

CREATING A RUIN IN COLONIAL CUSCO: SACSAHUAMÁN AND WHAT WAS MADE OF IT

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In 1534, Pedro Sancho de la Hoz (1968 [1534]:329), one of the first Europeans to see the capital city of the Inca (Inka), praised a certain structure saying, "neither the bridge of Segovia nor any of the buildings that Hercules or the Romans built are so worthy of being seen as this."¹ The monument he admired was Sacsahuamán (Saqsaywaman), an Inca architectural complex perched atop a hill overlooking the city of Cusco in the southern Andean highlands (Figure 1). Sancho's hyperbole would later reverberate in the writings of dozens of Spaniards.² Yet, despite their admiration of Sacsahuamán, the Spaniards dismantled most of the complex in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In so doing, they created a ruin. While their physical control of Sacsahuamán was unquestioned after the failed indigenous uprising of 1536, the colonists could not maintain interpretive control over what remained of the site and its history. During the colonial period the ruin hosted rival histories, and around its monumental skeleton competing elements of colonial society fleshed out differing versions of the "conquest" of the Inca's capital. Thus, in the colonial period the physical ruination of Sacsahuamán was accompanied by the creation of histories which made those ruins meaningful. In examining several of these histories, it will become apparent that Sacsahuamán, as a ruin, was a metonym for the control of Cusco, if not all of Peru.

While it is not my intention to recapitulate all that is known of and speculated about Inca Sacsahuamán, some general discussion of the

monument provides the requisite foundation for an analysis of Sacsahuamán in the colonial period -- that is, Sacsahuamán as a ruin. Sacsahuamán, bounded by a steep incline on one side and a flat plain on the other, consisted of numerous structures. Most prominent in its plan are three terraces which restricted access to edifices on the upper level (Figure 2). The zig-zagging terrace walls are characterized by polygonal masonry featuring dressed megaliths of irregular shape, each of which has been worked so as to fit precisely in its place (Figure 3). While much of these megalithic walls can still be seen, only the foundations of the rest of the complex remain. There were numerous rooms and as many as three towers in the elevated central portion.³ The largest tower, called *Muyuc Marca*, was circular in plan.⁴ Sancho (1968 [1534]), in describing Sacsahuamán before it was "ruined," reported that it was,

... of earth and very handsome stone with large windows that look upon the city and make it appear more handsome. Inside of it are many rooms and [there is] a principal tower in the center made in the manner of a round tower with four or five guardrooms one atop the other; the lodgings and rooms inside are small.⁵

³ Both Pedro Pizarro (1986 [1571]:104) and Cieza (1959 [1553]:154), however, report that Sacsahuamán had just two towers.

⁴ According to González Holguín (1901 [1608]:211, 236) *muyu* means round and *marca* can be translated as protector, as well as city, town or region. Garcilaso (1966 [1609]:468-469) translates *Muyuc Marca* [Móyoc Marca] as "the round fortress" and names the other two square towers as *Sácllac Marca* and *Páucar Marca*.

⁵ Sancho (1968 [1534]:329) wrote, "... hay una fortaleza de tierra y de piedra muy hermosa; con sus ventanas grandes que miran a la ciudad y la hacen parecer más hermosa. Hay dentro de ella muchos aposentos y una torre principal en medio, hecha a modo de cubo

¹ Sancho (1968 [1534]:329) wrote, "Los españoles que las ven dicen que ni el puente de Segovia, ni otro de los edificios que hicieron Hércules ni los romanos, no son cosa tan digna de verse como esto."

² Here "Spaniard" is used to refer both to those who were born in Spain and individuals of Spanish descent.

More, though perhaps less accurate, information about Sacsahuamán is provided by Garcilaso de la Vega who was the son of an important Spaniard and a woman of royal Inca ancestry. After moving to Spain, he wrote a version of Inca history based, in part, on accounts of prehispanic Peru told to him by his Inca relatives when he was a boy in Cusco. Dubbing himself "El Inca," he paints a rather glorious picture of his Andean ancestors. As a preeminent Inca monument, Sacsahuamán accounts for considerable descriptive prose in his chronicle. Of the decoration of the tower of Muryuc Marca he wrote,

All its walls were adorned with gold and silver, with animals, birds, and plants imitated from life and fitted into the wall, serving as a kind of tapestry. (Garcilaso 1966 [1609]:469)

In addition to this elaborate and intricate decoration, Garcilaso also described extensive subterranean passages beneath Sacsahuamán; neither feature is evident in the ruins.

Spaniards underscored the use of Sacsahuamán as an Inca stronghold by consistently referring to it as "the fortress" (*la fortaleza*).⁶ Several chroniclers maintain, however, that Sacsahuamán was a temple of the Inca patron, the sun (Herrera y Tordesillas 1945 [1615]:73; Cieza 1959 [1553]:153; Garcilaso 1966 [1609]:469; Contreras 1982 [1649]:4). Pedro de Cieza de León (1959 [1553]:153, 1985 [1553]:147), one of the earliest chroniclers of Peru, and one of the most reliable, calls it a royal house of the sun ("Casa real del Sol") and says it was conceived as a

house of the sun which should surpass everything done until then, and that it should house everything imaginable, such as gold and silver, precious stones, fine garments, arms of all the types they used, materials of war, sandals,

con cuatro o cinco cuerpos, uno encima de otro; los aposentos y estancias de adentro son pequeños."

⁶ Gasparini and Margolies (1980:280-281) suggest that the Spaniards identified Sacsahuamán as a fortress because its masonry reminded them of medieval European strongholds. They conclude that many of the Inca structures called fortresses by the Spaniards were actually religious edifices designed to protect sacred space.

shields, feathers, skins of animals and birds, coca, bags of wool, a thousand kinds of jewels; in a word, everything anyone had ever heard of was in it.

Cieza thus suggests that it was both a temple and a storage facility or treasury. Both Sancho (1968 [1534]:329-330) and Pedro Pizarro (1986 [1571]:104) describe Sacsahuamán as a depository. All three functions -- temple, depository, and stronghold -- may have been combined. Garcilaso (1966 [1609]:469) explains that "[Sacsahuamán] was considered a house of the Sun for arms and warfare" and that in it was stored clothing and footwear for the Inca military. From these accounts, Sacsahuamán was a military complex dedicated to the imperial solar cult and the concomitant agenda of an aggressively expanding state.

It has been suggested that Sacsahuamán was built after 1440 and completed in the first decades of the sixteenth century (Gasparini and Margolies 1980:195). Nearly all the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century documents that discuss Sacsahuamán, report that it was begun during the reign of the ninth Inca ruler (Pachacuti/Pachakuteq) or his son, the tenth ruler (Inca Yupanqui or Tupac Inca Yupanqui).⁷ Archaeology has been unable to determine the age of Sacsayhuamán, however, and so these historical accounts should be regarded as tentative at best.⁸ Many chroniclers report

⁷ While most chroniclers maintain that Pachacuti was another name for Inca Yupanqui, Garcilaso (1966 [1609]:463, 471) holds that they were distinct individuals: Pachacuti was the ninth Inca ruler, Inca Yupanqui was the tenth, and Tupac Inca Yupanqui was the eleventh. He claims that the construction of Sacsahuamán began under Inca Yupanqui although he concedes that Pachacuti may have planned the work and collected much of the stone. A number of chroniclers agree with Garcilaso that the structure was begun by Pachacuti's successor (e.g., Collapiña, Supno y otros Quipucamayos [1974 {1542-75}:40] and Esquivel y Navia [1980 {ca. 1749}:40-43]). See Angles Vargas (1990:16-24) for a summary of references to the construction of Sacsahuamán in colonial chronicles.

⁸ Zuidema (1983:89) argues that the building of Sacsahuamán was credited to Tupac Inca Yupanqui by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa who was writing for Viceroy Toledo in 1572. According to Zuidema, Sarmiento wanted to characterize Cusco under Pachacuti as a city without a "head" (i.e., a legitimate ruler). Upon the

that the work was continued by succeeding rulers being finished, or nearing completion, at the time Francisco Pizarro and his company arrived in the Andean area in 1532. Most agree that it had been in construction for over fifty years.⁹

The period of construction was lengthy and may have continued until the time of the conquest. Nevertheless, the destruction of Sacsahuamán began soon after the Spaniards settled in Cusco. Officially "founding" their city of Cusco in 1534, the Spaniards followed well known precedents including, of course, the founding of Mexico City on the ruins of the Mexica (Aztec) capital, Tenochtitlan. Such Spanish municipalities made use of the native labor and materials close at hand. In the case of Cusco, the Spaniards used the Inca's central plaza (the Haucaypata) as their own *plaza mayor* and positioned their cathedral on this square. All around the central precinct Spanish edifices were erected on the foundations of Inca structures. While they had no immediate plans for the site of Sacsahuamán, its masonry was used in the building of Spanish Cusco. Hence, in the colonial period, Sacsahuamán, the Inca's multipurpose fortress, depository, and temple, served a new function -- that of quarry. Apparently rumors of hidden treasure buried in Sacsahuamán also encouraged destructive excavations (Cieza 1959 [1553]:155; Garcilaso 1966 [1609]:471). Thus, within a few decades, the ruins of Sacsahuamán were literally created. In Garcilaso's words,

The Spaniards . . . demolished [the fortress] to build private houses in Cusco. And to save themselves the expense, effort and delay with which the Indians worked the stone, they pulled down all the smooth masonry in the walls. There is indeed not a house in the city

accession of Tupac Inca Yupanqui, Cusco gained a metaphoric head; Sarmiento, who followed Juan de Betanzos in likening Cusco to a puma's body, then dubbed Sacsahuamán its topographical head.

⁹ For varying estimates of the construction period see Garcilaso (1966 [1609]:471-72), Esquivel y Navia (1980 [ca. 1749]:40-43), Collapiña, Supno, y otros Quipucamayos (1974 [1542-75]:64).

that has not been made of this stone, or at least the houses built by the Spaniards.

The large slabs that formed the roof of the underground passages were taken out to serve as lintels and doorways. The smaller stones were used for foundations and walls, and for the steps of the staircases they sought slabs of stone of the size they needed, pulling down all the stones above the ones they wanted in the process, even though there might be ten or twelve rows and many more.

While Cusco's *cabildo* prohibited the removal of stones from Sacsahuamán in 1561 (Angles Vargas 1990:23), their edict had little apparent effect. That the city's *corregidor* commented in 1571 that Sacsahuamán could supply enough dressed stones to build four churches like those of Seville, suggests that Sacsahuamán continued to be an exploited resource for dressed stones (Polo de Ondegardo 1916 [1571]:107). Other officials and chroniclers affirm extensive usage of stones from Sacsahuamán in the building of Cusco (see e.g., Sarmiento 1943 [1572]:137 and Toledo 1904 [1571]). The friar Murúa (1986 [1600-11]:500) claimed that *all* Spanish structures built in Cusco used stone from Sacsahuamán. He also explained that the only reason any stones were left standing at the site was because the large boulders would have been too expensive to move and would have required the labor of too many natives.¹⁰ Contracts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provide concrete evidence for the usage of stones from Sacsahuamán in the building of Spanish Cusco's symbolic center; documents dated October 6, 1559 and February 19, 1646 indicate that Sacsahuamán was the source of stone used in building the cathedral of Cusco (Valcárcel 1934:176; Cornejo 1960:147). An eye witness account (Cobo 1990 [1653]:229-230) of the construction of Cusco's cathedral details the Andean method of lithic construction employed by native laborers -- the natives this chronicler watched were undoubtedly us-

¹⁰ Murúa writes, "Es de suerte que todos los edificios modernos que después se han hecho en la ciudad por los españoles, han alido de la piedra de allí, aunque a las piedras grandes y toscas no han llegado, por no poder llevarlas a otro lugar sin costa excesiva e infinito trabajo de los indios."

ing some of the same stones that their ancestors had used to build Sacsahuamán.¹¹

Although much of Sacsahuamán was dismantled in the first half of the colonial period, the most striking and impressive part of the complex remained -- its polygonal megalithic walls which feature stones measuring over fifteen feet in height and weighing over two hundred tons. Both Andeans and Spaniards esteemed the great size of these stones and the labor they represented. There are many Andean legends concerning boulders coming to life and of people being turned into rocks. The large boulders at Sacsahuamán also inspired legends. There was, in particular, one megalith -- possibly part of a nearby rock outcrop -- which has been associated with Sacsahuamán in native myths. This boulder was called Saicusa [Saykuska] which can be translated as "weary" or "tired" (Garcilaso 1966 [1609]:464, González Holguín 1901 [1608]:330). According to most accounts, this megalith was being dragged by thousands of laborers into position when it grew so weary that it began to weep tears of blood. The Inca left the distressed stone where it lay. The native chronicler Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (1988 [1615]:159 [161]) illustrates this boulder being moved by an Inca captain (Inga Urcon) who supervises the effort while the stone sheds tears of blood (the gloss reads "the stone cried blood", "lloró sangre la piedra") (Figure 4). Maarten Van de Guchte (1984) has analyzed six versions of the weary stone myth recorded in colonial chronicles; he argues convincingly that the stone symbolized the completion of work on Sacsahuamán.¹² This

legend also directs attention to the immensity of the task entailed in transporting such rocks from both local and distant quarries, especially because they could be unwilling transients.

On one level, then, Sacsahuamán's megalithic walls surely underscored the power of the Inca state. The complex was built by laborers from throughout the empire who worked periodically for the state as a form of tribute. Sacsahuamán manifested the extensive resources of a state that could mobilize the labor required to cut, dress, transport, and build a structure of these (apparently sometimes recalcitrant and always potentially animate) Herculean rocks. Garcilaso (1966 [1609]:465, 469), calling Sacsahuamán the Inca "trophy of trophies," concludes that its primary purpose was to impress:

The immensity and majesty of this monument seems to show that the Incas intended to demonstrate the greatness of their power. *It was indeed made to impress rather than for another reason.* They also wished to exhibit the skill of their masons and builders, not only in dressing the smooth masonry (which the Spaniards are never tired of praising) but also in rough stonework, which they executed with no less mastery. They sought also to exhibit their knowledge of military science in the plan of the fortress, including everything necessary for its defence against the enemy (emphasis mine).

While we may doubt Garcilaso's assertion, we should note that the putative objective -- to impress and amaze -- continued to be accomplished even after much of the structure was dismantled, for the "ruins" of Sacsahuamán consist primarily of its megalithic terrace walls.

There is no doubt that the Spaniards were truly impressed by the Inca masonry of Sacsahuamán. One after another, their descriptions echo the words of Sancho (1968 [1534]:329) who wrote,

¹¹ Cobo (1990 [1653]:229-230) describes the method of dragging large stones to construction sites and then the use of earthen ramps to place them, saying, "I saw this method used for the Cathedral of Cusco which is under construction. Since the laborers who work on this job are Indians, the Spanish masons and architects let them use their own methods of doing the work, and in order to raise up the stones, they made the ramps mentioned above, piling earth next to the wall until the ramp was as high as the wall." See Lee (1986) and Protzen (1985, 1986) for a more detailed analysis of Inca building methods.

¹² Van de Guchte (1984:548) identifies the Weary Stone as that which is located at the place referred to as

la Chingana Grande today. It is found to the north and east of Sacsahuamán. Angles Vargas (1990:100-103, 179) disagrees, however, noting that the stone is *in situ* and has never been moved.

The most beautiful thing that can be seen in the edifices of this land are these walls because they are of rocks so large that no one that sees them can say that they were placed here by human hands; they are so large, like pieces of mountains and cliffs. They are thirty palms high and as many wide and others 25 and others 15, but none is so small that they could be carried in three carts. These are not rocks of an even size but well fitted and joined one against another.¹³

Like Sancho, later writers consistently comment on the enormous size of the stones, the amount of labor required, and the quality of masonry which needed no mortar. Two examples of similar prose—one from midcentury and one from the last decade of the sixteenth century—will suffice to make the point. Twenty years after Sancho, Cieza de León (1959 [1553]:154-5) wrote:

There are stones of such size and magnificence in these walls that it baffles the mind to think how they could be brought up and set in place, and who could have cut them, for they had so few tools. Some of these stones are about twelve feet wide and over twenty long; others are as thick as an ox, and all so exactly set that a coin could not be inserted between them.

Forty years after Cieza, the Jesuit Joseph de Acosta (1962 [1590]:297) expressed similar wonderment:

[T]he labor is extraordinary and amazing and they did not use mortar nor did they have iron nor steel to cut and dress the stones, nor machines nor instruments to transport them, and notwithstanding all this [the rocks] are smoothly worked so that in many parts one can scarcely see the joining of one [rock] with another. Many of the rocks are so large, as I have said, that it would be unbelievable if one had not seen it . . .

¹³ "La más linda cosa que puede verse de edificios en aquella tierra, son estas cercas, porque son de piedras tan grandes, que nadie, que las vea no dirá que hayan sido puestas allí por manos de hombres humanos, que son tan grandes como trozos de montañas y peñascos, que las hay de una altura de treinta palmos, y otros tantos de largo, y otras de veinticinco, y otras de quince, pero no hay ninguna de ellas tan pequeña que la puedan llevar tres carretas; éstas no son piedras lisas, pero harto bien encajadas y trabadas unas con otras."

That which is most admirable [about Sacsahuamán] is that these [rocks] are not cut regularly but are very irregular in size and in shape. They fit one against another with incredible joins and no mortar. All this was done with many people and great suffering in the labor because to fit one rock against another, as these are placed, probably necessitated repeated [fittings], most of them being neither equal [in size] nor complete [in shape].¹⁴

While Garcilaso (1966 [1609]:471) called Sacsahuamán an "inadequately portrayed and insufficiently praised fortress," it consistently generated Spanish stupefaction. All manner of men, including a magistrate of Cusco and a viceroy of Peru, recorded words of amazement at the size of the stones and at the labor such a structure obviously required.¹⁵ Their com-

¹⁴ "La labor es extraña y para espantar; y no usaban de mezcla ni tenían hierro ni acero para cortar y labrar las piedras, ni máquinas ni instrumentos para traellas, y con todo eso están tan pulidamente labradas, que en muchas partes apenas se ve la juntura de unas con otras; y son tan grandes muchas piedras de estas, como está dicho, que sería cosa increíble si no se viese . . ." and "Y lo que más admira es que no siendo cortadas estas que digo de la muralla, por regla, sino entre sí muy desiguales en el tamaño y en la facción, encajan unas con otras con increíble juntura sin mezcla. Todo esto se hacía a poder de mucha gente y con gran sufrimiento en el labrar, porque para encajar una piedra con otra, según están ajustadas, era forzoso proballa muchas veces, no estando las más de ellas iguales ni llenas."

¹⁵ Polo de Ondegardo (1916 [1571]:106), who was first named *corregidor* of Cusco in 1558, estimated that some of the larger stones would have required twenty masons an entire year to dress a single one. He says, "cierto cosa maravillosa de ver en la fortaleza del Cuzco, que ay piedras tan grandes y ajuntadas, que yo e estado presente delante de canteros y se espantan como se podían suvir sin artificio, avn que el edificio no es muy alto, a labrallas e ponellas de suerte que bynyesen vien; entieéndose cierto aue ay piedras de aquellas que vna sola sería menester trauajo de veynte personas un año entero para desvastarla, y vistas las obra (*sic*) que allí ay debaxo de la tierra y encima al derredor del Cuzco . . ." (*ibid.*). Viceroy Toledo (1904 [1571]:174) also found it difficult to believe that Sacsahuamán was made by the "strength and industry of men." ("parece imposible haberlo hecho fuerza ni industria de hombres . . .") as did Pedro Pizarro ("Auía piedras . . . tan grandes y tan gruesas, que parecía cosa ymposible habellas puesto manos . . .") (1986:104). For similar views dating to the seventeenth century see Murúa (1986 [1600-11]:500); Mogrovejo de la Cerda (1983 [1690{1649}]:43); and Cobo (1990 [1653]:229).

mentary underscores European technological superiority, however, as the authors wonder at what was achieved *despite* the Inca's lack of (iron) tools. Thus, their effusive praise is implicitly mitigated, and it should be noted that few Spaniards made any serious attempts at documenting Inca architectural methods or priorities (*i.e.* why they built the structure in the way, shape, and location they did). Clearly, most Europeans were content to marvel at the Andean "mystery" and leave virtually uninvestigated the Inca's achievement.¹⁶

Yet, the ruins of Sacsahuamán rested uneasily as an inexplicable relic of a bygone era; perhaps this is because so many had witnessed the process of ruination. Some Spaniards expressed distress, or at least ambivalence, at the destruction of the site. Cieza (1959 [1553]: 155-6), for example, argued that Sacsahuamán "should be preserved in memory of the greatness of this land." Then, perhaps knowing that that reason was insufficient to impress most of his countrymen, he adopted a practical tact adding that Spaniards could use it as a fort at very little cost to themselves (seeing that it was already built). Likewise, Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa (1943 [1572]: 137) said the ruins inspired "great pity" ("Hace gran lástima a los que agora [*sic*] ven las ruinas della.") In the late eighteenth century, it was noted that the wondrous ruins would be more famous if Spanish "ambition" (*ambición*) had not led to the extraction of so many stones for use in new Cusqueño edifices (Castro 1978 [1788]:39-40). While "ambition" is an ambiguous term (yet one used frequently in chronicles which address conquest activities), Garcilaso (1966 [1609]:471) is more straightforward when he writes

The Spaniards . . . were as if envious of the remarkable achievements of the Incas, and not only failed to preserve the fortress, but even demolished it.

¹⁶ The reluctance to recognize Inca achievement has continued into the present century; both Fawcett (1953) and von Däniken (1970) have authored fanciful theories to account for the megaliths of Sacsahuamán. For a plausible method of masonry construction, see Lee (1986).

Thus Garcilaso suggests that, while the stones of Sacsahuamán were certainly convenient for the Spaniards of colonial Cusco, the majestic complex was more than a local quarry. It was the target of envy-engendered spite.

While Garcilaso's accusation is not easily supported, it is significant that the Spaniards of Cusco did more than partially dismantle "the fortress". They adopted Sacsahuamán as their symbol of the conquest of Cusco and the Inca. In 1540, King Charles V awarded the city a blazon featuring a castle of gold on a red background surrounded by eight condors (Figure 5). In Spanish heraldry, the castle not only represented the kingdom of Castille, but was a generic reference to a fortified city, and was, therefore, a symbol of warfare. The grant itself, however, suggests that the castle on Cusco's coat of arms referred specifically to the Inca architectural complex of Sacsahuamán and to a specific moment in the history of the conquest. The grant reads,

In Madrid on July 19, 1540, a grant of arms is awarded to the city of Cuzco in which the arms that are given consist of a shield inside of which is a golden castle on a field of red to remember that this city and its castle were conquered by the might of arms in our service. It shall have a golden border of eight condors that are great birds, resembling vultures, that they have in the province of Peru, as a reminder that at the time this city was won, these birds descended to eat the dead that died there . . .¹⁷

Referred to in this grant is the battle for Sacsahuamán which was fought in 1536 between Spaniards and rebellious Incas under the command of Manco Inca (sometimes called Manco II), the son of the last undisputed ruler

¹⁷ The grant reads, "En Madrid XIX dias del mes de julio de MDXL años se despacho un previlegio de armas para la ciudad del cuzco en que se le dieron por armas un escudo que dentro del esté un castillo de oro en campo colorado en memoria que la dha ciudad y el castillo della fueron conquistados por fuerza de armas en nro. servicio e por orla ocho condures que son unas aves grandes a manera de buytres que ay en la provincia del peru en memoria que al tiempo que la dha ciudad se gano abaxaron las dichas aves a comer los muertos que en ella murieron los quales esten en campo de oro." (Montoto de Sedas 1928:75).

of the Inca empire, Huayna Capac.¹⁸ The re-taking of Sacsahuamán by the Spaniards and their Andean allies was held to be a crucial success during this rebellion in which much of the city was destroyed.

The rebels who held Sacsahuamán were well-protected behind its walls. Eyewitness Pedro Pizarro (1986 [1571]:127-134) described in his memoirs how the rebels were able to inflict great injury on the besieged from Sacsahuamán due to its position above the city: using slings they threw heated stones onto the highly combustible straw roofs of Cusco and rocks onto those in the plaza below. Because the imperiled Spaniards recognized Sacsahuamán as a strategic vantage point, they exerted considerable effort recapturing it. In the process, the Spaniards and their native allies suffered great losses. Among the casualties was Juan Pizarro, the brother of Francisco, who had led the assault on Sacsahuamán. While Juan was killed and the casualties were heavy for both sides, the rebels were eventually overcome. Although the siege continued for many months, this victory was held to be the turning of the tide. Possession of Sacsahuamán thus became a metaphor for the possession of Cusco; and the ruination of Sacsahuamán referred metonymically to the conquest of Peru.

From the grant of 1540 we know that the generic tower on Cusco's coat of arms refers specifically to Sacsahuamán and the battle of 1536. While Sacsahuamán was literally dismantled during the next century, figuratively the "fortress" faced reconstruction. On Cusco's blazon the Inca's "fortress" has been Europeanized. The pictorial Sacsahuamán constructed by the Spaniards is a stereotypic medieval European fortress similar to the castle representing Castille on the royal Spanish blazon and those adorning hundreds of other coats of arms. Thus Cusco is pictorially characterized as just another fortified city in the expanding Spanish domain. But Cusco was not a medieval European town and its "for-

treass" was not constructed by Europeans. The blazon's stereotypic tower, which denies the Andean-ness of Cusco, figuratively converts the city from Incaic to Spanish and so participates in ongoing hispanicizing efforts. The tower on Cusco's coat of arms is the articulation of the Spanish desire to convert Cusco into a Spanish city. The juxtaposition of the empirical reality of Sacsahuamán (an Inca structure in the first phases of ruination) and the imagery on Cusco's coat of arms (a whole and perfect Europeanized tower) advanced the colonizer's cultural agenda.

To the Spaniards Sacsahuamán represented more than just military conquest and control, however, for the so-called fortress itself was more than just an Inca stronghold. Considering its associations with both the Inca's military might and its solar cult, Sacsahuamán symbolized, as no other structure in Cusco could do, both military and religious triumph. Not long after the battle of 1536 was won, the legend spread that Santiago (St. James the Greater), the patron saint of Spain, had ridden to the aid of the Christians astride his great white charger. The Mercedarian Murúa provides one version of the legend. He records what he heard "Spaniards and Indians tell as a thing known for certain and true" that during the battle "there appeared someone on a white horse, fighting on the side of the Spaniards and killing many Indians so that they all fled from him" (Murúa 1986 [1600-11]:235). The Spaniards later realized that this had been Santiago. This same chronicler also relates how the Virgin Mary came to the aid of the besieged Spaniards by flinging sand into the eyes of the rebel Andeans. He writes,

Also the Indians say that when they were below fighting and had cornered the Spaniards, a woman blinded them with grains of sand and they could not stand before her but fled from her and it is presumed to have been Our Lady, Intercessor and Mother of Sinners . . .¹⁹

¹⁸ Manco Inca had been named ruler with the blessings of the Spaniards in 1533.

¹⁹ Murúa (1986 [1600-11]:235-6) writes, ". . . quiero referir lo que he oído contar a españoles e indios por cosa constante y verdadera, y es que dicen que andanzo en el mayor conflicto de la pelea apareció uno de un caballo blanco, peleando en favor de los españoles y haciendo en los indios gran matanza, y que todos huían dél. Muchos españoles tuvieron por cierto que era

Pierre Duviols (1962) has analyzed the variations in the numerous accounts of these two miraculous apparitions as has Henrique Urbano (1992). Duviols demonstrates that these legends were codified in the late sixteenth century based on rather oblique references in writings of Cieza and Acosta.²⁰ The legends are particularly confused on the location and date of Mary's miraculous appearance.²¹ By the late sixteenth century, it was generally believed that while Santiago appeared at Sacsahuamán, Mary descended at the *suntur wasi*, a circular tower that was a focus of Inca ritual and where the Spaniards had taken refuge. According to legend, the Spaniards decided to build Cusco's cathedral on this site in memory of Mary's descent and she was elected as its patron. When a new and larger cathedral was built along side the original (finished in the seventeenth century), the earlier edifice was converted into a chapel. This chapel was called El Triunfo ("the Triumph") in memory of the victory won with Mary's aid.²²

Mansio Sierra [Mancio Sierra de Legízamo], conquistador principal del Cuzco, y que después, averiguando el caso, hallaron que Mansio Sierra no había peleado allí sino en otra parte y no había otro que tuviese caballo blanco, sino él, y así se entiende haber sido el Apóstol Santiago, singular patrón y defensor de España el aue allí apareció, por lo cual la ciudad del Cuzco le tiene por abogado. También se refiere por los indios que, estando abajo peleando y teniendo apretados en gran manera a los españoles, una mujer les cegaba con puñados de arena y no podían parar delante della, sino todos le huían, la cual se presume haber sido Nuestra Señora Abogada y Madre de los pecadores, que querría en aquel trance favorecer a los españoles, y así la Santa Iglesia del Cuzco la tiene por patrona y titular suya."

²⁰ Urbano (1992:241) notes that while some chroniclers not only recounted, but amplified the apparition legend, others (whom he does not name) tried to explain away the miracle by suggesting that *images* of the Virgin Mary and Santiago, which adorned banners that were raised by Hernando Pizarro at Sacsahuamán after their victory, were misinterpreted as the real thing.

²¹ Writing in the mid-eighteenth century, Cusco historian Esquivel y Navia (1980 [ca. 1749]:99), however, is very specific when he reports that "la Reina de los Cielos" appeared at night on May 21, 1536, the seventeenth day of the eight month siege.

²² Despite the popular legend, it is doubtful that El Triunfo is actually located on the spot formerly occu-

It may be significant that both Mary and Santiago were *said* to have appeared at the site of well known circular Inca towers (Muyuc Marca, at Sacsahuamán, and the *suntur wasi* in the Haucaypata). Both towers, being tall and circular, were identified in the Spanish mind with castle fortresses and, therefore, with armed resistance and military triumph. Both these Inca towers were destroyed in the decades following the broken siege and failed uprising. Significantly, however, while both monuments were ruined, only Sacsahuamán *became* a ruin. The cathedral and Sacsahuamán thus generate a dialogue between the Spanish and Christian center and the Andean and "pagan" periphery. As the cathedral was erected, Sacsahuamán was dismantled; stones from the latter were used to edify the former. The conversion of stones from Incaic to European architecture not only paralleled the religious conversion effort, but seemed to illustrate and actuate it.

As a ruin, Sacsahuamán hosted memories of a victorious battle against paganism. Many Spaniards described Sacsahuamán as the product of satanic handicraft. Such a characterization not only denied Andean ingenuity and skilled masonry, but positioned the structure itself as an "enemy." Viceroy Francisco de Toledo (1904 [1571]:174), for example, writing to the king from Cusco on March 25, 1571, describes Sacsahuamán as "a thing in which the power of the devil and his subjects is well demonstrated . . ." ("es cosa en que se muestra bien el poderío del diablo.") Diego de Córdova y Salinas (1957 [1651]:45-6), chronicler of the Franciscan Order in Peru, similarly suggests that Sacsahuamán represents devil's

pied by the *suntur wasi*. Garcilaso (1966 [1609]: 701) describes the *suntur wasi* and locates it as having been in the Haucaypata in front of the Amarukancha; further, he remarks that La Compañía in Cusco stands on the site. While Rowe (1990:92) is skeptical of Garcilaso's accuracy, Victor Angles Vargas (1978-83, v. 1:48-49, 96-97) suggests that there were two *suntur wasis*, one where Garcilaso places it and one where El Triunfo is now. What concerns me here is not whether the legend is accurate in this regard, but rather what was believed to be true in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Cusco, who advanced particular histories, and what purposes those histories might have served.

work. He wrote, "it makes one imagine that the devil helped in [building] that ediface" ("le hace imaginar que el demonio ayudó a aquel edificio"). Later, in the seventeenth century, one of the officials of Cusco's ecclesiastic council summed up the view of the ruins as a monument to the destroyed pagan past when he wrote, "[The fortress] was once dedicated as a house of the sun and in this time only serves as a witness of its ruin" ("Fue dedicada al principio para casa del Sol y en este tiempo, sólo sirve de testigo de su ruina.") (Vasco de Contreras y Valverde 1982 [1649]:4). As Sacsahuamán was a product of devilish powers, its ruins were a testament to the Christian god's ultimate triumph.

Sacsahuamán -- as a ruin -- thus came to symbolize Christian triumph in the Andes. Sacsahuamán was escorted by European historians into the great global ring where the Christian god meets and defeats all opponents. According to Córdova y Salinas (1957 [1651]: 141)

Satan was in this city [of Cuzco] as in Rome or Jerusalem until to his sorrow he was cast out and exorcised by the evangelizing ministers who destroyed his altars, demolished his temples and burned his *huacas* [shrines].²³

Numerous chroniclers compared the Inca with ancient Rome. Just as Roman ruins occupy the peripheries of Spanish cities recalling a grand (but defunct), non-Christian empire so, too, does Sacsahuamán. In this way, the Andean landscape with its unique monuments was inscribed in the familiar pattern of European history, and the Inca were added to the standard stock of non-Christian or pre-Christian players. In addition to Romans, the Inca were compared (favorably) by various Spaniards to other non-Christians, including the Jews, Moors, Greeks, Chaldeans, Babylo-

nians, Egyptians, and even the Chinese.²⁴ Using the tried and true recipe through which Spaniards understood their relation to non-Europeans, the procedure seemed simple: add Inca and stir. In the resulting confection, Andean ethnicities were implicitly and aggressively denied. Significantly, Spaniards equated the victory of Christianity with Spanish victory. Catholicism and nationality were inextricably linked in their understanding of conquest history.

Indigenous Cusqueños not only witnessed Sacsahuamán being reduced to ruin in order to raise the Christian temple, they were the laborers who, under Spanish supervision, dislodged the stones of Sacsahuamán and built the cathedral. If Sacsahuamán was built by the Incas (at least in part) in order to impress other Andeans, what impression must its reduction have made? What memories were invested in Sacsahuamán by native Andeans and what histories did they generate? While Spaniards left relatively full accounts of their notions about Sacsahuamán, Andean views are less recoverable. From the scant records that remain, it becomes clear that, in the complex, multiethnic society of colonial Cusco, Sacsahuamán became the focal point of rival histories.

Like the Spaniards, Andeans invested the "ruins" of Sacsahuamán with memories of 1536. But their ways of remembering affirmed native identities and countered Spanish claims to cultural superiority. The native chronicler, Felipe Guaman Poma, who compiled and illustrated his chronicle during the first decades of the seventeenth century, emphasizes the actions of supernatural beings in the decisive battle for Sacsahuamán. Signifi-

²³ "Estaba Satanás en esta ciudad como en su Roma o Jersalén, hasta que a su pesar fue echado y lanzado por los ministros evangélicos, y por ellos destruidas sus aras, derribados sus templos y quemadas sus huacas." Córdova y Salinas goes on to say, "Y en su lugar colocaron la santa cruz y el reino de Cristo nuestro Dios y Señor ocupó lo que el tirano tenía usurpado."

²⁴ Ignacio de Castro (1978 [1788]:23), priest and resident of Cusco (rector of the Colegio Real de San Bernardo and curate of San Jerónimo), for example, compares the roads built by the Inca favorably with the Great Wall of China and roads of Rome ("no son obra inferior a la gran muralla de la China; y aun hay Estrangeros, que dicen ser empresa superior a las mas celebradas de los Romanos.") He goes on to discuss Sacsahuamán which he says merits the greatest celebrity of all Inca constructions ("Quisa merece mayor celebridad la Fortaleza del Cuzco.").

cantly, Guaman Poma was not Inca and his chronicle contains considerable anti-Inca sentiment. For him, and very likely for other non-Inca Andeans, Sacsahuamán-as-ruin symbolized the demise of the oppressive Inca empire as well as their state religion.

Guaman Poma was also critical of the Spanish occupation of Peru. It is thus not surprising that he minimizes both Spanish and Inca efforts during the battle and emphasizes the activity of Christian supernatural beings in that conflict. This focus on supernatural forces manifested in the battle deflects the question of cultural superiority and separates Christianity from any specific ethnic or national group. This distinction is essential; while Spaniards linked Spanish and Christian triumph (and, in fact, recognized no distinction), Andean groups emphasized the separateness of God and Spaniards. Such a separation was critical to Andean memories of the conquest period. Recall, for example, that when relating the legend of Mary's miraculous activities during the siege of Cusco, the Spanish chronicler Murúa specified that the source of his account of her appearance was natives, not Spaniards. Clearly, natives had as much if not more at stake in these legends than did Europeans. Indigenous Andeans may even have authored the account of Mary's descent.

Guaman Poma (1988 [1615]:402 [404], 404 [406]) illustrated both Mary and Santiago coming to the aid of the besieged (Figures 6 and 7). The Spaniards are nowhere in evidence: we see only the deity and the defeated rebels. Guaman Poma (*ibid.*:403 [405]) gives Mary credit for breaking the siege by throwing dust in the eyes of the "infidel Indians" ("yndios ynfieles"). He writes

God and his blessed mother made the miracle to show mercy to the Spanish Christians, but it is better to say that the mother of God wanted more to show mercy to the Indians so that they be Christians and the souls of the Indians saved...²⁵

²⁵ "Cómo hizo Dios milagro para hazelle merced y su madre bendita a los españoles cristianos, por mejor dezir que más quizo hazer merced la Madre de Dios a los yndios porque fuesen cristianos y saluasen las ánimas de los yndios..."

Of Santiago, Guaman Poma (*ibid.*:405 [407]) says,

Like a lightning bolt [Santiago] hurled down from heaven to the fortress of the Inca called Sacsahuamán... And as he fell to the ground the Indians were frightened... And so the lord Santiago descended to defend the Christians... [He] came with great destruction and many Indians died and he broke the siege of the Christians by the Indians that Manco Inca had ordered and the saint was accompanied by such a racket [of thunder] that came from him that the Indians were scared away.²⁶

Guaman Poma goes on to say that the natives were eye witnesses to the miracle of Santiago and, as a result, they became his devoted followers. Thus, in Guaman Poma's eyes, the most significant result of these miraculous appearances was the religious conversion of Andeans by Christian supernatural powers.

According to Guaman Poma (1988 [1615]:406 [408]), the victory at Sacsahuamán was the end of Inca sovereignty. He relates how the miraculous appearance at Sacsahuamán caused Manco Inca to flee:

And he left the kingdom and the crown, the *mascapaycha* [royal fringe] and *chanbi* [war club], to the lord emperor and king, our lord don Carlos of glorious memory who is in heaven and to his son don Felipe the second who is in heaven and to his son don Felipe the third the king our lord.²⁷

²⁶ "Como rrayo cayó del cielo a la fortaleza del Ynga llamado Sacsá Guaman... Y como cayó en tierra se espantaron los yndios... Y ancí auajó el señor Sancti-ago a defender a los cristianos... Venía con gran destruyción y muerto muy muchos yndios y desbarató todo el serco de los yndios a los cristianos aue auía ordenado Mango Inga y que lleuaua el santo mucho ruydo y de ello se espantaron los yndios."

²⁷ "Y dexó el rreyno y corona, masca paycha [borla real] y chanbi [porra de pelear] al señor enperador y rrey, nuestro señor don Carlos de la gloriosa memoria guestá en el cielo y a su hijo don Phelipe el segundo guestá en el cielo y a su hijo don Phelipe el tersero rrey nuestro señor."

Thus political control of the Andean area is characterized as the result of divine intervention. Furthermore, mundane power shifted from Inca emperor to Spanish ruler. No mention is made of the local Spanish authorities whose presence in the Andes Guaman Poma opposed. If Guaman Poma speaks for other non-Inca Andeans, we may speculate that the ruins of Sacsahuamán were both a symbol of the Inca's defeat in 1536 and a memorial to the power of the Christian god.

If the non-Incas of colonial Cusco held Sacsahuamán as an emblem of the conquest of the Incas, how did the Incas themselves understand the ruins? Speaking for the Incas who descended from the rebels is Titu Cusi Yupanqui (1973 [1570]:82-87), the son of Manco Inca (the leader of the rebellious Incas who organized the siege).²⁸ Titu Cusi was the ruler of the exiled Incas (the followers of Manco) in Vilcabamba. In his account of the battle for Sacsahuamán, he underscores the valient defense of the "fortress" by rebel troops (a fact confirmed by Spanish eyewitnesses including Pedro Pizarro) and states,

This battle was bloody for both sides because of the many Indians that sided with the Spaniards. Among them were two of my father's brothers, one called Inguill and the other Vaipai and their many followers . . .²⁹

The battle, as he characterizes it, was lost due to the lack of Andean, and especially Inca, solidarity. More than any other factor, however, Titu Cusi Yupanqui (1973 [1570]:86) credits the successful storming of Sacsahuamán by the Spaniards and their native allies to the appearance of Santiago who "was the first to enter the fortress and did much

damage" ("ffué el primero que entró en la ffortaleza al tiempo que se tomó les hacía mucho daño . . ."). Thus the battle of Sacsahuamán is characterized as primarily Inca against Inca and as rebel troops against divine forces. In this light, the important outcome of 1536 was religious conversion. The dire political consequences of the loss are minimized.

The ethnic Inca who descended from the allies of the Spaniards also viewed Sacsahuamán as the locus of divine activity and as the place where the Incas and the Christian god formed an important and lasting alliance. The Quipucamayocs (Collapiña, Supno, y otros Quipucamayos 1974 [1542-75]:64), Inca "historians" who relied on mnemonic devices to keep oral histories, reported, within a decade of the event itself, the version of the siege that would be held by those Incas who did not join Manco's rebellion.³⁰ The Quipucamayocs were partisan to the Inca allies of the Spaniards; in fact, the second part of their chronicle is an exultation of Paullu Inca, the Inca leader of royal blood who remained loyal to the Spaniards during the rebellion. They emphasize the aid rendered to Spaniards by natives of Inca and other ethnicities. Deserving special mention in their account were four rebel Incas who changed sides at a crucial moment. The Quipucamayocs report

At this desperate time, God was served by the defection to the Christians of four Incas who were among the most important that Manco Inca had. They were Cayo Topa, don Felipe Cari Topa, Inca Paccac, and Uallpa Roca. With each one of them were great Indian squadrons. They gave great comfort to the Christians and later were seen with them and saw the need and hunger that existed. They ordered that a great quantity of food be smuggled into the city for the succor and sustenance of the Christians and Indians that were helping and aiding them.³¹

²⁸ When the siege failed, Manco retreated to Vilcabamba where he and his sons ruled an independent Inca state until 1572 when the Spaniards captured and later executed his successor, Tupac Amaru.

²⁹ Titu Cusi Yupanqui (1973 [1570]:84) writes, "Fué esta batalla de vna parte y de otra, ensangrentada, por la mucha gente de indios que ffavorezían a los españoles, entre los quales estaban dos hermanos de mi padre, llamados el vno Inguill y el otro Vaipai con mucha gente de su bando . . ."

³⁰ The Quipucamayocs were assembled at the orders of Governor Vaca de Castro and their reports were recorded with the aid of interpreters.

³¹ "A este tiempo tan trabajoso, fué Dios servido se pasaron a los cristianos cuatro ingas de los más principales que tuvo Mango Inga, los cuales fueron Cayo Topa y don Felipe Cari Topa e Inga Paccac y Uallpa Roca, cada uno de ellos con grandes cuadrillas de indios, los cuales dieron gran conseulo a los cristianos,

The Inca descendants of Spanish allies thus (logically) emphasized, in their recollections, the aid rendered the Spaniards by their ancestors. This version of the battle bolstered their positions in colonial society, for the Spaniards rewarded those who had befriended them. Their consistent use of the word "Christians" rather than "Spaniards" likewise highlights the new alliance between Incas and the Christian god. For these Incas, then, the ruins of Sacsahuamán were a monument to their own triumphant emergence from the confusions of the conquest to prominent positions in colonial Cusqueño society.

Ethnic Incas of royal descent adopted the castle from Cusco's coat of arms as one of their heraldic emblems (Dean 1990:244-5). Along with Incaic symbols, a miniature castle was frequently worn in the headdresses of Inca nobility in the middle of the colonial period (Figure 8). It also appears on the blazons belonging to postconquest native nobility, native textiles, and ceremonial wooden drinking vessels called *keros* (Rowe 1951:263). For public appearances on festive occasions, postconquest Incas would dress in the manner of their prehispanic royal ancestors and don these spectacular headdresses. Interestingly, the castle is the only major icon not of Incaic origin included in this postconquest headgear. It sits in the center of the headdress, encircled, perhaps even besieged, by emblems of Inca origin. In a way, these postconquest Inca leaders have reclaimed Sacsahuamán. By adopting the stereotypic, anonymous European castle icon and planting it in a garden of Inca emblems, its Inca origins and identification are affirmed. And, by re-possessing the "fortress," these noble Incas assert their own interpretive control over the events of 1536. In their version it is the Inca alliance with Spanish Christians and Christian supernatural beings that emerges as the salient phenomenon.

que después que se vieron conellos é vista la necesidad y hambre que pasaban, dieron orden de meter en la ciudad gran cantidad de comida para el socorro y mantenimiento de los cristianos e indios que estaban en ayuda e socorro déellos . . ." (Collapiña, *Supno y otros Quipucamayos* 1974 [1542-75]:65).

For the numerous, different social elements sharing colonial Cusco, the monumental ruins of Sacsahuamán engendered specific histories. For each of the groups -- Spaniards, non-Inca Andeans, and the Incas -- the ruins did not hearken back to the period of use, however. Rather, the moment recalled is the one in which Sacsahuamán ceased to function as intended -- that is, as a temple, depository, and stronghold. For each group examined, the critical moment was the battle of 1536, the moment when possession of Sacsahuamán and the futures of these groups were held in the balance. In 1536 Sacsahuamán had been a contested space; its ruins remained the space for contentious histories. In their ways of thinking about and representing Sacsahuamán, each of these groups asserted control over that moment in history. Clearly, the distinct ethnicities comprising colonial Cusqueño society had an investment, each in a different way, in what remained of Sacsahuamán.

As a postscript, Sacsahuamán, part of the Sacsayhuamán National Archaeological Park, is a major tourist attraction in Cusco today. Visible from its magnificent terraced walls, where visitors, dwarfed by the megaliths, congregate to take photographs, is a monumental white sculpture of Christ (Figure 9). This image now joins Sacsahuamán in watching over Cusco; its presence intensifies the dialogue which formerly occurred between the cathedral and Sacsahuamán, the past and the present, the Christian and the non-Christian. Yet, memories of 1536 no longer resonate among the ruins. Rather, the site summons memories of the Incas at the height of their power. The first modern excavations at Sacsahuamán, conducted by Luis Valcárcel in 1932, commemorated the 400th anniversary of Pizarro's advent. Ironically, these investigations engendered renewed interest in the prehispanic history of Cusco and fed the rising tide of *indigenismo*. Thus, Sacsahuamán, perhaps more than any other Inca monument in and around Cusco, now serves as a sign of the pre-conquest past.

While the single constant in colonial period understandings of Sacsahuamán had been its witness to the intervention of Christian su-

pernatural beings in the course of Andean history, today the ruin is primarily identified with its Incaic origins. Since mid-century Sacsahuamán has provided the setting for a revived and largely invented celebration of Inti Raymi, the Inca festival of the June solstice.³² The Inti Raymi performance is the culmination of Cusco's Jubilee week (Semana Jubilar del Cusco) in the month of June. As was intended, the festival has become a profitable event in terms of tourism, as well as an occasion for celebrating the city's and the nation's indigenous ancestry. Thus the ruin has become a stage for an annual commemoration of the city's prehispanic heritage, and residents of Cusco continue to rework, at least figuratively, what remains of Sacsahuamán.

Acknowledgments

This article is an expanded version of a paper presented at *The Culture of Ruins: An Interdisciplinary Conference* sponsored by The Center for Cultural Studies in collaboration with the Board of Studies in Anthropology, University of California, Santa Cruz (January 24-26, 1992). I am grateful to those attending the conference for their insights. Further research was aided by grants from the faculty senate committee on research and the Division of the Arts, UCSC. Many thanks also to Brian Bauer, Tom Zuidema, and the anonymous reviewer for the close attention they gave to this paper and their very helpful suggestions.

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³² See Fiedler (1985:338-354) for an excellent discussion of the new Inti Raymi (a theatrical performance loosely based on Garcilaso's descriptions). This modern Inti Raymi was the brainchild of Cuzqueño journalist Humberto Vidal Unda who organized the first festivities in 1944 as part of the period's new *indigenismo*.

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Figure 1. Aerial view of Cusco. Sacsahuamán is in the upper left. Photo courtesy of Servicio Aerofotográfico Nacional (SAN), Peru.

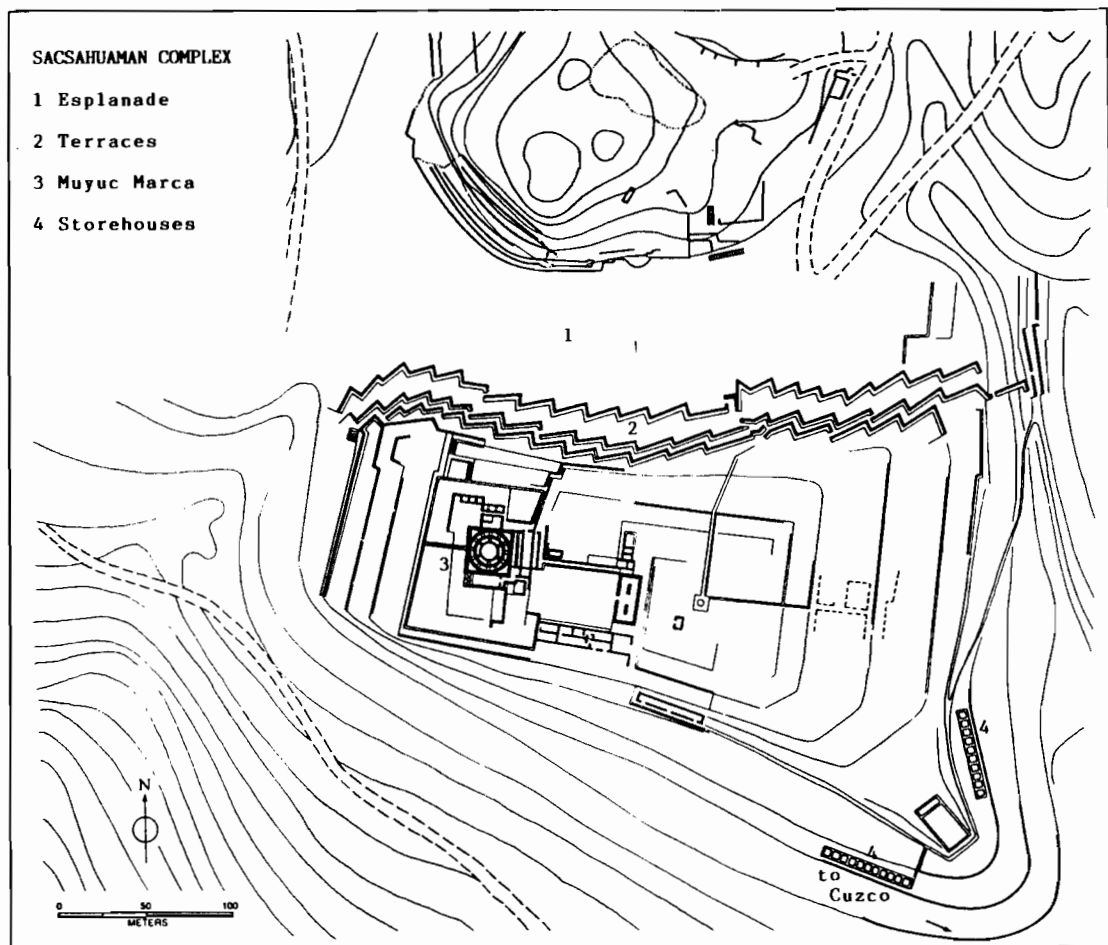


Figure 2: Plan of Sacsahuamán (after Gasparini and Margolies 1980).



Figure 3. Sacsahuamán, detail of megalithic terraces.

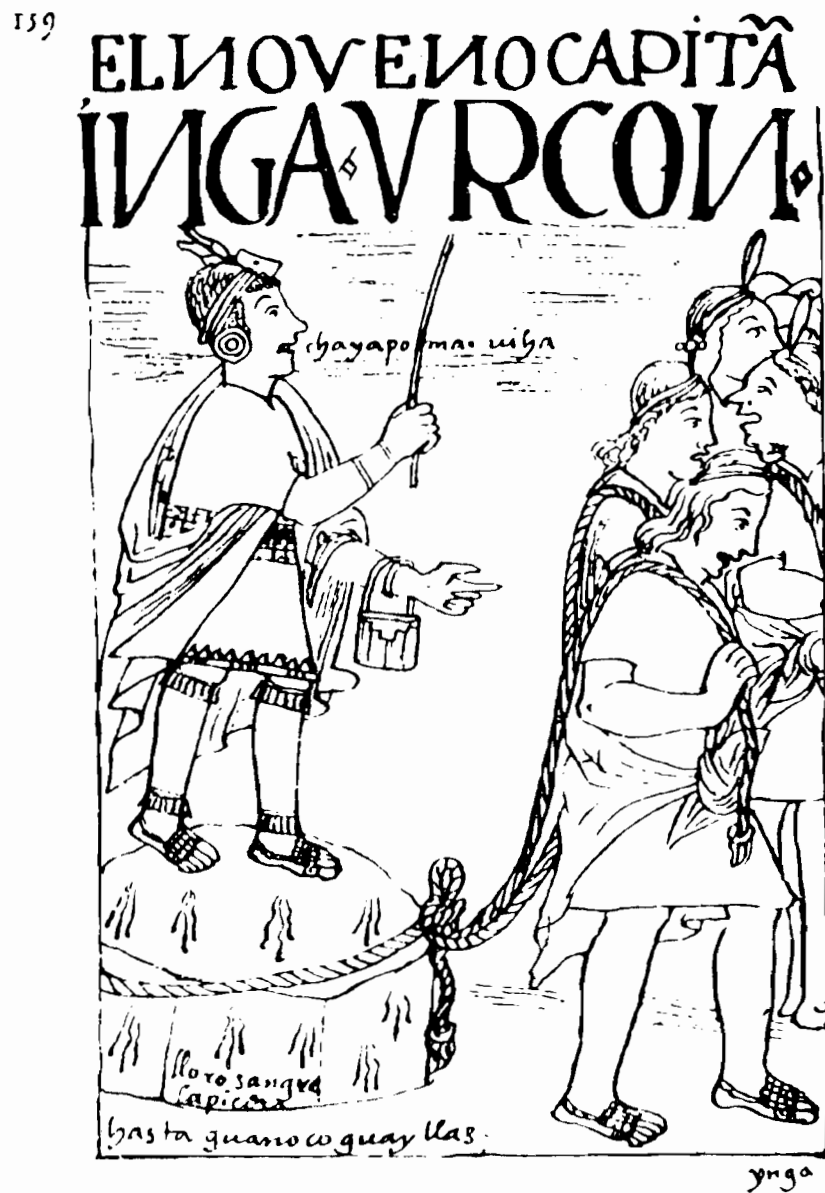


Figure 4. Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, 1988 [1615]:159 [161]. The weary stone.

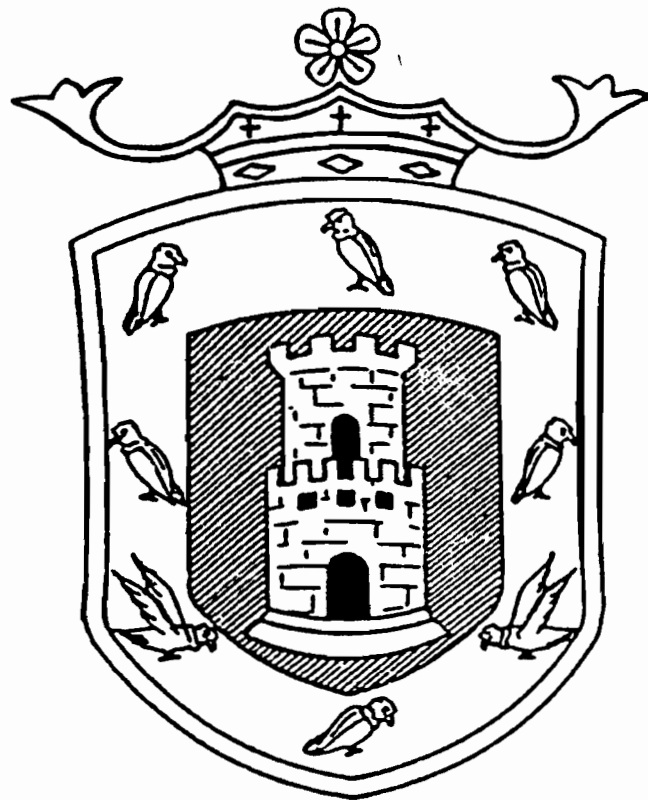


Figure 5. One version of the coat of arms of Cusco.

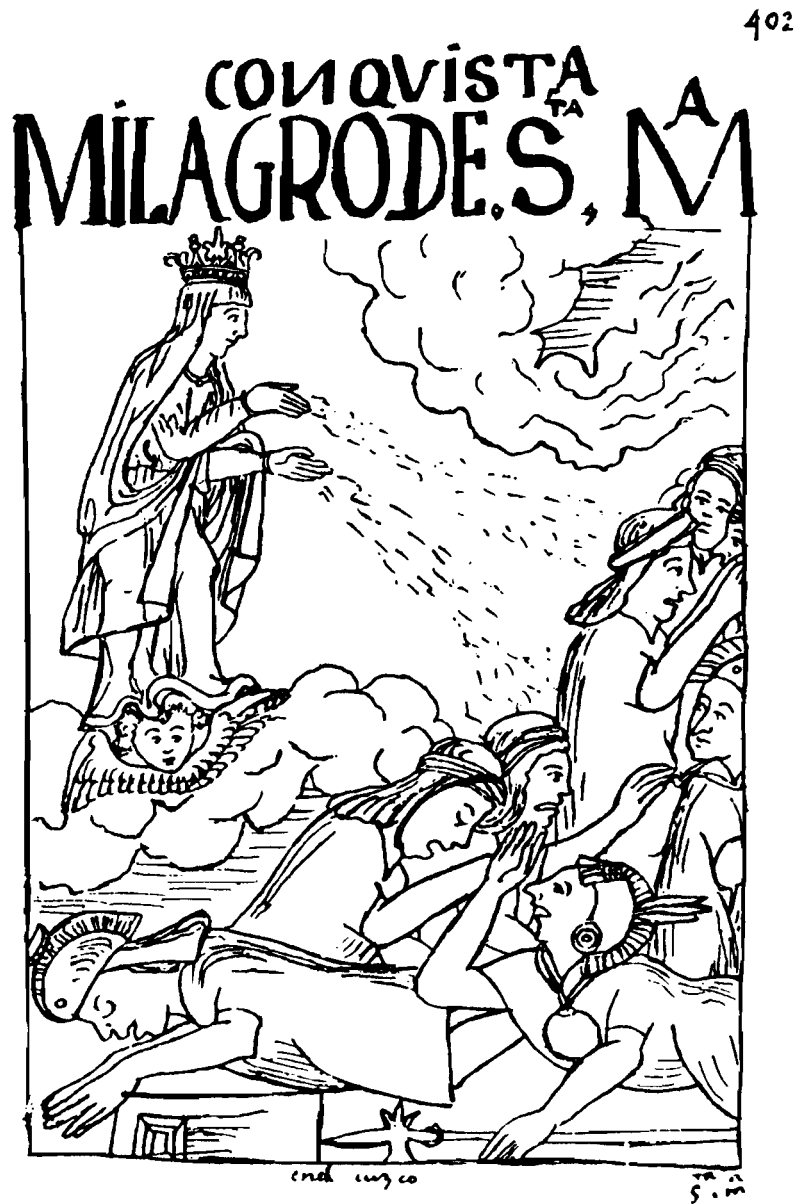


Figure 6. Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, 1988 [1615]:402 [404]. The miracle of St. Mary.



Figure 7. Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, 1988 [1615]:404 [406]. The miracle of Santiago.

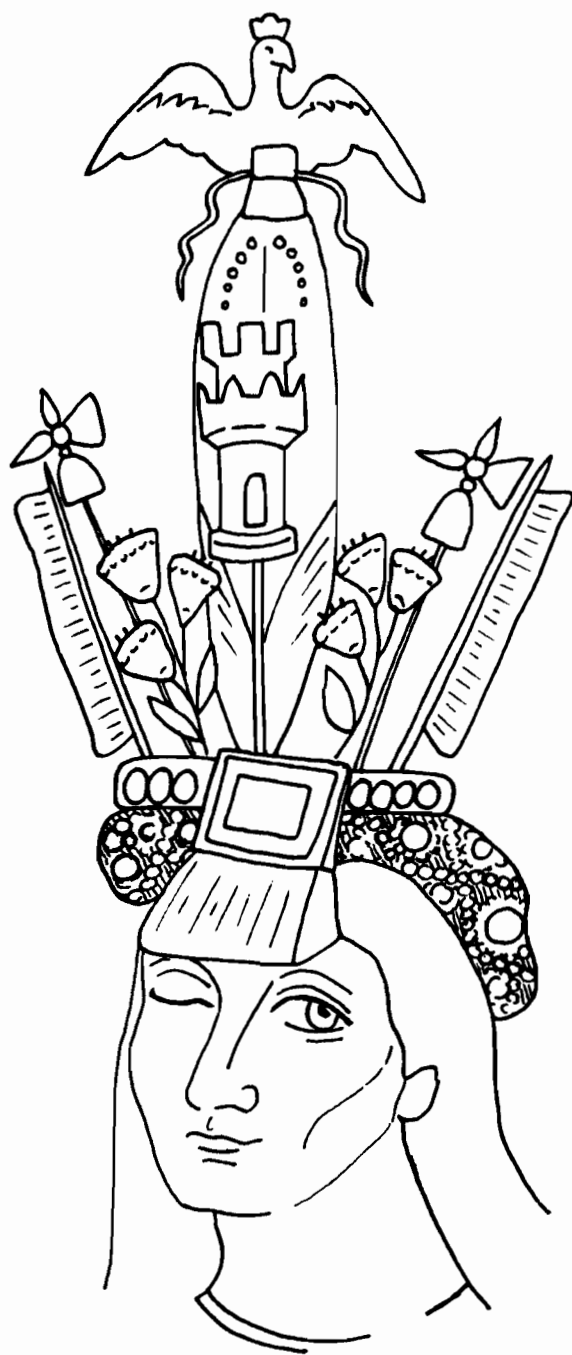


Figure 8. Drawing of the colonial period Inca headdress worn by Don Carlos Huayna Capac Inca in an anonymous painting of Cusco's Corpus Christi procession ("The Parish of San Cristóbal," ca. 1674-1680).



Figure 9. The statue of Christ seen from the ruins of Sacsahuamán.