

From the Pockets of Women: The Gendering of the Mita, Migration and Tribute in Colonial Chucuito, Peru



Bianca Premo

The Americas, Vol. 57, No. 1. (Jul., 2000), pp. 63-93.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1615%28200007%2957%3A1%3C63%3AFTPOWT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-F>

The Americas is currently published by Academy of American Franciscan History.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/aafh.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

FROM THE POCKETS OF WOMEN: THE GENDERING OF THE MITA, MIGRATION AND TRIBUTE IN COLONIAL CHUCUITO, PERU*

So many Indian men had moved, fled or died because of the labor draft to the silver mines of Potosí that only women were left to govern in some Andean communities. Or so the rumor went. In 1682, the cabildo of the imperial mining capital informed the king that such reports were greatly exaggerated. "This could not be true, even in the case where not one male Indian was left in the entire Kingdom," its statement reads. "Although the pueblos have been depopulated, there are still more than enough [men] to fill offices in conformity with cabildo ordinances."¹

The Potosí cabildo's report captures a particular juncture in colonial time when Spanish economic policy suffered from the very demographic crises it had produced. Officials in Potosí had reason to underplay male-specific depopulation in the provinces from which they drew their Indian workers. Silver production in the city had been in decline since the first quarter of the seventeenth century, spurring mine owners and local government officials to devise ways to augment the ever diminishing numbers of men serving the *repartimiento de la mita*, the annual labor draft to the mines. From the local perspective, the reports that the Potosí mita had left so few men in the provinces that women were serving as officials would betray the harshness of the labor system and its recruitment campaigns. These were rumors the cabildo hastened to dispel.

* Research for this study was made possible by funding from a Ford Foundation Fellowship for exchange with the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, a Tinker Pre-Dissertation Field Research Fellowship and a University of North Carolina Department of History Small Mowry Award. I am grateful for the comments and generous suggestions of Sarah Chambers, Luis Miguel Glave, the anonymous *Americas* readers and the participants in the March 1998 Virginia-Carolinas-Georgia Seminar on Colonial Latin American History.

¹ "Auto para que declaren si en algún pueblo sirven las indias oficios de Alcaldes," 1682, Archivo General de las Indias (AGI), legajo 270, no. 9-B.

Perhaps the cabildo was correct; the rumors may have been hyperbole masking criticisms of colonial economic policy itself. The report also might refer to the endurance of the centuries-old practice of female political leadership in the Andes, now set against the Spanish colonial background of labor, tribute and migration.² In any light, the report reveals that colonial economic practices, even those associated with an ostensibly male enterprise such as the Potosí mita, had unique consequences for Indian women.

That the gendered effects of mita policy extended beyond the city of Potosí is far from obvious. The bulk of scholarship to date on the mita focuses on official policy and male labor in the mines.³ Another substantial strain of historical inquiry, which emphasizes that the flight from provinces subject to the mita served Andeans as an alternative to coerced labor in the mines or haciendas, generally accentuates the importance of family and community strategies for survival and adaptation, but without explicit attention to women and the effects of the mita on Potosí.⁴

Examinations of the urban colonial economy have borne more fruit in providing information about indigenous women, even producing their own scholarly schism.⁵ Within these works, there is a noted historiographical

² For discussions of both pre- and post-conquest traditions of female leadership in Andean and coastal Peruvian communities, see María Rostworowski Rostworowski de Diez Canseco, *La mujer en la época pre-hispanica* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1986); Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); and Ann W. Wightman, *Indigenous Migration and Social Change: The Forasteros of Cuzco, 1570-1720* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 97.

³ Peter J. Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain: Indian Labor in Potosí, 1545-1650* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1984); Jeffrey Cole, *The Potosí Mita, 1500-1700: Compulsory Indian Labor in the Andes* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985); Enrique Tandeter, *Coercion and Market: Silver Mining in Colonial Potosí* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1993); and Teresa Cañedo-Argüelles Fabrega, *Potosí: la versión aymara de un mito europeo: la minería y sus efectos en las sociedades andinas del siglo XVII (la provincia de Pacajes)* (Madrid : Editorial Catriel, 1993).

⁴ Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, *Indios y tributos en Alto Perú* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1978) and "Mita, migraciones y pueblo: Variaciones en el espacio y en el tiempo. Alto Perú, 1573-1692," *Historia Boliviana* 3:1 (1983), pp. 31-59; Wightman, *Indigenous Migration*; Karen V. Powers, *Andean Journeys: Migration and Ethnogenesis and the State in Colonial Quito* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Kenneth J. Andrien, *The Kingdom of Quito, 1690-1830: The State and Regional Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Note that Andrien argues for the development of indigenous migration in response to state policy rather than an autonomous socio-economic strategy.

⁵ Elinor C. Burkett, "Indian Women and White Society: The Case of Sixteenth-Century Peru" in *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives*, Asunción Lavrin, ed. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), pp. 101-27; Luis Miguel Glave, "Mujer indígena, trabajo doméstico y cambio social en el virreinato peruano del siglo XVII: La ciudad de La Paz y el Sur Andino en 1684," *Ciudades de los Andes: Visión histórica y contemporánea*, Eduardo Kingman Garcés, ed. (Quito: CIUDAD, 1992 [first published 1987]); Frank Soloman, "Indian Women of Early Colonial Quito as Seen through Their Testaments," *The Americas* 64:3 (January, 1988), pp. 325-342; Brooke Larson, "Producción doméstica y trabajo femenino indígena en la formación de una economía mercantil colonial," *Historia Boliviana*, 3:2 (1983),

divide which has pitted the image of Indian women as “abused victims” against one of “skillful negotiators” of the colonial system. In accounting for the divergence, Brooke Larson and Ann Zulawski point out that women’s success at navigating the new contours of the Spanish economy depended largely upon the maintenance of community and ethnic ties. While correctives to scholarship that studies women in isolation from their families and communities, these works must be taken to speak for a particular—distinctly *urban*—female indigenous experience. In the cities, Indian women entered into contact with Spanish colonial society through employment as domestics and as business and property owners. Such exposure, in turn, led these women into colonial courts and, ultimately, into the historical record. Because of the propensity of historical documentation to record urban lives, Indian women largely have been portrayed as migrants engaged in commerce and production for urban markets.⁶ Irene Silverblatt’s work on rural women in Cuzco stands as an exception to this urban focus. Yet Silverblatt’s work illuminates the lives of women not fully representative of the mass of peasant women: noble or propertied Indian women and accused “*brujas*” of the *puna* whose economic or religious activities were more apt to be captured by colonial notaries or extirpators.⁷ Thus, indigenous women’s history and topics in the study of the indigenous male peasantry—the effects of mita migration, community leadership, tribute, and access to land and markets in the colonial countryside—seem to run a parallel course, seldom intersecting.

This study is an attempt to more firmly cross the history of Andean women with that of the Andean (male) peasantry under Spanish rule by focusing on the gendered patterns of population decline, mita migration and economic adaptation in one Altiplano province from the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries. It examines the effects of these large-scale economic and social phenomena on the lives of ordinary women who remained

pp. 173-188; Ann Zulawski, “Social Differentiation, Gender and Ethnicity: Urban Indian Women in Colonial Bolivia, 1640-1725,” *Latin American Research Review* 25 (1990), pp. 93-114; *They Eat from Their Labor: Work and Social Change in Colonial Bolivia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995).

⁶ Historians sometimes also engage in a degree of ethnic elision as a result of the often scant historical evidence about rural indigenous women. Many works that discuss Andean indigenous women’s economic activities migrate, as it were, toward discussions of the economic role of the urban *mestiza* in the nineteenth century. A recent example is Brooke Larson’s chapter addition, “(Re)constructing a History,” to *Cochabamba 1550-1900: Colonialism and Agrarian Transformation in Bolivia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998). On the process of cultural *mestizaje*, or *cholaraje*, brought about by participation in urban markets and its effect on *cuzqueña* gender codes in the nineteenth century, see Marisol de la Cadena, “Las mujeres son más indias: Etnicidad y género en una comunidad del Cuzco,” *Revista Andina* 1:9 (1991), pp. 4-35.

⁷ Irene Silverblatt, “The Universe has turned inside out. . . . There is no justice for us here: Andean Women under Spanish Rule,” *Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives*, Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock, eds. (New York: Praeger, 1980), pp. 149-160 and *Moon, Sun and Witches*.

behind in the provinces, women who sought refuge neither in the *puna* nor in the new colonial cities, but instead faced an equally uncertain future on the familiar terrain of their provinces of origin. My research in archives in Peru, Bolivia and Spain has yielded a suggestive if sometimes still shadowy chronicle of women's economic participation in the region. Mindful that the gendered aspects of colonialism had material as well as ideological manifestations, this article therefore will plot areas for more profound inquiry into the economic lives of Andean women in order to broaden the nexus between what some scholars consider to be "classic" investigations of the colonial Latin American economy, the historiography of peasant women and studies of ideologies of gender.⁸

With its seven pueblos strung along the ancient road passing the western shores of Lake Titicaca, Chucuito was, in certain respects, the quintessential mita province. It contained the largest indigenous population of any province in the viceroyalty of Peru in the sixteenth century and possessed a long history of mita service in the silver mines, predating the institutionalization of the system under Peru's fifth viceroy, Francisco de Toledo. Of the sixteen provinces subject to the labor draft to Potosí, Chucuito's quota of Indian laborers remained the highest into the late seventeenth century.⁹ The impact of the mita on the population in the province was extreme. The numbers of *originarios*, men liable for tribute who were native to the region, dropped by 74 percent between 1578 and 1684.¹⁰ Unlike areas where colonial urban centers sprang up, Chucuito was transformed from a province with "cities" to a pastoral land littered with *tambos* within a matter of decades.¹¹ The area became attractive to Spanish and non-white settlers only beginning in the mid to late-

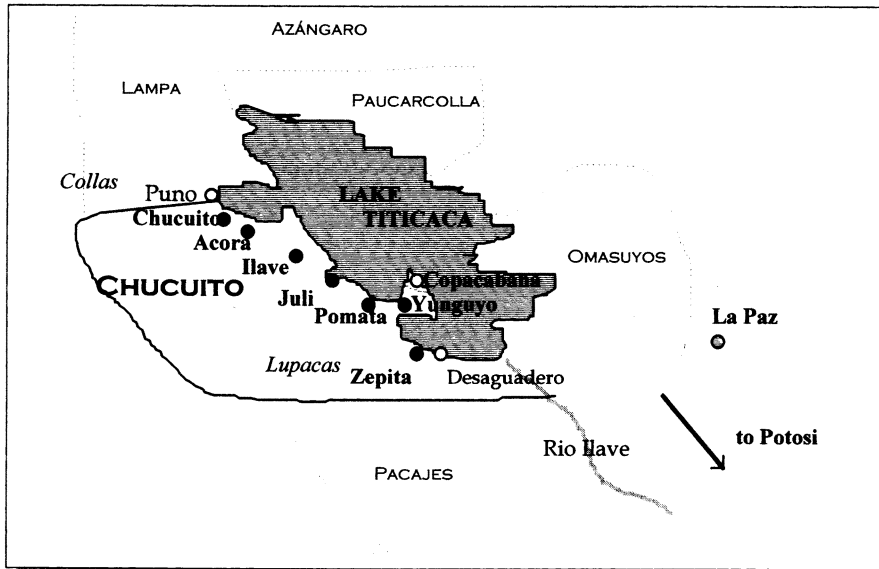
⁸ See the perceived distance between "seminal" academic traditions and "ideological and postmodern reinterpretations of the Andean past" in Alfonso Quiroz's review "Back to Basics: Migration, Labor, Markets and the State in the Colonial and Postcolonial Andes," *Latin American Research Review* 33:3 (1998), p. 250. The direction of several recent studies of Indian women and indigenous society show a renewed interest in rural Indian women and the economy; many are works that profit from such newer approaches to indigenous and feminist history. Among important contributions for Mexico include essays by Kevin Gosner, and Marta Espejo-Ponce Hunt and Matthew Restall in *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, Susan Schroeder, et al., eds. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997). The extraordinarily integrative approach to gender employed by Ward Stavig yields significant insights concerning rural Andean women. See *The World of Túpac Amaru: Conflict, Community, and Identity in Colonial Peru* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska: 1999).

⁹ Cole, *The Potosí Mita*, Table 4, pp. 74-6.

¹⁰ The number of *originario* men liable for tribute dropped from 17,779 in 1578 to 4,538 in 1684, according to a comparison of Noble David Cook, ed. *Tasa de la visita general de Francisco de Toledo (1570-1575)* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1975), p. 78 with the Reproduction of the Numeración General in "Petición de don Fernando de Torres y Portugal Conde de Villar para que se les conceda a los Padres de la Compañía de Jesús los indios necesaria para guardar de ganada ovejano que tienen en el Collao," 1690, AGI, legajo 270, no. 33, ff. 213-215.

¹¹ By the eighteenth century, the city of Puno dominated the region, and, at the end of the century,

PROVINCE OF CHUCUITO (not to scale)



seventeenth century, when the exploitation of local mineral deposits commenced in the wake of Potosí's decline. A royal possession, closed to private encomenderos, the countenance of colonial authority within the province was comprised, for over a century, almost exclusively of a small population of priests, royal officials and travelers on their way to and from Potosí.

Spanish colonialism had redrawn Chucuito's population profile as early as the 1560s, when significant numbers of single women and widows already populated the area. The gender imbalance in the province coincided with the absence of men who were serving their mita duty in Potosí, a pattern that endured at least until the end of the seventeenth century. Many women left the province with their mitayo male relatives, but any image of the Andean couple as a "family," traveling to Potosí together to face possible death and almost certain hardship in the mines and city, must be qualified. Evidence from the early eighteenth century suggests that, as men

Chucuito was placed under the Intendency of Puno. See the comments concerning the decay of "city" buildings in the villa of Chucuito in Bishop of La Paz Pedro de Valencia's 1619 *informe* reproduced in *Toledo y los Lupacas: Las Tasas de 1574 y 1579* Catherine Julien et al., eds. (Bonn: Bonner Amerikanistische Studien, 1993), pp. 170-173 and the discussion of the difficulty priests had in gaining contact with their parishioners who lived outside the pueblos, in "Relación de modo de gobernarse los P.P. de la Compañía de Jesús en la educación de los indios del pueblo de Juli (1682)," Rubén Vargas Ugarte, S.J. ed. *Manuscritos Peruanos del Archivo de Indias II* (Lima: Biblioteca Peruana, 1938), p. 65.

became more scarce in the province, those who elected not to migrate out of their communities of origin or to remain in Potosí after their “turn” at mita service regarded the help of a woman as a necessity—perhaps even a provision to which they were entitled—if they were to comply with their labor duty. For some women, mita migration in fact may have been less than a family affair and more akin to “forced gender complementarity.”

The gendered effects of male population loss in the province reverberated into the process of tribute collection. An examination of legal and extralegal tribute will demonstrate women’s centrality as tribute producers for their communities. As we shall see, the female family members of mitayos in Potosí were targeted by mine owners when production and profits fell off in the seventeenth century. Yet, if economic exploitation defined one part of many rural indigenous women’s lives, the women of Chucuito were also active—as were Indian men—in articulating an economic response to colonialism. The women who remained behind in Chucuito were economically engaged in the tribute system as creditors, consumers and community overseers. Here, Indian women’s histories again intersect with larger themes of indigenous survival and sometimes success in the colonial economic world. As the rumor that women were serving as political officials in the provinces suggests, their ability to adapt to the loss of men from their communities and to rise to the demands of colonialism could be formidable indeed.

“EL GRAN NÚMERO DE VIUDAS Y SOLTERAS”:
MITA MIGRATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY

In 1567, Garci Diez de San Miguel, the former governor of Chucuito, was responsible for compiling a *visita* and its accompanying population count. The *visita* allows us to examine the province before the Toledan reforms of the 1570s and the advent of what historians recognize as the “mature colonialism” of the seventeenth century. It also tells of how the presence of only a handful of Spanish, including Dominican priests in the pueblo of Pomata and Jesuits in Juli, had already undermined traditional political and economic power of the region’s Lupaca lords by this relatively early stage of colonialism. For our purposes, the most important revelation offered by the *visita* is that the Potosí mita, a labor system usually associated with the viceregal administration of Toledo, was already functioning on a sizable scale in Chucuito as early as the 1550s, and was the precedent on which the Toledan system was based.¹² Early changes in land use and shifts in political authority in the province—all reflecting the impact of Spanish colonialism—could be traced to developments over 100 leagues southeast of Lake Titicaca, in Potosí.

¹² Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain*, p. 57.

John V. Murra proposed that in the mid-sixteenth century the Potosí mita already was serving as an “alternate social system” for the men of Chucuito, who “refused” to return to their *hathas*, or pueblos of origin, after their turn.¹³ Indeed, many of the mitayos from Chucuito who went to serve in the mines during this early period did not return, although their absence from home communities was not always voluntary. Indians were thwarted from returning for a variety of reasons. Death comprised a significant factor. Indians faced danger not only in the mines but also in their journeys to them. Resident Juan Bautista recounted the arduous and dangerous trek from the province to Potosí, reporting that many Indians drowned attempting to cross the Río Ilave, and that the risk was exacerbated because they went to serve “laden with their women and children,” as well as with goods for sale or sustenance during their turn.¹⁴ The deaths of Indians along the route to the mines prompted Toledo to name a “*protector de los naturales*” for provinces subject to mita duty. Later, the province’s mita laborers would also be placed under a *capitán enterador de la mita*, who was responsible for the delivery of mitayos and their provisions. But from the beginning, the *protector de naturales* of Chucuito was specifically charged with ensuring that the laborers—and their cargo of foodstuffs and textiles for miners as well as the provincial tribute—arrived safely in the imperial city of Potosí.¹⁵

In addition to the risks along the way caused by natural hazards, mitayos could be waylaid by local Spaniards even when traveling with families and be forced to work on private encomiendas. In 1604, Indian overseers began a round-up operation to return to their pueblos of origin abducted Indian workers found in the tropical valley haciendas in the *yungas*, to the north of La Paz. There they found over 250 young men and women from all seven pueblos of Chucuito who had been “detained against their will in the valleys and *chácaras*, stolen away and tricked by the owners and others as if they were slaves.”¹⁶

Moreover, mitayos and their families remained in Potosí not only because they wanted to but also because could not afford the return trip home. In 1596, Fray Antonio de Ayans estimated that there were over 6,000 men, women and children from the province of Chucuito living in the mining

¹³ John V. Murra, “Un reino aymara,” Garcí Díez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia de Chucuito en 1567* Waldemar Espinosa Soriano, ed. (Lima: Casa de Cultura del Perú, 1964), p. 223.

¹⁴ Díez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia*, p. 105.

¹⁵ “Carta a SM del los licenciados Cepeda y Lopidana, contestando a varias reales cédulas,” La Plata, 1586, AGI Charcas, 16, R. 25, N. 132 reproduced in D. Roberto Levillier, *Audiencia de Charcas: Correspondencia de presidentes y oidores, Documentos del Archivo de Indias, Tomo II, 1580-89* (Madrid: Imprenta de Juan Pueyo, 1922), p. 282.

¹⁶ Thierry Saignes, *Los Andes orientales: Historia de un olvido* (Cochabamba, Bolivia: Instituto Francés de Estudios Latinos/ CERES, 1985), p. 177.

TABLE 1
UNMARRIED ADULTS BY SEX AND AGE IN CHUCUITO, 1566*

Men 17-50: 3534	Women 17-45: 6859
Men 50+: 315	Women 45+: 3506
Total: 3859 (27% of men)	Total: 10365 (44% of women)

*Cook's raw numbers for the marriage status of adult men and women out of a total population of 63,012 appear in Appendix I. Communities most likely underestimated ages when attempting to provide them in European years. Because I have used numbers only for adults of tributary age in calculating tables, these figures should, for the most part, avoid the complication of underestimation.

Source: Tables 1-4 are derived from Cook, *Demographic Collapse*, pp. 45-48, Tables 5 and 6.

center, and he thought they all remained because they were too poor to leave.¹⁷ Ayans also lamented the mita's effect on once thriving communities of Chucuito. He wrote that villages that had ten years earlier contained a population of 2,000-3,000 counted only around 200 residents in 1596. In the town of Juli, there was hardly anyone left, he remarked, and "the few who remain are women and old people."¹⁸

Even thirty years before Ayans recorded the effects of depopulation, the mita was in part responsible for the reports of large numbers of single women and widows living in Chucuito. A census taken in 1566 during the Diez de San Miguel visita substantiates the impression that the province had suffered significant male depopulation (see Appendix I). There were a notably higher number of women than men in the seven pueblos of Chucuito, particularly considering that the census in fact counted those men who were absent from the community, either serving their turn or permanently residing in Potosí. In 1566, there were 23,093 women age 17 and over living in the province, compared to 16,668 adult men.

¹⁷ Fray Francisco de Ayans, "Breve Relación de los agravios que reciben los indios que a desde cerca del Cuzco hasta Potosí (1598)," Ruben Vargas Ugarte, S.J. ed. *Pareceres jurídicos en asuntos de Indias (1601-1718)* (Lima: n.p.), pp. 39-40.

¹⁸ Ayans, "Breve Relación," p. 56. Ayans' impression of the rapid decline in the indigenous population of the area is related to some degree to the epidemics that swept through all of the Americas during the early colonial period. However, the depopulation noted by observers does not exactly correspond with the history of epidemics in the area. A general epidemic struck Upper Peruvian provinces between 1588-1589, but the worse period of death from disease occurred in 1618-19, when smallpox and measles ravaged the population. These outbreaks were reported almost two decades after Fray Ayans wrote of the decimation of Juli's population. Sánchez-Albornoz noted that the most severe loss of population seems to have preceded 1567. By deriving an estimate of the number of men of tributary age from the visita, he estimates that within the century preceding Garci Díez's visit, the population in the Chucuito area had dropped by over one-third. See *Indios y tributo en el Alto Perú*, p. 44. Also see Noble David Cook, *Demographic Collapse of Indian Peru, 1520-1620* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 62.

Censuses are social texts, and the severe gendered population imbalance in Chucuito was certainly in part a colonial fiction created by the communities and their caciques. An underreporting of the adult male population should be taken for granted in any Spanish colonial census that has as its aim the more efficient and extensive extraction of labor and tribute from a community, and the Chucuito census is no exception. In fact, Spanish officials Pedro Gutiérrez Flores and Juan Ramírez Segarra, who visited Chucuito for the Toledan *tasa* only six years after the Garcí Diez visita, pointedly asked a gathering of caciques if the communities were “hiding” Indians. The leaders answered in the affirmative. The caciques, however, emphasized that although some Indians had indeed been “*yncubiertos*,” or masked from the census, there were Indians dead or missing from communities nonetheless, including the “many Indians who have fled to places [and] of whom we have no knowledge.”¹⁹

Thus a combination of strategic deception and a real absence of men from the communities altered the reported marriage and property patterns in the provinces at this early date. Almost 45 percent of adult women were said to be unmarried (Table 1).²⁰ As Table 2 demonstrates, the ratio of unmarried to married adults is almost twice as high among women as among men. In fact, the total number of unmarried adults in the province seems higher than might be expected in communities where land rights were linked to marriage and where marriage amounted to adulthood. As the *principales* of the pueblo of Acora reported to Diez de San Miguel, a man traditionally became an adult when he “took a woman, received his *chácara*, and made a home [where they would live] until they were old people.”²¹

¹⁹ “Tasa de 1574, Pedro Gutiérrez Flores y Juan Ramírez Segarra,” in Julien, *Toledo y los Lupacas*, p. 11.

²⁰ The total number of adult men in the province was 16,687 and women numbered 23,093, from Garcí Diez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia*, passim, and Cook, *Demographic Collapse*, pp. 45-6. The total number of women counted in the Toledan visita, taken in 1572, was 38,915. The visita listed women of “all ages and states,” so the increase is partially explained by the addition of girls to the category of women. David Noble Cook, ed. *Tasa de la visita general de Francisco de Toledo (1570-1575)* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1975), p. 78. In addition, there was a slight increase in population overall in the province between 1566 and 1572 according to Cook, *Demographic Collapse*, p. 242, but this increase may be explained by the inclusion of mitayos who had been “hidden” in the earlier census.

²¹ Diez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia*, p. 94. The tradition of receiving a house of one’s own and property at the time of marriage continues in the town of Chucuito in today. See Harry Tschopik, “The Aymara,” *Handbook of Latin American Studies Volume 2: The South American Civilizations* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution), p. 546; John Hickman and William T. Stuart “Descent, Alliance and Moiety in Chucuito, Peru: An Explanatory Sketch of Aymara Social Organization” *Andean Kinship and Marriage*, Ralph Bolton and Enrique Mayer, eds. (Washington: American Anthropological Association, 1977).

TABLE 2
UNMARRIED VS. MARRIED AGES 17 AND OVER IN CHUCUITO, 1566

	N	%
Unmarried	4,214	36
Married	5,456	64
Total	39,670	100

While historians have demonstrated that the numbers of women who were single, widowed, or living alone normally comprised around one-third of the female population in Latin American cities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the figures for Chucuito are surprising because they represent an early phase of colonialism, are confined to an almost exclusively indigenous population, and are higher than average.²² The figures certainly struck Diez de San Miguel, who was forced to account for the phenomenon in his report. It is significant that he made no mention of under-representation of tributary adult males; instead, he blamed polygamy and concubinage for the alarming number of unmarried women, stating that because a man may have several wives, when he died, he would leave several widows.²³ It is unlikely, however, that polygamy was widespread among most of Chucuito's inhabitants, being a practice traditionally reserved for nobility.²⁴ Rather, the presence of so many unmarried women suggests that women were the widows or wives of mitayos remaining in Potosí or men who had left the province.

The number of women who were listed as living in their own houses ("*viudas y solteras que tienen casas por sí*") is a category not usually included in censuses of the provinces. As Table 3a demonstrates, single women and widows living in their own homes comprised almost 40 percent of the entire population of adult women in Chucuito in 1567. This category

²² See Elizabeth Anne Kuznesoff, "The Role of the Female-Headed Household in Brazilian Modernization: Sao Paulo, 1765-1836" *Journal of Social History* 13 (Summer 1980), pp. 589-611; Silvia Marina Arrom, *The Women of Mexico City, 1790-1857* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985); and several of the articles in the 1991 *Journal of Family History* 16:3, especially those by Barbara Potthast-Jutkeit, "The Ass of a Mare and Other Scandals: Marriage and Extramarital Relations in Nineteenth-Century Paraguay" and Donald Ramos, "Single and Married Women in Vila Rica Brazil, 1754-1838."

²³ Diez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia*, p. 207.

²⁴ Tschopik, "The Aymara," p. 543. For a contemporary reports by Spaniards that polygamy was restricted to the nobility in the area, see Pedro Cieza de Leon, *Crónica del Perú, Primera Parte*, Franklin Pease, G.Y., ed. (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1984) Capítulo C, p. 276; Cobo, *Inca Religions and Customs* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), pp. 204-210.

TABLE 3A
LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF ALL UNMARRIED WOMEN 17 AND OVER

	# unmarried women	%	% of adult women (n = 23,093)
In relatives' homes	1,217	11.74%	5.3%
In own home	9,148*	88.26%	39.6%
Total	10,365	100%	45.0%

*Includes widows over the age of 45 whose living arrangements are not listed.

may correspond to the pre-Hispanic practice of inheritance, whereby a man became an "*utani*," which in Aymara literally means "with house," when he married.²⁵ If the category of women "living in their own houses" was derived from the Aymara concept, it may indicate that these women were widows who had received their houses upon marriage but whose husbands were absent or had emigrated from the province. It is also possible that the women had inherited property through a social mechanism other than marriage because of dismal prospects for finding partners. It is also here that we would expect the highest number of wives of "hidden" husbands to be represented. Yet because single women and widows were listed in the same category, it is impossible to determine how many women were said to be widows and how many had never married at all. What can be deduced is that, as shown in Table 3b, women who were in their own houses between the ages of 17 and 45—ages where widowhood should be less likely than among the 45 and over group—constituted an overwhelming majority of the age group and almost one-quarter of all women in the province. Therefore, even before Toledo increased the number who would serve the *mita* in Potosí by 1,700 men in 1572, the colonial demand for silver had begun to rework the population structure of Chucuito's communities.

Despite the indications that male-specific provincial emigration was reworking the marriage structure and property patterns in the province, the most notable effect of *mita* on Chucuito's female population was movement to the mines with their male counterparts. Two dispatch lists of *mitayos* from Chucuito demonstrate the extent to which gender complementary migration prevailed among *mitayos*. In 1600, three-quarters of the 2,148 *mitayos* who reported for duty were married. The *teniente general* of the *mita*, Lope Buizeña, reported that he watched the Indians, "with their wives, llamas,

²⁵ Tschopik, "The Aymara," p. 546.

TABLE 3B
LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF UNMARRIED WOMEN AGES 17-45*

	# unmarried women	%	% of adult women (n = 23,093)
In relatives' homes	1,217	17.7%	5.3%
In own home	5,642	82.3%	24.4%
Total	6,859	100%	29.7%

*Women between the ages of 17 and 45 made up 6,859, or 66 percent, of a population of 10,365 unmarried adult women in province.

[and] food provisions, cross the bridge at Desaguadero and begin walking" to Potosí, over a month's journey away.²⁶ The other one-quarter of the population, the single or widowed, came to be dispatched at Desaguadero presumably without wives to accompany them, although many seem to have been the family members of other male mitayos.

Single men did not necessarily remain single during their time in Potosí. In a study of migration in Upper Peruvian provinces, Brian Evans found that most married men who still recognized ties to home communities, including the province of Chucuito, stated that they were accompanied by their families and that few admitted to having wives and children in their provinces of origin. Yet in a close examination of *forasteros* (immigrants recognizing ties to home communities) in La Paz, over half were married to women who were neither from the same community as their husbands nor from La Paz. Evans deduced that many wives were recent immigrants to the city themselves, or that the marriages had been made "on the road."²⁷

Taking along women, regardless of their origin, eased the burdens on the mitayo as he performed his duty in Potosí.²⁸ The income from family members' market activities or domestic service often made the difference for a mitayo's survival.²⁹ Surely it was obvious to royal officials that family migration offered other advantages as well. By 1597, viceroy Luis de

²⁶ "Padrón de los yndios mitayos," 1600, Casa Real de la Moneda- Archivo Histórico de Potosí (hereafter AHP) Caja Real 72, , f. 91.

²⁷ Brian M. Evans, "Migration Processes in Upper Peru in the Seventeenth Century," in David Robinson, ed. *Migration in Colonial Spanish America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 80.

²⁸ Stavig's findings suggest that children, in contrast to women, may have been sometimes seen as a liability during the journey to and turn in Potosí. See *The World of Túpac Amaru*, p. 177.

²⁹ Parson, "Producción doméstica," pp. 177-83.

Velasco had already noted that many of Chucuito's mitayos were failing to return after serving their duty. In 1603, he issued the confusing order that Chucuito's mitayos be forbidden from "bring[ing] indias . . . unless they go with their father or mother."³⁰ That the viceroy allowed "mothers" to migrate but attempted to halt the peregrinations of single women was telling. Velasco was struggling to limit the disorder caused by the massive migration associated with the mita, yet could not bring himself to restrict family migration to the mines. Subsequent viceroys elaborated these restrictions on women's migration. For example, a 1618 law required married women to remain in the village of their husbands if the husband were absent or had fled permanently.³¹ This law would be directed at women who migrated in search of their missing or mita-serving husbands.

Why did these laws stop short of forbidding families from migrating as a unit during mita duty? The capacity of a family to supplement the pauper's wages a mitayo was entitled to receive in Potosí (but often did not) may have factored into the implicit recognition of the benefits of family migration. More important to the viceroys, however, may have been that family migration for mita duty seemed to discourage the flight that was draining the system of its lifeblood.³²

Descriptions of gender complementarity in mita service and the images of provinces populated by widows and single women are not, ultimately, contradictory, given that mitayo couples were not always from the same community. Further, the real numbers of mitayos who reported for duty in Potosí declined throughout the seventeenth century, meaning that the numbers of wives or female relatives accompanying these men would have declined as well, while males continued to leave communities of origin in attempts to escape labor

³⁰ "Carta de don Luis de Velasco, virrey de Lima, al licenciado Juan Díaz de Lopidiana, oidor desta Real Audiencia y corregidor en Potosí," 1597, Archivo Nacional de Bolivia (hereafter ANB) Minas T.122 no. 7; "Provisión librada por don Luis de Velasco, virrey del Peru para que se expidió en 1596 estableciendo la orden que se había de tener con los indios de la provincia de Chucuito que van a la mita de Potosí," 1603, ANB Rück, T.2, f. 2.

³¹ Real Cédula, Madrid, 10-X-1618, *Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias*, Libro VI, Título XVI, Ley XI, Tomo II, no. 318 noted in Wightman, *Indigenous Migration*, p. 18. *Originarias* were not the only women abandoned by husbands or male relatives. In some cases, the "round up" of Indians for reduction prompted the abandonment of both immigrant and *originaria* women, indicating either that either immigrant men were being forced to serve in the Potosí mita, that *originario* (men) had immigrant wives, or both. See, for example, AGI, leg. 268, no. 37, 8 June 1673. For abandonment among *yanacona* women in Pilaya y Paspaya see Zulawski, *They Eat from their Labor*, pp. 192-93.

³² Such is suggested by a 1636 list of mitayos from Chucuito who had escaped their turn by either not appearing for duty or fleeing, "Expediente de autos seguidos antes del la Audiencia de Charcas: Alonso de Arrellano contra el ex-gobernador de la provincia de Chucuito, sobre que debe por varios servicios, con la compensación de la quiebra de la mita de los pueblos de Pomata, Yunguyo, y Çepita en el año 1638," ANB Minas T.144 no. 10, 1645-1653.

duty. The total number of mitayos from Chucuito who served their turn fell dramatically during the span of the century. Dilatory in its delivery of mitayos in 1600, a partial dispatch summary shows that by the year 1625 only 70 percent of mitayos reported for duty in Desaguadero.³³ By the end of the seventeenth century, that proportion had dropped to around 30 percent.³⁴ As we have seen, one-quarter of men serving their turn in 1600 left from the dispatch point at Desaguadero without a female to accompany them. As fewer and fewer men reported for duty during the seventeenth century, communities expected that "single" men would not be required to serve their turn at the mita at all. A partial mita dispatch record from 1673 lists 20 mitayos, all but one accompanied by women, many of whom left carrying their nursing infant children.³⁵ Women came to play such a vital economic role in Potosí that mitayos and their overseers could not fathom going without them.

In 1694, inhabitants of Juli complained that a local *teniente* was sending mitayos who were "very poor, without wives, [and] with nothing but the *manta* on their shoulders." They also stated that he required a female prisoner to perform duties for the Potosí mita, most likely to be of service to the mitayos.³⁶ The Indians of Juli thus indicated that men serving their turn might expect to receive women to help them with their journey, even in the event that they did not have their own wife to bring along. A complaint similar to the Juli petition was filed against the governor of the pueblo of Zepita, Ascencio Fernández, in 1725.³⁷ The *capitán enterador*, or official responsi-

³³ "Testimonio de los autos seguidos por Don Blas Ignacio Catacora, cacique principal y gobernador del pueblo de Acora en la provincia de Chuquito, a fin de que se le acuerden las gracias y premios a que sus mayores se habían hecho creedores por sus servicios al Rey y su continua asistencia a la pesada mita de Potosí," 1625, Archivo General de la Nación (Peru) (hereafter AGN), Derecho Indiano y Encomiendas, leg. 7, no. 70, f. 300 (detached).

³⁴ According to Viceroy Conde de Alba, the number of mitayos from Chucuito sent to Potosí in 1662 was 500, "El Virrey Conde de Alba a VM, Remite diferentes papeles que tocan de la mita de Potosí," 1662, AGI Charcas, leg. 267, no. 19. The viceroy claims that this was a weekly draft, but this seems highly unlikely. The yearly dispatch in 1692 was 535 according to Tandeter, *Coercion and Market*, p. 31. Also see "Cargo y data de las cuentas de la Real Hacienda de la caja de Potossi," 1660, AGI Charcas, leg. 269, no. 2, esp. f. 354.

³⁵ "Despacho de la Mita de Potosí," Puno, 1673, BNP, B585.

³⁶ "Reclamos i acusaciones de varios caciques de Juli provincia de Chucuito contra su theniente don Diego de Martínez por abusos," 1693, ANB Expedientes (hereafter EC) 23, f. 9-9v. It is also noteworthy that in the 1657 testament of Pedro Catacora, the cacique and capitán of the mita for Acora and Yunguyo, there is a provision to pay "the indias and indios that have served the mita and who are now in my house in Acora." AHP, Escrituras Notariales (EN), leg. p. 118, Baltasar de Barrionuevo, notary, f. 751v. My thanks to Jane Mangan for providing me with this document.

³⁷ "Don Juan Churacapie, indio principal de la parcellidad de los Ayriguas en el pueblo de San Sebastian de Sepita, provincia de Chucuito, enterador de la mita de Potosi sobre las faltas y los atrasos que en el desempeño de su oficio ha experimentado por culpa de su gobernador don Ascencio Fernández," 1748, ANB Minas T.126, no. 16, f. 1-a.

ble for dispatching workers to the mines, complained that the governor was heedlessly naming Indians for the draft without regard for whether they “were absent or single.” He further remonstrated that the Indians the governor assigned to help him in his duties were useless, and that the governor “failed to consider whether the woman he assigned to me was of any good at all[; in fact] she was only a poor woman.”

Enrique Tandeter found that nineteenth-century mitayos being sent to Oruro felt so entitled to provisions for their journey that they rebelled against Spaniards en route to the mines. Declaring they were on a mission from the king, the roaming band beat and humiliated the owners of a hacienda for not providing them with new livestock in exchange for a tired, skinny llama.³⁸ In late seventeenth-century Chucuito, mitayos felt a similar sense of entitlement to provisions.³⁹ What is astonishing to find is that, for the Chucuito mitayos, “provisions” included women of sufficient means to help men serve their turn at mita duty. When they felt that the royal governor of the province had failed in his duty to provide women, the mitayos did not hesitate to object. The two curious cases, which refer to women being forced into mita duty, raise a series of intriguing questions that encourage us to reconsider the traditional historiographical view on the merit of gender complementarity in offering Andean women social leverage.⁴⁰ By simply reversing the traditional historiographical vantage point from the perspective of the male mitayo to that of women like the prisoner from Juli, future research may reveal that gender complementarity could function as more a handicap than an advantage to Andean women.

PAYING THE POCKET PRICE: FEMALE TRIBUTE PRODUCTION

In other arenas, colonial tribute policy distorted—or transformed—once gender complementary local production into an enterprise of extraction that increasingly singled out women.⁴¹ In 1564, Diez de San Miguel’s informants made a priority of denouncing the tribute demands that the women bore, par-

³⁸ Tandeter, *Coercion and Market*, pp. 17-19.

³⁹ By the late eighteenth century, some of Chucuito’s mitayos simply refused to serve mita duty, complaining of the unremunerated and harsh labor they, their wives and children were forced to perform, “Expediente sobre los autos seguidos a cinco indios por haber desertado del servicio de las minas de Potosí en compañía de sus respectivas familias, por haberseles tenido sometidos a duros trabajos.” Chucuito, 1802, BNP D 31, and “Expediente formado sobre esclarecer varios abusos y pensiones con que se oprime en la villa de Potosí a los indios mitayos,” Chucuito, 1802, BNP D 33.

⁴⁰ Burkett, “Mujeres indígenas en sociedad blanca”; Silverblatt, *Sun, Moon and Witches*.

⁴¹ Both women and men traditionally wove cloth for tribute under Inca rule. See John V. Murra, *Formaciones económicas y políticas del mundo andino* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1975), esp. p. 149.

ticularly in terms of cloth production.⁴² One local leader reported that his small community could not support the demands any longer. Single women and widows were weaving textiles for tribute, he stated, aided by young children. "The whole community is working for the benefit of the [tribute] and it is impossible to pay in silver more than we already are," he claimed. "Neither women nor the old nor the children can contribute more."⁴³

The exacting of tribute from single women and widows defied Inca tribute tradition and the essence of local ties of reciprocity. Under the Incas, only married women were responsible for cloth production for the imperial state. After the Spanish conquest, the issue was slow to be resolved—a situation, which undoubtedly permitted priests, local officials and caciques to take advantage of female labor. Toledo ordered in 1575 that neither widows nor women married to any Indian male should pay tribute in cash or specie, a ruling which implied that single women would be eligible, reversing the pre-hispanic custom.⁴⁴ A 1618 royal cédula promulgated by Philip III, which later was integrated in the *Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias*, specifically exempted all Indian women from payment.⁴⁵ Yet despite this exemption, and despite the erstwhile gender complementary nature of textile production, the charge that Indian women were exploited in cloth production for priests or colonial officials would continue to echo as a familiar indigenous complaint.⁴⁶

The domestic production of cloth linked households to the tribute system and internal colonial markets in both New Spain and the Andes.⁴⁷ In Chucuito's case, early figures for the amount of tribute submitted in textiles from the province make it possible to infer that cloth production was substantial and that an ample proportion was produced by the province's women.

⁴² The absence of men from the community was tied to the Potosí mita in the Toledan visita. See Julien, *Toledo y los Lupacas*, passim.

⁴³ Díez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia*, p. 127.

⁴⁴ Toledo Ordenanzas XII, XIV, XIX, *Gobernantes del Perú: Cartas y Papeles Siglo XVI, Tomo VIII*, Roberto Levillier, ed. (Madrid: Imprenta Juan Pueyo, 1925), pp.346-8.

⁴⁵ *Recopilación*, Libro VI, Título V, Ley XIX.

⁴⁶ See for example, Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun and Witches*, pp. 129-131.

⁴⁷ Margaret Villanueva, "From Calpichui to Corregidor: Appropriation of Women's Cotton Textile Production in Early Colonial Mexico," *Latin American Perspectives* 12/1 (1985), pp.17-40; Larson, "Producción doméstica." It should be noted that Mexican indigenous women may have been more integrated into the Spanish colonial tribute system. See the comments of José María Ots Capdequi, *El sexo como circunstancia de la capacidad jurídica en nuestra Legislación de Indias* (Madrid: Tipografía de la "Revista de Archivos," 1930), p. 430. For an appraisal of the informant's complaints about cloth production emphasizing the male role as cloth producer in Chucuito, see Carlos Sempat Assodourian "Exchange in the Ethnic Territories between 1530 and 1567: The *Visitas* of Huánuco and Chucuito," in Brooke Larson and Olivia Harris, eds. *Ethnicity, Markets and Migration in the Andes: At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology* (Durham: Duke University, 1995), esp. pp. 110-112.

Although men increasingly became subject to the mita labor demands after the Toledan visita and were drawn out of their native communities, the total amount of tribute submitted to the royal coffer nonetheless increased during the first decades after the Toledan reforms. While the amount of tribute Chucuito paid varied widely during the years from 1570 to 1605, its inhabitants—supported by their curacas and local nobility—consistently provided tribute at almost double the rate paid in the pre-Toledan period.⁴⁸ This steady growth in tribute payment owed little to the cash contributions of mitayos in Potosí: the cacique from Acora and captain of the mita, Carlos Visa, filed a complaint in 1600 charging that mitayos in Potosí were unable to contribute their share of the tasa because they were restricted from performing voluntary labor in the mines (*minga*) during their time off.⁴⁹ However, the increase in tribute payment in fact was replicated in the portion of tax paid in cloth.

In 1572, Toledo set the tribute demand in cloth for the province at 1,922 *piezas de ropa*. Each measurement of cloth was valued at two pesos, making Chucuito's total tribute in cloth 3,844 pesos.⁵⁰ In 1585, tribute in cloth exceeded the quota and amounted to 2,370 *piezas* of woven wool cloth (valued, it may be estimated, at around 4,740 pesos.) The governor of the province explained that all the cloth was collected by the cacique and transported by mitayos to Potosí, where it was sold in order to pay tribute directly to the Caja Real.⁵¹ As mitayos headed toward Potosí, weighted down with their own provisions for their stay in Potosí as well as their community's tribute, the distinction between the production of cloth to aid mitayos during their turn, the production for tribute, and the production for community profit must have appeared quite unclear.⁵²

Perhaps it was because of the blurring of types of tribute and support for mitayos that the Diez de San Miguel visita reported that much of the cloth

⁴⁸ In 1568, the total collected for Chucuito was only 3,870 pesos, while the total payment reached an all-time high in 1601 of 60,074. For the period, 1575-1620, the average ran around 30,000 pesos. Joseph M. Barnardas, *Charcas: Orígenes históricos de una sociedad colonial* (La Paz: Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesino, 1973), p. 604. In the seventeenth century, however, the province was, in fact, perpetually remiss in tribute payment. For a full listing of tribute submitted to the Caja Real by Chucuito, see Ronald Escobedo, *El tributo indígena en el Perú (siglos XVI-XVII)* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1979), pp. 282-300.

⁴⁹ "Petición de Don Carlos Vissa, Cacique de Chucuyto," 1600, AGI Charcas no. 26.

⁵⁰ *Tasa de la visita general de Francisco de Toledo*, p. 79. The total amount of provincial tribute was set at 80,000 pesos annually.

⁵¹ "Carta a S.M. de Licenciado Cepeda acerca de la residencia y cuentas de D. Jerónimo de Silva, gobernador de la provincia de Chucuyto," *La Plata*, February 20, 1585 in Levillier, *Audiencia de Charcas*, pp. 189-90.

⁵² In 1600, the Indians of Chucuito complained that the mitayos they sent to Potosí, entrusted with llamas, food and clothing, returned to the communities empty-handed. Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain*, p. 131.

“destined for others,” namely local leaders or the markets, ended up in the hands of Spanish officials or priests.⁵³ The forced production of textiles for the Church and secular officials was a constant point of contention among Chucuito’s residents and the area’s priests. In Juli, the Jesuits were reported to have kept women locked up, sewing day and night.⁵⁴ The Jesuits there also established two schools, one where boys learned the rudiments of reading and writing, the other where they “taught” girls between the ages of four and eight years old to weave.⁵⁵ Investigating priests for forcing women to weave cloth illegally in the churches or cloisters had become standard Church practice by the end of the seventeenth century, indicating that a prohibition against placing women in convents to produce textiles was circumvented by the priests. The forced production of textile was frequent enough that, when a priest underwent ecclesiastical review after he left a post at a parish, his superiors always asked if “the said priest made the indias deposited [in the church] sew or spin even though they were [kept there] for the benefit of the parish.”⁵⁶

The Church was not alone in taking advantage of women who wove cloth for tribute. A late sixteenth-century report noted that women were being forced to spin in a “big house,” and if they did not finish the textiles on time, they would be imprisoned by their caciques. The same document explains how a scheme was developed around tribute payments in cloth which was aimed at extracting more labor from the province’s peasant women. Officials were to provide an *arroba* of wool, valued at 6 pesos, to be spun into cloth. Instead of providing the measure of wool, they would pay the Indians 4 pesos in cash. Women of the province would then be forced to spin and sew in the officials’ homes to compensate for the 2 peso difference, while the men were “rented out” in transporting the cloth to other areas, particularly to Cuzco.⁵⁷

Fray Ayans described the colonial tribute policy regarding textile production as completely ill-conceived, not because of abuses like the *arroba* scheme but because it required inordinate amounts of female labor. “Ordi-

⁵³ Díez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia*, pp. 91, 109, 217-8, and 231; passim.

⁵⁴ Ayans, “Breve Relación,” p. 44.

⁵⁵ “Relación de modo de gobernarse los P.P. de la Compañía de Jesús,” pp. 66-67.

⁵⁶ The question was #15 on a standard inquiry used for ecclesiastical review. See, for example, “Visita y escrutinio contra Manuel de Alcalá, cura y vicario de Chucuito,” 1683, Archivo Capítular, Arcodióses de La Paz, T4, f. 10.

⁵⁷ “Memorial de los casiques de la provincia de chucuito, acerca de los inconvenientes y daños que residen de sacar tantos indios alquilados de la provincia para trajines y de hazer tanta ropa como se haze por los oficiales de la dicha provincia,” no date [late sixteenth century] in “Descubrimiento del Potosí y papeles de minas,” Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), Manuscript 3040, ff. 226-227. The report does not specify which officials were responsible for the abuse, but its wording strongly suggests they were Spanish officials and not the caciques accused of imprisoning women.

narily," he explained, "it takes six to eight women to complete a single *pieza de ropa*, because one spins one half, another the other half, another weaves a piece," and so on. Further, Ayans pointed out that not all women knew how to weave, since the skill was, traditionally, only one of many of women's economic responsibilities and had been a task shared by the men of the community.⁵⁸

Certain women were able to find an economic niche created by the unreasonable tribute demands in cloth. One of Díez de San Miguel's informants reflected on the innovation in female labor routines when he reported, "most of the Indians know how to weave, but now if the women do not know how to do it, they rent out the work to other women in order to pay the tribute."⁵⁹ In 1600, such an arrangement was described in which the "rent" paid daily consisted of "one *real*, some *chuno* and a little meat, *ají* and some salt." However, as the Spanish attempted to profit off such labor agreements, they would raise the "rent" in the process: "the Spanish do not give them *chuno* or the rest, or even a *medio real* for each day."⁶⁰

When in the early seventeenth century Felipe Guáman Poma de Ayala wrote his critique of Spanish colonialism to Philip II, he referred to the strains the tribute system placed on the Indian woman.⁶¹ If the image of overburdened women weaving for greedy Spanish priests was intended to underscore the erosion of traditional Andean principles of reciprocity and the destruction of indigenous economic gender roles, it was also more than rhetorical. The continued production of textiles for tribute during the next several decades demonstrates that the economic onus of colonialism would fall on not only those who left for the mines but also on those who remained behind, many of whom were women temporarily or permanently widowed by the *mita*.

Beginning in the seventeenth century, colonial and Church officials faced the realization that the demands of tribute in pesos and in service were placing an unbearable burden on depopulated provinces like Chucuito. Royal cor-

⁵⁸ Ayans, "Breve Relación," pp. 45-55.

⁵⁹ Díez de San Miguel, *Visita Hecha a la Provincia*, p. 112.

⁶⁰ "Memorial de los casiques de la provincia de Chucuito," BNE, f. 227.

⁶¹ Felipe Guáman Poma de Ayala, *Nueva Crónica y Buen Gobierno*, Franklin Pease, ed. (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1990), p. 80. Enrique Urbano argues that local complaints in Chucuito against Dominicans for abusing women, raping girls and imposing personal service on the female population were sociopolitical maneuvers orchestrated by Toledo, "El escándalo de Chucuito y la primera evangelización de los Lupaqa (Perú). Nota en torno de un documento inédito," *Cuaderno para la historia de la evangelización en América Latina* 2 (1981), pp. 203-228. Even if that is so, it is notable that the complaints about the forced production of textiles among women appear in the *visita* taken before Toledo's tenure and continued after it.

respondence and decrees began to herald a crisis. Silver production in Potosí was suffering, and the growing inability of the provinces to produce bodies for labor and cash for tribute brought into sharp relief the conflicting exigencies of the colonial system. It also gave rise to new forms of colonial coercion.

Indigenous women became part of an extralegal system of tribute payment, directly aimed at those whose male relatives were serving as mitayos in Potosí. The system was based upon a practice in effect since the time of Toledo, whereby communities could pay an established amount per worker—around 30 pesos *ensayados*—instead of sending workers to the mines. Known alternately as *indios de plata* (cash Indians), or more commonly as *indios de faltriquera* (pocket Indians, or having an “Indian in the pocket”), the practice became more widespread among the provinces subject to the draft as populations declined.⁶² The *indios de faltriquera* system is considered by some historians as evidence of the mixed nature of labor within the colonies. They stress that cash collected from communities was used to pay skilled workers in the mines—sometimes even the same Indians who had “bought themselves” out of mita service.⁶³ “The community” is usually cited as the source of cash to substitute for mitayos. Yet who exactly comprised the “community” in seventeenth-century Peru? In the on-going debates about the future of the mita system, colonial officials consistently single out one group: indigenous women. Although it is clear that local priests would pay the pocket price in order to preserve Chucuito’s Indians for their own *estancias*, royal correspondence repeatedly referred to female family members as a significant source of cash for mine owners seeking to compensate for the decline in silver production.

In 1615, Chucuito was already sending around thirteen percent of its mita duty in payments of silver, and, by the 1620s, reports from Potosí stated that from one-third to one-half of the total draft was being submitted in the form of cash payments.⁶⁴ According to viceroys, *oidores* and ecclesiastical author-

⁶² Tandeter, *Coercion and Market*, p.17. While Tandeter claims that the system developed out of a legal practice sanctioned by Toledo, Cole calls the system “patently illegal,” *The Potosí Mita*, p. 37. Mine owners and operators were prohibited in 1618 from using Indians as “substitutes” and from paying for the absent, fled or dead, *Recopilación*, Libro VI, Título XV, Ley vj and vij. Most officials in my review of documents do not mention that the contributions in silver were in violation of the law, but instead used the issue to describe the miserable conditions in provinces and to argue that miners and officials in Potosí were doubly exploiting Indians.

⁶³ Bakewell discusses the conversion of Chucuito’s commodities into cash to pay for mingas as substitutes for mitayos in Potosí, *Miners of the Red Mountain*, 132. For a full discussion of minga labor and its significance in characterizing the colonial economy and for discussions of “community,” see Bakewell and Steve J. Stern, “Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean,” *The American Historical Review* 93/4 (October 1988), esp. pp. 851-854.

⁶⁴ Cole, *The Potosí Mita*, p. 37.

ities writing in the mid- to late-seventeenth century, the use of the substitution system had backfired on communities which most needed to preserve their rapidly diminishing male populations. As we shall see, mitayos continued to be drafted despite payments in specie. Furthermore, the decline in turnout for the mita and the overall drop in silver production prompted officials and mine owners in Potosí to force home communities to pay for absent or dead mitayos as a means of revenue collection.

In 1672, the viceroy Conde de Lemos wrote that the Jesuits in the pueblo of Juli were sending sufficient cash to Potosí to pay for those they wanted to remain behind in order to work community fields in the pueblo, undoubtedly for the benefit of the priests. However, the viceroy noted that officials were arriving from Potosí, gathering Indians for whom a price presumably had already been paid and forcibly taking them to serve their duty in person. He commented, "in these already dissipated provinces, the judges [sent] from Potosí take these Indians, leaving the land uncultivated and the women and children without anything to eat."⁶⁵ The next year, the viceroy claimed that this type of forced mita service was exacerbating the problem of flight from the provinces. He wrote, "if they are continually forced to work [in the mines], they abandon their lands, houses and families in order to liberate themselves, to the grief of their children and wives."⁶⁶ The capitanes enteradores absorbed most of the blame, but the curacas were said to "in part have some responsibility, because they are compelled to send out an assigned number from every ayllu and, if they cannot provide them in person, they search for the equivalent in silver."⁶⁷ A minister informed the Audiencia of Lima that caciques should be held responsible for "making slaves" out of widows who were impoverished by attempting to raise the "pocket price" for their absent husbands.⁶⁸

Officials suggested that not only was the burdensome collection of the "pocket price" failing to discourage men from fleeing their provinces, but that women were forced to pay tribute for those who had died in the mines

⁶⁵ "El virrey Conde de Lemos da cuenta de lo que ha proveído y resuelto en orden al alívio de los indios," 1672, AGI Charcas, leg. 268, no. 4.

⁶⁶ "El Conde de Lemos da cuenta a VM de lo ha escrito el virrey el Perú y paraceres que ha remitado de los terminos y comunidades de aquel reyno propendiendo que se quita las mitas forzadas," 1673, AGI Charcas, leg. 268, no. 37

⁶⁷ Untitled report to queen on the death of Philip IV signed by Don Andrés Ortiz de Mercado y Peña, 15 May 1668, AGI Charcas, leg. 268, no. 3.

⁶⁸ "Nícolas Polanco, Copia de los Ynfomes que en virtud del orden del Conde de Santistevan Virrey hicieron diferentes ministros de la Audiencia de Lima sobre la forma del entero de la Mita de Potosí, 1661, AGI Charcas, leg. 267, no. 20-A; "El virrey Conde de Lemos. . .," 1672, AGI Charcas, leg. 268, no. 4.

or fled from Potosí. After the death of Philip IV in 1665, the queen was briefed concerning the status of the mita: "The men are leaving their wives alone in their homes, and I have heard it said that the women are compelled, even apart from the mita, to pay tribute for their absent husbands. It is heart-breaking."⁶⁹ In 1672, the viceroy Conde de Lemos noted that he had attempted to correct the tribute problem by ordering an adjustment in tribute amounts. In addition, the viceroy wanted to ease the burdens of the practice of the cash-for-mitayos system on provinces like Chucuito. On this, however, he faced off against the corregidor of Potosí, Luis Antonio de Oviedo, who was protecting the city's mining interests by supporting their right to the practice. The viceroy demanded that Oviedo, who had sent officials to Juli in order to force Indians into service, return to the community all of the cash that was collected.⁷⁰ Still, in 1682, the *contador* of Potosí conceded that the situation had changed little from the image cast by the viceroy twenty years earlier. The caciques of communities and the mita captains were again described as "failing to grant to the widows the rights that they have by virtue of their miserable condition" by forcing them to pay in silver for those who were absent.⁷¹

It is unclear whether this last report referred to women paying tribute to the crown, or whether the capitanes enteradores were collecting the pocket price for the mine owners of Potosí. Yet the very ease with which royal correspondence blends the practice of indios de faltriquera with that of the blatantly illegal practice of collecting tribute from the wives of dead and absent husbands betrays that the two were believed by colonial officials to be equally exploitative of Indian women and, perhaps, were even confused at the local level. From the perspective of the wife of the dead or missing husband, it probably made little difference whether the cacique, representatives of the mines or the king himself was exacting silver in the name of their husbands. Rather than a mechanism that saved their husbands, fathers and sons from labor, the indios de faltriquera system became, for women, simply another form of tribute. In the end, the daughters, wives and mothers of mitayos might have to supplement or replace the labor of a mitayo with cash regardless of whether they accompanied him to Potosí or remained behind, and regardless of whether he was dead or alive.

⁶⁹ Untitled report, AGI Charcas, leg. 268, no. 3, 1668.

⁷⁰ "Carta que el Conde de Lemos el Virrey del Peru escribió a Antonio Oviedo Corregidor de Potosí, January 1670," AGI Charcas, leg. 268, no. 7-A.

⁷¹ "El contador Sebastian del Collado. Representa los medios que parecer proporcionados para conseguir la reducción de los Indios a sus Pueblos," 1682, AGI Charcas, leg. 270, no. 3, 1682.

NEW COMMUNITIES, EXTENDED ECONOMIC NETWORKS AND
PRECARIOUS POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY

While mature economic colonialism brought enormous hardship for those who remained behind in home communities, there is evidence colonial economic policy gave rise to new or invigorated systems of settlement and entrepreneurship among indigenous women. Most royal correspondence concerning Chucuito requires a patient reading in order to reveal how women were drawn into the orbit of local and royal policies of tribute extraction. Yet there is another story, one of economic adaptation on the part of the women, which can be more readily patched together from a variety of local sources and which provides the rare name to go with the numbers. These reveal how peasant women were able to maneuver within the colonial economy, finding paths for survival within the currents of changing inter-ethnic community relations and community leadership.

Ironically, it was the very coercion of women's labor by the Catholic Church that offered some women, whose male counterparts were absent or dead, the occasion to integrate themselves and their children among an emerging Andean community. During the latter part of the seventeenth century, Chucuito began to receive migrants to the newly-exploited mines of Ipabeco and Comarca, as well as to the Laicacota mines in neighboring Azángaro. Slowly, this settlement of Indians from other provinces would begin to restore the gender balance to Chucuito's pueblos. In the pueblo of Juli, the presence of forasteros also drew abandoned women into new socio-ethnic communities.

In the bishopric of Cuzco, originarios in the provinces subject to the *mita de minas* embarked upon an economic strategy of land rental and marketing with forastero populations during the eighteenth century. As the ayllu was unraveling, the fabric of community strained by decades of male-specific mortality and migration, a new, class-based community was constructed in its place through such economic interaction. Ann Wightman argues that these forasteros—particularly those who migrated in families—were able to redress the demographic sex imbalance that resulted from the labor draft after several generations.⁷² *Forasteros con tierras*, those settled Indians who had migrated to rural areas from the hispanicized cities, were assimilated into ayllu structures and acted in turn as stabilizing forces for communities suffering under the economic strains brought on by migration and tribute.

In 1684, the viceroy Duque de la Palata carried out a new census of all

⁷² Wightman, *Indigenous Migration and Social Change*, pp. 60-62.

the provinces subject to the *mita de minas* in order to account for the proliferation of *forasteros*, who were exempt from serving *mita* duty. The data from the *Numeración General* for Chucuito are shown in Appendix II. The results of this census for Chucuito both correspond with and diverge from the evidence on *forastero* communities in Cuzco. A list of migrants living on Jesuit property in Juli in 1684 shows that almost all settled in families, as had *forasteros* in Cuzco. In addition, the substantial family size of the migrants, averaging 2.8 children per couple, underscores the “stability” of the couples who had been taken in by Jesuits to tend their livestock or serve them in the cloisters.⁷³

Yet unlike in Cuzco, a full 90 percent of the *forasteros* in Juli were “*forasteros advenedizos*,” recently-arrived migrants who had no land rights and were not associated with any *ayllu*.⁷⁴ Moreover, among the group of migrants living on Jesuit property in Juli, 25 percent of the heads of families were single women and widows. The “*forasteros*” were a mixed group, comprised of migrants both who recognized ties to their home communities and those who did not. Most knew their origin, but, the Jesuits wrote, “they have come from dissipated provinces, and possess nothing of either the land or the products that belong to the pueblos.”⁷⁵

The differences between the male and female heads of household among this population may divulge a cache of information about the inter-relatedness of gender and socio-ethnic identity in the colonial Andes. Male heads of household always indicated a place of origin (i.e., “native of Arequipa,” “does not know,” etc.) The women heads of household, however, were listed as “*naturales deste pueblo*” without specifying a place of origin. The term “*natural*” had two meanings in such censuses. It could refer either to an Indian’s place of origin or it could denote an individual’s racial-ethnic status as an Indian, and would usually be followed by a more specific detail of his or her place of birth. When recording origin status of men in the census, “*natural*” was used in the latter sense, indicating that the individual was an Indian living in the pueblo but a migrant from another province. It is notable that, in comparison, not one single or widowed woman listed in the census was recorded as having migrated from another province.

⁷³ Reproduction of *Numeración General* in ANB EC no. 1762, 1586-1696.

⁷⁴ 2,228 out of 2,464 *forasteros* were listed as *advenedizos* in the 1684 *Numeración General*, ff. 209-215. The notable exceptions were in the pueblos of Pomata, where the population of 512 *advenedizos* did not include 40 Indians who, the enumerator wrote, “have been settled the longest” (*más antiguos de vezinidad*) on the estancia of Nuestra Señora of Pomata and in the pueblo of Acora, where all of the 163 *forasteros* were “from other provinces [and] generally serve their obligations to the *mita*.”

⁷⁵ “*Petición de don Fernando de Torres y Portugal Conde de Villar*,” 1586-1696, ANB EC no. 1762, f. 62.

This may suggest that these women were not migrants at all, but were single or widowed mothers from the pueblo of Juli with no choice but to work for the Jesuits. In 1734, the priests included a detailed 1684 census of the 104 “*yanaconas*” living on their property as an appendix to a petition to acquire more workers through labor assignments.⁷⁶ Eighteen of the women listed as heads of household were widows or older single women. Of this group, five were not listed by marital status, but all were over the age of 60. Six of the other women were listed as single, and among them, three had children. María Alegre, for example, was 24 years old and had five children between the ages of one and eight. Two of the women were specifically reported to have been abandoned by their husbands, but one of these women nonetheless seems to have been a “single mother,” in our contemporary sense of the term. Isabel Aracamolle’s husband left her fifteen years before the census was taken, yet her oldest child was twelve years old, indicating that her children were fathered by someone other than the man whom she considered to be her husband.

The priests petitioned the crown in 1734 for the power to again enlist the service of the population of “forasteros, widows and old Indian women.” The wording of the petition makes it evident that the priests regarded widows and old Indian women—regardless of origin—as fair game for service as domestic servants for the Church, much like the quasi-ethnic category “*yanaconas de iglesia*,” recognized since the Toledan tribute categories were established. If the women in the cloister of Juli were in fact from the pueblo, it was their status as single mothers and widows, rather than community ties or immigrant status, that determined their ethnic status in the eyes of the crown. It is likely that these women, widowed or abandoned by mitayo or migrant male counterparts, were forced onto the Jesuits’ property to raise their children among a new community of disenfranchised Indians like themselves. The five orphans listed in the census, all of whom were being raised by two-parent Indian families, may have been the offspring of local women who simply lacked the resources to raise them, or had decided to migrate without them.

Even if the women were migrants, it is notable that the petition to the crown based the right to their service on their status as “widows and old Indian women,” an explicitly gendered category distinct from their migrant status. The process that Wightman describes is one of *forastero* communities

⁷⁶ “Petición,” ANB EC no. 1762. In this case, “*yanaconas*” referred to Indians who were in service of the Church, or *yanaconas de iglesia*. In this document, like in many of its time, the distinction between *forasteros* and *yanaconas* had become blurred. In this case, the *yanaconas de iglesia* had been drawn from the migrant population of Juli without regard to their origin status.

integrating themselves into an originario population comprised of a high number of women. In a twist on the process of assimilation laid out by Wightman for Cuzco, in Chucuito, if these women were migrants it would mean that originarias integrated themselves into the forastero communities living on Jesuit lands.

Isolation from the ayllu and integration into forastero communities was the situation faced by only a percentage of Chucuito's women, presumably those who had lost the protection of the community or their economic support of male relatives. Others remained rooted to the ayllu and entered the colonial economy as producers, consumers and lenders. We have seen that women rented out their skills as weavers in Chucuito in 1567, as the demand for tribute in cloth grew in the early phase of colonialism. During the seventeenth century, Indian women had become well enmeshed in an economic endeavor designed to support community tribute demands. Through a type of credit system at the local level, women were helping one another to meet tribute obligations and were extending their sphere of economic activity beyond their own community.

A shipment of goods arrived at the pulpería of a wealthy cacique in the pueblo of Pomata in 1620. Diego de Chambilla's account records from the pulpería provide an exceptional glimpse into the quotidian economic activity of Chucuito's rural Indian women.⁷⁷ Over a three-month period in that year, out of 94 transactions, 91 listed only women buying baskets of *acxo* (the wool for a female garment that was also used as a unit of tribute) in cash and on credit.⁷⁸ While only three women were said to have left anything of value for collateral (all three left silver "*por prendas*"), the rest used credit extensively. An individual woman would offer her good credit as a guarantee for the purchases of another woman through a practice known as a "*fiado*." Forty-three of the transactions in Chambilla's pulpería involved women serving as *fiadoras* for other women. Many times, the women sponsored female relatives or friends—daughters, granddaughters, mothers,

⁷⁷ "Don Diego Chambilla, cacique del pueblo de Pomata provincia de Chucuito sobre las cuentas de administración de sus bienes en Potosí, a cuyo cargo había quedado Pedro Mateos cuando el presentante se retiró de dicha villa luego de haber desempeñado el oficio de capitán general enterador de la mita de Chucuito," 1639, ANB Minas T.124 no. 1.

⁷⁸ Fray Domingo de Santo Tomás defines "*acsso*" as the "*vestido interior de las mugeres indias*," *Léxico o vocabulario de la lengua general del Perú* (Lima: Edición del Instituto de Historia, 1951). The use of *acxo* in tribute is detailed in "Parecer que dan El Licenciado frai Pedro Gutierrez Flores . . . y Juan Ramírez Segarra [1568]," "Documentos sobre Chucuito," *Historia y Cultura* 4 (1970), p. 43. There were only three men who purchased *acxo*: one took a basket for the house of a Spanish official; one was named as "el Señor Alonso Sánchez;" and the last was a forastero from Quito, who took two baskets, one purchased on credit and the other for which he exchanged a blue manta.

compañeras. But, at other times, the list fails to detail a relationship between the women, strongly indicating that some fiadoras were extending good credit to women with whom their relationships were mostly economic, or to women who lived outside the community. This was the case with Ysabel Poco, who was listed as “living farther south than Copacabana” (*que vive por bajo de copacabana*) and who purchased her basket of acxo on the credit of an unnamed fiadora. In other instances, women from the pueblo extended credit to forasteras, as did Juana Vana Quispe, who guaranteed a basket for a María Harmana from Arequipa.⁷⁹

Zulawski stressed the importance of intra-ethnic economic ties in the urban setting; the evidence from Chucuito demonstrates that women in rural areas likewise networked in credit along family or kin lines. It also suggests that inter-ethnic ties were becoming beneficial for some women in Chucuito. In addition to extending credit to one another, women were also market intermediaries for their curaca in Pomata, responsible for the sale of raw, medium-quality (*abasca*) wool. Eight days after the delivery that included the acxo as well as bacon and lard, the widow Ysabel Hachama purchased six black and brown tufts of raw wool, “in order to sell them.” On 1 September, Ysabel Llachecolla bought 20 tufts certainly for the same purpose.

The pulpería records show how rural indigenous women in Chucuito established their own credit networks or engaged in merchant activity in order to shoulder the burdens of a local economy suffering under tribute and labor demands. In addition, they demonstrate how a community might piece together tribute and tax from a variety of sources. At the end of the pulpería list, a short accounting is made of tribute owed to “V.S.” (“*vuestro señor*,” or “your lordship”) by Pomata, indicating that a portion of the pulpería’s profits went to the crown. In 1619, Chambilla gave 45 pesos “from [his] own pocket,” while another cacique gave 100 pesos “in order to help with the tribute.”⁸⁰ In turn, Ysabel Hachama paid the pulpería’s share of the *alcabala*—44 pesos, for wool sold in 1620—as well as contributing a finely-worked saddle and stirrups to a collection of items headed to Potosí to be sold.

The contribution of local leaders and prominent women like Ysabel Hachama was to be expected, but, as elsewhere throughout the Andes, caciques and local elites in Chucuito began to feel that the responsibilities of the reciprocal relationships were too great to bear in the colonial economy.⁸¹ Nowhere was this more obvious than in the case of the captains of the

⁷⁹ “Don Diego Chambilla . . .,” ANB Minas T.124 no. 1, 1639.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 22.

⁸¹ Two of the most important works that study changes in reciprocity between native Andean lead-

mita from Chucuito. Until the mid-1600s, the captains were community leaders with enough wealth to provide mitayos with the provisions they needed for the journey and the time spent in Potosí.⁸² By the latter part of the century, however, the responsibility for ensuring the safe delivery and return of the mitayos had been taken up by members of the community of more modest means and positions, including women.⁸³

In 1629, the Protector General de Naturales, don Alonso Péres de Salazar, petitioned the Audiencia of La Plata on behalf of the Indians of Juli, requesting that local leaders of the rank of *segunda persona* rather than *principales* be assigned as captain for each *parcialidad* of Chucuito.⁸⁴ Péres claimed that the absence of the caciques was contributing to the province's notoriously poor rate of tribute payment and mita service. This request also reflects the growing official recognition that the responsibility for overseeing mitayos was too onerous for a single individual to withstand or was simply growing unattractive to caciques. When the duty of delivering mitayos was divided among many individuals, the lower-ranking elites in Chucuito's communities found themselves responsible both for protecting the Indians of their communities against the exigencies of the mita system and for ensuring that the workers did not flee, thereby transferring the costs to the captains themselves.⁸⁵ An example of this took place when, in 1640, a Spaniard named Alonso Arrellano, along with the pulpería-owning cacique of Pomata, Diego de Chambilla, and lower-ranking captains of the mita from Yunguyo and Zepita, sued the former Spanish governor of the province for compensation for money they contributed to cover the bankrupt and depopulated provinces. By the end of the seventeenth century, the position of capitán enterador had become a duty that placed local elites in a precarious position between the very wealthy of the community and the Indian commoners, as the story of María Picho from Juli demonstrates.

ers and their communities under Spanish colonialism are also foundational works on colonial Andean communities in general. Karen Spalding, *Huarochari: An Andean Society under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford, 1984) and Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian People and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1982). Also see Franklin Pease, *Curacas, reciprocidad y riqueza* (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1992).

⁸² Note that Doña Magdalena de Bibero, the wife of the cacique of Acora, Don Pedro Catacora, remained in the pueblo when he relocated to Potosí as capitán enterador. AHP, EN, T. 118, Barrionuevo.

⁸³ For the case of a wealthy cacique from Chucuito who renounced his office because he claimed the mita left him bankrupt see AGN, Derechos Indianos y Encomiendas, leg. 7, no. 79 (1625).

⁸⁴ "Para que el gobernador de Chucuito informe sobre lo contenido en el memoria aquí insertó y lo demás que aquí se manda a pedimiento de los indios del pueblo de Juli," 1629, BNP, B-463.

⁸⁵ "Expediente de autos seguidos antes la Audiencia de Characas: Alonso de Arrellano contra el ex-gobernador de la provincia de Chucuito, sobre que los que éste le debe por varios servicios, con la compensación de la quiebra de la mita de los pueblos de Pomata, Yunguyo, Çepita," 1645-1653, ANB Minas T.144, no. 10, ffs. 1-3.

In 1694, María had accompanied her husband, capitán Joseph Choquivaca, to Potosí, where they were responsible for 39 mitayos. After setting out from Juli, three of the Indians fled before the group reached Desaguadero, and one of the Indians died. Joseph went to search out the escapees, but to no avail. María claimed, “my husband was forced to give up all of his livestock, and, the way it worked out, we also had to use ten of the community’s llamas . . . [during] the round-up of escaped Indians.” However, María reported that the fugitives later turned up in Potosí after the contingent had been there a week. Upon return to Juli, the cacique of the parcialidad in which María and Joseph lived arrived on their estancia and seized 25 llamas in exchange for the ten llamas they had used for the search party, and as compensation for nine mitayos the cacique claimed they had lost en route. María also reported that the cacique then forced them to work in his chichería in reparation for the missing Indians and provisions. Her husband died in service to the cacique, and she continued working day and night in the chichería like “a blessed slave.”⁸⁶

María’s story illustrates that women in Chucuito entered with their husbands into new positions of local authority under colonialism. These positions, however, came at a cost. The binds of reciprocity that once drew ayllu and authority together had been altered permanently when the management of mitayos was added to the caciques’ responsibility. Quickly, this responsibility was sidestepped by the highest provincial leaders and parceled out among lesser figures in the community. At the same time, the distribution of authority over the mitayos was ultimately an economic catastrophe for couples such as María and her husband. Thus, even if the rumors of the alcalde women with which we began were true, they should not be taken to mean that women were continuing to exercise political authority as they had before Spanish conquest. “Authority” in mita provinces became a high-risk business. For women like María, it meant being caught between cacique and community in an environment where reciprocity could become simply another colonial burden.

CONCLUSION

The mita altered the demands placed on, and the possibilities open to, peasant women of Chucuito, even if they never laid eyes on the red mountain that yielded the silver of Potosí. The high numbers of widows and single women in Chucuito in the 1560s shows how the mita began to re-pattern the

⁸⁶ “Reclamos i acusaciones de varios caciques de Juli provincia de Chucuito,” 1693, ANB EC 23, ff. 9-9v.

social and cultural landscape of the provinces from which its workers came even before the mita's apogee. The presence of single and abandoned mothers on the Jesuit estancia in Juli a century later suggests that the problem became chronic. To a significant extent, the immigration of Indians from other provinces during the latter part of the century served to provide a buffer for the devastating effects of migration, but for at least a century, a significant proportion of women in Chucuito would shoulder the demands of community, crown and Church without the support of many of their male counterparts.

Yet it was not only the absence of men from the communities that was the legacy of the mita for the women of Chucuito. The mita was gendered in the sense that it placed different demands on women than on men. It was also gendered in that it became specifically exploitative of women, in local practice if not in official theory. The representatives of the mine owners, arriving in provinces from Potosí and wielding authority derived simply from colonial wealth, would certainly remind those women whose husbands, fathers or brothers left never to return that mita duties were seen as women's responsibility. The practice of collecting money to substitute for workers was in many ways a gendered counterpart to male labor in the mines; forcing women to pay for dead mitayos can be seen as the tragic epitome of the Andean peasant woman's situation.

Furthermore, the reports about mita assignments at the end of the seventeenth century caution that the image of indigenous "family migration" must be invoked prudently. In light of the evidence that women were assigned to mitayos headed for Potosí, simply noting that men and women from the same communities migrated together should not reflexively be taken to mean that they were "families." More research is necessary to uncover whether the Indian women were forced into mita duty as punishment for crimes with any frequency and the extent to which they may have been called upon to support local mitayos as a form of their own female repartimiento. Yet in any case, the central place of peasant women in buttressing the dwindling economies of decimated provinces, in shouldering the burdens of mine owner's diminishing returns, and in supporting mitayos in Potosí cannot be overlooked as a systemic—and gendered—feature of the colonial economy.

Finally, the evidence of women as active consumers, lenders and intermediaries in the tribute economy of Pomata alerts us to the ways in which Andean women fashioned strategies for managing colonial economic obligations. It reminds us that gendered forms of tribute and coerced labor were met with creative responses, and that, for many Indian women, survival in communities

of origin alone could be considered a success in an economic context marred by tragedy. Female indigenous economic activities, such as establishing networks of credit and drawing women from outside their communities into local circles, should provide fertile ground for future investigations that seek to consider the role of peasant women beyond the scope of the mita. For it was undoubtedly through such strategies that indigenous women survived and occasionally surmounted the gendered challenges of colonialism.

*University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill*

BIANCA PREMO

APPENDIX I POPULATION OF CHUCUITO, 1566

Marriage, Sex and Age Group	Aymara	Uro	Total*
married individuals	17,414	6,398	23,812
solteras and widows living in own house, ages 17-45	4,401	1,241	5,642
solteras and widows over 45	2,768	738	3,506
solteras in relative's homes 17-45	1,027	190	1,217
widowers and bachelors in own houses, ages 17-50	2,110	394	2,504
widowers and bachelors over 50	257	58	315
marriageable men in relative's houses	841	189 (89?)	1,030

*The total does not include children or those exempt from the mita because of disability.

Source: Cook, *Demographic Collapse*, pp. 45-6.

APPENDIX II POPULATION OF CHUCUITO, 1684

	Total Tribs	Originarios	Forasteros	% Originarios	% Forasteros
Chucuito	751	480	271	64	36
Juli	2,154	1,161	993	54	46
Pomata	760	255	505	33.5	66.5
Zepita	1,102	784	318	71	29
Illave	721	587	134	81	19
Acora	957	794	163	83	17
Yunguyo	807	477	330	59	41
Totals	7,252	4,538	2,714	64%	36%

Source: Numeración General, 1690, AGI, legajo 270, no. 33, ff. 213-251.