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# IMPLICIT UNDERSTANDINGS

OBSERVING, REPORTING, AND REFLECTING ON THE  
ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN EUROPEANS AND OTHER  
PEOPLES IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA

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## *The indigenous ethnographer: The "indio ladino" as historian and cultural mediation*

ROLENA ADORNO

IN Spanish colonial times, individuals of indigenous American background who were familiar with Spanish language and customs were commonly described as *ladino*. The seventeenth-century Castilian dictionary of Covarrubias defined the term as referring to any non-native speaker of Castilian who had some proficiency in the language, Moriscos and foreigners being cited as examples.<sup>1</sup> Implying as well the idea of cultural assimilation, the phrase *indio ladino*, applied to Amerindian natives, could refer to such diverse social types as the first natives who served the Spaniards as interpreters during the conquests, the ethnic lords who became the negotiators between their local communities and Spanish colonial officials, and persons of any rank or station who worked in the employ of Spanish masters. In addition, persons of mixed Spanish and Amerindian parentage (*mestizos*) as well as African slaves were also referred to by the adjective *ladino* ("un *mestizo muy ladino*," "negro *ladino*") in order to signal their acquaintance with Spanish language and culture.

Obviously, *ladino* was not a term of self-identification; it was employed instead from the outside by those who considered themselves Castilian or Spanish and therefore equipped to discern and judge how successfully non-Castilians handled the Spanish language and adapted themselves to Spanish customs. The complex history of the meanings of the concept and the particularities of its use in Spanish America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries merit a discussion

before we consider the cultural mediations practiced by those who were described by the term.

### A. THE MANY MEANINGS OF THE TERM LADINO

In the long and multiple histories of the concept, we turn to its original use to refer to the common Romance vernacular of Spain excluding Catalonia as well as its simultaneous and subsequent meanings. Roger Wright has studied the relationship of the concepts *latin* and *ladino* in medieval Spain; his work provides the missing link between the generalized use of *ladino* to refer to the language of vernacular Romance and the language of the Sephardic Jewish community. Because of their importance, his conclusions bear reiteration:

*Ladino* was the normal word used before 1080 by all Romance-speakers of any religious group in non-Catalan Spain to describe their own language, whether written or not, and it was only contrasted with other languages entirely such as Arabic, Greek or Hebrew.<sup>2</sup>

In 1080, the Council of Burgos decided to abandon the old Visigothic Christian liturgy, and adopted a new Christian liturgical Latin pronunciation. This led ultimately to the erection of a semantic and conceptual boundary between Latin and Romance vernacular; according to Wright, "*latin*" meaning Latin and "*ladino*" meaning Romance would have been spelled the same way until

the general adoption of the Romance-based method of spelling in the early thirteenth century, so there must have been some confusion, when reading, over whether the written form *latinus* meant *latin*, "Latin," or *ladino*, "Spanish," and it may be for this reason that those circles that used the new Christian liturgical Latin pronunciation stopped using that written form with the meaning of "Romance," and kept to that of "Latin," and eventually preferred in speech to use a word other than *ladino* to refer to Romance vernacular. . . . Meanwhile, Spanish-speaking Jews continued as before to think of their own language as *ladino*, unaware, perhaps, of the distinctions newly brought into the Christian community.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Roger Wright, "Early Medieval Spanish, Latin, and Ladino," in *Litterae Iudaeorum in Terra Hispanica*, I. Benabu and J. Yahalom, eds. (Jerusalem, in press), text following fn

5. I am grateful to Roger Wright for his permission to cite this important essay and his helpful comments on my interpretation of it.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, text at fn 6.

<sup>1</sup> Sebastian de Covarrubias Horozco, *Tesoro de la lengua Castellana o Española* [1611], Martin de Riquer, ed. (Barcelona, 1943).

Wright summarizes the final division between Latin and vernacular Romance in Spain and the fate of the concept *ladino* as follows:

By the time we reach the age of Alfonso el Sabio in the second half of the thirteenth century, Latin and Romance have become conceptually distinct languages throughout the Kingdom; the new *literar* pronunciation plus the old traditional way of writing were considered together to be the one language Latin, and the old ordinary colloquial pronunciation of Castile, plus the newly-elaborated methods of writing Castilian Romance, were considered together to be the one language now officially called *castellano*. Dialectal divisions had become psychologically and politically salient during the thirteenth century, so the general "Romance" meaning of the word *ladino* no longer seemed so suitable.<sup>4</sup>

Although *ladino* as a noun was used to refer to the language of the Sephardim, its use in reference to Castilian, as Manuel Alvar demonstrates, did not disappear.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the adjective *ladino* continued to carry one of its original meanings in reference to Latin – that of linguistic purity – now applied to proper pronunciation, usage, and cultivated speech in Castilian; this is the meaning captured in phrases like "ladino español" and "ladino castellano."<sup>6</sup> Inasmuch as the term implied skill in the use of Castilian on the part of those who possessed it, it was logically applied as well to any foreigner who spoke it; one could be described, for example, as "muy ladino" or "no muy ladino."<sup>7</sup> Such was the usage in which it spread to Spanish America to apply to non-native speakers of Castilian.

Although the term referred specifically to language use, the descriptions presented by early chroniclers of the Indies suggest as well the meaning of acculturation to Spanish ways. If in the sixteenth century our modern concept of culture did not exist, the intimate connections between language and customs were well understood. Hence we find Oviedo's vivid description of the cacique Enriqueillo of Hispaniola: "Among these modern and most recent lords of this island Hispaniola, there is one who is called Don Enrique, who is a baptized Christian and knows how to read and write and is very ladino and speaks the Castilian language very well."<sup>8</sup> Another sixteenth-century chron-

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, text following fn 7.

<sup>5</sup> Manuel Alvar, "Aceptaciones de *ladino* en español," in *Homenaje a Pedro Sainz Rodríguez. II. Estudios de lengua y literatura* (Madrid, 1986), 25–34.

<sup>6</sup> Manuel Alvar, "Aceptaciones de 'ladino' en español," in *Homenaje a Pedro Sainz Rodríguez. II. Estudios de lengua y literatura* (Madrid, 1986), 28.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>8</sup> Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general de las Indias*, 4 vols. (Madrid, 1851–3), I, 140 [part 1, book 5, chapter 4]; my translation.

icler of the Indies, Fray Pedro de Aguado, used the phrase "ladino o españolado" to refer to Hispanized Indians.<sup>9</sup> Language proficiency, literacy, Christianity and custom all converged around this concept.

But these are positive meanings. The connotations of the modifier *ladino* were multiple and diverse. For example, it connoted the qualities, at one extreme, of prudence and sagacity and, at the other, cunning and craftiness.<sup>10</sup> At the opposite pole of the positive values of linguistic expertise and practice of Christian customs, it could refer to the "big talker" and the charlatan.<sup>11</sup> The Andean native Felipe Guaman Poma, who felt the sting of its negative as well as its positive sign as applied to himself, remarked that those called *indios ladinos* were often scorned as "ladinejo" or "santico ladinejo" – that is, as zealous converts and busybodies, and as *bachilleres*, great and impatient talkers and scoundrels.<sup>12</sup>

The examples provided by Guaman Poma suggest the conflictive nature of the sign *ladino* as used in America, where its application always implicitly carried – even at its neutral best – the notion of the outsider to full participation in Castilian society. At its worst, it painted its object as suspect or guilty of insubordination after submission<sup>13</sup>: One of the great themes of Spanish dominion in America is the number of times that rebellions and insurrections were spawned by mestizos, Indians, or African blacks who had been Hispanized. This topic in Spain's history in America runs through the eighteenth century, yet one of the first historical examples suffices to make the point. Oviedo's account of the rebellion of the lord Enrique who was "muy ladino" is framed by the chronicler's chapter on native customs and his final comment about the results of Christian evangelization. The few remaining Indians could be saved, he asserted, if they were baptized and would keep the faith and not return to the customs of their fathers. "But what are we to say," he laments, "about those who, in spite of being Christian, have spent years as renegades in the mountains and foothills with Enrique and other Indian lords?"<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Alvar, "Aceptaciones de 'ladino' en español," 30.

<sup>10</sup> Covarrubias Horozco, *Tesoro de la lengua Castellana o Española*, 747.

<sup>11</sup> Alvar, "Aceptaciones de 'ladino' en español," 31.

<sup>12</sup> Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* [1612–15], John V. Murra and Rolena Adorno, eds., Jorge L. Urioste, Quechua trans. (Mexico, 1980), 733, 738, 796, 838.

<sup>13</sup> See Rolena Adorno, "Images of *Indios Ladinos* in Early Colonial Peru," in *Transatlantic Encounters: Europeans and Andeans in the Sixteenth Century*, Kenneth J. Andrien and Rolena Adorno, eds. (Berkeley, CA, 1991), 232–70, for a discussion of the range of social roles played by those identified as *indios ladinos* according to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century native and Spanish sources.

<sup>14</sup> Oviedo, *Historia general de las Indias*, I, 139 [part 1, book 5, chapter 3].

## B. THE INDIGENOUS ETHNOGRAPHERS

For Oviedo, this vexing question was unanswerable, and the issue he raised in the 1535 publication of the first part of his *Historia general de las Indias* – that is, the suspicion of culturally mixed and Hispanicized individuals, be they lords or commoners – would remain on the horizon for a long time. The well-known legislation passed in the latter part of the sixteenth century against mestizos signals the ever-greater concern about this issue.<sup>15</sup> This historical situation is central to understanding what was at stake for the writers of dynastic history considered here, and it helps us to frame our examination of their cultural mediations in writing. Our point of departure is that in one way or another they wrote from the position of cultural outsiders. The central issue in this discussion, therefore, is not the veracity of their histories, but rather their authority as writing subjects and the positions that they took to handle in writing the complexities of cultural plurality.<sup>16</sup>

Although ladino is the category of external description that orients this discussion, it should not be understood as the category of analysis.<sup>17</sup> Hence it is crucial to emphasize that none of the writers considered here would have found that they had much – if anything – in common with one another. It would be irresponsible to deny their subjectivity and uniqueness; to preserve them, it seems essential to emphasize that this discussion is not a collective analysis of their works but rather a glimpse at the similar roles of cultural mediation realized in them. Their narratives argue similar positions and it is to them that the following discussion is directed. These common threads do not reveal similarities among the writers as historical individuals but rather the similarities of the subject positions they took in their interactions with the institutions of church and state and their representatives. With these qualifications in mind, we turn to some of the common features that appear in the writings of these very different individuals who represented a variety of Amerindian traditions and a broad range of relationships to Spanish Christian culture.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See Richard Kometzke, "Los mestizos en la legislación colonial," *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 112 (1960): 113–29.

<sup>16</sup> Created by the historical author, the literary persona or subject that exists for the reader may or may not take the same positions as the author; the subject is vulnerable to readers' interpretations, which the historical author cannot correct. I use the analytical category of the literary subject – the persona on the written page – because it is the only version of the historical author to which we have access.

<sup>17</sup> To do so would merely reproduce the stereotype I have sought to avoid by outlining the philological history of the term.

<sup>18</sup> J. Jorge Klor de Alva, in "Colonialism and Postcolonialism as (Latin) American Mi-

The post-conquest writers of native tradition to be considered here include persons of autochthonous background as well as individuals of mixed European and Amerindian parentage. In particular, the texts produced by those who wrote the history of their ethnic groups are revealing both for what they say and for what they suppress. The adjustments to the intermingling of diverse cultures in a colonial society is nowhere more problematic than in the works of history and ethnography that these heirs of native traditions wrote, with the expectation that their writings would reach audiences within and beyond their own communities. These writers had to be twice ethnographers, not only mapping their own systems of cultural practice and belief but also – and implicitly – mapping and responding to those of their culturally European readers.

The most sensitive topics were native religion and Christian evangelization. We shall examine the common elements of their narratives on these subjects and the purposes for which these special kinds of history and ethnography were written. The aim of exploring the elusive and sometimes contradictory qualities of these subject positions is to show, first, that they do not lend themselves to the simple or dichotomous characterizations of European versus Amerindian society and culture and, second, that they reveal instead the richer, more ambiguous strategies that characterize the roles of cultural mediation they inevitably played.

The time period covered by this cluster of historians runs from the middle of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth, from the coming of age of the first native and mestizo generations born after the conquest to the maturity of those whose great-grandparents had experienced the European invasion. For Mexico, the post-conquest writers of native tradition represent several of the basic ethnic divisions of the Central Valley of Mexico at the time of the Spaniards' arrival.<sup>19</sup> Most notable are Hernando Alvarado Tezozomoc (active 1598–early seventeenth century), Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl (ca. 1578–1648), Domingo Francisco de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhltluhuamitzin (born 1579), Diego Muñoz Camargo (ca. 1529–1599), and Juan Bautista de Pomar (active 1582).<sup>20</sup>

rages," *Colonial Latin American Review* 1, nos. 1–2 (1992): 7–8, 19, warns against falling into the trap of essentializing dichotomies and underscores the importance in sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish American society of innovative interethnic alliances and cultural identities that were more ambiguous than fixed, more constructed and manipulated than given. I am grateful for his insights into the problems of cultural mestizaje.

<sup>19</sup> Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519–1810* (Stanford, 1964), 9, 21.

<sup>20</sup> Chimalpahin descended from the Chalcas and wrote in Nahuatl detailed accounts of

Alvarado Tezozomoc was of Mexica (Aztec) descent; as the son of one of the *tlatoani* or lords of Tenochtitlán under the Spaniards and Francisca de Moctezuma, he was a grandson of Moctezuma II.<sup>21</sup> Tezozomoc left a major narrative account of the Mexica rise to power in the late fourteenth century up to the time of the Spanish conquest in his *Crónica mexicana* [1598]; he wrote his *Crónica Mexicayotl* in Nahuatl in 1609.<sup>22</sup> Alva Ixtlilxochitl was the son of a Castilian, Juan Navas Pérez de Peralada, and Ana Cortés Ixtlilxochitl, who descended from the Acolhuaque, the lords of Texcoco; Don Fernando left abundant accounts of Acolhua history in his *Historia chichimeca* and various *relaciones*, all of which he wrote in Spanish. Diego Muñoz Camargo was the son of the Spanish conquistador Diego Muñoz and a native woman; he married a noblewoman of Tlaxcala.<sup>23</sup> His work presents the perspective of the Tlaxcalans, who inhabited the area northeast of the Central Valley of Mexico and were unconquered enemies of the Mexica. His *Historia de Tlaxcala* (late sixteenth century) covers the ancient migration of the group, its dynastic history, and its role as allies of the Spanish in the conquest of Mexico.<sup>24</sup> Juan Bautista de Pomar was also of mixed, European and Mexican parentage and his mother descended from the pre-conquest Acolhua rulers of Texcoco. Pomar's *Relación de Texcoco*, which Alva Ixtlilxochitl later read, was written in response to the 1577 questionnaire for geographic and census information for the *relaciones geográficas de Indias* and is considered a major source on native deities and other aspects of pre-Columbian and colonial culture.<sup>25</sup> Each of these authors, like their counterparts in Peru after the tenure of the Viceroy Francisco de Toledo (1569–1581), inter-

their history. I have not considered the Nahuatl writings of Chimalpahin here, but the reader is recommended to the recent studies of Susan Schroeder, "Chimalpahin's View of Spanish Ecclesiastics in Colonial Mexico," in *Indian-Religious Relations in Early Colonial Spanish America*, Susan Ramirez, ed. (Syracuse, NY, 1989), 21–38, and Chimalpahin and the kingdoms of Chalco (Tucson, 1991).

<sup>21</sup> Angel María Garibay, *Historia de la literatura nahuatl, Primera parte (Etapa autónoma: de c. 1430 a 1521), Segunda parte: El trauma de la conquista (1521–1750)* [1953–4], 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Mexico, 1971), II, 299, and Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought* [1971] (New Brunswick, NJ, 1985), 132.

<sup>22</sup> Charles Gibson and John B. Glass, "A Census of Middle American Prose Manuscripts in the Native Historical Tradition," in *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, Part Four, Howland F. Cline, Charles Gibson, and H.B. Nicholson, eds., Handbook of Middle American Indians*, vol. 15 (Austin, 1975), 326.

<sup>23</sup> Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought*, 127.

<sup>24</sup> Gibson and Glass, "A Census of Middle American Prose Manuscripts in the Native Historical Tradition," 350–51; Diego Muñoz Camargo, *Descripción de la ciudad y provincia de Tlaxcala* [late 16c], René Acuña, ed. (Mexico, 1981).

<sup>25</sup> Gibson and Glass, "A Census of Middle American Prose Manuscripts in the Native Historical Tradition," 355.

preted native history from the origins of the dynasties whose history they reconstructed to the period of Spanish domination. In every case, as we shall see later, the retrieval of the past was undertaken to influence the present.

Colonial Peru produced only a handful of texts in Spanish and Quechua that were written by bilingual native Quechua-speakers.<sup>26</sup> Missionary writers have been important in giving access to others, such as the dictated account of Titu Cussi Yupanqui.<sup>27</sup> There are three writings in the chronicle tradition: Juan de Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamayhua, *Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Pirí* (1613?); Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1612–1615); and El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *Primera y segunda partes de los Comentarios reales de los Incas* (1609, 1616).<sup>28</sup> Of these three accounts of Inca history, only El Inca Garcilaso, the son of the Spanish captain Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega and the Inca *palla* (noblewoman) Isabel Chimpu Ocllo, reconstructed the dynastic history of the Incas from the Inca perspective. Guaman Poma identified himself primarily with the pre-Incaic dynasty of the Yarovilca of the Huánuco region of Chinchaysuyo, even though he claimed matrilineal descent from the Incas. Santacruz Pachacuti was also an outsider to the Cuzco royalty, being a *kuraka* (ethnic lord) of the Collahuas, midway between Cuzco and Lake Titicaca in Collasuyo, which was nevertheless an area associated with Cuzco from the origins of its state expansion.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Although the extent of colonial recordkeeping in Quechua has been debated and remains to be ascertained, the quantity of colonial documents so far examined suggests that there is nothing like the centuries-long notarial traditions that exist in the languages of the Nahuas and Mayas of colonial Mesoamerica.

<sup>27</sup> See Jesús Lara, *La literatura de los quechuas: ensayo y antología* [1969], 4th ed. (La Paz, 1985). Titu Cussi Yupanqui, who ruled the post-conquest Inca state at Vilcabamba from 1557 to 1571 dictated an account of Manco Inca's complaints against the Spanish in Cuzco (see John Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas* [New York, 1970], 504–5). His Quechua testimony was transcribed by the Augustinian friar Marcos de García in 1570; only the Spanish translation survives (see Diego de Castro Titu Cussi Yupanqui, *Ynterucción del Ynga don Diego de Castro Titu Cussi Yupanqui*. . . , Luis Millones Santa Gadea, ed. [Lima, 1985]). Other Inca testimonial accounts of the Spanish conquest are found in Edmundo Guillén, *Versión Inca de la conquista* (Lima, 1974).

<sup>28</sup> Juan de Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamayhua, *Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Pirí* [1613?], Francisco Esteve Barba, ed., in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* 209 (Madrid, 1968), 281–319; Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* [1612–15] (1980); and El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *Comentarios Reales de los Incas, primera y segunda parte* [1609, 1616], in *Obras completas del Inca Garcilaso de la Vega* II–IV, Carmelo Sáenz de Santa María, ed., in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* 133–35 (Madrid, 1963–5).

<sup>29</sup> Franklin Pease, "El mestizaje religioso y Santa Cruz Pachacuti," *Revista Histórica* 28 (1965): 125, 131; and Jan Szebinski, "Un kuraka, un dios y una historia: *Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Pirí* por don Joan de Santa Cruz Pacha Cuti Yamqui Salca Maygua," *Antropología y Historia* 2 (1987): 4.

El Inca Garcilaso elucidated Andean cultural concepts through the analysis of Quechua terms as part of his effort to make known Inca history and culture; Guaman Poma and Pachacuti Yamqui included significant Quechua language interpolations in their Spanish language texts. Like the colonial Mesoamerican writings of historical tradition, the authors of these works painted theirs in broad strokes, elaborating grand cosmological designs written from a strong sense of the need to redeem the present. Only one of them, Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, commented extensively on postconquest society from the 1570s onward; in this respect his *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* stands out from its counterparts in both the vicerojalities of New Spain and Peru and makes explicit the culturally hybrid historian's need to relate traditional, historical prerogatives to contemporary colonial claims. That is, insofar as Guaman Poma's version of Andean history supports his claims about the Andean right to sovereignty in Peru, his testimony is particularly useful for elucidating the circumstances in which these historical ethnographies were written and the goals they sought to achieve.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the great differences among their various heritages, as writing subjects, these Mexican and Peruvian authors assumed similar subject positions: First, each presented himself as a lord or leader of his respective group, thereby claiming authority to speak on behalf of all. Second, each engaged actively in legal petitioning for the restoration of rights, privileges, and properties. Third, their works were aimed at enhancing the prestige of the dynastic traditions they represented. As a result, in articulating their viewpoints on native history, they inevitably emphasized certain components of their cultural traditions and suppressed or ignored others. In this regard, their efforts conformed to certain theoretical principles of cross-cultural interactions and exchange recognized today.<sup>31</sup> Fourth, they occasionally

<sup>30</sup> See Rolena Adorno, *Guaman Poma: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru* (Austin, 1986).

<sup>31</sup> Some of the anthropological concepts that Angel Rama applied to the processes of creation of literature and nationhood in post-independence Latin America may also be applied to the writings studied here (Rama, *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina* [Mexico, 1982]). For example, Fernando Ortiz's notion of transculturation – that is, the elaboration of new cultural forms common to neither the donor nor the recipient culture, and the suppression or loss of certain traditional ones – is especially pertinent (Ortiz, *Contrapunto cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* [1940] [Caracas, 1978]). Also relevant is George Foster's idea of a "stripping down process," by which the conquest culture refrains from presenting and imposing all its institutions and customs (Foster, *Culture and Conquest: America's Spanish Heritage* [New York, 1960]). My point here, however, is that all social participants – not merely the representatives of the dom-

appropriated to their ethnic heritage traditions not necessarily their own.<sup>32</sup> Whether they did so knowingly or not, the practice had the effect of universalizing the local and particular and extending its prestige to readerships whose knowledge of the native traditions under discussion could not be guaranteed.

The results of these various processes may be observed in the way these authors dealt with the following transcultural issues: For pre-Columbian times, they acknowledged the ancient existence of idolatry but they disassociated it from their own dynastic heritage; they considered pre-Columbian, oral and written historiographic traditions as important sources, although they showed deference to European histories; they claimed the highest achievements of autochthonous American civilization for their own ethnic traditions; they identified their own language as the most prestigious among native Amerindian language groups; they acknowledged ancient practices of human sacrifice but distanced it from their own heritage. For the post-conquest era, they claimed their forebears' incorporation as allies at the highest levels into the Spanish military campaigns of conquest, and they claimed their ancestors' swift conversion to Christianity and subsequent leadership in evangelizing the rest of the native population.

### C. THE ARGUMENTATIVE POWER OF THE NARRATIVE ANECDOTE

To illustrate the problems of writing history from a culturally hybrid perspective, Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl's *Sumaria relación de todas las cosas . . . en la Nueva España* provides a useful anecdote.<sup>33</sup> Don Fernando recalls that he had asked an old cacique to recount the origin of the ancient prince Ixtlilxochitl, the father of the king Nezahualcoyotzin. The cacique replied that Ixtlilxochitl came into existence when a great eagle flew down from the sky and laid a great egg in a nest in a tree. After a certain period of time, the egg broke open; thus the child who was to become the great Ixtlilxochitl was literally "hatched

inant or official culture – exercise roles of agency and innovation in these processes. These chronicles are testimony of that fact.

<sup>32</sup> For example, El Inca Garcilaso identified Tiahuanacu as an Inca ruin; Alva Ixtlilxochitl made all Mexican kings descend from the source of the Texcoco dynasty, and Guaman Poma contradicted, not without reason (see José Varallanos, *Historia de Huánuco* [Buenos Aires, 1959]), the notion that the Incas were the source of civilization in the Andes by attributing the role to his Yarovilca ancestors.

<sup>33</sup> Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Históricas*, Edmundo O'Gorman, ed., *Serie de historiadores y cronistas de Indias* 4, 2 vols. (Mexico, 1975), I, 288.

from an egg." Laughing, Don Fernando, whose ancestors on his mother's side were from the house of Texcoco, told the old gentleman that it was foolish to spin such yarns. But the old lord replied that, on the contrary, he would retell the story, and others like it, to anyone who asked, especially to the Spanish! Don Fernando concludes the tale by commenting that many old lords did not want to tell the truth about their history, seeing that every day they were asked about it, but never taken seriously by their interlocutors.

Recounting the remarks of the elder, Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl revealed his own frustration with the problems of recovering native history, when the venerated authorities on whom the burden rested had lost hope that such could be achieved. Moreover, the old cacique's scornful reference to Spaniards suggests that cross-cultural historical inquiry created special problems of credibility and verification, at the root of which was mutual mistrust. The case that Don Fernando presents is repeated by many other writers of his time, not only Mexican but Andean as well. The mediations are complex because they involve first of all the web of interests of the writer, who must take into account the atmosphere of mutual mistrust that has to be overcome. Second are the historical and political debates in which his writing is engaged; third, the expectations and threshold of cultural tolerance of the readers whom he seeks to reach and persuade.

Although the writers considered here come from significantly different ethnic traditions, their discussions of pre-Columbian and post-conquest religion sound remarkably similar. Monotheism was the key issue on which the arguments that could identify the group with the colonial civil and religious order rested. From the Spanish perspective, proselytization and the Amerindian acceptance or rejection of Christianity was the fulcrum on which the justification for Castilian dominion in America turned. With the threat of Protestantism abroad in Europe and the continuing struggle against Islam in Europe, the triumph of Christianity meant national unity and empire, while its defeat meant certain social and cultural disintegration. Within this purview, writing historical and ethnographic accounts was a challenge of great consequence for the author who could be identified as ladino. In their writings, the principal ethnographic question concerned the beliefs of the natives, both about their own gods and in the presumably prophesied coming of Christianity. The crucial historical issue to be addressed was how the natives responded to Christian indoctrination.

In general, the Spanish ecclesiastical histories of the religious orders that recounted the triumphs of the faith in the Indies exploited the

illustrative anecdote when they could not lay claim to numbers or quantifiable evidence about the success of conversion in the New World. In my view, this is an extremely important principle, in evidence throughout the writings on Spanish America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>34</sup> Its immediate roots are in the medieval tradition of the morally edifying exemplum, employed not only in the writing of history but also in the religious oratory of the spoken sermon. This universal rhetorical figure was theoretically not a mere interpolation or diversion but rather a key device of argumentation and persuasion. The theoretical importance of the exemplary anecdote was no less central to the writings of the ladino authors than it was to the Castilian writers with whose works they interacted. Thus, we can better understand the weight and significance of the tale told if we rightly gauge its structure and placement as central – not accessory – to the author's broader goals.

The first and fundamental common theme that emerges among these writers asserts that the ancients, either the whole group or some privileged member of the dynasty, understood monotheism to be the essence of authentic spiritual experience. For example, in his *Historia de Tlaxcala*, Diego Muñoz Camargo attributed this knowledge to the ancient Tlascalans.<sup>35</sup> Juan Bautista de Pomar's *Relación de Texcoco* [1582] credited the king Nezahualcoyotzin, among the lords of Texcoco, as the one who most doubted the identity of the idols as gods.<sup>36</sup> Although Nezahualcoyotzin did not receive divine illumination and thus returned to his parents' tradition, he authored many *cantos* (lyrical compositions) which attested – according to Pomar – to his apprehension of the monotheistic nature of true divinity.<sup>37</sup> Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl made a similar claim on behalf of the ancient Toltecs, who called this supreme god Tloque Nahauque.<sup>38</sup> He too attributed to Nezahualcoyotzin the special gift of the knowledge of the true God, as evidenced in the extant fragments of his *cantos*.<sup>39</sup> Each of these writers also asserted that the ancients had – in one

<sup>34</sup> I have used prominently here three anecdotes – from Alva Ixtlilxochitl, Pomar, and Muñoz Camargo – on the strength of this conviction; I developed arguments on this topic in my study of Guaman Poma's use of European rhetorical types and historiographic models (Adorno, *Guaman Poma*, 43–51, 69–70).

<sup>35</sup> Diego Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 2nd ed. [reprint of 1892 ed.] (Mexico, 1947), 141.

<sup>36</sup> Juan Bautista de Pomar, *Relación de Texcoco*, in *Nuestra colección de documentos para la historia de México*, vol. III. (Mexico, 1941), 23.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Históricas*, I, 263.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 405.

form or another – knowledge of the existence of Satan, evil, and eternal punishment.<sup>40</sup>

Interestingly, the Peruvian writers of the same generation offered similar accounts. Whereas El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega attributed to the first Incas the knowledge of the universal and invisible god, called by the Andeans *Pachacamac*, Guaman Poma de Ayala asserted that the civilizations of pre-Incaic times possessed the *sombra* or shadow of the knowledge of monotheism and that the Incas – specifically, Mama Uaco Coya, the mother of Manco Capac Inca – subsequently invented idolatry.<sup>41</sup> Like the *rasiro* or trace of the same knowledge that Muñoz Camargo assigned to the ancient Tlaxcalans, these claims were consistent with the standard Christian theological view that knowledge of the divine could be gained through the exclusive use of natural reason.<sup>42</sup> In all these Mexican and Peruvian cases, the authors insisted upon the ancients' original possession and subsequent loss of the knowledge of the creation and the Adamic age.<sup>43</sup>

Another characteristic tendency was for these authors to regularly bring together the events of ancient biblical and New World history. Alva Ixtlilxochitl, for example, coordinated ancient events in Mexico with the coming of Christ, suggesting that a possible ancient knowledge of the event was once recorded and then lost.<sup>44</sup> In Peru, Santacruz Pachacuti asserted that, upon the crucifixion of Christ, the *hapinuyños* ("infernal spirits") disappeared, raising mournful laments.<sup>45</sup> It was Guaman Poma, however, who presented the most elaborate intersection of New World and biblical history, likening the standard version of biblical ages to corresponding eras of ancient Andean civilization, and interrupting his narration of the reigns of the Incas to interpolate the birth of Jesus Christ and to claim that, soon afterward, the apostle Saint Bartholomew came to the Andes to make the first Andean conversions to Christianity. He claimed that the historical cross of Carabuco stood as proof of that apostolic visit.<sup>46</sup> El Inca Garcilaso also credited St. Bartholomew with a pre-Columbian

<sup>40</sup> Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 142:163; Pomar, *Relación de Texcoco*, 24; Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Históricas*, I, 447.

<sup>41</sup> Garcilaso de la Vega, *Comentarios Reales de los Incas*, 2 vols., Angel Rosenblat, ed. (Buenos Aires, 1943), 43; Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 50, 54, 58, 65, 81, 121.

<sup>42</sup> Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 142; Fray Luis de Granada, *Del símbolo de la fe, tercera parte*, in *Obras de Fray Luis de Granada* (Madrid, 1944), I, 400.

<sup>43</sup> Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Históricas*, I, 397; Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 50.

<sup>44</sup> Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Históricas*, I, 265.

<sup>45</sup> Santacruz Pachacuti, *Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Pirú*, 132.

<sup>46</sup> Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 88–94.

visit to the Andes, although he attributed to the Spanish – quite possibly correctly – this syncretic interpretation of the identity of a particular statue.<sup>47</sup> Finally, we find that Santacruz Pachacuti associated the cross of Carabuco with the apostolic visit of Tonapa, who was really Saint Thomas.<sup>48</sup>

Within such narrations of spiritual origins and biblical/New World contacts, the post-1492 arrival of Christianity is portrayed as a natural narrative development and an implicit fulfillment of the divinely ordained preparation for the gospel. The Mexican writers claimed that the introduction of Christianity had occurred during the earliest days of the conquest of Mexico. Muñoz Camargo and Alva Ixtlilxochitl both asserted that the four lords of Tlaxcala requested and received baptism in the first twenty days during which Cortés and his company camped in Tlaxcala in 1519.<sup>49</sup> The baptism of Moctezuma was claimed by Alva Ixtlilxochitl; Guaman Poma insisted that sincere conversion accompanied the forced baptisms of Atahualpa and the last prince of Vilcabamba, Tupac Amaru, who died baptized "in a most Christian manner."<sup>50</sup> Santacruz Pachacuti also attested to the baptism of Atahualpa, telling how he had been christened "Don Francisco" at the same time as he was executed as a traitor.<sup>51</sup> Regardless of their historical veracity, these claims of early baptisms are crucial because of their dramatization of the peaceful and willing acceptance of Christianity by the native lords.

Specifically, these episodes reveal that their writers recognized the exemplary power of the spectacle of the native lord submitting to the spiritual – if not so easily to the temporal – authority of the foreign invaders. The last-hour conversions claimed for the reigning lords serve as prefiguration for the widespread evangelization process subsequently narrated. Miracles and martyrdoms are the outstanding episodes in these dramas, but they are not as significant as the prophecies about the return of vanished lords. Such accounts are com-

<sup>47</sup> El Inca Garcilaso also noted that a confraternity of *mestizos*, desirous of disassociating themselves from the colonists, claimed Saint Bartholomew as their patron, openly declaring that it mattered not to them whether the apostle's visit to Peru had been real or apocryphal (*Comentarios Reales de los Incas* [1943], I, 272).

<sup>48</sup> Santacruz Pachacuti, *Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Pirú*, 134–5.

<sup>49</sup> Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 220; Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras históricas de don Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl*, Alfredo Chavero, ed., 2 vols. (Mexico, 1892), II, 371. Such an action seems unlikely; no sources mention the event until several decades after the Mexican conquest (Charles Gibson, *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century* [New Haven, 1952], 30).

<sup>50</sup> Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras históricas* [1892], II, 388; Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 393, 454.

<sup>51</sup> Santacruz Pachacuti, *Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Pirú*, 233.



mon to various post-conquest traditions among Mesoamerican as well as Andean peoples. These narratives provide a transitional argument between assertions about the ancient knowledge of the Judeo-Christian deity and contemporary claims about a Christian Indian society. At the same time, the arguments about the native lords' immediate acceptance of Christianity serve as the narrative fulfillment of the ancient prophecies.

Alvarado Tezozomoc's account, in his *Crónica mexicana* [1598], tells that Quetzalcoatl would return, bringing sons very different from the Mexica: stronger, braver, wearing different garb, speaking in a manner unintelligible to the Mexica, and coming to rule forever.<sup>52</sup> In his version of the ancient prophecy of the returning lords, the mestizo Muñoz Camargo emphasized the mixing of the races: "we have it understood from ancient times that people would come from where the sun rises, that they are to intermarry with us and we are to be all one."<sup>53</sup> Alva Ixtlilxochitl set forth the themes of dissension and punishment, telling that the astrologer Huematzin foretold that a lord would come to rule, with the good will of some and against that of others; that there would arise men of the same lineage who would pursue him with great wars until destroying themselves; that there would be a final destruction and that those who escaped it would suffer destruction sometime later. He concluded this bitter recital with the statement: "And it almost came to pass, with the will of God, just as it was foretold."<sup>54</sup> On the Peruvian side, Guaman Poma and El Inca Garcilaso attributed to Huayna Capac the foreknowledge of the coming invasion and conquest.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the differences in the ways these writers told the religious history of the ancients, they all followed the same basic scheme, including the claims about monotheism in ancient times, and the baptisms of native lords when the Spaniards arrived. Together with the prophecies that mediated between the two, these events constituted the central organizing principles around which these narrations of the histories of the Acolhuas, the Texcocans, the Tlaxcalans, the Incas, the Yarovilcas, and the Collahuas were articulated.

What are the factors that helped to produce these often repeated assertions? One is a matter of religious indoctrination. There is now

<sup>52</sup> Hernando Alvarado Tezozomoc, *Crónica Mexicana* [1598], Manuel Orozco y Berra, ed. (Mexico, 1944 [reprint of 1878 ed.]), 527.

<sup>53</sup> Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 197.

<sup>54</sup> Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Históricas* (1975), I, 271.

<sup>55</sup> Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva crónica y buen gobierno*, 114, 380; Garcilaso de la Vega, *Comentarios Reales de los Incas* (1943), II, 250.

persuasive evidence that the ancient promise of returning lords was to a great extent a missionary elaboration of native myths of local importance.<sup>56</sup> For both Mexico and Peru, the pre-Hispanic existence of the prophecies of the coming of new lords or the return of old ones is dubious. Even if historical, the doubt remains as to how extensive or limited such traditions were. In any case, by the time even the earliest of these authors was writing, the prophecies had been incorporated into the major Spanish chronicles of the conquests of Peru and Mexico.

Apart from personal experience or historiographic antecedents that these authors chose to elaborate or follow in their own works, there were immediate and pragmatic reasons for reconstructing the religious history of their people as they did. In spite of claiming the Christian conversion of their ethnic groups, they acknowledged, sometimes inadvertently, the failure of religious evangelization as they described the persistence of traditional ritual practices.<sup>57</sup> Muñoz Camargo's solution to the problem of avoiding a subject that he could not ignore was to declare that the Franciscan missionaries had already written so thoroughly on the subject of traditional religion that there was no need for him to explore it in his own work.<sup>58</sup> He then went on to present a picture of exemplary religious piety on the part of the Tlaxcalans in order to demonstrate that the Christian faith was well-rooted and broadly extended among them.<sup>59</sup>

In general, the persistence of traditional ritual practices was a topic suppressed in these texts. Only in certain cases, such as Guaman Poma's, was native religion given voice, which is then drowned out by contradictory "evidence" of massive conversion. In discussing pre-

<sup>56</sup> See Susan Gillespie, *The Aztec Kings: The Construction of Rulership in Mexica History* (Tucson, 1989); Franklin Pease, "La conquista española y la percepción andina del otro," *Hisórica* 13, no. 2 (1989): 179-96; and Inga Clendinnen, "Fierce and Unnatural Cruelty": Cortés and the Conquest of Mexico," *Representations* 33 (1991): 65-100. Gillespie (1989, 179-201) has argued persuasively that the primary sources of Aztec/Spanish history do not sustain the idea that the Aztecs believed that Cortés was either an ancient lord come back again or the deity Quetzalcoatl. She traces the process by which that interpretation grew to legendary proportions through the early missionary period, despite limited evidence to support it; see also Clendinnen (1991: 69-70). Franklin Pease (1989: 181-191) shows how the stereotypical account of the conquest of Peru, which attributed to the Andeans the identification of the Spaniards as the returning god Viracocha and his helpers, was the work of Spanish chroniclers of the 1550s and later; this tale did not appear in the initial eyewitness Spanish accounts written in the 1530s; only later did it become a way of rationalizing the conquest.

<sup>57</sup> Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva crónica y buen gobierno*, 1088; Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 149, 258; Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Históricas*, I, 287.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

sumably ancient religious practices, he acknowledged that he has seen them in the course of his work assisting in extirpation campaigns at the same time as he claimed that the people of the Andes had become Christian.<sup>60</sup>

By the time these Amerindian and mestizo writers were at work, the large-scale Christian conversions – both the dream and the limited reality realized particularly by the early Franciscan establishment in Mexico – had suffered serious setbacks.<sup>61</sup> If works published in Spain grandly celebrated the triumphs of the faith in the New World (Estéban Salazar and Alonso Fernández provide widely disseminated examples), the culturally hybrid writers of America were often simultaneously engaged in gathering information for treatises on the extirpation of idolatry. Consequently, their own works were polemical and defensive; the limited mention they made of the persistence of idolatrous practices, and the way they compensated for them with tales of conversion and native Christian martyrdom, register the degree to which they aspired to create a harmonious picture of Christianization, at the same time as they acknowledged the impossibility of sustaining such an optimistic interpretation.

These works reveal an awareness of the colonial authorities' attempts to suppress and destroy all sources of information on native religion, both the Amerindian codices and European-authored works on native ritual life. Such representations of Amerindian culture and religion, either in pre-Columbian codices or in colonial treatises, were not considered innocuous repositories of culture but rather implements of dangerous cultural and social practices. Pomar, for example, said that it was because of the Inquisition's execution in 1539 of Don Carlos Ometochtzin, a lord of Texcoco and the son of Nezahualpilli (see *Proceso*), that the codices not already confiscated by Archbishop Francisco de Zumárraga's extirpation efforts were destroyed by the lords who still possessed them.<sup>62</sup> He declared that these lords destroyed their sacred property out of fear of being accused of idolatry if such artifacts were found in their possession.

This anecdote, with which Pomar began his *Relación de Texcoco*, may provide the best clue to the general Amerindian and mestizo writers' silence on the subject of traditional belief. Each of these authors was careful to distance himself as far as possible from the knowledge of these traditional survivals. Even Guaman Poma, who gave an exacting

<sup>60</sup> Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 282, 285, 298; and 403, 834–57.

<sup>61</sup> See Charles Gibson, *Thaxcala in the Sixteenth Century*, 29.

<sup>62</sup> Juan Bautista de Pomar, *Relación de Texcoco*, 4.

catalogue of such practices, went to extremes to prove his own Christianity and put his knowledge of traditional ritual firmly in the context of his own work in assisting Cristóbal de Albornoz in the extirpation of idolatries.<sup>63</sup>

Regarding the suppression of works that dealt with native belief systems and customs, the case of the confiscation of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún's writings by the Franciscan order and the crown provides a pertinent example. Sahagún's efforts to preserve the knowledge of Nahuatl culture through its language were controversial because they proposed evangelization based on the knowledge of Christian doctrine and Scriptural passages in Nahuatl; at the same time they were considered dangerous, potentially perpetuating traditional native customs through the recording of ancient history. Thanks to the president of the Council of the Indies, Juan de Ovando, the Spanish crown since 1572 had promoted research into the history and ethnography of the New World. However, Ovando's death in 1575 and the implementation by the Spanish Inquisition in 1576–77 of the 1545 decision of the Council of Trent to prohibit Scripture in the vernacular, brought about the reversal of crown policies on Sahagún's *Historia* and on all writings on pre-Columbian civilizations.<sup>64</sup> Subsequently, in 1577, Sahagún's papers were ordered confiscated by royal decree.<sup>65</sup>

Not only were Sahagún's works to be gathered up, but the viceroy and the audiencia were to prohibit similar initiatives from being taken in the future: "And you will be advised not to permit anyone, for any reason, in any language, to write concerning the superstitions and ways of life these Indians had. Thus it is best for God our Lord's service and for our own."<sup>66</sup> At bottom is the perceived danger that the written word, particularly in an indigenous language, would perpetuate practices identified by the church with superstition, magic, and witchcraft.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 282, 285; see Adorno, "Las otras fuentes de Guaman Poma: sus lecturas Castellanas," *Historia* 2, no. 2 (1978): 137–58, and Pierre Duviols, "Albornoz y el espacio ritual andino prehispánico," *Revista Andina* 1 (1984): 169–222.

<sup>64</sup> Autilhu Anderson and Charles Dibble, *Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain. Introductions and Índices*, Monographs of the School of American Research 14, part 1 (Santa Fe, NM, 1982), 35–6.

<sup>65</sup> Manuel Ballesteros Gaiboris, *Vida y obra de Fray Bernardino de Sahagún* (León, 1973), 76. The royal decree is printed in the *Códice Franciscano. Siglo XVI* (Mexico, 1941), 249–250.

<sup>66</sup> The cédula of 22 April 1577 is here translated by Anderson and Dibble, *Florentine Codex*, 36–37.

<sup>67</sup> In the dedication of his work (the Florentine Codex) to Fray Rodrigo de Sequera and, more completely, in his prologue to Book Two, Sahagún summarized his problems

#### D. FICTIONALIZING THE FAILURE OF EVANGELIZATION

If the preservation of sacred objects and traditions was problematical for the native lords who participated in the destruction of their own cultural monuments, it was perhaps less obvious but no less dramatic for the bi- or polycultural authors of later generations whose works we are discussing here. To render their deliberate silences more audible, we turn to the writings of European authors who gave voice to what the indigenous and mestizo writers never could. Such works were didactic and literary; they did not describe native religion ethnographically (the reason, perhaps, why some of them were not suppressed)<sup>68</sup> but rather created fictional situations that nevertheless commented forcefully on the predicament of indoctrinated natives. Such reflections on the state of Amerindian Christianity and the outlook of its presumed adherents reveal the social and spiritual problems the missionary evangelizers actually faced. These fictional accounts allow us to focus more sharply the interpretations of native spiritual/religious history offered by writers as diverse as Muñoz Camargo, Guaman Poma, and El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega.

Pedro de Quiroga's *Coloquios de la verdad*, written around 1563 but not published until the twentieth century, provides a relevant example.<sup>69</sup> Another is Fray Fernando de Valverde's *poema sacro*, written and published almost a century later, entitled *Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Copacabana en el Perú* (Lima, 1641). Quiroga wrote the *Coloquios* when some of the authors discussed here were adolescents, or already adults; the *Santuario* appeared some years before the death of the last of them (Alva Ixtlilxochitl died in 1648).

Quiroga's work deals with Spanish/Indian relations in the first

with censorship and confiscation within the Franciscan order (Sahagún, *Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva España*, Angel M. Garibay, ed. [Mexico, 1979], 15, 73-5). He told about the elimination of his native scribes and collaborators, the subsequent confiscation and circulation of his writings among members of the Franciscan order in Mexico, and only belatedly the eventual return of his manuscripts to him, thanks to the support of Sequera, the new Franciscan commissary who encouraged him to resume his work.

<sup>68</sup> See Adorno, "Literary Production and Suppression: Reading and Writing About Amerindians in Colonial Spanish America," *Dispositivo* 11, nos. 28-29 (1986):1-25.

<sup>69</sup> The autograph manuscript of the *Coloquios de la verdad* comes from the library of the Count-Duke of Olivares and is preserved in the library of the monastery of San Lorenzo el Real of El Escorial. Its author was a priest who had experienced the chaotic years of civil war following the conquest of Peru (Pedro de Quiroga, *Coloquios*, Julian Zarco Cuevas, ed. [Seville, 1922], 2-4). The location and circulation of the manuscript in the sixteenth century are unknown.

thirty years after the Peruvian conquest. One of the major characters in the dialogue is Tito, an Indian whose attempted suicide is thwarted by two Spanish passersby. After the two men remove him from the scaffold, Tito tells them his life story. His attempt to take his own life becomes more disturbing when his interlocutors [discover?] that Tito is a baptized Christian. Thus Quiroga presents, through the voice of a former Inca noble, a ringing condemnation of the failure of Spanish evangelization among the early generations of those who were called "indios ladinos."

Working first for a captain at Cajamarca and later for a soldier, Tito was unaccustomed to doing the manual labor he saw his own former vassals doing. Hence he became a thief, much loved by his Spanish master whose friends envied him so clever a servant. Only on taking up service with a Spanish merchant was he indoctrinated in the Christian faith. Tito tells of his swift but meaningless Christianization through several baptisms, and his subsequent, more thorough religious indoctrination which turned to bitter disillusionment when he visited Spain and saw the depravity of the Christians he had been taught to emulate. Finally, he narrates how he returned to Peru and his own people with the intention of preaching the gospel to them. Instead, they persuaded him to return to traditional beliefs and practices, to which he refers - unable to undo the lessons of Christianity - as sins.

This fictional self-description reveals the partial character of Christian indoctrination. In this way, Quiroga revealed the trauma of the acculturated native for whom it was impossible to go forward and impossible to go back. Such persons were caught in the position described aptly by the Nahuatl word *nepantla*, "in between." Used by a Mexican lord as recalled in an anecdote narrated by Fray Diego Durán in his *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España y islas de tierra firme, nepantla* was the "situation in which a person remains suspended in the middle between a lost or disfigured past and a present that has not been assimilated or understood."<sup>70</sup> The record of this drama, reenacted over and over again in early colonial Mexico and Peru, is almost entirely suppressed in the works of the authors we are discussing. Only Guaman Poma, in his extensive depictions of colonial society, described at length ladino apostates; this exceptional report is worth noting:

<sup>70</sup> Durán, *Historia de las Indias*, 2 vols. (Mexico, 1951), II, 268; Jorge Klor de Alva, "Spiritual Conflict and Accommodation in New Spain: Toward a Typology of Aztec Responses to Christianity," in *The Inca and Aztec States, 1400-1800: Anthropology and History*, George Collier, Renato Rosaldo, and John Wirth, eds. (New York, 1982), 353.

... the most Christian, although he may know how to read and write, carry a rosary and dress like a Spaniards, ... - he seems a saint - on getting drunk, he speaks with demons and worships the *wayankuna* [Andean deities and sacred places] ... speaking of his ancestors, performing their ceremonies.<sup>71</sup>

In the 1640's Fray Fernando de Valverde presented a tantalizing portrait of the defeated Inca in a poetic composition that celebrated the foundation of the faith and honored the Christian shrine at Copacabana. The Inca Yupanqui plays a small role in this pastoral/heroic poem; however, it is one deemed sufficiently important to represent his figure in the frontispiece engraving. There, he sets up a ringing and bewildered lament: How can it be that he, the Inca, finds himself defeated by subjection to a mere woman? He harangues: "Don't ask me to revere one who was so poor that she gave birth in a manger and so humble that she obeyed a husband who was a carpenter and who, on top of everything else, saw her son expire, nailed to a tree!"<sup>72</sup> Fictionally framed and assigned to a dynastic lord vanished for a century, the words echo very closely the kinds of statements reported about Indians in the extirpation instructions and other church documents.

For example, native Andean responses to the doctrines of Christianity, recorded by Juan Polo de Ondegardo in the 1560s and reprinted in the Third Church Council of Lima's 1585 *Confesionario*, ring remarkably true to the fictional (but not fictitious) utterances just cited. In Polo's "Instrucción contra las ceremonias y ritos," Chapter 6 is devoted to "the errors against the Catholic faith, into which some Indians tend to fall."<sup>73</sup> Among the natives, it was the indios ladinos who most commonly thwarted the progress of the faith by preaching to the Indians against the gospel and its ministers, not unlike the confused and frustrated experience of Quiroga's Tito. The "Instrucción" speaks as well about how Andeans (like Valverde's Inca Yupanqui) often could not fathom the idea of omnipotence of a deity presenting himself as a humble and lowly carpenter. When faced with the demand to abandon their gods, native Andeans frequently responded that they would gladly worship the Christians' god alongside their own, because the deities "had contrived with one another and were related like brothers."<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 877.

<sup>72</sup> Valverde, *Sentiuario de Nuestra Señora de Copacabana en el Perú. Poema Sacro*, ff.236r-v.

<sup>73</sup> Polo de Ondegardo, "Instrucción contra las ceremonias y ritos que usan los indios, conforme al tiempo de su infidelidad," in *Revista Histórica* 1, no. 1 (1906): 202-3, [1585]: ff5-6.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 202, [1585]: f5.

Such admissions, however, were seldom to be found in the writings of those who would have heard such arguments against the Christian faith made by the native peoples whose histories they sought to dignify. Here, Muñoz Camargo provides an apparent exception, but he moved swiftly to neutralize the damage his narration might incur. He mentioned an offer made by the Tlaxcalan lords at the time of the conquest to negotiate such a compromise with the invaders, that is, to accept the new Christian religious while preserving their own.<sup>75</sup> However, he immediately undercut the episode with the account of the joyous conversion of the principal lords, who requested baptism and were determined to take up the new, Christian precepts.<sup>76</sup> In this regard, the tale Muñoz Camargo tells about one Don Gonzalo Tecpanecatl Tecuhtli is also pertinent.

Confessing one Holy Week, Don Gonzalo acknowledges the troublesome presence in his home of the ashes of the deity Camaxtli, much venerated by the Tlascalans. He brings the remains to the priest, Fray Diego de Olarte; Fray Diego burns the ashes and absolves the cacique. Shortly afterward, Don Gonzalo dies while flagellating himself - full of remorse and repentance for his sins - before the image of the Virgin Mary in the Hospital of the Annunciation on Holy Thursday. The burned ashes of the deity, which had been spread about with great scorn by Fray Diego, are now discovered to have blond hairs among them, "because the elders affirm that Camaxtli had been a white man and blond."<sup>77</sup>

This story provides a transition from the old gods to the new, however unresolvable the conflict between them. On one hand, the anecdote can be read as an overt summary of Muñoz Camargo's work: the sincerity of conversion of the old cacique, the success of efforts to root out native religion, as undertaken with the collaboration of the natives themselves, and the Christian fulfillment of the ancient prophecy. The remains of the old god are found to contain blond hairs, which denote the foreign culture and possibly its providential message. The fact that the narrative contains the scorn and "great exhortations" of "the good religious" Fray Diego, and ends with the spectacle of the scourged corpse of the old lord of Tepeticpac, suggests

<sup>75</sup> Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, 218.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 258. The association of blond hair with the Spaniards is confirmed by native sources of the conquest, such as the Codex Aubin in which Pedro de Alvarado is called *tonatlauh* ("the Sun") because of his fair hair and skin (see Miguel León-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*, Angel M. Garibay, Spanish trans., Lysander Kemp, English trans. [Boston, 1962], 71, 80).

an edifying interpretation of this episode. In this reading, and far from the image of the pathetic old Inca as presented by Fray Fernando de Valverde, Muñoz Camargo presents the tragic tale of a lord who practiced self-censure and self-castigation in an exemplary fashion, only to die without knowing that his devotion was, implicitly, not misplaced.

On the other hand, the tale could be read as the text of a different revelation: that the Spaniards (represented by the blond hairs) were diabolical and even though the old gods were destroyed, evil – a new evil – remained. Whichever reading Muñoz Camargo might have preferred (and he certainly overtly favored the former), the literary subject Muñoz Camargo permits a tantalizing ambiguity of interpretation.

#### E. CULTURAL MEDIATION OR WRITING HISTORY FOR THE PRESENT

Like all writing of history, these narrations, so marginal in their time from the viewpoint of participation in elite literary culture, are not disinterested. In each case, the reevaluation of the past has a present-oriented objective. Unlike the Spanish histories their authors read, however, these works were not designed to inspire men to great deeds in the king's service or the exercise of virtue and valor in the name of Spanish imperial culture. These were not exemplary tales which the sons of Texcoco and Tlaxcala could emulate in the future, in line with the didactic goals of history of the day. They were, as Frank Salomon has written, "chronicles of the impossible"<sup>78</sup>; if the cultural ambiguity which they experienced were erased, the necessity of writing from or about that condition would disappear. Because of that cultural hybridity, they had more immediate and practical objectives which were related more to legal than historiographic prerogatives.

As legal petitions, these works brought together two traditions. On one hand, their initiatives were related to the appeals by which the Spanish conquistadores regularly sought recognition and reward. As descendants of the conquistadores and/or their native allies who had thus served the Spanish king, these writers employed and elaborated the format of the *relaciones de méritos y servicios* and the *probanzas* of services rendered to the crown.<sup>79</sup> As such, their insistence on religious

<sup>78</sup> Frank Salomon, "Chronicles of the Impossible: Notes on Three Peruvian Indigenous Historians," in *From Oral to Written Expression*, ed. R. Adorno (1982), 9–39.

<sup>79</sup> On the character of the *relaciones de méritos y servicios*, see Murdo MacLeod, "Self-Promotion: The *Relaciones de Méritos y Servicios* and their Historical and Political In-

monotheism in the ancient past and loyal Christianity in the present fulfilled the same role – although in much more elaborate narrative versions – as the declarations of faith found, in one formula or another, in the *relaciones* and *probanzas* of Spanish soldiers.

On the other hand, the culturally mestizo writers put forward several arguments that had much in common not with the conquistadores of America, but rather that other colonized population, the Moriscos of peninsular Spain.<sup>80</sup> Both traditions insisted on their obedience and service to the crown, their unjust suffering at the hands of the Christian overlords, their insistence upon the harmony of traditional cultural practices with the Christian faith, and the argument that all policies prejudicial to local native interests would have severe economic consequences for their foreign rulers. The Morisco testimonies set in clear relief those of the ladino historians. Encoding the practices of the ancient culture into formulas appropriate for advocating for rights and privileges in a new foreign regime, the historiographic and testimonial practices of the ladino Americans echo those of the pluricultural sons and daughters of Spain of prior and contemporary generations.

In sum, upon representing native Amerindian traditions in relation to the European, the ladino historians were ethnographers of their own cultural hybridization. As individuals of mixed background and loyalties, they understood that the boundary between identity and alterity was artificial and arbitrarily set in place by those who had something to gain by the exclusion. Indigenous histories of the post-conquest period could not afford to be so qualified. The function of such narrative efforts was not only to undertake the preservation of

terpretation," in *Proceedings of the Conference "The Book in the Americas"* (Providence, RI, in press), and Adorno, "History, Law, and the Eyewitness: Protocols of Authority in Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *True History of the Conquest of New Spain*," in *The Project of Prose in the Early Modern West*, Elizabeth Fowler and Roland Greene, eds. (Cambridge, in press).

<sup>80</sup> I have studied elsewhere such similarities in the writings of Morisco and Amerindian advocates on behalf of their peoples in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Although separated by some forty years and entirely different cultural identities and social circumstances, the respective interactions of Don Francisco Núñez Muley and Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala with the Castilian state and its representatives abroad produced very similar protests (Adorno, "La ciudad letrada y los discursos coloniales," *Hispanamérica* 16, no. 48 [1987]: 3–24). See K. Garrad, "The Original Memorial of Don Francisco Núñez Muley," *Atlantiv* 2, no. 1 (1954): 199–226, for the protest written by Francisco Núñez Muley and Luce López-Baralt. "Crónica de la destrucción de un mundo: la literatura aljamiado-morisca," *Boletín Hispanique* 82 (1980): 15–68, for an illuminating overview of the *aljamiado-morisca* tradition of writings of sixteenth-century Spain.

the past but also to keep the present alive. In this respect, the old Texcocan lord who told the tale of the great egg, and his "muy ladino" interlocuter, the historian Alva Ixtlilxochitl who wrote down his story, may have enjoyed together, after all, the last laugh.

## *What to wear? Observation and participation by Jesuit missionaries in late Ming society*

WILLARD J. PETERSON

CUTTERING our memories are images of men fully clothed in an apparently European style, some with armor, stepping up a tropical shore (weren't they hot?, I wonder now) to confront a small crowd of men and women clad only according to the minimum decency required at the time the picture was concocted. I suspect this is close to being an archetypal image, from a European perspective, of conquerors and about-to-be conquered as their meetings were rehearsed for several centuries in the so-called Age of Expansion, expansion by Europeans, that is. The robes are made obvious by who is naked and who is robed. (Robed is the appropriate word here because buried in the etymology of the English word "robe" is the idea of robes being the spoils of conquest.)

All of this becomes more complicated, both as an image and as history, when missionaries in their distinctive robes are added to the picture. Missionaries, of course, also sought to conquer in the sense of seeking and winning, in our case souls for Christ, as their compatriots sought other conquests, such as portable wealth. Their task was more difficult when they confronted not "naked natives" but men already wearing the robes, and even the swords, symbolic of dominance and exploitation in their own societies.

In Ming China there was a well-established pattern of using robes and other adornments (which in modern Chinese are summarized in the term *fu-shih*) to denote social status.<sup>1</sup> Although the Ming state was

<sup>1</sup> Basing himself on his analysis of the adornment practices of an Amazonian Kayapo tribe, Terence Turner suggested that what he called the "social skin" could be seen as a constructed medium between the individual and other individuals, between the social "self" and the pre-social, libidinous "self," and between "categories or classes