Ophir de España & Fernando de Montesinos’s Divine Defense of the Spanish Colonial Empire: A Mysterious Ancestral Merging of Pre-Inca and Christian Histories

Nathan James Gordon
University of Colorado at Boulder, gordonnj@colorado.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.colorado.edu/span_gradetds
Part of the Latin American History Commons, and the Latin American Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholar.colorado.edu/span_gradetds/27

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Spanish and Portuguese at CU Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spanish and Portuguese Graduate Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CU Scholar. For more information, please contact cuscholaradmin@colorado.edu.
OPHIR DE ESPAÑA & FERNANDO DE MONTESINOS’S
DIVINE DEFENSE OF THE SPANISH COLONIAL EMPIRE: A MYSTERIOUS
ANCESTRAL MERGING OF PRE-INCA AND CHRISTIAN HISTORIES

by

NATHAN JAMES GORDON

A.A., Mt. San Jacinto College, 2006
B.A., University of Colorado, 2010
M.A., University of Colorado, 2012

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Colorado in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
2017
This thesis entitled:

Ophir de España & Fernando de Montesinos’s Divine Defense of the Spanish Colonial Empire:

A Mysterious Ancestral Merging of pre-Inca and Christian Histories

written by Nathan James Gordon

has been approved for the Department of Spanish and Portuguese

__________________________
Andrés Prieto

__________________________
Leila Gómez

__________________________
Gerardo Gutiérrez

__________________________
Núria Silleras-Fernández

__________________________
Juan Dabove

Date ________________

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.
ABSTRACT

Gordon, Nathan James (Ph.D., Spanish Literature, Department of Spanish and Portuguese)

_Ophir de España_ & Fernando de Montesinos’s Divine Defense of the Spanish Colonial Empire:

A Mysterious Ancestral Merging of pre-Inca and Christian Histories

Thesis directed by Associate Professor Andrés Prieto

Over the last two centuries, Books I and III of _Ophir de España: Memorias historiales y políticas del Perú_ (1644) by Fernando de Montesinos have been generally overlooked. The cause of this inattention is associated with the mysterious and unique pre-Columbian historical account from Book II, which affords the most extensive version of Andean genealogy. Due to the excitement of Book II, colonial scholars have predominantly concentrated on thoroughly exploring the theoretical depths of the colonial manuscript selection. While all preceding studies are estimable and invaluable, this dissertation seeks to reunify _Ophir de España_ by placing Book II back into its original context alongside Books I and III and by demonstrating that the text should be understood as a complementary component that supports Montesinos’s theses. As the entirety of _Ophir de España_ and some of Montesinos’s other correlative works are evaluated, the true authorial design of the chronicle is revealed. Although the primary goal of _Ophir de España_ is obvious, in that it centers on defending the legal rights of Spain in the New World, the major objective of this dissertation is to explain why Montesinos felt it was necessary to come to Spain’s defense during the seventeenth century when it had already ruled America for nearly one hundred years.
During the course of this study, Nathan J. Gordon establishes that Montesinos wrote *Ophir de España* because he was concerned with the financial demise of Spain, which was rooted in a number of social, political, and economic problems: the disarray of the American mining industry, the decline of proper precious metal exports and imports, enduring the various expensive international and domestic conflicts, the corruption of bankers and creditors, along with the civil unrest of Peruvian landowners, merchants, clergymen, and nobles. As a passionate metallurgist and mineralogist, Montesinos was actively searching for ways to resolve Spain’s economic dilemma while simultaneous profiting from his efforts. Almost all of his research and writings focused on this undertaking, from mining instructional manuals, mining codification, and amalgamation practices, to protecting the legal rights of the Spanish Empire in the New World, with *Ophir de España* serving as a culmination to his work.
DEDICATION

This doctoral thesis is dedicated to Stephanie,
my exemplary eternal companion, who lifted me up when I was weary,
to Matthew, Elaine, Nancy, and Moroni, who always believed in me,
and to my wonderful and inspirational mother, Nancy,
who constantly taught me to reach for the stars.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to recognize the outstanding faculty and staff in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Colorado at Boulder. I am deeply grateful to each one of you who carefully guided and taught me how to become an academic. In particular, I give thanks to Andrés Pireto for the many professional and scholarly lessons that he taught me, specifically his encouragement for me to work with Ophir de España. Likewise, I genuinely appreciate the benevolence and direction of Núria Silleras-Fernández, as well as the resourcefulness and profound pedagogical knowledge of Anne Becher. To my closest colleagues, Dulce Aldama, Carlos van der Linde, Harrison Meadows, and Mark Pleiss, thank you for the countless private conversations we shared where you counseled me and offered reassurance. Concerning my research, I was able to unearth the AAL documents, in part, thanks to a research grant provided by LASC support at the University of Colorado and the Tinker Foundation. During my visit to the Archivo Arzobispal de Lima, Laura Gutiérrez and Melecio Tineo Morón patiently coached me through their catalogs. I would like to personally thank Laura for her transcription of these documents. Finally, none of this would have been possible without that unceasing love and support of all my family members. I am indebted to each one of you.
CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION: The Production, Response, and Theories of *Ophir de España* ..........1
   Publications, Critics, and Interpretations of Book II ...............................6
   Problems with Trusting the Authenticity of Book II ...............................13
   Objectives and New Approach to *Ophir de España* .................................20

II. CHAPTER 1: *Ophir de España*: Reunifying Montesinos’s Books ....................27
   Transcribing *Ophir de España* ...............................................................28
      Obstacle 1: Hand Variability ..............................................................30
      Obstacle 2: Linguistic variability .........................................................36
      Obstacle 3: Multilingualism .................................................................41
      Obstacle 4: Facsimiles ...........................................................................42
   Solutions and Conclusion ..........................................................................42
   Manuscripts and Summaries of the Prologue, Book I, and Book III .............43
      Montesinos’s Manuscripts .......................................................................44
      Summaries of the Prologue, Book I, and Book III of *Ophir de España* ......49
      A Biblical Andean Past ...........................................................................64
      Additional Non-Biblical Supportive Themes .............................................73
   Conclusion ....................................................................................................75

III. CHAPTER 2: Fernando de Montesinos, Science, and his Authorial Motivation ......77
   Fernando de Montesinos’s Biography .......................................................78
   Montesinos and Metallurgy .........................................................................100
   *Ophir de España* and Montesinos’s Scientific Arguments ..........................111
Conclusion ..................................................................................................................127

IV. CHAPTER 3: Economic Crisis, the Peruvian Mining Industry, and International Conflicts during the Seventeenth Century .................................................................129

   Economic Crisis in Spain .......................................................................................132

   Problems Surrounding the Administration of Peruvian Mines ......................144

   Montesinos’s Scattered and Explicitly Expressed Concerns from his Writings ..150

   How *Ophir de España* Attempts to Safeguard Spain’s Financial Wellbeing .....158

V. CONCLUSIONS ......................................................................................................163

VI. WORKS CITED .....................................................................................................174
TABLES

Table

1. A biblical comparison with Book II from Ophir de España ..........................69
FIGURES

Figure

1. Folio 3 from Book I of *Ophir de España*. This is Montesinos’s handwriting, the first hand. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla ..........................32

2. Folio 52 from Book I of *Ophir de España*. This is the second dominant hand. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................34

3. Folio 146 from Book III of *Ophir de España*. This is the third dominant hand. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................35

4. Various folio selections from *Ophir de España*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................................................37

5. Various folio selections from *Ophir de España*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................................................38

6. Various folio selections from *Ophir de España*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................................................38

7. Various folio selections from *Ophir de España*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................................................39

8. Various folio selections from *Ophir de España*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................................................40

9. Select folios from *Autos Alonso de Alarcon albañan de Melchior Ramirez difunto contra el licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos sobre mas de quatro mil pesos procedidos de mercadurias quel dicho difunto le remitio para que vendiese*. Courtesy of the Archivo Arzobispado de Lima .................................................................41

10. Folio 106 from Book III of *Las memorias antiguas y nuevas del Pirú*. This is the frontispiece of *Anales del Perú*, section two. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional de España .................................................................46

11. Folio 1 and the frontispiece from *Ophir de España*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla .................................................................48

12. The first folio of Alonso de Alarcon’s petition in Lima on 21 April 1637. Courtesy of Archivo Arzobispado de Lima .................................................................84
13. Montesinos’s first petition. Courtesy of Archivo Arzobispado de Lima ........................87

14. The first folio of Jusepe Nuñez de Prado’s final plea. Courtesy of Archivo Arzobispado de Lima ..........................................................8
INTRODUCTION

THE PRODUCTION, RESPONSE, AND THEORIES OF OPHIR DE ESPAÑA

Among the most fascinating facets of colonial Latin American literature are the glimpses of Andean histories that the Spanish chroniclers documented during the course of the sixteen and seventeen centuries. The stories that they penned share many similarities despite their reliance on oral and pictorial traditions, and generally they retain the traditional and royal Inca line of succession, frequently referred to as capacuna in Quechua (Imbelloni 4). Despite their commonalities, since the nineteenth century most colonial scholars have come to a consensus that the vast majority of Andean histories are clouded by personal, religious, social, and political agendas.¹ On the one hand, colonial Spanish chroniclers tended to write their version of history with a particular target in mind, and frequently they altered and utilized Andean histories as a means to that end. From Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa’s delegitimation of the Incas, to Cristobal de Molina’s anti-idolatrous attitude, and on to José de Acosta’s approach of watching over and carefully instructing the Indigenous population within the church, it appears as though Spanish chroniclers were more concerned with their authorial objectives and innovative interpretations

¹ See The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative by Rolena Adorno where she explains how “[t]hese works do not describe events; they are events, and they transcend self-reference to refer to the world outside themselves. This referentiality, however, is not historical, as in the historical truth whose referent is a past event. It is instead rhetorical and polemical, with the objective of influencing reader’s perceptions, royal policies, and social practices” (4). Another source that highlights similar problems more specific to the Peruvian region is Mito, tradición e historia del Perú by Raúl Porras Barrenechea. In his text, while discussing the Spanish chroniclers, he explains how most would tell the same exact story with the same exact events, but they would paint the story in a different light. Each chronicler was dependent on his authorial motives. In the most general sense, he mentions that the chronicles tended to fall in the following category, “Pero la crónica castellana tenía, sobre todo, como característica propia, una tendencia ascética y moralizadora. Aunque nacida para escribir la alabanza del príncipe y con una voluntad de lisonja proveniente del encargo real, se penetra inmediatamente del espíritu ético español y busca ser advertencia y consejo de buenos gobernantes, espejo de verdad y ejemplo de doctrina” (43).
than they were with prudently sticking to the facts. Instead of seeing orally transmitted Andean history for what it was, complex Native stories that were detached from Euro-Christian traditions, they made every attempt to understand them as inclusive logical stories that complemented Christian history. In many cases, this produced subjective and divergent interpretations. On the other hand, the accounts documented by these men were already muddled to begin with since Native Andeans viewed and understood historical narratives as a space of negotiation, reinvention, and social control. The Incas, in particular, were sensitive to the power and potential of historical adaptations. During their reign and expansion of Tahuantinsuyo, they held a common practice of religious and historical inclusiveness. Instead of erasing one’s beliefs, practices, and history, as the Spaniards regularly attempted, they knew how to incorporate these key social components from their conquered societies into their own in order to effectively subdue them. Catherine Julien makes a similar observation in relation to Andean oral practices:

Rather than a faithful reflection of the past, it was a story which represented a new social order in historical terms. The history crafted at this time reflected the interests of a particular group, but it rewrote material that was known or believed about the past in line with new explanations of the rise to power of a segment within the larger group that was identified as Inca. (8)

Gary Urton likewise pinpoints the problems of Inca oral practice, when he states, “Inca mythological traditions were the products of a long and complex process of innovation, borrowing and reworking of myths among a succession of Andean societies” (24). When we

---

2 Tahuantinsuyo literally means “the four united quarters” (Urton 7). These were the four separate regions of the Inca Empire: Chinchansuyu, Cuntisuyu, Collasuyu, and Antisuyu. This Native government expanded through modern day Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina.
think of the Andean past, we must recognize the Spanish presence and impact, the preexisting Andean historical practices, and the colonial rupture and influence that occurred when the two worlds collided. As we analyze colonial narratives, we must similarly take into account that each one is a product of these intricate filters.

While there are countless examples of historical colonial narratives that were passed through a complex process such as the one noted above, Ophir De españa: Memorias Historiales I políticas del pirv. vaticinios de sv descvbrimiento i conversion por los reies chatolicos i singulares epítetos qve por ello se les da en la sagrada escriptvra Al rei N[uestro] S[eño]r Philipo IV el grande monarca de anbos mvndos avtor el liz[encia]do d. Fernando montesinos presbítero natvral de osuna (1644) by Fernando (Felix) de Montesinos is by far one of the most elaborate, exemplary, interesting, and controversial.\(^3\) This is due in large part to Montesinos’s inclusion of Book II, which provides us with the longest version of Andean genealogy, one hundred and three Andean rulers instead of the traditional eleven to thirteen that were included in the other colonial chronicles from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Aside from his eccentric *capacuna*, another abnormal, yet unoriginal, point Montesinos argues throughout his chronicle is that the Incas, along with all Andeans, are actually descendants of one of Noah’s grandsons named Ophir.\(^4\) The genealogical list from Book II is used as evidence and support for this claim. According to Montesinos, Ophir and his family were

---

\(^3\) Montesinos does not refer to himself as Fernando Felix de Montesinos in his available works and documents. He commonly called himself “El licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos presbítero” (*Autos* 17). The middle name, Felix, first appears six separate times in a handwritten copy of his legal proceedings from Arica, Chile (61-62, 74v-75, 81). While he does not personally use this name, various individuals from Arica include it in their legal petitions and decrees.

\(^4\) Montesinos was not the first colonial author to write about the Ophirian theory. Both Cabello de Balboa in *Miscelánea Antártica* (1586) and Gegorio García in *Origen de los indios de el Nuevo Mundo e Indias Occidentales* (1607) wrote about and discussed this possible origin (*Miscelánea* 4; *Origen* 30).
the first to arrive to Peru, and subsequently the territory was named after this biblical descendant.

In Book II, it becomes evident that Montesinos not only offers us the longest Andean timeline, but he also depicts a society that is influenced by biblical stories. That is to say, the first Andean settlers are portrayed as individuals possessing a biblical background who observed the commandments of God from the Old Testament. As will be explained in detail later on in Chapter 1, the first Andean rulers were Christian-like because they kept the commandments, received revelations, and used a precise calendar that corresponded with the biblical timeline. Although Montesinos’s Andean society from Book II is rooted in biblical times and traditions, as the chronology and narration progress, we are presented with an increasing moral decline. Slowly, even though there are moral cycles similar to those found in the Bible, Andean or Ophirian society distance themselves from God. War, greed, and struggles for dominance and power corrupt the Andean world until the final arrival of the Spaniards.

By establishing a connection between the chronologies of the Bible and the Andean past, Montesinos accentuates his most apparent hypothesis that Peru and Ophir are the same place. Ophir is a biblical location from the Old Testament that remains undiscovered today. The people of Tyre and Kings David and Salomon’s sailors would travel to this site because of its abundance of gold and precious minerals. Like Ophir, Peru became a desirable location for Spaniards due to its abundant mines, and this is the parallel Montesinos centers on. As becomes clear in Book III, he promotes this similarity in order to justify the Spanish conquest and colonization of the New World. His ultimate goal is to equate the roles of Kings David and Solomon to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, along with all his royal Spanish successors. On multiple occasions, Montesinos emphasizes that Ophir was a divine and chosen land. Only righteous rulers who were chosen by God were allowed to rule and profit from Ophir, like Kings David and Solomon.
However, due to the unrighteous and sinful behavior of King Solomon, God withdrew their access to Ophir, which is why it remained lost and undiscovered for so long. That is, until it was once again restored to the earth and bestowed upon King Charles V with an official papal bull.

Unfortunately for Montesinos, his manuscripts of *Ophir de España* were never published. Like so many other colonial documents, they were hid away in various library stacks and archives for nearly two centuries. It was not until 1840 that Book II reached the printing press for the first time and generated a renewed interest in Montesinos’s unique *capacuna* and chronicle.

Over the last one hundred and seventy-five years, interpretations of Book II and Montesinos’s authorial intentions have consistently varied. In the most general sense, critics have either considered it to be a fictitious historical work penned by Montesinos, due to its unique and mysterious length, or they have found it to be an authentic Andean manuscript obtained by him. This debate primarily exists because in Book I of *Ophir de España* Montesinos claims that he is not the original author of the second book. He explains that he purchased the manuscript in an auction in Lima: “Quiero referir otra antiguedad deste nombre Piru que halle en un libro m.s. [que] con harta estima y maior cuidado le ube en una almoneda en la ciudad de Lima” (*Ophir* 8v). Despite his seemingly honest admission, he neglects to provide the name of the author, even

---

5In 1840 Henri Ternaux-Compans published a French translation of Book II from *Ophir de España*. He titled his text *Mémoires historiques sur L’ancien Pérou*. Over the years, following the publication of this translation, Book II gained continual and increasing interest by colonial scholars. The first Spanish transcription and publication was brought forth by Vicente Fidel López between 1869 and 1870. He is the only individual to have published parts of Book I. López published a series of selections from Books I and II in *Revista de Buenos Aires: Historia americana, literatura y derecho y variedad* in volumes 20-22. The publications were limited, hardly circulated, and difficult to follow. Aside from López, all other *Ophir de España* publications have been limited to Book II. Marcos Jiménez de la Espada was the second to transcribe and publish Book II in 1882. Most editions from the twentieth century are some variation of Espada’s transcription. Sabine Hyland and Jan Szemiński have produced more accurate transcriptions in recent years.
though he admits to knowing of this individual by association. Furthermore, as has been pointed out more recently, Montesinos’s omission becomes even more questionable when one considers how careful he is with his citations throughout *Ophir de España* (Prieto, “The Jesuit” 5). Due to Montesinos’s statements concerning his shadowy discovery of Book II, juxtaposed with the distinctiveness of this text, critics have continually made an effort to comprehend and categorize this unique historical account. Even today, the curiosity and existence of this exclusive chronicle has promoted a noteworthy amount of discord among colonial scholars. In what follows, I will address the variety of critical approaches that have surfaced since the induction of *Ophir de España*.

**Publications, Critics, and Interpretations of Book II**

While analyzing the chronology of Montesinos’s critics, I find that most individuals fall into one of three interpretive periods. As briefly mentioned before, the first period started in 1840 when Henri Ternaux-Compans produced a French translation of Book II and published the text for the first time with the title *Mémoires historiques sur L’ancien Pérou*. This edition was accompanied by some front matter that included several subjective observations, with some of them being negative:

---

6 As the previous quote continues on, Montesinos makes it apparent that Bishop Luis López knew the autor. Montesinos appears to have had a discussion about him with López, since he mention the following inforamtion, “Quiero referir otra antiguedad deste nombre Piru que halle en un libro m.s. [que] con harta estima y maior cuidado le ube en una almoneda en la ciudad de Lima. trata del Piru y sus emperadores, y segun pude aueriguar en ella aiudandole a las noticias y dandole calor al examen de los indios el [padre] don frai Luis López obispo de aquella iglesía. este autor pues tratando de la etimologia del nombre Piru en el discurso. 1. [capítulo]. 9. diçe: que los indios usaban en muchos nombres de grandes metaforas, y [que] por no entenderlas los autores asi por la antiguedad como por ignorar las deribaçiones no açertaron en las significaçiones proprias. en conprobaçion desto trae algunas cosas curiosas de [que] me balgo en este libro. una dellas es que uno de los Reyes Peruanos, que poblaron la ciudad del Cuzco se llamo Pirua Paccarimanco segun una de las aclamaçiones [conque] sus uasallos le inuocaban y aclamaban porque su nombre propio fue Tupa aiaruehu manco como se uera adelante [cuando] del se trate (*Ophir* 8v). The only detail that Montesinos affords us is that this mysterious author was from Quito.
Si lón admet comme véritable tout ce que contient l’ouvrage du licencié Montesinos, que nous donnons aujourd’hui au public, il change entièrement la face de l’histoire du Pérou; il fait remonter jusqu’à l’origine du monde un empire auquel on n’accordait que quelques siècles d’antiquité. Dans mon opinion, Montesinos a beaucoup exagéré; mais je suis cependant convaincu que la civilisation du Pérou est plus ancienne que la domination des Incas, et que les monuments de Tiaguanuco lui sont antérieurs. (vii)

In the following years, for most of the nineteenth century and entering into the twentieth century, his remarks were followed up by additional confrontational commentary by various scholars. Many of them shared similar opinions and distrusted Montesinos. William H. Prescott, who was probably familiar with Ternaux-Compans work, was one of these individuals. He bluntly shared his interpretation of Montesinos’s 

*capacuna* in *History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847), when he stated the following,

> But anyone who has occasion to compare his narrative with that of contemporary writers will find frequent cause to distrust it . . . His writings have been commended by some of his learned countrymen, as showing diligent research and information. My own experience would not assign them a high rank as historical vouchers. They may seem to me entitled to little praise, either for the accuracy of their statements, or the sagacity of their reflections. (1035)

Ternaux-Compans and Prescott were just the beginning. Eleven years after Ternaux-Compans’s publication, Mariano E. Rivero and John J. Tschudi chimed in with a comparable position, when they explained, “[the] memorial of Montesinos present so many contradictions, so many chronological errors, and such manifest incorrectness, that it is only with utmost precaution and much distrust that such documents can be made of at all” (65-6). While disbelief increased as the
general consensus among nineteenth-century scholars, it should be noted that there were also a few advocates like William Bollaert, Eugenio Maffey, Ramón Rua Figueroa, and John Baldwin. What most critics from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries appear to have in common is an impulse to provide their readers with brief subjective commentary. This was an understandable and justifiable approach for nineteenth-century scholars since Montesinos was contradicting and challenging everything they had learned and understood about pre-Columbian history in Peru. Nonetheless, it spurred negative and quick unsupported judgments.

During the twentieth century, there was a transition into more serious, comprehensive, and well thought-out interpretations of Book II by a handful of colonial scholars. One of the first to appear was that of Pablo Patrón, who wrote an article titled “La veracidad de Montesinos” for Revista Histórica (1906). Within his article, Patrón begins by reviewing and discussing the various negative remarks that were made throughout the preceding years. Later, he moves forward into his primary objective, which is to “desvanecer” the suspicions of everyone (290). According to Patrón, Book II of Ophir de España should be taken seriously because “hay motivos muy fundados para tomarlo en seria consideración y estudiarlo con la diligencia y crítica con que se analizan hoy las obras de su género” (291). What Patrón fundamentally attempts to do during the remainder of his article is provide his readers with a supportive and pro-Montesinos comparative study. He likens Book II to other colonial chronicles in an effort to heighten their similarities and possible truths.

Another example is that of José Imbelloni, who in 1941 took a similar approach on Book II when he wrote and published La capaccuna de Montesinos, después de cien años de

---

7 See Antiquarium, Ethnological and Other Researchers in New Granada, Equador, Peru and Chile (1860) by William Bollaert, La imprenta en Lima (1965) by José Toribio on Eugenio Maffey and Ramon Rua Figueroa (1871), and Ancient America, in Notes on American Archaeology (1872) by John Baldwin.
discusiones e hipótesis (1840-1940). Like Patrón, Imbelloni sought out and highlighted the possible parallels between Book II and other colonial chronicles. Special attention is placed on the correlation between the probable works of Blas Valera, the Anonymous Jesuit, and Montesinos: “Las Memorias no nacieron de la fantasía de su autor, porque tienen antecedentes y fuentes dignas de nuestro respeto, tales como el Vocabulario del P. Blas Valera y la Relación publicada como del Anónimo Jesuita” (89). After a thorough comparative examination, his main argument hinges on the notion that Montesinos did not simply make up the genealogical list from Book II because he finds that the names, places, and timeline are unoriginal to Ophir de España. The primary goal of both Patrón and Imbelloni was that of accentuating and supporting the potential truthful components of Montesinos’s capacuna.

The third critical period, which is by far the most extensive and rich, started during the eighties and has lasted up until now. Using the studies produced during the second critical period as a sounding board, this more contemporary approach has aimed at identifying the specific origins of Montesinos’s Andean history. Instead of offering readers brief subjective commentary, as was done during the larger part of the nineteenth century, or focusing on the possible authentic aspects of Book II, as occurred during the first part of the twentieth century, critics from the second half of the twentieth century and those from this century have begun exploring and locating the conceivable oral sources that were utilized to compose Book II.

Briggite Boehm de Lameiras is one of the first. In 1987 she wrote an article titled “Fernando de Montesinos. ¿Historia o mito?” Throughout her analysis she points out how a number of the narrative components in Book II derive from Mesoamerican oral traditions, and she emphasizes the correlation between the cycles of the sun and moon in the annual calendars. Boehm de Lameiras ultimately argues that some of the selections from Book II are undoubtedly
original, suggesting that Montesinos is at least partially honest. However, she contends that the most likely scenario is that Montesinos took hold of an amalgam of Mesoamerican and Andean oral histories in an effort to synthesize and produce the longest Christianized Andean timeline (10).

A little over a decade later, Juha J. Hiltunen offered analogous arguments in *Ancient Kings of Peru: The Reliability of the Chronicle of Fernando de Montesinos; Correlating the Dynasty Lists with Current Prehistoric Periodization in the Andes*. While Hiltunen reevaluates the second part of *Ophir de España*, he likewise seeks to isolate the probable origins of Montesinos’s text and, at times, interprets it as a genuine source of Andean mythology. According to Hiltunen, Book II can be traced back to the history of the Wari since there is a possible parallel with several of their historical events. He details how the described wars and the territorial positioning of Ophir’s descendants match the archeological timeline of the Wari who lived from approximately 600 AD – 1000 AD. He also finds that Book II chronologically follows other Indigenous societies that surfaced after the restructuring of the Wari Empire (308). Despite the potential Wari connection, Hiltunen does recognize Montesinos’s narrative voice and influence in Book II.

At the start of the twenty-first century, Sergio Barraza Lescano followed in suit, and made an effort to not only discuss the likely origins of Book II, but to also reveal the precise identity of the author of this matchless Andean history. His arguments are founded in some of Sabine Hyland’s preliminary studies, where she contends that the author must have been from Quito due to the similarities between Book II and the oral traditions of the Quito region. The Quito origin theory is also based on the fact that Montesinos’s mentioned the author was from this region in *Ophir de España*. In accordance with Montesinos and Hyland, Barraza Lescano
concludes by stating that Diego Lobato de Sosa is the anonymous author (63). He bases his hypothesis on the notion that the author would have needed to be from Quito, reside there at the same time as Montesinos, be bilingual, and maintain some form of a professional relationship with Fray Luis López de Solís (the bishop who made Montesinos aware of the author’s identity), and Diego de Lobato appears to fit this description. Barraza Lescano also believes that the parallels between Diego de Lobato and Blas Valera’s works took place because they both used Fray Melchior Hernández as a source.

In 2007, Sabine Hyland published *The Quito Manuscript: An Inca History Preserved by Fernando Montesinos*, which is the culmination of all her research and work on Montesinos and Book II. As was previously mentioned, she establishes that the second part of *Ophir de España* is the product of an author from Quito who grounded his historical narrative on the oral traditions of the Quito region. Unlike Barraza Lescano, she does not attempt to reveal this author’s identity. Her critical aim is to convince her readers that Book II was not written by Montesinos because as she contends, “[there are profound] thematic, grammatical, and stylistic difference” between Montesinos’s other books from *Ophir de España* and Book II (57). Moreover, she explicates that Montesinos’s narrative tone from Book I and III is much more hostile towards Indigenous peoples, whereas Book II is amicable. In addition to these differences, she finds that some of the grammatical errors in Montesinos’s manuscript are “typical of native Quechuan speakers who speak or write in Spanish,” alluding to the idea that the author is Mestizo or Ladino.

Finally, just two years after Hyland’s publication, Jan Szemiński wrote *Un ejemplo de larga tradición andina: Libro 2º de las Memorias antiguas historiales y políticas del Pirú*. Much like Boehm de Lameiras, Hiltunen, Barraza Lescano, and Hyland, Szemiński moves to highlight the specific origins of the second book of *Ophir de España*. Szemiński concurs with Hyland in
that it appears as though some of the Andean stories are influenced by the oral traditions of Quito. Despite this agreement, Szemiński does not claim that the text was composed entirely by a single Mestizo or Ladino. He argues that it was likely compiled by a Spaniard with a rough understanding of Quechua, and emphasizes that “El libro 2º fue producido por una secuencia de redactores entre los cuales Fernando de Montesinos fue el último” (455). In other words, there was probably a group of individuals involved in the process: various Andean informants, interpreters, and writers. This collaboration is evident for Szemiński because, as he states, “No es posible reconstruir el contenido de la tradición, ya que el producto final (Libro 2º) es el resultado de muchas selecciones y amplificaciones” (455). Even though there are some similarities with the oral traditions of Quito, Szemiński contends that the majority of the informants from Book II must have come from Cuzco because of the particular dialect that is used. He finds, additionally, that many of the cultural characteristics that appear in Book II, like the quilcas, quipus, amautas, calendar, and astronomy, resemble those found in other Cuzco-centric narratives.

The list of critics that has been discussed up until this point is not all-inclusive; however, it is comprised of most of Montesinos’s critics. It reflects what I believe to be the general trend of critical thinking on Book II of Ophir de España over the last two centuries. As has been seen, the first critical period from the nineteenth century considered it to be a forgery. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and entering the twentieth century, scholars started looking inward toward the text in an effort to find culturally authentic characteristics in the narration of Book II. Finally, from the middle of the twentieth century up until the present, Montesinos enthusiasts have sought to locate the precise origins of the oral traditions from Book II.

While many of these approaches have made significant contributions to understanding Book II, its complexities, and its possible origins, when all these studies are considered as a
whole, it appears as though we are brought back to square one because there is an obvious lack of interpretative consensus. No one can seem to agree on whether Montesinos was telling the truth about his cagy manuscript find. What is certain about Book II, is that it is a mysterious version of Andean history which stands alone in colonial Latin American literature. It defies the narrative customs of other Spanish historiographers from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it is the most exhaustive and complex version of Andean history that survives today. With that said, this was the exact cause of so much nineteenth-century dismissal among colonial scholars. No one can or should blame them for rejecting Montesinos because they might have been correct in their initial assumptions. It appears as though the biggest issue with Book II has been the act of taking it at face value and simply trusting Montesinos, as many twentieth-century and modern scholars have done. Ternaux-Compans’s initial gaffe to separate Book II from *Ophir de España* has created a common analytical tradition over the last two centuries in academic work on Montesinos. While the depths of Book II as a standalone text have been successfully exhausted, this book clearly forms a part of a larger whole. Montesinos undoubtedly found it relevant in place it side by side with his other arguments in *Ophir de España*, which leads me to believe that now is the time to take a different direction in an effort to better understand Montesinos and his design for Book II.

**Problems with Trusting the Authenticity of Book II**

To further scholarly work on Montesinos and Book II, I propose we begin placing the pieces of *Ophir de España* back together. It is time we start looking towards Books I and III to better understand Montesinos’s authorial intentions and enterprise for Book II, but before I do that, I would like to momentarily provide some of my opinions concerning the ways Book II should be interpreted. Many of these points will be elaborated later on in subsequent chapters.
As was discussed at the start of the introduction, most colonial chronicles, especially those that incorporate Andean history, are much more multifaceted than they seem and were planned with a specific literary objective and sociopolitical outcome in mind. This point is similar to some of Sabine MacCormack’s arguments concerning Andean religious knowledge. She mentions that “whatever understanding it may now be possible to gain of Inca and Andean religion must be channeled through the writings of men who in one way or another were outsiders to that religion” (5). Like documented Andean religious practices, Andean mythology, histories, and genealogies had to pass through the narrative voices of Spaniards who belonged to a different culture that was molded and shaped by Christianity and Western philosophy. Separated by sea, culture, ideologies, religion, and times past, these individuals imposed their own cultural filters, prejudices, and preconceptions onto what was for them a foreign and dissimilar past. Many times they struggled to convey American cultural values and practices to a European audience without falling back on their own cultural categories.

Montesinos falls nicely into this classification of historians, and I believe that more critical attention should be placed on his possible contribution to the creation of Book II. If these somewhat basic colonial theories of historical intervention, adaptation, and reinvention are applied to the second book, a number of problems with trusting the legitimacy of this narration stand out and obfuscate its credibility. Furthermore, this approach seems to place Montesinos at the forefront of the text, revealing a heavier involvement of his authorial hand than previously thought. I want to be clear in that I am not rejecting the origin theories of contemporary scholars. On the contrary, I find that the majority of them have some very valid points. Again, what I am suggesting is that Montesinos may have been much more entangled in the production of Book II as scholars initial suggested in the nineteenth century.
There are a number of reasons I am inclined to believe this perspective. For starters, Montesinos’s personal character is questionable, and one might even go so far as to say that he appears to be an untrustworthy individual and chronicler. That is to say, we might not want to simply believe everything he tells us concerning the production of Book II. As will be detailed in Chapter 2, some recent biographical information that I unearthed in the Archivo del Arzobispado de Lima reveals that Montesinos may have been a criminal.\(^8\) In 1636, he was tried and found guilty on two separate occasions for stealing approximately four thousand pesos from one Melchior Ramírez Vaio, a merchant from Arica, Peru. Although his religious privileges and ecclesiastical duties were later reinstated, he was temporarily excommunicated from the Catholic Church for his crimes. Throughout Montesinos’s legal proceedings, he continuously claims innocence and does his best to provide convincing counterarguments. He is so diligent that he manages to reduce his sentence and restrictions a few different times, but, as far as these documents are concerned, his freedoms are never fully reinstated and the case is never put to rest.

Interestingly enough, Montesinos’s legal proceedings were ongoing from 1636 until at least 1641, just one year before he completed his first surviving draft of *Ophir de España*, the Madrid MS. This would suggest that Montesinos was most likely researching and writing his manuscript during his incarceration, restriction to the city limits of Lima, and during his

\(^8\) While visiting the Archivo del Arzobispado de Lima, I found a ninety-one folio compilation of legal documents entitled *Autos Alonso de Alarcón Albacea de Melchor Ramírez difunto contra el licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos sobre más de cuatro mil pesos procedidos de mercadurías que el dicho difunto le remitió para que vendiese*. Up until now, these documents have gone generally unnoticed by scholars on Montesinos. Sergio Barraza Lescano, in his article entitled “La dinastía prehispánica de Fernando de Montesinos: Identificación de su fuente,” mentions the *Autos* in passing in one of his footnotes (59). As far as I have seen, he is the only other scholar who has come in contact with these revealing and important documents. One of my many aims with this dissertation is to bring them to light.
subsequent caución juratoria. Most of Montesinos’s stay in Lima was a condition of his sentence and legal proceedings, and it would seem as though he had a significant amount of time on his hands to start a writing career. In fact, all of Montesinos’s manuscripts and publications came to be following the commencement of his legal battle.

What is clear, as previously stated, is that he admits to finding Book II in an auction in Lima around the same time he was at what may have been his most desperate moment of life. Despite that Montesinos had probably made a significant amount of social contacts in Lima, and notwithstanding that he appears to have known who the author was through his association with Bishop Luis López, he neglects to provide us his name. Moreover, Montesinos makes no mention of there being a necessity to hide the identity of this anonymous individual.

In addition to Montesinos’s controversial personal life, little attention has been placed on how Book II supports the main theoretical objectives from Books I and III. One of Montesinos’s most superficial arguments is that the first Andean forefather and leader was one of Noah’s grandchildren named Ophir. This point is reiterated on many occasions throughout Books I and III, and Montesinos could have easily supported this claim by providing his readers with a lengthy version of Andean ancestry that matches his unoriginal theory, which is precisely what Book II does. The story immediately starts by stating, “Después de hauer Ophir poblado la América, ynstruyó a sus hijos y nietos en el temor de Dios y oberuançía de la ley natural” (Hyland, The Quito 106). This is not the only biblical reference in Book II, which was supposedly composed by the anonymous author, and not by Montesinos. As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3, there are several biblical allusions that complement and support Montesinos’s larger theses from Ophir de España. That is to say, Montesinos’s Andean past

---

9 A caución juratoria can be interpreted as an “[o]ath taken by a poor person to return to prison, when called on, having no bail” or as a “caution, warning, foresight, prevention” (“Caución juratoria”).

16
mimics the Bible at various levels; thus, making his theories seem like more of a reality. Structurally, it imitates the Bible through its genealogical wording/order and by way of providing readers with a conforming biblical chronology. Thematically, Book II emulates the Bible in that it includes prophetic leaders and a fluctuating social moral.

A central point of interest and a possible indication that the manuscript reflects an authentic Andean tradition for some critics has been the incorporation of a handful of names in Book II that appear in the capacunas of other colonial chroniclers. For instance, Giovanni Anello Oliva mentions four pre-Inca kings, Capac Raymi Amauta, Capac Yupanqui Amauta, Capac Lluque Yupanqui, and Cuis Manco, and cites Blas Valera’s lost Vocabulario as his source (95-96).\(^{10}\) The Anonymous Jesuit, who is alleged to be Valera by some, refers to the first Andean king as Pirua Pacaric Manco Inca (2). Book II mentions a similar name in reference to the first king of the Andeans, Pirua Parimanco or simply Phirua Manco, a common name for Topa Ayar Uchu, according to Montesinos’s anonymous author (Montesinos, Ophir 82). Aside from the presence of this name, the Anonymous Jesuit also narrates the story of the seventh Pachacuti, who also appears in the narration of Book II. The name Pirua surfaces in Inca Garcilaso de la Vega’s Comentarios reales as well, as he quotes passages of Valera, a curious and debatable source since Garcilaso claims to have found a sack with “las reliquias que de sus [Valera’s] papeles quedaron, para mayor dolor y lástima de los que se perdieron, que se sacan por los que se hallaron: quedaron tan destrozados que falta lo más y mejor” (18, 20). They were supposedly left

\(^{10}\) In Book I, Chapter 13, of Historia del reino y provincias del Perú, Oliva brings up how the list of Andean rulers is much longer than previously thought (95). To prove his point and refute Garcilaso’s claim that early Andeans were barbarous and without rulers, he cites Blas Valera’s Vocabulario (now lost) and lists just four names, along with their specific numerical order. According to Oliva, Capac Raymi Amauta was the 39th ruler, Capac Yupanqui Amauta was the 45th, Capac Lluqui Yupanqui was the 95th, and Cuis Manco was the 64th, in this order (96). Numerically, the order of these Andean rulers is similar to those found in Book II of Ophir de España. Capac Raymi Amauta and Capac Lluque Yupanqui correspond while Capac Yupanqui Amauta and Cuis Manco do not (Hiltunen 184).
to burn in Cadiz, Spain by a pirate attack led by the Duke of Essex. These comparisons of similar pre-Inca names have been accentuated by critics in an effort to suggest Valera as a possible common source for Book II, but as most colonial scholars know, Valera and his works became shrouded in mystery after his exile from Peru. His presence and existence in the seventeenth century have been vehemently challenged, particularly after the unearthing of the controversial Naples documents. As Andrés Prieto mentions, while discussing the possible correlation with Book II,

Blas Valera appears as a central for the transmission of this unusual version of the Andean past. Yet, Valera is a peculiarly elusive figure. A ‘cronista fantasma,’ as Porras Barrenechea called him, Valera is a writer with no corpus. Only fragments of his works survive, and even these only indirectly. . . . Valera’s looming presence in all the manuscripts that deal in one way or another with the alternative long history of the Andes, bring about issues regarding truth and falsehood, accusations of forgery and deceit. (“The Jesuit” 1-2)

While unique similarities do exists between Book II and other chronicles, they are miniscule when we take the totality of Book II into consideration, especially since there are another eighty-eight pre-Inca rulers unaccounted for. A handful of names does not seem like enough evidence to identify Book II as unoriginal and separate it from the authorial hand of Montesinos.

From the wraithlike presence of Valera’s *capacuna*, to Mesoamerican mythological influences, to the Wari Empire, to Quito, and on to Cuzco, the conglomeration of everything that

---

11 The Naples documents are two documents, *Historia et Rudimenta* and *Exsul Immeritus*, that were allegedly discovered in Clara Miccinelli’s personal library. They claim that Valera, after being rejected by his fellow Jesuits for his radical pro-Andean ideas, faked his own death in 1597, so he could secretly return to Peru. While in Peru, he purportedly wrote *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, which has been accredited to the penned author, Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, since its rediscovery in 1908 (Hyland, *The Jesuit* 196).
has been said about Book II indicates that it is a perfect example of a multifaceted colonial text and not an original Andean oral tradition belonging to one specific Indigenous American region. Book II, a manuscript Montesinos just mysteriously happened upon, shows clear signs of a cultural and historical amalgamation, a point that has been mentioned by some of Montesinos’s modern critics. For example, Hiltunen, even though he believes that the Wari oral traditions were a primary source, confesses that Montesinos must have had a heavy hand in the formation of Book II: “Montesinos did not invent most of this information, but drew data from more primary sources” (21). He points out that there is a clear difference in the “narrative thickness” of certain sections of Book II (297). The first section of the narration starts out strong and abundant. Later, as one approaches the middle section, it thins out, become more monotonous, and places more emphasis on the ancestral line. In the third section, the narration picks back up and becomes more complete.

Szemiński goes a step further than Hiltunen in his attribution of authorial agency to Montesinos. He stresses and details the editorial process and the number of individuals that were most likely involved in the creation of Book II at some point. Szemiński finds that this text is the product of a series of editors, with Montesinos being the last. It is founded upon various selections and amplifications. He ultimately argues that while there are a number of cultural elements from Quito and Cuzco, it is too difficult to support just one.

I agree with these points that have been made by Hiltunen and Szemiński. These thoughts and ideas of collectiveness and hybridization should be expounded upon, and the notion of Montesinos as an orchestrator of various Andean sources and oral traditions should be the primary analytical focus for future studies on Book II. Peter Gose has reasoned that Spanish Chroniclers regularly attempted “to reconcile the ‘discovery’ of the Americas with a Christian
universalizing history” (143). He explains that this historical approach “frequently distorted them beyond recognition” (140). I would contend that Montesinos belongs in this category because his chronicle is one of the most universal, narratively and chronologically speaking, and it dramatically distorts Andean oral traditions. Albeit Indigenous and Mestizo writers from the seventeenth century, like Guamán Poma, Garcilaso, and Joan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui, Christianized their historical facts, their timeline into the past was not so elaborate and extensive. This seems like the work of a Spaniard who had something to prove, who found it necessary and important to trace Andean genealogy all the way back to Noah and the Old Testament for a specific reason.

**Objectives and New Approach to *Ophir de España***

Over the last two centuries, Books I and III have generally been ignored, primarily because they have never been fully transcribed and published, due to the initial partial publication of Ternaux-Compans that promoted a scholarly trend and tradition. While these two books do seem less interesting and more political and explanatory than historical, the fact that Book II is part of a larger unit should not be brushed aside. When Montesinos chose to incorporated Book II into his larger project, *Ophir de España*, he would have certainly had specific goals in mind. For him, the text was a complementary component that supported his general theses and authorial motives. As important as the continual study and research of Book II is, it will not become the focal point of this dissertation. The discussion up until now has served as segue into what will be my main concern: Montesinos’s reasons and personal motives for producing the entirety of *Ophir de España*. Up until now, Montesinos’s intentions in writing *Ophir de España* have remained unclear and infrequently deliberated. His superficial theses are obvious, but pertinent questions related to my principal concern remain unanswered. For
instance, why did Montesinos feel it was necessary to write, or at least incorporate, an original version of Peruvian history and include a new Andean *capacuna* during the first half of the seventeenth century? Why defend Spain’s rights to the New World when it had held control of America for over a hundred years? Why reiterate that the King of Spain had been divinely appointed by God to govern America when this was already common knowledge? Why revisit an unoriginal argument that claims Peru is actually the long-lost biblical land of Ophir? In order to appropriately answer these questions and address my main concern, I will focus on a two-part response that I will summarize here in the introduction and elaborate upon throughout all remaining chapters.

The first portion of my response deals with the personal motives of Montesinos. There are three interrelated reasons why he chose to write *Ophir de España*, along with all his other works. First, Montesinos was invested in the mining industry for personal fulfillment and financial gain. Following the death of Bishop Carlos Marcelo Corne on 14 October 1629, Montesinos’s ecclesiastical supervisor while he served as Corne’s secretary and later as rector of the diocesan seminary in Trujillo, Montesinos moved to Potosi in 1630, served as the benefice of Santa Barbara, and started a side career in the mining industry. He began to rigorously study mineralogy and metallurgy, a path that quickly became a long-lasting obsession. More specifically, he became interested in the extraction of silver from *negrillos*, a hard black ore of disseminated silver and various additional minerals. From 1635-1636 Montesinos was living lucratively in the Mining Camp of Chocaya, near Potosi, where he had established all of his personal estates. He lived in this specific location because he was involved in the mines of Chocaya (*Autos* 19-19v). Considering his involvement in the mining industry, I find it safe to say that any possible threat against the wealth of the Peruvian mines, Montesinos’s livelihood,
would not have been taken lightly by him. In part, I believe this is why he was so adamant about protecting Spain’s economic rights.

Second, as was addressed earlier, Montesinos’s legal proceedings and problems began in 1636 while he was residing in the Mining Camp of Chocaya. He was tried as a criminal, imprisoned, and temporarily excommunicated during this time. With a closer look at his legal documents from Lima, it can be revealed that he took a substantial financial blow since his estates and properties were ordered to be seized and repossessed (Autos 15v). On multiple occasions in Montesinos’s petitions, he clarifies that he was struggling financially, so much so that he claimed he was unable to continue in the legal battle. Monetary loss certainly was not his only difficulty during his trials, he also suffered public humiliation because his crimes and excommunication were publically announced (12v). Poor and publically shamed, it would seem as though Montesinos would have had to start over, possibly clear his name, and regain financial stability, and he may have attempted to achieve some of these goals through his writings. A closer look at Montesinos’s authorial timeline would suggest that his writing career may have been a reaction to his legal proceedings, since his rapid push of manuscripts and publications did not take off until after his legal troubles began. The bulk of his texts were completed between 1638 and 1642 while his trial was still pending. It is probable that he buried himself in his authorial life in an effort to restore his wealth and social status, while simultaneously attempting to create a literary notoriety for himself in Peru and Spain. His memorials to King Philip IV would advocate this scenario, which brings me to his third reason.

---

12 Again, this is relatively new information found in the Autos. Previously, Montesinos was believed to have simply picked up and freely moved to Lima, when in fact he was residing in Lima because of his ongoing legal troubles.
In *Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos Presbítero*, Montesinos did not hide his literary agenda, and he made it evident as he discussed the mining industry, his various ecclesiastical duties, and all of his literary projects that everything had been for one purpose: el aumento de vuestra Real Hazienda, y conservacion de aquellos Reynos, las mas necesarias q se pueden ofrecer, de que darà quenta a quien V.M. mandare, que sea persona desocupada, por ser cosas importantes y que pidë presta resolucion, por ser de donde se pueden sacar muchos dineros para V.M. sin perjuzyio de nadie, antes en bien de todo aquel Reyno. Lo qual ha alcançado con el bueno y leal intento que ha tenido de ver aumëtados vuestros Reales Tesoros, gastados en la defensa de la Christiandad. (4)

Following common practice, Montesinos wrote his texts, and *Ophir de España* in particular, to gain favor with King Philip IV and receive some form of compensation for his labors, which is why he directly requested a dignitary in either Lima or Mexico (1).

The second half of my response centers on perceived economic threats, on the part of Montesinos, against Spain’s continual access to American territories and wealth. He defends the rights of Spain in the New World because he started to recognize a series of possible economic hazards that were contributing to Spain’s financial crisis during the first half of the seventeenth century, during which time Spain went bankrupt for the third time in a thirty-one year period. Montesinos felt that there were political, administrative, and social problems surrounding the mining industry. He learned that local authorities had lost control over the mines, a point he makes evident in a mining instructional manual he wrote in 1638 titled “Beneficio común o directorio de beneficiadores de metales y arte dellos, con reglas para los nigrillos.” Directing himself to the mining beneficiaries in this text, Montesinos provides directives on the different mining practices and techniques of the seventeenth century. As he does so, he regularly
highlights the various problems surrounding the current status of the mining industry. For instance, he chastises the mining beneficiaries and makes certain they understand that the wealth of the mines belongs to Spain and the prudential progress of Christianity (“Beneficio” 263). Additionally, Montesinos gives specific examples of mines that have been poorly managed by the beneficiaries and underlines how they and everyone else involved in the mining process are enveloped in greed. He even goes so far as to directly call some of the beneficiaries thieves (265-266). While his tone is somewhat more restrained, he does occasionally make similar remarks in Ophir de España and Anales del Perú (1642), the latter being a text that briefly summarizes the most important yearly events of the history of Peru, along with some details concerning the mines that were discovered each year. All of his observations related to the complications of the mining industry in these texts are designed to demonstrate that the Peruvian wealth is not being channeled to Spain as it should. Another perceived economic problem by Montesinos, that he claims is hindering Spain’s continual access to the wealth of the New World, are the international conflicts with other colonial empires, like England, France, and the Dutch Republic, who were taking over Spain’s American territories and trying to usurp what legally and divinely belonged to Spain. In Book III of Ophir de España, Montesinos discusses how these nations were continually bombarding them and attempting to steal the silver they had diligently extracted from the mines (Ophir 193v). If we carefully analyze Ophir de España and Montesinos’s other texts, that were produced in a span of six years and referenced as though they all had a single purpose in his memorials to King Philip IV (to protect the economic wealth of Spain), it can be shown that Montesinos believed that the minerals being extracted from American mines were not reaching their rightful and legal destinations. In other words, greed, at various levels, was

---

13 It appears as though little work has been done on Montesinos’s memorials to King Philip IV. Most scholars are aware of the memorials, but they are rarely cited. Due to this, I made a significant effort to
controlling the flow of Peruvian and American wealth. The mining industry appeared to be in a state of disarray, and it seems as though these problems threatened Spain’s financial stability.

In the end, what I hope will become clear throughout this dissertation is that the entirety of Ophir de España was composed while considering several preconceived economic threats to the Peruvian mines, an industry Montesinos deeply valued. Ultimately, he felt that the wealth from the mining industry was not being channeled properly to Spain, like he argues was regularly done with Kings David and Salomon initially. By writing his own chronicle, Montesinos expected to safeguard Spain’s dominion over the mining industry and aid Spain during its challenging time of economic crisis. In addition to protecting Spanish wealth, he was also allowing for his own personal goals to be fulfilled. He is simultaneously trying to shield himself and his own interests. Broke and besmirched by his legal proceedings, it appears he also took up the pen in order to repair his social and financial situation.

In order to achieve all of these objectives, it was not enough to reiterate unoriginal theories. Montesinos could not simply claim that Peru and Ophir were the same divine place that previously belonged to Kings David and Solomon and that currently belongs to the Spanish Crown. No, he needed to take his arguments to the next level if he wanted serious recognition. He required more convincing evidence, which was the benefit and necessity of Book II.

find these letters and discuss them in my dissertation. With further research, I first discovered that the British Library has what appears to be two incomplete copies of two of Montesinos’s memorials. The first has been titled Señor, El licenciado D. F. de M (four undated and printed folios). The second is titled Señor, Proponensele a V. M. los servicios del licenciado Don F. de M., (seven undated and printed folios). As I delved further into my research, I exhumed the entire second memorial from the University of Seville library that was hidden in a compilation of random documents titled Papeles varios, folios 416 to 471. The actual title of this memorial is Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos Presbítero (1644). It has a manuscript title page, the seven printed folios found at the British Library, and an additional fifty-four manuscript folios of random letters and documents that support Montesinos’s good character and fruitful service to King Philip IV. Basically, they are supportive documents for his seven-page memorial.
Regardless of whether Montesinos actually found and purchased the most elaborate and lengthy version of Andean history or not (which, again, I believe is a challenging story to take at face value since Book II is filled with an apparent narrative collectiveness and hybridity and since Montesinos hides pertinent information about Book II and has a questionable background), Book II complements Ophir de España. As far as having a scholarly source and documented history that corroborates his theories is concerned, Book II fits the mold. The text seems all too timely and coincidental to just confide in Montesinos’s patchy story. In regards to Book II, it appears as though the majority of nineteenth-century critics were correct with their initial observations. Most likely, Montesinos had a heavy hand in the conception of Book II, imitating the narratives of other colonial historians who tried to make logical sense of Andean oral traditions by viewing them as complementary and including them in Christian history.
CHAPTER 1

OPHIR DE ESPAÑA: REUNIFYING MONTESINOS’S BOOK

One of the most important and necessary steps in analyzing Fernando de Montesinos and *Ophir de España* is beginning to piece back together his entire project and to incorporate Books I and III into modern scholarly dialogs. Until recently, these books had not been transcribed, deliberated, and detailed in their entirety, despite the fact that Montesinos undoubtedly had a larger objective in mind when he chose to produce multiple manuscripts for *Ophir de España*. His universal authorial aims have generally been overlooked since Book II was introduced to the world in 1840; even though, as tends to be the case with colonial chronicles, the designs and purposes of these types of literary works are usually more complex than they initially appear.

Since *Ophir de España* has remained unpublished and buried for so long, one might say that the surface of the complexities and depths of this chronicle have barely been scratched.

Due to these issues, I have made it my goal over the last two years to honor Montesinos’s memory by reunifying all of his books. To begin, I spent a significant amount of time completing a transcription of Books I and III. During this process, I carefully analyzed the various facets of each book and composed some preliminary rough studies on *Ophir de España*, which have been presented at a handful of conferences. Moreover, I traveled to Lima and Cuzco, Peru and visited a wide array of colonial archives in an effort to obtain additional information concerning Montesinos’s personal life and tenure in South America. Throughout each step, I have prudently considered the hard work and thoughts of Juha J. Hiltunen, Sabine Hyland, and Jan Szemiński. Additionally, I have maintained an open, stimulating, and much appreciated dialogue with my long-term advisor, Andrés Prieto.
The purpose of this chapter is to bring my accumulated knowledge and research together and attempt to reunify Books I-III of *Ophir de España* into one place and push Montesinos’s entire project to the forefront of Latin American Colonial Studies. This is simply a starting point that will serve as a segue into my own theories and ideas concerning Montesinos and his mysterious chronicle, which will be elaborated throughout the remainder of my dissertation. I find it imperative to foremost contextualize *Ophir de España* so that my readers can suitably follow along. In order to achieve this goal, I will divide Chapter I into three sections. First, I will discuss my personal journey transcribing Books I and III and shed some light on the intricacies of transcribing for the very first time. Second, I will briefly summarize the prologue, Book I, and Book III. Third, I will demonstrate how Book II fits into the larger picture and supports Montesinos’s overarching theories. Ideally, if time permitted, I would include a polished transcription of Books I and III in the dissertation itself. Unfortunately, a project such as this will have to wait for a future date.

**Transcribing *Ophir de España***

A crucial phase in the process of reunifying *Ophir de España* was creating a complete transcription of Books I and III.\(^\text{14}\) Recognizing this problem early on during the dissertation stage of my academic career, I took the initiative in 2014 and transcribed these books. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Colorado at Boulder provided me with a small research grant that made the transcription possible. As a novice, I was entirely unaware of what I was getting myself into, and I was clueless to the complexities of colonial paleography.\(^\text{15}\)

---

\(^{14}\) I did not find it necessary to transcribe Book II since Sabine Hyland and Jan Szemiński have already produced accurate transcriptions.

\(^{15}\) Although the transcription section of Chapter I was written prior to publication and included in several rough drafts of my dissertation, it should be noted here that a modified version of this text was published by *Pterodáctilo* at the University of Texas at Austin.
At first, it sounds like a simple task. You take a manuscript, and while you read it, you just begin typing. However, after about ten minutes and ten words have passed, reality will set in and one will begin to realize that there are a number of potential impediments that will delay a swift and thorough completion of the transcription. Candidly, for beginners, transcribing colonial manuscripts is a daunting task, a point Manuel Romero Tallafigo, Laureano Rodríguez Liáñez, and Antonio Sánchez González make clear, “Como de difícil solución, hasta el extremo de llevarnos a una situación de desaliento y quizás frustración, es considerada muchas veces la labor de transcripción de documentos manuscritos” (103). The process can take months or years depending on the length and type of manuscript you are working with, and this is something a transcriber will need to mentally prepare him or herself for beforehand. Transcribing is a highly challenging academic pursuit that requires substantial amounts of time, patience, diligence, and perseverance.

Regrettably, there are not enough instructional and practical resources to prepare a novice transcriber and guide him or her through the transcription process. The goal of this section is to fill in some of the gaps by establishing a taxonomy of problems in the transcription of colonial Latin American manuscripts. Taking as a point of departure my experiences with *Ophir de España*, I will identify a series of obstacles that are common to work on the vast array of colonial-era texts that remain today unedited in archives around the world. These challenges include the presence of various hands, the orthographic and linguistic variability of Spanish in the period, and the multi-lingual nature of colonial texts. I will consider as well the problems inherent in working from digital images of such documents. The ultimate goal of this informative section is to provide novice transcribers with a starting point, so they can become aware of the challenges they will face and properly prepare themselves in advance. Likewise, this discussion
should provide all readers with a brief glimpse into my experience and procedure of transcribing *Ophir de España*.

**Obstacle 1: Hand Variability**

While handling colonial manuscripts, one of the first problematic aspects of the texts that will undoubtedly stand out is the presence of various hands. Much like modern-day handwriting, during the colonial Latin American period people were taught and wrote differently. That is to say, writing was a trained and learned institution, and while universality was the overarching goal, deviation by organization and individuals was inevitable. Writing was, just as it is today, a product of history and social formation and association. Thus, when one confronts paleography for the first time, it must be understood that scripts, as with art, passed through many phases. It was a malleable and evolving practice.

For the purposes of this discussion, attention will solely be placed on Latin and Spanish scripts under Spanish institutions.\(^{16}\) Without venturing too far back into the past, and in order to provide a brief overview, it is worth noting that the vast majority of Latin American colonial scripts were influenced by Caroline minuscule, the imperial roman handwriting established by Charlemagne at the start of the ninth century.

Throughout European medieval times, Caroline minuscule transitioned into the gothic scripts,\(^{17}\) and during the beginning of the reign of Pedro I in 1350, a variant of gothic handwriting was implemented and utilized “tanto en los documentos regios como en los

---

\(^{16}\) It goes without saying that Spain was not a nation during the time periods discussed here. While I do provide a brief overview of the most common and general scripts used in the Iberian Peninsula, Castile, and later Castile and Aragon, was simply a kingdom among many. Caroline, Gothic, and humanistic scripts spanned much of the peninsula; however, there were many variants. I will not discuss all the variations in detail.

\(^{17}\) “Gothic scripts” is intentionally mentioned in the plural because there were numerous variation throughout Europe.
privados, redondeó y estrechó sus caracteres, dando forma curva a sus rasgueos y aumentando los enlaces” (Millares Carlo and Ignacio Mantecón 41; Tallafigo, Rodríguez Liáñez, and González 65). This form of cursive was proceeded by another variant of gothic scripts called cortesana, coined and enforced by Queen Isabel. It lasted through the sixteenth century (Millares Carlo and Ignacio Mantecón 41).ⁱ⁸

With the rebirth of Latin and the rise of humanism, both Caroline and gothic scripts were proceeded by a humanistic cursive often referred to as italic (Figure 1). It was not so much an evolution of gothic script as it was a “littera antiqua o restauración de la unidad gráfica latina europea” (Tallafigo, Rodríguez Liáñez, and González 68). This latter writing reformation became widely promoted by Juan de Iciar’s Ortografía práctica in 1548 (González Antias 46). It ended up being one of the more dominant scripts utilized during the Latin American colonial period, but it too had a wide array of modifications. All three of the hands from Ophir de España appear to be some variant of the humanistic script.

---

ⁱ⁸ In general, gothsics scripts gained popularity because society wanted and needed to “escribir y leer más deprisa” (Tallafigo, Rodríguez Liáñez, and González 66).
Figure 1. Folio 3 from Book I of Ophir de España. This is Montesinos’s handwriting, the first hand. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla.
When I decided I was going to attempt to transcribe approximately three hundred and fifty pages of *Ophir de España*, it was as though I had traveled back in time. I was quickly reminded of the first few times I had sat down and ventured to read some of the cursive letters my grandparents had sent me during my childhood. Initially, the humanistic scripts that were so carefully inked onto the colonial folios appeared as nonsensical childish doodles. However, with effort, practice, resource checking, and loads of patience, the scribbles transformed into meaningful and insightful words.

Once I had finally gained control of the handwriting from Book I of *Ophir de España* and was making significant progress with my transcription, I was bombarded by the second and third scripts (Figures 2 and 3). While it was the same type of humanistic script, the large and subtle dissimilarities created new obstacles. Stylistically speaking, the movement and flow changed. Angles were sharpened, frills were added, and letters were modified. All of these variants slowed my comprehension and quickness during the transcription process.
De las novedades de la isla aventuramos que conociendo el arte de la cartografía, fueron algunas personas que se dedicaron a la cartografía de la isla de España. Dieron cuenta de la existencia de un río que se llamaba el Río de los Diamantes. En el río se encontraron grandes cantidades de diamantes que se convirtieron en una valiosa fuente de riqueza económica.

Capítulo 2: Prosigue la descripción de los diamantes

Dióses de una piedra preciosa que vino a poder del autor.

Para más información sobre el río, se mencionan las características geográficas y climáticas de la isla de España. La isla es extremadamente rica en minerales de alta calidad y se ha convertido en un centro de exportación de diamantes.

Folio 52 from Book I of Ophir de España. This is the second dominant hand. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla.
Figure 3. Folio 146 from Book III of Ophir de España. This is the third dominant hand. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla.
One must bear in mind that colonial manuscripts will generally include several hands. Chroniclers tended to use multiple scribes while dictating their version of history. Likewise, most colonial documents you will come in contact with were legal and clerical forms of communication that incorporated many hands by scribes, notaries, and secretaries who were charged with keeping “relación con el hecho de redactar escrituras, tomar notas o guardar secretos” (González Antias 159). The presence of various dissimilar hands will initially slow down your ability to transcribe expeditiously, and unfortunately, many North American academic institutions do not provide courses that teach individuals how to read Spanish colonial paleography.

**Obstacle 2: Linguistic variability**

A second obstacle with Latin American colonial manuscripts, which is heavily associated with the presence of differing scripts, is the orthographic and linguistic variability of Spanish. As ones presses through the transcription process, he or she will start to recognize a lack of uniformity and orthographic norms. The strict standardization of written Spanish did not take hold until 1741 when the Real Academia Española published its first book on orthography (Real v). Before this time, authors lacked guidance which created widespread inconsistencies. In what follows, I will discuss a handful of the most common examples of orthographic disorder.

Word spacing is one of the largest issues and challenges. On a regular basis, words and phrases are meshed together with no spacing (Figure 4). Like unfamiliar cursive, *scriptio continua* slows down the contemporary transcriber’s ability to read and transcribe quickly. Colonial authors and readers relied less on word separation for textual comprehension and more so on the oral flow of syllables. Silent reading was far less common during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even the most skilled readers had the habit of reading “aloud to
themselves” (Ife 8). Obviously, this antiquated writing practice makes it “difficult for [modern
day] editors to decide whether spacing is intentional or an accidental reflection of the scribe’s
attempt to fill a line or compress more text into it” (Mackenzie 15). Frequently, the split-second
decision of whether a space is required or not is left to the transcriber.

Figure 4. Various folio selections from Ophir de España. Courtesy of the Biblioteca
Universidad de Sevilla.

Compounds are another issue that surface in certain types of scripts like humanistic. They
take place when two words are joined together to create a single long word (Figure 5). Many
times, as the two words are grammaticalized together, they drop repeat vowels. In general,
compounds have the tendency to affect the correct diction of the words (González Antias 105).
Some of the frequent compounds that appear in Spanish gothic and humanistic scripts, both in
print and manuscript, are dellos, destos, porquel, antel, queste, and sobrello, among others
(Puche Lorenzo 44-45).
A third orthographic hurdle in colonial transcriptions is the constant usage of abbreviations (Figure 6). There is a large collection of abbreviations that were common to most scribes and writers; however, the symbols applied were not always universal. Their excessive inclusion, along with the particular way in which each scribe abbreviated words causes the “proceso de lectura de documentos se convierta en un trabajo al cual debe prestársele la mayor atención” (González Antías 104). A few of the most typical abbreviations are as follows: nra (nuestra), nro (nuestro), VM (Vuestra Majestad), obpo (obispo), xto (Cristo), Ilmo (Ilustrísimo), q (que), qdo (cuando), and pte (parte). For the most part, abbreviations can only be learned and referenced in Spanish paleographic sources.
Other types of orthographic and linguistic variabilities novice transcribers will be confronted with are punctuation, letter variation, capitalization, and illegible words and phrases (Figure 7). Normalized punctuation was pretty much nonexistent. Accent marks will sometimes appear over certain letters depending on the author’s distinct style. However, there is no consistency, even with individual authors. Periods were used, but they marked “divisions which do not necessarily coincide with modern sentence divisions, and at times seem to indicate divisions between breath groups” (Mackenzie 10).

![Figure 7](image)

**Figure 7.** Various folio selections from *Ophir de España.* Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla.

Certain letters were interchangeable, but again, this rested on the authorial tastes of the writer. For instance, when Fernando de Montesinos writes, he tends to only use the letter “u” for both “u” and “v,” but occasionally he will incorporate the letter “v.” Some exchangeable letter combinations are i/j, b/u/v, c/s, m/n, ñ/nn, and x/g. “u” and “v” are the most difficult letters to differentiate.

Capitalization is yet another frequent inconsistency with colonial manuscripts. Sometimes words are capitalized at the beginning of the sentence or in titles as one might expect. Nevertheless, this is not always the case, and one should be aware of the fact that capitalized
letters capriciously appear out of nowhere in the middle of a word causing confusing for the transcriber (González Antias 44).

Since we are dealing with quills and ink, it should come as no surprise that occasionally words are illegible (Figure 8). At times, words were simply defaced, effaced, or mutilated by the author him or herself or a subsequent reader who felt the need to expunge a certain phrase, sentence, or paragraph (Mackenzie 310). Time itself is another enemy of colonial documents and words. Iron gall ink, the most popular during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, included specific acids and iron ions that gradually deteriorated paper, especially when used excessively (Figure 9). That is to say, when a quill was oversaturated with ink and lines were thickened, the written words had a higher chance of becoming degraded with age. As Jana Kolar points out, “In addition to acids, iron gall inks contain a substantial amount of iron ions. Ferrous ions react with peroxides produced during oxidation of organic materials, thus releasing extremely reactive hydroxyl radicals” (1). This process causes colonial documents to appear sporadically burnt. It also makes certain folios near impossible to transcribe.

Figure 8. Various folio selections from Ophir de España. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla.
Figure 9. Select folios from Autos Alonso de Alarcon albaçea de Melchior Ramirez difunto contra el licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos sobre mas de quatro mil pesos procedidos de mercadurias quel dicho difunto le remitio para que vendiese. Courtesy of the Archivo Arzobispado de Lima.

Obstacle 3: Multilingualism

The multi-lingual nature of colonial texts is a third complication transcribers will be faced with. Latin, Italian, French, German and other European languages and texts were frequently included in citations. Latin is by far the most common since it was the preferred ecclesiastical language of the Roman Catholic Church, and because it reemerged and was promoted by humanists during the Spanish Renaissance period: “It developed in reaction to what the humanists considered the decadence of Medieval Latin. The humanists reacted against what in their eyes were the ahistorical and nonliterary consequences of centuries of linguistic and, therefore, cultural distortion and ignorance” (D’Amico 353). Since it was viewed as an enlightened and elitist language among scholars, its presence and practice extended to Colonial Latin America. One of several problems with transcribing additional languages is that fact that they too come with their own types of orthographic and linguistic variabilities.
Obstacle 4: Facsimiles

Finally, on a very practical level, a fourth obstacle beginning transcribers will confront are the problems inherent in working from digital images of such documents. While it is possible to transcribe colonial manuscripts from the original source, if one is fortunate enough to have continual access to the document’s archive. The likely scenario is that the transcriber will ultimately end up with a digital copy. How then does an individual properly view the digital images and transcribe simultaneously?

One option is to simply print the facsimiles. However, this prevents the transcriber from the option of zooming in on the manuscript and gaining a closer look at specific words or phrases, which tends to be a necessary step. Another option available is that of operating two monitors at once, whether this be with two computers or one. One monitor can be used to display the digital images while the other is employed for typing.

A third option, which I prefer, is to gain access to a very large monitor where both a PDF and Word document can be displayed simultaneously. This allows for swift action between both of the digital documents. It is easier on the eyes, neck and brain activity. In the end, a transcriber will be forced to find a situation and position that is comfortable to him or her.

Solutions and Conclusion

It should be duly noted and reiterated that the process of transcribing colonial Latin American manuscripts is no easy task. It includes a wide array of preliminary problems that must be confronted and conquered with diligence, practice, and experience. Sadly, most of the problems I have presented in this section do not come with simple and quick solutions.

As far as hand and linguistic variabilities are concerned, there are a limited number of resources you can reference to gain some basic knowledge about transcribing colonial
manuscripts and these practices. They function as an excellent starting point, but the reality of the situation is that transcribing is an exercise of trial and error. You have to dive into the text and figure out the process on your own and continually train yourself to read the colonial scripts. Much like learning to read for the first time, it will initially be intimidating, but with great assiduousness and training, it will eventually become second nature.

Concerning the multilingual nature of some colonial manuscripts, you either need to know the language or start learning it. If you are unfamiliar with the language, you will most likely end up with a poor transcription due to all the complications of colonial manuscripts that have been discussed up until now. The other option is to find a colleague who is willing to transcribe those narrative selections for you, or you could hire a professional.

In the end, the ultimate goal of all transcribers is to be as true and literal as possible to the original characters of the text, and make certain to avoid all types of modifications, which is probably another obstacle in and of itself. Despite all the intricacies that have been exposed thus far, transcribing colonial Latin American documents is a highly gratifying and self-fulfilling experience. The procedure of resurrecting the colonial voices of the past is an indescribable and exciting challenge.

**Manuscripts and Summaries of the Prologue, Book I, and Book III**

Before discussing Montesinos’s various manuscripts and summarizing the prologue and Books I and III, it should be pointed out that he initially envisioned a larger project and chronicle that included two sections and five books. The first section would have been comprised of Books I-III, which are found in their entirety in *Ophir de España* (Seville MS), while the second would have included an additional two books with the subtitle *Anales del Perú*. Throughout Books I-III, Montesinos constantly references *Anales del Perú* and makes it evident that both sections were
designed to work in unison. For example, in Book I, as he mentions the abundance of Peruvian
gold, he makes certain to direct his readers’ attention to the additional and forthcoming
information that will be provided in his final chapters, *Anales del Perú*:

> en qualquiera parte dicha y porque en mis anales e procurado tratar con todo cuidado de
> los asientos de minas de oro asi de lauaderos como de Vetas y de las de plata con dia y
> año y motiuo del Rexistro no me alargare aqui en esta materia solo pondre algunos

Puntos tocante. (*Ophir 54*)

The vast majority of his in-text references to *Anales del Perú* utilize the future tense, suggesting
that they form a part of a larger whole and support his universal arguments. Despite his original
narrative design, Montesinos only managed to publish *Anales de Perú*. He had high hopes for
Books I-III; but, unfortunately, he was unable to obtain funding and a stamp of approval from the
Spanish Monarchy (Montesinos, *Servicios* 2) Since *Anales del Perú* was ultimately published as
an independent text and never bore the title *Ophir de España*, it will not be referred to as such.
All future references to *Ophir de España* as a text will only take into account Books I-III.

**Montesinos’s Manuscripts**

To date, there are two accessible manuscripts of Montesinos’s chronicle that were
completed by him and his various anonymous scribes. The first is the Madrid MS from 1642 that
is currently housed in the Biblioteca Nacional de España. This is an incomplete manuscript that
includes Book III and all of *Anales del Perú* in numerical order by folio. On various occasions
throughout the Madrid MS, Montesinos cites Books I and II, making it evident that the
manuscript is incomplete (Hyland, *The Quito* 29). For instance, as he discusses the uniqueness of
the New World, he states in Chapter 5 of Book III, “de lo que queda dicho en il libro primero
destas memorias cap. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. y 22” (*Las memorias 75v*). Both Book III and *Anales
*del Perú* bear the same original and main title, *Las memorias antiguas y nuevas del Pirú*, a fact that further illustrates Montesinos’s early intent to publish a five-book chronicle (Figure 10).

Within the Madrid MS, Montesinos’s hand is by far the most dominant throughout all narrations. In fact, his hand has a much stronger presence in this original manuscript than it does in the more well-known Seville MS. A facsimile of the Madrid MS can be readily accessed and downloaded from the virtual catalog of the Biblioteca Nacional de España under special collections.
Figure 10. Folio 106 from Book III of *Las memorias antiguas y nuevas del Pirú*. This is the frontispiece of *Anales del Perú*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional de España.
The second manuscript of Montesinos’s chronicle is kept in the Biblioteca Universididad de Sevilla (Seville MS). As indicated by the frontispiece of the manuscript, it was completed in 1644 and was titled *Ophir de España: Memorias historiales y políticas del Perú. Vaticinios de su descubrimiento y conversión por los reyes católicos y singulares epítetos que por ello se les da en la sagrada escritura al rey nuestro señor Felipe IV el grande monarca de ambos mundos autor el licenciado don Fernando Montesinos presbítero natural de Osuna primera parte.* It contains Books I-III, and all of them include the subtitle *De las memorias historiales y políticas del Perú,* with slight spelling variations. *Anales del Perú* is missing from this manuscript, but, as was pointed out previously, Montesinos makes constant references to the second part of his chronicle in the Seville MS. It is unknown whether he adjoined *Anales del Perú* with this redaction or not. However, what we do know is that Book III was a work in progress. For example, the final words of Book III are simply the chapter heading for Chapter 30: “Capit. 30. diçense otros sucesos Prodigiosos en prueba del intento” (Montesinos, *Ophir* 217). Moreover, it has been confirmed by Hyland that there were a few changes made in Montesinos’s redaction, particularly in Book III. As she points out, Chapters 17, 25, and 29 were new additions, and she also mentions that Montesinos “also slightly changed the wording throughout the entire book, and included information on events that had occurred since 1642” (The *Quito* 30). A facsimile of the Seville MS is also offered through the online catalog of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla.
Figure 11. Folio 1 and the frontispiece from *Ophir de España*. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Universidad de Sevilla.
Aside from these two available manuscripts of Montesinos’s chronicle, any discussion of additional redactions becomes hazy and convoluted since it would be based on second hand information and lost manuscripts. It is believed that Montesinos had personally composed a third undated redaction. Juan Bautista Muñoz is credited for finding it in the monastery of San José Mercedarios Descalzos during the latter part of the eighteenth century, and it supposedly included Books I, II, and Anales del Perú (Hyland, *The Quito* 31). The Real Academia Española is also believed to have housed some form of an eighteenth-century transcription that likewise contained Books I, II, and Anales del Perú. It was used by Vicente Fidel López and Brasseur de Bourbourg for their publications. Both of these manuscripts have been lost, and they can only be examined through their transcriptions that are found at Yale University and the New York Public Library.\(^\text{19}\)

**Summaries of the Prologue, Book I, and Book III of Ophir de España**

As far as the first part of Montesinos’s chronicle is concerned, the Seville MS (*Ophir de España*) is the most complete, which is why I chose to transcribe this particular manuscript. Furthermore, this is the same reason I have and will continue to use it as my primary text. All ensuing summaries are derived from the Seville MS. To reiterate, *Ophir de España* is comprised of three books and a prologue. Book II has been transcribed, summarized, and scrutinized abundantly, which is why I will not recapitulate its contents here.

The prologue from *Ophir de España* is simply titled “Señor.” It consists of the front side of a single folio that is addressed to King Philip IV. Moreover, it was not written by Montesinos

\(^{19}\) For additional and detailed information on the various transcriptions of Montesinos’s original manuscripts, please see chapter three, “*Stemma codicum of the Memorias historiales,*” in *The Quito Manuscript* by Sabine Hyland.
since the calligraphy matches the second hand which is the most prevalent throughout Book II. As anticipated, the prologue briefly outlines Montesinos’s theses and intentions in writing his chronicle. To start, he explains that “Es la Hamerica el tessoro de Dios que reseruo su poder para desempeño de sus obras” (Ophir 1). He continues by emphasizing that it was first entrusted to the King of Tyre for a short time and later to Kings David and Salomon. All of these men benefited greatly from the riches of Ophir. However, the idolatrous behavior of King Solomon caused God to cut them off from the land of gold, hiding and reserving it for a future purpose. This greater purpose, according to Montesinos, was to aid the Spanish Kings in their conquest and conversion of the New World: “determino Dios se continuasse esta graçia para el mayor luçimiento de su iglesia en los Reyes catolicos quinto abuelos de [Vuestra Magestad] derecho de la divina justiçia voluer post liminium temporis despues de largos siglos” (1). Finally, Montesinos makes certain that the King of Spain knows that he was worried and wrote this chronicle in an effort to dispel the effects of envy of his venomous rivals who challenged the Spanish Monarchy’s rights to rule in America (1).

Book I is divided up into thirty-six numbered chapters and thirty-four actual chapters. That is to say, Montesinos’s chapters end with the number thirty-six, but there are only thirty-four chapters due to a few discrepancies. The first numerical inconsistency takes place between Chapters 6 and 7. Between these two chapters there is a numberless chapter titled “Capitulo.____. de Igunas inteligençias que es neçesario aduertir en los autores de libros de indias para açertar sus materias” (Montesinos, Ophir 13). A second discrepancy occurs between Chapters 7 and 12. Chapters 8-11 are missing altogether even though the pagination and narration continue without

---

20 Tyre was an ancient city discussed in the Holy Bible in chapters 26 and 28 of the book of Ezekiel. It is believed to be located somewhere within the borders of modern day Lebanon. The King of Tyre was a religious military leader.
interruption. The third numerical irregularity surfaces between chapters 28 and 30 when 29 is assigned to two separate chapters. This error happens because there is a transition from Montesinos’s hand to that of one of his scribes. Furthermore, Montesinos mistakenly writes “cap. 29.” in the bottom right-hand corner of the marginalia (62v). Apart from the discrepancies in chapter order, there are seventy-eight folios in Book I, and as indicated previously, it bears the subtitle “De las memorias antiguas historiales y políticas del Pirú.”

Essentially, Book I has three objectives that strive to support Montesinos’s overlying arguments. The first concentrates on the etymology of two historically separate locations and names, Pirú and Ophir. While creating a dialog with his contemporary historians who have addressed the Ophirian origin theory, and while attempting to formulate a coherent argument through a baroque game of word play that shifts letters around, Montesinos’s ultimate goal is to convince his readers that Ophir and Peru are actually the same word. As a second point of departure, albeit brief since it is showcased in Book II and picked back up in Book III, Montesinos focuses on the existing historical information on Ophir and Peru, slowly tries to unify them, and demonstrates how they are one and the same. At this point of the narration, Book II becomes a crucial source for his historical arguments. He draws parallels between Book II and the biblical stories of Noah, the King of Tyre, and Kings David and Salomon. Using the second argument as a segue, Montesinos enters into his third and most protracted and scientific argument of Book I. It is here where he moves to physically conjoin Peru and Ophir through arguments based on natural history and mineralogy, disciplines that would be recognized today as subsciences such as biogeography, phytogeography, mineralogy, and zoogeography. These modern scientific fields were not exactly cohesive during the seventeenth century. In fact, there were often viewed as separate. Aside from mineralogy, the rest of these disciplines likely fell
under the category of natural history, and they were in their developmental stages. Even so, Montesinos appears to be aware of their importance and utilizes them to his advantage.

Chapters 1-5 open up *Ophir de España* by concentrating on the etymology and conceivable interpretations of the word *Pirú*, an acceptable spelling variation of the territory during colonial times. Montesinos starts by analyzing the various names that were initially assigned to America. For instance, he touches on Christopher Columbus’s erroneous claim that he had arrived to the Western Indies. He also addresses the title New World that was at one point engraved on King Ferdinand’s shield: “a castilla y a Leon nuevo Mundo dio Colon” (*Ophir* 3v). While citing Abraham Ortelius, he mentions how the designation of the term New World was appropriate because it was the largest and most abundant part of the world that had been discovered up until that moment in time. In addition to these two common names, he briefly discusses other names that had been suggested by various historians. Some examples include *Atlántica, Santa Cruz, Orbis Carolinus, Ferisabelica,* and *Colonia de Colón.* He even goes so far as to propose a few names that would have been more suitable, such as *Isfernandina* (after the Catholic Kings), *Alfonsina* (after the discoverer Alonso Sánchez who was believed to have informed Columbus of the existence of the New World), and *La Angélica* (after the angels that supposedly guided Sánchez to Columbus’s house).21 As a final point, he debates how the most utilized name *America,* derived from Amerigo Vespucci and his maps, had created a significant discord among colonial historians.

Resting on this point of Amerigo, Montesinos explains that despite the large number of writers who disagree with the implementation and popularity of *America,* they are bound to it. They continue to use it in their own writings as though they were incapable of erasing it from the

---

21 With the final example, Montesinos is citing Juan de Torquemada’s *Monarquía indiana.*
books. This is because, according to him, *America* is actually an anagram of *Maria*. Montesinos details how *America* is the same as “Hec Maria con ajustamiento de letras” (*Ophir* 4v). He furthers his argument by claiming that anagrams were common practice and that Amerigo was an intelligent man who intentionally gave praises to the Virgin Mary by including her name in the title *America*.

This etymological explanation concerning the usage of *America*, as he mentions and details in latter chapters, allows Montesinos to draw a parallel between the words *Pirú* and *Ophir*, but before doing that, he begins by focusing strictly on the origins of *Pirú*. To start, he highlights the various authors, like Francisco López de Gómara, Agustín de Zárate, José de Acosta, and Gregorio García, who had discussed Francisco Pizarro’s initial contact with a Native Peruvian by the bay of San Mateo and the rivers Santiago and San Juan. He was the first Native to mention the name of the territory, *Pirú*. After discussing the opinions that were offered up by these prominent writers concerning the authenticity and appropriateness of the title *Pirú*, and after providing his readers with some geographical context, Montesinos proceeds to reveal his discovery of the mysterious auctioned-off manuscript from Lima and uses this text to explain his understanding of *Pirú*. He discloses that *Pirú* was the name of one of the ancient kings of Peru, Pirua Paccarimanco. Moreover, he mentions that it was a common name designated to the Andean creator.

In Chapter 5, Montesinos somewhat deviates from his narration to address Inca Garcilaso de la Vega’s theories concerning the name *Pirú*, since they contradict his own arguments. As reported by Garcilaso, *Pirú* was a name imposed on the Native lands by the Spaniards. When they made contact with the first Native, they were incapable of properly communicating with

---

22 An anagram is when two words or phrases share the same letters, but they are rearranged in a different order so as to create a new word.
him. Due to this, when they initially asked the Native what the name of his nation was, he quickly and erroneously responded with his own name, Pelu, which the Spaniards interpreted as Perú. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, Montesinos attempts to undermined Garcilaso’s authority and story. He even goes so far as to accuse Garcilaso of dishonesty in Comentarios reales and claims that one of his primary sources, Blas Valera, is pure fiction (Ophir 10v). He concludes by attempting to convince his readers that Pirú or Perú and Ophir or Vrphen are actually the same words when you adjust the letters and pay close attention to their etymology (11v).

Chapters 6-15 move to provide additional support for his etymological theory that Pirú and Ophir are one in the same. While chiding all previous authors who documented Andean histories, and while condemning them for supposedly utilizing conjecture to compose their chronicles, Montesinos revisits the details of his enigmatic manuscript find and explains that Noah’s descendants deliberately named the lands Ophir, after their leader. He follows up by discussing how Ophir and his people likely traveled to America, and covers some of the most common origin theories, such as passing through the Strait of Magellan or crossing the Atlantic Ocean by boat. Subsequently, he fleetingly touches on the chronicles and theories that have been previously provided by other colonial scholars like Francisco de Xerez, Francisco López de Gómara, Agustín Zárate, Pedro Cieza de León, Diego Fernández Palentino, Antonio Herrera, and Bartolomé de Las Casas, pausing on Las Casas in order to refute his notorious arguments that Native Americans were actually docile and friendly.

In Chapter 7, Montesinos returns from his tangents and begins to analyze the relationship between the words Pirú and Ophir more in depth. He carefully walks his readers through the explanation, as he uses Gregorio García and Tomaso Malvenda as a supportive sources:
la transposición de las letras, y así ajustando las de ophir, con, Piru, uiene a ser lo mismo y dira. Phiro, o Piru . . . aora se escribe y pronuncia con. V. la ultima silaba, [porque] la. O. la convirtieron en. V. los indios por ser mas acomodada a su pronunciación. y esto importa poco en quanto al nombre ophir por ser hebreo, y estos no tienen sino unos puntos en lugar de uocales. de modo, que tanto uale Ophir, como, Piro, o, Piru . . . i no haçer al caso [que] aora pronunciemos Piru con P. aspera, y [que antiguamente] se pronunciase con. Ph. suau . . . los antiguos Hebreos pronunciaban el. Ph. suau y no el. P. aspero, pero en opinion moderno dellos esto [da] una pronunciacion, y así es una misma cosa Piru, o, Phiru, o transpuesto, Vphir, o, Ophir con P. aspera, o suau por ser pronunciacion entre ellos mas o menos politica pero usada. y en los indios uemos la misma en el nombre Phirua, o, Pirua. (19v)

Following these statements, Montesinos starts to draw additional parallels between the Bible and other Indigenous names from America. For instance, he claims that when the Spaniards arrived to Tierra Firme en 1510, they ran across an Indigenous leader by the name of Tirufi. According to Montesinos, his name was a derivative of the words Pirú and Tiro, with the latter being a Spanish translation for the Phoenician city Tyre. He make a similar argument as he explicates that Hiram, the name for the biblical king of Tyre, was also written as Chiran, the name of a Panamanian river. This game of wordplay and comparison continues on in Chapters 12, 13, and 15 as Montesinos deliberates comparable American, biblical, and Western names. Specifically, he discusses similar names for provinces, cities, rivers, mountains, family names, always shifting the letters around in a baroque fashion to make certain the words match.

Names and references to gold dominate the narration in Chapter 14. Montesinos argues that both Ophir and Peru are heavily associated with the abundance of gold, another fact he feels
supports his theory that they are the same location. As he points out, “tengo por sin duda [que] los mismos naturales y pobladores al principio como uieron la tierra tan rica de oro la llamaron tierra dorada, y despues por ser tan famosa quisieron para memoria de su primer pariente ophir ponerle este nombre. que se llame tierra dorada” (Ophir 28). He furthers this claim by emphasizing that Coro, Venezuela is also another spelling for the word oro, the Spanish translation for gold. From this point, he lists several South American cities and towns that are known for their exorbitance of gold, making certain his readers see the potential connection between both Ophir and Peru every step of the way.

While delving further into the history of King Salomon, Chapter 16 sets the tone that will permeate throughout the next sixteen chapters. In Chapter 16, Montesinos examines the likely course traveled by King Solomon’s armada. He considers how the Bible details the armada’s first trip lasting three years, and uses this as evidence to argue that they must have been traveling to America, following the path set forth by the people of Tyre. Exercising narrative liberties, as he so often does, Montesinos explains the precise port of arrival, the mouth of the Amazon River, and he accentuates other possible locations they visited, such as Lake Maracaibo. Each one of the locations he postulates is supposedly reinforced by the traces they left behind. Montesinos introduces his theories concerning King Solomon’s armada in this chapter, so he can subsequently discuss all “las cosas Preçiosas que llebaban a Salomon” throughout the ensuing sixteen chapters (Ophir 33v).

From Chapter 17 to 31, Montesinos immerses himself into an in-depth comparative study. He makes every effort to convince his readers that there are an abundant amount of rare items found in the Old World that undoubtedly originated in Peru. He starts by discussing the various woods he considers to be migrant. Some of the Native Peruvian trees he mentions are
uba-piru, uitaca, taral, maria caoba, and granadillo. From rare woods, he transitions into the “piedras preciosas” that were hauled over by King Solomon’s armada (Ophir 37). He touches on pearls, emeralds, carbuncle, crystals, jaspers, and a few other rare Peruvian rocks he is unable to identify with specific names. Unsurprisingly, he proceeds by detailing the plenitude of gold and silver discovered in Peru. After pausing on precious metals for a few chapters, Montesinos then tackles the issue of ivory that was presented to King Solomon by his armada. He recognizes how the absence of elephants in America could appear to damage his primary argument. In an effort to refute future criticism, he tells a story of Spaniards discovering elephant tusks in Mexico in 1604. Furthermore, he argues that the teeth of tapirs, which have a trunk-like snout, were extracted and utilized by Indigenous populations, much like ivory. Montesinos argues that this was an ancient variety of ivory that was given to King Solomon. From this point of the narration, Montesinos continues to discuss the similarities among certain animals from Peru that were gifted to King Solomon. The abundance of monkeys and exotic birds are highlighted. Obviously, each one of these chapters provides more particulars than those briefly mentioned here. He regularly discusses explicit sites, both in Peru and in the Old World, which can be associated with each precious item. Moreover, he often cites other chroniclers or provides a personal testimony for additional backing. All of his examples are designed to create convincing parallels between Peru and the biblical stories of King Solomon. Again, he is ultimately trying to prove that Ophir is Peru.

The final four chapters of Book I deviate somewhat from the previous sixteen chapters in that they no longer focus on “cosas preciosas.” Instead, Chapter 32 mentions how the description and layout of Ophir and Peru are similar, and it reiterates some of Montesinos’s previous arguments. For instance, he reemphasizes how God bestowed Peru upon the Catholic Kings in
modern times. Chapter 33 rebuts all conflicting Ophirian theories. For example, Montesinos explains that Ophir cannot be located in India or Spain due to their noteworthy lack of gold and close proximity. Chapters 34 and 35 digress the most, since he starts to explain that the Garden of Eden (or the “Parayso de deleytes” as Montesinos calls it) is located in Peru (Ophir 75). He gives six reasons for this theory. First, he claims that both places are plentiful in beautiful plants and trees. Second, it does not rain in either of these locations. Third, each of these places must be irrigated by rivers. Fourth, both lands have four fast-flowing rivers. Fifth, the Garden of Eden and Peru are known as paradises. Sixth, when Gonzalo de Badajoz arrived to the Province of Tierra Firme, he was greeted by various chiefs that went by the name of Cherubim. As previously noted, Chapter 36 starts and ends abruptly. It is titled “Cap. 36. de los quatro Rios famosos [que] salen de la tierra del Piru” (78v). From the title and sentence included on this folio, it appears that Montesinos intended to expand his arguments concerning the similarities between Peru and the Garden of Eden.

Book III is divided up into thirty chapters, with the final chapter only including the title: “capit. 30. diçense otros suçesos Prodigiosos en prueba del intento” (Montesinos, Ophir 144). Like Book I, it appears as though Book III was still a work in progress for Montesinos. There are seventy-three folios in this book, and it is subtitled “de las memorias antiguas Historiales y Politicas del Piru.” The only difference from this title and that of Book I is the spelling variation of Peru (Pirú versus Perú). Whereas Book I focuses on histories, etymology, natural history, and minerology, in an effort to support his first thesis that Peru and Ophir are the same location,

---

23 According to Genesis, after Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they were driven out of the Garden of Eden. To prevent them from eating the fruit again and dying in sin, God commanded that the tree be protected by Cherubims and a flaming sword. All descriptions of Cherubims are mere speculation. No one knows what they look like as they are considered to be some type of heavenly beings.
Book III centers on the how and the why Ophir belongs to the Catholic Kings of Spain, which supports his second thesis. Throughout Book III, Montesinos combines Christian theology, biblical studies, and politics to ultimately assure his readers that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were preordained by God to rule and reign over the New World, expressly Peru.

Montesinos’s theses are reintroduced and developed in detail in Chapters 1 through 3. He starts out by explaining that God is the author of all things (*Ophir* 144). He continues this theological path by pointing out that God is also the “dador y distribuidor de los Imperio y Reynos,” and has chosen to gift the New World to Spain (144). Through these three chapters, nine separate supportive reasons are provided to demonstrate that this was truly the will of God. First, he claims that God placed a messenger in Christopher Columbus’s path in order to point him in the right direction. While this individual is generally believe to be Alonso Sánchez, Montesinos contends that this is merely a legend, and that no one definitively knows his true identity. Montesinos believes this was the intentional design of God, alluding to the idea of a heavenly messenger. Second, Germany and England, even after hearing word that there might be new territories to the west of Europe, chose to ignore its possible existence. Third, the Natives of the New World were predestined by God to receive his gospel at that time. Fourth, only the Catholic Kings felt moved by God to aid Columbus in his efforts to travel to the west. Fifth, the grace of God was required to liberate the Natives from the influence of the demons that had held them captive for so long. Sixth, and this is a crucial point for Montesinos (since he will dwell

---

24 While the story remains debatable (due to skepticism concerning Garcilaso’s account from *Comentarios Reales*), Alonso Sánchez, a Spanish pilot from Huelva, is believed to have traveled to the New World during the fifteenth century, at some point before Christopher Columbus. While traveling between the Canary Islands and Madera, Alonso supposedly got swept away in a storm for approximately twenty-eight days until he arrived to an unknown island somewhere in the western Atlantic Ocean. As he returned to Spain, he created various maps, and while visiting Columbus’s home, he gave them to Columbus.
upon it for several chapters), this historical event was foretold and prophesized by many individuals. Seventh, as Montesinos states, while paraphrasing the words of Pope Alexander VI from the *Dudum siquidem*, “el concederselas a los Reyes de España, es porque assi como tuvieron zelo santo en la conquista del Reyno de Granada, assi la tendrian en la convencion del nuevo mundo” (149v). 25 Eighth, Montesinos explains that all great gifts, such as the concession of the New World to Spain, come from God. He provides this supportive reason by citing the Holy Bible: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1.17). Ninth, since the influence of the Inca Empire had stretched so far and filled Native societies with wickedness and sin, such as tyranny, idolatry, and sodomy, God was forced to hand it over to the Spanish Kings to relieve them from sin.

Chapters 4 through 17 attempt to support Montesinos’s sixth reason by providing a series of biblical prophecies he claims have already come to pass through the discovery of the New World. Most of his example serve to back his argument that God planned for the Spanish Kings to one day rule over the Western Hemisphere. He utilizes the biblical stories of Isaiah, Daniel, Amos, Job, Ezra, and David as his various points of departure. I will not summarize all of the examples he affords since they are generally complex, hard to follow, and somewhat farfetched. To provide some examples, our attention can be turned to Chapter 5, titled “Ponese una Profeçia de Daniel en que se uaticina el progreso de la Hamerica, de donde se deduce auerla dado dios a los Reyes chatolics” (Montesinos, *Ophir* 154v). In this chapter, Montesinos proceeds to explain how the four beasts from Daniel’s vision of the future actually represent “la entrada de los

---

25 The *Dudum siquidem* was a papal bull granted to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella on 26 September 1493, conferring and expanding the New World territories that belonged and would belong to the Catholic Kings. This was one of several bulls, like the *Inter caetera* and the *Eximiae* (Linden 6-11).
españoles en el Piru, y sucesos de a=quellos primeros años. por las quatro bestias se entienden los quatro Reynos o las quatro partes del mundo” (155v). Since the fourth beast appears last in Daniel’s vision, Montesinos believes this represents the gospel finally arriving to America. As far as the ten horns that belonged to this beast are concerned, he interprets them as the ten Inca rulers. Further on, in Chapter 11, Montesinos discusses one of Isaiah’s prophecies concerning the people of Tyre, and he describes how they had fallen away from God and lost their faith. Due to their sinful behavior, they were prohibited from returning to Ophir for a period of seventy years. Once Ophir was returned to them, they continued with their wicked ways, and God transferred Ophir over to King David. Montesinos uses this prophecy of seventy years to reiterate how only a chosen and righteous people can maintain access to Ophir. Furthermore, he questions and points out the following:

Diçe Pues el profeta que esta negocioación e interes que santifico Dios. para si que fue la del oPhir esa la dio a los que auitan en presencia suya quien pues son estos? sino los Reyes de España que sienpre estan perseuerantes en çelar la honrra de Dios sinque admita tan continuo tenor pequeña intercadencia donde es de adbertir que quando la [señora] trata del descubrimento y predicación evangelica en esta america por orden de los Reyes de españa les da Titulos notables como es este de que auitan delante del señor sienpre propio dote de los bien aventurados. (171-71v)

In the end, he rehashes his second thesis once again, that the Catholic Kings have been specifically selected by God due to their continuously righteous behavior and actions. As a final example, in Chapter 17 Montesinos highlights two parts of a foretelling by David. First, David revealed that one day all the gentiles would be redeemed, and second, that they would all be converted and recongregated to the house of God. Unsurprisingly, Montesinos details how this
prophecy was partially fulfilled through Spain’s arrival to the New World and through Spain’s efforts to convert all of its Indigenous peoples.

After Montesinos concludes his discussion of prophecies, he begins a comparative study in Chapters 18 to 21. During the course of these four chapters, he likens the Spanish armadas to those of King Salomon. To start, he steadfastly deliberates how Salomon’s men were true sailors with a profound knowledge of maritime travel. He likewise explains how King Salomon and the Catholic Kings were not only virtuous people, they were also the greatest leaders of their time. They made certain to select only the wisest and most experienced and trustworthy sailors to travel to Ophir. Another similarity these armadas shared were the maritime conflicts they were confronted with. They regularly had to protect their cargo from being seized by their enemies. Finally, he covers how both King David and the kings of Spain made certain that all the profits and riches of Ophir were employed for constructing sacred places, preaching the gospel, and expelling the iniquitous.

Chapters 22 through 25 revisit Montesinos’s arguments concerning the prophecies of David from Chapter 17 to once again reemphasize the significance of the role of the Catholic Kings in evangelizing the American-Indigenous populous. These chapters allow Montesinos to clarify how the Catholic Kings were chosen to be the captain and guard of God and His church here on the earth. According to Montesinos, all kings of Spain are charged with executing justice, fulfilling the divine commands of God, and vanquishing all of the Lord’s foes. Additionally, these chapters provide a much more in-depth analysis of David’s visions, unfailingly citing the Bible and always making sure to underline how the Catholic Kings have fulfilled each divinations. Montesinos regularly praises the Catholic Kings, along with their successors, and makes a special point of noting how the Spanish rulers are unselfish individuals.
when it comes to the riches of the New World, despite their ability to control the wealth and keep it for themselves.

The remaining chapters are less structured and a little more random than the rest of Book III. Nevertheless, they retain the same narrative goal, to prove that the Spanish Monarchy rightfully owns the New World. What sets the final four chapters apart is their increasing political and dogmatic tone. Chapter 26 picks up where Chapter 3 left off, highlighting the significance of the papal bull that was set forward by Pope Alexander VI. Montesinos stresses how this appointment was necessary since so many barbarous individual, in his words, were drowning in sin without the light of Christ (Ophir, 207). In addition to this exhaustive point, Montesinos also emphasizes that Alexander VI was not just any man, he was the “suçessor de San Pedro y vicario de christo y en las dos llaues que se le entregaron le dieron plena potestad” (207v). As such, he was justified in his ordination of the Catholic Kings. Chapter 27 follows a similar train of thought in that it moves to provide sources that uphold the legal authority given by Alexander VI. In order to provide support for his legal and dogmatic narrative, Montesinos cites various agreeing authors, like Juan de Anania, Rutilo Benzonio, Cesare Baronius, to name a few. With all of his textual examples, Montesinos reiterates how the authority of Alexander VI is intertwined with that of God. Next, in Chapter 28, he once more recaps why God chose to preserve America for the Catholic Kings. He explains how Spain was prepared to put an end to the unceasing idolatrous behavior of America’s Native peoples and halt the influence of Satan and his minions. Finally, Chapter 29 begins to discuss how the Catholic Kings were the only worthy monarchs when God chose to reveal America to the rest of the world. In agreement with Montesinos, the other European rulers were unfit because of their protestant behavior. That is to say, in this chapter as he concludes his draft of Book III, he makes a strong point of verbally
assaulting protestant rulers, all the while stressing how the Catholic Kings were the only rulers capable of taking on the might of Satan in the New World. He repeatedly makes it clear that all events and designations of authority took place according to the will and design of God.

**A Biblical Andean Past**

As was mentioned in the introduction, Book II has served as the focal point for the vast majority of studies on Montesinos. He is generally viewed as either a creative and misleading colonial story teller or as a fortunate buyer at an auction who happened upon one of the rarest versions of pre-Inca history. Whatever the case, there are certain narrative components of Book II that cannot be denied or ignored, that neatly and curiously support Montesinos’s ancestral merging of pre-Inca and Christian histories. While still hinging on a lack of actual proof, they suggest that Montesinos may have had a heavy hand in the creation of Book II. At the very least, they indicate that he hired someone to write the story this way, or he diligently sought out a specific version of pre-Inca history that had already been composed by a third party. Regardless, the supportive components of Book II seem way too coincidental, and I am not the only scholar to recognize them. Sabine Hyland and Juha J. Hiltunen have briefly and sporadically touched on some of these correlations. However, they have yet to be analyzed in their entirety and placed into context, which is the goal of this section. Most of the Book II complementary components are biblical. By way of explanation, Montesinos’s Andean past mimics the Bible at various levels, thus making Montesinos’s theories seem like more of a reality. Structurally, it imitates the Bible through its genealogical wording/order and by way of providing readers with a conforming biblical chronology. Thematically, Book II emulates the Bible in that it includes prophetic leaders and a fluctuating social moral.
Undeniably, one of Montesinos’s biggest claims is that Native Peruvians are descendents of Noah; “digo que el Piru y los demas de la Hamerica la poblaron Ofir nieto de noe y sus descendientes, los cuales dende el oriente uinieron haçiendo sus poblaciones hasta el Piru ultima tierra del mundo respecto del uiaje que traian” (Ophir 12). His theory does not stop here. He continues by explaining that Noah’s descendants named the mineral abundant land Ophir in memory of their first father’s name. He states that communication and trade continued between Ophir and the Old World, specifically during the time of Kings David and Solomon (12). As has been pointed out, all of Book I and III attempt to prove this theory through a wide array of arguments. What is missing in both of these books is historical proof. Montesinos himself recognizes the challenges of his assertion which is why he directly says, “No es pequeña conjetura la del nombre Piru para sacar de ella auer sido el ofir” (19v). Each one of his narrative advances venture to break down his theoretical obstacles. It seems as though he was aware of how puzzling some of his opinions and evidences were, which is why he required Book II.

With that said, Book II is his narrative cornerstone. It picks up right where his theory leaves off. Chapter I, “del modo con que al principio se intoduxo el señorio y mando entre los Indios del Piru,” begins with a discussion of how Ophir was the first to populate America and is followed up by a brief chronological debate and summary. In keeping with Montesinos, “segun lo que [pudo] averiguar seria los seisientos años despues del dilubio, se llenaron todas estas Prouinçias de moradores” (Ophir 80). He continues by stating that six hundred years after the flood, Noah realized how overpopulated Armenia had become, so he commanded his descendants to divide and populate the world, which is how Ophir ended up in South America. His explicit chronological observations and deliberations stop after the third paragraph; however, throughout the Andean historical narration, the chronology, or the “computacion de los tiempos”
as Montesinos calls it, is constantly referenced and documented. Not surprisingly, it almost perfectly matches the biblical timeline. Chapter 7 of Book II describes the following regarding the functionality of the timeline:

> la comuptación de los tiempos que se iba, estinguendo la renob de modo que en tiempo deste rey se contauan los años comunes de 356 dias y oras y luego, por decadas dando a cada decada diez años y cada decada de 100 y cada diez decadas de ciento mill años llamandole Capac huata o intip huantan que quiere decir el gran año del sol por esto contaban los siglos y reynos, por los años magnos solares. (96-96v)

Given these figures, a *Capac huata* or *intip huata* was understood as one thousand years. Moreover, the one-thousand year period was broken down by tenths. They had one-hundred and ten year periods. Each year consisted of three hundred and fifty-six days. In Chapter 11, the data pertaining to the Andean calendar is elaborated upon by the narrator and historically adjusted by Ayay Manco. It is pronounced here, by Ayay Manco and the *amautas*, that the previously utilized lunar method would be discontinued and that a system of ten day weeks and thirty day months would be employed (105). There is also mention of the five-hundred year *Pachacuti* and the leap year, which would include the extra annual days.

The timeline from Book II is precise and is neatly strategized during the course of the narration. Through a careful reading and plotting of the Book II timeline, it is apparent that it corresponds to Christian chronology. It appears to roughly match the creation of the world, the flood, and the resurrection of Christ as can be deduced from the following quote, “Díçen los Amuatas que al segundo año del reynado de Manco capac se cumplió el 4o sol. de la creación que son quatro mill años poco menos y 200900 y tantos despues del dilubio general y contando año por año Viene a ser el Primero del nacimiento de Christo, Señor [nuestro]” (Montesinos,
While Hyland continues to reject Montesinos as the author of Book II, she does note that “the particular dates used by the amautas in Montesinos’s anonymous source reveal a strong Christian influence” (The Quito 89). I agree with the Christian influence remark; however, I would argue here that the Christian presence could have been produced by Montesinos. Again, part of his main argument in Ophir de España is that Native Andeans are Noah’s and Ophir’s descendants. If he wanted his theory to be successful, he would have been persuaded to provide his readers with a matching timeline. This is clearly achieved in Book II.

Tightly intertwined with the Andean chronology lies another biblical component of Book II, which is its unique and long list of ninety-three pre-Incan rulers. In other words, as I have mentioned previously, Montesinos affords us the lengthiest complete Andean genealogy known to date. The vast majority of Spanish colonial chroniclers only recorded the Incan rulers and consistently blamed the lack of ancestral knowledge on Andean oral traditions. As will be seen in what follows, Montesinos’s list is advantageous to his Ophirian theory for two reasons.

Although the first reason is the most noticeable and merits little elaboration, it is crucial and must be touched upon. Montesinos simply required a lengthy genealogy to support his theory. If he planned on moving forward with his chronicle, and if he intended on obtaining favor from King Philip IV, he knew his chronicle would have to be convincing. What better way to do this than to include the most extensive Andean lineage ever. A list as long as Montesinos’s could potentially prove that Native American ancestry went clear back to the time of Noah. The list alone does not substantiate much; nevertheless, the way it is written does. Some of the stories included in the ancestral history seem to combine traditional pre-Hispanic Andean myths with an

---

26 For additional information concerning the Andean calendar from Book II, I highly recommend chapter 10 from Hyland’s book, The Quito Manuscript. She provides a detailed analysis of the parallels between the Christian timeline and the Andean chronology.
uncanny newness. Take for example the origin story of Book II. It begins somewhat like the all too familiar Ayar brothers myth but with its own variations. This version likewise presents us with four Ayar brothers (Ayar Manco Topa, Ayar Chachi Topa, Aiar Auca Topa, and Ayar Uchu) and four Ayar sisters (Mama Cora, Hipa Huacum, Mama Huacum, and Pilco Acum) who make their way to and eventually inhabit Cuzco. While there are several dissimilarities, there are two that stand out the most and strongly support Montesinos’s theory. First, unlike most of the Ayar brothers myths, the eight siblings do not emerge from a cave called Paqariq Tampu within the Andean region. Instead they just arrive to a place near Cuzco; “llegaron los primeros cerca del paraxe que oy es El cuzco en tropa y forma de familia” (Montesinos, Ophir 80). “llegaron” is a key word in this sentence because it is ambiguous and open for interpretation. What it appears to imply is that they did not belong to the land like the Ayar brother who rose up from it in most versions; and, that they were foreigners. Such a detail as this complements the theory that Ophir and Peru arrived to Peru/Ophir. It cannot be forgotten that, according to Montesinos, Ophir and Peru are the same word; “del nombre Piru, y Ofir nombres transpuestos, pero una mesma cosa en la signification” (4v). Second, it must not be forgotten that the first Andean leader among the ninety-three, Topa Ayar Uchu, was also commonly called Pirua or Phirua.

A second reason the ancestral list is beneficial to Montesinos lies within its organization. Many of the ninety-three pre-Inca rulers are only named while their detailed biographical information is omitted. Typically when this occurs, others follow. Put differently, a simple pedigree chart of several or many names is provided. The manner in which the names are written and included seem to imitate biblical pedigree charts. Just as Hyland points out, “Yet the extremely long history of kings, from father to son, echoes the biblical genealogies from Adam to Abraham and beyond, to include the pre-Israelite kings” (The Quito 102). Borrowing concepts
from Dell Hymes, she argues that the pedigree chart sections utilize a type of measured verse (101). Hyland is so convinced of this fact that she places these repetitive structures in verse within her transcription of Book II. We can compare the Bible with Book II, side by side, in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book II (Hyland Transcription Sample)</th>
<th>The Bible (Genesis Chapter 36)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Cosque Huaman Titu sucedió Cuyo Manco; reynó 50 años.</td>
<td>32 Bela hijo de Beor reinó en Edom; y el nombre de su ciudad fue Dinaba.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A este sucedió Huica Titu; reynó 30; sucedióle Sairi Tupa; reynó 40; sucedióle Topa Yupanqui, 1º deste nombre; reynó 25. (129)</td>
<td>33 Y murió Bela, y reinó en su lugar Jobab hijo de Zera, de Bosra. 34 Y murió Jobab, y en su lugar reinó Husam, de la tierra de Temán. 35 Y murió Husam, y reinó en su lugar Hadad hijo de Bedad. (29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.** A biblical comparison with Book II from *Ophir de España.*

Genesis contains numerous examples of ancestral lists; however, Chapter 36 is the best sample because it specifically refers to kings and uses the verb reign. A Spanish biblical quote has been include in this chart to further highlight their similarities.

It seems to me that this organizational and syntactic resemblance was non-coincidental. I believe this to be the possible handiwork of Montesinos. His inclusion of an Andean genealogy that mimics the Bible creates a biblical undertone familiar to his would-be Spanish readers during the seventeenth century. Moreover, it would have caused them to feel as though they were

---

27 She quotes from *Now I Know Only So Far: Essays in Ethnopoetics* (2003) by Hymes.
reading a biblical story. Since Montesinos was trying to establish a biblically-rooted narrative, this is the type of sensation he would have wanted to afford. As will be seen hereafter, this is not the only element of Book II that mimics the Bible.

Two of the primary and most repetitive themes found in Book II also appear to yield a biblical undertone that aid Montesinos’s theoretical cause. Book II includes what I will refer to as prophetic-like kings and a fluctuating social moral. Both of these themes begin with Phirua (aka Ophir) and resurface regularly during the course of twenty-eight chapters. Although not identical, from the start it can be seen that Phirua shares some of the same characteristics portrayed in biblical prophets. As would be expected, he instructs his followers to be righteous; “Después de haer OPhir poblado la America, ynstruyo a sus hijos y nietos en el temor de Dios y obseruançia de la ley natural” (Montesinos, Ophir 79). Likewise, without force, they feel persuaded to obey him out of love and respect; “hera tanto el rrespecto que tenian al Padre y al hijo que sus palabras y mandatos heran ovedeçidos como leyes imbiolables y sin que ninguno c osasse. a rreplicar. a ellas” (81v). Phirua himself is exemplarily moral and shadows the Christian model; “Phirua manco fue el primero que Reyno en el Cuzco y no era ydolatra sino que adoraua al Dios del Patriarca Noe y sus desçendientes no tubo otros Dios sino al criahdor del mundo” (81v).

Both of these initial themes and Christian-like qualities do not stop with Phirua. They reappear many times and are continuously associated with his male heirs. Concerning these themes, there are several textual examples. To highlight just a few, we can first look towards Inti Cape Yupanqui, Sinchi Cozque’s son. After Phirua’s death, his son, Manco Capac reigns in his stead and is confronted with political tensions that continue on through the reign of a few kings. By the time Sinchi become the ruler, civil wars break out and Phirua’s descendants (Sinchi and
Inti) fear they will lose control of Cuzco. Inti, the prince at this time, receives prophetic revelation from the Sun (Illatici Huiracocha, whom Book II refers to as the God of Noah, the Creator of the World). He is told that they should go to battle without fear, implying they will be protected by Illatici. Needless to say, he resourcefully fights, wins, regains absolute power, and the will of Illatici is restored. During Inti’s reign, he builds and dedicates a temple to Illatici; nonetheless, he makes one grave mistake that leads to social corruption. He permits the usage if idols; “no pohiuiendo los ydolos que ellos tenian para los suscesos particulares; cossa que despues vino en grande corrupción” (Montesinos, *Ophir* 93). From here there is a moral decline that is not recovered until Chapter 10.

In this chapter, the Peruvians are mentioned as having “oluidados de buenas costumbres y dados a todo genero de viçios” (Montesinos, *Ophir* 101). It is inferred in the narrative that due to their moral status, the Sun (God) punishes them by hiding his light from them for a twenty hour period. When his brightness is reinstated, they rejoice and the current king, Titu Yupanqui Pachacuti reforms the kingdom. While details are lacking, the totality of this episode seems to suggest that morality and order are revitalized anew.

Once again, during the 24th king’s reign, Marasco Pachacuti, it is mentioned that idolatrous behavior grew strong by barbarous groups. Following the trend and model of his predecessors, Marasco battles against the iniquitous in the name of the Sun, triumphs, and reforms society again (Montesinos, *Ophir* 104). With little surprise at this point in the narration, moral decay befalls the Peruvian people yet again until the prophetic-like King Sinchi Apusqui, who is so righteous that he is named after Illatici Huiracocha, restores moral order; “hiço grandes leyes contra los ladrones adulteros incendarios y mentirosos y los mando executar con tanto rigor que en su tiempo no vbo quien mintiesse ni hurtase ni fuese adultero” (104v). Very similar
stories of immorality followed by renewal transpire during the rule of Titu Yupanqui, Topa Cauri Pachacuti, Conдорoca, Inca Rroca, and Igna Sinchi Rroca. After Igna governs, gradual moral decay is briefly and sporadically brought up in the text, but as a dominant theme it fades away and is replaced by stories of Inca conquest. No final moral restoration is ever discussed.

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from these analogous stories. First, they demonstrate that the narration is not as complex as one might think. Names and details change, but the plot is highly repetitive and unoriginal. Furthermore, while social restructuring in not entirely unheard of in Andean myths, a constant cyclical moral reform is. This is a type of reoccurrence primarily associated with Old Testament biblical stories. God chooses a prophet, (Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc...), they strive to worship Him, keep His commandments, and lead a righteous society. Despite all of their efforts, immorality eventually consumes and disrupts the social order, and then the cycle repeats. Second, the returning moral structures appears to indicate that God loved and watched over His children. He did not simply abandon Noah’s grandson (Ophir) along with all of his descendants. As mentioned at the start of Book II, they followed the natural law. Third, the reason moral stories trickle off towards the very end of Book II, when the last few Incan rulers reign, is because it was common knowledge for Montesinos’s prospective seventeenth-century Spanish readers. From their perspective, everyone would have been aware of the idolatrous and sinful behavior that flourished in the Inca Empire. So, one might ask, what was the point of ending the story with ongoing Inca conquests and no final moral restoration? The objective was to show how there was a need to be filled. Incan kings

28 Pachacuti is a perfect example who appears in most of the documented Inca histories. He is recognized for having totally reformed Cuzco into Tawantinsuyo.
29 When I say natural law, I am referring to the common Thomas Aquinas Catholic thought. This philosophy was dominant during colonial times. It followed that the natural man knows right from wrong and is capable of seeking out God and righteousness without actually knowing of Him. According to this thought, it was and is believed that man is spiritually connected to God.
conquered and vastly expanded their empire to prepare the way so that the Spaniards, under God’s divine command, could restore order. However, this renewal would be completely different then the last. A society who spent thousands of years struggling to fulfill the Law of Moses, would now be provided and blessed with the Law of Christ, thanks to the Spaniards.

All of these possible conclusions concerning the two central themes of prophetic-like kings and a fluctuating social moral, along with conforming biblical pedigree charts and a timeline that matches Christian chronology, suggest that Book II is not authentically Andean and that a Christian author was heavily involved with the tampering of Andean history. This author may have been none other than Montesinos. Book II is not merely a long and unique Andean history. In part, it was designed to echo the Bible, making readers feel as though they are reading a history about Noah’s descendants. Likewise, it justifies the Spanish conquest and the need for evangelization and a final moral restoration. Both of these are evidently two of Montesinos’s primary objectives throughout Ophir de España, as has been noted in my summaries of Books I and III.

Additional Non-Biblical Supportive Themes

Before concluding this section, there are a few other components within Book II that also appear to indirectly validate some of Montesinos’s arguments. In Book I he vehemently refutes arguments made by Bartolomé de Las Casas because by the early seventeenth century the debate of Spain’s illegitimate sovereignty over America and the cruelty towards the Indigenous populations still lingered. Some proselytizing Spanish writers in the New World “continued to write criticisms of the way in which the Spanish were treating them. These writings reinforced Las Casa’s views” (Muldoon 28). The survival of this debate is, to some extent, what urges Montesinos to promote his Ophirian theory. For the same reason, this is why he verbally attacks
Las Casas’s claim that Native Americans were and are not docile and innocent individuals. To prove his point, he tells us how a group of Indigenous people “mataron a los religiosos de s. Francisco, a [su] primo, y a otros ocho amigos” (Ophir 15). He continues this story by saying:

Entre el primer suceso [que] acaecio en el año de 15. y este [que] yo uide y paso aier pudiera referir quatro mil deste genero, pero como esta esperiencia es ia tan aduertida de todos no es neçesario cansarme en contar las grandes crueldades, ingratudes, traiciones, y Barbaridades destos indios [que] se uen en su trono y sin sugeçion a los castellanos. y esta es proporiçion llana, asentada, y uerdadera. (15v)

Montesinos’s goal with this story, and other similar stories he tells, is to demonstrate how violent and barbarous the Andeans can be, alluding to the necessity for Spanish sovereignty. As one might imagine, Book II reinforces these statements made by Montesinos. The number of wars that take place in Book II seem infinite. Like some of the biblical themes, bloodshed is a constant reoccurring topic. Barbarous groups habitually rise up against Noah’s ruling descendants, forcing them to go to battle. Frequently, the narrator refers to these wars as “guerras sangrientas” (118v).

Another possible supportive element from Book II is the incorporation of a writing system. Book II discusses how Noah’s descendants used quillqa for thirty-five hundred years to write and keep records; “hauia letras y caracteres en pergamino y oxas de arboles hasta que todo ser perdio de ay a 400 años” (Montesinos, Ophir 106). The quillqa writing system was supposedly utilized from Ophir’s arrival all the way up until Topa Cauri Pachacuti received a revelation from Illatici Huiracocha, instructing him to terminate writing. Illatici believed that the prevalent iniquitous conduct of society was a learned behavior caused by the quillqa. Due to this, letters were never used again and they were replaced by the quipus knot system. Despite the loss of the quillqa, we are informed that history and knowledge were not lost. In Chapter 7, the
narrator explains that even though the quillqa were no longer used, “se dauan los chasquis los recaudos el uno a el otro y los anprehendian muy bien” (95v). From quillqa, to memory, to quipus, the narrator of Book II wanted to make it clear that Andean history and stories were preserved. This backs Montesinos’s claim and it supports the existence of Book II.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this chapter has been an attempt to contextualize Ophir de España, since the vast majority of studies on Montesinos have centered heavily on Book II and have commonly overlooked the entirety of the colonial chronicle. Prior to my work, research, and this chapter, Ophir de España as a whole had remained largely untranscribed and infrequently deliberated. One of my aims has been that of reunifying Montesinos’s chronicle. Before I could begin and pursue a scholarly debate on the designs and intentions of Ophir de España in my subsequent chapters, it was necessary to provide my intellectual audience with background, summaries, and framework. This is precisely why I shared my experiences transcribing Books I and III, offered brief summaries on both of these books and the prologue, and addressed the likelihood that Book II is a Christianized version of pre-Columbus history that may have been exposed to Montesinos’s meddlesome hand. Through the duration of this chapter, it should have become evident that Montesinos’s complete work, from the prologue, through Chapter II, and right to the end of Chapter III, revolves around a single mission. He is trying to convince his readers and narratee, Philip IV, that Peru and Ophir are the exact same geographical location, and as such he wants us to recognize that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were preordained by God to rule and reign over the New World because their imperial power was comparable to that of Kings David and Solomon. In the next two chapters, I will expound upon Montesinos’s mission and theses, detail what motivated him to write his version
of Peruvian history, and specify why he felt it was necessary to defend the legal rights of the Spanish Monarchy during the seventeenth century.
CHAPTER 2

FERNANDO DE MONTESINOS, SCIENCE, AND HIS AUTHORIAL MOTIVATION

In 1645 Montesinos wrote his second memorial to King Philip IV in an effort to sell his method for consuming less mercury during the process of amalgamation, which he regularly refers to as his “secreto” (Señor, El licenciado 2) His memorial declares the following, “Ofrece el dicho D. Fernando remedio cierto y verdadero, experimentado ciêto y mas vezes hasta su perfecta execucion, a prueba de la evidencia, para que esta scoria se buelva en su primero ser de açogue, y se recoja sin que se pierda vn atomo de lo que se echò para el Beneficio, con material poco costoso” (1). In accordance with Montesinos, he had diligently prepared this new technique for the financial benefit of Spain, America, and the Catholic Church. Still, in return for revealing his secret he did request “doze mil ducados de renta perpetua en plata, puestos en España, ò en lugar dellos, a seis por ciento de lo que se apreciare que puede tener de aumento la Real Hazienda, situado esto que assi se apreciare en la caxa Real de Lima” (4). Although this may seem like a steep price, and while Montesinos may appear as an avaricious individual, there is a hidden story that lies beneath this demand. What most do not know is that he spent the better part of approximately fifteen years working in the American mines as a mineralogist and metallurgist perfecting his craft. Furthermore, he diligently produced a handful of books that centered on related subjects. Regardless of what the Spanish Crown thought about his new method, Montesinos felt justified in his request because he had done his due diligence and dedicated seemingly endless hours and years to mining and amalgamation. Even though he never wrote this down on paper, by the time he had returned to Spain in 1643, Montesinos no longer perceived himself as an ecclesiastical. Instead he presented himself as a knowledgeable mineralogist, metallurgist, and scholar.
Since 1840, Montesinos has largely been scrutinized as a pre-Inca chronicler and historian. His intentions in writing the longest version of Andean history have been questioned and embraced. Yet, as I have discussed previously, little attention has been given to his motives and reasons for including Book II in *Ophir de España* and writing the entire chronicle. Below the surface of the pages, text, theses, and arguments of this remarkable book, rests a professional colonial metallurgist and scientist, a man who was deeply passionate about mining, mineralogy, and metallurgy and allowed this interest to drive and influence his life and literary works. During the course of this chapter, I will demonstrate that these statements are true. First, I will provide the most extensive bibliography yet on Montesinos’s life and accentuate his scientific undertakings. Second, I will summarizes and explain what it is that makes him a mineralogist and metallurgist while featuring a few other authors that published books on these subjects during the seventeenth century. Additionally, I will briefly touch on the two separate mining traditions that influenced Montesinos, the European and Andean. Third, I will reveal how his scientific interests were not restricted to mineralogy and metallurgy because *Ophir de España* is deeply influenced by scientific thought and natural history. The goal of this chapter is to prove that Montesinos was profoundly invested on various levels in American mining, mineralogy, and metallurgy. By making this point clear, we will be better able to understand why Montesinos wrote *Ophir de España*, and why he was so concerned with preserving and protecting Spain’s rights in the New World, more specifically their continual access to American mines.

**Fernando de Montesinos’s Biography**

Fernando (Felix) de Montesinos’s family originated near the rocky and often snowcapped Mountains of Leon in northwestern Spain, but he was born around 1598 and brought up in the
small town of Osuña, Spain in the southwestern region of Andalusia. When Montesinos came of age, he studied Canon Law at Colegio-Universidad de la Purísima Concepción in Osuña and eventually obtained his licentiate (Hyland, The Quito 11). Sometime around 1627, the Archdiocese of Seville ordained Montesinos a priest, and shortly thereafter his petition and license to travel to Peru were granted by the soon-to-be president of the Audiencia Real of Charcas, Don Martín de Egües (Angulo xiii; Montesinos, Autos 61v). Accompanied by Egües and Count Luis Jerónimo de Cabrera, Montesinos set sail from Cadiz in the beginning of 1628, and on 19 June of that same year, their ship landed at Cartagena (Hiltunen 166; Montesinos, Servicios 417). From Cartagena he traveled on through Portobello, Panama and Paita, Peru, before settling in Trujillo for a time in 1629 (Angulo xiii; Montesinos, Servicios 417). In Montesinos’s first memorial to King Philip IV, the following is explained concerning his arrival to Trujillo, “auiendo llegado a la Ciudad de Truxillo, el Obispo tuuo noticia de la virtud y letras del dicho Licenciado Don Fernando, y le pidio con instancia al Presidente [Egües] le dexasse en su compañía, y le hizo su Secretario, y Rector del Collegio Seminario, en que se ocupò hasta la muerte del Obispo” (Servicios 417). His prestigious and coveted ecclesiastical appointments by Bishop Carlos Marcelo Corni Velázquez in Trujillo were not simultaneous. He first served as his secretary and was later called to be rector. Despite his quick clerical assent, Montesinos did not remain in Trujillo long because Bishop Corni became entangled in a heated episcopacy dispute and passed away shortly thereafter in 1629 (Means 403; Montesinos, Anales 236-38).

30 Montesinos’s approximate birth year is indirectly revealed in Autos Alonso de Alarcon albaçea de Melchior Ramirez difunto contra el licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos sobre mas de quatro mil pesos procedidos de mercadurias quel dicho difunto le remitio para que vendiese when he explains that he is “treynta y nueve años poco mas o menos” (17v). He provides us with this information in 1637, making 1598 his probable birth year. It should also be noted that Montesinos specifically and proudly points out that his family or originated from the Mountains of Leon in Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos Presbítero (417). He most likely makes this reference in an effort to underscore his ancient Christian bloodline and separate himself from the predominant Muslim heritage in Osuña.
Considering Bishop Corni’s troubles and the “emnity and ill will still lingering in the diocese,” Montesinos quickly departed Trujillo and made his way down to Potosi in 1630 (Hyland, *The Quito* 13). While living in Potosi, he was granted the benefice of Santa Barbara and served as parish priest: “por sus letras se le dio el seruicio del Curato de aquella Villa, en ausencia del Licenciado Don Diego Zambrana de Villalobos, entónces Cura, y aora Obispo de la Concepcion de Chile, en que se ocupò vn año” (Angulo xx-xxi; Montesinos, *Servicios* 417). It was right around this same time that Montesinos started developing a deep and enduring passion for mining. Giving up his illustrious ecclesiastical duties in Potosi, he started exploring the various ways by which miners could make use of the ongoing stock piles of *negrillos*. He explains his rationale in his first memorial, *Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos Presbítero*:

> Y viendo que los metales de plata llamados Negrillos, eran abundantísimos, de que están las Cordilleras y Cerros llenos, y que se dexauan de beneficiar por la dificultad de la quema, y que por beneficiarse sin entederla, por no auer otros, se perdia casi todo el açogue, plata y tiempo, tratò de buscar el remedio de ello. (417)

In this same section of Montesinos’s memorial, he continues by explaining that he spent two years in an unmentioned mine working closely with the extraction of silver from *negrillos* with mercury, contemporarily known as pan amalgamation. Moreover, he highlights that he researched *negrillos* for an unspecified period of time in some mines near Rauma during his tenure in Lima, Peru.\(^31\) From around 1631 up through 1638, Montesinos makes it evident that he was involved in the mining industry and he was writing his first two-volume text, *Arte del beneficio* (417). The first part of this text was published in 1638 under the title “Beneficio común

\(^{31}\) The Rauma Mines are approximately eighty miles northeast of Lima, Peru.
o directorio de beneficiadores de metales y artes de ellos, con reglas ciertas para los negrillos,” while the second part was never printed and remains a lost manuscript today.

The general consensus among colonial scholars who have dedicated noteworthy portions of their time to Montesinos, has been that these eight years, from the time he left Potosi through his stay in Lima, are the most challenging to trace (Angulo XV; Hiltunen 167; Hyland, The Quito 15). In fact, Montesinos himself offers up little information concerning this interlude in his Servicios to King Philip IV, and there is an exceptional reason for this omission. This is the period that he was confronted with criminal charges in Arica, Chile and Lima, Peru. From 1635-1636, Montesinos was living in the Mining Camp of Chocaya, near Potosi, working in the Chocaya Mines. He resided and had his estates in this region (Autos 19-19v). In all likelihood, these were some of the mines he was researching when he wrote the first part of Arte del beneficiio. During Montesinos’s stay in Chocaya, he appears to have regularly travelled back and forth from Arica. This is probably due to the fact that Arica was a popular port for silver export from Potosi. Montesinos references this town in Book I of Ophir de España, where he claims to have met a man from Timana in Arica in 1635 who showed him some prized carbuncles (44). Arica is also the location where Montesinos’s legal troubles originated.

In what follows, I will summarize the legal events surrounding Montesinos’s time in Chocaya, Arica, and Lima, Peru before proceeding with what remains of his biographical information. As mentioned beforehand in the introduction of this dissertation, the AAL legal documents titled Autos Alonso de Alarcon albaçea de Melchior Ramirez difunto contra el liçenciado don Fernando de Montesinos sobre mas de quatro mil pesos procedidos de mercadurias quel dicho difunto le remitio para que vendiese have for the most part remained
buried until now. While these sorts of legal disputes were not uncommon in seventeenth-century Peru, this particular case is revealing because it affords additional details concerning Montesinos’s rather obscured life. Moreover, it exposes a gloomier side of his visit to the New World, an expedition that has been thought of as being filled with perpetual adventure, exploration, and metallurgical research (Hyland, *The Quito* 15).

On 8 May 1635, a merchant from Arica, Peru by the name of Melchior Ramírez Vaio fell ill and decided to write his last will and testament before his scribe, Miguel de León. Within this testament, he appointed his wife, Doña María Calderón, and his son-in-law, Alonso de Alarcón, as general executors. As local executors of Arica, Peru, he named Gonzalo Gómez del Moral and Juan Rodríguez Barreto. Concerning his estates in the Mining Camp of Chocaya, Fernando de Montesinos, who had supposedly become an established resident of this region, was charged with the following responsibilities:

\[
\text{de afiançar para dar quenta con pago de lo que en su poder entrare a la dicha mi muxer y su hierno el mio y en esta conformidad les doy poder para que entren en mis vienes y los vendan en almoneda puvlica o fuera della den cartas de pago con renunçiação y leyes del entrego y parescan en xuyçio y hagan los autos e delixenssias que convengan hasta que tenga efecto lo contenido en este testamento}
\]

---

32 The vast majority of scholars on Montesinos have had no contact with these documents. This is probably due to their remote location and the lack of a digital archive in the AAL. Once again, Barraza Lescano saw the *Autos* and briefly mentioned them in a footnote.

33 Melchior Ramírez was born in Lepe, Spain. He was raised by his parents, Juan Vaio and Manuela de San Juan. By the time he wrote this testament, he was a resident of San Marcos, Arica, Peru.

34 Montesinos’s true residency is a point of debate throughout his civil and criminal cases.
Montesinos was expected to consolidate a large load of merchandise, including various bundles of tobacco, which was hauled to him by Antonio Rodríguez de Acosta’s mule trade prior to the execution of the will. While the quantity and itemization of the testator Melchior Ramírez’s merchandize is inconsistent throughout the documented legal proceedings, the general consensus was that it amounted to more than 4,000 pesos. Once everything was auctioned off and accounted for, all remaining “vienes deudas derechos y acciones” were to be transferred to Melchior Ramírez’s children and designated beneficiaries: Juan, Jusepe, María, and Melchora (3).

Approximately eight months after Melchoir Ramírez’s death, on 19 February 1636, Montesinos arrived to Arica, Peru where he was officially apprehended by Gonzalo Gómez de Moral and imprisoned in the main cathedral of Arica. He allegedly refused to account for and report the belongings of Melchior Ramírez for a period of four months, and he was attempting to return to Castile, Spain with the Chocaya estate. According to Gonzalo Gómez’s brother, Juan Domínguez de Moral, it was publically announced and mandated by the vicar of Arica, Juan Correal de Quevedo, that Montesinos be excommunicated from the Catholic Church (Autos 12–12v). Criminalized and anathematized by local church authorities, Montesinos escaped from the sacristy of the main cathedral, where he was being held, and hide himself in a fishing boat that was headed north to Lima, Peru. He purportedly still had intentions of returning to Spain.

Almost a year later, on 21 April 1637, Alonso de Alarcón opened a second criminal and civil case against Montesinos in Lima, Peru (Figure 12). He petitioned Fernando de Avendaño, the ecclesiastical judge of the Archdiocese of Lima at that time, that Montesinos be
reincarcerated and that all of his assets be seized and accounted for. After being presented with the conforming testimonies of Juan Domínguez del Moral, Francisco Benítez, and Pedro de la Mota Mejía, Avendaño approved Alarcón’s legal request. On 29 April 1637, Montesinos was imprisoned once again, but this time in the archbishop’s prison cell in Lima.

Figure 12. The first folio of Alonso de Alarcon’s petition in Lima on 21 April 1637. Courtesy of Archivo Arzobispado de Lima.
Five days later, Montesinos’s voice, opinion and response to these legal proceedings were finally documented in his first plea to Avendaño. In this plea, as in all of Montesinos’s petitions, he pleaded innocence and made several counter arguments to Alarcón’s claims (Figure 13). First, he asserted that he was never informed of his responsibilities as one of Melchior Ramírez’s executors during his stay in Chocaya. Supposedly, this fact was not made known to him until his arrival to Arica. Second, he initially claimed that the merchandise did arrive, but that he was unaware of the specific quantities and contents. In agreement with Montesinos, the following is what took place to Melchior Ramírez’s belongings:

Gonzalo del Moral sobre que por no aver manifestado el testamento del dicho
Melchor Ramírez Vayo ante la justicia ordinaria conforme a la ley se le avian reccrecido a los bienes del dicho difunto y suyos deste confessante mas de tres mil pesos de daños porque por no aver enviadole clausula para que como albaçea los administrasse quando vendio algunos le hizieron una caussa de mercader y esto fue en Chocalla donde el juez que le puso la dicha caussa y sus ministros le embargaron toda la ropa y llebaron lo que quision de ella y ciento y dies pesos en plata y fuera desto robaron todo quanto este confessante tenia suyo y lo manuable que avia del dicho difunto en una ausencia que hizo este confessante a Potossi.

(Autos 19v)

Third, Montesinos defends his insubordination and escape by proclaiming that he should have never been tried in Arica or Lima because he was an official resident of Chocaya. He insisted on multiple occasions that his criminal case be taken up by the Tribunal of the Holy Office and that his civil case be transferred to the ecclesiastical judge of Chocaya (25). Fourth, Montesinos explains that the real reason he was imprisoned by Juan Correal was out of personal spite.
According to Montesinos, his travels to Arica were on behalf of the Holy Office, which had commissioned him to oversee a trial against Juan Correal. As soon as Juan Correal became aware of Montesinos’s legal problems with Alonso de Alarcón, he swiftly took advantage of the situation by arresting Montesinos and excommunicating him:

fue este confessante a la sachristia donde estaba el dicho vicario y se lo notifico

por su perssona y como hombre yncapax que es serro las puertas de la dicha sachristia diciendo yo lo prendere y le declarare por descomulgado. (20)

As far as Montesinos is concerned, Juan Correal broke the proper legal procedures because he never provided Montesinos with an official and fair trial. In one of his final petitions to Avendaño, he explains that Juan Correal’s hearing had recently become public and well-known. Reportedly, Juan Correal had been placed under house arrest and all his assets were seized. Montesinos firmly argued that all of this new information made him ‘libre de la calumnia que se [le] imputa’ (36).
Figure 13. Montesinos’s first petition. Courtesy of Archivo Arzobispado de Lima.
During the course of Montesinos’s legal proceedings in Lima, Peru, he was gradually given certain amounts of restricted freedoms. On 14 May 1637, Avendaño approved a petition to allow Montesinos to leave his prison cell for 20 days, so he could attend to personal matters. Later, on 30 May 1637, his request to be restricted to the city limits during the remainder of his trial was accepted, with the caveat that he would be punished with a major excommunication were he to leave the confined area. Approximately four months later, on 10 October 1637, Montesinos pleaded that the legal terminology of future decrees replace the word *carcelería* with *gravamen*. This request was also granted. Finally, on 18 June 1638, he petitioned that his restriction to the city be lifted with a *caución juratoria*. While stressing his poor health, lack of income, and the long pending status of Alarcon’s lawsuit, he expressed his desire to return to his home in Chocaya and search for new employment. After the newly appointed vicar Juan de Cabrera had reviewed all previous legal petitions and decrees concerning Montesinos’s cases, he fulfilled Montesinos’s appeal.

While Montesinos was progressively given liberties, his civil case was at least ongoing until 1641. On 9 March 1641, Jusepe Nuñez de Prado, on behalf of María Calderón, took charge of the legal proceedings and petitioned once again that Montesinos return the money that rightfully belonged to Melchoir Ramírez’s family (Figure 14). Juan de Cabrera took a renewed interest in this case and mandated that Montesinos be notified of this petition. In the last folio of these legal proceedings, Jusepe Nuñez expresses his final concerns and frustrations with Montesinos’s preparations to travel back to Spain; “aora trata de yrse y ausentarse en esta presente ocacion de armada a los reynos de España llevando quantos vienes tiene y dejando totalmente frustrado el

---

35 A *caución juratoria* can be interpreted as an ‘[o]ath taken by a poor person to return to prison, when called on, having no bail’ or as a ‘caution, warning, foresight, prevention’ (‘Caución juratoria’).
derecho de mi parte” (Autos 91). Unfortunately, the AAL documents stop here and, as far as I know, no additional records have been found that include a resolution to this case.

Figure 14. The first folio of Jusepe Nuñez de Prado’s final plea. Courtesy of Archivo Arzobispado de Lima.
As can be inferred from this summary of the *Autos*, they are an illuminating source because they isolate some of the reasons Montesinos spent so much of his time in Lima. Likewise, these AAL documents provide us with additional interpretive details concerning Montesinos. He might have been a criminal as the *Autos* suggest. Maybe he truly attempted to steal from the Melchoir Ramírez family and escaped the pending legal ramifications of his crime by running off to Spain, as Jusepe Nuñez de Prado specifies. Another possibility is that he was truly an innocent man, setup and framed by corrupt officials like Juan Correal from Arica, a point Montesinos makes in his legal petitions. However, this presupposition would overlook the zealous persistence of Melchoir Ramírez’s beneficiaries. Even so, as Montesinos claimed, perhaps he was never truly informed of his legal responsibilities, or maybe he was and simply became careless with his duties, making way for thieves to run off with Melchoir Ramírez’s estate.\(^{36}\) A criminal case such as Montesinos’s was not unheard of during the first half of the seventeenth century. As will be discussed later on in Chapter 3, legal disputes were common and increasing in colonial Peru. Montesinos complains about the flying accusations and corruption that surrounded the mining industry. This very well could have been an unethical and ill-willed attack against Montesinos. Unfortunately at this time, with a lack of information, all we are left with is various examples of conjecture. What is clear is that Montesinos was indeed engulfed in an ongoing legal battle where he hoped to find relief in his association with the Tribunal of the Holy Office and by trying to force the legality of proper judicial boundaries. Whatever the scenario, we do know that various individuals and ecclesiastical leaders were involved in Montesinos’s cases, and they initially found him guilty of his alleged crime. The evidence

\(^{36}\) This is another argument that Montesinos makes in some of his latter petitions. He claims that he was away from his home when the estate was delivered, and he argues that the tobacco rotted and that the rest of the items were stolen by thieves (*Autos* 25).
against him seems to have been compelling enough to drag the case on for nearly five years and maybe longer. While no closure is provided in the AAL documents, in the end, we are informed of Montesinos’s repeated refusal to pay his debts, along with Cabrera’s renewed involvement in his case, as he purportedly attempts to flee the country once again, an act the may have violated his caución juratoria.

Montesinos’s time in and around the vicinity of Lima did not revolve solely around his legal troubles. There are several known biographical events that took place during this same period. For instance, Montesinos happened upon the aforementioned mysterious manuscript (Book II) by an unidentified author, allegedly from Quito, while remaining in Lima (Montesinos, Ophir 8v). He provided few details concerning this find and neglected to indicate the year he purchased the text from the auction. In 1637, he met Pedro Bohórques as he returned from an expedition to a gold mine near Tarma, carrying large quantities of the precious metal, which peaked Montesinos’s interest as a metallurgist.37 Shortly after Bohórques’s arrival, he traveled back to the Tarma region in search of more gold. Francisco de Montesinos, Montesinos’s cousin, accompanied Bohórques on this trip, an event he brings up to King Philip IV:

procuró el dicho Licenciado D. Fernando aueriguar lo cierto de aquellas estendidas
Prouincias, sus têples, ríos, minerals, numero de gente y sus rritos, facilidad o repugnancia en su conuersion, en order también al descargo de vuestra Real conciencia, haciendo para ello varios caminos. Y vtlimamente embió a Don Francisco de Montesinos su primo, y a Don Pedro Bohorques con otros doze hombres, a ver esta tierra por la derecera de

37 Pedro Bohórques was a controversial fellow from Andalusia who regularly traveled to the Amazon in search of Paititi, also known as El Dorado. To gain ties with the Indigenous villages, Bohórquez regularly presented himself as a Mestizo from “the royal panaca lineage of Cuzco” (Lorandi 2). He vacillated between two fantasies, that of finding Paititi and that of actually belonging to the Inca society. Later on in his life, he attempted to portray himself as the “Messiah of the Calchaquíes” (2).
Montesinos was interested in gold and the potential discovery of Paititi, but as he points out to the King, he also wanted to learn more about the Amazon region. Bohórquyes and Francisco came back from the second trip with “seis indios principales [que Montesinos tuvo] en [su] casa en la ciudad de lima regalados y estimados de todos” (Montesinos, Ophir 15). They were celebrated and visited by the Viceroy, the Archbishop, and other nobles. The Viceroy even saw it fit to clothe them in some of the finest silks before they returned home. Francisco de Montesinos was charged with their safe return, along with further exploration of the Tarma region and the task of locating the whereabouts of Paititi. Unfortunately, this third and final voyage turned out to be disastrous: “este agasajo lo pagaron estos idolatras [conque] mataron a los religiosos de [San Francisco, a mi primo, y a otros ocho amigos [que] llebo contigo sin mas causa [que] la barbaridad destos Bestiales indios” (15). This traumatic personal experience appears to have put an end to Montesinos’s hopes of finding Paititi and exploring the amazon. It has been suggested that following these events Montesinos composed a story about Paititi and that this manuscript is now lost (Boehm de Lameiras 27; Jiménez de la Espada XXIX; Hiltunen 175; Hyland, Quito 21).  

While he does regularly discuss the location of Paititi in Books I and III of Ophir de España, as far as I have seen, he does not comment on any sort of manuscript or publication

---

38 It looks like Jiménez de la Espada was the common source for this information: “Tengo para mí que las investigaciones históricas y operaciones metalúrgicas no era lo único que entretenía la gran actividad del licenciado osonense. El haber escrito una Historia del Paititi, y crecido en las riquezas de Canderí o el Dorado de los Moxos, son pruebas de que su imaginación se hallaba harto entretenida y preocupada con ellas” (XXIX). Sadly, he does not provide a source for the information.
concerning the topic. In fact, in his first memorial to King Philip IV, where he is adamant about highlighting all of his literary works, he makes no mention of *Historia del Paititi*.

Aside from these endeavors, 1637 was likewise the year that Montesinos was commissioned by the Tribunal of the Holy Office of Lima to oversee a serious and delicate case between “vn Familiar Regidor, y el Vicario de cierta Ciudad” (Montesinos, *Servicios* 2). Montesinos withheld most of the details concerning this case. Nonetheless, he did include a letter from the Holy Office in his *Servicios* thanking him for his services in this particular case, but like his comments to King Philip IV, the letter excluded in-depth information. What the letter does do is provide the names of the two individuals involved, Vicar Juan Correal and Juan de la Ragybre. Montesinos claimed he was able to successfully and harmoniously settle the dispute between these two parties. The name that stands out the most is Juan Correal, since this is most likely the same individual from the *Autos* that arrested and excommunicated Montesinos in Arica. Part of Montesinos’s defense during his legal trial was that he had been commissioned by the Holy Office to travel to Arica and oversee a grievance against Juan Correal:

> Y porque lo que pasa en hecho de verdad es que aviendo llegado a Arica a executar cierta comission del Tribunal del Santo Oficio el vicario Juan Correal vanamente intento impedirme el uso y progreso della con muchas molestias y agradios y ultimadamente aviendo notificado un auto tocante a mi comission en la sacristia de la iglessia mayor juebes 19 de febrero del año corriente, con notable colera y enojo me çerro la puerta de la dicha sacristia, y diciéndole yo cuando se iba que le declaraba por incurso en la çensura del auto que le avia notificado pues çerrandome la puerta me impedia el venir a dar cuenta a los mui Ilustres Señores Inquisidores Apostolicos de lo que procuraban saber por su comission y de otras cosas graves incidențes a ella. (*Autos* 28)
The dates put forward in both the *Autos* and *Servicios* match, suggesting this is indeed the same Juan Correal. Furthermore, the letter provided by *Servicios* affords some credibility to Montesinos’s defense in the *Autos*. Even so, one cannot help but wonder why Montesinos was so vague in his correspondence with King Philip IV. I would assume that he did not want to offer up any information that would tie him to his alleged criminal activities in Peru. What is more, even though the letter does legitimize Montesinos’s defense to a certain extent, it does not let him off the hook, since the Melchor Ramírez family successfully recuperated their case in a separate legal jurisdiction outside of Correal’s reach.

1638 was one of Montesinos’s most productive years because he finalized three of his manuscripts. His first publication, “Beneficio común o directorio de beneficiadores de metales y arte dellos, con reglas para los negrillos,” was published in Lima this same year. As indicated by the title, it is a directory. Contemporarily, this would be more appropriately referred to as an instruction manual. It provided explicit instructions to the mining beneficiaries on how to mine, run, and maintain mines, as highlighted in my introduction. In particular, this manual specified how to properly extract silver from *negrillos* and conserve the mercury that is typically wasited, a crucial point Montesinos makes to the King, “Y viendo que los metales de plata llamada Negrillos, eran abundantísimos, de que estan las Cordillera y Cerros llenos, y que se dexauan de beneficiar por la dificultad de la quema, y que por beneficiarse sin entendella, por no auer otros, se perdia casi todo el açogue, plata, y tiempo, trató de buscar el remedio de ello” (*Servicios* 1).

Within this text, he tells his readers where to look for precious metals, talks about the various kinds of metals, discusses their makeup, explains what types of ovens should be utilized for...
smelting, covers the bases on how to smelt, and finishes with a long series of questions and answers designed to clarify doubts.

Feeling that there was more to be said about this mining process and the beneficiaries, Montesinos wrote a second part to “Beneficio común” while visiting the mining camp of Rauma, but it never reached the printing press, even though it was approved and licensed on 31 December 1638 by the Viceroy of Lima (Montesinos, Servicios 6-7). In Montesinos’s Servicios, he refers to these two texts as Arte del beneficio, suggesting that “Beneficio común” may have been a subtitle. Unfortunately, the original manuscript for part one and all of part two are missing. Some of Montesinos’s concerns regarding the legal quarrels surrounding the mining industry expressed in part one of “Beneficio común” possibly inspired him to write his third text entitled Política de mineros around this same time. As reported by him, he wrote this book with the following reasons in mind:

Que aduirtiendo la muchedumbre de pleytos que cada dia se ofrecen entre los Mineros sobre los registros y possession de las Minas, grauisimos por quantiosos, y ocasionados siempre a tumultos, por la gente licenciosa y no entendida, parando en dexarse de labrar las minas por muchos tiempo, q es el mayor de los daños, y que se origina todo de no saber el actor lo que pide, ni el reo lo q le demandā, por ser las Ordenāças de esto muchas y encontradas, las recogio todas el dicho Licenciado, y hizo vn libro de ellas muy claro y breue . . . que hoy es el gouierno de los Juezes, y la quietud de los Mineros. (2)

This book was apparently published and received regional notoriety, but if there are any surviving copies, they are scarce. I have been unsuccessful in finding a copy of this particular text.
In 1639, the Tribunal of the Holy Office of Lima assigned Montesinos the task of writing
and documenting the *auto-da-fé* that took place in Lima on 23 January 1639.\(^{40}\) He titled this
work *Auto de la fe celebrado en Lima a 23. de enero de 1639*, and it was quickly approved by
the Viceroy Conde de Chinchón and subsequently published. Montesinos explained that the
*auto-da-fé* was necessary because Satan had too great an influence over the Native populous and
some Portuguese: “Pero dolor grande, digno de todo sentimiento en tan limpio sembrado procuró
el enemigo común arrojar la ponzoñosa semilla de la ley ya muerta de Moyses, y sus Ritos,
valiendose para esto de muchos Indios, Portugueses, que llamados de la grosedad del Perù, le
yuan llenado por todas partes” (*Auto de 1*). Throughout this text, he gives specifics concerning
the stage, the green cross utilized for carrying out the sentences, the procession of the convicted,
the particulars of each sentence, and a list of all those who were imprisoned. Of all of
Montesinos’s manuscripts and publications, this was the only surviving text related to his
religious duties. It is also the only one he brings up in his *Servicios*.

Sometime between 1638 and 1641, Montesinos was ordained a priest of Capilla de
Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza in Rimac, a northeastern district of Lima, Peru. According to
Montesinos, he was regarded as a highly compassionate priest during this time, who was
considerate of all the ecclesiastical necessities in this neighborhood; so much so, that the
Inquisitor of Lima, Antonio de Castro, wrote him a missive mentioning how his absence was
greatly missed because everyone thought of him as such a selfless individual (Montesinos,
*Servicios* 2v). It was in this local chapel where Montesinos wrote *Ophir de España*, including
*Anales del Perú* (2v). After serving in this capacity for a couple of years, he once again

\(^{40}\) An *auto-da-fé* was a public catholic inquisitorial event where they tested the sincere Christian faith of
local residents who had been accused of pagan practices. Individuals found guilty of sacrilege were often
burned as heretics.
abandoned his ecclesiastical responsibilities in pursuit of his true passion, metallurgy. He made this decision following a request from Diego Rodríguez Mejía, “descubridor de la quema de los metales negrillos por tostadillo,” asking Montesinos to aid him with the extraction of silver in a local mining camp. Pursuant to Montesinos, Mejía considered him to be the wisest and most proficient when it came to the practice of negrillos.

Montesinos completed his first draft of both parts of *Ophir de España* in 1642. The first half originally bore the title *Las memorias antiguas y nuevas del Pirú*, while the second was assigned its current title, *Anales del Perú*. The aim of this entire chronicle was to, as reported by Montesinos, “escribir con todo cuidado la Historia general del Perú, incluyendo debajo de este nombre desde Cartagena hasta Chile, aueirguando quien fue el primero que llegò a aquellas partes, y de que gentes se fueron despues pablando, y como por permission y dadiua passò aquel grande Imperio” (*Servicios* 2). The first part of *Ophir de España* has been discussed at length in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. As far as *Anales del Perú* is concerned, a two-book section, Montesinos incorporated this text into *Ophir de España* in an attempt to provide a brief yearly glimpse into the entire post-Columbian history of Peru. He was trying to feature what he thought were the most important events of each year. He explains, “Breve copia de dilatados sucesos, frutos de la solicitud, son los Anales que escribo del Perú” (*Anales* 7). The manuscript is dedicated and addressed to the archbishop of Quito, Don Fray Pedro de Oviedo. Montesinos begins his chronicle in 1498, when Christopher Columbus discovered Margarita and first laid eyes on the province of Tierra Firme. As he continues, he documents all the Spaniards who had come in contact with Tierra Firme, or who had some sort of historical connection with the province. This is relevant information for Montesinos because he considers Tierra Firme to be a territorial extension of Peru (11). Following the historical tradition of previous colonial
chronicles, in Book I, he focuses heavily on Francisco Pizarro and Almagro’s voyages, along with their conquest of the Incan Empire. Book I continues by documenting all of Peru’s most memorable historical events, as would be expected. Book II of Anales del Perú deviates from Book I in that it begins to incorporate a significant amount of information concerning the Andean mines. This seems to occur because the documented years draw closer to and fall in line with Montesinos’s metallurgical research. Montesinos mentions at the end of “Año de 1571” that he was struggling with his research prior to this year: “y así me costó mucho trabajo el averiguar las cantidades de azogue que se sacaron cada año, que desde éste iré poniendo al fin de todos hasta el de 1639” (42). His descriptions of the mines gradually become more detailed during the duration of the narration. Some take up entire chapters. He typically references the date they were found, the types of minerals or metals discovered, and the monetary value of the minerals that were extracted from each mine.

In order to research and write Ophir de España, especially the second part, Montesinos informed King Philip IV that he was required to travel a great deal: “caminó por tierra desde la Provincia de Atacama hasta Cartagena, que son mas de mil leguas, con grande riesgo de su vida, por los malos caminos y peligrosos ríos aduirtiendo por vista de ojos todos los archiuos de las Ciudades, y papeles particulares de que ha hecho los dichos Anales” (Servicios 2-2v). While all of the specific places that he visited are unknown, as he mentioned particular destinations throughout Ophir the España, he regularly spoke as though he had personally seen each location with his own eyes.

Aside from the constant research trips taken by Montesinos prior to the completion of Anales del Perú, following his departure from Lima, he held additional ecclesiastical responsibilities. At some point in 1641, he was called to be the ecclesiastical judge of Cajamarca,
Peru and all of its provinces (Montesinos, *Servicios* 3v). His responsibilities consisted of watching over the “paz y quietud de ellas [all of the provinces], sin atender a codicia ni interes, en tanto grado, que de muchas causas que sentéció en materias graues de hazienda, assi por razon de su oficio, como por acessoria y remission del Corregidor de las dichas Provincias” (3v). As he served in this capacity, he was charged by Pedro de Reina Maldonado, canon, judge, and commissioner of Trujillo, with a delicate legal case in Trujillo, Peru against the Franciscan friars for having “dicho y celebrado Missas en Capillas no compuestas, y Altares portatiles” (3v). After supposedly bringing this case to a peaceful resolution, he was shortly thereafter called to serve as the ecclesiastical judge of Trujillo in 1642. At the start of 1643, Montesinos traveled to Quito while the archbishop, Pedro de Oviedo, was reforming his archbishopric. Recognizing all of Montesinos’s previous ecclesiastical responsibilities, he was formally given the title of *Visitador General* of Quito on 12 February 1643. Just one month after agreeing to this new position, Montesinos was informed by a Jesuit named Blas Serrano that a new mercury mine near Ibagué, Colombia had been discovered that desperately required his expertise. Following his true passion of metallurgy, Montesinos formally resigned as *Visitador General* on 30 March 1643. On his way up to Ibagué, Montesinos passed through Popayan, Cali, and Buga, Colombia.

Not long after visiting the mining camp near Ibagué, Montesinos returned to Spain in 1643 for unknown reasons. Angulo has suggested that his license may have expired: “Vencidos los cinco años que tenía de licencia, ni trató de renovarla ni de volver a su diócesis, y así se fue manteniendo en estas partes de las Indias, casi al margen de la ley, durante quince años, o sea hasta el de 1643” (xxi). Upon his arrival to the Archdiocese of Seville, he was granted the Benefice of La Campana “cerca de la confluencia del Madre Vieja con el Guadalquivir” (xxi). It would seem Montesinos was unsatisfied living in Spain again and longed to return to the New
World, since he was swift to write his *Servicios* to the King in 1644 and request a benefice in either Lima or Mexico (Montesinos, *Servicios* 1). In 1645, Montesinos wrote a second memorial to the King explaining and offering his method for amalgamation and recycling mercury, as was highlighted in the introduction of this chapter. By offering this new method to the Spanish Crown, Montesinos hoped he would be financially rewarded. It remains unknown whether his requests were approved and whether he was able to voyage back to the New World for a second time. Montesinos is believed to have died sometime around 1653 in an unidentified place. No original source for this date seems to exist. 41 What is certain, is that in the same year he wrote his first memorial and made some of his request to the King, he also redrafted *Ophir de España* in hopes that it would finally be published. Sadly, like the majority of Montesinos’s manuscripts, it was never publicly distributed, and the world had to wait another one hundred and ninety-six years before Book II would finally be printed. To this day, his incredible chronicle that he so diligently composed remains unpublished.

**Montesinos and Metallurgy**

After compiling and summarizing the known facts concerning Montesinos’s life and professional endeavors, there is one biographical detail that stands out the most and enlarges some of his motives for traveling to, remaining, and desiring to return to the New World. Montesinos had a profound passion for mining and metallurgy. This obsession seems to have controlled his decision making and time in Peru. While Montesinos held an array of ecclesiastical callings, they appear to have been a means to an end. That is to say, the religious duties he executed during his journey throughout South America, served as a conduit to draw

---

41 It appears that Angulo is the common source for this date among scholars of Montesinos. Nonetheless, Angulo seems to know little concerning Montesinos’s death, and he does not provide a source for this date: “pues falleció por el año de 1653, no sabemos si en su parroquia de La Campana, o en otra de mayor dotación” (xxii).
closer to metallurgy. Each time he was charged with a reputable ecclesiastical position, he would regularly abandon it for his deep personal interest in mining. To reiterate, he gave up the Benefice of Santa Barbara in Potosi to work in the local mining camps. While imprisoned for his alleged crimes in Lima, his biggest concern was returning to his estates in the Mining Camp of Chocaya near Potosi in Alto Peru. During his stay in Lima, he frequently traveled to nearby mines, and he also sought out Pedro Bóhorques who was on a quest to find the most valuable source and site of gold and precious metals, Paititi. He was so consumed by the notoriety of Paititi that he inadvertently sent his cousin Francisco de Montesinos to his tragic death during one of their expeditions. Serving as a beloved priest in Rimac, he once again vacated his clerical responsibilities to chase after negrillos with Diego Rodríguez Mejía. Later on, after being given the illustrious position as the Visitador General of Quito, he found his calling as a metallurgist more imperative, and for at least the third time, he resigned from his religious duties in order to visit a new mercury mine in Ibague, Colombia. Even when he was serving as an ecclesiastical leader, his time appears to have been consumed by writing manuscripts that were in one way or another related to metallurgy, a point Montesinos himself makes directly apparent in his *Servicios*, while referencing his post as priest of Capilla de Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza. To further recapitulate, his first two texts, *Arte del beneficio*, directly dealt with mining practices, maintenance, and instructions, while his third text, *Política de mineros*, concentrated on the political and legal disputes surrounding the mining industry. All three of these texts seem to be a byproduct of Montesinos’s time spent in mining camps. *Ophir de España*, along with its second section *Anales del Perú*, likewise have a direct correlation with mining and metallurgy, albeit on a larger scale and in a different direction.
As I will argue and detail in Chapter 3, and as I have proposed in the introduction of my dissertation, *Ophir de España* partially serves to protect Spain’s rights, interests, and access to the mines of the New World. Montesinos began to recognize a series of possible threats that could potentially interfere and halt the outward flow of American wealth he felt rightfully belonged to Spain. What is more, he likely viewed these prospective problems as a hazard to his newfound profession and own personal interest in metallurgy. Throughout Book I of *Ophir de España*, Montesinos constantly showcases his knowledge of metallurgy as he references mines and discusses the similarities between specific metals from Peru that were exported to the Old World by the people of Tyre and Kings David and Salomon’s men. Even though *Anales del Perú* is intended to be a historical volume, it does take special care in documenting all of the discovered mines and their specific economic and annual values. Again, with a closer look at the biographical information on Montesinos, it should become apparent that his time in Peru revolved around the mining industry and metallurgy. This seventeenth-century chronicler was not just a writer who provided the world with the longest version of Andean genealogy, he is an example of an early post-Columbus metallurgist. On the one hand, he pursued this path out of sheer enjoyment, while on the other hand, as was common practice for colonial explores and settlers, he hoped to financially prosper from his metallurgical endeavors, a fact he in no way hides from King Philip IV in his memorials (Montesinos, *Servicios* 4).

With all of this said, one might ask, what is it that truly makes Montesinos a colonial metallurgist? In agreement with Arthur C. Reardon, metallurgy is “[t]he science and technology of metals and alloys. Extractive metallurgy is concerned with the extraction of metals from their ores and with refining of metals” (447). Furthermore, to be a metallurgist, one generally does much more than simply extract the metal him or herself, usually they will research and write on
the subject. Montesinos not only had years of hands-on experience in several mining camps, he also made it a point to research and publish new methods on the extraction of silver, thus making him an early American metallurgist. To further illustrate that he was truly a metallurgist, additional attention should be given to his surviving publication on the subject, “Beneficio común o directorio de beneficiadores de metales y arte dellos, con reglas ciertas para los negrillos.” As has been briefly stated heretofore, this text was a directory that offered a wide array of instructions to the mining beneficiaries of the Peruvian region. Montesinos manifests what the general intent of his book is on the first page of the text:

Supuesto que este Directorio es para beneficiadores, daré principio á él representándoles su obligacion que ha de corresponder al nombre: beneficiador es lo mismo que bienhechor, el que hace bien, el cual adecua al buen beneficiador, porque hace bien al dueño del metal en sacar mucha plata, al ingeniero por su aumento, al Rey para los quintos, y á la criстиandad por la praricipacion del mucho bien; y por el contrario en su ignorancia está el daño de todos. (263)

From the very beginning, he makes it known that the mines and extraction of precious metals must be properly tended to for the benefit of everyone, especially for Spain and the emergence of Christianity in the New World. In order to personally aid this cause and improve the production of silver, Montesinos offers up detailed metallurgical arguments and centers on the extraction of silver from ore during the burring process. According to him, the most efficient method to obtain

---

42 I would like to point out that Montesinos takes a similar tone later on as he writes *Ophir de España*, most often in Book III. On a regular basis he highlights how the riches of America belong to Spain and are intended for the building up of God’s kingdom on the earth: “que libro Dios estas armadas porque lleuan plata y oro para defensa de la christiandad y por a mayor aumento de solemnidad y grandeça de aquel pan diuino que se instituyo en Hierusalem y sustenta a todos los christianos en la yglesia Católica” (195). It is evident in both “Beneficio común” and *Ophir de España* that Montesinos is concerned with the outward flow of wealth from the New World. This is a topic I will address with greater detail in Chapter 3.
the maximum amount of silver depends on how one goes about burning the ore. In other words, this is one of the most crucial steps. Prior to the findings of Montesinos and his subsequent publication, he believed that the mining beneficiaries misunderstood the importance of smelting ore, which inadvertently lead to the loss of “muchos millones de plata” (“Beneficio común” 280-81). As reported by him, the solution to this problem is very simple:

\begin{quote}
y ser muy fácil el remedio, y que lo alcanza una cuidadosa diligencia; para lo cual es necesario advertir que de los tres géneros de metales que dijimos, solo han menester quema el mulato y el negrillo, porque, si bien algunos han practicado darle un tostadillo de un día al paco, en vano, porque da menos plata que el crudo de que ha hecho muchas experiencias de diversos metales pacos. (282)
\end{quote}

Following this hypothesis, Montesinos elaborates on precisely how to smelt dark brown (mulato) and black (negrillo) ores. Even though dark brown ore is one of the most malleable, it must be burned for an extended period of time with an extremely high temperature. Montesinos recommends that it be smelted for two days. On the second day, two hundred kilograms of salt must be added to the mixture, and throughout the entire process, the mixture should be grinded approximately thirty times. As far as black ore is concerned, he recommends it be burned even longer due to the hardness of the ore which consists of several minerals: bronze, sulfur, copperas, and other antimonies. Like dark brown ore, black ore requires an intense and constant heat, but instead of two days, it must be smelted for four days. The goal is to burn out the majority of the undesirable minerals so that more silver remains than ore. By following this procedure, Montesinos claims that less mercury will be required in the final step of wholly extracting the silver from the rest of the minerals: “y advierte que por este ensaye sacarás más plata que por otro alguno, y no se consume azogue” (285). Aside from the fact that Montesinos was visibly
making metallurgical arguments in “Beneficio común,” I find it relevant to mention that he was doing so consciously. He was aware of his role as a metallurgist in the seventeenth century, and he wanted to be recognized as such. This point is supported by some of Montesinos’s commentary in Book III of *Ophir de España*. In Book III, Chapter 19, of his chronicle, he states the following about the role and importance of metallurgists in the New World:

> asi vino Americo Vespuçio y otros y se buscauan hombres científico de la tierra que entendiessen en la lauor de minas de oro y plata y el conçierro que se hiço con los Belzares en el descubrimiento de la Prouinçia de Ueneçuela fue con cargo que hauia de lleuar çinquenta hombres diestros en el mineraxe y esto hera entonçes tan Ymportante que aunque se dauan por estraños destos Reynos a los estanxeros solo en materia de minas con ser de tanto interes los abilitauan en ellos como digo en mi politica de mineros si uien oy çessa esta rrazon porque ay españoles eminentisimos en minas y tan dados a este exerçio que puede enseñar a los de las demas nacions estas arte. (191)

I find this to be a self-reference where Montesinos praises his own efforts and knowledge. That is to say, he is selling himself in this section of his narration, much like he does in his memorials to the King of Spain. He wants to make certain that his readers identify him as a vital scientific commodity.

A pioneer of metallurgy is not a title I would assign to Montesinos, even though he was attempting to revolutionize the process of metallurgy through the refined introduction of amalgamation. No, if anything, he was continuing and contributing to two separate and long traditions of mining and the study of precious metals, that of the Europeans and that of the Andeans. For the Iberian Peninsula, the practice of mining and basic metallurgy surfaced long before the Spanish arrived to the New World and the Peruvian region. The quest for rich metals
and the daring act of exploiting mines began much sooner: “El florecimiento de la minería ibérica iniciado durante la dominación cartaginesa culminó con la romana. Las tres invasiones (fenicia, siglo XI a. c.; celta, hacia el año 1000 a. c., y griega, siglo VI a. c.) que con anterioridad sufrieron los pueblos iberos” (Bargalló 13). Greek and Roman historians like Gaius Plinius Secundus, Strabon, Polybius, and Poseidonios took the lead on documenting some of these mineralogical and metallurgical practices (13). Mining did not stop after the control of the Greeks and Romans dwindled off. It carried on through time and through the various European cultures, so much so, that a metallurgic renaissance flourished from the eighth century up through the twelfth century: “A mediados del siglo viii comenzaron a explotarse las minas de plomo y plata centroeuropeos: en el año 750 se descubrieron las de Schemnitz. Las de Goslar, en el Harz, en los años 936 a 973, y las de Freiberg, hacia 1170” (22). Following the twelfth century, most regional mines in the Iberian Peninsula had been exhausted and the hunt and desire to excavate for gold and silver had died off, that was until the discovery of the New World. This unique historical event triggered a passionate yearning in Spaniards to risk voyaging across the Atlantic under the extreme circumstances and conditions of colonial navigation with the hopes of acquiring large sums of precious metals. As is well known and documented, gold was one of the first New-World items that Christopher Columbus took note of. He immediately made it his pursuit to obtain gold and find mines during his four voyages, especially while visiting the coast of Central America. As Columbus mentions,

Llegué a tierra de Ca[n]ariay, adonde me detuve a remediar los navíos y bastimentos y dar aliento a la gente, que venía muy enferma. Yo, como dije, había llegado muchas veces a la muerte. Allí supe de las minas del oro de la provincia de Çiamba, que yo buscaba. Dos indios me llevaron a Caramburú, adonde la gente anda desnuda y al cuello un espejo
Columbus was the first of many who would stop at nothing, even while staring death in the face as he indicated in the above quote, to become wealthy by leaching off America’s minerals. While most Spaniards did not enter the intellectual and documentary realm of mining, there were a few before Montesinos’s time. Most did not detail the intricacies of metallurgy. More often than not, they would simply document the existing mines they had visited, similar to what Montesinos accomplished in Anales del Peru. Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, López de Velasco, Cieza de León, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, José de Acosta, Agustín de Zárate, Juan de Cárdenas, López de Velasco, and Juan de Solórzano are several examples of colonial authors who touched on the topic of mining to varying degrees. One of the first true European metallurgy authors was an Italian author named Vannoccio Biringuccio. He published a ten-volume work titled De la pirotechnia in 1540. This text deals with the intricacies of the technical practice of metallurgy. He spans the topics of differing minerals, semiminerals, preparing ores for smelting, separation of gold from silver, the formation of alloys, the art of casting, melting metals, and the diverse methods for smelting (Price 3-7).

Around the time Montesinos was writing, there were few colonial texts that dealt explicitly with the in-depth complexities of metallurgy, such as extracting silver from ore with mercury (e.g. amalgamation). One such well-known text that proceeded Montesinos’s less prominent Arte del beneficio was Arte de los metales: En que enseña el verdadero beneficio de

---

43 Biringuccio’s parents were Paolo and Lucrezia di Bartolommeo Biringuccio, and he was born in 1480 in Siena. He traveled throughout Italy and Germany during his lifetime collecting large amounts of data on metallurgy. His book, De la pirotechnia, is “the earliest printed work to cover the whole field of metallurgy” (Price x).
los de oro, y plata por azogue. El modo de fundirlos todos, y como se han de refinar, y apartar unos de otros by Álvaro Alonso Barba Toscano. On the authority of Modesto Bargalló, Barba Toscano was “el metalurgista más destacado del siglo XVII” (223). Barba Toscano’s work consists of five books that cover a wide range of topics such as the composition of certain minerals and ores, the dissimilarities between certain comparable ores, their precise locations, the knowledge and experience required to work with precious metals, the smelting process, the types of ovens to be utilized, and the practice of refining metals, among many other subjects. In the prologue of Arte de los metales, Barba Toscano explains that he wrote this book so that “se conozca, que el error de la poca experiencia de los mineros que las benefician, no tiene persuadidos a que es incierto, que nuestra España las tenga, o que su fruto es tan corto, que no alcanza al útil del beneficio” (3). Aside from Barba Toscano, there are a two other more obscured metallurgists, who were contemporary writers of Montesinos. In fact, all three of their works on metallurgy appear alongside each other in a nineteenth-century book titled Registro y Relación general de Minas de la Corona de Castilla. It was published in 1832 by the editor Tomás González at the behest of the Spanish Crown. All three of the original manuscripts are believed to be housed in the Archivo General de Indias:

[e]stos tres tratados se han compulsado en el archivo general de Indias, que está en la casa de la Lonja de Sevilla, de entre los manuscritos que se llevaron allí de Simancas, en el Indiferente de la Secretaría del Perú, de Real orden comunicada por el señor Secretario de Gracia y Justicia, excitado por el señor don Luis López Ballesteros, Secretario de Estado

44 Barba Toscano was born in Villa de Lepe, Huelva, Spain around 1569. He traveled to Peru sometime before 1588. Like Montesinos, he held many ecclesiastical positions and frequented Peruvian mines. In 1590 he discovered the renowned benefice in Tarabuco. Some authors, like Modesto Bargalló, believed his to be the only work on metallurgy from the seventeenth century, since Montesinos’s metallurgical texts were and are so scarce (223).
y del Despacho Universal de Hacienda, que, conforme á los benéficos deseos de S.M., ha
promovido y promueve incesantemente estos importantes descubrimientos. (González
xvi)

Miguel de Rojas, the second author that appears in *Registro y Relación general de Minas de la
Corona de Castilla*, directly after Montesinos, wrote *Arte general para el beneficio de los
metales de plata por azogues* at some point during the first half of the seventeenth century. Like Montesinos, Rojas hoped to perfect the practice of extracting silver with mercury. Furthermore, he recognized the inexperience of beneficiaries and the consistent waist of extractable silver: “Y porque mucho ignoran los fundamentos de donde se han ocasionado los desperdicios de innumerables riquezas, me dispuse á hacer este breve compendio” (325). Captain Juan Ramos de Valdárrago, the third author in this group, penned *De la generación de los metales, y sus compuestos* sometime between 1662-1664 (Maffei and Figueroa 81). His text is similar to those of Montesinos and Rojas since it is a didactic work or directory that attempts to guide the mining beneficiaries through the difficult task of amalgamation. Valdárrago differs from Montesinos and Rojas in that he provides detailed definitions of all the words associated with amalgamation, and in that he is more thorough in the actually step by step process. The basic opposing point of his amalgamation practice is that more mercury must be incorporated in the mixing process. To be exact, more mercury is actually better at breaking up the ore. With these brief examples of Barba Toscano, Rojas, and Valdárrago, it is clear that Montesinos was not alone in his metallurgical pursuits during the first half of the seventeenth century. At least

---

45 Currently, there are very few details concerning Miguel de Rojas’s book and life. Apparently he was born around 1600 in the town Alba de Tormes. He served as the ensayador general of Peru during the time of the Marquis Gualdalcazar from 1622-1629 (Maffei and Figueroa 103-4).

46 There are even fewer details on Captain Juan Ramos de Valdárrago. The survival of his book in *Registro y Relación general de Minas de la Corona de Castilla* is all that I am able to obtain at this time.
this small group of Spanish metallurgists from this time period were determined to improve the process of amalgamation and enrich Spain, the beneficiaries, and themselves.

When one speaks of metallurgical processing in the New World, it must be understood that Spaniards were not only influenced by European mining traditions, but they also took advantage of the enduring Andean metallurgical practices that surfaced long before Christopher Columbus reached the isles of the Caribbean. Andeans are considered to be one of the first ancient societies to extract gold and silver from ore, with the oldest site for gold dating as far back as the Early Horizon from 900 B.C. to 200 A.D. (Peterson G. 47). Over time, they had developed methods that did not differ drastically from those of Europe, a fact that surprised conquistadores during their quest for gold. As Florian Téreygeol and Celia Castro have suggested, “Se puede suponer que las técnicas aplicadas por los indígenas para labrar eran similares a las utilizadas a la llegada de los conquistadores, es decir, minas a cielo abierto y siguiendo el filón de mineral” (13). When it comes to silver, the first method employed by Andeans consisted of digging small pits at the foots of hills, where they would burn the uncovered ore with wood, straw, dried animal dung, moss, and other plants to break up the ore and recover the silver (Peterson G. 47). Later on, they developed high-temperature furnaces called huayras that would smelt the ore more efficiently and rapidly. Various forms of smelters were utilized, and they can be placed into three general categories. The first consisted of the simple process of smelting loose stones without clay mortars. Second, semi-sophisticated stone and mortar smelters were fashioned to extract the precious metals, and third, portable cone-shaped clay smelters were employed in the process (47). As the first Spaniards started to arrive to the Peruvian region during the first half of the sixteenth century, they were astonished by the metallurgical practices already developed by the Native Andeans. Since most of them were
inexperienced in mining and metallurgy, they took advantage of the already established local techniques, and this custom prevailed “hasta el descubrimiento de la técnica por amalgamación del azogue con la plata en 1555 por Bartolomé de Medina en la ciudad de Pachuca (México)” (Téreygeol and Castro 15). While Andeans did not practice pan amalgamation, at least in Huancavelica they were aware of mercury and used it for paint for both canvases and cosmetics (Peterson G. 49). Aside from gold and silver, Native Andeans also mined for tin and copper. All of these points are to emphasize that Andean society had studied and practiced metallurgy for centuries, and their techniques undoubtedly influenced and contributed to the technological advances of metallurgy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

By the time Montesinos was studying and writing about metallurgy and amalgamation, he had been indirectly influenced by both European and Andean practices. His mining techniques and metallurgy works, the two volumes of Arte del beneficio and most likely Política de mineros, were a byproduct of these mining traditions, as was his seemingly unceasing obsession for American mining and metallurgy that consistently interfered with his originally assigned duties as a catholic ecclesiastical. When we reflect back on Montesinos’s life and his initial literary works, there is no doubt that this chronicler, commonly acknowledged for his extensive capaccuna, was also a metallurgist and modern-day scientist who was concerned with the efficiency of amalgamation.

**Ophir de España and Montesinos’s Scientific Arguments**

Montesinos’s decision to become a metallurgist and attempt to publish a handful of texts in his field noticeably consumed the vast majority of his time in the New World, as has been shown up until now. Furthermore, this scientific career choice became a stepping stone that would greatly influence and contribute to his lengthiest and most controversial literary work,
Ophir de España. That is, Montesinos’s love for mining and metallurgy mingled with his scientific mind and approach flowed over into his final project. Ophir de España, as will be carefully explained in Chapter 3, was written while considering the potential threats to the mining industry in Peru. Even though on the surface Montesinos’s larger theses focus on 1) the notion that Peru is actually Ophir, and as such, 2) it rightfully belongs to the kings of Spain because they have been divinely appointed by God to oversee and profit from America for the greater good of Christendom, this is not his biggest concern. Ophir is a façade for an even greater matter, the mining industry and the efficient outward flow of Peruvian wealth. In other words, Ophir is symbolic of all the affluence of precious metals in Peru and America. Both Ophir de España and Anales del Perú, persistently reference the mining industry, showcasing Montesinos’s knowledge of the practice and metallurgy. While Montesinos’s chronicle can appear confusing at times, due to his seemingly unorthodox rational and erratic comparative analyses, especially in Book I, I argue that in Ophir de España Montesinos is in all actuality roughly incorporating and applying scientific thought, such as natural history and mineralogy, in an effort to support his overarching theses. In what remains of Chapter 2, I will summarize and explain a few key points of scientific disciplines from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that can be connected to Ophir de España and Montesinos’s rationale. Subsequently, on a concentrated scale, I will highlight some of the early scientific arguments that Montesinos develops. Finally, I will show how on a larger scale he blends theology and scientific thought together to ultimately support his central theses. In the long run, what I aim to demonstrate is that Ophir de España was designed by a scientific mind, one that was determined to protect and secure the mining industry.
Science as it is contemporarily defined, with all of its voluminous subfields, was nonexistent during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially in the New World where distant and individual viceroyalties were developing and tackling their own unique social, political, and educational dilemmas. Though the sovereignty of the Spanish Empire had certainly burrowed itself into the vast majority of American territories throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, uniformity was relatively challenging to acquire, in particular when it came to academic and scientific traditions. As Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra mentions, “Thus it was typical that for every ‘imperial’ version of a science that arrived in America a local, ‘colonial’ version emerged” (Cañizares-Esguerra 69). Science was still an evolving, diverse, and loosely defined subject in Colonial America. Even in Spain and Europe, science was not comparable to its modern-day offshoot. Many of the subfields of science that we are so familiar with today were studied and viewed as separate disciplines. During the sixteenth century all of these individual forms of knowledge “tuvieron una naturaleza mucho más aplicada que teórica, de forma que, desde un análisis actual, deberíamos considerarlos más como técnicas que como ciencias o, al menos, como ciencias aplicadas” (Piñeiro 20). Some of the more notable practices from the sixteenth century that could currently be viewed as scientific activities were mathematics, alchemy, distillation, chemistry, medicine, astrology, and cartography. Each of these disciplines were directly associated with the Alcázar Real where the scholars of these practices often “obtuvieron el rango de ‘criados del rey’ y, en ciertos casos, llegaron a disfrutar de una estrecha relación con su soberano” (27).47 The Casa de Contratación, located inside the

47 The Alcázar Real is located in Seville, Spain. It is one of the most significant, beautiful, and oldest palaces in Europe that is still currently inhabited by the Royal Family. It was one of the epicenters for scientific knowledge.
Alcázar Real, was one of its sites for scientific pursuits.\textsuperscript{48} It was here where versions of astrology, astronomy, cosmography, and cartography were advanced (28). As Spain’s scientific activities progressed throughout the sixteenth century, King Philip II eventually opened the Academia Real Mathematica in 1582, an academic institution that stressed the study of mathematics, architecture, and other disciplines, with some being scientific:

\begin{quote}
Se pretendía que en ella pudieran formarse los futuros cultivadores de la totalidad de las profesiones de la época, relacionadas con distintas artes, ciencias y técnicas: aritméticos, geómetras, astrónomos, músicos, cosmógrafos, pilotos, arquitectos y fortificadores, ingenieros y maquinarios, artilleros, fontaneros y niveladores de aguas, horologiógrafos y, por último, pintores y escultores. (30)
\end{quote}

While the history of science in the sixteenth century is traceable and somewhat defined, this was not the case with seventeenth-century colonial science. It has been largely misconstrued and improperly categorized due to its “sketchy and blurry” nature (Cañizares-Esguerra 64). What is clear about colonial science is that it did concentrate on mineralogy, metallurgy and natural history, common colonial disciplines that carried over from the sixteenth century. Moreover, it continued the expansion of knowledge on cartography. Metallurgy in particular was one of the most developed sciences, as has been highlighted through Montesinos’s works (67). Natural history, the study of plants, animals, and natural objects, predated Montesinos’s \textit{Ophir de España}, since colonial texts like \textit{Sumario de la natural historia} (1526) by Gonzalo Fernández de

\textsuperscript{48} Formally known as La Casa y Audiencia de Indias, the Casa de Contratación was primarily concerned with overseeing all the commerce arriving from the New World. More specifically, it served as the location of taxation on the importation of all precious metals. While there were a variety of taxations that could have been implemented, the standard Royal Fifth was typically levied on all imports. It was founded by Queen Isabella in 1503 and was initially housed in the arsenal of Seville, but later found a permanent home in the Alcázar Real, “a royal palace and fortress” (Brown, “Casa” 180). The Casa de Contratación will be revisited in Chapter 3.
Oviedo and *De Natura Novis Orbis* (1588) and *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590) by José de Acosta were written and consistently studied during the sixteenth century. Furthermore, Montesinos was not alone in his study of natural history. Other contemporary writers of his that also dabbled in natural history were Alonso de Ovalle, Bernabé Cobo, and Diego de Rosales, all Jesuit chroniclers (Prieto, *Missionary* 7). Jesuits were central to the advancement of colonial science and education as a whole. Aside from natural history, they also expanded other scientific practices such as geometry, astronomy, optics, magnetism, mechanics, and even electricity (Navarro Brotons 49). Even though science did not exist as a single interconnected subject and field, it was present throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Another stimulating development of science during the colonial period, which sets itself apart from its modern-day successor and is relevant when discussing Montesinos, was its association with theology. Both science and theology often intermingled. As Amos Funkenstein points out, “[t]heology and other sciences became almost one” (346). Before the sixteenth century, they were generally viewed as entirely separate fields. However, they gradually grew closer together as the “belief in divine creation” became a presupposition for science (Funkenstein 4; Klaaren v). Part of this advancement was driven by the printing press which allowed layman to read and write more freely, a privilege that was only given to clergymen previously. God, the Holy Bible, the creation, and God’s role in the formation and objectives for the world became essential considerations for scientific thought:

These early modern thinkers were determined reformers. Their belief in the creation had all the force of a new and highly focused sense of the supreme will of God. The Creator was much more than the power of being; He was the single source of the chief order in
creation. Some of the moderns were converted natural philosophers, but all were moved and disciplined by praise of the Creator. (Klaaren 188)

For most early modern scientists, especially those who practiced natural history, the laws of nature were viewed as pertaining to both heaven and earth since nature was so “homogenous, uniform, [and] symmetrical” (Funkenstein 29). Nature was created by God; therefore, it was understood to be orderly and in tune with his divine power. Thus, if one wanted to comprehend the composition and purpose of an earthly object or organism, he or she would need to turn to God and theological sources. By far one of the most paramount sources was the Holy Bible, an encyclopedia for early modern scientists. The text was filled with metaphors that could be interpreted and applied to the sciences (215). At the end of the sixteenth century and entering into the seventeenth century, this exchange of theology and science extended into the realm of history because “[h]istorical facts were no longer seen as self-evident, simplex narratio gestarum. Instead, they obtain[ed] significance only from the context in which they [were] embedded – a context to be reconstructed by the historian” (11). Some colonial historians, like Montesinos, ventured to fathom American history, and more often than not they were understandably inclined to place it into a Christian context. They hoped and aimed to incorporate pre-Columbus American history into the creation and biblical history, often utilizing scientific explanations for support.

One well-known and frequently cited source and predecessor of Montesinos that can be linked with these scientific approaches is José de Acosta and his Historia natural y moral de las Indias (Ford 32; Prieto, Missionary 2). As clearly expressed by the title, this book meshed science and theology into a single literary space, and “Acosta presented his reader with what he considered to be a totally new kind of history of the New World,” a history that gave “God due
recognition for the wonders of his creation and help[ed] the natives obtain their salvation,” but that also “aspired to give his readers an opportunity to improve their own condition by offering them a reasoned exposition of natural phenomena and objects from which they could obtain a ‘most useful philosophy’” (Prieto, Missionary 148-50). While Historia natural starts by examining the flora and fauna of the New World, leaning more on scientific inquiry and observation, Acosta eventually leads up to a more philosophical approach, as suggested in his prologue, and his text transitions into a “source of moral teachings and lessons of positive theology” (Acosta 13; Prieto, Missionary 167). In the second moral half of Acosta’s text, he centers on the Indigenous peoples and how they should be viewed and understood as human beings despite their differences. Like Europeans, they have free will, were organized in social, political, and educational levels, and obtained a number of achievements during the course of their respective histories (Marzal 12). Acosta’s ultimate goal is to reveal to and urge his readers to obtain a more in-depth understanding of God, His world, and His people.

While Acosta and Montesinos have dissimilar goals with their respective chronicles, they share a similar approach with their inclusion of natural history as a tool and explanation for God’s purpose for the New World. Unlike Acosta, Montesinos uses various scientific disciplines and natural history as a way to aid himself in proving that Ophir and Peru are the same exact location, but he does not simply rely on scientific thought. As can be expected, Montesinos combines theology and science to back his larger thesis that Ophir belongs to Spain because of biblical tradition and the will of God. What we will see with Ophir de España is that Montesinos’s theses initially appear as though they are founded on theological arguments. Yet, as we delve into the text it is revealed that scientific thought is also a primary proponent.
From the onset Montesinos provides his readers with a wide range of scientific arguments in Book I. It is in this section of *Ophir de España* where he experiments with natural history and mineralogy. To be more specific, in terms of modern science he deals with the subfields of biogeography, phytogeography, mineralogy, and zoogeography. All of these subsiences have one goal, similar to Book II and the entirety of Book I, to evidence and convince us that Ophir and Peru are indeed the same place. Book I is all about substantiating Montesinos’s first thesis by drawing clear parallels between the two geographical locations. Before creating a series of scientific connections, just as was summarized in Chapter 1, he spends approximately fifteen chapters thoroughly detailing the etymology of both words, Peru and Ophir, in an effort to disclose that they are actually the same exact word. It is throughout the remainder of Book I where he unveils his more scientific explanations through an in-depth comparative study that moves to illustrate that there are an abundant amount of rare items found in the Old World that were brought overseas from Ophir in biblical times past. To begin, Montesinos discusses all of the precious items he believes and knows King Solomon’s armadas would bring back from Ophir to gift to their ruler:

Diçese en el cap. 10. del. 3º. libro de los Reyes, que le llebaban a Salomon del Ophir Madera Tlinia, Piedras preciosas, oro Plata, dientes de Elefantes, Simias, y Pabos. Siete generos refiere el espiritu [santo] y como este numero. es misterioso en lo sagrado, y comprende infinidad, tengo por sin duda era algunas mas las cosas de estima y novedad que acompanaban las otras comprehendidas, no especificadas en el numero septenario.

(*Ophir 33v*)

From this point of Book I, Montesinos carefully examines each listed item. With every case study, he will generally reference a scripture from the Holy Bible where the article is mentioned.
At times, he will question the translation of the word listed in Hebrew and attempt to offer up an interpretation more suitable for his standpoint. Afterwards, he will explain where each item has been spotted in both the New and Old World while providing supportive descriptions and evidentiary stories.

Resting on the first item listed, this is the moment Montesinos enters into what can be considered natural historical analyses, or a biogeographical and phytogeography analyses. The first argument he makes is that the Hebrew word \textit{algumin} should be properly translated as a generic odorous wood. This translation is utilized to explain that Peru would fit this category: “aquella tierra pues en ella ay montañas de arboles no solo de todos olores, sino de todos colores. blancos, amarillos, colorados, açules, negros, naranjados y uersicolores dignos de la admiraçion” (Montesinos, \textit{Ophir} 34). Montesinos proceeds by unsteadily trying to elucidate that several odorous woods from Spain and Jerusalem may have originated in the New World because of their rarity in the Old World. Sandalwood, cedar, pine, and ebony are a few examples he highlights, and each time he does so, he tries to draw a parallel to the Old World by delivering some form of proof, many times unsuccessfully. For instance, while discussing the scarcity of Sandalwood, he discusses an extremely ancient house in the Santa Maria district of Seville, Spain that had a roof made entirely of sandalwood shingles. According to the older generation of that area, the perfectly-conditioned roof was well over five hundred years old, and it was constructed by Muslims. The point of this example is to suggest that the wood is so old and unusual that it must have come from somewhere else, alluding to the possibility of Ophir.

Moving forward, Montesinos details several Native Peruvian woods, like \textit{uba-piru}, \textit{uitaca}, \textit{taral}, \textit{maria caoba}, and \textit{granadillo}, that he concludes were all imported by King Solomon’s armadas,
survived in the Old World, and could be interpreted as \textit{algumin}. Ultimately, he is striving to show an early distribution of trees from Peru/Ophir.

Similar methodological procedures are exercised with the rest of Montesinos’s scientific comparisons in Book I. From natural history, he shifts over to mineralogy, once again endeavoring to pinpoint all of the specific items that were hauled over by King Solomon’s armadas, but that originated in Peru. Predictably, this is the most extensive section since it deals with Montesinos’s specialty. Before deliberating each mineral, Montesinos mentions that the following minerals, specified in the Holy Bible, are unquestionably from Peru: “y asi quando queramos deçir [que] del Ophir llebaban a Salomon Perlas, esmeraldas, christales, iaspes, o aquel misterioso maridaje de aquellas piedreçitas [que] juntas y unidas ofereç la profundidad, y otros generos de piedras preçiosas todo lo emos de uerificar en el Piru” (\textit{Ophir} 37v). Concerning pearls, the first precious gemstone he addresses, Montesinos claims that Spain and Europe had never before seen so many and such a diversity of pearls until the discovery of America, stressing the abundance of pearls originally harvested from the shores of Margarita island and from the mouth of the Orinoco River.\footnote{While Montesinos clusters pearls with minerals, it should be pointed out that pearls are not actually minerals. They are the formation of a living organism, and because of this they lack a structured crystal pattern like other gemstones. They consist of calcium carbonate.} Montesinos asserts that the armadas of King Solomon specifically collected pearls from these two locations because there is nowhere else on the planet where pearls are so abundant (37v). Since King Solomon received a noteworthy amount of rare pearls, he finds this as the only reasonable explanation. In the same manner, he argues that Peru holds the largest reserves of emeralds, signifying that this is likely where King Solomon obtained these green gemstones. To help support this deduction, he follows the pattern of his other arguments by linking Peru to the Holy Bible. He asserts that the Native Peruvians were too
barbarous to have the proper knowledge to adorn the Temple of the Sun in Tomebamba with emeralds. He believes that they must have obtained this delicate skill from the people of Tyre (41v). From emeralds, Montesinos examines carbuncles and reference a scripture from the Holy Bible that is far removed from the people of Tyre, Kings David and Solomon, and Ophir as biblical evidence, Exodus 28:17 which discusses the gems found in Aaron’s breastplate of judgment. One of the gemstones mentioned is carbuncle: “And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row.” This scripture is followed up by a handful of stories from Peru that are meant to ascertain that carbuncles are prevalent in America. For example, on a personal level, Montesinos tells how in 1634, while he was staying in Arica, a man visiting from the New Kingdom of Granada showed him a spectacular carbuncle the size of a hazelnut (44). The next item that he studies is bdellium. It is mentioned twice in the Holy Bible, in Genesis 2:12 and Numbers 11:7. Bdellium is currently believed to be a gum resin obtained from African and Indian trees of the genus *commiphora* (“Bdellium”). Montesinos himself identifies this as one possibility: “dize que no es piedra sino una goma preçiosa que destila Un arbol al modo de luçiente lagrima gota a gota que como van cayendo le quaxan con orden” (Ophir 46). Even so, he stresses that the translation of this Hebrew word was a point of debate, since it is listed alongside other precious gemstones in the Holy Bible. In the opinion of Montesinos, Hebrew lost the accurate translation of this item, and they have given conflicting translations over time. Some say it is a fruit resin while others firmly reason it is a gemstone. They have supposedly identified it as emerald, crystal, diamond, and jasper. Montesinos prudently inspects each option and ultimately reveals the irrelevance of the differing translations of *bdellium* because all of them are plentiful in Peru. Aside from the abovementioned identifiable gemstones, he also briefly
classifies a few other newly discovered and unnamed Peruvian gems he believes could have been exported to King Solomon, but he falters in supporting these claims with any kind of evidence, be it biblical, narrative, or physical.

For Montesinos, a conversation on mineralogy would not be complete without dedicating time to gold and silver. Before addressing silver, he starts his analysis of gold by emphasizing the endlessness of this coveted metal in South America: “que en toda la cordillera y sus ramas que corren dende tierra firme hasta chile se hallan grandes Vetas de oro continuas vnas con otras y esto a enseñado la esperiençia porque donde quiera que ay gente afiçionada al mineraxe hallan oro” (Ophir 54). Instead of listing each one of the mines that have been discovered in Book I, he directs his readers to Anales del Perú where he is much more thorough with this information. Despite this statement, Montesinos does take a moment in Book I to list the most notorious regions of gold in South America. Additionally, he shares a few stories of the golden regalia and jewelry the conquistadores witnessed the Native peoples wearing. For instance, he tells how the Incas were swift to hide all they could managed following the death of Atahualpa (55v). When it comes to his examination of gold, Montesinos focuses more on its presence in America and less so on biblical references to Kings David and Solomon and the people of Tyre because by this point of his account it is a given. That is to say, he has repeatedly rehashed this notion throughout all of Book I. His discussion of silver does not vary drastically from gold since he starts by stating that there are approximately two hundred and six mines that are featured in Anales del Perú. He explains how the Natives mined for silver with guiaras before the arrival of the Spaniards:

Estas minas o parte dellas labrauan los indios antiguanmente con menos codiçia que las de oro. El modo de sacar plata era en unas que llaman Guarias son como chimeneas aunque
Montesinos continues by illustrating the large quantities and assortments of silver that are mined each day in Peru, always delivering as much detail as possible. He claims that roughly twelve to thirteen thousand pesos of silver are coined each day in Peru, and he concludes that this indubitably must have been the site where King Solomon’s men retrieved their silver since it is the biggest reserve in the world. Jerusalem supposedly had so much silver that “ni se estimaba en aquel triempo, ni aun se hacía caso della” (61v). In part, this is what leads Montesinos to believe Peru is truly Ophir.

After elaborating extensively on mineralogy, Montesinos returns to natural history. These scientific arguments can currently be associated with biogeography and zoogeography. As I lightly touched on in my summary of *Ophir de España* in Chapter 1, Montesinos starts this section of Book I by discussing how the absence of ivory and elephants in the New World might appear to encumber his thesis that Peru is Ophir, because ivory was another common import of King Solomon’s armadas. Nevertheless, he assures his readers that elephant tusks were discovered in Mexico in 1604: “y es que en nueva españa cerca de Mexico varrenando vn cerro para desaguár la laguna en que esta fundada la ciudad quando se llego a la mitad del que tenia vna legua de su vida se hallo vn colmillo de Elefantes enterrado en tierra blanda” (*Ophir* 63). To further thwart any potential criticism, he likens the teeth of tapirs to the tusks of elephants. They too were extracted and used by the Native Andeans. Tapirs, like elephants, he argues, have a trunk-like snout that may have been misinterpreted as an elephant trunk: “en los Andes se allan las [antas] que tienen [trompa] como el Elefante y colmillos aunque no tan grandes también ay
noticias que ay los mesmos Elefantes” (63v). As a final point regarding the challenge of elephants, he argues that the Hebrew words in the Holy Bible, sen habim, do not strictly translate to elephant teeth. While he does agree that sen means teeth, he contends that habim could have included various species like the tapir. Following a long examination of ivory, elephants, and tapirs, Montesinos fleetingly comments on apes and monkeys, and he accentuates how these animals were also imported from Ophir and gifted to King Solomon. In the same manner, he explains how there are bountiful in the New World: “son yfinitos los que ay en este reyno” (65). Finally, Montesinos tackles the abundance of exotic fowls from Peru that he believes were exported to Jerusalem. This section of Book I is rather broad because he quickly list as many exotic birds as he can. To provide some examples, he examines herons, parrots, parakeets, macaws, thrushes, woodpeckers, and falcons. Anew, with many of his species of birds he regularly attempts to link them to the biblical references to birds in Jerusalem.

During Montesinos’s scientific arguments in Book I, we see that his studies do not compare to modern day science because they are somewhat less complex and exclude the use of mathematical analysis. These types of studies that were rooted in natural history and minerology “were confined principally to the business of collecting and classifying facts” (Crombie 262). Montesinos was constantly gathering empirical information during his travels through South America, so that in turn he could categorize and equate New World objects to those mentioned in the Holy Bible regarding Ophir and those purportedly surviving in the Old World. As can be observed by reading Book I, Montesinos’s scientific arguments are not always the most coherent and well developed, but they follow the trends of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scientific disciplines nonetheless, such as natural history and mineralogy. What is more, all of his inquiries draw from the Holy Bible, accentuating the natural inclination of early modern scientists to
reference and adopt this sacred text as a primary source. In other words, Montesinos does not question the Holy Bible. On the contrary, he sees it as source of truth and fact, especially concerning the data related to the people of Tyre, Kings David and Solomon, and Ophir.

Using the scriptures as a source of information is just one way that Montesinos blends science and religion together. To reiterate, one of his larger goals is to convince his readers that Peru and Ophir are physically and geographically the same location, a cosmographical argument. He begins this process in Book I by presenting his theses, explaining why Peru and Ophir are the same word through etymology, and systematically walking his readers through a comparative study based on scientific analyses, as we have seen up until now. All of this builds up to an even bigger idea that is established in Book II, that Peru and Ophir are genealogically and historically connected. Following the practice of early modern historians, Montesinos ties the Andean past and ancestry into the Christian timeline, emphasizing God’s will, awareness, and design for all human beings. Book II repeatedly centers on the social and cultural behaviors of these biblical descendants, presenting itself as an early coarse form of social anthropology. At the time, this would have also fallen under natural history. Book III is where the inclusion of theology becomes most salient and builds upon Montesinos’s preceding analyses of natural history, mineralogy, and history, which were all used to satisfy and support his first thesis that Peru is Ophir. It is in Book III where he declares that God’s will is supreme and depicts Ophir as a sacred territory of great abundance that is rewarded to righteous and obedient rulers, a point Montesinos makes all too often: “hasta los officios y dignidades, por el sumo emperador del Cielo que es el que puede quitar las monarquías a uno y darlas a otros, y assi las quitara a estos y los offi y Dignidades y todo lo dara a los españoles” (Ophir 154v). Montesinos’s rationale in Book III is theological because it focuses on the will of God and concentrates on certain aspects
of his relationship with the world (Polkinghorne 143). The whole reason Montesinos gradually persuades his readers that Peru is Ophir in Books I and II is so that he can turn around and contend that it rightfully belongs to Spain through divine intervention, corroborating his second thesis. God controls the world, land, and especially Ophir. At least that is what biblical history indicates as Montesinos so attentively and thoroughly demonstrates. Just as God bestowed this land upon the King of Tyre, King Solomon, and King David in times past, he has every right to do so in the present. Since Pope Alexander VI speaks for God on the earth, and since he conferred the papal bull on the kings of Spain, the channeled will of God must be followed.

Montesinos is so adamant about these ideas that he had them drawn on his title page of Ophir de España (Figure 11). In the top half of this drawing, we see the Holy Trinity up in the sky watching over and administering to the world in the center. From God’s hand, extending down and touching the surface of the world, there in an inscription in Latin that translates as, “God gave the kings of Spain” (Ophir 1). The statement is completed by a single word written on the land of the world, “Hamerica” (1). Below the heavens and the world, off in the right corner, we see what appears to be a seated Pope Alexander VI holding a document in his left hand (probably the papal bull), and with his right index and middle fingers he is pointing off in the distance towards a male and female ruler, who are most likely the Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella. The presence of the Pope reemphasizes his role in fulfilling the will of God. In the end, when all is said and done, what started in Book I as seemingly unpretentious scientific assessments based on biblical history slowly expands into a much more complex theological debate that aims to protect Spanish interests in the New World. Throughout Ophir de España, science and religion coexist and complement one another in the same theoretical sphere.
Conclusion

The objective of this chapter has been to depict Montesinos as a metallurgist and scientist who was invested in and influenced by mining and metallurgy. During a fifteen year period, he made every effort possible to draw close to the South American mines and research amalgamation. He was constantly giving up his ecclesiastical callings in pursuit of these intellectual interests, making them appear as a means to an end. Even when he was fulfilling his religious responsibilities, he was consistently researching, writing, and attempting to publish his findings. The vast majority of his works were related to metallurgy and mining. Montesinos’s memorials to the King stressed the significance and relevance of his research. He was perceptibly a man who wanted recognition for his scientific achievements and efforts. In the same manner, he wanted to be financially rewarded. When we take all of this into consideration and look closely at Ophir de España, we can start to see that this chronicle was not impermeable to Montesinos’s professional and intellectual activities. Ophir de España was visibly influenced by scientific thought and his interests in mining. As I will argue and demonstrate in the next chapter, when Montesinos spoke of the Spanish rights in the New World, he was not simply referring to generalities. There is a deeper and more personal reason he was alarmed and attempting to aid Spain. This colonial priest feared that the South American mines were not being managed properly and that local authorities and citizens were taking advantage of the outward flow of wealth. The mining industry is something Montesinos held near and dear, and quite possibly he worried that Spain would eventually lose total control of the mines, preventing him from returning to them and continuing his research. In both Montesinos’s memorials to the King, he was quick to express his interest in returning to the New World. If he returned or had he returned, I am convinced he would have hastily fled back to the mines. What is certain is that
Montesinos used his mineralogical and scientific knowledge to his advantage in *Ophir de España* in an effort to defend Spain’s legal rights in America.
CHAPTER 3

ECONOMIC CRISIS, THE PERUVIAN MINING INDUSTRY, AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

It was the year 1569 when Francisco de Toledo became the Viceroy of Peru and served in this post until 1581, one year before his death in Escalona, Spain. In terms of colonization and economic prosperity, Toledo was unmatched in his accomplishments. Following his general inspection from 1570 to 1575 (la visita general), Toledo implemented a series of policies that are referred to as the Toledo Reforms, due to the constant political and economic mayhem that had previously prevented Spain from gaining absolute governmental control in Peru. One of Toledo’s first measures was to assemble the outlying Amerindians into centralized Spanish-style towns known as reducciones, where they could be monitored, easily controlled, and indoctrinated. From this point, he also implemented heavy taxation laws, established a series of regional ordinances (las ordenanzas) that afforded a comprehensive list of laws pertaining to all corners of Peruvian life, conducted a massive historical inquiry into the Inca past that led to the anti-Inca publication of Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, Historia indica (1572), abolished the final significant traces of Inca resistance by apprehending and executing Tupac Amaru I, and established the mita, a government labor draft (Cook 665). The Toledo Reforms were designed to finally put an end to the Spanish conquest of Tahuantinsuyo by demonstrating that Spanish rule was permanent and resistance was futile (Rowe 156).

50 Most colonial towns in South America are remnants of the reducciones, modeled after Spanish towns from Europe. They generally consist of quadrilateral layouts, with the center of town being a plaza surrounded by square buildings facing the middle (primarily administrative buildings). The most important central piece is a Catholic cathedral that sits on one of the sides of the plaza, highlighting the central role of the Catholic Church and Christ. Each reduction town was assigned a corregidor (a judicial official) who was charged with watching over his assigned Indigenous population. As the Spanish title hints, he was responsible for correcting the bad behavior of his residents, particularly idolatrous and sinful conduct.
The latter of these political undertakings was by far the most momentous financially speaking, since the *mita* labor greatly affected and contributed to increased mining productions. Between 1574 and 1578, Toledo reorganized Peruvian mining practices and introduced “the amalgam process of extracting silver from its ore, using mercury” (Rowe 172). While drafting Native Andeans into the mining industry through the *mita*, there was a silver boom, with the mercury mines of Huancavelica and the silver mines of Potosi being converted into the epicenters of mining. This mining transformation was authored by Toledo:

This viceroy stamped an impress upon the Andean industry which was not erased until the Wars of Independence . . . The results of this structural reorganization were impressive and immediate. Production at Potosi, in the doldrums in 1570, soared to unprecedented heights, and during the ensuing quarter century the *cerro rico* accounted for at least 70 percent of all Peruvian silver production, or, to put the case in wider perspective, about half of all American silver. (Brading and Cross 571-73)

While silver productions soared, the Spanish Crown made certain it was profiting from the mining revolution. Spain had Toledo issue legal code to control silver productions and exports, heavily tax all silver, and redefine mercury distributions and minting (Brading and Cross 560-66; Cobb 37). During Toledo’s political stay, Spain had reached the height of its economic prosperity, and for approximately twenty years any financial struggles of the past were no more.

Even though Toledo was extremely successful at revolutionizing the mining industry and improving Spain’s economy during the second half of the sixteenth century, he could not foresee the problems of the future. As luck would have it, mercury productions drastically declined over the years, which in turn slowed the amalgamation of silver and silver exports. By the turn of the century, Spain’s economy was in a downward spiral. The mining industry was not the only cause
for economic disaster. International and local conflicts were at a high, and the cost of war was great. In addition to a failing mining industry and growing wars, Spain was confronted with unsatisfactory and corrupt bankers and financers who were taking advantage of Spain’s American income. Each of these economic woes eventually led to and contributed to three bankruptcies that occurred in Spain during the first half of the seventeenth century.

By the time Montesinos had reached the New World in 1628, Spain has just been hit with the second of the three bankruptcies in 1627, and just four years after his return to the Iberian Peninsula, Spain was confronted with the third in 1647. The Peru that Montesinos came to know during his tenure in the New World was no longer the golden-era Peru that had been successfully driving by the tenacious hand of Toledo. In particular, Spain was no longer the primary benefactor of the mining industry. Viceroys Luis Jerónimo Fernández de Cabrera y Bobadilla and Pedro Álvarez de Toledo y Leiva were incapable of monitoring the Peruvian mines as Toledo once did because legal disputes and corruption seem to have climbed to an all-time high. Spain’s economy was in shambles, and Montesinos was aware of this fact. So much so, that he often dedicated his time to the study of metallurgy and improving the process of amalgamation. In addition, he wrote a handful of texts that aimed to mend the poor management of mines, increase silver productions, and tame the mounting number of legal disputes that were overflowing the judicial system. When Montesinos sat down to draft Ophir de España, I am convinced that he was considering all of these issues, and I believe his main goal was that of protecting and restoring Spain’s economy. He recognized a number of growing and potential threats that had shaped Spain’s economic crisis and threatened to further ruin his mother country. While Montesinos’s larger theses focus on the notion that Peru is actually Ophir, and as such, it rightfully belongs to the Kings of Spain because they had been divinely appointed by God to oversee and profit from America for the greater good of
Christendom, I do not find this to be his chief concern. Ophir is a smokescreen for a much larger argument, one that aims to point out that the mining industry should be controlled by Spain and that the wealth of the New World should do nothing short of benefit and sustain Spain’s economy, since Spain is a divine nation authorized to act in God’s name. In the end, it can be seen that Montesinos is essentially chastising any individual or nation who interferes with Spain’s economic affluence.

**Economic Crisis in Spain**

A large portion of the sixteenth century was a colossal success for the Crown of Castile, from a monetary perspective. This period allowed Spain to acquire and conquer large portions of the world, including the Americas, Portugal, the Philippines, and territories in the Netherlands and Italy. According to Dennis Flynn, “1580 is sometimes chosen as the zenith of Spanish hegemony” (139). As history would have it, this period of imperial and fiscal bliss that was partially commanded by Toledo would not last forever. The first half of the seventeenth century in Spain was marked by economic turmoil and a handful of bankruptcies that spanned a thirty-one-year period.\(^{51}\) On the one hand, this was due to the excessive borrowing of foreign credit for more than one hundred years (Álvarez Nogal, *The Role* 27). On the other hand, the “[i]mperial

---

\(^{51}\) I would like to clarify here that there were other bankruptcies for Spain in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Philip II allowed Spain to go bankrupt on four separate occasions, 1557, 1560, 1575 and 1596, but it is believed that the first three bankruptcies were unnecessary and could have been prevented, unlike the bankruptcies of the seventeenth century: “Philip’s debts did not exceed future discounted primary surpluses. Rising debt was met with rising revenue. Contrary to received wisdom, Philip II’s debts were sustainable throughout his reign. Castile’s fiscal position only weakened after the defeat of the ‘Invincible Armada [1588],’ and this deterioration was mild. Far from being undermined by reckless spending and weak fiscal institutions, Castile’s finances mainly suffered large, temporary shocks as a result of military events” (Drelichman and Voth 2). Even though Philip II defaulted a few times, Spain rapidly recovered and continued to borrow and meet its debt with equal amounts of revenue. Most of the sixteenth century is viewed as a period of financial prosperity in Spain. In other words, Spain’s economy did not suffer to the same degree as it did in the seventeenth century. For the purposes of this chapter, I will only focus on the bankruptcies from the first half of the seventeenth century because I believe these were the financial events that Montesinos was aware of and considering while researching and writing his various texts.
contraction was due to an inevitable shrinkage of profits extracted from the prodigious mines of America” (Flynn 140). For the most part, Spain’s economy relied on the outward flow of wealth from the mining industries in the New World. In the most general sense, if Spain’s American viceroyalties were booming and profiting from precious metals, so too was Spain and Europe. At the same time, if the American wealth was not properly reaching the Casa de Contratación, this tended to create economic havoc for Spain, its creditors, and even Europe as a whole. All precious metals from the New World, on a level of legality, were required to first pass through Spain and the Casa de Contratación, and “el comercio con las colonias españolas estaba celosamente restringido a los súbditos de la madre patria” (Hamilton 23). It was not so much the production of precious metals in the New World that mattered, as it was the importation and taxation of said items. In order for Spain to maintain its elite status that once flourished in the sixteenth century, it was imperative to preserve the importation of American minerals, and this was where the Spanish Crown struggled.

Unfortunately for Spain, there were a number of growing problems that hindered precious metal imports and the sustainability of Spain’s finances during the first half of the seventeenth century, some of which will be briefly discussed hereafter in order to demonstrate that the economy of the Spanish Crown had fallen into despair. Some of the economic problems Spain was confronted with included the inconsistency and inability to retain satisfactory bankers and financers, the corruption of some bankers, the fluctuating prices and irregular distribution of mercury, the increasing loss of precious metal imports, local rebellions, and the presence of diverse wars and their associated debt. As will be highlighted later on, these various types of economic issues contributed to the three bankruptcies that took place during the first part of the seventeenth century.
One of the largest economic woes that Spain dealt with on a regular basis during this time was the poor management and inconsistent stay of bankers and financers. The financial charge of Spain’s economy constantly switched foreign hands, leaving their fiscal continuity unstable. On separate occasions, Spain sought the help of foreign financers and creditors, with the most common being the Germans, Italians, and Portuguese (Sanz Ayán 164). The worst of these transitions took place between 1639 and 1641 when the “Real Hacienda perdió un importante grupo de financieros con experiencia, precisamente cuando más recursos necesitaba” (Álvarez Nogal, *Los banqueros* 34). Regrettably, this shifting financial situation often produced dishonest bankers and financers who took advantage of Spain’s wealth. One of the more well-known fraudulent bankers that siphoned away large sums of income from the Casa de la Contratación was Antonio Balbi. He was primarily charged with the duty of managing the mercury provisions from Nueva España. During his tenure as a banker for Spain, “[e]l precio del mercurio siguió haciéndole acreedor de las remesas americanas, pero este hombre de negocios logró recibir esos pagos en las cajas reales americanas, evitando de esa forma las consignaciones sobre los oficiales reales de Sevilla” (36). His deceitful astuteness set a trend for subsequent bankers, since many of them began receiving their allocations in American territories as well.

Bankers and financers were not the only reason Spain’s economy was being poorly managed. In part, the financial downward spiral was a result of “the plurality of agencies that were responsible for the fiscal administration” that developed within the Castilian treasury (Gelabert 224). At times the distribution of economic responsibility lead to the inability to maintain a “regularidad del flujo de capitales hacia los lugares donde debía aplicarse el gasto. La movilidad de los instrumentos de pago fue siempre una cuestión pendiente, sujeta a la capacidad y a la iniciativa de quienes eran los responsables financieros de la Monarquía” (Álvarez Nogal,
Los banqueros 21). The wealth of American shipments was frequently dispersed through a system of priority. Importance of merchants and foreign trade agreements seriously depended on a previous display of generosity towards the Spanish Crown (22). Since the delivery of royal payments was forced to be selective instead of widespread, due to insufficient funds, the history of Spain’s debt settlements (specifically around the time of Montesinos) reveals that there were two distinctive periods of payments. Prior to 1640, there was a constant expansion of credit, and the majority of the precious metal imports had the “principal misión estar al servicio de los intereses de la Monarquía en Europa. Las consignaciones en las flotas respondían al pago de los asientos cuyo destino era Milán, Flandes, o Alemania” (22). After 1640, Spain was confronted with local rebellions and foreign wars. There were the rebellions of Catalonia and Portugal and the Thirty Years’ War, which will be detailed later on. These conflicts forced Spain to channel all of its wealth into military efforts, with the Catalan Revolt being the most costly (22). The excess of credit increases and the financial demands were just two factors that contributed to Spain’s economic difficulties.

Another significant problem Spain encountered during the first half of the seventeenth century, which contributed to its monetary troubles, was a decline in mercury productions. As was stressed in Chapter 2, metallurgists like Montesinos were searching for new methods to efficiently extract silver from ore since quicksilver was diminishing to an all-time low. The Peruvian mercury mines had all but dried up,52 and the notorious Almadén Spanish mercury mine was no longer producing large quantities of quicksilver. What is more, Spain ultimately

52 Huancavelica was the most popular location for Peruvian mercury. It was also the most inhumane and dangerous for Native Americans who were assigned to work there. By 1642, the mines of Huancavelica were bottoming out on mercury and its overall structure was falling apart. The horrific state required a noteworthy amount of reconditioning and structural improvements that likely halted the extraction of mercury (Brown, “Workers” 490).
ended up losing control of Almadén: “perdieron el control de la mina Almadén, que pasó a ser administrada por una Junta gestora nombrada por la Real Hacienda, y pocos años después, acabaron en suspensión de pagos definitiva y en la liquidación de la compañía” (Álvarez Nogal, Los banqueros 30). With a heavy blow to Spain’s mercury productions, it was forced to outsource and turn to central European mines, and since mercury was scarce and had reached an increased premium, less gold and silver were being extracted and imported to Spain. Yet, another probable reason Montesinos was diligently working on innovated ways to recycle mercury. Prior to the decrease in mercury productions, the world’s supply of silver had reached an all-time high, and this rise “drove its market value downward,” so much so that its “[v]alue eventually dropped below the cost of producing it in a growing number of European mines” (Flynn 141). By the turn of the century, silver had become so plentiful and devalued that a recession was inevitable once silver productions came to a crawling pace due to the shrinkage of mercury (141).

While Spain’s foreign neighbors were jacking up mercury prices and taking advantage of Spain’s demise, and while silver prices were plummeting into an unavoidable recession, the Spanish debt ceiling was crumbling before the Spanish Crown’s very eyes. Around 1623, the debt of the Spanish Empire rose to approximately “112 million ducats, ‘the equivalent of at least 10 years' revenue,’” and in 1667 it “reached the staggering sum of 180 million ducats” (Flynn 143). Slowly but surely, through the first half of the seventeenth century, as precious metal imports began to stagger, Spain had lost its bargaining chip to creditors because “[l]os metales precisos eran el único medio de pago aceptado en el exterior y, por lo tanto, el único capaz de animar a los hombres de negocios a colaborar con las necesidades financieras de la Corona española” (Álvarez Nogal, Los banqueros 15-16). The gold and silver shipments, that were once overflowing the Iberian Peninsula, were irrereplaceable for the economy of the Spanish Crown,
and to make matters worse, Spain had become engulfed in a number of serious local and foreign conflicts.

With Spain controlling massive territories in both the Old and New Worlds, and while overpowering previously independent states and hoarding the majority of the world’s potential wealth, internal and foreign uprisings were foreseeable. As soon as Spain had become an enduring and growing imperial power in the sixteenth century, its number of international conflicts rose drastically. During this one-hundred-year period of ascendancy, Spain was threatened with approximately thirty-eight conflicts.53 As the seventeenth century began and progressed, local and foreign wars and conflicts hardly subsided. By the time Montesinos was writing *Ophir de España*, Spain had been challenged with or was entangled in at least sixteen different skirmishes, all of which contributed to Spain’s financial demise, since it found itself dumping the bulk of its American wealth into protecting its many borders (Álvarez Nogal, *Los banqueros* 33). With the evaporation of mercury, the decline of precious metal productions, the mismanagement of Spain’s finances, and the corruption of bankers and financers, the ongoing and new wars of the seventeenth century became too much for Spain to handle on an economic level. These wars became another factor that lead to Spain’s various bankruptcies. In an effort to demonstrate the gravity of some of these conflicts, and in order to place the wars in Montesinos’s timeline and illustrate what he was most likely seeing and envisioning while writing *Ophir de España*, I will touch upon five of the more notable European wars that transpired during the

53 Some of the more notable conflicts were the War of the League of Cambrai (1508-1516), the Spanish Conquest of Iberian Navarre (1512), the Conquest of the Aztec Empire (1519-1521), the War of the League of Cognac (1526-1530), the Conquest of the Inca Empire (1531-1572), the Third Ottoman-Venetian War (1537-1540), the French Wars of Religion (1562-1598), the Eighty Years’ War (1568-1648), the War of the Portuguese Succession (1580-1583), and the Anglo-Spanish War (1585-1604).
conception of *Ophir de España* and directly threatened the Spanish Crown and its financial stability.

The first of these wars is generally referred to as the Eighty Years’ War, from 1568-1648. This war started as an uprising in the Habsburg Netherlands. The Netherlands sought independence from Spain and King Philip II because the people had become increasingly tired of the Habsburg’s heavy hand and onerous taxation. This revolt eventually divided the northern Netherlands from the south and created the Dutch Republic, the Provinces of the Netherlands. After forty-one years of conflict and territorial exchanges, there was a period of peace as the Twelve Years’ Truce was put into action in 1609. The calm did not last long because fighting recommenced in 1621 and lasted until 1648 when Spain officially acknowledged the Dutch’s independence. Jonathan I. Israel argues that the Eight Years’ War should actually be recognized as two separate wars. According to him,

> the Dutch struggle for independence . . . was won by 1609 when the first Spanish-Dutch war ended . . . Decades ago it was shown that the way in which the Spanish-Dutch rupture was presented publicly in the United Provinces in 1621 was largely determined by domestic political considerations and especially the need to convince the Dutch people of the necessity of war. (2)

Furthermore, Israel explains that the only reason the Spanish resumed the war was because Spain wanted to assure “that freedom of worship be conceded to the Dutch Catholic minority, that the river Scheldt be reopened and that the Dutch withdraw from the Indies east and west” (2). That is to say, Spain was not attempting to reconquer the European Dutch territories. More than anything, it was threatened by the Dutch’s global presence and religious reprisal, topics

---

54 Sometimes the latter part of this war is associated with the Thirty Years’ War because some of the events were intertwined.
Montesinos discusses in *Ophir de España*. From 1585-1660 Spain repeatedly attempted to place embargos on the Dutch because it feared the Dutch were becoming too powerful and influential. The Spanish went to great lengths to create and assure ridged embargo policies that would limit and control the Dutch (196). This is part of the reason the Eighty Years’s War resumed, because by 1621 the Dutch were starting to be recognized as a colonial power by Europeans.

Three years before the Eighty Years’ War resumed in 1621, the Thirty Years’ War had begun in 1618 and drug on until 1648. This particular conflict was more of a widespread European war, involving a large number of European nations. Over this thirty-year period, there was a chain of distinct wars that would occasionally overlap. Although, by the end of the war there was a general consensus and feeling it had become a unified conflict, which is why the Westphalian peace treaties of 1648 were executed and signed. Many of the battles transpired for different reasons. For instance, the war was initially sparked by religious debate. By the seventeenth century, the struggles and disaccord between Roman Catholics and Protestants had increased dramatically. In 1618, the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II, also the King of Bohemia, “attempted to impose Roman Catholic absolutism on his domains, and the Protestant nobles of both Bohemia and Austria rose up in rebellion” (“Thirty Years’s War”). Five years later, Ferdinand II and his policies of Roman Catholic absolutism won, a historical event that quickly upset other protestant nations and supporters and generated similar and interrelated clashes in Saxony, Sweden, Spain, Austria, France, Germany, Netherlands, Scotland, Hungary, Denmark, and other European nations. Some of the overarching causes of these wars were

55 The peace treaties of Westphalia occurred in 1648 when two separate peace treaties were signed. The first was the Spanish-Dutch treaty that put an end to the Eighty Years’ War and was signed on 30 January in Münster and Osnabrück. There was also a second peace treaty that was signed on 24 October in the same towns. All European nations, aside from the Ottoman Empire, Sweden, Russia, Poland, and England, participated in the treaty. This put a stop to the German phase of the Thirty Years’s War (“Peace of Westphalia”).
related to issues of religion, commerce, governance, and territorial disputes. As the Thirty Year’s War advanced, most nations involved found themselves either aligning with the Habsburg states or with the anti-Habsburg states. The war ended up becoming a struggle for political power. Since the war had become so extensive in Europe, it is considered one of the most catastrophic early modern events.

An associated war that surfaced during the Thirty Years’ War in 1635, but ended separately in 1659, and directly affected Spain was the Franco-Spanish War. The French, particularly the first minister and cardinal Armand Jean du Plessis and the Valois and Bourbon dynasties that had been in rivalry with the House of Habsburg for many years, became concerned with the Habsburg territories that were gradually encircling France. Due to this encroachment and France’s inability to expand its kingdom, it declared war on Spain, in an attempt to debilitate Spanish borders and dominance. France hastily invaded the borders of Catalonia and the Basque provinces, making this one of the few times the Spanish Empire had been confronted with a local border dispute and had a war at home (Gelabert 240). With the French invasion and the ongoing Eighty Years’ War with the Dutch, Spain found itself rechanneling all of its wealth into these different wars and unrelentingly suffered financially.

Five years into the Franco-Spanish War, with the border strongholds constantly shifting, Spain was dealt yet another blow as Catalonia and Portugal decided to follow the lead of France and revolted against Spain and the Habsburgs by seeking out their own independence. Some of the reasons Catalonia revolted against Philip IV in 1640 were linked to financial distress, excessive taxation, war on Catalan soil, and the loss of Catalonia to France on 6 January 1640. Due to these issues, Catalonia saw it fit to join forces with France and successfully helped defeat the Castilian armies in 1641. Eventually, Spain reclaimed Catalonia in 1648 and the Catalan
rebels were left to fend for themselves. During the four years following France’s departure from Catalonia, Spain gradually weeded out all of the Catalan rebels and they surrendered in 1652. Like all the other wars, the revolt of Catalonia only worsened Spain’s financial crisis: “Las remesas americanas que antes servían fundamentalmente para pagar los ejércitos que combatían en Europa fueron destinadas a recuperar Cataluña, expulsando al ejército francés de la Península Ibérica” (Álvarez Nogal, Los banqueros 33). Prior to 1640 Portugal had regularly been granted a substantial amount of freedom by Spain when it came to the New World. They were permitted to travel freely to all of Spain’s colonial territories, and they even had “corresponsales en Lima, Nueva España, en el Nuevo Reino de Granada y en toda la banda de barlovento” where they would export tobacco, leather, cacao, and other goods (Anes and Castrillón 323). This liberty afforded to the Portuguese was linked to the Habsburg rule which had lasted nearly sixty years since the succession of Philip II of Spain in 1580.56 While there were some perks, much like the Catalans, the Habsburg rule became overwhelming to the Portuguese. The heavy tax burden on Portuguese society created widespread discontent with the Habsburgs and the Portuguese nobility who did not share the same financial encumbrance. Even large numbers of Portuguese aristocrats were growing tired of the Habsburgs: “Disaffection within the Portuguese nobility was also hardening, particularly among lesser nobles” (Disney 218). The main benefactor of the Portuguese’ disgruntlement belonged to the oppression of the Count of Olivares, Gaspar de Guzmán. As the prime minister of Spain and the right-hand man of Philip IV, the Count of Olivares was viewed as a tyrant by many because he was the source for elevated and rampant taxation and enduring European conflict. The Count of Olivares commanded the far-reaching

56 Isabella of Portugal and Charles V were the parents of Philip. By birthright and four separate marriages to nobles, Philip ended up ruling seventeen different provinces. He ruled both Spain and Portugal, hence the reason he is referred to as Philip II of Spain and Philip I of Portugal.
European wars and attempted to cover up the costs of the wars by increasing taxes. Corruption, taxation, and the strain of Spain’s ongoing wars caused a Portuguese revolt and a series of minor and serious conflicts between 1640 and 1668, known as the Portuguese Restoration War. With Spain at war with the Dutch and French, and with the uprising of Catalonia, on 24 November 1640 a group of Portuguese rebels infiltrated Viceroy Bragança’s palace in Lisbon, killed the much hated secretary Vasconcelos, and sent the Viceroy back to Spain unharmed (220). Following the coup, Portugal continued to fight on and off with Spain until 1668 when a detailed treaty, that was mediated by England, was signed by both Portugal and Spain, granting and recognizing Portugal’s independence.

A discussion such as this on war is not an attempt to highlight the first half of the seventeenth century as the most severe period of warfare for Spain. On the contrary, the purpose of this information is to demonstrate how these specific conflicts surfaced during a time of financial crisis. The Eighty Years’ War, the Thirty Years’ War, the Franco-Spanish War, the Revolt of Catalonia, the Portuguese Restoration War, and all other Spanish conflicts during this interval further indebted Spain and contributed to its three bankruptcies from the first part of the seventeenth century, as did the presence of unreliable and corrupt bankers, the fluctuating prices and unbalanced supply of mercury, and the loss of precious metal imports. Through a series of adverse accumulating financial events, Spain’s economy collapsed repeatedly from 1607 to 1647.

It was not as though Spain had become oblivious to its economic situation. Spain was perfectly aware of its imminent predicament since the “annual expenditure was often greater than

---

57 Unfortunately for the Portuguese, the revolt and subsequent wars did not end their tax burdens, one of their major complaints against the Habsburgs. Following 1640, taxes increased dramatically because of the conflicts (Fonseca 6).
the income for the relevant year” (Gelabert 224). Even so, the Spanish Crown was no longer able to control its financial fate. With a decreased number of financial backers and support and an insurmountable amount of debt, Spain resolved to cleaning the slate and embracing bankruptcy on 24 January 1607:

at the request of Philip III, Cristóbal de Ipeñarrieta presented a forecast of income and expenditure for the current year and the following two. The sum owed to the bankers was 19,717, 286 ducats, while the income amounted to only 9,593,407. A short time later, on 18 April, the Archdukes Albert and Isabella were obliged to agree to a ceasefire on the Flemish front, and on 9 November a suspension of payments was declared by Philip III. (Gelabert 234)

It took a little over a year to restore the faith of the bankers in the king, and a new general agreement was not signed until 14 May 1608. In 1609, Spain signed the Twelve Years’ Truce in an effort to lower its financial costs. Moving forward, Spain likewise attempted to restore its financial status by increasing taxes and revenues while reducing expenditures, but its efforts were to no avail because the “volume of asientos contracted declined appreciably in the following years” (235). On 31 January 1627 Spain once again found itself obligated to declare bankruptcy. This particular bankruptcy ended the longstanding control of the Genoese bankers and opened the door for the Portuguese-Jewish bankers to try working with the Spanish Crown and to rebuild from its second bankruptcy. This time around, Spain decided to stop increasing

58 By increasing revenues and reducing expenditures, Spain caused an increase in contracted asientos: “a contract for a monopoly on the introduction of African slaves into Spain’s colonial realms in the Americas, by which the Spanish Crown endeavored to facilitate, control, and derive profit from slave trading by private commercial interest. Individuals or companies, generally non-Spanish, received monopoly rights for a fixed period over the delivery of a stipulated number of enslaved Africans to designated Spanish American ports in return for making predetermined annual payments to the crown” (Lokken 115). A rise in asientos created a positive income that Spain relied on. Once the contracted asientos began to decline in 1625, this event placed a tremendous amount of financial stress on Spain.
taxes and focus on improving its administration (236). Philip IV wanted to make certain that the
council of finance was made aware of all financial decisions and held absolute control. There
was some improvement with the financial situation in the ensuing years, but no matter how hard
Spain tried, it was unable to prevent the cost of war, the corruption, the decline in mercury, and
the loss of gold and silver imports. This is a point Sanz Ayán makes, “[l]a ampliación de los
escenarios bélicos en el reinado de Felipe IV, el aumento de los gastos de administración y el
superior costo de la guerra, elevaron las necesidades financieras. La presión fiscal creció tanto en
términos absolutos como relativos y de modo particularmente intenso en Castilla” (158). On 1
October 1647 Spain filled bankruptcy for the third time in a thirty-one year period because once
again the financial burden had become too great.

In order to fully understand Montesinos’s objectives for writing Ophir de España, it was
important to take a glimpse at Spain’s financial situation during the first half of the seventeenth
century. As has been noted, Spain’s economy was thrown into an uncontrollable downward
spiral due to a number of factors. The biggest issue at hand was an absence of precious metal
imports, a problem that Montesinos was steadfastly attempting to resolve with his various
manuscripts and publications. The vast majority of his works sought to improve the mining
industry and protect Spain’s rights in the New World. I believe that Montesinos was attuned to
Spain’s financial crisis, and he was considering the complexities of its economy while
composing Ophir de España, a point I will clarify and elaborate upon in the upcoming pages.
Before detailing Montesinos’s financial arguments from Ophir de España, it is equally
imperative that we turn our attention to the American side of Spain’s monetary troubles from the
first half of the seventeenth century.

Problems Surrounding the Administration of Peruvian Mines
While Spain was enveloped in ongoing wars and struggled to surmount its relentless economic crisis, the Viceroyalty of Peru was forced to share Spain’s burden. By governmental association, Peru was confronted with its own economic crisis that began during the first half of the seventeenth century and lingered on until the 1800s (Andrien 1; Lorandi 8). This crisis was rooted in some of the same problems that had tormented Spain, Portugal, and Catalonia. To name a few of the most salient difficulties that contributed to the Peruvian economic downfall, that will be discussed hereafter, Peru (like Catalonia and Portugal) was largely pressured to increase taxes and make additional financial donations to the Spanish Crown in order to soften Spain’s fiscal dilemma. Furthermore, Peru was at the heart of the decline in mercury productions, its mines were crumbling due to rapid overuse, and lastly, the Peruvian elite were looking out for themselves by hoarding as much revenue as possible from both the remnants of the mining industry and all new capital adventures that were being implemented to counterbalance Peru’s economic slump.

Peru’s heaviest financial encumbrance were the heavy taxes and contributions that the Habsburg Monarchy demanded of the Viceroyalty of Peru. Spain was constantly relying on the Indies for fiscal relief in an attempt to “avert the economic and military decline of the crown in Europe” (Andrien 12). From 1621 until 1643, under the direction of the Duke de Olivares as the great chancellor of the Council of the Indies, Olivares and his advisors concluded that the best option to aid Spain’s economy was to raise taxes in the Indies and fight foreign corruption. While tax levy laws were expanded, more often than not they failed due to broken ties with Peruvian leaders, bankers, and private merchants, which forced the Spanish Crown to depend on inspection tours (las visitas generales) to impose taxes and the successful acquisition of owed resources, but even the general inspectors were powerless at controlling a viceroyalty that was in
the earliest stages of its road to independence. At the same time, they were incapable of forcing the treasury officials to be efficient and accountable for their vital fiscal duties. In Peru, treasury officials were falling short in their responsibilities, and this reality worsened the financial emergency Peru was facing during the first half of the seventeenth century. Treasury officials “failed to cut expenditures or impose any permanent new levies on the clergy, landowners, merchants, or other elites” (75). While Spain attempted to tighten its grip on the Peruvian economy, it quickly instigated resentment in the local elite who had a stronghold on revenue. This political approach strained the ties between Spain and Peru and “ultimately undermined the imperial system in South America” (1).

Peru was habitually challenged with high taxes, general inspections, and local resistance, but its worst financial blow associated with these issues did not transpire until 6 May 1635, when one of the most influential banks of Lima went completely bankrupt, leaving an unrepairable wake of financial destruction behind it. The man responsible for this pandemonium was Juan de la Cueva, and prior to his fiscal blowup, he was considered “uno de los hombres más poderosos del Perú virreinal, y sus actividades mercantiles y financieras estuvieron ligadas a casi todas las esferas importantes de la economía colonial” (Suárez, Comercio 46). The prestige of his bank grew rapidly, as did the value of his loans and clientele. While other banks were going bankrupt between 1613 and 1630, Cueva’s bank was thriving. It was one of the most trusted banks, to such a degree that most elites invested in Cueva. His financial interests and endeavors were tied to and supported by nobles from all over the Spanish speaking globe: Spain, Tierra Firme, Peru, Mexico, and Central America. He even had a close personal relationship with the Viceroy and his family. What everyone neglected to see during Cueva’s ascendancy was that he was actually committing fraud with his brothers. While Cueva’s brothers were exporting silver from Callao,
Peru, they were falsifying the accounting books by documenting a smaller quantity of silver, when in all actuality the consignment was greater. The discrepancies were not detected until years after the bankruptcy, and they were finally revealed by comparing the Lima bookkeeping with the personal accounting records of Cueva’s brother from Panama. That is to say, Cueva’s brothers correctly documented the amount of silver that was being exported when they would arrive to and depart from Panama. The difference identified in the records is what they were misappropriating and eventually led to Cueva’s bankruptcy. Over a twenty year period “[l]as exportaciones de Juan de la Cueva registradas ante notarios . . . ascendieron a más de medio millón de pesos” (65). Unsurprisingly, Cueva was swiftly imprisoned and as far as we know never released, but his punishment did little to prevent the aftermath: “El impacto de la quiebra de Cueva fue profundo. Cristobal de Montana, del Santo Oficio, decía, en 1636, que la quiebra del banco y la confiscación de bienes de los portugueses habían paralizado todo el sistema de crédito del virreinato: parecía que se estuviese acercando el fin del mundo” (Suárez, Desafíos 93-94). Cueva’s actions highlight the stress, contention, selfishness, and chaos that encircled Peru’s economy during the first half of the seventeenth century. Likewise, they serve as one example that contributed to the financial crisis.

A separate matter that created many of these fiscal problems was the decline in mercury productions and the deterioration of the Peruvian mines. Before the start of the seventeenth century, Peru’s economy relied almost exclusively on silver. Like Spain, the viceregal government had spent nearly a century depending on the success of the mining industry, but its dependence on silver came to a halt with the decay of the silver mine in Potosí and the mercury mines of Huancavelica. As Kenneth J. Andrien has pointed out, “Between 1607 and 1621 the gradual decline of the silver-mining industry and the erosion of the transatlantic trade led to a
series of long-range financial difficulties in the colony” (74). Nicholas A. Robins confirms that some cities, like Potosi, were running short on mercury due to scattered imports and a wide array of uncontrollable logistical problems (17). These issues were so grim that the mining guild had to write a letter to the King of Spain requesting support and additional provisions. With the passing of time, a combination of the mismanagement of the mines, the progressive failure of the mita, and high taxes, Peru was challenged with “rising costs and falling outputs,” and when 1657 arrived, “the crown alone owed nearly 1,000,000 pesos to the miners at Huancavelica, leaving them to depend on merchants, called aviadores, to supply the necessary capital” (Andrien 14 - 15). It was not simply a matter of mercury and silver productions decreasing that advanced and partially caused Peru’s economic slump. A primary reason the mines were failing was their physical deterioration and associated risks that scared off the mitayos (Indigenous mita workers). Miners found themselves digging deeper into the earth, yet they were unexperienced at supporting such extensive and elaborate structures. The mines were “intrinsically chaotic and perilous spaces that resembled the legendary labyrinth of Daedalus and fomented criminal behavior because they lay beyond the reach of law and justice” (Scott 16). The mita labor force served as the back bone of the mines. They were forced into some of the most horrific workings conditions imaginable. Moreover, the bottomless mines they worked in lacked ventilation shafts. Few safety precautions were taken. Mining roofs were built out of weak green wood, and often the “miners had to negotiate staircases, caverns, difficult passages and low tunnels” (Hemming 371). Many times, in Potosi for example, the miners would stay in the mines all day, sleep in them at night, and only come out for air once a week (Robins 74). Initially, the mitayos cooperated with government regulations, but as the minerals became scarce and the mines
deteriorated, they began to resist and flee from their imposed obligations, thus further indebting both Peru and Spain.

As the financial demands of Spain amounted in the Viceroyalty of Peru and the mining industry faltered, local elites further realized the Spanish Crown was no longer capable of controlling all facets of daily Peruvian life, especially new capital adventures that were taking place to counterbalance the dwindling revenue of the mines. Peruvian nobles had their own monetary dilemma and could no longer trouble themselves with the financial needs of Spain. Due to this reality, Spanish mandates were recurrently met with severe opposition on the part of the privileged Peruvians (Andrien 12). The power of public leaders appointed by the Spanish Crown likewise began to clash with that of the power of private leaders, landowners, administrators, and merchants, since they held control over the private sectors and the remaining wealth of the Viceroyalty:

hubo un oscilamiento entre el poder privado y el poder público, y que, cada vez más, la administración recayó en manos privadas durante el siglo XVII. Esto sucedió tanto cuando hubo administración indirecta – ‘asientos’ –, como cuando la administración era directa y conducida por funciones reales. En ambos casos, la hacienda peruana estuvo peligrosamente endeudada y vinculada financieramente a las élites locales. (Suárez, Desafíos 13)

Something had to give during the economic crisis of Peru, so the Peruvian nobles found it necessary to cut Spain out of the financial picture. They achieved this separation a couple of different ways. On the one hand, they found themselves turning to the black market to unofficially retain monetary profits in house. Contraband practices became the norm for most merchants (Suárez, Comericio 40). They circumvented Spain and found their own networks of
foreign suppliers who would not hesitate disobeying the commerce mandates and regulations of Spain. On the other hand, by retaining Peruvian revenues, the viceregal elites managed to diversify their economy and slowly distance themselves from their reliance on silver and other precious metals, even though it took several decades to recover. Some of the more lucrative enterprises were agriculture, intercolonial trade, and a series of new local industries (Andrien 4). In the end, with such an unstable economy, the only option that remained for Peru was to attempt to detach itself from Spain and diversify to stay afloat. Needless to say, not everyone agreed with the decisions of local elites and the direction they were headed. Some, like Montesinos, still felt that Peru was forever indebted to Spain. For these types of individuals, the necessities and wishes of Spain should have always preceded those of the New World.

Lamentably, the economic problems of Peru have received little attention over the last four hundred years, unlike the countless studies that have been done on the financial struggles of Spain from the seventeenth century. Easily accessible information and documentation is so limited that modern scholars still debate whether the financial crisis even took place. Researchers like Kenneth J. Andrien and Margarita Suárez had to turn to the archives and collect scattered information to mold their published arguments. Regardless of whether we want to call this an official economic crisis or not, history seems to point to severe fiscal problems in seventeenth-century Peru. Despite the actual gravity of the situation, Montesinos was concerned enough to draft multiple texts on related subjects, and top his writing career off with an extensive chronicle, Ophir de España, that specifically attempts to protect Spanish interests in the Americas.

Montesinos’s Scattered and Explicitly Expressed Concerns from his Writings

An argument that has been emphasized heretofore is the fact that most of Montesinos’s works have an overarching theme: mining, mineralogy, and metallurgy. With a closer look at these
various related texts, it becomes evident that Montesinos sporadically affords us as readers with his personal opinions regarding the mining industry and Spain’s financial crisis. I find that his scattered and explicit commentary from the bulk of his writings demonstrates that Montesinos was in tune with and concerned with Spain’s economy, its enduring foreign conflicts, and the disarray of the Peruvian mining industry, which was in turn contributing to Spain’s fiscal downfall. In the following section, my goal is to underscore Montesinos’s collective commentary and perspectives on these issues so that we may be able to fully understand the designs and aims of *Ophir de España*. In other words, I believe that the body of Montesinos’s texts have analogous aims, and *Ophir de España* serves as the culmination of all his efforts. His works go hand in hand in that they attempt to accentuate impending problems, come up with solutions for the problems, and ultimately save Spain from its economic woes and its undying warfare. Many of these points can and will be made regarding *Ophir de España*.

To start, it is best to return to Montesinos’s memorials and the comments and requests he openly makes to Philip IV, because this is really the only time that he details the purpose of all his works. Throughout *Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos Presbítero*, Montesinos summarizes his time in the New World and features all of his achievements in chronological order. Furthermore, he explains the purpose of each one of his texts in his certified and printed seven-folio memorial. After walking Philip IV through his timeline and making a request for a benefice in either Lima or Mexico, Montesinos describes the reason for his accumulative efforts (the repeated and extended quote is for reiteration),

_Fuera de lo referido, ha observado el dicho Don Fernando algunas cosas tocantes al aumento de vuestra Real Hazienda, y conservacion de aquellos Reynos, las mas necessarias q se pueden ofrecer, de que dará quenta a quien V.M. mandare, que sea_
Within this quote Montesinos alludes to Spain’s financial troubles. He elucidates the need to increase and preserve Spain’s royalties, and he reveals that he holds the solution to this necessity, a secret method of amalgamation that minimizes the usage of mercury. A year later in 1645 he offers his original technique to Philip IV in his second memorial while seeking financial compensation. Although Montesinos’s comments in his memorials are subtle, they do not hide his intentions of resolving one of Spain’s leading problems, namely a shortage of precious metal imports.

Montesinos’s memorials are not the only place his concerns for the financial stability of Spain are expressed. In the first part of his Arte del beneficio from 1638, “Beneficio común,” he underlines some of the issues surrounding the mining industry of seventeenth-century Peru, which can be interpreted as one conceivably cause for Spain’s reduced silver and gold imports. Even though “Beneficio común” is primarily an instructional text, it does discuss some problems related to mining in the Andean region and divulge some of Montesinos’s thoughts concerning these matters. Without saying much, the mere existence of this directory suggests that the mines Montesinos was dealing with were in a complicated state. The need to write an instructional manual to the mining beneficiaries indicates that they lacked organization. Additionally, it suggests that they were having trouble managing their mines and the outward flow of wealth. Apart from the presence of this directory, there are a few moments in the text where Montesinos openly stresses the problems associated with the mining industry. To reemphasize, in the first
paragraph of chapter one, Montesinos’s initial words highlight that there is a deep responsibility in being a mining beneficiary (“Beneficio” 263). He points out that all beneficiaries must see themselves as doers of good. It is not enough to solely extract precious metals and do what you please with them. They have to be managed well and used for the good of others, specifically for the financial wellbeing of Spain and the continued evangelization of the New World. Indirectly, Montesinos appears to be chastising mining beneficiaries for mishandling the wealth of Spain. As his final words indicate, if appropriate corrective measures are not taken, it will be the undoing of everyone (263).

This type of reasoning resurfaces more than once in “Beneficio común.” Further on, Montesinos gives explicit examples of mines that have been poorly managed and underlines their social and political problems. He centers on the greed of everyone involved in the mining industry. For example, while discussing the beneficiaries, he states,

(No ha de ser codicioso). Yo he visto algunos beneficiadores tan rateros que se enconan en hurtar seis libras u ocho de pella con que desacreditan el ingenio, porque como es una casa de vecindad, y donde hay poco que hacer se atiende a todo, y así de esto ha de guardarse: mucho más de los hurtos cuantiosos, supliendo con azogue las libras que toman de pella, que, fuera de ser tan grave pecado el del hurto, quedan obligados a restituir lo que tomaron, y la fama que quitaron al ingeniero. (“Beneficio” 265-66)

Moving forward in “Beneficio común,” he provides an additional instance of corruption in the mining industry where he references a mine in Chocaya known as Santísima Trinidad. According to him, it is also known as Los Pleitos because of the countless conflicts that happen there. He explains that similar events of theft and greed have troubled its financial success: “porque siendo riquísima de a más de treinta piñas, fueron más los pleitos que sobre ella hubo, y se chingó de
modo la riqueza, que no se saca una piedra en un día” (269). His descriptions fundamentally attempt to illustrate that many mines have deteriorated, due to poor management and theft, and have become unprofitable for Spain. This reality disturbs Montesinos, and it seems to be one of his primary intentions in writing “Benficio común.”

Sadly, the second half of Arte del beneficio and his third text, Política de mineros are lost or destroyed. As reported by Montesinos in his Servicios, these two texts dealt with similar issues documented in “Beneficio común.” The second part of Arte del beneficio would have likely continued his advice on how to properly run and maintain the mines. Política de mineros is probably his most direct, significant, and related text since it addresses the apparently overwhelming number of legal disputes that interfered with the regular and productive administration of the mines. Montesinos wrote this book with the target of creating universal bylaws that would help regulate the courts and legal disputes more expeditiously. In agreement with him, the major concern with the swelling number of lawsuits was their side effect of closing the mines under dispute for extensive intervals, thus slowing the extraction of silver and gold (Servicios 2).

Looking back at Anales del Perú, this appears to be one of Montesinos’s less political texts. To recap, Anales del Perú was written with the purpose of providing brief yearly glimpses into the entire post-Columbian history of Peru. The annual reports underscore the most vital events of each year, but they also afford descriptions of the mines that were discovered and mention the types of minerals that belonged to each mine. What is more, Montesinos tried to include the exact income that was profited each year from the different mines. While he primarily concentrates on documenting the Peruvian mines in Anales del Perú, there are times when he expresses his frustration with the political and logistical problems that have caused
some of the mines to become unprofitable, similar to some of his concerns in “Beneficio común.” For example, in “Año de 1627,” while discussing the Maragua Mine that resides fourteen leagues away from Potosí, Montesinos offers the following details, “es la tierra esta de mayores noticias de los Charcas y de más riqueza; han salido de este asiento muchos hombres ricos y ha habido muchos pleitos sobre las minas, causa de que hoy no estén tan pujantes como al principio” (238). Later on, comparable frustrations resurface in “Año de 1632.” In this annual report, he talks about some of the disputes that have complicated the financial success of the Norusi gold mines. He even goes so far as to offer a solution:

lo que yo sentí del caso es que le conviene a S.M., por estorbar estos pleitos, mandar se guarden las ordenanzas de minas del Perú en este Gobierno y en todo el distrito de la Audiencia de Santa Fe; porque las que se guardan en él, fuera de ser hechos por un hombre no letrado, están confusísimas y no se le da a S.M. la mina que tiene. (247)

This passage shows that the mining bylaws were being violated on a larger scale. Much like “Beneficio común,” Montesinos expresses a deep concern for how the mines are being administered. He underlines some of the problems surrounding the mining industry and makes some suggestions on how to solve these matters. Moreover, he is frequently emphasizing the annual royalties obtained by each mine. Aside from Montesinos’s pure frustration with the mining industry, there is one probable scenario and reason for documenting all the distinct mines in Anales del Perú, a point Montesinos never fully clarifies. I think that he wanted to make certain that everyone, including the King of Spain, knew the accurate amount of royalties that were being extracted from the Andean mines. By providing specific numbers, Montesinos would have allowed the Casa de Contratación to calculate, examine, and review their books. If the figures did not match those recorded by the Casa de Contratación, he could have potentially
exposed the deceptive actions of any miner or beneficiary involved in stealing from Spain. In other words, I would argue that Montesinos provides detailed information about the Peruvian mines and draws attentions to a number of complications in an effort to help and serve Spain during its time of financial need.

Although these are not general and direct themes from *Ophir de España*, there are various tangential moments where Montesinos discusses his vexations with the mismanagement of the mines and Spain’s access to their returns. There are several instances in *Ophir de España* where he stresses some of the political and logistical problems with the mining industry. For example, in Chapter 28 of Book I, when Montesinos is talking about the details of amalgamation, he comments that some unspecified men have attempted to steal profits from the beneficiaries:

> El año de mil y quinientos y setenta y cuatro hasta los de mil y quinientos y noventa y cinco que experimentado por los mineros el trabajo y costas se dejó y comenzó a usar el beneficio descubierto como ahora se hace en la imperial bella de Potosí y Oruro adonde hay famosos beneficiadores mayorazgo harto envidiado y procurado robar su bendición con cautelosa tramoya. (*Ophir* 59)

Earlier on, in a marginal note from Chapter 27, Montesinos talks about the laziness caused by greed in the silver mines. He explains how miners and beneficiaries have placed all their mining efforts in the silver mines due to quicker and higher personal returns. Furthermore, he criticizes them for not focusing their efforts on the extraction of gold (56). The most obvious and direct example that emphasizes Montesinos’s trepidations with the wealth of the mines surfaces in Chapter 29. In this chapter, Montesinos draws a parallel between Madrid and Jerusalem as he points out that, during the time of King Solomon’s reign, all the silver and royalties from Ophir
reached the courts of Jerusalem without intervention. He follows by explaining that the opposite is taking place in Spain:

parece que si ahora se sacara más que entonces, o por lo menos con igualdad, pudiéramos decir lo mismo a la corte de Madrid hoy que dice el Vaticinio de Jerusalén. Respondo, que no concluye la razón porque en el tiempo de Salomón toda la plata de sus armadas iba a parar a su corte de Jerusalén sin divertirse a otras partes con que la muchedumbre causaba menos precio y el servirse del oro en todos los ministerios del templo por haber mucho. Ahora es al contrario y por eso no sucede lo mismo en Madrid. La mayor parte de plata se consume en otros reinos, sirviendo sólo España de Garganta a sus estómagos.

(62)

Of all of Montesinos’s writings and commentary, I find this quote to be the most significant and illuminating. First, Montesinos draws upon his constant parallel between Spain and Jerusalem. They are viewed as the divinely ordained beneficiaries of Ophir. As such, they should receive the bulk of its wealth, or so one would think, according to the rationale of Montesinos. Second, instead of using this moment to further liken the two locations to each other, as Montesinos has so emphatically done on many other occasions in Ophir de España, he points out a unique difference. The Casa de Contratación is not receiving its rightful earnings as Jerusalem did during the times of King Salomon. By stating that “Spain only serves as the throat to their stomachs,” Montesinos is openly accusing individuals of thieving from Spain, and he demonstrates that God’s will and plan for Ophir are being violated. He obliquely stresses that Spain’s corrupt bankers and creditors, as well as the inefficient and dishonest beneficiaries and employees of the mining industry, have taken advantage of Spain and utilized its name and control over the New World to line their own pockets with gold and silver, thus contributing to
Spain’s ongoing economic crisis. What is more, Montesinos identifies and exposes one of his motives and reasons for writing *Ophir de España*, to defend Spain’s legal and divine right to economically prosper from Peru without interference, whether that be foreign or domestic. During a time of economic turmoil, theft, dishonesty, enduring wars, and uprisings against Spain, Montesinos recognizes these problems and takes the initiative to guard and assist Spain by writing *Ophir de España*.

**How *Ophir de España* Attempts to Safeguard Spain’s Financial Wellbeing**

During the course of the narration from *Ophir de España*, Montesinos seldom deliberates the financial status of Spain. This is probably due to the fact that it was the white elephant in the room, and he was attempting to be delicate and respectful of King Philip IV’s problems. It would have been unnecessary to constantly rehash and throw all of Spain’s financial troubles in the King’s face. Even so, this does not prevent Montesinos from defending Spain’s rights to rule, control, and profit from the New World. With that said, how exactly does *Ophir de España* benefit Spain financially? How do Montesinos’s methodically peculiar arguments from Book I achieve this purpose? How does an original version of Peruvian history support Spain? What is the contribution of Book III? Moreover, returning to some of the preliminary questions from this dissertation, why defend Spain’s rights to the New World when it had held control of America for over a hundred years? Why reiterate that the King of Spain had been divinely appointed by God to govern America when this was already common knowledge? I believe these questions can be answered as we consider the larger economic storyline of Montesinos’s body of works and approach *Ophir de España* from this angle and perspective. In what follows, I will quickly revisit each book from *Ophir de España* and demonstrate how the entire chronicle supports Montesinos’s larger goal, which I believe is to protect Spain’s financial interests.
If we recall, Book I was basically written with three objectives. First, Montesinos focuses on the etymology of two historically separate locations and names, Pirú and Ophir, and he tries to convince us that Ophir and Peru are actually the same word. Second, he centers on the known historical information written about Ophir and Peru as textual support and gradually attempts to unify them and prove that they are the same exact location. Finally, through a series of scientific arguments, Montesinos tries to geographically conjoin Peru and Ophir through the study of natural history and mineralogy. By the end of Book I, it is rather obvious that this portion of *Ophir de España* generally avoids fiscal topics and the difficulties in Spain. What Book I does do is start the process of setting the stage. Book I paves the way for Book II and Book III, with Book III being the most relevant in terms of financial dialogue since it straightforwardly examines Spain’s legal rights pertaining to the New World. Otherwise stated, the entire aim of Book I is a didactic discourse that ventures to progressively persuade us that Ophir and Peru are one in the same: “el nombre Piru y el de ophir son una mesma cosa” (Montesinos, *Ophir* 19). The procedure and rationale of Book I is imperative to Montesinos’s major arguments that are laid out in Book III. He cannot logically compare the legal rights and privileges of Kings David and Solomon to those of the Catholic Kings without first evidencing that Ophir and Peru are actually the same geographical location. Thus, when Montesinos exhaustively deliberates the nuances of the etymology of Peru and Ophir, furiously rejects all previous counter arguments against the Ophirian theory, meshes both Andean and Christian histories together, and explores an array of possible scientific connections, he is in all actuality preparing his readers for an even larger and much more political theory in Book III.

These are some of the same reasons Montesinos incorporates Book II into his chronicle. Over the last one hundred and seventy-five years, many scholars have enveloped themselves with
the allure and uniqueness of Book II. They have repeatedly contemplated whether Montesinos authored this text alone, or whether some Indigenous writer(s) penned this unrivaled story as Montesinos claimed. In the same manner, they have explored other possibilities that meet somewhere in the middle. Maybe Montesinos was the orchestrator of the text, and he simply compiled an assortment of authentic Andean stories from different regions to extend pre-Inca history, or possibly he co-authored the text with an Indigenous or Mestizo colleague of his. Regardless of the scenario, it is undeniable that Book II serves its supportive purpose. Book II coexists with Books I and III because it creates a plausible history that substantiates the Ophirian theory that Montesinos so unwaveringly safeguards. By providing his readers with such a comprehensive, protracted, and Christianized version of Andean history, Montesinos broadens his comparative analyses from Book I and affords his prospective Christian and converted audiences with a familiar narrative. The Christian undertones of Book II create a space of naturalness and strengthen Montesinos’s arguments concerning Ophir and Peru. In the end, Book II goes one step further than Book I by producing a historical artifact, and like Book I, Book II is ultimately a pretext for Book III.

All of Montesinos’s efforts from Books I and II are paid off in Book III, where he reintroduces and meticulously develops his thesis that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were preordained by God to rule and reign over the New World, as well as all their worthy successors. His thesis is founded on the precedence that Ophir was at specific moments in time gifted to the King of Tyre and Kings David and Solomon. They were permitted to profit from this abundant land so long as they remained faithful servants of God. Montesinos likens their celestial permissions to those of the Kings of Spain. In order to advance and back his theory, Montesinos walks through a series of arguments associated with Christian theology, biblical studies, and
politics. Attention is placed on the supremacy of God and his ability to distribute territories and rescind those regional allowances when he sees fit, and he makes it clear that the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus, in the name of Spain, was the will of God. For Montesinos, it was a prophecy foretold, a heavenly liberation for the Native populous, and a financially and mutually beneficial destiny for Spain. Large sections of Book III stress the minutia of the biblical passages that forecast Spain’s future calling to find and prudently oversee the New World. Of all the chapters from Book III, the final chapters and Chapter 3 are by far the most noteworthy and pragmatic because they center on the legality of the papal bull that was granted by Pope Alexander VI. Through his divinely appointed calling and ordination, he was given the keys to select catholic rulers on the earth, specifically King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, commonly known as the Catholic Kings. Within these chapters, Montesinos defends the authority of Alexander VI and emphasizes how his will is intertwined with that of God, thus stressing how God desires nothing more than for the kings of Spain to control America and by association Peru. According to Montesinos, the kings of Spain are the only catholic rulers worthy of such a responsibility.

Each one of Montesinos’s arguments from Book III lead us back to one of our initial questions. Why is he truly defending Spain’s legal authority? Spain was immersed in a sea of social, political, and economic problems. War was encroaching from all directions; the conflicts were international and domestic. Precious metal imports and mercury productions had declined drastically. Bankers and creditors were robbing Spain blind. The mining industry, at least in Peru, was in a disarray. Miners and mining beneficiaries were using every option at their disposal to take advantage of the designated mineral exports. Landowners, merchants, clergymen and other Peruvian elites were fed up with the burdens of Spain and they were financially distancing themselves from the empire. Mineralogist were desperately searching for new ways to improve
silver productions. Although Spain was still a strong and prominent empire, it had lost some of its control and was financially ruined for the time being. By systematically establishing that Peru is Ophir in Chapters I and II, reaffirming that the Catholic Kings were preordained by God to manage and prosper from America, as previous biblical kings had once done and as was prophesied in the Bible, and highlighting the authority of Alexander VI and the supremacy of the papal bull, Montesinos is essentially warning all of Spain’s wrongdoers and demanding they put a stop to their malicious and disruptive behavior. All this is to say, he is telling everyone to stop fighting against Spain and to halt appropriating what rightful belongs to the Spanish Crown, whether that be currency, territories, or liberties constituted to God’s chosen kingdom. Circumlocutorily, Montesinos is endeavoring to not only reaffirm and protect Spain’s legal rights, but also to benefit Spain financially. If Montesinos’s warnings were to have been heeded (that was his hope), then corrupt individuals would have put an end to diverting Spain’s royalties and contributing to Spain’s enduring economic crisis. An argument such as this is not all that absurd when we consider Montesinos’s entire body of written works. Most of his texts in one way or another accentuated problems associated with Spain’s financial struggles. From unrestrained mines, miners, and beneficiaries who needed guidance and innovates ways to extract silver from ore, to set rules and instructions for judges who were dealing with an unprecedented number of legal disputes, to specific annual reports of mining returns, and on to a voluminous defense of Spain’s God-given rights, it would appear as though Montesinos was profoundly concerned for the financial wellbeing of Spain, a matter he does not hide from King Philip IV in his memorials.
CONCLUSIONS

Despite Montesinos’s fascination with metallurgy and mining, a profession that could potentially portray him as an avaricious man, I am convinced that he was also a spiritual and religious individual, as least this is what Book III, his memorials to King Philip IV, and his letters of support would suggest. Even though he regularly abandoned his ecclesiastical responsibilities in pursuit of his research, I find that Montesinos felt this was his higher calling in life. It is true that at the core of his various works there is an elaborate financial debate, one that certainly defends the fiscal rights of the Spanish Monarchy in the New World. Be that as it may, it is equally true that this defense is rooted in theological examinations, as Montesinos carefully illustrates in Book III. Regardless of whether his theories, arguments, and capaccuna are accurate or not, I would contend that Montesinos believed that his authorial mission in Ophir de España was a righteous endeavor. At the very least, it would seem as though Montesinos sensed that it was his divine duty to provide some form of financial relief to Spain’s failing economy, a nation that had been charged by God to evangelize and convert the Indigenous of the Americas. For Montesinos, Spain’s financial stability was relevant in that it supported all missionary efforts in the New World. Consequently, we might think of his texts as reinforcement for the greater good of Christendom.

I am not suggesting that Montesinos was an exceedingly devout Catholic, free of all worldly flaws. On the contrary, as I have mentioned before, Montesinos may have been a criminal, and he may have even forged portions of Book II. Likewise, he anticipated profiting from his metallurgic efforts. Nonetheless, like many Catholics at the time, he had a religious side to him, one that influenced his academic labors. His religiosity is part of the reason he wrote Ophir de España, and it is the foundation for his belief in divine inspiration, revelation, visions,
and all good works, which is what he believed was involved in and produced the discovery of the New World. In the mind of Montesinos, the presence of Spain in America was the direct will of God, and this correlation was identifiable through the benevolent deeds cultivated by the Spanish Crown: "lo que yo añado es que el evangelio nos dexo una regla cierta de las reuelaciones, visiones y obras interiores y es conocerlas de sus fructos, siendo esto evangelio" (Montesinos, Ophir 147). Montesinos was not oblivious to the darker side of colonial history that is associated with conquest, murder, torture, appropriation, forced labor, and involuntary conversion, among many other transgressions, but he thought that the good fruits of colonization outweighed the bad in the long run.

Just as Montesinos believed it was important for us to take into account the bigger picture of colonization, I too find it essential for colonial scholars to consider the entire body of Montesinos’s works when attempting to understand the designs of Ophir de España and Book II. One of the initials goals of this dissertation was driven by this necessity. Before I could properly explain why Montesinos wrote Ophir de España, I realized that I would be required to reunify the text, placing Book II in its original context. As I have emphasized in Chapter 1, this was no simple task because I was forced to transcribe Books I and III for ease of reading and access. Reaching beyond Ophir de España became another crucial step, as I came to realize this chronicle originally had a counterpart, Anales del Perú. Upon ascertaining that Montesinos had a strong interest in mining and metallurgy in the majority of his texts, I additionally acknowledged the need to concentrate on the totality of his authorial undertakings, which I found to be complementary. Moreover, I had to perform extensive archival research on Montesinos which led me to the unearthing of Autos Alonso de Alarcon albaçea de Melchior Ramirez difunto contra el liçenciado don Fernando de Montesinos sobre mas de quatre mil pesos proçedidos de
mercadurias quel dicho difunto le remitio para que vendiese and Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos Presbítero. Before thoroughly exploring all of Montesinos’s works, I had to research and deliberate all the critical studies that had previously been written on Montesinos and Book II as well. Each one of these crucial steps contributed to the construction of this dissertation.

In the introduction, it was pertinent to begin by assessing some of the complexities of colonial texts. While it is tempting to take colonial historical works at face value, there are often a number of social, political, religious, and personal interests that intervene and shape colonial narrations. When we speak of colonial Latin American literature, the term “colonial” is crucial because it accentuates the act of colonization. Colonial literature is an intricate space where the colonizers recurrently take possession of Indigenous histories, and where the Mestizo and Indigenous writers appropriate Spanish and European writing practices and traditions so they can negotiate colonial history. To begin a conversation on Montesinos and his chronicle, Ophir de España, I wanted to make it clear that his text is equally convoluted. This initial discussion opened the door to the wide spectrum of critical analyses that have tried to comprehend and explain the distinctiveness of Book II, a rare colonial text that provides us with the longest version of pre-Columbian history. Most critics of Montesinos tend to fall into three interpretive periods. The first took place during the nineteenth century where most individuals considered Book II to be a forgery. Second, towards the end of the nineteenth century and entering the twentieth century, scholars started looking inward toward the text to find culturally authentic characteristics in Book II. Third, from the middle of the twentieth century up until now, Montesinos enthusiasts have attempted to pinpoint the precise origins of the oral traditions from Book II. Before I could present new findings and studies on Ophir de España and Montesinos, it
was important to address the previous scholarly works on Montesinos first. From this point, I was able to provide some of my own thoughts on Book II. Recognizing the nuances of colonial literature, I am of the thought that further critical attention should be placed on Montesinos’s conceivable contribution to the creation of Book II because, as tends to be the case with colonial authors, he might have been entangled in the production of this Andean genealogical narration. I argued this point because there is reason to question Montesinos’s personal character, due to his alleged criminal background, the biblical undertones of Book II, and that fact that this book supports the main theoretical objectives from Books I and III. Every one of these preliminary observations, exchanges, and arguments served as a brief overview of Montesinos and his scholarly attention. They also function as a segue into my thesis and original approach to *Ophir de España*. My primarily goal was to reveal Montesinos’s objectives in writing this manuscript. What I discovered and maintained is that there were two interrelated and primary reasons he wrote his chronicle. On the one hand rest the personal motives and interests of Montesinos. He was a metallurgist fully invested in the mining industry. His research and scholarly writings revolved around metallurgy and the administration of the mines. Furthermore, the bulk of Montesinos’s works were written following his legal proceedings and problems that began in 1636. Significant financial loss and public shame seem to suggest that his writing career may have been a reaction to his legal proceedings. At minimum, his legal and financial troubles appear to have encouraged him to succeed as a metallurgist, an outcome that could have potentially replaced public rumors of alleged criminal activity with positive notoriety. Unsurprisingly, along with Montesinos’s passion for metallurgy and desire to distance himself from a troubled past, he hoped to gain favor with King Philip IV and receive monetary compensation, specifically a dignitary in either Lima or Mexico. On the other hand, Montesinos
started to recognize several threats towards the financial prosperity of Spain and its American mining industry, which is why *Ophir de España* defends Spain legal rights in the New World. The threats he perceived were the judicial, political, and social problems that confronted mining beneficiaries, the ongoing and costly local and international conflicts, as well as the corruption of European and American bankers and creditors. In the end, Montesinos felt that these threats were the cause of Spain’s economic downfall, and he wrote *Ophir de España* with the intention of safeguarding and improving Spain’s economy, a fact he does not hide from King Philip IV in his memorials. At the same time he was trying to protect the Spanish Monarchy, he was also moving to secure his own interests, metallurgy and financial stability. Even though there was an assortment of reasons for composing this manuscript, the ultimate goal was to conserve the mining industry and all aspects of metallurgy, Montesinos’s profession and passion.

Since we are dealing with a partially unpublished manuscript that is unfamiliar to most, Chapter 1 was conceived as an opening chapter that would help readers become acquainted with *Ophir de España*. I wanted to make it apparent how much time and effort was involved in the transcription stage of Books I and III. I felt the best way to achieve this result was by detailing the difficulties inherent in transcribing as a novice, which is why I covered hand and linguistic variability, multilingualism, and various practical issues associated with facsimiles. As I was unable to provide a finalized edition of *Ophir de España* at this time, I found it imperative to discuss the existing manuscripts and summarize the prologue, Book I, and Book III, in addition to expanding my theories regarding Book II, a *capaccuna* I feel is deliberately Christianized. The purpose of this chapter was to contextualize *Ophir de España*, reunify Montesinos’s chronicle, and provide my intellectual audience with background, summaries, and framework that would
allow me to further develop my dissertation in Chapters 2 and 3 and allow my readers to properly following along.

From contextualizing and reunifying, the aim of Chapter 2 was to disclose the primary motives for composing Ophir de España in its entirety, which in turn influenced its narration and had a substantial effect on the objectives of the text. It was demonstrated in this chapter that Montesinos’s life and passions had a profound impact on this unique chronicle. Montesinos was a metallurgist and scientist, and he was zealous about mining, mineralogy, and metallurgy. These personal interests transformed into the driving force behind most of his literary works. To prove this point, I started by providing my readers with the most extensive biography on Montesinos thus far. By including a biography in Chapter 2, I wanted to highlight that Montesinos would stop at nothing to draw closer to the South American mines and metallurgy. It appears to have consumed his every thought during a fifteen-year period. He was so involved in metallurgy that he consistently gave up his religious duties for his intellectual pursuits. Even while in prison and dealing with an ongoing legal battle, Montesinos’s mind was absorbed in the mining industry. After discussing Montesinos’s personal life and passions, I found it necessary to place his scholarly interests and research in perspective. While mining practices long predated Montesinos, as I stress in this chapter, he was not the only author to write on metallurgy. Álvaro Alonso Barba Toscano dabbled in the subject during the sixteenth century, and later Montesinos had at least two contemporary metallurgist writers, Miguel de Rojas and Juan Ramos de Valdárrago. During the first part of the seventeenth century, it appears as though Montesinos was not the only metallurgist attempting to revolutionize amalgamation. All of this seems to indicate that there was a demand to enhance mining practices. To finalize this chapter, I center on the fact that Montesinos had a scientific mind, a characteristic that blatantly surfaces in and controls
portions of *Ophir de España*. Throughout Book I, there are a number of scientific arguments that are based on natural history and mineralogy, and each one of these scientific discussions is utilized to support his overarching theses. In the long run, what this chapter establishes is that Montesinos’s scientific thought and interests permeate *Ophir de España*.

As a passionate metallurgist who was infatuated with the American mining industry and made certain to display his scientific knowledge in Book I of *Ophir de España*, it should come as no surprise that Montesinos was exceedingly concerned with the downfall of the mining industry and Spain’s economy, which were intertwined. In Chapter 3, I reasoned that he noticed a number of economic threats that had become detrimental to Spain’s economy, and his purpose in writing *Ophir de España*, notably Book III, was to protect Spain’s economic interests in the New World. To support this argument, I explained in Chapter 3 that Spain, following nearly a century of colonial rule, had become engulfed in a number of social, political, and economic problems. Domestic and international conflicts were increasing. The production and import of mercury in Peru had radically declined, consequently slowing the amalgamation and export of silver. American mines were deteriorating and being mismanaged. Creditors and bankers were taking advantage of Spain’s finances. Peruvian nobles, clergymen, merchants, and landowners had grown tired of high taxation and Spain’s economic difficulties, so they were slowly finding ways to financially detach themselves from the Spanish Crown. In additional to all of these issues and financial threats, metallurgists like Montesinos were urgently trying to improve and enhance silver productions. Each one of these fiscal issues seems to have contributed to Spain’s three bankruptcies during the first part of the seventeenth century. In order to prove that Montesinos was aware of these problems, I discussed and emphasized several of his scattered and explicitly expressed concerned from his writings. *Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos*
Presbítero, “Beneficio común,” Anales del Perú, and Ophir de España all in one way or another include commentary by Montesinos that accentuate his worries regarding Spain’s financial welfare and these miscellaneous threats. As true as it may be that Montesinos’s main theses from Ophir de España concentrate on the idea that Peru is Ophir, and as such, it should be controlled and governed by the Catholic Kings and their righteous successors, just as was permitted by God with Kings David and Solomon, I maintained that these are only superficial points of view. On a deeper level, while considering all previous information and arguments from my dissertation, I contended that Montesinos’s real objective was to make it apparent to the world and everyone who was involved with the financial collapse of the Spanish Monarchy that the mining industry and wealth of the New World should be controlled by Spain. The design of Book III (an unfinished manuscript) was to support this claim. Hence, the reason Montesinos deliberates and backs the sacred authority of the papal bull by Alexander VI. This is also the same logic that inspired Montesinos to debate and detail the biblical prophecies in Book III that he felt foretold the arrival of Spain in the New World and predicted the divine ordination of the Catholic Kings. By writing Book III and Ophir de España, Montesinos hoped to caution Spain’s enemies of their transgressions and demand they discontinue their acts of treason against the will of God, conduct that he felt contributed to Spain’s bankruptcies and economic woes.

Although this dissertation has required a substantial amount of time, research, resources, writing, revisions, and editing, it has its limitations. That is to say, there is more to be said about Montesinos, his writing, and Ophir de España. I believe this to be an invaluable start that has the potential to branch out into supplementary studies on Montesinos and his colonial works. As one suggestion, I recommend that from this point we begin to generate a stronger dialogue between Montesinos and other colonial writers, mainly his contemporaries. There are many notable
writers that Montesinos examines and uses for support, primarily because they embrace the conquest and Spanish sovereignty. At the same time, there is also a group of prominent colonial authors that he vehemently attacks, like Batolomé de las Casas, Giovanni Anello Oliva, Blas Valera, and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega. The connection between the latter authors that frustrates Montesinos appears to be their pro-Indigenous attitudes. Montesinos tends to disagree with anyone who contradicts his beliefs and understanding of the papal bull. We might also take the time to do a study on Native Andean origin theories and place Montesinos alongside other authors like Miguel Cabello de Balboa, José de Acosta, Francisco de Xerez, Francisco López de Gómara, Agustín Zárate, Pedro Cieza de León, Diego Fernández Palentino, and Antonio Herrera, to name a few. Another central avenue to be explored, which will shed additional details on Montesinos and his authorial mission, are the colonial archives in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Spain, and possibly Colombia. Montesinos frequented these locations, and I am confident that there are more remaining and revealing documents to be uncovered. Política de mineros and the second half of Arte del beneficio would be of special interest, especially the first since Montesinos claims the book obtained weighty recognition in Peru. The original manuscript for “Beneficio común” is supposedly housed in the Archivo General de Indias, so this would be a relevant research stop for anyone concerned with writing about metallurgic and mining practices. This is yet another topic that will require further examination. Mining, metallurgy, and amalgamation have not been given enough attention in colonial studies. As I have indicated in this dissertation, it seems to have been a vital industry during the seventeenth century and the root of Spain’s financial troubles. Coupled with these promising studies, it is pertinent that we produce and publish a complete edition of Ophir de España, a task I am currently undertaking.
Albeit there is plenty of scholarly work on Montesinos that remains, my dissertation has contributed to colonial Latin American literature in a number of ways. First, research on Book II and Montesinos has increased in the twenty-first century as colonial scholars have sought to answer the mystery behind Book II. Narrative origin and any correlation to Anello Oliva, Blas Valera, and the Anonymous Jesuit have become the focal point. Juha J Hiltunen, Sabine Hyland, Sergio Barraza Lescano, Jan Szemiński, and Andrés Prieto have done current research on Montesinos. My dissertation enters this present conversation; however, it pushes colonial scholars in a different direction that tries to place Book II back into its original context, instead of giving credence to Book II as a stand-alone text. Second, this dissertation is the first scholarly work of its kind because it reunifies the entire chronicle and evaluates it as a whole. It demonstrates that all sections of Ophir de España, along with Montesinos’s other texts, were influenced by his interest and investment in the mining industry. Third, this study touches on a matter that has seldom been acknowledged in colonial Latin American literature and colonial history due to a glaring lack of evidence, the financial status of Peru during the first part of the seventeenth century along with its influence on the Spanish economy. This knowledge is beneficial because it provides added insights on the financial situation of the Viceroyalty of Peru and it explains why some colonial authors like Montesinos were devoted to mining, metallurgy, and amalgamation during this period. Furthermore, it seems to divulge a potential reason as to why there were a growing number of creoles, mestizos, and indigenous individuals and writers who were tired of Spanish rule. Fourth and finally, as was deliberated in the introduction of this dissertation, Ophir de España is an example of a colonial text. It does not differ widely from other colonial chronicles because it is clouded by a personal, social, and political agenda, that of Montesinos. It combines Andean and Christian histories with a specific target in mind. Two
worlds collide and Montesinos plays the role of colonizer because he takes advantage of Andean history in an effort to support his political and monetary agenda and justify the Spanish conquest.

As this dissertation concludes, I am reminded of some of Montesinos’s insightful words: “después de largas experiencias alcanzo la verdad [que] hemos dicho” (Ophir 15). I recognize the confines of my research due to a lack of time and resources. Even so, I am convinced that “Ophir de España” & Fernando de Montesinos’s Divine Defense of the Spanish Colonial Empire: A Mysterious Ancestral Merging of pre-Inca and Christian Histories will become nothing short of a scholarly contribution to colonial Latin American studies. Like Montesinos, I am confident in the seemingly endless hours I spent transcribing, researching, visiting colonial archives, writing, and revising, and I believe the facts and information I have set forth to be accurate. My only hope is that these academic labors will eventually reach the attention of other colonial and literary scholars like myself and live on through their enterprises.
WORKS CITED


*Autos Alonso de Alarcon albaçea de Melchior Ramirez difunto contra el liçenciado don Fernando de Montesinos sobre mas de quatro mil pesos proçedidos de mercadurias quel dicho difunto le remitio para que vendiese*. 1635-1641. MS Archivo Arzobispal, Lima.


---. The Quito Manuscript: An Inca History Preserved by Fernando Montesinos.


Markham, Clements R. Introduction. *Memorias antiguas historiales del Perú*. By Fernando de


---. Las memorias antiguas y nuevas del Pirú. 1642. MS. Bib. Nacional de España, Madrid.


---. Servicios del licenciado don Fernando de Montesinos Presbítero. 1644. MS. Bib. Universidad de Sevilla, Seville.


Oliva, Giovanni Anello. Historia del reino y provincias del Perú. Lima: Pontificia U


Rivero, Mariano Eduardo de and Juan Diego de Tschudi. *Antigüedades Peruanas*. Viena: Imprenta imperial de la corte y del estado, 1851. Print.

Robins, Nicholas A. *Mercury, Mining, and Empire: The Human and Ecological Cost of*


