the larger goal of uniting readers in a common contempt for the Spanish Crown.[26]

Denouncing the transgressions committed by the Spaniards in Potosí against the indigenous mineworkers thus allowed those who were either envious of the success of the Spanish "heroes," in disagreement with the stated motivation of evangelization that drove the Spanish conquests, or both, to distance themselves from the exploits of this global power while also asserting the moral, if not political or economic, superiority of their own social group.

---

[26] Interestingly, whether the abuse committed by the Spaniards is pictured, as in Thevet, or not, as in de Bry, the Spanish presence is implied in both images motivating the workers to perform their work expediently. Just as the indigenous workers are portrayed as exotic specimens, the explicit and implicit negative representation of the Spanish behavior allows the artists to represent the Spaniards as different from their own social group. The images thus represent two distinct "others" in opposition to whom both of these European intellectuals situate themselves. The goal to unify the different nations of Europe in a common enmity against Spain is recorded, for example, in a speech Oliver Cromwell addressed to the English Parliament in 1656. He proclaims in front of his countrymen and fellow parliamentarians that "the French, all the Protestants in Germany, have agreed that his [the Spaniard king's] design was the empire of the whole Christian world, if not more" (qtd. in Gibson 58).

In fact, references to and comparisons with the Spanish Empire and its overseas achievements were an important element in the intellectual discourse of the late sixteenth and the seventeenth century in texts written in many parts of Europe, but especially England. Representations of Potosí published outside the Spanish Empire thus form part of a more general ongoing discourse that denounced Spanish imperialism and opposed the heroic "official history" of the Spanish Empire and Potosí created by Spanish authors, as outlined in Chapter One. This alternative history, including also accounts of the Spanish colonial endeavors, was first termed the "black legend" by the Spanish intellectual Julián Juderías in 1912.[27] The black legend more broadly indicates an anti-Spanish discourse that was a reaction to Spanish imperial politics in Europe and overseas, but also to the political conflicts advanced by the Spanish monarchs within Europe. Anti-Spanish propaganda was produced and circulated as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century and reached a culmination towards the turn of the sixteenth century. The polemical texts promoting a critical attitude towards Spain were influential in the

[27] Julián Juderías, the Spanish intellectual who coined the term "Black Legend" in 1912 in his book with the same title, asserts that the Black Legend was born during the time of the revolt of the Netherlands. In particular, he points to the publication of William of Orange's *Apología* [1581] and Las Casas's *Brevíssima relación* [1551 Spanish edition; 1583 English edition] as important factors furthering the anti-Spanish sentiment in other European nations. Griffin's research on English drama has resulted in his observation that "the decade that saw the great flowering of England's drama is also the decade during which the 'base kind of dealyng' of the Black Legend comes to dominate the discursive field with the rantings of both unofficial 'hedgeministers' and official 'proclaimations.' During Elizabeth's turbulent final decade English public culture had been inundated with Hispanophobic stereotypes mobilized again and again in propagandistic efforts to affirm the twin pillars of national sovereignty and the Protestant faith" (357).

early modern period and the message they contained still informs representations of the Spanish colonial period today.[28]

English writers especially criticized the "tyranny" of the Spaniards. Ralegh, in his account of *The Discovery of Guiana*, relates how in his interactions with the indigenous people he encountered in the Carribean he explicitly communicated that his Queen, Elizabeth I, "was an enemy to the *Castellani* in respect of their tyranny and oppression" (49). But even before Ralegh embarked on this voyage of discovery, he had requested and received more information on the "Western Discoveries" from Richard Hackluyt in his *A Discourse Concerning Western Planting* (1584). The text provides information on the benefits of an attempted colonization of America by the English and includes intelligence on the political circumstances that the explorers were likely to encounter during their voyage. Several of the twenty-one chapters that constitute this text address the rivalry with the Spaniards, a disregard for the Spanish king, and a desire to curb their influence in the Indies.[29] One chapter specifically denounces the "moste outragious more then Turkishe cruelties" (Hackluyt 71) the Spaniards committed in the Indies. This denunciation was based on Las Casas's *Brevísima Relación de la destrucción de las*

---

[28] Maltby convincingly argues that the Black Legend still determines superficial representations of the Spanish conquest, for example, in American high-school history books (6).

[29] For example, Hackluyt indicates that "the savages of Florida are the Spaniardes mortall enemyes, and wilbe ready to joyne with us against them" (46), and that "on the northe side of Nova Hispania, ther is a people called Chichimici, which are bigg and stronge men and valiaunte archers, which have contynuall warres with the Spaniards […] Nowe if wee (beinge therto provoked by Spanishe injuries) would either joyne with these savages, or sende or give the armor, as the Spaniardes arme our Irishe rebells, wee should trouble the Kinge of Spaine more in those partes, then he hath or can trouble us in Ireland" (47). These insights, gained in part from "Spanishe histories," show the English perspective on a rivalry that was motivated by more than moral outrage; the English also had concrete political reasons to oppose the Spaniards both in writing and in actions.

Indias, which had recently been published in English translation (1583). The criticism of Spanish policies and cruelties against the indigenous population in general was widespread and closely related to the political ambitions of conquest and colonization nurtured by the English themselves, as becomes obvious from Hackluyt's conscientious listing of Spain's enemies as possible allies for the English. Defaming Spain thus served, in part, the ulterior motive of obtaining both European and Amerindian goodwill for English expansionism.

Within this larger discourse one text in particular directly denounced the conflict of interest between the proclaimed Christian intention of the Spaniards in exploiting the mines and the actual execution of the mining endeavors. In 1684 the English shepherd and autodidact turned writer, Thomas Tryon, published a manual:,*The country-man's companion…,* on the proper care of sheep and horses. In this text he includes "The Planters speech to his Neighbours & Country-men in Pennsylvania, East and West-Iersey, &c. And to all such as have Transported themselves into *New-Colonies* for the sake of a quiet Life" (100-141).[30] The narrator of the speech reminds those who had

[30] It is unclear whether Tryon adapted the speech from a different source or whether it is his own work. The general message of the "Speech," respect for nature and people, aligns with ideas he communicated in his other publications in which he extolled the respect for all living things. For example, Tryon was an early advocate for vegetarianism. His argument against the consumption of meat convinced a young Benjamin Franklin, who recalls in his autobiography that for part of his life "I considered with my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us any injury that might justify slaughter" (39). Margaret Spufford, using information included in the auto-referential texts published by Tryon, illustrates the personal educational journey of this author who left school at the age of six to help support his family, but consequently endeavored to educate himself in reading and writing and to become knowledgeable in a series of issues (415-417). As an Anabaptist, Tryon travelled to Barbados to avoid religious persecution. Upon returning to London in 1669, inspired by an epiphany, he started to "Write and Publish

decided to emigrate to the British colonies in North America of the "good Ends" that had motivated them to leave behind their homes in Europe. One of the "motives of our retreating," he suggests, is a shared desire to "gain upon those Thousands of poor dark Souls scattered round about us … and bring them not only to a state of *Civility*, but real *Piety*" (102-103, emphasis in original). While this goal does not seem to differ much from the conversion efforts advanced by the Spanish settlers and missionaries in the American colonies, the narrator of this text thinks it important to clearly distinguish his ideas for the enlightenment of the "poor dark souls" from the efforts of the Spaniards especially in Potosí, which he perceives as false and misleading; he urges that the efforts of Pennsylvania's settlers

> turn to a more satisfying account, than if with the proud *Spaniards*, we had gain'd the Mines of *Potosí*, and might make the Ambitious *Hero's*, whom the World admires, blush for their petty and shameful Victories, which only tend to make their Fellow-Creatures *Slaves* to those that are already the *Devil's Vassals*. (103, emphasis in original)

The narrator of this text links the mines of Potosí to the ambition of the Spanish "heroes," who, he claims, the world admires for the success that accompanied their adventurous and ruthless exploits of discovery and conquest in the Americas. However, he insists that their "victories" are meaningless as they did not accomplish the goal they had claimed to pursue: bringing the light of Christianity to those unfamiliar with "the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of the most High" (Tryon 103). Instead, he suggests that as a consequence of their worldly victories over material goods — the mines of Potosí in particular — the proud Spaniards forfeited their integrity and entered the service of the devil making

---

something…recommending to the World Temperance, Cleanness, and Innocency of Living; and admonishing Mankind against Violence, Oppression, and Cruelty, either to their own Kind, or any inferior Creatures" (qtd. in Stuart 62).

slaves of those indigenous who were under their spiritual care. At the same time, he communicates his confidence in his neighbors and countrymen to succeed where the proud Spaniards had failed in bringing the "Heathens" to a state of "Civility" and "real Piety."

The narrator of the "Planter's Speech," however, was not the only writer who extended the harsh criticism of anti-Spanish texts to the immoral and decadent behavior of the Spaniards in Potosí specifically. In 1691, Guy Miege published the first edition of *The new state of England*, a text in which he provides a geographical description of England "with useful and curious remarks" (Title Page) along with an overview over the new state of England.[31] One of the curious remarks he adds is a comment included in his description "Of the Products of England" (16-22). Regarding the silver mines in the territories of the English Crown, he comments that they had even richer ore than those of the rich mountain. Whereas the silver ore was easily mined in Potosí, though, Miege

---

[31] "'Tis the late Revolution that has given birth to this new Piece of Work; a New Face of Things required a New State of England" (A2) announces Miege "To the Reader." Miege continues to clearly state his disregard for the "Popish" king James II overthrown in the revolution of 1688, stating that "such is our present Settlement, upon Their Majesties happy Accession to the Crown that the Popish Party may assoon see a Prostestant Pope of Rome as a Popish King of England" (A2). De Bruyn has represented Miege's *The new State of England* as an early attempt to adequately address the changed political environment in England following the revolution. England now represented a state, "a political society in a defined territory that is independent of any external or superior power, such as the Holy Roman Emperor or the Pope, and whose sovereignty as a law making power and object of allegiance has no internal rivals" (de Bruyn 114). This reading of Miege's work indicates that he was aware of the political situation in England as related to a larger context. Miege, who originated from Switzerland, arrived in London in 1661 where he joined the household of the earl of Elgin before joining the earl of Carlisle in his embassy to Muscovy, Sweden, and Denmark in 1663. Upon his return to London he established a reputation as lexicographer and grammarian and taught language courses, while also publishing several works reflecting on the political situation in Europe (Larminie n.p.).

asserts that "'tis true ours lying deeper, and harder to come unto, and the Workmen being dear (which is otherwise in Potosí)" (20-21). This rhetorical maneuver allowed Miege to turn a seeming disadvantage – the inaccessibility of England's silver mines – into a moral advantage: of course, the English workmen would not be exploited as cruelly and with such disregard for the human life as those in Potosí, because the safety of human life took precedence over the reckless pursuit of riches for the sake of misguided ambition. While texts referencing Spanish excesses at the *Cerro Rico* are few among many that criticize the cruelty of Spaniards in the Indies and Europe more generally, the mountain as represented in these texts stands as an icon of the degenerative force of wealth and ambition associated with Spanish imperialism.

Temptation, Ambition, and Moral Decadence: Conclusion

While widely circulated texts produced by Spanish authors in the second half of the sixteenth century promoted the rich mountain of Potosí as an icon of wealth, which conferred economic and political power onto the Spanish Monarchy, writers from outside and from within the Spanish Empire also indicated the flipside of the wealth and portrayed the *Cerro Rico* as an icon representative of moral decadence. In texts created by Spanish writers, including authors such as Ocaña, Arzáns, and Calancha, the *Cerro Rico* is represented as a monstrosity. The immorality and abuse, which these authors observe in the Imperial City and the mines of Potosí, are closely linked to a destructive force attributed to the mountain itself. Furthermore, several of these authors fault the rich mountain for being a – possibly satanic – temptation that entices those who are attracted by the call of its silver to sinful and immoral behavior. The culpability for moral

transgressions is thus transferred to the mountain as the agent responsible for both accidents and abuses, while the human actors are exculpated. Many of these authors describe abuses against indigenous miners, however, Arzáns's critique of the crimes committed by Spanish and creole residents of the Imperial City against each other widens the scope of the pervasive moral corruption that defined life in the shade of the rich mountain.

Texts published in England, France, Germany and other parts of Europe, emphasize the perceived moral corruption of the Spaniards in terms of the abuse committed against the indigenous population and indicate the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of this abuse. These texts outwardly present a strong critique of Spanish ambition that forced indigenous individuals to provide their service to the Spanish Crown by laboring in the mines and refineries of Potosí. Authors from outside the Spanish empire portray Potosí as an icon representing this ambition and its degenerative effect on morality. However, contributing to the larger anti-Spanish discourse now described as the black legend these representations of Potosí also advance the propagation of narratives about Spanish cruelties that served the political goals of Spain's adversaries in the Atlantic arena, including primarily England and the Netherlands.

A real concern for the hardship suffered by the indigenous communities recruited to work in Potosí's mines seems lacking. The criticism voiced by authors of European origin both within and outside the Spanish Empire does not take into account the perspective of the indigenous communities they purport to support. While they criticize the exploitation of the mineworkers on account of the obvious mistreatments and hardship suffered, the more subtle abuse that occurred when the stated rules of the *mita*

were not observed is not considered. Complaints recorded by indigenous groups and individuals, such as Carlos Vissa, show that these less obvious forms of exploitation were maybe even more frequent and no less damaging than the physical abuse the indigenous people suffered at the hands of those in charge.[32] The representations of the *Cerro Rico* indicate that it was perceived as an icon associated with immorality and corruption rather than indigenous suffering *per se*.

[32] Almost two centuries after Carlos Vissa wrote the letter to the royal treasurer the general situation of the indigenous miners had not improved, which is evident in a collection of documents assembled by Victorian de Villava, the *fiscal*, or district attorney, of the Charcas province. One account recorded in 1795 by Don José Horracio Hidalgo de Cisneros, a priest in the province of La Paz, describes the plight of the *mitayos* of his district: "Cumplido el año de tan penosa fatiga rara o ninguna vez vuelbe el mismo numero de Yndios, ya sea porque algunos de estos infelizes Naturales mueren en aql trabajo incomparable de minas, e Yngenios; ya pr q despues de concluidas sus tareas se hallan enteramente destituidos, y sin tener con q poder restituirse estos miserables a sus Pueb[los] y antiguos domicilios, sujetos tal vez a la mendicidad y desdicha, o ya finalmente p q su misma indigencia los obliga a tomar el trabajo de nuebo en dhas lavores para agarrar el sustento a costa del abandono de sus casas, ganados, sembradios, y demas comodidades" 'At the end of a year filled with such terrible weariness rarely or never sees the return of the same number of *indios* [as had left to Potosí], either because some of these unfortunate natives die in the incomparable work of the mines and refineries; or because they are completely destitute after finishing their assigned work, and these miserables have nothing with which to return to their villages and previous domiciles, as they are perhaps subjected to poverty and misfortune; or finally because their very destitution forces them to accept again the work in the mines in order to get a hold on sustenance at the cost of abandoning their houses, livestock, fields, and other commodities' (AGI Charcas 697; my translation). Cisneros leaves no doubt that while the incomparable mines have caused the loss of many indios, the physical hardship and dangers suffered by individuals in the mines seem almost insignificant compared to the larger problem of financial destitution and the consequential abandonment of properties that affect the indigenous community as a whole.

Chapter 4: Mapping Potosí – Alternative Narratives of the Cerro Rico as an Icon of Spanish Dominance

In 1549 the Spanish soldier turned chronicler, Pedro Cieza de León, visited the Villa Imperial and mountain of Potosí as part of a tour of the Peruvian viceroyalty, which he carried out on orders of viceroy Pedro de la Gasca. As we have seen, Cieza de León became one of the first chroniclers to visit and later describe Potosí to a wide audience in his *Crónica del Perú*. Based on the impressions he collected of Potosí during his visit he concluded that certainly there was no other mountain as rich as the *Cerro Rico* in the whole world and that no other monarch had benefited as much from a single site (374). Cieza de León, in 1553, was also the first to visually represent the *Cerro Rico* as situated within a concrete physical space; by adding an illustration to his text, he implied that relying exclusively on a discursive representation of the rich mountain would not do it justice (Figures 6 and 7, *p.154). In his image the physical space is narrowly delimited with a focus on the mountain and the Imperial City to the exclusion of an environmental context. The woodcut of the *Cerro Rico* shows the rich mountain as an imposing presence that dominates the settlement—the *Villa Imperial*—at its base, and is nestled within an environment that is barely discernible as mountainous. Later representations of the rich mountain on maps, images, and in textual references expand this frame of reference as they represent Potosí within spaces that span an ever-widening geographical area up to the entire globe. Cieza de León's representation of Potosí marks the Spanish claim to this particular landmark; within the expanding focus of the maps, however, the

rich mountain came to represent an icon of the Spanish claim to authority over the American territories and a global network of trade.

Barbara Mundy has described the sixteenth century as a time of burgeoning European cartography (xi). Representations of space held interest for an audience anxious to understand and envision a world that suddenly seemed bigger than it had been less than a century ago. Beyond maps, any kind of information about the spaces previously unknown was of particular interest to those involved in making territorial claims and negotiating the distribution of power across familiar and unfamiliar territories. Related to the interest this knowledge held for political reasons, the information communicated on maps as well as other representations of space was far from objective, as Mundy has shown: "The map, by definition, arises out of a particular culture's understanding of space, which in turn presaged on a culture's own construction of reality" (xii-xiii). Ricardo Padrón also reviews the linkage between cartography and the creation of empire – the Spanish Empire in particular. He introduces the concept of metageography – a set of spatial structures through which people order their knowledge – and proposes that the "invention of America" was dependent on the different metageographies that informed the accounts of American chroniclers such as las Casas and Acosta (26-28).[1] These chroniclers, according to Padrón, "inhabit the blank map of the New World with discourse, thereby assimilating it within a new metageography of Spain as a trans-Atlantic empire" (28). The discourse and representations of Potosí as an icon with spatial relevance was one of the narratives "inhabiting" these maps, where the rich mountain

[1] Padrón's use of the concept of "metageography" is based on references included in O'Gorman's *The Invention of America* but also on the work of scholars Martin Lewis and Kärin Wigen.

assumed an important place within the geography and metageographies of the early modern Atlantic World and the Spanish empire.

Writers, cartographers, and artists from the Americas and Europe referenced the rich mountain of Potosí as an important landmark that served as a point of reference in the construction of space, a space that was perceived and represented differently by diverse social groups. The representations of Potosí contribute to a circular discourse in which authority within a real physical space is continuously asserted, (re)negotiated and (re)affirmed. The image of the mountain in visual and alphabetic texts not only allows the audience to contemplate the *Cerro Rico*, but also to behold an image – distorted through the filter of visual or textual representation – of themselves and their perceived spatial emplacement in relation to this Andean landmark.

Iberian cartographers, artists, and authors from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth century have presented Potosí as an icon closely associated with the political accomplishments of the Spanish monarchy as well as an important cog – if not the motor – of international networks of trade maintained by the Spanish crown. Their texts, images, and maps portray an idealized auto-representation of the perceived greatness and global centrality of the Spanish Empire to an audience within and outside the Spanish Empire. However, works originating from other parts of Europe and those representing indigenous voices introduce an important counter-narrative complicating the image of Potosí presented in Spanish texts. This chapter will bring together a variety of representations reflecting different perspectives on Potosí's place within the cultural and political landscape of an early modern world. The analysis of these perspectives will demonstrate the complex levels of Potosí's representation as an icon indicative of both

the success and the limitations of Spanish imperial authority within spaces defined by different cultural expectations. An overview of some of the first images that established Potosí as a marker of Spanish imperial authority, published in Cieza de León's *Crónica,* will serve as an introduction to the discussion of the rich mountain as an icon representing territorial possession and spatial dominance of imperial Spain. This will lead into an analysis of indigenous representations of Potosí. In the indigenous portraits, the rich mountain's iconicity, as a marker of seigneurial power, is appropriated to advance claims for an increase in indigenous command over the former Inca territories. Finally, Iberian cartographic representations of Potosí are discussed as portraying the rich mountain as a metaphorical point of reference in transoceanic trading networks; the representations of the *Cerro Rico* on maps and images created by artists outside the Spanish empire, on the other hand, deny Potosí this central role in a political and commercial space.

Establishing Potosí as an Icon of Authority within Geographic and Discursive Spaces

In the first part of Cieza de León's *Crónica* the textual description of the rich mountain of Potosí relates the author's observations and impressions in simple prose focused primarily on communicating "facts" about the *Cerro Rico* to an audience unfamiliar with this landmark.[2] One of these facts is communicated in Cieza de León's

[2] Cieza de León carefully describes his observations and aims to authorize the "facts" he references by attributing this information to local authorities – for example the amount of the *quinto* taxes collected on the silver from the rich mountain. However, a comparison with other sources, such as the tax records collected by TePaske and Klein, suggest that a

assertion that “con gran verdad se podrá tener que en ninguna parte del mundo se halló cerro tan rico” ‘it can be assumed with great certainty that in no other part of the world there has ever been a mountain as rich [as Potosí]’ (*Primera Parte*, 374; my translation). The prose of the *Crónica* itself, however, is only one element that helps to establish the mountain as an iconic landmark in the imagination of Cieza de León’s European and American audience: the accompanying woodcut illustration of the *Cerro Rico* and its mines—and, at its base, the growing city of Potosí—calls additional attention to this possession of the Spanish king representing the rich mountain even to those who might not have been able to read.

The first part of Cieza de León’s *Crónica del Perú* published in Seville in 1553 was the first publication to represent the rich mountain both textually and visually to a large audience. The text was quickly translated and distributed across Europe and the Americas. According to Manuel Ballesteros Gabrois, based on the known numbers of copies sold in 1554, the first part of Cieza de León’s *Crónica* “era uno de los mayores éxitos editoriales” ‘was one of the major editorial successes’ (“Introducción” 48; my translation). This success is evident from the history of editions and translations of this text published in the sixteenth century: in 1554 three editions were published in Antwerp and Italian translations were edited in Rome and Venice in 1555; from 1557 to 1560 four more editions were published in Venice.[3] Several editions of Cieza de León’s text contain

---

modern audience would question the reliability of these “facts,” which might have convinced an early modern audience.

[3] Ballesteros offers an excellent overview of publications of the first part of Cieza de León’s *Crónica*, which includes the references to Potosí. He further traces publications of this work from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century. He notes an interesting lacuna

illustrations based on the woodcut included in the first edition. The similarities indicate that this image served as an inspiration and pattern of representation for images of the *Cerro Rico* included in other texts, ranging from an English translation of Agustín de Zárate's *The Discoverie and Conquest of the Provinces of Peru*, published in London in 1581, to several copies of an illustrated manuscript, the *Tarih-I Hind-I Garbi*, from Constantinople.[4]

The choice to highlight the account of Potosí and its mines by the inclusion of a relatively detailed image of the *Cerro Rico* indicates the perceived importance of this particular information in the text. For example, the 1553 Seville edition of Cieza de León's text included a total of twelve unique images. Eight of these were specifically related to the text of a chapter and appear only once, while another four were repeated throughout, sometimes in a seemingly arbitrary association with the text. All but the Potosí image occupy about a sixth of a page, while the visual representation of the "Cerro Rico de Potosí" is featured as a bigger image, taking up the top half of the first page that relates written information about Potosí. The images effectively replaces the chapter title, which was printed at the bottom of the previous page.[5] The image of Potosí included in

---

of publications in the seventeenth century, which he attributes to the publication of Garcilaso's *Comentarios Reales*.

[4] The first known copy was a manuscript published around 1615 and in 1730 the text became the first illustrated text produced on an Ottoman printing press.

[5] There are a total of 42 images in 1553 Sevilla edition. The eight images uniquely and specifically related to the text of a chapter are: 1) an image presumably portraying a human sacrifice, 2) an image of the Inca ruler, 3) an image of several figures paying respect to an object, presumably the emerald that is described in the text, 4) an image presumably representing giants who according to a legend settled on the island of Santa Elena, 5) an image titled "Cuzco" showing the city behind the Inca and a Spanish noble (maybe Pizarro), 6) an image titled "Titicaca" showing a body of water surrounded by

the first edition of the *Crónica* in 1553 is dominated by the representation of the *Cerro Rico* and the smaller *Guayna Potosí*. Unlike many of the other images in this edition, which were likely created by an artist unfamiliar with the new world and its natural and urban geographies – for example the representation of Lake Titicaca resembles Venetian or Dutch channels tightly enclosed by buildings – the representation of Potosí shows a more verisimilar impression of the Cerro and the growing city at its base and might have been sketched by Cieza de León himself when he visited the mining town in 1549.

It is also interesting to compare the image of Potosí to the other two titled images in this edition, both of which purport to represent geographical landmarks of the Andes: the city of Cuzco and the lake Titicaca. Aside from the smaller size and unrealistic representation, the landmarks alluded to by the titles of these images are less prominently featured; a representation of the Inca ruler and a Spanish conquistador dominates the image of Cuzco. Similarly, in the woodcut lake Titicaca is reduced to a fraction of its size crowded by only four small vessels – recalling the Caribbean piraguas pictured in Oviedo's *Coronica de las Indias* rather than Andean reed boats – and confined by European-style buildings that line its coasts.[6] The portrayals of these landmarks are reflections of European models transposed onto the geography of the Andes, whereas the more verisimilar image of Potosí establishes the rich mountain as a landmark that stands apart as unique and noteworthy. Unlike the representations of the other landmarks, the

---

buildings and navigated by four small vessels, 7) the image of Potosí, 8) an image of a group of four camelids.

[6] see Kathleen Myer's *Fernández de Oviedo's Chronicle of America: A New History for a New World,* p. 199.

Cerro Rico in this text is not assimilated to conform to European ideas of a mountain and yet it represents, in its own right, the Spanish achievements in the Andes.

Portrayals of the rich mountain in the *Crónica del Perú* and other texts also feature a detail that indicates the proprietary claim of the Spanish Catholic monarchy: the *Cerro Rico* in these images is clearly marked with the sign of the cross on its peak. Spanish authors of several sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts depicted the rich mountain of Potosí as a divine reward that recognized and supported the Spanish efforts to defend and extend the Catholic faith in the Old as well as the New World.[7] While this discourse likely reached its peak after Cieza de León's text had been published, the Spanish Crown had created and propagated the image of their sovereigns as "Catholic Kings" since the reign of Ferdinand and Isabel, a title bestowed on them by Pope Alexander VI in 1496. The monarchs of the Spanish kingdoms were thus closely linked to the Catholic Church, a connection also expressed in their political agenda and their effort to bring the light of Christianity to the Andes.[8] Consequently, the marker of the cross on the summit of the rich mountain proclaims the Spanish territorial claim to the rich mountain as well as their politico-religious agenda of conquest in the Andes.[9] The use of the cross as a marker of territorial claims also played an important role in the history of conquest: Columbus, when exploring the Carribean islands, had marked each new territory he claimed with a cross: "en todas las partes, islas y tierras donde entraba dejaba siempre puesta una cruz" 'In all places, islands, and territories in which he

[7] I have elaborated this topic in more detail in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.
[8] See for example Murúa (Galvin MS, 142v) or Lizárraga (86) for a reference to the Spanish political agenda in terms of Christianization.
[9] I address the latter topic – Potosí's significance as an icon of spirituality – in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

entered, he always left a cross he placed' (*Los cuatro viajes,* "16 de noviembre;" my translation).

Published in 1553, Cieza de León's *Crónica del Perú* might have anticipated the physical placement of the cross on the *Cerro Rico*.[10] In the *Historia de la Villa Imperial,* Arzáns describes the placement of the cross on top of the Cerro Rico as part of an event that took place in 1555, when Potosí celebrated the acclamation of the city's patron saints:

> Salió esta procesión domingo a las 8 del día, después de haberse celebrado en San Francisco una misa con toda solemnidad, y habiendo caminado medio cuarto de legua hasta la parroquia de Santa Bárbara sacaron de ella una santa cruz que se tenía prevenida, y prosiguiendo la procesión la llevaron al cerro de Munaypata donde fue colocada en lo más encumbrado.
>
> This procession left Sunday at 8 in the morning, after the celebration of a solemn mass in San Francisco, and having walked haft a quarter of a league to the parish of Santa Bárbara, they removed from there a holy cross, which had been prepared, and continuing the proceesion, they took it to the cerro Munaypata [the *Cerro Rico*] where it was placed on its very peak (I, 97; my translation).

Arzáns emphasizes the religious motivation for placing a specially prepared cross on top of the rich mountain. However, Arzáns account also conveys that the cross was placed on the peak of the Cerro Rico as part of the celebrations that followed upon a prolonged period of conflicts, including the Pizarro rebellion and subsequent uprisings, for example by Francisco Hérnandez Girón (Arzáns I, 92-94), as well as local conflicts between

---

[10] The coat of arms conferred upon the Imperial City by Charles V in 1547 also pictures the rich mountain marked by a cross; this representation thus might have preceded the image included in Cieza de León's *Crónica del Perú*. However, the coat of arms would not have had the far-reaching impact that the *Crónica* undoubtedly had in Europe as well as the Indies. Additionally, the only surviving representation of this coat of arms is included in Arzáns *Historia*, a text that was written some 150 years after the time when coat of arms was used in Potosí (see below).

representatives of the different Spanish "naciones."[11] Assuming the veracity of Arzáns's account, the timing of the placement of the cross following upon the sosegation of upheaval against the authority of the Spanish Crown is significant as it would have visually emphasized the territorial claim of the king. It is also interesting to note that an image associating the Cerro Rico with the sign of the cross, the woodcut included in Cieza de León's *Crónica* in 1553, preceded the placement of the actual artifact in claiming Potosí for the Catholic monarchs of Spain.

Regardless of the sequence of events, the virtual marking of the *Cerro Rico* with a cross in the images that circulated in the Atlantic world is considerably more relevant than the placement of the actual cross in the discussion of Potosí's iconicity. Considering the propagation and interpretations of this image is especially relevant as illustrations, circulated in texts and on maps, constituted the only form of contact with the iconic landmark for the principal part of the early modern audience and even for many of the intellectuals and artists who produced narrative and visual representations of Potosí in the Old World as well as the New. Representations of the Cerro thus had a wider impact than the actual mountain itself; propagating the image of the rich mountain crowned by a cross at the summit established and perpetuated Spain's claim to the economically and culturally significant landmark.

---

[11] Throughout the colonial period several kingdoms were unified under the Spanish Monarchy, making Spain a "composite monarchy," a monarchy that conjoins various previously independent principalities under its superior influence while the diverse regions maintain the independence of their legal system (J.H. Elliott). People originating from these different kingdoms were referred to as different "naciones" – nations. As each of these naciones had unique cultural and social expectations conflict among them were frequent. In Potosí, the best known example is the drawn out conflict between the "Vicuñas" – Peruvian creoles – and the "Vascongados" – immigrants from the Basque country. This conflict escalated in an open war from 1622 to 1625.

In Cieza de León's image, the cross is placed on top of a rectangular pedestal. In subsequent images (i.e. Cieza de León, Antwerp 1554; Zárate, London 1581) this pedestal is replaced by a sphere, calling to mind the *globus cruciger*, an orb underneath the cross. Since the beginning of its use by Christian rulers of the late antiquity and the Middle Ages, this symbol represented a sacramentalized sovereign power (Sloterdijk 32). Peter Sloterdijk indicates that since the Hellenistic time the sphere had served as a hieroglyphic representation of the universe (32).[12] In representations of rulers, "the sphaira under the sandals of the ruler became a common conceit of the pictorial language of power" (32) – a habitus adopted by Roman emperors as well as early modern monarchs who are often pictured placing a hand on top of a globe or sphere. The visual portraits of Potosí indicate the rich mountain as another such symbol of power. In the representations of the *Cerro Rico* with a cross placed on its summit, the pyramidal shape of the rich mountain instead of the sphere becomes a hieroglyph representating the Spanish king's political power. Figuratively, the monarch places his hand on the rich mountain as a geographical landmark by erecting a cross on its highest peak. More importantly, though, this way of representing the mountain visually manifested the

[12] Peter Sloterdijk cites Brendel: "from hellenistic time onwards, the sphaira was a common 'hieroglyph for the entire universe, especially the heavens'" (32). Spanish and other European monarchs were often represented possesively placing a hand on the sphere, for example in the painting by Antonio Fernández Arias, "Carlos V y Felipe II" (1639 – 1640). Dressed in armor as well as royal regalia – an hermine cape for the emperor and a sash for the heir – the emperor Charles V and his heir Philip II further showcase their strength and determination through the display of the weapons they are holding. Philip II possessively places his right hand on a sphere pictured in the background of the image. The visual claim to the globe depicted here evokes Philip II's achievements, while he was king of Spain from 1556-1598, in expanding the kingdom into an empire that spanned the entire globe, especially through the claim and later assumption of the Portuguese crown in 1580.

Spanish claim to the economic power and territorial authority that the resources of the rich mountain conferred upon the Crown. The representation suggests that by claiming the *Cerro Rico* the Spanish crown acquired the means to control their vast territories. The rich mountain is rendered a metonymical representation of Spanish rule over newly acquired territories.

An illustration that serves as the frontispiece of the *Tratado de Confirmaciones Reales de Encomiendas,* authored by Antonio de León Pinelo and printed in Madrid in 1630, supports this interpretation of the rich mountain as a Peruvian *globus cruciger*, an emblem that is perceived to symbolically confer authority over the Andean territories. In the illustration, a figure allegorically representing Peru is pictured holding a miniature *Cerro Rico* in his right hand (Figure 3). Here, the mountain of Potosí is displayed like a *globus cruciger*: the indigenous figure, who represents an Inca ruler based on the *mazcca paycha* headgear with which he is portrayed, is shown in a standing position.[13] He holds the rich mountain in his right hand and a ceremonial staff or weapon in his left. His position and display of the *Cerro Rico* is reminiscent of a representation of Charles V as portrayed on various coins circulating in the sixteenth century. One example is the Karolusflorin showing Charles V in a standing position with a *globus cruciger* in his left hand. This coin was struck in Antwerp between 1521 and 1545. The engraving featured on the title page of León Pinelo's *Tratado* echoes this presumably well-known pose, substituting the *globus* for the iconic mountain of Potosí and the Spanish emperor for an indigenous ruler. The Inca ruler, unlike Charles V on the Karolusflorin, does not lay

[13] According to Diego de Holguín's Spanish-Quechua dictionary from 1608, the *mazcca paycha* was the royal insignia or crown of the king (163).

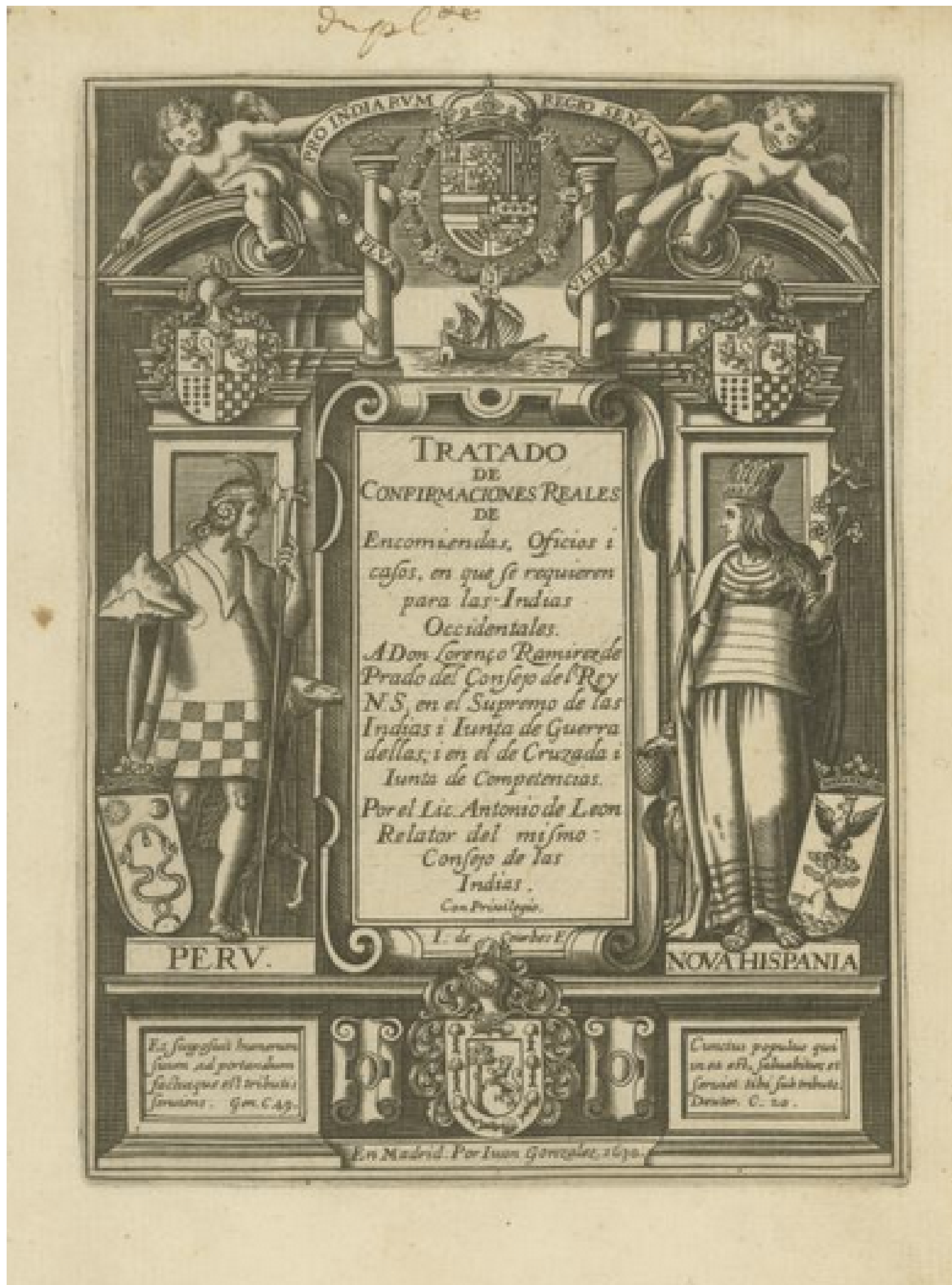

Figure 3 "Frontispiece" *Tratado de confirmaciones reales...* António de León Pinelo. 1630.
Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

claim to the rich mountain as an icon of power for himself. Charles V, as portrayed on the Florin, keeps his gaze fixed on the sphere that represents his power to those contemplating his likeness on the coin.[14] The Inca represented in Pinelo's text, on the other hand, averts his gaze and, extending his hand, presumably offers the mountain in a gesture that implies the transfer of power – represented by the *Cerro Rico* as a hieroglyph analogous to the *globus cruciger* – from the Incanate to the Spanish empire.[15]

Ego Fulcio Columnas Eius: I Support Their Pillars

Representations created by authors associated with the Spanish Empire exalted the Cerro as a symbol of state and an icon representing the Spanish authority over the American territories. Two images created by indigenous artists and intellectuals, however, tell the story of Potosí from an Andean perspective; the artists offer their own representation of Potosí within the geographical as well as political landscape of colonial Peru. An anonymous artist created one of these images for Martín de Murúa's *Historia general del Piru*; the second image was drawn by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala to be included in in his *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno*.

---

[14] Similarly, Philip II in the painting by Antonio Fernández Arias, referenced above, firmly and possessively grasps the globe – symbol of his global rule – even as his confident gaze regards the viewer outside the painting.

[15] Even though the indigenous communities prior to the arrival of the Spaniards had not exploited the rich mountain, it was represented as the most valuable offering the Spanish Empire had received as part of their conquest of the Incan territories. Murúa more explicitly represents the rich mountain as a possession of the Incan ruler, which he had offered to Spain (see below, *p. 131). I have discussed in Chapter 2 the representations that portray the rich mountain as a reward directly associated with bringing the light of Christianity to the Andes. It is likely that a European audience, not at last due to the geographic location of the rich mountain in the Andes, might have associated the *Cerro Rico* of Potosí with the Incan rule regardless of the timing of its "discovery" in 1545.

In their codicological analysis of the two extant manuscripts of Murúa's text,[16] Rolena Adorno and Ivan Boserup were able to determine that the texts "were produced not by Murúa himself but by scribes working under his supervision" (7) as well as by artists, including the Andean Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, who created illustrations for the text. While the above-mentioned image of Potosí in particular was not created by Guaman Poma (Adorno and Boserup 19), it is plausible to assume that another Andean, rather than European, artist created this image.[17] The colored drawing pictures a larger than life Inca ruler standing behind the rich mountain, almost indistinguishable from the landmark because of the continuity of the coloring and pattern in the image that connects the Inca's clothes to the mountain.[18] The indigenous ruler supports the Pillars of Hercules – an important imperial symbol of the Habsburgs – that are seemingly floating in front of the Cerro Rico. Ascending the mountain on either side are two presumably indigenous figures and a llama. The title inscribed on this image reads: "Ego fulcio collumãs eius" 'I

---

[16] The earlier Galvin [Wellington] manuscript – dated in 1590 – includes this image of Potosí, which is not included in the later Getty manuscript. Adorno and Boserup propose that the Getty manuscript, finished in 1613, constitutes the final, fair copy version of the text meant for publication. Adorno and Boserup describe the various phases leading to the completion of the Galvin manuscript. According to their analysis, the text is written by an anonymous scribe and a limited amount of illustrations of the text were created by an anonymous artist. Later Murúa himself wrote additional text and a second artist, the indigenous writer Guaman Poma de Ayala, created further images related to the text.

[17] Thomas B. Cummins explains that for Guaman Poma and many other indigenous artists, "line is the defining element in his images, regardless of medium. [...] Guaman Poma's strong dependence on line in his images may be traced to the colonial relation between European patron and native artist. The patron normally gave the artist a European print to render a painting, a transaction that later underpinned the colonial characterization of the native artist as mimic. Guaman Poma seems to have been trained in such a manner" ("Images" 152)—as was the artist who created the illustration of Potosí for the Galvin Manuscript, presumably.

[18] I am grateful to Rebecca Howard who pointed this out to me in our conversation regarding this image.

support their columns.' While the columns referenced in the words as well as the painting are easily identifiable as part of the Spanish insignia, the Pillars of Hercules, the overall significance of the expression is less easily interpreted because of the ambiguity regarding the speaking subject of this phrase: who is the "ego," the "I," that voices support?

Before exploring a possible indigenous perspective implied in this representation, let us consider its appropriation by the Spanish Murúa, who commissioned the illustration. In the textual description of Potosí, which accompanies the image included in the earlier of two manuscripts, Murúa provides his own interpretation and gloss for this illustration:

> [el cerro] sustenta toda la christiandad como se ve por esta pintura. Pues dize el ynga, ego fulcio columas eius como señor y poseedor deste gran serro con lo q el piru queda contento y españa pagada. Debemos pues todos los de este rreino dar gracias a dios por abernos dado este serro tan notable entre todos los del mundo en grandeza y ermosura y rriqueza.
>
> [The rich mountain] sustains all of Christianity as is depicted in this painting. After all, the Inca say, ego fulcio columas eius – as master and owner of this great mountain with which Peru remains content and Spain compensated. We should therefore, all of us in this kingdom, give thanks to God for giving us this mountain, which is so notable among all those [mountains] of the world in greatness and beauty and wealth. (Murúa, *Galvin MS* 142v; my translation)[19]

Murúa thus attributes the statement of support to the Inca ruler. Murúa's explanation of the image's title communicates and reinforces the intrinsic connection between religion

[19] It is interesting that for Murúa "toda la christiandad" 'all of Christianity' seems to be synonymous with "todos los de este rreino" 'all in this kingdom' – a group of people presumably including both the indigenous groups and residents of European origin within the viceroyalty of Peru. This sweeping generalization, thus, offers a definition of Christianity that is too broad and too narrow at the same time. Does Murúa's definition of "este rreino" really include the *república de indios* or is he just referring to the European population? Does his statement assume the successful conversion of the Spanish king's indigenous subjects?

and politics that defined the Spanish empire throughout the colonial period. He makes the assumption that the Spanish efforts of Christianization and "civilization" are welcomed by Peru, whose population he describes as content about their interactions with Spain. Murúa further elaborates on the relationship between Spain and Potosí, indicating that the *Cerro Rico* should be considered a "bolsa de dios, con que se a enrriquecido todo el mundo contribuyendo todos los años a españa el devido tributo de ynestimable rriqueza por los grandes beneficios q della y de los españoles este rreyno a reciuido" 'God's pocketbook, with which all the world has been enriched, contributing each year the proper tribute of inestimable wealth because of the great benefits, which this kingdom has received from her [Spain] and from the Spaniards' (Murúa, Galvin MS 142v; my translation). Considered in relation to each other, the two statements by Murúa demonstrate his conviction that the support Spain received from Potosí – in the form of tribute payments – were just rewards for the great benefits Peru had received from the Spaniards. In both the text and image, the rich mountain represents the prior wealth and power of the vanquished Inca; furthermore, Murúa's gloss suggest that the Inca as a representative of the indigenous community voluntarily passed the authority over the former Inca territories to the Spanish king, a transaction, which, according to Murúa's perception was just and mutually beneficial.

The image itself, however, calls into question this simplistic and ethnocentric interpretation. In the image, the Inca becomes one with the *Cerro* as the color of his garment continues down the side of the rich mountain, which is also marked by a checkerboard pattern that recalls the *tocapu* design of Incaic textiles. The Inca is pictured as a part of the rich mountain and the Andean landscape more generally; his connection

to nature is reminiscent of the worship rendered to the sacralized landscape and its *huacas* – objects associated with a sacred presence – by the pre- and post-conquest Andean population. While the indigenous ruler in this image forms the bedrock of the Andean landscape, the Pillars of Hercules representing Spain, on the other hand, depend on the Inca's support as they are suspended in the air, without a solid foundation upon which they might rest.[20] This drawing, not unlike other representations of Potosí in Iberian texts and images, does attribute a central role to Potosí within the Spanish empire by representing the rich mountain as an important support of the Spanish monarchy. At the same time, however, this representation of the *Cerro Rico* attributes agency to the Inca, and by extension the indigenous population of the Andes, as the real motor and support of Spanish imperial politics. If the Inca were to let go of the Pillars they would tumble and the Spanish authority over Peru – and possibly other territorial possessions onto which the Spanish Crown had placed the marks of their sovereignty – would topple along with them, the image implies. While other representations of Potosí focus on the rich mountain as an icon of wealth in its own right, the drawing included in Murúa's text calls to mind the reliance on human actors – most of whom happened to be indigenous – to operate the "maquina" of Potosí and keep it running smoothly.[21] The important

[20] I discuss Potosí's place within the sacralized landscape of the Andes in Chapter 5.
[21] A letter written by Bartolomé Astete de Ulloa in 1619 to the Peruvian viceroy confirms the centrality of the indigenous population for the operation of the "machine," as Potosí's mining industry was sometimes described. Astete de Ulloa emphasizes the important role of the mita as he emphasizes the important task of the *Corregidor* [Mayor] to enforce the *mita* "en lo posible conforme a la correspondencia de los corregidores de yndios que por sus fines y grangerias desayudan el entero dellos que es *el nervio principal* desta *maquina mineral*" 'to the best of his abilities according to the support of the *corregidores de indios* who, pursuing their own ends and profits, hinder the fulfillment [of the mita], which is the principal nerve of this mineral machine' (AGI Charcas 36 1619; my translation and

contribution of the indigenous community is further emphasized by the portrayal of two indigenous workers who are pictured physically exerting themselves as they climb the rich mountain with their loads of silver.

It is significant to point to a connection between the Murúa image and Potosí's original coat of arms, which was bestowed upon the Imperial City by Charles V in 1547. According to Arzáns, "tuvo por primeras armas esta famosa Villa en campo blanco el rico cerro, una águila y corona imperial al timbre y a los dos lados columnas con el *Plus ultra*" 'this famous Villa had for its first coat of arms on a white background the rich mountain, an eagle and the imperial crown over the peak and on both sides pillars with the *plus ultra*' (I, 10; my translation).[22] The description of this design as well as a visual representation included by Arzáns on the title page of his *Historia* display obvious similarities between the coat of arms – a symbol that connects Potosí to the imperial discourse of the Spanish Empire – and the indigenous drawing. It is impossible to prove that the indigenous artist who created the illustration for Murúa's text was aware of the coat of arms that represented Potosí from 1547 to 1565. However, the similarities between these two representations indicate that it is possible that the indigenous drawing responded to the idea of Potosí represented by the coat of arms.

In addition to the visual representation of Potosí, the coat of arms is further associated with a motto "Soi el rico Potosí, Del Mundo soi el Tesoro, Soi el Rey de los

---

emphasis). In 1640 Cristobal Matute, the alcalde mayor – principal deputy – of the mines of the rich mountain also claims that "el entero de la mita … es el [sic] basis y fundamento desta maquina" 'the fulfillment of the mita is the basis and foundation for this machine' (AGI Charcas 32 1640; my translation). The "maquina" of the rich mountain is one that depended on indigenous labor, according to these texts.

[22] This coat of arms was replaced by a different design in 1565.

Montes Y embidia soi de los Reies" 'I am rich Potosí, Treasure of the world, I am the king of all mountains and envy of all kings.' (Arzáns I, title page; my translation). As do many other representations, the coat of arms along with its motto efaces the role of indigenous contributions to the "maquina" that powered Potosí and presumably supported the Spanish Empire as a whole. Interestingly, the image in Murúa's text primarily differs from the coat of arms in its additions – most notably the addition of the Inca who is offering support for the Pillars of Hercules. These minimal changes suggest that the indigenous artist might have aimed to "correct" the coat of arms, a representation of the official history distributed by Spanish authors and officials.[23] The anonymous indigenous artist who created the images for Murúa's text thus offers a visual commentary not only on the written text of the *Historía*, which he is illustrating, but also on other visual and perhaps written texts representing Potosí with which he was familiar; the texts that influenced his depiction of the rich mountain might have included this first coat of arms. Even though the drawing offers a "corrected" representation of the *Cerro Rico* and its value—which is shown to depend on human, and particularly indigenous, labor—the image also affirms the importance of the *Cerro Rico*'s silver for Spanish imperial rule by

[23] The Peruvian mestizo chronicler Garcilaso de la Vega confesses to a similar motivation when he asserts that "aunque ha habido españoles curiosos que han escrito las repúblicas del Nuevo Mundo … no ha sido con la relación entera que de ellos se pudiera dar" 'even though there have been curious Spaniards who have written about the republics of the New World … they did not provide the whole account, which they could give of them' (139). Garcilaso thus indicates that he wishes to serve the chroniclers as "comento y glosa, y de intérprete" 'commentary and gloss, and as interpreter' (139).

visually portraying the landmark as an important support for the Pillars of Hercules, the symbols of Spanish authority.[24]

The second image of Potosí was created by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala and formed a part of his *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno,* completed in 1615.[25] Guaman Poma, who also contributed several illustrations to Murúa's *Historia*, seems to have modeled his image of the rich mountain on the anonymous drawing referenced above. However, whereas the Murúa drawing may have provided a critical comment on the official history and the portrayal – or lack thereof – of the indigenous population as instrumental to the efficient functioning of Potosí, Guaman Poma's image offers a more direct political commentary.

His line drawing is a visual representation of the claim that motivates Guaman Poma's text: his plea for a return to indigenous self-government in the Andes while remaining a part of the Spanish Empire under the overarching rule of the Spanish king rather than one of his emissaries. In Guaman Poma's drawing the rich mountain almost disappears relative to the portrayal of the Inca who is pictured on the peak of the Cerro surrounded by indigenous rulers representing the four provinces of the *Tawantinsuyu*, the Inca Empire. The Inca in this drawing wears the traditional ritual clothing, the *tocapu*

---

[24] The visual affirmation of the authority of the Spanish Monarch in Peru and confirmation of indigenous support for his rule might reflect a reaction to the corruption of local authorities and their abuse of indigenous people in the interest of personal gain. The second indigenous artist, Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, clearly denounces this social abuse in his *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno*, although his criticism it is not explicitly linked to Potosí.

[25] Guaman Poma included his representation of Potosí in his monumental *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, a "letter" written to Philip III in 1615; it is uncertain whether the letter ever reached Philip's court, as the document was unknown to a modern audience until its discovery in Copenhagen in the early twentieth century, and the trajectory it took to get there remains an unanswered question.

tunic and *mazcca paycha* headdress, symbols of his authority as an autonomous ruler, yet he is framed by the pillars of Hercules on either side and stands under the crest of *Castilla y León*. Both of these imperial symbols represent the authority of the Spanish monarchy, which is accepted and upheld by the Inca. The inscription heading the drawing claims that "la santa madre yglecia es defendida y nuestra santa fe guardada por los quatro rreys de las Yndias y por el enperador *Ynga*" 'the holy mother Church is defended and our holy faith guarded by the four kings of the Indies and by the Inca emperor' (Guaman Poma, II, 860; my translation). In conjunction this text and the drawing propose a new hierarchy in the Spanish Indies without rejecting the supreme rule of the Spanish king and the Catholic faith. The drawing visually confirms the capability of the Inca and his subordinates to guard and support the Catholic faith and uphold the authority of the Spanish monarchy by picturing the 'four kings of the Indies' as bracing the pillars of Hercules crowned by the Spanish monarch's coat of arms.

Given that Guaman Poma visually depicted a number of Peruvian cities and settlements – a total of 38 drawings of cities are included in his *Buen Gobierno* – the fact that he chose Potosí to portray his ideal version of an indigenous government to lead Peru under the reign of the Spanish king is important. His choice communicates that Guaman Poma recognizes the Cerro Rico as an important icon that in post-conquest Peru had been accepted to represent Spanish imperial authority over the Andes, at least for the Spanish audience he is addressing. Choosing this icon that is already associated with political power and territorial control would have allowed Guaman Poma to more clearly communicate his idea both visually and in writing.

Rather than diminishing the importance of Potosí both indigenous authors leverage Potosí's significance as an imperial icon associated with the Spanish empire in order to create an alternative discourse that "corrects" the Spanish official history, which was conveyed and shaped by authors such as Cieza de León. The image included in Murúa's text amends the representation of Potosí by portraying the central importance of indigenous contributions to the mining industry. Guaman Poma's drawing, on the other hand, adds another dimension by leveraging the iconic *Cerro Rico* as a visual argument to further his own proposal of indigenous self-government. Both representations suggest a re-contextualization of the rich mountain's iconic function as a symbol of state. Without undermining Spanish authority *per se* the indigenous artists, in their representations of Potosí, attempt to negotiate authority within the Andes as a shared responsibility between the Andean and European populations. The images propose an idealistic alternative to the representation of Potosí as an icon of Spanish authority alone. A reminder of indigenous contributions to both the labor and the government of the rich mountain, these images portray the *Cerro Rico* as a place and an icon representing respectful collaboration and increased equality between the different social groups of the vast Spanish empire.

Putting Potosí on the Grid

Beyond the metaphorical representations of the Cerro Rico as a symbol of state in book illustrations, Potosí's representation on select maps created by European mapmakers in the early modern period reinforces the significance of Potosí as an icon representing the Spanish monarchs' political influence. European cartographers put Potosí on the geographical grid in the early 1560s. The first two maps that reference

Potosí are a Portuguese manuscript chart drawn by Bartolomeu Velho in 1561 and an engraved map, *Americae sive quartae orbis partis nova et exactissima description,* printed in 1562 in Seville, which was created by Diego Gutierrez, a cartographer of Spain's *Casa de la Contratación*.[26] The emphasis of Velho's planispheric chart is on the representation of coastlines, and only few settlements located in the interior are represented, including "Cusco," "Villa de Plata" and "Potosí" in the viceroyalty of Peru. On Gutierrez's map Potosí is labeled alphabetically and marked as a settlement by a few stylized buildings. Similar to Gutierrez's map of "America, or the fourth part of the world," many of the colonial maps produced from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century referred to Potosí merely by including a generic symbol (a circle, a small building, etc.) marked by an alphabetic label indicating its geographic location and its status as a settlement. In these maps Potosí remained undistinguished from many other such places that were equally represented. A few seventeenth- and eighteenth-century maps include a visual representation of Potosí as a map inset or border image. On several seventeeth-century charts created primarily by Portuguese cartographers, however, the Cerro Rico is represented as an important landmark with an apparently strategic function.

To understand why and how Portuguese charts might have depicted Potosí as an icon representing Spanish authority in the Indies, it is important to consider the historical context of Iberian relations. The Portuguese territories were incorporated into the territories ruled by the Spanish Monarchy in 1580 following the disappearance (and

[26] Even though a map of the Western Hemisphere was included in Juan Bellero's 1554 Antwerp edition of Pedro Cieza de León's *Crónica*, this map did not represent Potosí by name or image.

presumable death) of the Portuguese king, Sebastian I, during a battle in Morocco.[27] Portugal's aristocracy, the upper clergy, and the Portuguese Jesuits supported the Iberian union primarily because of the economic benefits a union with Castile could bring to Portugal. For the Spanish Monarchy, the union with Portugal meant an increased presence and impact of the combined Iberian kingdoms in the Atlantic space, especially in transatlantic trading activity (Elliott, *Imperial Spain* 270-76). This increase in trade also contributed to a period of intense cartographic activity, which had commenced with the reign of Philip II and spanned the period of the Iberian Union from 1580 to 1640.

Andrea Doré describes this time period as "um momento de inédita valorização da produção cartográfica a serviço da expansão, da administração e da manutenção de um império" 'a moment of unprecedented valuation of the cartographic productionat the service of the expansion, administration, and maintenance of an Empire' ("Deslocamento" n.p.; my translation). Paradoxically, Doré observes, even as cartography was increasingly valued in the Spanish empire, the Portuguese production of maps lost its dynamism in this same period. Indeed, she indicates that for Armando Cortesão, the modern editor of the comprehensive volume of *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartográfica*, "o período de 1580 a 1640 é caracterizado pela 'decadência' na história da cartografia portuguesa, devida à dominação de Portugal pela Inquisição, pela Companhia de Jesus e pelos Filipes" 'the period from 1580 to 1640 is characterized as a 'decline' in the history of Portuguese cartography, due to the domination of Portugal by the Inquisition, by the Jesuit Company, and by the Philips' ("Deslocamento" n.p.; my

---

[27] See J.H. Elliott *Imperial Spain 1469-1716* (1963) p. 268-277 on details of the historical events leading up to the annexation and on the important role the silver from the Indies played in this political maneuver.

translation). Despite, or maybe because of this overall decrease in cartographic activity, it is likely that the maps produced during this time period reflected a point of view coherent with the official history advanced and supported by the Spanish monarchs.

Doré indicates that Portuguese cartographic representations of the Andean space portray Peru, and Potosí more specifically, as points of reference that help a Spanish audience situate Portuguese possessions in the Indies in relation to the better known Peruvian viceroyalty ("Deslocamento"). She further suggests that the discovery of gold and silver in Peru might have "built a horizon of expectations that stimulated European knowledge and representations of all of South America" ("America Meridionalis" n.p.); the mountain of Potosí is likely the most widely known landmark determining this horizon of expectation. While printed maps and manuscript charts depict the *Cerro Rico* as a recognizable geographical point of reference, the charts in particular present the rich mountain as a logistical center in the network of Atlantic commerce, an important cog in the motor of Spanish imperial politics, and a landmark of metaphorical value.

The *Cerro Rico* is especially highlighted as a geographical point of reference on manuscript charts created primarily by Portuguese cartographers in the late sixteenth and the seventeenth century, although there is at least one example of a manuscript chart produced in England towards the end of the seventeenth century, which similarly highlights the rich mountain visually. The English manuscript chart was created by the English mapmaker William Hack in London after 1698. It functioned as the "Table of Contents" page to a codex he created to provide *An accurate description of all the harbours rivers ports islands sands rocks and dangers … in the south sea of America* (Figure 4). According to the description accompanying this map in the John Carter

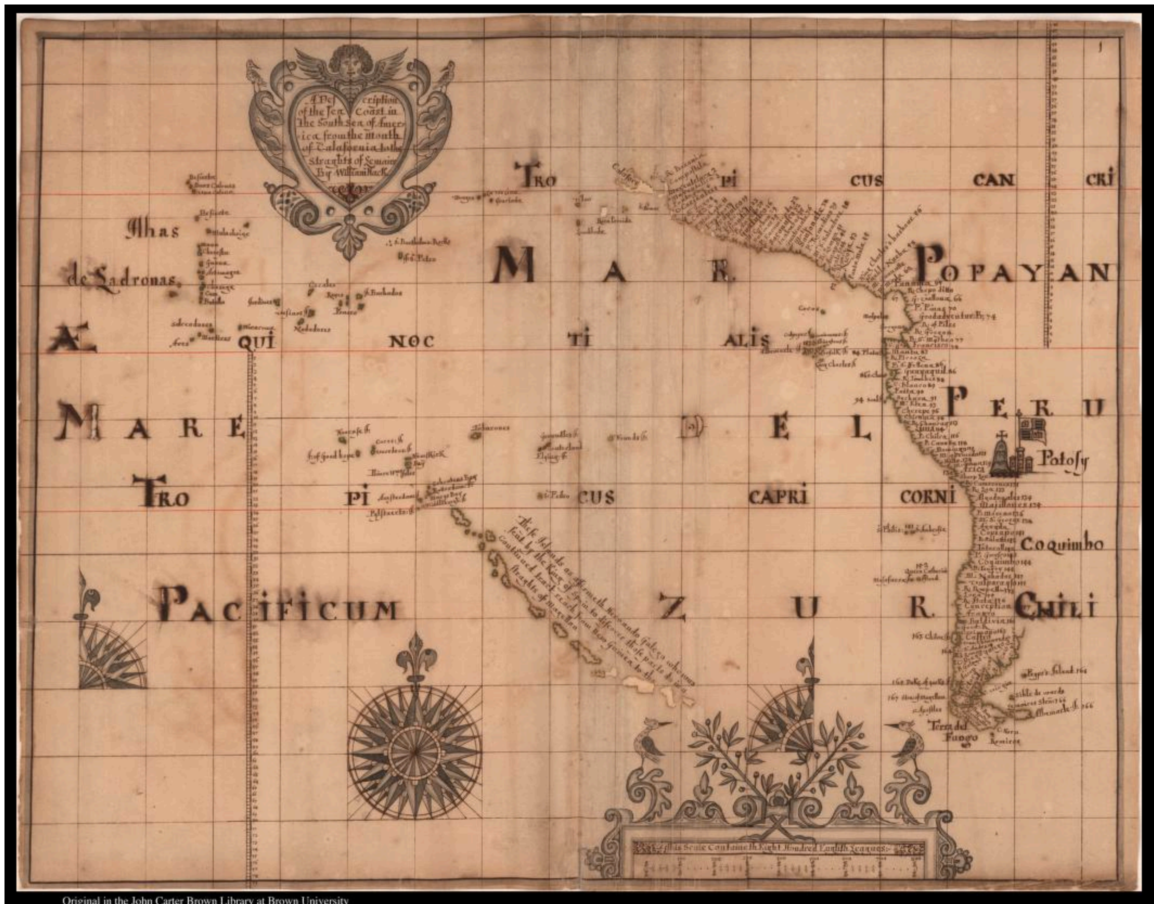

Figure 4 *An accurate description of of all the harbours rivers ports islands sands rocks and dangers … in the south sea of America*. William Hack. ca.1698.
Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

Brown Library online "Archive of Early American Images," Hack's atlas, including this "Table of Contents," was based on

> a collection of Spanish charts captured by the English privateer, Captain Bartholomew Sharpe, when his ship, Trinity, seized the Spanish ship, Rosario, off the coast of Ecuador in 1681. Among the booty seized was a derrotero, or a volume of manuscript charts of the coast with detailed sailing directions, captured as it was about to be thrown overboard. ("Notes" n.p.)

The description of the source for Hack's chart provides evidence that charts, similar to those discussed in this analysis, were indeed used by Spanish navigators on transatlantic

voyages. Hack's map reveals that charts prominently featuring a representation of Potosí were created not only in Portugal but also by Spanish mapmakers.[28]

While the first chart referencing Potosí dates to 1561 (created by Velho as indicated above), it is only in the early seventeenth century that Portuguese cartographers begin depicting the iconic shape of Potosí as a noteworthy landmark by portraying it as more than a marker on the grid of the map. Based on the extensive collection of early modern Portuguese maps and charts published in the *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica,* which span the time frame from the fifteenth to the early eighteenth century, this trend continues until the late seventeenth century. Unfortunately no similar corpus of Spanish manuscript charts exists for comparison.

In many of these charts the obvious focus is on the coastlines, which are tightly labeled with names of coastal settlements and ports. A network of rhumb lines criss-crosses the two-dimensional representation of space in these portolan charts, a visual aid that presumably assisted navigators in determining a "rumbo" or course for their voyage in order to reach their destination. Often Potosí is located near a juncture of the rhumblines and is thus visually indicated as a central location that could be reached in many different ways by those who set course for Peruvian treasures. It is unlikely that the

---

[28] Kevin Sheehan's dissertation research has provided him with evidence that portolan charts "were not directly involved with seafaring," but were in fact "consumer goods designed to show off the owner's worldliness" (133). He claims that "just as *mappaemundi* reflected the religious desire to explain the universe, portolan charts revealed the desire of people in the maritime cultures of Genoa, Venice, Catalonia, Portugal and, later, Languedoc, Castile, the Dutch Republic and England to understand the world within their frame of reference" (133). Regardless of their actual use, however, the perceived function of the rhumb lines on portolan charts was their support for setting a clear course of navigation.

Cerro Rico would have been expected to provide a discernible point of reference that allowed travelers to orient themselves, as it is removed from the coast and situated remotely in the middle of the Andean mountain range; Potosí is as good as invisible from anywhere but a short distance. Therefore, the importance of the *Cerro Rico* as a point of reference on these maps must be considered in a metaphorical rather than geographical context.

In several of the Portuguese manuscript maps – planispheric as well as hemispheric charts – Potosí is the only landmark in America's interior that is represented aside from waterways. On at least one map, Antonio Sánches's planispheric chart *Idrographisae Nova Descripcio* from 1641, Potosí is the only landmark pictured on the map, calling attention to the exceptional importance attributed to the Cerro Rico, since none of the other continents pictured on this chart merit the representation of a recognizable landmark. The sense of exceptionality evoked by this privileged representation of the Cerro Rico calls attention to an iconic function that clearly extended beyond the mountain's role as a geographical point of reference. On these nautical charts – or at least charts inspired by nautical conventions – on which the rhumb lines provide a visual reference to intersecting trading routes and networks of commerce connecting the Old World and the New, the *Cerro Rico* functioned as an icon representing the motor of an Atlantic economy, which was dependent on American silver.[29]

---

[29] John H. Elliott elaborates that "the King of Spain needed [silver] to meet his expenses (especially incurred in war), and Europe's mercantile community needed it to lubricate its transactions and to provide a means of paying for luxuries from India and the East. Therefore the organization of the silver mines and the silver trade became a major preoccupation of the Spanish crown, and the whole Spanish system - and to some extent

Metaphorically, then, the Cerro Rico pictured on these Portuguese charts, indeed, served as a point of reference for navigation. However, it was not the landmark *per se* that guided travelers, as it was hardly visible for travelers on land and sea. Rather, Potosí the icon evoked the silver treasures of the New World and the "maquina" of its mines and refineries, which powered transatlantic trade, motivating navigators of the official Spanish fleet as well as British and French pirates and traders to set a course directly or indirectly determined by the silver flowing from America's silver mines – Potosí most prominent among them.

In addition to being represented as a metaphorical beacon for early modern travellers on maps and charts, an early eighteenth-century painting also depicts the *Cerro Rico* as a compass guiding these travelers. The painting, *Embalsas* (1709), portrays the rich mountain as its focus; the Imperial City is located at its base, and it is set within a landscape of mountains and water reservoirs, which provided hydropower to the ore mills and refineries of Potosí. A compass encircles the peak of the mountain recalling the placement of compass roses on nautical charts, which facilitate the setting of the course according to the ordinal directions indicated by the tool itself as well as its representations. By placing the compass on top of the Cerro rather than off to the side of the main scene represented in this image, the unknown artist calls attention to the *Cerro Rico* as being akin to this navigational tool, which provides direction to those navigating known and unknown terrains. The rich mountain is located at the center of the compass rose where – according to the conventions of the early modern nautical charts – the

---

the European international system - came to depend very heavily on the regular flow of precious metals from America to Europe" (*Spain and Its Empire* 19).

rhumblines would have converged and intersected. This representation of Potosí suggests both its role as a motivation for exploratory expeditions as well as calling to mind the networks of trade it created and sustained.[30]

Not only in these visual representations was the rich mountain located at the center of intersecting routes of trade and exploration. Accounts of the abundant markets of the Imperial City described by, for example, Cieza de León in the late sixteenth century and Potosian chronicler Bartolomé de Arzáns y Orsúa in the early eighteenth century confirm that the city that grew based on Potosí's silver provided an important market for goods originating from all parts of the world. Potosí, Arzáns describes, is at the center of a well-oiled machine, a trading network that provides the Imperial City with all the essential provisions as well as any luxuries one could desire from all parts of the world. Arzáns proves the commercial importance of Potosí and the Imperial City by providing an exhaustive list of goods accessible in the markets and their provenance, corroborating its central position within the network of trade stimulated by the silver extracted from the *Cerro Rico*. His superficial inventory includes sheep and llamas from the neighboring valleys, wine from Arequipa, seafood from the nearby seaport of Arica (I, 7), cloth from Spain, paintings from Rome, carpets from Persia, silk from China, and slaves from Angola (I, 8) among other items. Arzáns thus conveys that Potosí was an important market for both locally produced and globally imported merchandise, an observation that placed the rich mountain at the center of a wide spread trading network, a place where goods as well as people from all parts of the world converged.

[30] On Potosí's role in motivating Portuguese explorers to look for an equivalent to Potosí in the Portuguese territories of Brazil, see Sergio Buarque de Holanda, *Visión del paraíso,* 70-71.

Attracting goods and people, the rich mountain serves as a magnet – the true North for the travellers' compass. Confirming this perception of the rich mountain as holding an inevitable attraction, Reginaldo de Lizárraga describes Potosí as "el centro de todas las Indias, fin y paradero de los que a ellas venimos" 'the center of all the Indies, end goals and destination of all of us who come to [the Indies]' (86; my translation). The charts, paintings and texts produced by Portuguese and Spanish authors in the early seventeenth century portray Potosí as a landmark, which metaphorically though not literally guided navigation and trade and affirmed Spanish predominance of transatlantic commerce.

Competing Spatial Narratives

Unlike the Portuguese seventeenth-century charts, which highlight Potosí as an important point of reference in the American and even a global space, many maps printed in other parts of Europe portray Potosí as just another settlement – if it is depicted at all. For example, two of the first maps representing Potosí, Diego Gutierrez's 1562 map and a 1564 Venetian map created by Paolo di Forlani, *La Descrittione di tutto il Peru,*[31] situated a schematic urbanization titled Potosí at the bottom of a mountain and next to a fictional lake – Lago Tichicasa, a spatial pattern that subsequently was repeated on many maps produced in all parts of Europe. Also on the shores of the imaginary Lago Tichicasa, the reader of the maps is able to find the fictional settlements of "Colochi" and "Chilachi;" these names seem to be a play on sounds with Potosí, which is sometimes

[31] Both maps show many similarities suggesting that the later Venetian map was based on Gutierrez's model.

also labeled as Potochi. Perhaps the printers were not entirely sure of the name and included several labels in the hope of one of them being right. Furthermore, the Venetian map also features several other landmarks and cities with fabulous names that sound similar to actual locations (i.e. Cuchiao might be Chuquisaca [Sucre]). The mix of the real and the fabulous on these maps is indicative of the difficult access to accurate information—especially geographic intelligence—in the sixteenth century. It is therefore significant that Potosí is represented on these and other maps in a more or less accurate position in relation to some of the real landmarks also marked on the grid: Potosí is south of lake Titicaca and northwest of the Rio de la Plata.[32]

The inclusion of Potosí as a labeled landmark on many early modern maps indicates that, in general, the mines and city of Potosí were recognized as a place worthy of note, even though European cartographers as well as authors guessed at the concrete geographic location of the legendary silver mountain. Not only sixteenth- and seventeenth-century maps, however, reveal uncertainty regarding the concrete location of Potosí. Notably, the French historian and cosmographer André Thevet, in *Les singularitez de la France Antarctique,* claimed that Potosí was located on an island in the Caribbean, north of Cuba:

> Quãt aux isles de Lucaïa (ainsi nommées pour etre plusieurs en nombre) ells sont situées au nort de l'isle d'Cuba et de Saint Dominique […]. Puis qu'il vient à propos de ces isles, et de leur richesses, ie ne veux oublier à dire quelque chose des richesse de Potosí: lequel prend son nom d'une haute montagne … elevée en

[32] Potosí, however, is represented whereas other settlements are not represented on these maps at all. One of the settlements left out is the city of Chuquisaca/La Plata, which was the episcopal seat of Charcas since 1552-53 and housed the Audiencia since 1559. This lack of representation suggests the relative importance associated with Potosí over other locations, such as Chuquisaca, which – presumably – ranked higher in the political hierarchy of the Peruvian viceroyalty.

> haut en façon de pyramide. Ceste montagne est merueilleusement riche á cause des mines d'argent.
>
> In regard to the islands of Lucaya (named thusly because there are several of this name) they are situated north of the island of Cuba and Santo Domingo [...] As it comes to these islands and their treasures, I do not want to forget to mention something about the wealth of Potosí: which takes its name from a tall mountain ... shaped like a pyramid. This mountain is marvelously rich because of its silver mines. (380-81; my translation)

No other cartographic or textual representation of Potosí places the rich mountain as far removed from its actual location in the Andes as Thevet. However, at least two maps show Potosí's location directly on the Pacific coast; a map of North and South America created by Arnoldo di Arnoldi in Siena in 1601 pictures Potosí, as well as Porco – another Andean silver mining center – as ports on the Pacific coast.[33] A map printed in 1592 in Amsterdam, *Haec pars Peruvianae*, shows Potosí in two locations (Figure 5).[34] The main map on this printed sheet shows "El Serro de Potosí" as a mountain range just north of the Trópico del Capricornio only a short distance from the Pacific. A small map inset on the same sheet portrays a close-up of a part of the Peruvian territories, the same area in which the mountain range is located on the main map. Despite representing the same region, the mountain range "El Serro de Potosí" is conspicuously absent, while the label Potosí is applied to a symbol denoting an urbanization, located – again – next to a fictional lake and the villages of Colochi and Chilachi, in a location that approximates the actual geographical coordinates of the *Cerro Rico*. Even though the two maps pictured on

---

[33] It is interesting to note that on a 1587 map by Abraham Ortelius, *America sive nove orbis* – which likely served as the model for Arnoldi's map – Potosí is located in the Andes next to the fictitious Lago Tichicasa. Another map, *Vniversale Descrittione del mondo,* created by Arnoldi and printed in the same year as his map of America, shows Potosí located in the Andean region next to pyramidal mountain.

[34] According to the JCB notes this map is attributed to Petrus Plancius, a well-known cosmographer as well as clergyman of the Dutch reformed church.

Figure 5 *Haec Pars Peruvianae*. Petrus Plancius. 1592.
Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

this sheet show almost the same part of the Peruvian viceroyalty each map represents different and, as in the case of Potosí, conflicting information about the geography of this part of the world. The varying locations of Potosí provide visual evidence of not only the existence of alternative accounts but also their ready acceptance during a time period that was marked by frequent contestations of spatial and cultural geographies.

The inconsistencies in the representations of Potosí in the sixteenth and even early seventeenth century suggest that Potosí, for several decades after its silver was discovered by the Spaniards, might have been perceived as another of the New World's fabulous landmarks holding immeasurable treasures that, even though they were pictured on maps and sought by explorers, were located in a virtual rather than a "real" geographical space. For example, the fabled kingdom of El Dorado was represented on maps until the early eighteenth century even though explorers were never able to reach it and to confirm its location.[35] Yet while El Dorado remained elusive, the *Cerro Rico*, especially if contemplated from a distance, must have been perceived as a confirmation of the veracity of legends circulating about the American sensations; if a veritable mountain of silver existed, why not a land of giants or a city of gold?

By suggesting that for the vast audience (as well as some producers) of these written and visual texts, Potosí was primarily located in a discursive and virtual space, I do not claim that the *Cerro Rico* – or El Dorado for that matter – was perceived as less real. However, for those readers who were consuming these written and visual texts

---

[35] See, for example, *Partie de Terre Ferme* by N. Sanson d'Abbeville [Paris, 1656] and *Scheepstogt door Robert Harcourt gedaan na Gujana* [Leyden, 1706]. On the latter map El Dorado is replaced by the city of Manoa, which, supposedly was a city of Gold founded by the Incas.

without being able to experience the actual mountain, firmly embedded within the Andean landscape and shaped by human activity, the *Cerro Rico* would remain insubstantial, a discursive token that could be easily appropriated and adapted to various cultural contexts.

Cultural Translation and Appropriation of Representation: Conclusion

In the edition of Cieza de León's *Crónica del Perú* published by Juan Bellero in Antwerp in 1554, which overall differs only slightly from the 1553 Seville edition, one notable difference are the images illustrating the text. While in the Seville edition the representation of Potosí stood out as notable, if only for its bigger size, in the Antwerp edition, published only a year later, all illustrations have the same size. A different set of woodcuts was used to create this edition, although the images are closely modeled on the representations from the 1553 edition.[36] In this variation of the woodcut images the artist frequently added and changed details, such as the shape of the buildings representing Cuzco, rather than the overall composition of the image. Interestingly, most of the woodcut prints included in this edition are more detailed – although not more verisimilar – with the notable exception of the representation of Potosí. The representation of the rich mountain is less detailed than in the first edition, lacking, for example, all labels included in the original woodcut and showing extremely stylized human figures, no more than a few lines. Rather than interpreting this apparent decrease in the emphasis placed

[36] Two of the three 1554 Antwerp editions are held by the John Carter Brown Library and images are accessible online through the library. The two publishers of these editions are Martin Nucio y Juan Bellero. The images of these two editions available online are virtually alike differing only in minute details. In this section I will refer to the images included in the edition by Juan Bellero unless noted otherwise.

on Potosí in the 1554 edition as a waning of interest, though, this adaptation of the original image is an early example of its appropriation and translation to a new cultural context where some of the details of Andean culture included in the original woodcut – such as the more detailed representation of people wearing traditional Andean clothing – are irrelevant or incomprehensible (see Figures 6 and 7).

As representations of Potosí started to be adapted and modified to meet the expectations of different audiences, they represented a more generic, iconic image of the Cerro evoking an abstract idea rather than the concrete geographical landmark.[37] Thus it becomes possible for the Cerro Rico, portrayed in subsequent interpretations of Cieza de León's image of Potosí, to look like an alpine mountain (Italian translation 1555, qtd. in Goodrich 293), a densely vegetated hill (*Tarih-I Hind-I Garbi*, Newberry Manuscript), or even a mere elevation (*Tarih-I Hind-I Garbi,* printed 1718). Rather than detracting from the relevance of the Cerro as an icon representative of economic and political success, these superficial changes and cultural appropriations of the image of Potosí prove the impact of this icon by providing evidence of its considerable circulation.

Similarly, the visual appropriation of the Cerro Rico in its different representations indicates that the mountain represented a culturally potent image (Jenkins 468) for a variety of social groups within and outside the Spanish Empire. Nevertheless, the images might not always have evoked an association with the political dominance of Spanish monarchy, as the Spanish authors of the texts accompanying these images seem to have intended.

[37] As I have described in the introduction, I follow Jenkins's suggestion that the icon is a concrete embodiment of an abstract state and, consequently, that the representations of Potosí function as concrete embodiments of abstract ideas.

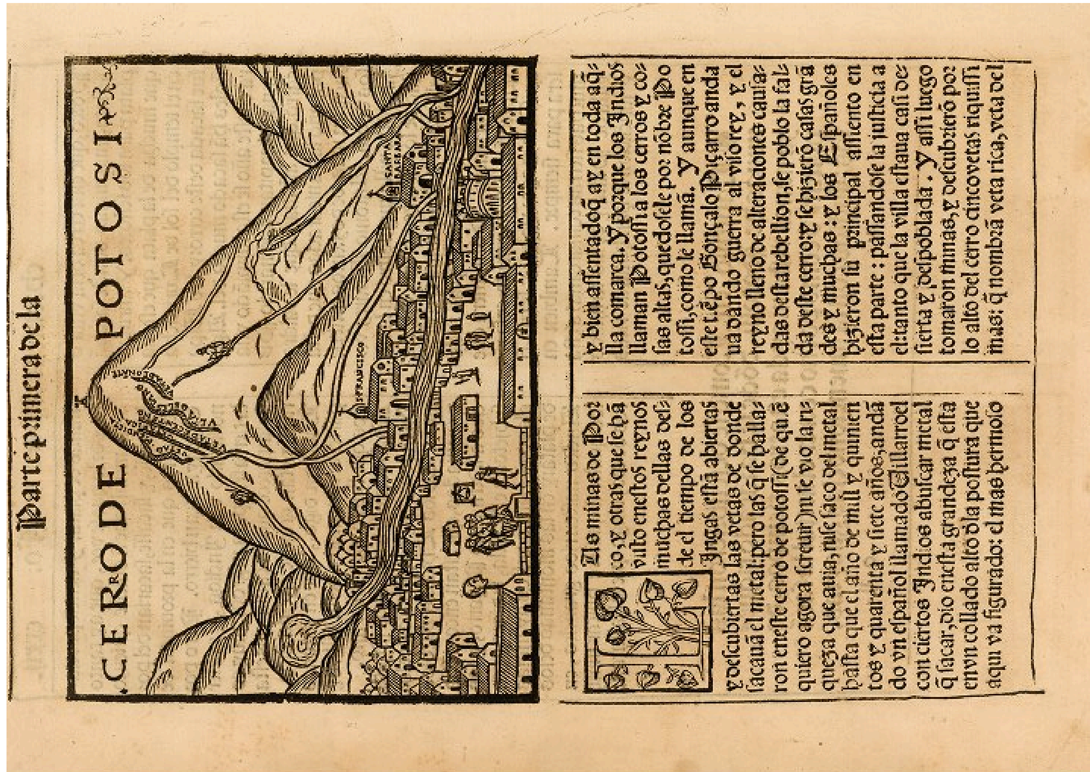

Figure 6 *Cerro de Potosí*. Pedro Cieza de León. Primera Parte de la Crónica del Perú. 1553.
Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

Figure 7 *Cerro de Potosí*. Pedro Cieza de León. *Primera Parte de la Crónica del Perú*. 1554.
Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

In his study of six different – manuscript and printed – editions of the Ottoman text of the *Tarih-I Hind-I Garbi*[38], which included a textual description of the Cerro Rico as well as a visual representation of the mountain, Thomas Goodrich observes that even within the same cultural context, representations of Potosí reflect variety and changes over time (62). Even though his research focuses on the various edition of this text that was first edited in Constantinople in the sixteenth century, the statement in general applies to visual and written representations of Potosí. The depictions included in various texts as drawings or printed woodcuts and engravings show an image of the Cerro that was adapted to different cultural expectations. For example, although in the editions of Cieza de León's *Crónica* the text itself, even when translated, does not differ much from the original, the visual translation of the image of the mountain is significant. In the original illustration published in 1553, the image shows the almost conical shape –a sugarloaf – of the rich mountain and the smaller Guayna Potosí, its smooth slopes clearly set apart from the surrounding mountainous terrain. Towards the peak of the Cerro Rico, the artist indicates five mining shafts labeled as *Veta Mendieta, Veta Rica, Veta de Centeno, Veta del Estaño,* and *Veta de Oñate*. Approaching the mines are several paths on which two figures – at least one of these probably represents an indigenous miner based on his headgear, which resembles an Andean *ch'ullu* hat – climb towards the veins of silver. At the base of the mountain two churches, labeled as San Francisco and Santa

---

[38]According to Goodrich, the author of the original manuscript "very clearly gave a name to his work – *Hadis-I nev* (Fresh New), yet because of the very blandness or imprecision of that title many names are given to the existing manuscripts and the two printed editions." The title *Tarih-I Hind-I Garbi,* which was given to the 1730 edition translates to "A History of the India of the West" (19). Goodrich has been able to trace 19 extant manuscripts of the text in addition to two printed editions (1730 and 1875-76).

Barbara, and a *plaza* dominate the growing mining town. The settlement is enclosed by several buildings and a short strip of wall with an open archway. A river originating from a lagoon outside the city separates the city into two parts. While most of the houses seem to be built according to a European model, in the background several buildings are differently shaped – almost mirroring the conical shape of the mountain with an entrance in front and a chimney on top – and might represent indigenous housing. The image of the Cerro Rico included in the 1555 Italian translation of Cieza de León's *Crónica* preserves some principal features of the original representation, including the generally conical shape of the mountain and its clear separation from other geographical features. However, important changes to the image present a mountain that might be part of an alpine rather than Andean landscape: the slopes of the mountain are no longer smooth, several outcroppings create a rugged terrain where paths no longer provide access to the peak so that the two figures pictured in this image seem to be almost stranded on the mountainside making their way with mountaineering equipment, one of them seemingly wielding a pickax. Similarly, the drawing representing Potosí in the Newberry *Tarih-I Hind-I Garbi* manuscript represents the mountain, without its smaller companion the *Guayna Potosí*, as a verdant hill next to a walled city featuring several square domed buildings representative of Ottoman architecture. It is interesting that neither the Italian nor the Ottoman image reference the silver mines that were emphasized in the original woodcut through labeling, even though the texts accompanying the images highlight Potosí's importance as a source of silver (Goodrich 285, 293).[39]

[39] Goodrich claims that "while the Turkish text is a translation from the 1563 Italian edition of Zárate's *History of the Discovery of Perú*, the picture of Potosí does not exist

It was not just translations of Spanish texts that represented visual adaptations and interpretations of the Cerro Rico. A widespread image of Potosí was first published in two illustrated texts in 1671: a Dutch text by Arnoldus Montanus, *De Nieuwe en onbekende Weereld: of Beschryving van America* [Amsterdam], and John Ogilby's *America Being the Latest and Most Accurate Description of the New World* [London] (Figure 8). The image shows the rich mountain in the background crowned by an oversized chapel. In the foreground a windmill is prominently featured; several others are pictured in the background. The windmills effectively deny one of the engineering feats celebrated in Potosí, the *Ribera* featuring a string of water-powered mills to grind silver ore alongside a partly canalized river fed by water from several dammed lagoons. The city of Potosí in this image is represented as a scattered collection of small houses in addition to two churches rather than the burgeoning city that in the early seventeenth century had approximately 160,000 inhabitants and was one of the biggest urbanizations in the world.

Moreover, unconcerned about the physical reality of the Andes, the illustrator of this texts relies on stereotypes to portray the exotic location of the rich mountain, and includes a few palm trees and some African slaves. These visual disconnects between representation and reality effectively rejected some of the elements of Potosí's grandeur

in that edition but only in the 1563 edition in Dutch. It is much more likely that the Turkish artist had before him as a model the picture of Potosí that appeared in the 1555 Italian edition of Cieza de León's *La Crónica del Perú*" (61). If that is the case, the Ottoman artist who created the image would not have seen the mines pictured in the earlier Seville and Antwerp editions. However, based on the shape of the lagoon pictured in the Newberry drawing – present in the Seville and Antwerp images but not in the Italian one, where it is replaced with the river springing from a cave – it is just as likely that the source was one of the earlier Cieza de León editions.

Figure 8 *Potosí*. Arnoldus Montanus. *De Nieuwe en onbekende Weereld*. 1671.
Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

that went beyond its proverbial wealth, such as the water-powered *Ribera* and the successful urbanization that thrived despite its unlikely location in the infertile landscape and high altitude of the high Andes. Furthermore, the *Cerro Rico* itself – an icon representing wealth and authority in the Spanish accounts – is relegated to the secondary plane within this illustration. Based on culturally determined expectations and ideals that inform the frame of reference for this image its creator foregrounds the industry and productivity of the windmills as indicators of success rather than accepting the representations advanced by the Spanish texts.

A number of maps published outside the Spanish territories also include small vignettes of Potosí alongside schematic representations of other American cities and clichéd representations of indigenous people. These compositions present an image of the Cerro Rico as part of a collection of curiosities. The engraving by Arnoldus Montanus, the representation of Potosí surrounded by windmills, was one of the images that served as a model for these vignettes; another was the image introduced by Cieza de León.[40] In the two dimensional space of these published sheets, the images permit readers to behold an unknown part of the world; the *Cerro Rico* represented on these maps thus might have been an example of an attraction presented to an audience of early modern virtual tourists. The compositional context of these maps, however, where Potosí is just one among a number of representations depicting exotic oddities of the Americas indicates that the rich mountain might have been perceived as one of many novelties assembled in a virtual space, akin to a cabinet of curiosities (Figure 9).

Each of the images and maps discussed in this chapter constitutes an appropriation and cultural translation of the *Cerro Rico* for a different audience as well as for different purposes. While the physical landmark and its rich mines belong to the Spanish Empire, the virtual *Cerro Rico* represented in word and image does not. In Iberian texts, the mountain of Potosí is represented as a symbol of state that consolidates Spanish authority over the territories of Peru and beyond. In the Andes, meanwhile, some indigenous authors aspired to negotiate the distribution of authority within the territory

---

[40] Montanus engraving, for example, was (re)presented as an inset on the map created by Herman Moll ca. 1709 that was dedicated "To the Right Honourable Charles Earl of Sunderland and Baron Spencer." Cieza de León's image was included in the decorative border, for example, of the map *America nova descriptio* by Abraham Goos [1633]

that, following the Spanish conquest, was unequally shared by Andeans and Europeans. Spatial depictions of Potosí created outside the Spanish empire, on the other hand, portray the rich mountain as a geographical location mostly independent of political significance in the context of Spanish imperialism by adapting its image to local ideals of representation.[41]

The circulation of this icon in sixteenth-century texts created by Spaniards might have successfully recalled Spain's assertion of dominance over the expansive territories of the Spanish Indies for an audience outside the Spanish empire.[42] Walter Ralegh's lament regarding the vexation the rich mountain caused "all the Princes of Europe" (53) confirms Potosí's status as an icon representing Spanish success, which, at the same time, motivated others to equal or surpass the colonial achievements of the Spaniards.[43] Yet unlike Spanish chroniclers, such as Cieza de León , Zárate, and Acosta, who represent Potosí and the discovery of its silver as ordained by "la divina providencia – para felicidad de España" 'divine providence – for the happiness of Spain' (Acosta 104; my translation), other European authors do not establish a direct relation between the Cerro Rico and Spain's claim to authority over territories in the Spanish Indies – much less in Europe – and control of commercial networks.

---

[41] Thevet's and De Bry's representations of the mountain, discussed in Chapter 3, might be considered exceptions as both images make an explicitly political statement. However, I do not consider these images here as they focus on portraying the work in the mines and refineries of Potosí rather than representing the landmark within its geographical context.

[42] Bellic endeavors were initiated by Charles V and Philip II to "check and throw back the forces of heresy and disorder" (Elliott, *Spain and Its Empire* 23), creating tensions and recurrent international conflicts with England, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, parts of Italy and even certain Spanish kingdoms, such as Cataluña, that were inherited by Philip III and Philip IV.

[43] See *p. 37 for the full quote.

Figure 9 *America Nova Descriptio* Abraham Goos and Nicolaes Visscher. 1633.
Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

The visual translation of representations of Potosí in European texts contribute to the negotiation of the Cerro's importance as an icon claimed by the Spanish both literally and figuratively. In the written words and images of early modern Spanish writers and artists, but also in representations on maps created by Portuguese cartographers at a time when Portugal was joined to the Habsburg monarchs, the rich mountain was portrayed as an important force behind Spain's political dominance in Europe and, more globally, as a focal point and motor of transoceanic trade. The images created by Europeans unfamiliar with the actual landmark take the rich mountain out of a political context and focus on its geography. By inserting the legendary landmark into a cultural framework reflecting the creators' cultural reference points, the displacement and recontextualization of Potosí allows the intended audience of each image to normalize the phenomenon of the Silver Mountain: how exceptional can it be if – based on the contextual information communicated in the images – this mythical mountain of silver is not so very different from the landmarks closer to home? This rejection of Potosí's significance, however, is a political statement in itself: discounting the rich mountain, which was hailed as a symbol of power in Spanish texts, signified a parallel devaluation of the Spanish Crown.

Chapter 5: Debating Spirituality – Potosí's Place within the Sacred Landscape of the Andes and the Catholic Spanish Empire

The cross marking the peak of Potosí conveyed the territorial claim of the Spanish king over the rich mountain, as we have seen in the previous chapter. However, the cross also marked the rich mountain for the Catholic Church as part of a larger discourse negotiating spirituality in the Andes. This discourse was initiated upon the first meeting between the Inca Atahuallpa and Pizarro's Spanish conquistadors in 1532. On this occasion Pizarro sent the friar Vicente de Valverde to speak as an emissary of the Christian God to the Incan ruler. Sharing the word of God, Valverde presents his breviary to the Inca, who after leafing through its pages, throws it on the floor without fully understanding its significance (Cieza de León, *Tercera parte* 134); yet this gesture, perceived as disrespect by the Spaniards, has been indicated as a principal reason in the following ambush attack on the Inca and his guard (Cieza de León, *Tercera parte* 135; Titu Cusi Yupanqui 10-15). From the beginning, the Spanish conquistadors assumed the negotiation of spirituality in the Andes to be one-directional: the expected outcome of conversion was the imposition of Catholic religion and ideals on the indigenous population, who would uncritically accept this new paradigm. This expectation of religious conversion as a one-sided discourse set the tone for the negotiation of the rich mountain as an icon of spirituality; various Spanish texts provide evidence of the discursive effort to claim the rich mountain as an icon representative of the successful conversion to Catholicism in the Andes. A consideration of surviving sources, however,

shows that the success of these efforts to impose Catholic ideas onto the pre-existing sacred indigenous landmark – the *huaca* of the mountain of Potosí – was limited. Indeed, the negotiation of spirituality seemed one-directional only on the surface: indigenous representations of the mountain of Potosí are but one example of a quiet resistance against the religious domination by the Spanish and the Catholic ideals they promoted. Rather than portraying an uncritical acceptance of the Catholic paradigm, these representations evince a gradual mutual assimilation of spiritualities in the context of a changed cultural environment.

After the "discovery" of the rich mountain of Potosí the *Cerro Rico* was one of the spaces where the conversion of the indigenous people was actively advanced in several *parroquías* de Indios – indigenous parishes – that were distributed throughout the Imperial City. An important purpose of these parishes was to provide the indigenous workers with access to salvation by way of providing opportunities to receive instruction in the Catholic religion as well as spiritual care from a designated priest.[1] At the same time, the rich mountain was discursively transformed into an icon of spirituality that represented the goals of Christianization: the Catholic Cross and Virgin were portrayed as dominating the *Cerro Rico*, which, as an indigenous idol, was vanquished by the determination of the Catholic Church to save the souls of the unbelieving Andeans.

As we have seen, Arzáns recalls in his *Historia* that in 1555, on the occasion of acclaiming Potosí's patron saints, a model of the rich mountain fashioned from its fine

[1] Potosí's *rancherías* – the parts of the city assigned to house the indigenous population – were divided into several indigenous parishes. Bakewell indicates that prior to Toledo's reorganization of the city in 1573 six parishes existed to which Toledo added eight additional ones (*Miners* 99). Arzáns, referring to the year 1591, lists a total of 15 indigenous parishes (I, 213).

silver was an important showpiece of the procession that wound its way through the Imperial City. On the peak of this miniature mountain, Arzáns relates “estaba la imagen de María santísima […] formado del mismo metal” ‘there was a statue of the most saintly Mary […] fashioned from [silver]’(Arzáns I, 97; my translation). Visually, this representation of the rich mountain placed the former *huaca* under the protection of the Catholic Virgin and under the dominion of the Catholic religion and the Catholic kings of Spain. During this spectacle, which occurred only ten years after the Spaniards had started to exploit Potosí’s mines, the residents of the Imperial City explicitly represented the rich mountain as an icon of spirituality and portrayed the *Cerro Rico* as both a sign of God’s goodwill towards the Spaniards and as a place ruled and protected by the Catholic divinity through the Virgin Mary.

Around 1718, shortly after his visit to the Imperial City, the viceroy and archbishop Morcillo commissioned a similar silver miniature of the rich mountain that was created in Potosí and then shipped to Spain. In Spain, the 1718 model of the *Cerro Rico* is also crowned by the Catholic Virgin, more specifically, the Virgin of Charity in Morcillo’s hometown of Robledo in Spain.[2] In both of these representations, dating from 1555 and 1718, the rich mountain serves as the pedestal for a statue of the Mother of God; the former Andean *huaca* becomes the stepping-stone upon which the Virgin, who embodies Christianity, was placed. This representation alludes to the goal of Spanish missionaries and colonizers who aimed to transform the physical and spiritual landscape

[2] Both of these representations were actually created at the same time, event though Arzáns dates the parade during which the mountain was first portrayed as a pedestal for the Virgin to 1555, his record of the events was created towards the beginning of the eighteenth century and it is possible that his report of the sixteenth-century celebration was inspired by the statue commissioned by Morcillo rather than vice versa.

in the Andes and eradicate indigenous beliefs by replacing them with the belief in the Catholic God. The imposition of the Virgin onto the *Cerro Rico* – an object of veneration among the indigenous population – symbolically suggests the successful achievement of this goal. This visual assertion of Catholic spiritual dominance in Potosí is not the only evidence of a discourse that closely links the rich mountain to the Christian God and the Catholic saints. Spanish and creole authors advanced this discourse in both texts and images, which convey the dominance of the Catholic belief in this specific Andean space, the *Cerro Rico*. Nevertheless, the indigenous religious beliefs and the significance of the rich mountain as an icon of spirituality within the Andean belief system were not easily effaced.

Before the Europeans claimed the *Cerro Rico* for their own purposes it had been a landmark that, according to various colonial sources (including Arzáns I, 39; Capoche 77; Ocaña 254) was associated with Andean spirituality. Various Incan deities, such as the Sun (Ocaña 254) or the Andean creator God Pachacámac (Arzáns I, 39), were indicated as having been venerated at the site of the mountain. These observations have given rise to some speculation by modern scholars, such as Teresa Gisbert, on which of these pre-Hispanic deities was likely venerated at the Cerro during the pre-Hispanic and colonial period. However, the lack of original sources written from an Andean perspective makes it impossible to resolve this discussion one way or another.

Instead, I will focus on how both Andean and European spiritualities are manifest in the different written and visual representations, created between the late sixteenth and early eighteenth century, that portray the rich mountain and its mines within an religious context. With the arrival of the Spaniards and other Europeans the *Cerro Rico* remained

an important icon of spirituality for the Andean as well as European population: in various visual and textual representations it became associated with the European Virgin Mary as well as the Andean Pachamama. Yet it also was described as a place roamed and governed by demonic forces that, until today, are represented in the statues of the tío, who is venerated by the contemporary Andean miners for watching over them and their work in the entrails of the rich mountain.[3]

As the Andean region experienced profound social changes during the colonial period representations of Potosí also changed reflecting the complexity and variegation of the colonial society. Spirituality was one important aspect considered for defining the diverse social groups that constituted this society. In its representations the *Cerro Rico* was portrayed as an argument in support of the spiritual realities and concerns of both indigenous and European groups. Textual and visual invocations of the rich mountain implicitly depict the Andean landmark as an icon representing spirituality. The icon, depending on the context of its representation, evokes the survival of indigenous spiritual traditions as well as the successful imposition of Catholicism and the eradication of pre-Hispanic pagan beliefs. Which of these contradictory qualities became salient in the various representations generally depended on the authors' point of view and their implicit or explicit agenda for cultural change. In the discourse that negotiated spirituality in the Andes, the *Cerro Rico* was associated either with a pre-Hispanic sacred entity or *huaca*, a demonic presence, the Catholic Virgin, or both. A series of cultural translations, which from the mid-sixteenth to the eighteenth century each promoted different aspects

---

[3] Potosí's mines house a multitude of *tíos* fashioned after demonic figures, many of them with horns, hooves and a protruding phallus.

of spirituality, culminate in representations that depict the iconic rich mountain as comprised of diverse elements indicative of the fusion of cultures. The resulting kaleidoscopic image conveys an ambiguous message allowing for a multitude of possible readings, which are – each in their own right – culturally and spiritually significant. As the Cerro became an icon representing spirituality to social groups in and beyond Potosí, it both reflected and shaped colonial religious discourses.This chapter traces the cultural translations that determined the different approaches to representing the *Cerro Rico* in close connection to sacred entities of Andean and European origin. For the sake of clarity, this chapter will follow a roughly chronological progression of the discourse starting with a consideration of the role of pre-Hispanic beliefs in determining the spiritual iconicity of the rich mountain.

Potosí and the Sacralized Landscape of the Andes

References to the pre-conquest history and import of the *Cerro Rico* only survive in post-conquest records. The vast majority of these records are accounts recorded by Spanish chroniclers for official purposes, such as solicited and unsolicited reports to crown officials (i.e. Capoche) or to religious orders (i.e. Ocaña, and the *Historia general de la Compañía de Jesús en la provincia de Perú*). Several of these records indicate that the mountain, shaped like a sugar loaf, was a place worshiped by the indigenous population for its association with an Andean sacred presence. However, the authors do not agree on who or what the indigenous population venerated at Potosí. Arzáns, for example, cites a speech he attributes to an indigenous leader from Cantunmarca, claiming that the Cerro was dedicated to Pachacamac – the deity who "cría y da vida al universo"

‘creates and gives live to the universe’ (I, 39; my translation); Inca Garcilaso de la Vega in his *Comentarios Reales* suggests that this Andean deity, Pachacamac, was most closely related to the Christian God representing, as well, an incorporeal creator God. On the other hand, Fray Diego de Ocaña tells a different tale based on the memory of the indigenous population: “los indios antiguos dicen que el cerro de Potosí [el Inca] le tenía ofrecido y consagrado al Sol” ‘the old indios say that the mountain of Potosí, was offered and consecrated to the Sun [by the Inca]’ (254; my translation).[4] Finally, in 1585, Luis Capoche referred to the Cerro simply as a *huaca*, a sacred object not necessarily associated with a specific deity (77). Yet even as they disagree on the specifics, the Spanish authors who provide information on this topic generally agree that the Cerro was venerated as a sacred landmark representing an Andean divinity or sacred entity before the arrival of European colonizers, a practice that continued into colonial period. The narratives of these authors suggest that they understood Potosí to be a religious idol in the Andean cosmos, a *huaca* to use the Andean term, which might have been dedicated to a specific deity or constituted a sacred presence in its own right. However, European chroniclers immersed in a significantly different worldview did not easily comprehend the spiritual landscape of the Andes.

Even though they are few, records taking into account a more intimate knowledge of the Andean perspective provide a valuable insight into these differences and assist in setting the scene for a discussion of the relevance of the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of

[4] In the spiritual tradition of the Incan Tawantinsuyu the Sun was a considered a principal deity. The Sapa Inca – Inca ruler – was said to be the son of the Sun, although the relationship to the celestial body “was adoptive rather than familial, since Inca origin myths do not identify the Sun and Moon as the actual parents of any royal pair, including the first” (Klein 46)

spirituality in the Andean landscape. The Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, son of a Spanish conqueror and an Incan *coya* or princess, who grew up in the Incan capital of Cuzco immersed in both the Spanish and Quechua culture, expands on the basic understanding of the *huaca* as a sacred object in his elaborate descriptions of this Andean concept. According to Garcilaso, a *huaca* is an

> ídolo, como Júpiter, Marte, Venus, [...] Además de esta primera y principal significación, tiene otras muchas[...]. Quiere decir cosa sagrada, como eran todas aquellas en que el demonio les hablaba: esto es, los ídolos, las peñas, piedras grandes o árboles en que el enemigo entraba para hacerles creer que era dios. [...] También dan el mismo nombre a todas aquellas cosas que en hermosura o excelencia se aventajan de las otras de su especie [...]. Por el contrario llaman *huaca* a las cosas muy feas y monstruosas, que causan horror y asombro [...] Dan el mismo nombre a los cerros muy altos, que se aventajan de los otros cerros, como las torres altas de las casas comunes, y a las cuestas grandes que se hallan por los caminos, que las hay de tres, cuatro, cinco y seis leguas de alto, casi tan derechas como una pared, a las cuales los españoles, corrompiendo el nombre, dicen *Apachitas*, y que los indios adoraban y les ofrecían ofrendas [...] A todas estas cosas y otras semejantes llamaron *huaca*, no por tenerlas por dioses ni adorarlas, sino por la particular ventaja que hacían a las comunes; por esta causa as miraban y trataban con veneración y respeto. (163)

> idol, such as Jupiter, Mars, or Venus [...] Beyond this first and main meaning it has many others [...]. It means 'a sacred thing,' such as all those in which the Devil spoke: idols, rocks, great stones, or trees which the enemy entered to make the people believe he was a god. [...] The same name is given to all those things, which for their beauty or excellence, stand above other things of the same kind[...]. On the other hand they give the name *huaca* to ugly and monstruous things that inspire horror and alarm[...]. They also call *huaca* everything that is out of the usual course of nature [...]. The same name is given to very high hills that stand above the rest as high towers stand above ordinary houses, and to steep mountain slopes on the roads [...] All these things and others like them were called *huaca*, not because they were considered gods and therefore worthy of adoration, but because of their special superiority over the common run of things, for which reason they were regarded and treated with veneration and respect. (*Royal Commentaries* 76-77)

In this lengthy description, Garcilaso attempts to unlink the concept of the Andean *huaca* from an automatic association with non-Christian spirituality. With his Spanish audience

in mind, Garcilaso emphasizes that *huacas* were "venerated and respected" for being outside the ordinary, rather than worshipped as something sacred. His goal seems to be to normalize Andean behavior towards these – in European eyes – mostly inanimate and ordinary things. Beyond this apparent intent of disassociating the Indians' veneration of *huacas* from the common interpretation of their behavior as worship of pagan deities, Garcilaso's paragraph unwittingly presents a compelling picture of the Andean landscape where almost anything – from a simple rock, a fruit, or an egg to the highest peaks of the Sierra Nevada – might be meaningful beyond its quotidian use and significance. The Andean veneration of nature's quirks and extravagancies reflects a spiritual tradition and, indeed, an approach to understanding the natural and spiritual cosmos that is very different from the Catholic traditions and epistemologies that many European chroniclers relied on to make sense of the circumstances they encountered in their "New World."

Despite Garcilaso's insistence on the necessity to adapt a more discerning interpretation of the concept of *huacas*, his account clearly indicates their role and importance for Andean spiritual practices affirming that one of the many manifestations associated with the term was that of an idol, which meant that any spiritual significance associated with a *huaca* did not originate from the Catholic tradition. However, his description also makes it obvious that, even though it was commonly translated as such, a *huaca* did not entirely conform to, nor could its significance be contained by, the European definition of an idol. According to Covarrubias's *Tesoro de lengua* (1611), an idol was a "simulacrum, statua, imago" – an inanimate representation of sacred beings that referenced the properties of an original deity without sharing them. Covarrubias further described idols as "alguna figura o estatua: la qual se venera por semejança de

algun Dios […] que reverenciavan los Gentiles, o otro demonio, o criatura de las que los Indios, y los demás barbaros reuerenciã y adoran" 'a figure or statue, which is venerated for its similarity to some deity … that was revered by the gentiles, or some other demon or creature of those, which the Indios and other barbarians revere and adore' (72r; my translation); this description bespeaks the difficulty faced by Europeans in understanding the *huaca* as a sacred presence in its own right. As many European chroniclers relied on their own culturally situated knowledge in reacting to new concepts, it must have seemed common sense to explain the power attributed to – from their perspective – inanimate objects by assuming a diabolical plot to lead astray those who had been outside the reach of the Catholic Church.

In her historical study *Religion in the Andes*, Sabine MacCormack indicates the overwhelming number of *huacas* that populated the spiritual and physical landscape of the Andes during the pre-conquest and even the early colonial period. Before the arrival of the Europeans, as diverse cultural groups were conquered and incorporated into the *Tahuantinsuyu,* sacred presences that were venerated locally joined the principal *huacas* revered by the Incas and were included in their pantheon of deities. Populated by local and regional *huacas,* the Andean landscape itself was a meaning-laden place of ubiquitous worship for the indigenous population. While Cuzco authorities centrally decreed the observance of the cult of some Inca deities, such as the Sun and the living Inca and his predecessors, the worship of locally significant *huacas* continued primarily within the individual communities. During the colonial period, these allegiances to sacred presences that were locally relevant proved to be of an enduring significance and importance to the Andean population who, according to Sabine MacCormack, perceived

that "the holy places, or *huacas*, […] imbued as they were with divine presences, represented the history and the concerns of the community" (147). The idea communicated here implies the active role of the *huacas* in shaping the local society and the interdependence of human and divine beings, which coexisted in the Andean sacralized landscape.

The *Huarochirí Manuscript,* a collection of regional tales and traditions narrated by several indigenous voices that were compiled post-conquest in a document written in Quechua, illustrates this interdependence of humans and the animated, sacralized nature of the Andes. While similar accounts, unfortunately, do not exist for Potosí, the narratives in the *Huarochirí Manuscript* relate regional legends of the active engagement of powerful deities in the fate of the people. Even though at the time of its composition the *huacas* were known and venerated in their form of static landmarks, especially mountains or rocky outcrops, the legends indicate that *huacas* can assume animated forms, including human, animal, and elemental ones, and join the Andean population in their everyday events. Paria Caca, for example, a snowcapped peak in the Huarochirí region and the *huaca* who is presented as the "father" of the local indigenous community, is remembered in three separate accounts as punishing a whole community for disregarding his presence. The *huaca*, in his human form, had joined villagers in an important festival and "not a single one of the villagers offered him a drink" (*Huarochirí* 61,125,127). In all three accounts Paria Caca, transformed into either a violent windstorm (125) or "yellow hail and red hail" (62), destroys the entire village with the exception of the individual who during the festivities had brought him some "maize beer" or coca leaf. Interestingly, the indigenous informants of these tales relate the decline in the worship of Paria Caca –

a result of the evangelization efforts of the Catholic Spaniards – to the degeneration of certain population groups in the Andes. The indigenous voice recorded in the *Huarochirí Manuscript* claims that as the Yunca, the principal indigenous group of this region, turned away from Paria Caca and the Andean spiritual tradition, "it is because of that fault of theirs that the Yunca are becoming extinct" (76). Thus the veneration of the *huacas*, often expressed through offerings made on their behalf, was not only a sign of respect but, from an Andean perspective, a necessary practice to ensure the survival of the communities whose history they represented. Frank Salomon has described the attitude that informs these interactions as based on a *quid pro quo* relationship between humans and sacred beings; he suggests that it is an expression of the Andean ritual practice of "reciprocity among beings of all classes, human and nonhuman" ("How the *huacas* were" 11).

The indigenous voices recorded in the *Huarochirí Mauscript*, as well as the discussion of the various manifestations of *huacas* and the roles they played in the Andean world recorded by the mestizo author Garcilaso de la Vega, provide rare glimpses into the indigenous perception of the Andean physical and spiritual landscape and the close association between these two. Both accounts indicate the cultural and spiritual importance attributed to extraordinary geographic landmarks that were venerated and respected by indigenous people across the Andes. If we are to believe the Spanish authors who verbally portray the *Cerro Rico* for various European audiences, Potosí was one of these landmarks, a *huaca* venerated by indigenous people before and after the Spanish conquest even as the form of worship offered to this particular *huaca* changed over time.

Rodrigo de la Fuente Sanct Angel, a cleric who accompanied viceroy Toledo on his visit to Potosí in 1572, recorded one of the first references to Potosí as an indigenous huaca. During his stay in the Imperial City he interviewed Diego Gualpa,[5] the indigenous *yanacona* who purportedly was the first to unearth silver in Potosí. The version of this story referenced by several authors (Arzáns I, 35; Capoche 77-78) suggests that Gualpa, or an anonymous *yanacona* (Lizárraga 87), was alternatively herding a group of llamas or hunting undomesticated camelids as he passed the *Cerro Rico* on the path from La Plata to Porco. As Gualpa pursued an animal on the mountain, the stories relate, he stumbled upon "rocks of silver" during his chase, or was held up on the mountain overnight after he was able to capture some of the animals; the next morning "al cargarlos … se le soltaron algunos, i arrancando con las sogas aquellos céspedes, divisó metales i conoció la beta" 'upon loading [the llamas] … some of them got lose, and as the ropes pulled out some grass, [Gualpa] became aware of metal and he recognized the [silver] vein' (Calancha V, 2; my translation). While Gualpa first kept this knowledge to himself, he later shared the information with his Spanish master. In 1572, Gualpa petitioned viceroy Francisco de Toledo during his extended stay in Potosí to be rewarded for this contribution to the Spanish treasury, a request that motivated the interview conducted and recorded by Fuente Sanct Angel to determine whether the indio was telling the truth – "si lo que decía este indio era verdad" 'if what this indian said were true' (Fuente Sanct Angel 357; my translation).

The version of the story that emerges in this interview differs in important details

[5] The name of the indigenous man who presumably discovered silver on Potosí is alternatively transcribed as Gualpa and Hualca.

from the oft-repeated reference to the lost or hunted llamas. According to Diego Gualpa, he accompanied four Spanish soldiers to a location close to Potosí – the Asientos de Gonzalo Pizarro – where silver had been discovered recently. From this location, Potosí was visible and the four Spaniards sent Gualpa to the top of the mountain as they suspected that he would find "mucha plata labrada y oro ofrecido a la *guaca* que en él está" 'a lot of worked silver and gold offered to the *huaca* that inhabits it' (358; my translation). Gualpa's memory credits the Spanish soldiers with exposing Potosí as a *huaca* and landmark of spiritual importance to the indigenous people; they vocalized this connection in their request to plunder the great amounts of silver and gold from the sanctuary they expected him to find on the peak of the *Cerro Rico*. The fact that in 1545 foreign soldiers may have been able to guess at the cultural relevance of an otherwise unassuming natural object suggests that even those colonizers who most likely did not involve themselves with studying indigenous language and beliefs had a basic understanding of the Andean practice to venerate natural objects, particularly some of the remarkable peaks throughout the Andes – enough, at least, to take advantage of this knowledge for their own purposes. In his recollection of the events, Gualpa also rejects some of the responsibility for disclosing information about Potosí; by referring to the Spaniards' request, he seems to imply that these foreigners were already aware of the special meaning attributed to the rich mountain.

Their disrespectful order to plunder the items dedicated to the sacred presence of the Cerro puts the soldiers in the position of trespassers, which is a strategy that becomes meaningful in the context of an anecdote related by Arzáns. Describing the discovery of Potosí in his *Historia*, Arzáns quotes the warning of a local indigenous leader: "Y

decidles que al mal hombre Hualca, lo ha de castigar el gran Pachacámac, porque les ha descubierto el Potocsi, que a ninguno de nuestro ingas se lo dio; y que si quieren paz y no guerra se vayan de aquí y nos entreguen a Hualca para castigarlo en nombre del Pachacámac" 'and tell the evil man Hualca, he will be punished by the great Pachacámac, because he has uncovered the Potosí [for the Spaniards], which he [Pachacámac] did not give to any of our Incas; and if they [the Spaniards] want peace and not war they should leave here and turn over Hualca to us in order to punish him in the name of Pachacámac' (Arzáns I, 35; my translation). Assuming the verosimilitude of this reaction to Potosí's discovery, Gualpa's rejection of responsibility in combination with a general silence on the importance of Potosí as a spiritual icon for the indigenous population – a silence that is only broken explicitly by some of the European authors – seems to support rather than weaken the claim for Potosí's significance in the Andean sacralized landscape.

The Cerro's spiritual significance is further substantiated by Gualpa's description of the *huaca* he purportedly encountered on its peak, which he claims was an "adoratorio de los indios comarcanos," with only "algunas cosas ofrecidas de poca importancia a la guaca que allí estaba" 'a tabernacle of the regional indios [with] few things of little importance offered to the the *huaca* that was there' (Fuente Sanct Angel 359; my translation). This seems to be a disavowal of the Cerro's importance. However, it is important to keep in mind, as indicated above, that local *huacas* tended to be held in higher esteem by the population than the divinities imposed on them by Incan overlords and that the cult to local deities survived during the colonial period, even as the widespread but superficial cults to the more visible and better known Incan deities were combated by the Catholic extirpators. As a local *huaca* of seemingly lesser importance,

Potosí might have initially escaped the full scrutiny of those charged with extirpating idolatries. Those same extirpators also soon came to realize that in the Andes, where mountains and other landmarks formed part of a sacralized landscape, it was impossible to destroy the ubiquitous objects of adoration (Arriaga 30). Even though Potosí might have started out as a local *huaca,* the massive movements of indigenous people from across the Andes who undertook the journey to Potosí in order to fulfill the *mita* requirements facilitated the propagation of knowledge about this particular landmark. Indeed, according to Pablo Cruz, the *Cerro Rico* became, "uno de los principales *apu* de la región […] campesinos de regiones alejadas de Potosí, continúan hoy levantando sus vasos y pronunciando el nombre del cerro Rico durante sus rituales y fiestas religiosas" 'one of the principal *apus* [mountain spirits] of the region […] peasants from regions far from Potosí, continue until today to raise their glasses to the name of the *Cerro Rico* during their rituals and religious celebrations' (62; my translation). At the same time as knowledge about Potosí spread along the paths travelled by *mita* Indians, the idea of Potosí as a *huaca* was perpetuated in writing within and beyond Andean space to a mostly European audience, an idea that became relevant especially in relation to extirpation efforts.

As indicated in the brief discussion of the representation of *huacas* in the *Huarochirí Manuscript*, the sacralized landmarks of the Andes were perceived as animate beings rather than inanimate objects. Thus, a landmark was not merely a shrine or place of worship *dedicated to* a deity, but an *instantiation* of the *huaca* itself; the physical form of a mountain or curiously shaped rock did not, however, encompass the *huaca* in its entirety, since at any point it could assume the form of a human or animal. The

Huarochirí Manuscript makes it obvious that a *huaca* was not limited to just one shape but could either interact with or be venerated by humans in many different forms. An anecdote recounted by Potosí's unofficial chronicler Arzáns illustrates the belief held by the indigenous population that the *Cerro Rico* housed such a sacred presence. According to Arzáns, in 1575 in the *veta Centeno* miners discovered "una estatua de metales diferentes … El rostro tenía muy hermoso (aunque los ojos no estaban bien formadas) y era de plata blanca; el pecho hasta la cintura de rosicler; los brazos de diversas mezclas" 'a statue made from different metals… The face was very beautiful (even though the eyes were not well formed) and this was made of white silver; the chest down to the waist was shaped from *rosicler* [silver with a pinkish hue]; the arms from several mixtures' (I, 159; my translation).[6] When Spanish officials tried to remove this naturally formed statue from the mine, its head broke off. Arzáns reported the strong reaction of the Indians witnessing the removal of the statue. Upon seeing the beheaded statue carried outside, he recounts, there was a big upheaval among the indios who started, he claims, their usual diabolical performances. He asserts that the reason for this display of distress was the foolishness and superstition of the indios who claimed that "aquel era el Cerro de Potosí y que ya los españoles le habían quitado la cabeza, como lo habían hecho con sus ingas y todas sus cosas" 'that [statue] was the mountain of Potosí and that the Spaniards had taken off its head, just like they had done with their Incas and all their things'(Arzáns I, 160; my translation). For these miners, the humanoid statue was more than an inanimate object of

[6] This naturally formed statue was not unlike some of the *huacas* which according to local legends represented humans or gods turned to stone; these "statues," for the Andean population, represented sacred entities, who in their petrified form were venerated and and adulated with offerings, for example, of coca leaves. These instances are described, for example, in the *Huarochirí Manuscript* 77 and 125-126.

immeasurable wealth: it represented the sacred presence of Potosí. In a culture that was constructed around reciprocal relations between humans and deities and where the *huacas* represented the concerns of the community, the harm befalling the *huaca* might, in the end, negatively affect the community of miners as well.

The careless destruction of the statue attributed to Spanish authorities further gives cause to the indigenous miners to voice their outrage about the abuse the Inca and "all their things" had experienced at the hands of the Spaniards. Especially as they are mentioned in connection with the Cerro and the Inca, two Andean divine entities, it is conceivable that the reference to "all their things" is an allusion to other *huacas* – which would have appeared to the Spaniards as "things" rather than animate presences – destroyed in the effort to evangelize the Andean people by forcing a literal and metaphorical break with the past. The physical destruction of objects embodying the Andean past are representative of the drastic changes experienced by the indigenous population during the colonial period especially in places like Potosí where there was a high level of interaction between indigenous groups and Europeans. The indigenous people described in this anecdote express their sorrow openly, reacting not only to the statue losing its head, but maybe more so to the destruction of their culture that is implied in the beheading of culturally significant icons, such as the Inca and the *huacas*.

The miners' mourning, however, also indicates that—despite conscious and unconscious efforts to eradicate and extirpate Andean beliefs—they continued to adhere to the beliefs and values that had been passed on from their pre-Hispanic ancestors. To them the statue found in the shaft represents the *Cerro Rico*, which in the middle of uncertainties and hardships holds a significance that is deeper than being a place of labor,

and more meaningful than the silver mined from its shafts. Arzáns' anecdote suggests that, after the assassination of the Inca and the despoiling of other sacred objects, the *huaca* of Potosí might have become an icon – accessible to the many *mitayos* who annually made the "pilgrimage" to Potosí and known to even more – representing the concerns and history of the struggling indigenous community as well as a reminder of their shared spiritual values and beliefs.[7]

Several sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts stand witness to the continued relevance of Andean beliefs and the veneration of Potosí, which were manifest in the ongoing practice of offering sacrifice to the Cerro and its mines. Bartolomé Álvarez in his *Memorial a Felipe II*, written in 1588, criticizes the "idolatrous" behavior of the Indians in the mines of Potosí:

> No entrara un indio en la mina sin ofrecer a la puerta su sacrificio de coca, mascada o por mascar, aunque esté un ángel a la puerta diciéndole que, si ofrece [coca], se ha de hacer pedazos; excepto si el ángel se le mostrara de suerte que le cause miedo, que en tal caso mocharía al ángel primero con la coca, y después – si lo dejaran ir – mocharía a la mina. […] En todos los pasos peligrosos de las minas y puentes va ofreciendo coca.
> An indio would not enter into the mine without first offering his sacrifice of coca at the door, chewed or unchewed, even if an angel were at the door telling him that, if he offered [coca] he would be destroyed; except if the angel showed himself in such away as to provoke fear, in this case [the indio] would first pay tribute to the angel with the coca, and later – if he let him go – he would honor the mine. […] In all the dangerous passageways of the mines and bridges he is offering coca (Alvárez 351; my translation).[8]

[7] Thomas Abercrombie describes the travel of the indigenous population to Potosí as mita "pilgrimages" (230-236). Abercrombie relates the mita pilgrimages of the colonial period differed significantly from those that occurred during the rule of the Incas: "on passing through Inca administrative centers, mit'a workers were invited to pour vast amounts of chicha libation; they sang and danced while performing labors destined to feed their own, as well as Inca, ancestors and gods. This was not the case in Spanish times." (235)
[8] Diego González Holguín in his 1608 dictionary *Vocabulario de la lengua general de todo el Peru* lists *muchhaycuni*, which he translates as "Adorar, rogar, reuerenciar, honrar, venerar, o bessar las manos" (171). *Muchhaycuni* is a composite verbform

The behavior of the Indians in this account suggests that the mine itself was understood as a sacred presence, which the miners venerate as well as appease with the offerings they render in all of the dangerous passages. Situating his observations in the discourse of idolatry, Álvarez demonstrates that towards the end of the sixteenth century, the Indians working in Potosí still relied on traditional behaviors and beliefs in their effort to safeguard their work in the mines. Rather than commending themselves to the Christian God and his angels, they offered their prayers and oblations to the Andean *huaca* of the mine, even to the point of dismissing divine warnings unless intimidated—in which case, Álvarez suggests, they would pretend compliance but then revert to their irreverent behavior as soon as they were left to their own devices. Álvarez is not the only Spanish author recording and commenting on the "idolatrous" behavior of the indigenous population who continued to exhibit their reverence of the Cerro and its mines. Around 1600, an anonymous author who recorded events for the Jesuit order in the *Historia general de la Compañía de Jesús en la provincia de Perú* noted that

> los [indios] como uiuían entonces en medio de las tinieblas y engañados del commún enemigo, no sabían sino adorar guacas y al serro grande y pequeño que están junto a la uilla, llamando al vno Apu Potochí y al otro Guaina Potochí, y tenían mucho cuydado de ofrescerles sacrificios de cuyes, coca, maís, y aun las sejas y pestañas de los ojos arrancándoselas y soplandolas haçia el serro y otros adoratorios.

> the [indios] since they were living then in the midst of shadows and deceived by the common enenmy [the devil], did not know better than to adore *huacas* and the big and small mountains that are close to the city, calling one *apu* Potosí and the other *Guaina* Potosí, and they were very concerned to offer them sacrifices of guinea pigs, coca, corn, and even [hairs from] their eyebrows and eye lashes,

---

combining *muchhay* and the suffix *–cuni,* which indicates a reciprocal action. While Álvarez's *Memorial* was written in the late sixteenth century and arrived in Madrid in 1589, it was not until 1991 that it was re-discovered there.

> pulling them out and blowing them towards the mountain and other sacred places. (*Historia general de la Compañía de Jesús* II, 146; my translation)

Both Álvarez and this anonymous author describe expressions of the Indians' reverence and respect for the Cerro, which they perceived as an animate, sacred entity. The former reveals that not only the Cerro itself but also the mines and their immediate environment were revered and received offerings. Indeed, his narrative establishes a direct link between the dangers of the mines and the reverence addressed to the sacred spirit that animated the Cerro, emphasizing the attitude of reciprocal relations between humans and *huacas*. On the other hand, the behavior recorded by the Jesuit chronicler reveals that the worship of the Cerro was not limited to the mines and its indigenous laborers; the *apu Potochí* – as they reverently called the Cerro – was honored with sacrifices and invoked in small rituals by the indigenous population in Potosí "desde donde le dan la primera vista" 'from wherever they first laid eyes on it' (Álvarez 357). According to Álvarez, the indios asked for "ventura y salud y riqueza" 'luck and health and wealth'(357), which is a plausible interpretation of their oblations. More importantly, though, their behavior makes it obvious that for the indigenous population living in Potosí as well as for those coming from a distance, the *apu Potochí* was an important presence that defined the landscape as well as their spiritual practices, whether they were mine workers in immediate contact with the *huaca*, or lived and worked in its vicinity.

The continued adherence to pre-Hispanic traditions in their everyday life and the indigenous population's false compliance with the rules set forth by the Catholic religion – especially in the face of intimidation practices to which Álvarez alludes – are examples of everyday resistance using the "weapons of the weak" described by James C. Scott

(29).[9] Those acts of resistance, however, as Scott has pointed out, "are gifted with intentions and values and purposefulness" and informed by the "symbols, the norms, the ideological forms they create [which] constitute the indispensable background to their behavior" (38). As extirpation efforts increasingly limited the performance of indigenous traditions and spirituality, the *Cerro Rico* of Potosí might have become such a symbol, an icon of spirituality, which, for the increasingly diverse indigenous community with ties to Potosí, continued to represent indigenous spiritual values. Even as the Andean people, motivated by the continued efforts of Catholic missionaries and extirpators, made some adjustments to their interactions with this pre-Hispanic deity, the Cerro, taking on several Christianized guises, continued to fulfill the social function attributed to the *huaca* in representing the history and concerns of a larger indigenous community.

The "Virgin of the Mountain": Convergence of Spiritualities

Likely as a reaction to the pressures from church and state authorities the *huaca* of Potosí seems to have undergone a series of cultural translations that allowed, to a certain extent, the assertion of an indigenous agency and the continuation of indigenous practices in a manner that was more palatable to the Catholic authorities. One of these translations, furthered also by the indigenous community, was the outward conversion of the *Cerro*

[9] Scott bases his arguments on the context of peasant resistance and revolutions; however, his observations also hold true in the context of the indigenous population who, just like European peasants, confronted exploitation. According to Scott, "Most of the forms this struggle takes stop well short of collective outright defiance. Here I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth" (29).

Rico from a pre-Hispanic deity to a landmark linked – at least outwardly – to the Catholic religion. This conversion is manifest in particular in the association of the rich mountain with the Virgin Mary. This representation of the Cerro as an icon linked to Catholic spirituality through the Virgin is recorded in several images and written sources created by both indigenous and European authors. The references to this literal fusion of spiritualties in texts and images reflect and document the significant changes shaping the conceptualization and expression of religion in the Andes. Visual portraits establishing the link between the mountain and the Virgin will be the focus of the following discussion of representations of Potosí in the form of the "Virgen del Cerro."[10] However, written accounts from the same time period provide contextual information for this analysis of how the representations of the rich mountain, created between the late sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries, portray a progressively closer link between the Virgin and the *Cerro Rico*. This connection mirrors the gradual transformation of religious beliefs and the at least superficial fusion of Andean and Catholic beliefs. However, even as representations such as the "Virgen del Cerro" indicate the coming together of different cultures, resulting in cultural productions that inextricably join the values and ideas of diverse epistemologies, it was exactly the composite nature of these images that allowed vastly different readings and, ultimately, facilitated their

[10] The Bolivian art historian, Teresa Gisbert, who in her work on the *Iconografía y Mitos Indígenas en el Arte* analyzes the artistic expression and architecture of the pre-Hispanic and colonial Andes, was the first to identify five images that depict a link or even a union between the Cerro and the virgin Mary. Based on her research, Gisbert asserts that this iconography facilitated the identification of the Virgin and Potosí when "el culto idolátrico preexistente del cerro de Potosí obligó a cristianizar el mito y a crear la aparición de María sobre el monte de plata" (20).

appropriation as an argument in support of both the uninterrupted continuation of indigenous traditions *and* the success of the Spanish colonial project of conversion.

The first image addressed in this context has a somewhat problematic history and origin. Known today is a drawing that the Bolivian author Jesús Viscarra Fabre claims to have copied from a canvas created by the indigenous artist Francisco Tito Yupanqui (aprox. 1550-1616). This copy was included in a collection of annotated documents that Viscarra published in 1901. The surviving image is a drawing of the city of Potosí at the base of the *Cerro Rico* and the smaller Guaina Potosí. Suspended over the rich mountain, the upper body of the Virgin Mary is pictured surrounded by clouds her arms open in a gesture of blessing. Yupanqui, a descendent of the Inca lineage, was an indigenous artist who apprenticed himself to the Spanish sculptor, Diego Ortiz, in Potosí towards 1580.[11] Calancha reports that during his stay in Potosí before finishing his statue of the Virgin, Yupanqui sought a license from La Plata's Bishop to paint and carve images

[11] According to Fray Antonio de la Calancha's *Crónica moralizada,* Yupanqui initiated this apprenticeship based on his desire to create a Virgin image for his parish church in Copacabana. After many risible and failed attempts he created a statue of passable beauty, which, however, upon reaching her destination in Copacabana, a town close to the Lake Titicaca, "la transformó Dios, o le hizo el rostro de nuevo, pues resplandeció con tan extraña belleza, que se arrebató los ojos de todos, llenándoles las almas con tanta dulzura, que la mostraban en los gozos y en la reverencia" 'she [the statue] was transformed by God, or He newly shaped her face, since it was resplendent with such a strange beauty, that it arrested the eues of all, filling their souls with so much delight that they showed it in their revels and reverences" (Calancha, "Copacabana" 221; all translations are mine). Calancha describes Yupanqui's many failed attempts:The first statue turned out so "feo, tosco, y desproporcionado" 'ugly, crude, and disproportionate' ("Copacabana" 190) that it was exiled from the church because "era más para dar risa, que para causar devoción" 'it provoked more ridicule than devotion' ("Copacabana" 191). Several other attempts at creating a statue from a mold break before they can be elaborated (193). And even the image that turned out to be the miraculous one "transformed by God" ("Copacabana" 221) was initially ridiculed by the Bishop of La Plata ("Copacabana" 195) and broken and reassembled during the voyage to Chuquiago where Yupanqui worked with a Spanish artist to gild the statue ("Copacabana" 202).

(“Copacabana” 195) and for this purpose he had brought to his audience with the church leader a canvas showing his painting of the Virgin. Alonso Ramos Gavilán provides a similar account of the creation and miracle of the statue in his *Historia de Copacabana y de la milagrosa imagen de su Virgen* published in Lima in 1621. In addition, Ramos’s *Historia* gives voice to the indigenous artist by including a memory, purportedly written by Yupanqui. Ramos claims to have obtained this written document from the brother of the indigenous artist after his death in 1616. In this testimony Yupanqui recounts—in a Spanish that is riddled with “aimarismos” and indigenous forms of expression (Siles Salinas 99)—his creation of a painting portraying the Virgin. He further describes the derisive reaction it received in La Plata and how this experience had left him “medio desmayado, e lo fue espantado amohenado” ‘half fainted, frightened, and annoyed’ (qtd. in Ramos 125; my translation). Yupanqui remembers that the Bishop told him that “si lo quereis ser pentor pintalde la mona con so mico, que no os lo quiero dar il lisencia para pentor” “if you want to be a painter paint a monkey with its mico, as I don’t want to give you license to be a painter’ (qtd. in Ramos 125; my translation), while other Spaniards mocked his painting:

> parece como hombre y lo está con sus barbas que lo parece barbas, é lo echaron mocho falta, que no es boena, é me lo dexeron que no lo haga, e dispoes di quando lo avia visto el Imagen la Señoría, lo rieron mocho todos, […] e me lo dexeron que los Natorales no se poeden hazer el Imagenes del Vergen.
>
> [the Virgin] looked like a man and it actually is [one] with its beard, since it appears to be a beard; and they found much fault [with the image], that it is not good, and they told me that I should not do it, and after his Highness had seen the image, they all laughed about it a lot […] and they told me that the natives cannot make images of the Virgin. (qtd. in Ramos 125; my translation)

Despite this mockery, we know from Calancha's *Crónica* that after a triumphant entry into Copacabana by the Virgin statue, which Yupanqui created following his audience with the archbishop, the indigenous artist created at least two additional copies of the Virgin for the towns of Pucarani and Guarina. These sculptures were skillfully worked as with God's help he had perfected his art (Calancha V, 212). Based on this information it is conceivable that the "lienzo" Yupanqui took to La Plata to be scrutinized by the Bishop and his companions or a different painting he created later was, in fact, the model for the drawing Viscarra included in his text in 1901. Assuming, thus, the credibility of Viscarra's account, Yupanqui's image would have been one of the first known visual representations of the Virgin linked with Potosí.

In the image a representation of the urban grid of Potosí takes up the lower half of the pictured space. Several ecclesiastic buildings marked by crosses, a water wheel used to power the silver refineries alongside Potosí's *Ribera* – a canal constructed for the purpose of providing waterpower to those pre-industrial plants –, as well as the central plaza are the most recognizable features. The drawing of the urban space relies primarily on simple geometric shapes and lacks a three-dimensional perspective, making it reminiscent of a two-dimensional map rather than a painting.[12] The *Cerro Rico* is depicted in the top half of the image. Due to the lack of perspective, the Cerro seems to

---

[12] This lack of three-dimensional perspective in the image would align not only with Yupanqui's reported lack of artistic skills but also with other images created by indigenous artists, notably from the Cuzco School of painting, whose images also lack artistic perspective. In her study *The Virgin of the Andes*, Carol Damian has observed that in the paintings produced by indigenous artists "there is little attention to the description of three dimensional space and perspective, nor is the Andean Virgin depicted soaring in the heavenly realm of cloud and sky" (38). However, it is ultimately impossible to determine whether the simplicity of this representation should be attributed to Yupanqui, as the artist, or to Viscarra who copied the original.

dominate the urban space on the page rather than serve as a backdrop to it, a representation that, maybe unconsciously, highlights the importance of the natural landmark over the man-made geography of the city.[13] A portrait of the Virgin's face and upper body, who is opening her hands in blessing, crowns the mountain in this image. The arrangement suggests a hierarchy that places the human realm, the city, at the bottom, followed by the Andean divine presence of the mountain, which is ultimately superseded by the Catholic Virgin. This hierarchy would align with the portrayal of Yupanqui as a devout Catholic, who not only followed through on his promise to create a statue of the Virgin for his village but also accompanied his vow with "afectuosas oraciones y ayunos, pidiendo gracia para acertar a hacer la Imagen, conforme a su devoción" 'affectionate orations and fasts, asking for [God's] grace to ensure [his ability] to fashion the image according to his devotion' (Ramos 116; my translation).

However, this hierarchy reflects a primarily European perspective. As Rolena Adorno has suggested in her study of the images created by the indigenous writer and artist Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala for his *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno*, the reading of a pictorial text provides different insights if the Andean spatial symbolism is

---

[13] The representation of the Cerro in this drawing shows clear similarities with the engraving of Potosí included in the first (and subsequent) editions of Pedro Cieza de León's *Crónica del Perú* (Seville, 1553), even as the depiction of the city sets them apart. The Cerro in both images is made accessible by paths, which in Cieza de León's image are travelled by indigenous laborers, whereas in Yupanqui's illustration small buildings are placed along the way. Indigenous miners are thus represented indirectly through the depiction of their shelter, even though the miners themselves are absent. Aside from the manner of representing the city, which is more map-like in Yupanqui's image, some important differences point to the later date of creation associated with this image. Yupanqui's representation of the city includes a waterwheel, a technology that became part of the cityscape after the spatial restructuring and the creation of the *Ribera* motivated by viceroy Toledo in 1571.

taken into account for its interpretation (*Guaman Poma* 80-119). Of particular importance for reading Yupanqui's image according to a more Andean paradigm is the consideration of the center as "the position of preferred value" (Adorno, *Guaman Poma* 89). In the drawing, the Cerro rather than the Virgin serves as the focal point – if not the exact geometric center – of the represented space. The central point of the image, the juncture of the two diagonal axes that divided the Andean space into the four regions of the *Tawantinsuyu*, portrays a seemingly nondescript section of Potosí where the city meets the base of the mountain. It is interesting that this would have been one of the sections of the urban space that housed the indigenous population of Potosí and thus might have been the center of Yupanqui's experience in the mining boomtown. Beyond highlighting the indigenous space in Potosí, though, the image, by assigning the central spot to the nexus between the indigenous miners' living quarters at the edge of the city and the mountain itself, evokes, again, the interdependent relationship between humans and the rich mountain as a sacred being.[14]

The almost intimate connection between the mountain and the indigenous people and the space they inhabit contrasts with the representation of the Virgin as removed from this reality. The Virgin in Yupanqui's image is surrounded by clouds, which even as they suggest an opening between the heavenly and worldly realms, simultaneously affirm a spatial separation of the Virgin – who is visually situated in the heavenly dimension – from Potosí and the physical world in general. This apparent distinction of realms and the setting apart of the Virgin as a figure who is simultaneously present and absent from the

[14]This interdependence is manifest also in the strong indigenous reaction to the broken statue, which is described above.

worldly landscape is not coherent with the Andean perception of *huacas* as objects *inhabited* by the divine. The representation suggests that the epistemology that postulated an immediate, reciprocal nature of humans' relationship with a sacralized landscape was not eradicated after the arrival of Spanish colonizers and missionaries but amended through the *addition* of a more distant relationship with the Virgin. While the Catholic God represented by the Virgin might have been accepted as the ultimate religious authority, not unlike the Andean creator God Pachacámac, this did not render irrelevant the everyday interactions through invocations and small offerings that determined the Andeans' relationship with the more immediately visible *huacas*, such as the *Cerro Rico*.

It is interesting to relate Yupanqui's image of Potosí to the representation of the Villa Imperial and its mountain created by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, previously discussed in Chapter 4 (see *p.136ff.). The two indigenous representations of the *Cerro Rico* show similarities that merit closer attention. Guaman Poma's drawing supports the idea that the image attributed to Yupanqui was in fact created by an indigenous artist in the late sixteenth century because of the similar styles and points of view represented in each, even though they also feature important differences. Just like Yupanqui's image of Potosí, Guaman Poma's drawing foregrounds the "Villa Enpereal de Potosí." The *Cerro Rico* itself almost disappears behind the roofs of the city at its base and the portrayal of the Inca, who is pictured on the peak of the mountain surrounded by indigenous rulers representing the four provinces of the *Tawantinsuyu*. As indicated previously, the Inca in this drawing wears the traditional ritual clothing, the *tocapu* tunic and *mazcca paycha* headdress, symbols of his authority as an autonomous ruler, yet he is framed by the Pillars of Hercules on the either side and stands under the crest of *Castilla y León*, both of

these imperial symbols are representing the imposed authority of the Spanish monarchy. This image not only communicates a political message, as we have seen, but also offers a comment on Andean spirituality. Even though Guamán Poma acknowledges the new power in the Andes visually – by referencing the imperial symbols – and verbally, Guaman Poma still makes a powerful statement situating the Inca, rather than representatives of the Catholic Church and kingdom of Spain, in a position of power on top of the Silver Mountain.[15] In his annotated image the indigenous author (re)claims for the indigenous ruler the position as head of church and head of state in the Andes, indicating the capability of the Inca and his subordinates to guard and support the Catholic faith and the Spanish monarchy. Guaman Poma visually suggests not only a reorganization of the governmental structure in the Andes, but also of the Catholic ecclesiastic hierarchy; he does not, however, propose a return to indigenous religion. The combination of image and narrative gloss portrays the Inca, who in the pre-Hispanic Andes was venerated as a deity in his own right, as the Andean equivalent of the Catholic Pope in Rome.[16] Beyond making a political statement, in its visual association of the

[15] In his study of Inca ritual, Thomas Cummins relates the changes in the way in which the Sapa Inca was represented visually from the pre-Hispanic to the colonial period. He claims that "the primacy of visual resemblance between subject and representation as the basis for the understanding of the image is much more in line with a European presentation of the royal person than with Inca representation. Inca kings did have images that stood for them, but these images did not necessarily take human form" (*Toasts* 124). A first example of the change to a visual representation of the Inca that took human form is a representation of Manco Inca, who ruled as the Sapa Inca from 1534-44, "painted on a high rock facing the approach from Cuzco" (*Toasts* 123).

[16] This reading of the image representing Potosí aligns with Adorno's analysis of the drawing featured on the title page of Guaman Poma's *Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno*. Adorno suggests that "hierarchical Andean authority is symbolized not by the vertical arrangement but rather by the diagonal line that divides upper and lower fields. In this drawing, that line connects the Catholic Pope [in the upper left corner] and the Andean

Cerro with a pre-Hispanic deity this representation of the Inca clearly recalls the pre-Hispanic veneration of the Inca himself; in this Guaman Poma's image differs from the drawing attributed to Yupanqui whose image is clearly dedicated to the cult of the Catholic Virgin. Despite his invocation of the pre-Hispanic past, however, Guaman Poma adapts his vision to accommodate the changed power relations defining his reality by suggesting the subordination of the Andean "defender of the faith" to the Christian God, although not necessarily to his worldly representatives. Referencing the rich mountain in his drawing, Guaman Poma seems to assume that it would be recognized for its spiritual and political significance not only by an Andean audience but also by the European audience to whom he addresses his letter. The Cerro thus becomes a visual argument on behalf of the Inca as the Andean head of church – a role that he held in the *Tawantinsuyu,* combining political and spiritual authority in one person.

Both of the representations of Potosí created by indigenous authors highlight the tensions between Andean and European epistemologies. Despite picturing a different sacred presence positioned at the peak of the Cerro watching over the Villa Imperial de Potosí and presumably providing spiritual guidance to its population, they both allude to the Andeans' struggle to make sense of the colonial situation and define their place in this

---

prince [in the bottom right]. […] In this new symbolic map, Guaman Poma summarizes his dreams about the ideal relationship of Eruope to Peru by placing the Roman Catholic pope and the Andean prince in the priority relation" (98-99). Adorno observes that in the frontispiece "the figure of the king is pushed of to the side" (98), being represented only by its coat of arms. In the drawing of Potosí, neither king nor pope are physically represented in the image, but the representation of the Inca literally holding up the imperial symbols – coat of arms and pillars of Hercules – in combination with the textual reference to the Inca as defender of the faith, suggest a possible conflation of ecclesiastic and imperial authorities. This attitude might reflect the pre-Hispanic reality where the position of head of state and head of church were combined in the person of the Sapa Inca.

new reality. Neither drawing outwardly rejects the Catholic religion; on the contrary, they explicitly propose the acceptance of the Catholic faith and the symbols portraying the Christian God and Catholic Church. Nevertheless, both images implicitly rely on an Andean framework to "translate" the Catholic symbols and ideas by visually locating them within the sacralized landscape of the Andes and attempting to fit them into the Andean spiritual paradigm. In doing so the indigenous artists also visually reinforce a close connection between religious authority and the natural world, a theme that is continued in other textual and visual representations of the Cerro.

Ultimately, both of these images depict a colonial reality where Andean and European epistemologies cannot be clearly separated anymore. Nevertheless, each author presents a distinct attempt to accommodate religious practice to the colonial reality: while Yupanqui's image indicates an acceptance of the Catholic Virgin as the direct link between the Andean world and an invisible creator God, Guaman Poma advocates that the Sapa Inca, an Andean authority, take the position of mediator. The differences in their representations of the religious order of colonial Peru—and Potosí's place within this order—reflect an ongoing negotiation of political and religious hierarchies in the early colonial Andes.In this context Potosí is pictured as a place of convergence, a contact zone where cultural and spiritual ideas and values are negotiated and re-negotiated but not resolved.[17]

Two extant canvas paintings of the "Virgen del Cerro," dating from the early eighteenth century, further accentuate the cultural convergence introduced in Yupanqui's

[17] Mary Louise Pratt coined this term, defining it as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (34).

and Guaman Poma's images of Potosí. In both images the face and hands of the Virgin are extended from the iconic triangular shape that represents the *Cerro Rico*, which in these paintings constitutes her body. Several studies have built on the foundational work of Bolivian art historian Teresa Gisbert, who in 1980 introduced the idea of a parallelism between representations of the Virgin as mountain and the Andean cult of the Pachamama, the Earth Mother, in her work on *Iconografía y Mitos Indígenas en el Arte*. Carol Damian, in her comparative analysis of Andean representations of the Virgin, confirms that "a dominant stylistic and iconographic trait in Cuzco paintings of the Virgin is the triangular shape of Mary's dress, a reference to the shape of a mountain" (50). In the paintings of the "Virgen del Cerro" it is, however, not just a dress that provides the triangular shape: Mary *is* the mountain of Potosí. Gisbert's analysis of the paintings provides a glimpse into the historical context from which these representations of the "Virgen del Cerro" originated in order to support her main claim that "[e]l culto idolátrico preexistente del cerro de Potosí obligó a cristianizar el mito y a crear la aparición de María sobre el monte de plata, facilitando así - por medios visuales - la identificación de ambos" '[t]he preexisting idolatrous cult of the mountain of Potosí obligated [the Spaniards] to Christianize the myth and to create the apparition of Mary above the mountain of silver, facilitating in this way – by visual means – the identification of one with the other' (*Iconografía* 20; my translation). For example, she cites a colonial reference relating that the indigenous term, *coya*, used to refer to the mines, corresponded to "queen" allowing an easy appropriation of this term in a Catholic context. Furthermore, Gisbert argues that Alonso Ramos, author of the *Historia de*

Copacabana cited above, explicitly promoted the identification of Mary with the mountain based on Augustinian theology.[18]

While Gisbert's analysis of the permanence of Andean ideas throughout the colonial period is an invaluable contribution to Andean studies, she implicitly assumes European agency in setting up the framework that "Christianized" the pre-Hispanic *huacas* and inadvertently made it possible for indigenous ideas and practices to survive within a Catholic framework. Damian, on the other hand, attributes agency to the indigenous groups when, in her analysis of Virgin paintings in Cuzco, she claims that "the image of the Virgin Mary was also the most effective means for the indigenous people to disseminate their ancient beliefs" (50). Though they might seem contradictory, both of these statements are likely parts of a less straightforward truth.

Supporting the claim for indigenous agency, an anecdote narrated by Arzáns relates an example of how the indigenous appropriation of the Catholic Virgin for their own purposes might have allowed the Andean miners to continue honoring their perceived obligations to the *huaca* of Potosí as part of the reciprocal relationship between humans and the deity.[19] In his *Historia* Arzáns claims that in 1566, in the *Centeno* mine, miners discovered "una plancha de metal, redonda como una luna cuando se muestra llena. En ella se veía obrada de naturaleza una imagen de la Concepción de Nuestra

---

[18] According to Gisbert, Ramos, based on Augustinian theology elaborated in *La Ciudad de Dios*, claims that "María es el monte de donde salió aquella piedra sin pies, ni manos que es Cristo" 'María is the mountain from which emerged this rock without feet or hands, that is Christus' (Ramos, qtd. in Gisbert 19)

[19] This attitude, however, cannot exclusively be attributed to an Andean influence as Christian narratives of interactions with God, especially in moments of great peril, suggest a similar quid pro quo. One example is the tradition of offering ex-votos to a specific saint after surviving a life-threatening or extremely difficult situations (on this topic see Davis)

Señora la Virgen Santa María" '[A] sheet of metal, round as the moon when it is full. In it one could perceive the image of the conception of out lady the Virgin Santa Maria worked by nature' (I, 130; my translation). This image remained in the mine, placed in a niche lined with silver where it was venerated by the indios and miners. Instead of offering coca, the mostly indigenous miners adapted the European custom of lighting candles, which were burning by her shrine day and night, as an offering and an indication of their devotion to the Virgin; in turn, according to Arzáns' account, the Virgin rewarded their devotion by freeing them from the great dangers that awaited them in the mines.

The discovery of the image of the Virgin and her presence in the mine, according to Arzáns, provoked a marked increase of devotion among the miners, to the point that they placed an image of the Virgin of Immaculate Conception in the entrance of all of the mines (I, 131).[20] The tale recounted by Arzáns implies that the origin of the Virgin is indigenous to the Cerro and thus pertains to the Andean region and its people. The image seems to have waited to be discovered by the indigenous miners, who, according to Arzáns, should receive it as a demonstration of God's love who "desde tiempos

---

[20] Whether or not a likeness of the Virgin shaped by nature was discovered shortly after the start of mining in Potosí is uncertain, but the tradition of placing the image of the Virgin at the entrance of the mine or in its close proximity was a custom easily verifiable for Arzáns who wrote his *Historia* in the early eighteenth century. It is also a tradition that has survived into the present, as shown by Absi who after visiting the different mines of Potosí observed that "Presque toutes les sections possèdent una statue de la Vierge près de l'entrée de la mine, généralement dans la maison des gardiens" 'almost all the sections possess a statue of the Virgin close to the mine entrance, generally in the guardians house' (96; my translation). Furthermore, she asserts that, while it is difficult to date the statues she has seen, "certaines sont de facture récente, d'autres sont coloniales, comme la statue baroque de la Vierge de la Concepción de la mine San German" 'certain ones were recently made, others are colonial, like the baroque statue of the Virgin of Immaculate Conceptio in the mine of St. Germain' (97; my translation). By dating at least one of the statues back to the colonial period, her observations implicitly support Arzáns's account.

antecedentes las tenía escogidas [las Indias] para que en ellas fuese conocido y adorado" 'since times past [God] had chosen [the Indies] in order for them to know him and adore him' (Arzáns I, 131; my translation). Beyond this gloss added by the eighteenth-century historian, the narrative presents Potosí as a site of a spirituality, which, no matter its guise, is closely linked to the Cerro as a physical object: the miners turn their veneration from the mountain itself to an object originating from its mines. While this tale raises the question of whether the indigenous appropriation of the Virgin might have been a strategy to avoid deeper changes by professing to conform to Catholic mandates in name only, the tensions evident in the drawings as well as the two paintings of the "Virgen del Cerro" suggest differently. That is, although changes might have started out as superficial appropriations of Catholic symbols, the different images of the "Virgen del Cerro" suggest a more active involvement with the ideas introduced as part of the Catholic religion.

The two paintings known as *Virgin of the Mountain*, which today form part of the collections of the *Casa de la Moneda* in Potosí and the *Museo Nacional de Arte* in La Paz, evince the same ongoing struggle I have discussed in the context of Yupanqui's and Guaman Poma's image: the attempt to make sense of spirituality in the context of the Andean colonial situation. One important difference between the indigenous drawings created toward the turn of the seventeenth century and these eighteenth-century paintings is a visual lessening of the distance between Andean and Catholic beliefs. Rather than relying on mediators or presenting the Virgin as physically removed from the worldly realm including Potosí, she is portrayed as an integral part of the mountain a representation reminiscent of an Andean *huaca*. Yet the paintings also suggest an

increasing prevalence of Catholic ideas determining the Andean spiritual and cultural landscape. Potosí is placed at the center of the compositions framed on either side by the sun and the moon. Sun and moon were important symbols for Andean spirituality as they each represented a deity, who, together, constituted an Andean ideal pair of opposites; the sun frequently represented the Inca whereas the moon was associated with his queen or *coya* (MacCormack 331; Guaman Poma f.79). However, sun and moon were also associated with the Virgin in Catholic iconography (Damian 34).

The margins of the image are crowded by the portrayal of ecclesiastic and worldly authorities: the pope and Catholic monarch of Spain at the bottom as well as a rendering of the tri-partite Christian God and heavenly angels in the upper half, crowning the Virgin/Cerro with an imperial crown. The composition of the paintings suggests a parallelism between the tight space assigned to the rich mountain amongst ecclesiastic figures of power in this portrait and the limited physical space available for the performance of Andean spirituality in the colonial Andes. From an indigenous perspective, representatives of both worldly and sacred powers increasingly limited the freedom available to the native communities, this included restricted access to the places venerated as *huacas*. Towards the beginning of the seventeenth century, the *Huarochirí Manuscript* records an example of these restrictions: describing the rituals performed in honor of the mountain Paria Caca, the indigenous narrator indicates several locations used by different communities to venerate this *huaca* remotely. The narrator adds, "regarding all these places on mountains for worship of Paria Caca, it was only later on when the Spaniards had emerged and came to look into it, that they were established. But, in the old times, they say all these people used to go to Paria Caca mountain itself" (75).

Due to the presence of European influences in the Andes, the space where the indigenous populations could freely express their spirituality became more and more restricted, ultimately giving rise to veiled forms of resistance, of which the paintings of the *Virgin of the Mountain* might be one indication.

It is important to note that the paintings created a virtual space where the Andean and Catholic ideals came together to create a coherent whole; where the Catholic God from the heavens crowned the Andean *huaca* embodying the earthly realm. Or did the Incan sun and moon deities smile their blessing upon the Christian Virgin? Humor aside, the paintings we are able to contemplate today are products of an environment where influences from both Andean and Catholic epistemologies combined to create something new, an image that is more than the sum of its influences from both Andean and European cultures, but that speaks to both. Kenneth Mills, a scholar of religion in the colonial Americas, has asserted that for intellectuals of the colonial period “'monstruous' becomes the crosstemporal, pan-Americas code for the difficult religious and cultural middle which particularly worried our recording narrators but which they could not fully comprehend" (444). The association of the *Cerro Rico* with the monstruous, which emerges from the holistic contemplation of its representations but has also been contemplated in the context of the exploitation of indigenous workers in its mines, thus can be extended to encompass its representations as an icon of spirituality: just as the iconic mountain itself the emergent Andean spirituality, indicated in the paintings of the *Virgin of the Mountain*, might have been perceived as “monstruous” due to its strangeness and kaleidoscopic variability.

However, while these paintings visually united these different cultural influences in a virtual space, viewers, at the time, might not have recognized this utopian fusion. After all, the *Virgin of the Mountain* might provoke, as Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibsohn have stated in “Hybridity and its Discontents,” “the recognition […] of an ‘us’ and a ‘them’” (6), an awareness of difference that leads to the conceptualization of a self in opposition to an other. For an audience contemplating the “Virgen del Cerro” this might have meant the recognition and acceptance of only one set of influences. Thus, while for the indigenous groups representations of the the rich mountain inhabited by the Virgin might have represented the survival of their spiritual traditions and practices, the same image might have been received as a metaphor for the successful imposition of Catholic ideals and the extirpation of idolatry for a Spanish audience.

Bringing Light into the Darkness – The *Cerro Rico* as a Miraculous Place

Even though many studies on colonial Andean art and religion reproduce and refer to these paintings, especially the “Virgen del Cerro” currently in the collection of the *Casa de la Moneda de Potosí*, the alternative perspective – the perception of the paintings from a Catholic perspective – has not been taken into consideration by critics who focus on contemplating the subaltern point of view. Taking into account this diverging interpretation is relevant because, while the creators of these images are likely indigenous artist(s) based on the stylistic similarity to paintings from the Cuzco school, their audience likely represented a mix of ethnicities and cultures. Indeed, in some cases the audience might have been entirely European, given that one of the canvases, which is currently in the collection of the *Museo Nacional de Arte in La Paz*, was commissioned

by the Spanish Quiros family.[21] Taking into consideration the fact that the paintings, created in the early eighteenth century, represent a culmination of years of spiritual negotiations, it is useful to take a brief glimpse into the written records documenting the ongoing efforts of conversion in the Andes.

According to references in Spanish accounts, the Cerro seems to have followed a gradual progression from an indigenous *huaca* to an iconic landmark that was perceived to represent as well as bolster the power of the Catholic Church. In the process European authors seem to have lost interest in Potosí's origins as a landmark embodying the sacred for an Andean audience. While many authors in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century criticize the permanence of indigenous traditions by citing the continuing expressions of worship and the offering of sacrifices occurring at Potosí, there are close to none of these references in later texts. The only exception known to me is Arzáns' *Historia,* a text written in the first half of the eighteenth century that sets as its task to record a complete history of the first two centuries of Potosí's existence as a silver mine and thus references reports of the *huaca* in chapters dedicated to the events of the late sixteenth century.

Some early accounts created by European chroniclers suggest that the Cerro is a site of a metaphysical struggle involving the Virgin, representing the Catholic religion, and the pre-Hispanic *huacas,* who in the cultural translation for Europeans simply became demons. For example, the Jesuit author who towards 1600 created the *Historia*

[21] The legend of this painting reads: "SU SDAD. CLEMENTE EL RX HISPANIA MDCXX A MDCCXX. Devoción de la familia de Quirós." While the painting of the *Moneda* is undated, Bolivian art historian Teresa Gisbert suggests that this second canvas, which is dated to 1720, is a copy of the earlier, more elaborate representation of the Virgin as mountain (18).

general of his order in Peru asserts that prior to the intercession of the Virgin, the devil had deceived the Andeans and prevented them from emerging from the "tinieblas," the 'shadows' of their pagan beliefs and practices (II, 146). However, because of the Christian God and his representatives, the Virgin as well as the missionary priests, the indigenous population had escaped "de aquellas tan espesas tinieblas, y como hombres admirados y espantados començaron a uer la luz y por medio della la ceguedad y engaño en que auían uiuido, doliendose de auer adorado a las piedras en lugar del verdadero Dios y Señor de todas las cosas" 'from those dense shadows, and as astonished and frightened men they started to see the light and through they perceived the blindness and deception in which they had lived, regretting their adoration for the stones instead of the true God and master over all things' (*Historia general de la Compañía* II, 146; my translation).

The metaphors of contrasting darkness and light invoked in the above-cited Jesuit *Historia general* refer to the spiritual state of the indigenous population who lived in the "deepest darkness" before being introduced to the "light" of Christianity. The analogy invoked to create an experiential reference to indigenous spirituality mirrors the reality of the mines. In this subterranean space, miners work in the dark or by the weak light of a candle. The mines, in the imaginary of today's miners, are the domain of the *tío* who, represented as a demonic figure, is present in all of the mines. Whereas the Virgin guards the entrance of the mine, the statue of the *tío* is generally found deeper within the labyrinthian tunnels.[22] Representations of the mines imply that darkness was not only a

[22] Michael Taussig describes the modern practice of greeting *Pachamama* before entering the mine and offering thanks upon concluding the day's work (148). Taussig further asserts that his consultation of colonial texts revealed that "nowhere in these accounts is there even a hint of a figure of evil [in the mines] like the contemporary devil in the

metaphor for the perceived delusions of those who worshipped pagan idols, but inversely in the European imaginary the physical darkness found in the shafts evoked the recesses of hell and its denizens. Authors such as Ocaña perceived the mines as an infernal place, based on the sights and sounds he experienced there (258). Álvarez further asserts that the indios entered the mines in the company of the devil, which they invoke with their sacrifices and practices (351). However, other colonial sources, in particular the painting *The Reign of the Antichrist* (1739), suggest a more direct relationship between the mines and demon spirits, unmediated by the idolatrous behavior of the indigenous population. The image shows a small mountain situated on an island where several demonic figures are mining and hoarding the precious metals extracted from its mines. Above the unspecified mountain, an inscription reads: "Los demonios descubrirán al Antichristo todo el oro y la plata que estava oculto desde el principio del mundo" 'The demons will discover to the Antichrist all the gold and silver, which had been concealed since the beginning of the world" (my translation). The image along with this statement implies that the demons are keepers of the worldly treasures, responsible for disclosing or hiding the mines of precious metals.[23]

Bolivian tin mines. To the contrary, it is the feminine figure of fecundity that holds the stage" (203). Interestingly, Taussig argues that the emergence of the *tío* might have been related to the inadequate religious instruction of the indigenous mine workers, who were taught by the Spaniards that "growing rich is our principal aim" (Arriaga, *Extirpation* 78; qtd. in Taussig 204). My research confirmed that the *tío* is not mentioned in any of the colonial texts I have consulted, but the placement of this statue in the depths of the mines would have prevented it from being easily accessible and therefore visible to the Spaniards who rarely visited the mines beyond the entrance.

[23] The connection between treasures and the underworld established in this painting is a recurrent theme in visual representations of hell during the colonial period, where greed is depicted as one of the deadly sins condemning sinners to hell. See, for example, Mujica Pinillo "Hell in the Andes."

In contrast, the Virgin, as reported in accounts of the miracles that she wrought in the mines of Potosí to the benefit of indigenous miners, is experienced as a light so great that she resembled the Sun (Arzáns I, 305). She represents the light of Christianity that disperses the darkness of pagan traditions. The miners, who in moments of peril invoke the Virgin in one of her manifestations, are saved through her intervention. As Gisbert has suggested, Christianizing the myth was a conscious effort (21), and in the reports of miracles, the Virgin and her images are appropriated by ecclesiastics for the purpose of converting Potosí and the indigenous population. The prevalence of reports of miracles effected by the Virgin in the mines of Potosí clearly contributed to the association of those two entities and helped establish what Gisbert has claimed was an established and widespread iconography of the "Virgen del Cerro" (*Iconografía* 17). Thus it was not only the miracles themselves that delivered the Andean miners from peril, but also the reports of miracles in the form of sermons that might have redeemed their eternal souls.

Several colonial authors (Arzáns, Calancha, Ocaña, Ramos) report miracles performed in the mines of Potosí by different manifestations of the Virgin. Ocaña, for example, reports that the Spanish Virgin of Guadalupe, whose cult he was promoting in Potosí, performed a miracle that saved several miners from a collapse after they had been buried for over five days (247). Similarly, in his record of the *Historia de Copacabana,* Ramos refers to an analogous miracle – although in this case the ordeal of the miners lasted for eight days – performed, this time, by the Virgin of Copacabana (156). Each of these reports indicates a particular *image* or *statue* of the Virgin as the benefactress of the miners. This also creates a sense of coherence with the pre-colonial worship of *huacas* as in the veneration of images rather than abstract ideas of the Virgin, Andeans would

interact with an objectified representation of divine power. Consequently, even if the indigenous miners in fact turned to the Catholic Virgin for help, they replaced the worship of one purportedly animated object – the *huaca* – with another – an image of the Virgin. The importance of images is particularly highlighted in Ocaña's account of the miracle he adscribes to the Virgin of Guadalupe. He laments that after reports about the miracle became known he could have sold fifty thousand mass cards of the Virgin, but since the order of Guadalupe in Spain had not fulfilled his request for them, they had lost out on a significant income through their sales (248). While miraculous images were exalted in the accounts and their veneration promoted in reports of the miracles they effected, no reference is made to the rules determined in the twenty-fifth session of the Council of Trent in 1563: "And if at times, when expedient for the unlettered people, it happens that the facts and narratives of sacred Scripture are portrayed and represented; the people shall be taught, that not thereby is the Divinity represented" (235). As the presence of representations of the Virgin and their influence spread throughout the Andean region, the lack of awareness regarding these limitations promoted by the Council would have allowed the indigenous population to draw their own conclusions as they happened upon a multitude of triangular, mountain shaped Virgin images and statues.[24]

[24] Stanfield has analyzed the circulation of miraculous statues, indicating that "once the statues became known as miraculous, artists began to produce secondary statues, paintings, prints, and medallions depicting them [...] Each statue and its secondary images became an artistic complex with a definite center in the primary image's location that then radiated outward from the primary image, mirrored the centripetal movement of devotees toward the original image for annual pilgrimage and festival events." (2).

Rather than being explicitly identified as a sacred place, the Cerro was used in these miracle narratives as the ideal background—a liminal space that facilitated an encounter between humans and the divine presence of the Virgin, just as the *huacas* before had served as a point of contact between humans and the sacred. However, beyond serving as a canvas on which Andean beliefs were Christianized but not effaced, the Cerro as an icon representative of spirituality was indicative of a larger goal pursued by the Spanish authors and their European audience. The visual connection between the Virgin and Potosí as well as the indication of Potosí as a site of miracles performed by the Catholic Saint, helped to claim the mountain for the Catholic faith and visually designate it as a part of the Catholic Spanish Empire. The *Cerro Rico* thus was presented as an icon indicative of the perceived success of conversion and in its representations it was promoted and circulated as such not only in the Andes but to an audience beyond the Andean location of the rich mountain.

Even though representatives of the Catholic faith discouraged theveneration of the mountain itself the Cerro did become a place of worship. Arzáns, for example, remembers the celebration of the cross on the peak of the Cerro in 1714, when "la fiesta [de la exaltación de la cruz] se hizo en la misma punta donde está la cruz, la cual es muy grande y nueva" "the celebration [of the exaltation of the Cross] took place on the very peak [of the mountain] where the Cross is placed, which is very big and new" (III, 22; my translation). On this occasion the caballero don Andrés "con su acostumbrada devoción subió a la cumbre del Cerro rico llevando sacerdotes y acompañamiento, y allí mandó celebrar el santo sacrificio de la misa con mucho regocijo de los españoles y de los indios" 'climbed to the peak of the rich mountain with his customary devotion, bringing

along priests and company, and there [on the peak] he ordered the celebration of the holy sacrifice of the mass to the great delight of the Spaniards and the indios' (Arzáns III, 22; my translation). While the celebration presumably honors the cross, it is the combination of the cross *and* the rich mountain that serves as the background for the mass and the rejoicing of Spanish and indigenous alike.

In addition, the cross serves as a visible marker that situates the physical form of the *Cerro Rico* as well as its representations within a Catholic spiritual landscape.[25] Thus, even though the accounts celebrating the conversion of the Andean population as a consequence of miracles and powerful sermons might have been overly optimistic due to the superficiality and possible pretense of the conversion, the cross placed on top of this landmark visually communicated the claim for dominance of the Catholic religion in the Andes and the perception of a victory of the Catholic Church over the Andean demonic presences who had previously led astray the Andean subjects of the Spanish king. Through implanting a cross on its peak, Catholic dominance was quite literally imposed on the Cerro of Potosí and on the Andean religion represented by the Cerro in its manifestation as an indigenous *huaca*.

Potosí Between the Virgin, the Cross, and the *Huaca*: Conclusion

While the cross is physically imposed on the Andean *huaca,* in the paintings of the "Virgen del Cerro" it is the face of the Virgin that represents the Catholic Church and its claim to dominance over the pre-Hispanic idol, the *Cerro Rico*. Aside from the visual

[25] The political significance of this marker, the cross, is discussed further in Chapter 4, *p.123ff.

repression of the rich mountain as an icon of indigenous spirituality through the imposition of the Virgin, whose image provides the focal point in the paintings, the control claimed by the Catholic Church is expressed particularly through the use of space on the canvas. The painting is dominated by Catholic figures and symbols that overshadow the image of the Andean mountain. Even viewers who are not familiar with the rich mountain's history as an Andean *huaca*, would be able to perceive the Catholic claim to the space represented in the image, a claim, which based on the overwhelming dominance of Catholic iconography might be perceived as having been successful. Thus considered from this perspective, the imposition of the Virgin's image onto the Andean *Cerro Rico* might have been perceived not as a survival of indigenous spirituality, but as its ultimate erasure.

Throughout the colonial period, Potosí was an icon of spirituality that represented various religious ideals. Certain parts of pre-Hispanic Andean spirituality never lost their relevance, and until today the miners of the rich mountain continue practicing elements of the pre-Hispanic religion, according to which the *Cerro Rico* was acknowledged as a *huaca*, a sacred being within the landscape of the Andes. At the same time, ideals and beliefs of the Catholic religion were visually and textualy imposed on the rich mountain – for example through the placement of the cross on its summit – and socially enforced by officials appointed to advance the extirpation of indigenous beliefs and the conversion of the Andean population. Potosí became a site where religious values and forms of spiritual expression were negotiated, an effort that has been recorded in textual and visual

representations of the rich mountain dating from the sixteenth century until today.[26] While indigenous and Catholic religions both played an important part in defining the *Cerro Rico* as an icon of spirituality, it is the image of a Christianized Cerro marked by the Cross that was more widely circulated and more easily accessible to a European audience; any Andean influences present in these representations were likely overlooked by those unfamiliar with the ideas and spiritual practices of the Andes.

In its different representations, the memorable, almost perfectly triangular shape of the Cerro reflected continutity and change at the same time. As time progressed, the textual and visual record put less emphasis on distinguishing the different cultural elements and spiritual practices that defined the Cerro's function within the Andean faiths. Consecutive representations of the Cerro, while they might have been conceived with a particular spiritual ideal in mind, increasingly combined diverse cultural elements resulting in images depicting the rich mountain as an icon of a kaleidoscopic Andean spirituality, which lent itself to multiple readings based on the perspective of their audience. Most importantly, though, the *Cerro Rico* transcended, through its representations, its importance as a local landmark and pre-Hispanic *huaca*. Especially in its representations as the "Virgen del Cerro," Potosí became an icon "rooting" and representing Andean as well as Catholic religion, making them accessible to a large audience beyond its physical location

[26] According to Thomas Abercrombie "colonialism created metaphoric equivalences through which both Spaniard and indians could gloss a limited range of one another's cultural forms, and with metaphor came license of poetic interpretation. Neither Spaniard nor indian could ignore the equivalence, once established" (214). This metaphoric equivalence also applies to Potosí, which glossed in terms of Catholic ideas – for example in its representation of the *Virgen del Cerro* – still represented an underlying indigenous belief system.

Conclusion

Throughout the colonial period, representations of the rich mountain of Potosí transcended its significance as a geographic landmark. In representing the *Cerro Rico* as part of a larger discourse, writers and artists of Andean, creole, and European origin created an icon that denoted wealth and political authority, moral degeneracy, as well as a claim to territorial and spiritual control. The significance of the rich mountain as an icon, which a diverse audience of Andeans, creoles, Spaniards, and Europeans outside the Spanish Empire considered culturally relevant, is evident in the wide circulation of its textual and visual representations within the larger Atlantic space. The legend of Potosí's silver attracted a wide array of people from different ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds to its mines where they coexisted uneasily; similarly, when considered jointly the diverse representations of the rich mountain – an icon evoking conflicting ideas – bespeak an ideological tension and unease among those who contributed to the creation of Potosí's kaleidoscopic iconicity.

The goal of this dissertation is to bring together the disparate representations of this iconic landmark. The aim is not to perpetuate or promote the association of the *Cerro Rico* with any single idea of its iconic relevance, but to highlight the multiple narratives that combine to indicate the rich mountain's discursive monstrosity: its ability to be mobilized as an icon representing a variety of sometimes contradictory ideas and values.

Within political and spiritual discourses of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries, Potosí's significance cannot be determined definitively: the meaning attributed to its representations is constantly negotiated by those who appropriate the rich mountain as a discursive token for advancing personal and communal political goals and ideas. Writers and artist from different nationalities asserted the significance of the mountain as an icon representing wealth and moral degeneracy, spatial and religious dominance.

Initial representations of the *Cerro Rico* created by Spanish authors, such as Cieza de León and Acosta, who had visited Potosí during their travels in the Peruvian viceroyalty, praised it as an icon of wealth and a divine reward for the Spanish monarch. This manifestation of Potosí's iconicity aligns with the official history of Spain as a heroic nation and defender of the faith. However, in the politically charged context of early modern Europe, where the Spanish Crown was plagued by financial difficulties as a result of sustained conflicts with several other nations, especially England, the Low Countries, and France, representations of the mountain communicated a multitude of ideas. Some authors within Spain rejected the celebratory accounts of Potosí as an icon of wealth by implying that its riches – real or imagined – had no direct positive impact on the Spanish population as a whole. Other texts, created by both residents of Potosí and European authors outside of Spain, presented the rich mountain as an icon of immorality. For these authors, the *Cerro Rico* represented Spanish ambition and an inordinate desire to pursue personal wealth over virtuous conduct; this prioritization of goals is claimed to be responsible for the exploitation and abuse of the indigenous workers who were

forcibly recruited to work the mines and refineries and to keep the "machine" of Potosí's silver industry running.

Visual and textual representations of the *Cerro Rico* situated Potosí within the political and spiritual landscape of the Spanish Empire. In real and discursive space, represented especially on maps and charts, the rich mountain was pictured as a metaphorical rather than geographical point of reference, an icon that both guided and motivated transatlantic interactions and commerce. However, while Potosí was represented as a landmark central to commerce and territorial control on Iberian maps, outside the Spanish empire its representations portrayed it as one among many exotic curiosities, rejecting the idea of its central role in the transatlantic network of commerce. At the same time, Andean indigenous artists employed representations of the rich mountain as an argument for regaining a measure of control over their ancestral territories, both in terms of political authority and spiritual self-determination. In Potosí, as in other parts of the Andes, representatives of the Catholic Church orchestrated efforts to extirpate Andean spirituality and to impose Catholic ideals, an effort that was also put into effect in Potosí. However, images of the rich mountain in a spiritual context, such as the eighteenth-century representations of the *Cerro Rico* as the *Virgin of the Mountain*, indicate that Potosí as an icon of spirituality was defined by a multitude of influences – both Andean and European – a reality that made it possible for a diverse population to perceive of the rich mountain as an icon representing their own religious ideals.

From its discovery in 1545 until the eighteenth century, the mountain of Potosí was an icon used to represent a variety of ideas – wealth, immorality, territorial control, and religion. Simplistic references to the mountain as a symbol of either wealth or

suffering are thus inadequate to understand the complexity and far-reaching impact of Potosí as an icon. The conflicting manifestations of its iconicity not only bespeak the flexibility of Potosí as a discursive token, but also represent the tensions between different European kingdoms as well as efforts by indigenous intellectuals to assert their agency in a politically and culturally unfamiliar environment. Artists and writers from within and outside the Spanish Empire cited the rich mountain as an icon and discursive token supporting their ideas; as such, the meaning attributed to this icon was constantly negotiated. Spanish efforts to positively shape the representation of the rich mountain as "God's pocketbook" and a divine reward for the Spanish defenders of the Catholic faith, which were most widely circulated in the various editions and translations of texts created by sixteenth-century authors, were only moderately successful. Reacting to this well-known idea of Potosí as the legendary silver mountain, writers and artists continued to redefine the *Cerro Rico*'s iconicity. Early modern texts show that the icon of the *Cerro Rico* was just as enticing, but also as unpredictable in its effects, as the rich mountain's silver production. Control over the meaning of the silver mountain, however, was more successfully disputed than control over the silver itself, which remained in the hands of the Spanish Monarchs until the early nineteenth century. This discursive negotiation of Potosí's significance thus indicates that the rich mountain was not only a source of the precious metal, but an icon that contributed to intellectual, political, and spiritual discourses in Europe and the Americas.

Bibliography

Abercrombie, Thomas A. *Pathways of Memory and Power. Ethnography and History Among an Andean People*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1998. Print.

Absi, Pascale and Pablo Cruz. "La porte de la wak'a de Potosi s'est ouverte à l'enfer. La Quebrada de San Bartolomé." *Journal de la société des américanistes* 93.2 (2007): 51-86. Web. 23 March 2013.

Absi, Pascale. "Cerros ardientes y *huayras* calladas. Potosi antes y durante el contacto." *Mina y metalurgia en los Andes del Sur desde la época prehispánica hasta el siglo XVII*. Eds. Pablo José Cruz and Jean-Joinville Vacher. Sucre: Imprenta-Editorial "Tupac Katari", 2008. 91-120. Print.

---. *Les Ministre du Diable. Le Travail et ses Representations dans les Mines de Potosi, Bolivie*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003. Print.

Acarete du Biscay (attributed to). *Mr. R. M. Voyage to Buenos-Ayres: And from thence by Land to Potosí* [1672]. London, 1716. *Sabin Americana*. Web. 24 March 2013.

Acosta, Josef de. *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* [1590]. Ed. Fermín del Pino-Díaz. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas: Madrid, 2008. Print.

Acosta, Joseph de. *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies*. Trans. Edward Grimston [1604]. Ed. Clements R. Markham. London: Hakluyt Society, 1880. *Internet Archive*. Web. 10 June 2014.

Adorno, Rolena. *Guaman Poma. Writing and Resistance*. 2nd ed. Austin: U of Texas P, 2000. Print.

Adorno, Rolena and Ivan Boserup. "The Making of Murúa's *Historia general del Piru*." *The Getty Murúa*. Eds. Thomas B.F. Cummins and Barbara Anderson. Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2008. 7-76. Print.

Alcalá, Luisa Elena. "The Image of the Devout Indian: The Codification of a Colonial Idea." *Contested Visions In the Spanish Colonial World*. Ed. Ilona Katzew. New Haven: Yale UP, 2011. 228-249. Print.

Alexander, Jeffrey C. "Iconic Consciousness: The Material Feeling of Meaning." *Thesis Eleven* 103.10 (2010): 10-25. *SagePub*. Web. 12 March 2013.

Alfieri, Annamaria. *City of Silver: A Mystery*. New York: Minotaur Books, 2009. Print.

Alvarez, Bartolomé. *De las costumbres y conversión de los Indios del Perú: memorial a Felipe II*. Eds. María del Carmen Martín Rubio et. al. Madrid: Polifemo, 1998.

Print.

Anderson, Barbara and Thomas B. Cummins. "Introduction." *The Getty Murúa*. Eds. Thomas B.F. Cummins and Barbara Anderson. Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2008. 1-7. Print.

Andrien, Kenneth J. *Andean worlds: indigenous history, culture, and consciousness under Spanish rule, 1532-1825*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 2001. Print.

António, Prior of Crato. *The explanation of the true and lavvful right and tytle, of the most excellent prince, Anthonie the first of that name King of Portugall, concering his warres, againste Phillip King of Castile, and against his subiectes and adherentes, for the recouerie of his kingdome. Together vvith a briefe historye of all that hath passed aboute that matter, vntill the yeare of our Lord. 1583. Translated into English and conferred with the French and Latine copies. By the commanundement and order of the superiors*. Leyden 1585. *EEBO*. Web. 1 April 2014.

Aquaviva, Claudio. "Carta al P. Juan Sebastián, Prov. Roma, Octubre 1596." *Monumenta Peruana*. Ed. Antonio de Egaña. Vol. VI. Rome: Apud "Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu", 1974. 201-207. Print.

Arnoldi, Arnoldo di. *América*. Map. Siena, 1601. John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images. Web. 8 June 2014.

---. *Vniversale descrittione del mondo*. Map. Siena, 1601. John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images. Web. 8 June 2014.

Arriaga, Pablo Joseph de. "Carta. 29 de abril 1599." *Monumenta Peruana*. Ed. Antonio de Egaña. Vol. VI. Rome: Apud "Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu", 1974. 660-733. Print.

---. *The Extirpation of Idolatry in Peru* [1621]. Trans. L.Clark Keating. Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1968. Print.

Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela, Bartolomé. *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí* [1734] Eds. Lewis Hanke and Gunnar Mendoza. 3 vols. Providence: Brown University Press, 1965. Print.

Astete de Ulloa, Bartolomé. Letter to the Viceroy. 1619. MS. Charcas 36. Archivo General de Indias. Seville, Spain.

Audiencia de La Plata. Letter to the Peruvian Viceroy. 15 April 1607. MS. Charcas 32. Archivo General de Indias. Seville, Spain.

Bakewell, Peter. *Miners of the Red Mountain. Indian Labor in Potosí 1545-1650*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1984. Print.

---. "Technological Change in Potosí: The Silver Boom of the 1570's." *Mines of Silver and Gold in the Americas*. Ed. Peter Bakewell. Aldershot: Variorum, 1997. 75-95. Print.

Ballesteros Gabrois, Manuel. “Introducción.” *La crónica del Perú. El señorío de los Incas* [1553]. Ed. Manuel Ballesteros. Historia 16: Madrid, 1984. 7-49. Print.

Baptista Gumucio, Mariano. *El mundo desde Potosí. Vida y reflexiones de Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela*. Santa Cruz: Banco Santa Cruz, 2001. Print.

Bauer, Ralph and José Antonio Mazzotti. “Introduction.” *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas*. Eds. Ralph Bauer and José Antonio Mazzotti. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2009. 1-57. Print.

Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Berdadera Copya o retrato del Cerro Ryco de Potosy que mando hacer el ylustrysymo D. Dyego Rubio Morcyllo de Avñon. 1719. Silverwork. Sanctuary of the Virgin of Charity, Villarobledo. *The Colonial Andes. Tapestries and Silverwork, 1530-1830*. Ed. Elena Phipps, Johanna Hecht, and Cristina Esteras Martín. The Metropolitan Museum of Art: New York, 2004. 258-259. Print.

Berrio, Gaspar Miguel. *El Cerro Rico y la Villa Imperial*. 1758. Oil on Canvas. Museo de Charcas, Sucre.

Boyle, Margaret E. “Chronicling Women’s Containment in Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela’s History of Potosí.” *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture* 39.1 (2010): 279-296. Print.

Brading, D. A. and Harry E. Cross. “Colonial Silver Mining: Mexico and Peru.” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 52.4 (1972): 545-579. *Jstor*. Web. 15 May 2014.

Bruyn, Frans de. “From Georgic Poetry to Statistics and Graphs: Eighteenth-Century Representations and the ‘State’ of British Society.” *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 17.1 (2004): 107-139. *Project Muse*. Web. 15 May 2014.

Bry, Theodor de. *Neundter vnd letzter Theil Americae*. Frankfurt am Main, 1601. *The Krauss Collection* of *Sir Francis*. *Library of Congress*. Web. 13 May 2013.

---. *Title Page*. 1596. Engraving. *Americae pars sexta, sive Historiae ab Hieronymo Besoni Mediolanese scriptae, section tertia*. Frankfurt am Main, 1596. Title Page. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

---. *Wie die Indianer das Goldt aus den Bergen graben*. 1601. Engraving. *Additamentum nonae partes America*. Frankfurt am Main, 1601. Pt. 3 plate III. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Bucher, Bernadette. *Icon and Conquest. A Structural Analysis of de Bry's Great Voyages*. Trans. Basia Miller Gulati. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1981. Print

Buarque de Holanda, Sergio. *Visión del Paraíso*. Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1987. *Google Books*. Web. 20 June 2014.

Burkholder, Mark A. and Lyman L. Johnson, eds. *Colonial Latin America*. 6th ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. Print.

Cabildo de Potosí. Letter to King Philip II. 1562. MS. Charcas 32. Archivo General de Indias. Sevilla, Spain.

Cabildo, Justicia y Regimiento de Potosí. Letter. 31 July 1620. MS Charcas 32. Archivo General de Indias. Sevilla, Spain.

Calancha, Antonio de la. *Cronica moralizada del orden de San Agustín en el Perú*. [1639]. 5 Vol. *Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolivia*. 1 September 2013. Web.

---. "Historia del santuario de Nuestra Señora de Copacabana." *Cronica moralizada*. Ed. Gustavo Adolfo Otero. La Paz: Bolivia, 1939. 190-224. Print.

Cañete y Dominguez, Pedro Vicente. *Potosi Colonial. Guia histórica, civil y legal del gobierno e intendencia de la provincia de Potosi* [ca. 1808]. Ed. Gustavo Adolfo Otero. Artistica Ayacucho: La Paz, 1939. Print.

Capoche, Luis. *Relación general de la Villa Imperial de Potosí* [1588]. Ed. Lewis Hanke. *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*. Madrid: Atlas, 1959. Print

Casey, James. *Early Modern Spain. A Social History*. London: Routledge, 1999. Print.

Cellorigo, Martín González de. "The Restoration of the Republic (1600)." *Early Modern Spain. A Documentary History*. Ed. Jon Cowans. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2003. 133-140. Print

Cerro de Potosí. 1553. Woodcut. Pedro Cieza de León. *Parte primera de la Chronica del Perú*. Seville, 1553. CXXII v. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Cerro de Potosí. 1554. Woodcut. Pedro Cieza de León. *Parte primera de la Chronica del Perú*. Antwerp, 1554. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Certeau, Michel de. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven F. Rendall. Berkeley: U of California P, 1984. Print.

Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Madrid: Real Academia Española, 2004. Print.

---. "El Celoso Extremeño." *Novelas Ejemplares II*. Ed. Harry Sieber. Madrid: Catedra, 2001. 99-136. Print.

Cieza de León, Pedro de. *La crónica del Perú. El señorío de los Incas* [1553]. Ed. Manuel Ballesteros. Historia 16: Madrid, 1984. Print.

---. *La Crónica del Perú. Tercera Parte*. Ed. Francesca Cantú. Lima: PUCP, 1989. Print.

Cole, Jeffrey. *The Potosí Mita: Compulsory Indian Labor in the Andes*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1985. Print.

Colón, Cristóbal. *Los cuatro viajes y el testamento*. Tucson: Açedrex Publishing, 2012. Kindle Edition.

Comme les esclaves fouillent & font fondre la mine. 1575. Woodcut. André Thevet. *La cosmographie universelle*. Vol. 2. Paris, 1575. 984v. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Cortesão, Armando and Avelino Teixeira da Mota, eds. *Portugaliae monumenta cartographica*. 6 vols. Lisboa: n.p., 1960.

Covarrubias Orrozco, Sebastián de. *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española*. Madrid, 1610. *University of Toronto Libraries Internet Archive*. Web. 29 August 2013.

Cowans, Jon, ed. *Early Modern Spain. A Documentary History*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2003. Print.

Cresswell, Tim. *Place. A short introduction*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. Print.

Cromwell, Oliver. "Speech at the Opening of Parliament, 1656." *The Black Legend*. Ed. Charles Gibson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971. 54-62. Print.

Cruz, Pablo. "Huacas olvidadas y cerros santos. Apuntes metodológicos sobre la cartografía sagrada en los Andes del sur de Bolivia." *Estudios Atacameños* 38 (2009): 55-74. Web. 5 April 2013.

Cummins, Thomas B. F. "The Images in Murúa's *Historia general del Piru:* An Art Historical Study." *The Getty Murúa*. Eds. Thomas B. F. Cummins and Barbara Anderson. Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2008. 147-173. Print.

---. *Toasts with the Inca. Andean Abstraction and Colonial Images of Quero Vessels*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2002. Print.

Damian, Carol. *The Virgin of the Andes. Art and Ritual in Colonial Cuzco*. Miami Beach: Grassfield Press, 1995. Print

Das Silberbergwerck Potosi in Peru. 1727. Engraving. Franz Ernst Brückmann. *Magnalla Dei in locis subterraneis*. Braunschweig, 1727. Plate XIII. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Davis, Elizabeth. "La promesa del náufrago: el motivo marinero del *ex-voto*, de Garcilaso a Quevedo." *Studies in Honor of James O. Crosby*. Eds. James of Crosby and Lia Schwartz Lerner. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2004. Print.

Dean, Carolyn. *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ*. Durham: Duke UP, 1999. Print.

---."War Games: Indigenous Militaristic Theater in Colonial Peru." *Contested Visions In the Spanish Colonial World*. Ed. Ilona Katzew. New Haven: Yale UP, 2011. 133-149. Print.

Dean, Carolyn and Dana Leibsohn. "Hybridity and Its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America." *Colonial Latin American Review* 12.1 (2003): 5-38. Print.

"Descripción de la Villa y Minas de Potosí. Año de 1603." *Relaciones Geográficas de Indias Perú*. Ed. José Urbano Martínez Carreras. Vol. 1. Madrid: Atlas, 1965.

Print. 372-385. Biblioteca de Autores Españoles

Domínguez Torres, Mónica. “Emblazoning Identity: Indigenous Heraldry in Colonial Mexico and Perú.” Contested Visions In the Spanish Colonial World. Ed. Ilona Katzew. New Haven: Yale UP, 2011. 97-115. Print.

Doré, Andrea. “America Meridionalis or America Peruvianae: Traditions in the Representation of South America.” The Americas before 1900s Working Group. The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH. 29 March 2013. Reading.

---. “O deslocamento de interesses da Índia para o Brasil durante a União Ibérica: mapas e relatos.” *Colonial Latin American Review* (forthcoming).

Dueñas, Alcira. *Indians and Mestizos in the ‘Lettered City.’* Boulder: UP of Colorado, 2010. Print.

Durston, Alan. “Notes on the Authorship of the Huarochirí Manuscript.” *Colonial Latin American Review* 16.2 (2007): 227-241. Web.

Embalsas. 1709. Oil on Canvas. Museo del Ejército, Madrid. Web. *Vistas*. 8 June 2014.

Elliott, John H. *Empires of the Atlantic World. Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2006. Print.

---. *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716*. New York: Penguin Books, 1963. Print.

---. *Spain and Its World, 1500-1700. Selected Essays*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1989. Print.

Farago, Claire. “Vision Itself Has Its History: Race, Nation, and Rennaissance Art History.” *Reframing the Renaissance*. Ed. Claire Farago. New Haven: Yale UP, 1995. 67-88. Print.

Festival Hat. 1700-1800. Silverwork. Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York. *Vistas*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Ford, Richard. *A Hand-Book for Travellers in Spain, and Readers at Home: Describing the Country and Cities, the Natives and Their Manners*. [1845]. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011. *GoogleBooks*. Web. 27 April 2014.

Forlani, Paolo di. *La descrittione di tutto il Peru*. Map. Venice, 1564. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 8 June 2014.

Foucault, Michel. “Des espaces autres (1967), Hétérotopies.” *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 (1984): 46-49. *Foucault.info*. Web. 10 April 2010.

---. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Vintage, 2010. Print

---. *The Order of Things*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994. Kindle Edition.

Franklin, Benjamin. *Autobiography*. Ed. William B. Cairns. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905. *GoogleBooks*. Web. 15 May 2014.

Fuente Sanct Angel, Rodrigo de la. “Relación del Cerro de Potosí y su descubrimiento.”

Relaciones Geográficas de Indias. Perú. Ed. José Urbano Martínez Carreras. Vol. 1. Madrid: Atlas, 1965. Print. 357-361. Biblioteca de Autores Españoles.

Gaffarel, Paul. "Notice Biographique." *Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique* [1558]. By André Thevet. Ed. Paul Gaffarel. Paris: Maisonneuve & Cie, 1878. v-xxxiii. *Internet Archive*. Web. 27 March 2013

Galarza Sepúlveda, Denise. *City, Myth, and Morality in Bartolomé Arzáns 'Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí': A Criollo Project*. Dissertation. 2002.

Galeano, Eduardo. *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*. Montevideo: Universidad de la República, 1971. Print.

García-Pabón, Leonardo . *Espacio andino, escritura colonial y patria criolla: La historia de Potosí en la narrativa de Batolomé Arzáns*. Dissertation. 1990.

---. "Indios, criollos y fiesta barroca en la *Historia de Potosí* de Bartolomé Arzáns." *Revista Iberoamericana* 61.172-73 (1995): 423-439. Print.

---. "Sleeping with corpses, eating hearts, and walking skulls : Criollo's subjectivity in Antonio de la Calancha and Bartolomé Arzans de Orsúa y Vela." *Hispanic Baroques*. Eds. Nicholas Spadaccini and Luis Martín-Estudillo. Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 2005. Print.

Garcilaso de la Vega, Inca. *Comentarios reales* [1609]. México: Editoral Porrúa, 1990. Print.

---. *Royal commentaries of the Incas, and general history of Peru*. Trans. H.V. Livermore. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989. *ACLS Humanities E-Book*. Web. 21 August 2013.

Gardyner, George. *A description of the new world, or, America, islands and continent and by what people those regions are now inhabited…* London, 1651. *Early English Books Online (EEOB)*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Gisbert, Teresa. "El Cerro de Potosí y el Dios Pachacámac." *Chungara. Revista de Antropología Chilena* 42.1 (2010): 169-180. Web. 9 March 2013.

---. *Iconografía y Mitos Indígenas en el Arte*. La Paz: Editorial Gisbert, 1980. Print.

Goodrich, Thomas D. *The Ottoman Turks and the New World: a study of the Tarih-i Hind-i Garbi and sixteenth century Ottoman Americana*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1990. Print.

Goos, Abraham. *America nova descriptio*. Map. Amsterdam, 1633. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 8 June 2014.

Gose, Peter. "Sacrifice and the commodity form in the Andes." *Man* 21.2 (1986): 296-310. *Jstor*. 12 May 2013. Web.

Griffin, Eric. "Nationalism, the Black Legend, and the Revised *Spanish Tragedy*."

English Literary Renaissance 39.2 (2009): 336-370. *Article First*. Web. 17 April 2014.

Gutierrez, Diego. *America sive quartae orbis partis nova exactissima descriptio*. Map. Seville, 1562. *Library of Congress*. Web. 8 June 2014.

Hack, William. "Table of Contents." *An accurate description of all the harbours rivers ports islands sands rocks and dangers between the mouth of California and the straits of Lemaire in the south sea of America*. 1698. MS. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Hackluyt, Richard. *Discourse concerning Western Planting* [1584]. Ed. Charles Deane. Cambridge: 1877. *Google Books*. Web. 1 June 2014.

Hall, Stuart. "New Cultures for Old?" *The Cultural Geography Reader*. Eds. Timothy Oakes and Patricia Price. London: Routledge, 2008. 264-274. Print.

Hamann, Byron Ellsworth. "The Mirrors of Las *Meninas:* Cochineal, Silver, and Clay." *The Art Bulletin* XCII.1 (2010): 6-35. Print.

Hanke, Lewis. "A Modest Proposal for a Moratorium on Grand Generalizations: Some Thoughts on the Black Legend." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 51.1 (1971): 112-127. *Jstor*. Web. 20 March 2013.

---. *Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela's History of Potosí*. Providence: Brown UP, 1965. Print.

---. "Luis Capoche." *Relación general de la Villa Imperial de Potosí* [1588]. Ed. Lewis Hanke. *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*. Madrid: Atlas, 1959. Print.

Hanke, Lewis and Gunnar Mendoza. "Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela: Su vida y obra." *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí*. By Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela. Eds. Lewis Hanke and Gunnar Mendoza. Providence: Brown UP, 1965. xxvii-clxxxi. Print.

Herrmann, Gina. "Amazonic Ambivalence in Imperial Potosí." *MLN* 114.2 (1999): 315-40. Print.

Hillgarth, J.N. *The Mirror of Spain, 1500-1700. The Formation of a Myth*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2000. Print.

Holguín, Diego. *Vocabulario de la lengua general de todo el Peru* [1608]. *Runasimi Qepsiqa*. Web. 1 May 2009.

Holguín, Melchor Pérez. *Entry of Viceroy Archbishop Morcillo into Potosí*. 1718. Museo de América. Madrid. *Vistas*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Holyday, Barten. *A survey of the world in ten books*. Oxford, 1661. *Early English Books Online (EEOB)*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Howard, Rebecca. Personal Conversation. 10 April 2013.

Hidalgo de Cisneros, José Horracio. Letter to the Bishop Don Alexandro Joseph de Ochoa y Morillo. April 1795. MS. Charcas 697. Archivo General de las Indias. Sevilla, Spain.

Hornberger, Theodore. "Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias:* A Guide to the Source and the Growth of American Scientific Tradition." *Studies in English* 19 (1939): 139-162. *Jstor*. Web. 10 March 2014.

Huarochirí Manuscript. Ed. Frank Salomon and George L. Urioste. Austin: U of Texas P, 1991. Print.

Jammes, Robert. *Études sur l'oeuvre poétique de Don Luis de Góngora y Argote*. Bordeaux: Féret et Fils, 1967. Print.

Jenkins, Eric. "My iPod, My iCon: How and Why Do Images Become Icons?" *Studies in Media Communication* 25.5 (2008): 466-489. *Taylor and Francis Online*. Web. 12 March 2013.

Juderías, Julián. *La Leyenda Negra*. Barcelona: Casa Editorial Araluce, 1917. Print.

Kagan, Richard L. *Clio and the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 2009. Print.

Karolusflorin. Coin. 1521-1545. *Classical Numismatic Group*. Web. 10 June 2014.

Klein, Cecelia F. "Before the Conquest: Contested Visions in Aztec and Inca Art." *Contested Visions In the Spanish Colonial World*. Ed. Ilona Katzew. New Haven: Yale UP, 2011. 29-53. Print.

Larminie, Vivienne. "Miege, Guy." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Web. 15 May 2014.

Las Casas, Bartolomé de. *Brevísima Relación de la destrucción de las Indias*. Barcelona: Linkgua, 2006. Print.

León Pinelo, Antonio de. *El Paraíso en el Nuevo Mundo* [1656]. Ed. Raul Porras Barrenechea. Lima: Comité del IV Centenario del Descubrimiento del Amazonas, 1943. 2 vols. Print.

---. *Title Page*. 1630. Engraving. *Tratado de confirmaciones reales de encomiendas, oficios I casos, en que se requieren para las Indias Occidentales*. Madrid, 1630. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013

---. *Tratado de confirmaciones reales de Encomiendas, Oficios i casos, en que se requieren para las Indias Occidentales*. Madrid, 1630. *Google Books*.Web. 10 March 2014.

Lizárraga, Reginaldo de. *Descripción breve de toda la tierra del Perú, Tucumán, Río de la Plata y Chile*. Ed. Don Mario Hernandez Sanchez-Barba. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1968.

López de Quiroga, Antonio. Lawsuit against Manuel de Campos. 1674. MS. CGI 063.

Casa Nacional de la Moneda Archivo Histórico. Potosí, Bolivia.

Lynch, John. *Spain 1516-1598. From Nation State to World Empire*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994. Print.

MacCormack, Sabine. *Religion in the Andes. Vision and Imagination in Early Colonial Peru*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991. Print.

Machicado Saravia, Eduardo and Cristina Machicado Murillo. "Introducción." *Copacabana de los Incas. Documentos Auto-lingüisticos é isografiados del Aymáru-Aymára. Prótogonos de los Pre-americanos*. By Jesús Viscarra. La Paz: Fundación Flavio Machicado Viscarra and Fundación Cultural Banco Central, 2010 [1901]. XXV-LIV. Print.

Maltby, William S. *The Black Legend in England. The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment 1558-1660*. Durham: Duke UP, 1971. Print.

---. *The Reign of Charles V*. New York: Palgrave, 2002. Print.

Mangan, Jane. *Trading Roles: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Urban Economy in Colonial Potosí*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005. Print.

Map of South America. Map. London, ca. 1709. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Marchena Fernández, Juan. "Alabanza de corte y menosprecio de aldea. La ciudad y cerro rico de Potosí." *Potosí. Plata para Europa*. Ed. Juan Marchena Fernández. Comp. José Villa Rodríguez. Sevilla: Colección América, 2000. 15-72. Print.

Mateos, F. (Ed.). *Historia general de la Compañía de Jesús en la provincia del Perú*. Vol. 2. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, 1944. Print.

Matienzo, Juan de. *Gobierno del Perú* [1567]. Ed. Guillermo Lohmann Villena. Institut Français d'Études Andine: Paris, 1967. Print.

Matute, Cristobal. Letter. 5 March 1640. Charcas 32. Archivo General de las Indias. Seville, Spain.

McCarthy-Gilmore, Kate Alicia . *Subversive Frontiers: Space, Gender and Literature in Colonial Latin America*. Dissertation. 2009.

Medinaceli, Ximena. "Potosí y La Plata: La Experiencia de la ciudad andina (Siglos XVI y SVII)." *La construcción de lo urbano en Potosí y La Plata*. Ministerio de Cultura de España and Archivo y Biblioteca Nacional de Bolivia: Sucre, 2008. Print.

Merrim, Stephanie. "Spectacular Cityscapes of Baroque Spanish America". *Literary Cultures of Latin America A Comparative History*. Vol. 3. Eds. Mario J Valdés and Djelal Kadir. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. 31-57. Print.

---. *The Spectacular City. Mexico and Colonial Hispanic Literary Culture*. Austin: U of

Texas P, 2010. Print.

Miege, Guy. *The new state of England under Their Majesties K. William and Q. Mary in three parts*. London, 1691. *EEBO*. Web. 27 April 2014.

Mignolo, Walter. "Crossing Gazes and the Silence of the 'Indians': Theodor De Bry and Guaman Poma de Ayala." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 41.1 (2011): 173-223. Web. 10 May 2014.

Millones, Luis. "Encuentro o tinkuy en textos andinos coloniales." *Tinkuy* 1.1 (2005): n.p. Luis Millones Personal Website.Web. 9 March 2013.

Mills, Kenneth. "Religion in the Atlantic World." *The Oxford Handbook of The Atlantic World 1450-1850*. Ed. Nicholas Canny and Philip Morgan. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011. 433-448. Print.

Mines de Potosi. 1720. Engraving. *Voyage de Marseille a Lima et dans les autres lieux des Indes occidentales*. Paris, 1720. 170. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Mining in Peru. 1678. Engraving. Athanasius Kircher. *Mundus subterraneous*. Vol. 2. Amsterdam, 1678. 228. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Moll, Hermann. To the Right Honorable Charles Earl of Sunderland and Baron Spencer… this map of South America. ca. 1709. Map. John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images. Web. 8 June 2014.

Monte di Pottosi. 1555. Woodcut. Pedro Cieza de León. *La Prima Parte de la Cronica del Grandissimo Regno del Peru*. Rome, 1555. In Thomas Goodrich. *The Ottoman Turks and the New World: a study o the Tarih-i Hind-i Garbi and sixteenth century Ottoman Americana*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1990. Print

Morden, Robert. *Geography rectified, or, A description of the world…* London, 1688. *EEBO*. Web. 27 April 2014.

Mujica Pinilla, Ramón. "Hell in the Andes: The Last Judgement in the Art of Viceregal Peru." *Contested Visions In the Spanish Colonial World*. Ed. Ilona Katzew. New Haven: Yale UP, 2011. 178-201. Print.

Mundy, Barbara E. *The Mapping of New Spain. Indigenous Cartography and the Maps of the Relaciones Geográficas*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1996. Print.

Murúa, Martín. *Historia general del Piru*. Ed. J. Paul Getty Museum. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute Publication Program, 2008. Print.

---. *Historia general del Piru*. MS Galvin. Private Collection.

Myers, Kathleen Ann. and Scott, Nina M. *Fernández de Oviedo's Chronicle of America: A New History for a New World*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007. *Project Muse*. Web. 11 Jun. 2014.

"Notes to Hack's 'Table of Content'." *An accurate description of all the harbours rivers*

ports islands sands rocks and dangers between the mouth of California and the straits of Lemaire in the south sea of America. 1698. MS. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Ocaña, Diego de. *Viaje por el Nuevo Mundo: de Guadalupe a Potosí, 1599-1605*. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2010. Print.

Oficiales de Potosí. Letter to Viceroy of Peru "sobre que se puede hacer en cuanto al alivio de mineros". 1620. MS. Charcas 36. Archivo General de Indias. Sevilla, Spain.

Ogilby, John. *America: being the lastest, and most accurate description of the new vvorld containing the original of the inhabitants, and the remarkable voyages tither … collected from most authentick authors, augmented with later observations, and adorn'd with maps and sculptures*. London, 1671. *Early English Books Online (EEOB)*. Web. 15 April 2013.

O'Gorman, Edmundo. *The Invention of America*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1961. Print.

Orange, Guillaume de. *Apologie ou defense de tres illustre Prince Guillaume par la grance de Dieu Prince D'Orange*. Delft, 1581. G*oogleBooks*. Web. 10 May 2014.

Ordóñez de Ceballos, Pedro. *El viaje del mundo*. [1614]. Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe, 1947. Print.

Ortelius, Abraham. *America sive Novi orbis nova descriptio*. Map. Antwerp, 1587. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 8 June 2014.

Ossio, Juan M. "Murúa's Two Manuscripts: A Comparison." *The Getty Murúa*. Eds. Thomas B.F. Cummins and Barbara Anderson. Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2008. 77-94. Print.

Otero, Adolfo. "Introduction". *Cronica moralizada* [1631]. By Antonio de la Calancha. Ed. Gustavo Adolfo Otero. Artistica Ayacucho: La Paz, 1939. Print

Otte, Enrique. *Cartas privadas de emigrantes a Indias 1540-1616*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1996. Print.

Padrón, Ricardo. *The Spacious Word*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2004. Print.

Panofsky, Erwin. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982. Print.

Parker, Geoffrey. *Success is Never Final*. New York: Basic Books, 2002. Print.

Philipot, Thomas. *The original and growth of the Spanish monarchy united with the House of Austria extracted from those chronicles, annals, registers and genealogies that yeild any faithful representation how the houses of Castile, Aragon and Burgundy became knit and combin'd*. London, 1664. *Early English Books Online (EEOB)*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Plancius, Petrus. *Haec Pars Peruvianae*. Map. Amsterdam, ca. 1592. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 8 June 2014.

Polo de Ondegardo, Juan. *El mundo de los incas*. Eds. Laura González y Alicia Alonso. Madrid: Historia 16, 1990. Print.

Poma de Ayala, Guamán. *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* [1615]. Ed. Franklin Pease G. Y. 3 vols. Lima: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005. Print.

"Potosí." *Diccionario de la lengua española. Real Academía Española*. Web. 1 May 2014.

Potosi, its mountain, and its river. 1730. Woodcut. *Tarih-i Hind-i garbi*. Constantinople, 1730. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Potosi. 1671. Engraving. Arnoldus Montanus. *De Nieuwe en onbekende Weereld: of Beschryving van America*. Amsterdam, 1671. Plate 325. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Pratt, Mary Louise. "Art of the Contact Zone". *MLA Profession* (1991): 33-40. *Jstor*. Web. 31 October 2013.

Purchas, Samuel. *Purchas his pilgrims in fiue bookes*. London, 1625. *Early English Books Online (EEOB)*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Quevedo, Francisco de. "Poderoso Caballero es Don Dinero." *Poesía de la Edad de Oro II. Barroco*. Ed. José Manuel Blecua. Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1984. 201-204. Print.

Quisbert, Pablo Luis. "Servir a Dios o Vivir en el siglo." *La construcción de lo urbano en Potosí y La Plata*. Ministerio de Cultura de España and Archivo y Biblioteca Nacional de Bolivia: Sucre, 2008. Print.

Ralegh, Walter Sir. *The Discovery of Guiana*. Ed. Benjamin Schmidt. Boston: Bedfords/ St. Martin, 2008. Print.

Rama, Angel. *La ciudad letrada*. Hanover: Ediciones del Norte, 1984. Print.

Ramos (Gavilán), Alonso. *Historia de Copacabana y de la milagrosa imagen de su Virgen*. Ed. Mariano Fernandez de Córdova. Lima, 1837. [1621] *Hathi Trust*. Web. 26 August 2013.

Rappaport, Joanne and Thomas Cummins. *Beyond the Lettered City: Indigenous Literacies in the Andes*. Durham: Duke UP, 2012. *Project Muse*. Web. 14 March 2013.

Rohter, Larry. "Author Changes His Mind on 70s Manifesto. Eduardo Galeano Disavows His Book *The Open Veins*." *New York Times*. 23 May 2014. Online edition. Web. 23 May 2014.

Rostworowski de Diez Canseco, María. *Historia del Tahuantinsuyu*. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2006. Print.

Salomon, Frank. "How the *Huacas* Were." *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 33 (1998):

7-17. *Jstor*. Web. 30 October 2010.

Sanches, António. *Idrographisae*. Chart. Portugal, 1641. *Portugaliae monumenta cartographica*. Eds. Armando Cortesão and Avelino Teixeira da Mota. Vol. 5. Lisboa: n.p., 1960. Print.

Sanson D'Abbeville, Nicolas. *Partie de Terre Ferme*. Map. Paris, 1656. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 8 June 2014.

Santo Tomás, Domingo de. "Las minas de Potosí." *Fr. Domingo Santo Tomás defensor y apóstol de los indios del Perú*. Ed. José María Vargas. Quito: Editorial Santo Domingo, 1937. 15-21. Print.

Scheepstogt door Robert Harcourt gedaan na Gujana. Map. Leyden, 1709. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 8 June 2014.

Scott, James C. *Weapons of the Weak*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1985. Print.

Siles Salinas, Jorge. "Virgen de Tito Yupanqui: símbolo de la cultura mestizo boliviana." *Humanitas* 25 (2002): 96-101. Web. 1 September 2013.

Silverblatt, Irene. *Moon, Sun, and Witches*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1987. Print.

Sloterdijk, Peter. "Geometry in the colossal: the project of metaphysical globalization." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27(2009):29-40. Web. 1 January 2014.

Soux, María Luisa. "Presentación." *Copacabana de los Incas. Documentos Auto-lingüisticos é isografiados del Aymáru-Aymára. Prótogonos de los Pre-americanos*. By Jesús Viscarra. La Paz: Fundación Flavio Machicado Viscarra and Fundación Cultural Banco Central, 2010 [1901]. XIX- XXIV. Print.

Spufford, Margaret. "First Steps in Literacy: The reading and writing experience of the humblest seventeenth-century spiritual autobiographers." *Social History* 4.3 (1979): 407-435. *Taylor & Francis*. Web. 15 May 2014.

Stavig, Ward. "Continuing the Bleeding of These Pueblos Will Shortly Make Them Cadavers: The Potosi Mita, Cultural Identity, and Communal Survival in Colonial Peru." *The Americas* 56.4 (2000): 529-562. *Jstor*. Web. 8 February 2010.

---. "Potosí the King of All Mountains, and the Envy of All Kings: Potosís Image in the Colonial and European Worlds." *Bolivian Studies Journal* 6 (1996): 41-61. Print.

---. "Potosí and the Roots of Rural-Urban Migration and Settlement in the Andes." *Bolivian Studies Journal* 5 (1984): 60-80. Print.

---. *The World of Tupac Amaru. Conflict, Community, and Identity in Colonial Peru*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1999. Print.

Stuart, Tristam. *The Bloodless Revolution*. New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 2007. *GoogleBooks*. Web. 15 May 2014.

Talbot, Eliane. "Criollos y peninsulares en la obra de Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela:

La historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí." *Bolivian Studies Journal* 11.3 (2004): 188-205. Print.

Tandeter, Enrique. *Coercion and Market. Silver Mining in Colonial Potosi 1692-1826*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1993. Print

Taussig, Michael. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1980. Print.

TePaske, John Jay and Herbert S. Klein. The Royal Treasuries of the Spanish Empire in America. Volume 2 (of 3). Durham: Duke UP, 1982. Print.

The Colonial Andes. Tapestries and Silverwork, 1530-1830. Ed. Elena Phipps, Johanna Hecht, and Cristina Esteras Martín. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004. Print.

The Devil's Miner. Dir. Kief Davidson and Richard Ladkani. FRF, 2005. Film.

The Reign of the Antichrist. 1739. Oil on Canvas. Iglesia de Caquiaviri, La Paz, Bolivia. In Mujica Pinilla, Ramón. "Hell in the Andes: The Last Judgement in the Art of Viceregal Peru." *Contested Visions In the Spanish Colonial World*. Ed. Ilona Katzew. New Haven: Yale UP, 2011. 178-201. Print.

The Riche Mines of Potossi. 1581. Woodcut. Agustín de Zarate. *The discoverie and conqvest of the prouinces of Peru*. London, 1581. Title page. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Thevet, André. *La cosmographie universelle*. Paris, 1575. *John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images*. Web. 15 April 2013.

---. *Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique* [1558]. Ed. Paul Gaffarel. Paris, 1878. *Internet Archive*. Web. 27 March 2013.

Toledo, Francisco de. *Disposiciones gubernativas para el virreinato del Peru. 1575-1580*. Sevilla: Consejo Superiorde Investigaciones Científicas, 1989. *Google Books*. Web. 15 May 2014.

Torres, Juan de. *Acclamación Festiva de la muy noble Imperial Villa de Potosí*. Lima, 1716. Print.

Torres y Portugal, Fernando de. Letter to Juan Ortíz de Zárate. 1586. MS. CPLA 5. Archivo y Biblioteca Nacionales de Bolicia. Sucre, Bolivia.

Tryon, Thomas. *The country-man's companion, or, A new method of ordering horses & sheep so as to preserve them both from diseases and casualties, or to recover them if fallen ill and also to render them much more serviceable and useful to their owners…*London, 1684. *Early English Books Online (EEOB)*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Varela, Consuelo. "El magnetismo de Potosí. La Babilonia Americana." *Potosí. Plata para Europa*. Ed. Juan Marchena Fernández. Comp. José Villa Rodríguez.

Sevilla: Colección América, 2000. 175-188. Print.

Velho, Bartolomeu. *Quarta pars orbis*. Chart. 1561. *Portugaliae monumenta cartographica*. Eds. Armando Cortesão and Avelino Teixeira da Mota. Vol. 4. Lisboa: n.p., 1960. Print.

View of Potosí. 1610. Drawing. *Tarih-i Hind-i garbi veya Hadîs-i nev*. MS. Newberry Library, Chicago. *Vistas*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Vilches, Elvira. *New World Gold. Cultural Anxiety and Monetary Disorder in Early Modern Spain*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2010. Print.

Virgin of the Mountain. 1740. Oil on Canvas. Casa de la Moneda, Potosí.

Virgin of the Mountain of Potosí. 1720. Oil on Canvas. Museo Nacional de Arte, La Paz. *Vistas*. Web. 15 April 2013.

Viscarra, Jésus. *Copacabana de los Incas. Documentos Auto-lingüisticos é isografiados del Aymáru-Aymára. Prótogonos de los Pre-americanos* [1901]. La Paz: Fundación Flavio Machicado Viscarra and Fundación Cultural Banco Central, 2010. Print.

Vision of Francisco Tito Yupanqui of Potosi. Fray Jesús Viscarra Fabre. *Copacabana de los Incas*. Fundación Cultural Banco Central and Fundación Flavio Machicado Viscarra: La Paz, 2010 [1901]. Print.

Vissa, Carlos. Letter to Luis Quiñones Osorio, Royal Treasurer. 1600. MS. Charcas 45. Archivo General de Indias. Sevilla, Spain.

Voigt, Lisa. "Spectacular Wealth: Barroque Festivals and Creole Consciousness in Colonial Mining Towns of Brazil and Peru." *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas*. Eds. Ralph Bauer and José Antonio Mazzotti. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2009. 265-292. Print.

---. *Writing Captivity in the Early Modern Atlantic: Circulations of Knowledge and Authority in the Iberian and English Imperial Worlds*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2009. Print.

Walsh, Thomas, ed. and trans. *Hispanic Anthology. Poems Translated from the Spanish*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1920. *Google Books*. Web. 1 June 2014.

Wilson, Diana de Armas. *Cervantes, the Novel, and the New World*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Print.

White, Hayden. *Tropics of Discourse*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1985. Print.

Zárate, Augustin de. *Historia del descubrimiento y conquista del Perú*. Eds. Franklin Pease G.Y. and Teodoro Hampe Martínez. Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Fondo Editorial, 1995. Print.

---. *The discoverie and conquest of the Prouinces of Peru, and the Navigation in the South Sea, along that Coast, and also of the ritche Mines of Potosi*. Trans. T. Nicholas. London, 1581. *Early English Books Online (EEOB)*. Web. 15 April

2013.

Yupanqui, Titu Cusi. *History of How the Spaniards Arrived in Peru*. Trans. Catherine Julien. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2006. Print.

Zulawski, Ann. *They Eat From Their Labor: Work and Social Change in Colonial Bolivia*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1995. Print.

Appendix A: Income to the Spanish treasury from the *Quinto Real* tax on minted silver in Potosí (1560-1699)

The tables in this section are based on the information on the royal fifth contained in official tax records collected by John Jay TePaske and Herbert S. Klein in their publication *The Royal Treasuries of the Spanish Empire in America* (1982).

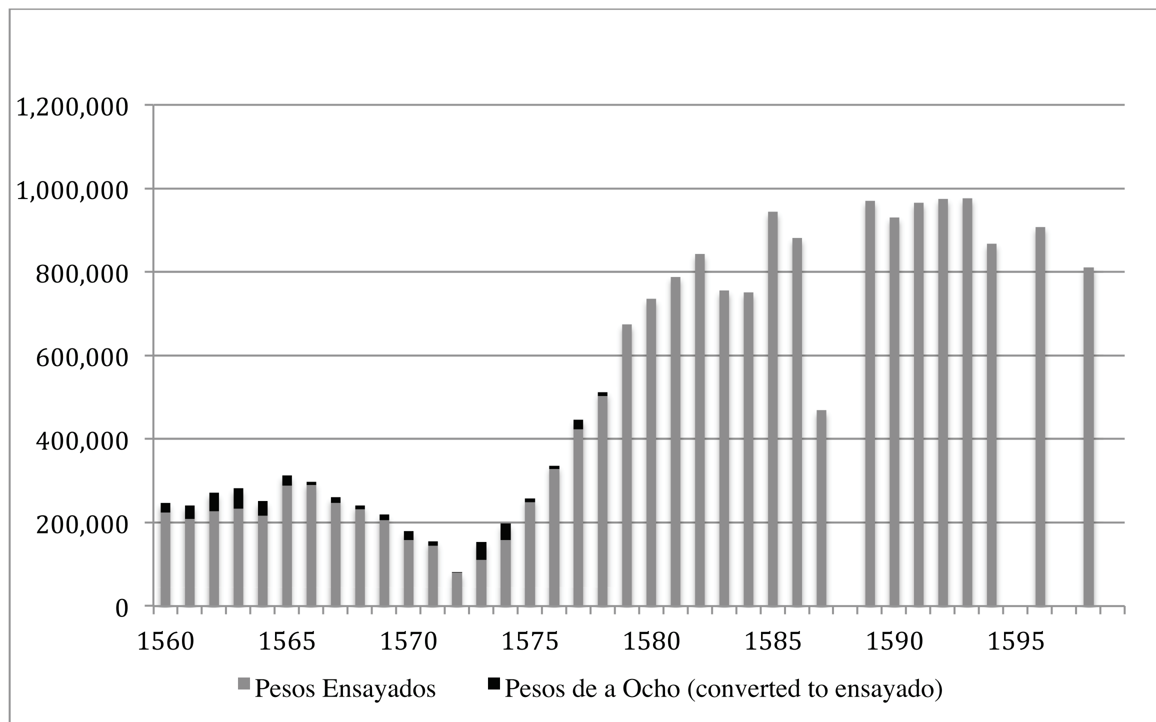

Table 1 *Quinto Real* collected in Potosí from 1560-1599.
The accounts recovered by TePaske and Klein record tax income collected in *pesos ensayados* and *pesos de ocho* separately from 1560-1578. "In Spain and in the Indies *maravedís* were standard units for accountants. Monies shipped from the Indies to Spain, for example, were always listed in Sevilla or Cádiz in *maravedís* to enable pensinsulars to convert the value of colonial coins or bullion into units of currency used in Spain. In the Indies, throughout the colonial period a *peso de ocho* was 272 maravedís and a *peso ensayado* normally 450 *maravedís*" (TePaske et al. xvi). For the sake of comparison, I have used the above information to convert the income recorded in *pesos de ocho* to *pesos ensayados*.

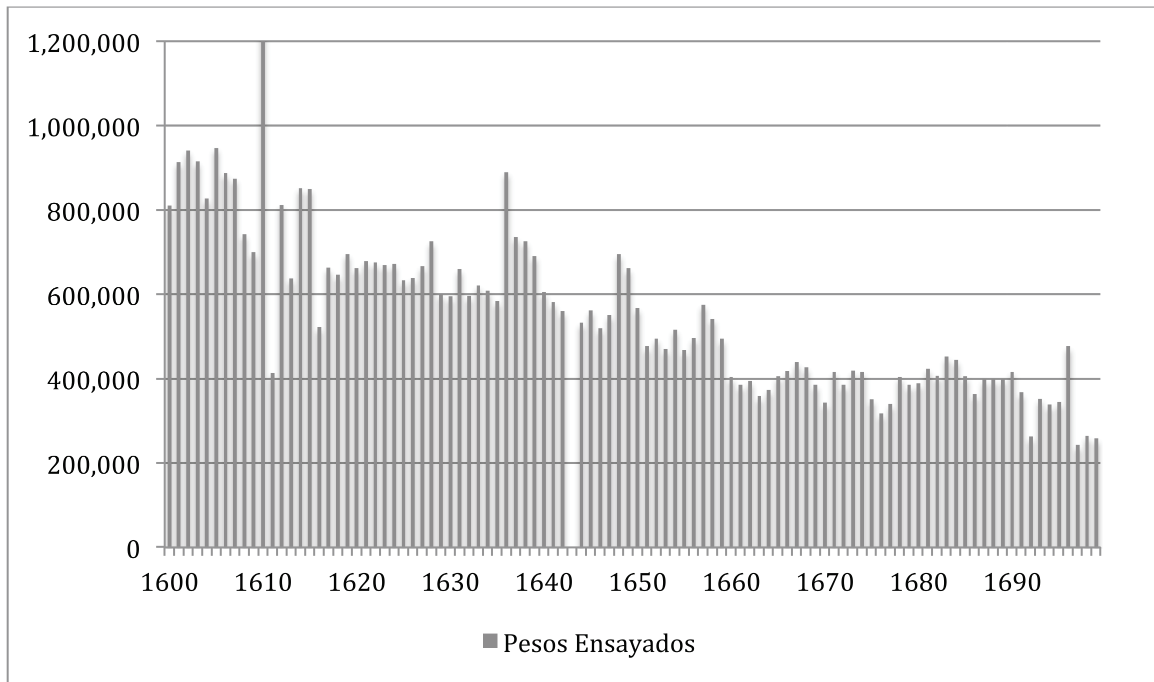

Table 2 *Quinto Real* collected in Potosí from 1600-1699.

The income from taxes in the seventeenth-century actually did not fall below 200,000 *pesos ensayados* and towards the end of the century had reached levels comparable with those of the 1560s. This data shows the important impact of the frame of reference for making sense of reality. While the absolute amount of the *quinto* was roughly the same in the 1560s and the 1690s, in the sixteenth-century this amount was considered an indication of the mines' wealth whereas in the seventeenth-century it was a sign of Potosí's decline. The frame of reference had shifted and the high rents collected in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century now served as a point of comparison.