

## **Final Research Report - CLAG Field Study Grant**

**Key words:** Colonial Andean communities, indigenous knowledge, land inspections, natural resources management.

**Abstract:** My dissertation focuses on colonial land reports to interrogate how was indigenous environmental knowledge preserved and how it circulated during the colonial Andes. My research project shows how the Spanish colonial labor regime contributed to the systematization of knowledge about agriculture, pastoralism and natural resources management in Andean villages across the central Andes, located between modern Peru and Bolivia. My general research interests in Spanish colonialism lie at the intersection of the history of indigenous labor, natural knowledge, technology, environment and colonial statecraft. Specifically, I am interested in the systematic process of data collection through the documentary genre of *visitas* (land inspections and censuses) in which official colonial inspectors engaged with local Andean population in interviews, observations and registration over crops, animals, land demarcation, land management, demographics and other aspects of labor in Andean communities. This information reveals the co-creation of colonial landscapes, and contributes to establish a dialogue between history and geography, especially the emergent fields of “local environmental knowledge,” “traditional ecological knowledge” and Indigenous science. My research in the main colonial archives of Peru and Sucre has been fruitful to gather land inspections centralized by higher colonial administrators. With the help of the CLAG Grant, I was able to expand my research in regional archives of Peru.

**Report:** The CLAG Field Study Grant supported my dissertation research about land inspections and censuses undertaken in indigenous communities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The early land inspections are particularly rich sources of information about how

indigenous people managed their natural resources, including farming, textile manufacturing, cattle raising, and other everyday activities in which Andean people engaged with their local environment. Thus, these sources are a window into indigenous environmental knowledges.

Specifically, the CLAG Field Study Grant contributed to conducting critical archival research in the regional archives of the cities of Cuzco and Trujillo in Peru. Prior to this research, I was able to conduct research in the main repositories in Lima (Peru), and Sucre (Bolivia), but it was necessary to continue exploring local archives in which local inspections could be undertaken. In summer 2023 I was able to complete these two exploratory trips to both Peruvian cities. Both experiences were particularly adventurous. But my exploration to the archive of Cuzco was also a nice opportunity to see documents that are not cataloged and whose content told a lot about how natural resources became a key factor in the interaction between communities and the colonial state. During this exploration, I also had the chance to explore the bridge of Qeswachaca, considered the last pre-colonial technology of bridge manufacturing. This technology relies on *ichu* (Andean grass) from the Andes and has been passed on for generations. CLAG funds were spent on airfare, lodging, meals and digital reproduction of documents.

In Trujillo I was able to identify 17 documents (expedientes, peticiones) in the section Corregimiento in which Andeans expressed their concerns for the use of the space, as well as supported their claims with information they gathered in their communities. In Cuzco more than 18 documents were consulted in which land was involved. In both cases the section Corregimientos is the one providing more information. Most of these cases were complaints related to labor but in these cases the documents express the use of land inspections and the general management of the environment.



Research in Archivo Regional del Cuzco, Summer 2023.



Research in Archivo Regional de La Libertad, Summer