

INDIGENOUS COSMOLOGY AND SPANISH CONQUEST

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Shortly after the U.S. annexation of half of Mexico's territory in 1848, not only was slavery re-instituted, but Mexicans viewed the process as one of dispossession and humiliation. As a result many rebels, some real and some imagined, rose in defiance during the second half of the nineteenth century. The uprisings produced figures that emulated a Robin Hood of the Southwest, who were eventually stylized as the character Zorro.¹ These anti-*gringo* masked avengers, who led secret lives, were appropriated and quickly transformed into symbols of Anglo-Saxon culture.² The Lone Ranger, Batman, and all of the superheroes that followed them are nihilistic myths that exposed the dualities, day/night, discourse/reality of a new U.S. culture. Actors such as John Wayne, Gary Cooper, and Clint Eastwood helped to elevate the cowboy as a prototypic symbol of the "authentic American," which had little or no connection to the Quakers, Puritans, Pilgrims of the Mayflower, or the intellectualism of the Founding Fathers. The cowboy is another mutation of the Mexican *vaquero* who, in turn, is rooted in the Hispano Arab culture. It is no coincidence, then, that current conservative groups who resist the nonexistent "Mexican invasion" were and are from Texas and other Southwestern states. The more distant states, such as in New England, were more removed, and thus, less critical.

History—at least popular history—is basically a construction of social myths composed of masks and hermetic symbols, shaped by select memories and well-timed amnesia. Perhaps its most powerful components are those which, for good reason, have been repressed, although not exterminated.

A similar process, but on a more grand and profound scale, took place during the centuries of conquest and colonization in what we know today as Latin America. In the same way that Christmas takes place on a date that has nothing to do with Jesus, in Mexico, pilgrimages to the Virgin of Guadalupe are made at the same place where the Aztecs worshiped the goddess Tonantzin, "our mother," the goddess of fertility. According to Octavio Paz, the fact that the Conquest coincides with the defeat of Quetzalcoatl, the god of self-sacrifice and the creator of the world within the flames of Teotihuacan, and the defeat of Huitzilopochtli, the young god of war, represents the return to female divinities.³ Although the Conquest had nearly destroyed the indigenous world and on its ruins had raised another, "between the old society and the new Hispanic order an invisible thread of continuity exists: the thread of domination. That thread is not broken: the Spanish viceroys and Mexican presidents are the successors of the Aztec chieftains."⁴

The process of repression and conversion, which is traditionally called syncretism—a psychological parallel of *mestizaje*—was widespread and inevitable. It would be difficult to limit this phenomenon to a few religious rituals. Unlike the Anglo-Saxon settlers, the Spanish Conquest did not proceed by displacing the indigenous population. For

practical reasons, most of this colonization was carried out in regions where the native population counted in millions and had, in the eyes of the Spaniards, developed sophisticated civilizations. The Spanish abandoned the more uninhabited lands such as North Carolina, since its interest was mineral wealth, converting souls to Catholicism, and finding bodies for cheap labor when slavery was not an option.⁵

For this reason, the cultural repression imposed by Iberian colonization should be seen as more severe with less absolute achievement. Colonization was achieved by force, although at times, there was a more devastating and absolute approach. The moral repression originated in the shame of the colonized indigenous people because of what they were, which was anything except white or European. After the wars of independence, and in the absence of a powerful Catholic Church, which was perceived as a source of backwardness and ignorance, this task was taken up by the *criollos* in the name of liberalism and scientific positivism. Until the late nineteenth century, the educator and eventual Argentine President Domingo Sarmiento, in an attempt to promote the successful model of the United States, wrote passionately against the races who resisted Western progress.⁶

Time and again we face the issue of separation and the repression of one group over the other. For example that of the “lettered city”—high society and enlightened culture—over that of spoken society, the mass of popular culture that, far from being dead, is ignored and depreciated domestically and abroad. With access to books, newspapers, and universities, the lettered European culture was the only visible and legitimate media at the time. Well into the twentieth century, many in Bolivia were unaware or unwilling to see that the vast majority of its population was indigenous; they considered their homeland a country of whites because they were white *criollos* or “whitened” who wrote in newspapers and held posts in government and administration.

Ángel Rama defines four appearances of the Indian theme in Latin American literature: (1) in the missionary literature of the Conquest; (2) in the critical literature of the mercantile bourgeoisie during the revolutionary period; (3) in romanticism as a mourning for their destruction; and (4) “in the twentieth century, in the form of a demand, which presented a new social sector from the lower strata of the middle, white or *mezizo* class. Needless to say, in none of these themes did the Indian speak, but authors spoke in his name.”⁷

It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that this trend was reversed. Once despised races and cultures became the center of vindication, particularly among the committed writers on the left and between rebels and revolutionaries. Yet this was not a simple infatuation of *indigenismo* but the expression of a thought:⁸ the restoration of lost origin, not of the industrial future paradoxically voiced by those who were defined as Marxists. The *sentipensante*, defined by Eduardo Galeano, is incarnated in the social critic and in the Latin American rebel.⁹ The Peruvian historian Manuel Burga observed in *Nacimiento de una utopía* that “all peoples without writing turn to rituals to remember their mythical ancestors.”¹⁰ Colonial societies were ritualistic societies: “The past was more important than the future for them. The Conquest produced anguish and then colonial violence, and threw them into the past.”¹¹ Huamán Poma de Ayala sketched several of these rituals and dances where you can see Spaniards reproducing indigenous rituals in a Catholic ceremony. To Burga, they were Indians disguised as Spaniards representing a ritual submerged in Catholic symbols. The cursed memory survives despite the eradication of idolatry in a manner that is even more profound than formal ceremony. It is repressed memory recorded with fire by the conquerors. Even today, as Burga

demonstrates, the silent narration persists in the local celebrations of what once was the Inca Empire. On the other hand, as we shall see later in this chapter, the veneration of the past as a superior time which is experienced in the future is a concept inherent in languages like Quechua and in the mythic-ideological aspirations of pre-Columbian cultures. This concept is opposite to modern progressive time, where the past is inferior, backward, and located behind us.

But the need to suppress and merge according to both the forces of colonial power and by colonized resistance occurred in an opposite way but with the same goal. Unlike the chroniclers of the Conquest, in the *Comentarios Reales*, the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (in some ways a *converso* in Spain) tried to assimilate a Spanish Catholic mentality, but could not forget his origin. To resolve this conflict or apparent contradiction, he integrated them into a common destiny: According to de la Vega, the Inca culture, its theological conception, and its religious destination, were previously in a state of a natural evolution towards Christianity. Garcilaso solves the zeal of Christian monotheism by identifying Pachacámac as Yahweh and Zúpay as Lucifer.¹² For de la Vega, the Inca had one god, the sun; and on the other hand, the universal Spirit of Pachacámac, who is the Father and the Holy Spirit. The third element of the Trinity, the Son, is actually Christ, the hallmark of the Conquest.¹³ Prior to the Incas, according to de la Vega, nature was revealed as a false adoration and inferior: “there was no animal, however vile or filthy, that they didn’t consider a god.”¹⁴

In any of its possibilities, the discussion of continuity and survival of the pre-Hispanic world has been avoided over and over. From *Ariel* (1900) by J. E. Rodó, *La raza cósmica* (1925) by José Vasconcelos, and *Siete ensayos de interpretación* (1928) by José C. Mariátegui to *El espejo enterrado* (1992) by Carlos Fuentes or *Las raíces torcidas de América Latina* (2000) de Carlos Alberto Montaner, the writers of the continent have scarcely recognized pre-Columbian roots as a vivid sign of the present. Leopoldo Zea and other Latin American specialists have observed that in no other continent but Latin America did European colonization replace the original cultures. *El laberinto de la soledad* (1950) by Octavio Paz—a refined version of a similar work by Samuel Ramos, also in reference to Mexico—is an exception, in addition to a few less significant works. In all others, the indigenous heritage survives only when it coincides with the defects of Spain: hierarchical societies of Mesoamerica were replaced by the hierarchical society of Spain, which explains why Latin America has always found it difficult to create a democratic culture.¹⁵ Similarly, Mariátegui observed that the only thing that survived from Tawantinsuyu (the four regions of Inca Empire) was the Indian as a biological organism, since its civilization had perished.¹⁶ Carlos Fuentes, in *El espejo enterrado* (1992), observes that:

when Moctezuma and his empire sank in the bloody waters of the lake, the old indigenous world disappeared forever; its broken gods and forgotten treasures were all buried in the end under baroque Christian churches and viceregal palaces.¹⁷

The very idea that the multitudes of indigenous people, from Mexico to the Tierra del Fuego, could have a non-European thought continued to be denied, even by some contemporary researchers.

However, through many centuries, the illiterate masses, who, because of colonialism, had learned to feel ashamed of their own culture and their braided hair, had no other choice but to continue speaking their vernacular languages, practicing their own habits away from the centers of Spanish civilization and their own ways of thinking and feeling.

In countries like Peru, in the nineteenth century natives still did not speak Spanish, the language of the conquerors. "For tribes like the Huichol, who live in the northwest of Mexico, the Nahuatl religion has survived in many beliefs and ceremonies."¹⁸ Perhaps in a more anecdotal tone, Eduardo Galeano recalls when passing through Quito in 1976 that "the Indians still wear black for the crime of Atahualpa."¹⁹ The historian and anthropologist Manuel Burga interprets the festivals, dances and performances in Bolivia and Peru as proof of the permanence of indigenous identity and the existence of "an Andean utopia."²⁰ Moreover, "studies on the same performance in Central America and Mexico are abundant; all seem to agree on presenting them as different variations of a single dance."²¹ Thus, the pre-Hispanic cosmos survives, despite the colonial repression, as well as the common origin, nature, and understanding of it among different native cultures. For centuries, European authorities made a meticulous task of cultural extermination. The indigenous responded by using memory in order to adapt for survival. Catholic priests have been aware of this fact since the sixteenth century, which is why they came to change the religious calendar, "even if this meant changing the patron saints for all."²²

Today the survival of myth, or even a repressed cosmology, is not a simple narrative or a revindication of the past, but is strongly associated with the ideas of the present and future. One of the foundational books of modern utopias was, without a doubt, *Utopia* (1516), by Thomas More. Latin America played a decisive role in this new tradition as More was inspired by the letters that Amerigo Vespucci wrote earlier during the era of discovery. Vespucci reported that in this land the natives were very healthy people and had strange habits and who did not hold material wealth in high esteem, were unaware of private property and bathed every day. Furthermore, machismo, as an institution, was mostly imported from Europe, where it was much stronger than in the Americas. Machismo was not as influential among the indigenous where the people had less preoccupation over female virginity and paid less attention to keeping women away from public affairs.²³

Beyond the argument that the Vespucci letters (similar to those of Hernán Cortés and Bartolomé de las Casas) are exaggerated or not, the truth is that they bring the past to life: Both America and *Utopia* expressed the dreams and aspirations of a Europe left to individualistic passion, money, and conquest. Greed and cupidity ceased to be a sin and became a virtue. Renaissance Christianity desacralized the world and sacralized individual salvation: If the world was no longer sacred, only material, it was fine to exploit without condemning humanity to destruction. In other words, utopia was, from multiple perspectives, a collective dream, the symbolic expression of the desire for what you cannot be or cannot not possess, the blame for what you have done or what you have done wrong, a dream that in many cases ended in a nightmare. The new European concept of time, which, thanks to the first modern humanists of the fourteenth century, was no longer conceived of as it had been during the Age of Metals. Existence was no longer an inevitable process of degradation and corruption, and, in the later centuries, ascended up a linear scale along with progress. Life in the past was worse. The best was ahead, towards the future: Man progressed and overcame all maladies thanks to his knowledge of the world.

Conversely, the Amerindian world did not separate blood from the spirit, nor men and women from the natural universe, nor were they governed by the Judeo-Christian conception of linear time. As in many other cultures, time was circular. Progress, virtue, and the sense of justice was and continues to be a restoration of their origins. And this is how utopia ended for the Spanish, with committed intellectuals and revolutionaries,

just as it had begun in the sixteenth century. Inspired by indigenous America, the questioning of the irrationality of consumerism, greed and individualism, from an ecological vision, is also an indigenous and *indigenista* revindication.

Another particular aspect related to the Amerindian cosmos was its conception of time. In our Western world, it is common to consider that the past goes back and the future forward. This is a concept, though universal, that is entirely arbitrary. Just as north doesn't move toward the top, the future doesn't move forward. Language has entangled the idea that our bodies walk forward, which reflects our concept of time. Particularly in English, where actions are more common than contemplations, where there is no distinction between *ser* and *estar* [to be] but between *to do* and *to make*, for which in Spanish there is only one word, *hacer*. In English, the distinctions of the past tenses are less sophisticated than in Romance languages such as Spanish, not to mention a vast colloquial vocabulary.

In mindsets and civilizations such as ours, action predominates over the contemplation of existence, and therefore the future moves forward. In more contemplative cultures such as ancient Greece or the Andean world, time was a river flowing from our back to what lays ahead. In other words, the past was forward and the future backward. This concept, which may seem absurd in principle, is even more logical than the Western conception of time: If we can see the past in the form of our memories and we cannot see the uncertain future, then what we have before us is not what is to come, but what has been; that is, memory. In the Andean world, this view of time is the *ñaupaq*, a word that, like many others, survives even in most Hispanic regions such as the Southern Cone.²⁴

Amerindian influence is everywhere, often surviving in an underground, unnoticed form, which brings up the question: How far does the colonial mentality go back for the people of Latin America today? Is it possible to revert this process from within culture itself? According to Eduardo Subirats, the colonial process exists today even in the contemporary university system. For example, the colonization of Latin American poetics consisted of "the kidnapping of intellectual intent, the domestication and neutralization of the historical and political commitment to theory."²⁵ Subirats focuses on the mythical and oral importance of Latin America's poetics of resistance to oppose academic neutralization.²⁶ Subirats understands that "cultures and memories of Iberians and Latin Americans must be reviewed and redefined from its spiritual centers, not its borders."²⁷ One of these centers should be the spaces and sacred symbols shared by a strategically forgotten tradition: the Jewish-Christian-Muslim in Spain and the ancient cosmological ideas of the Americas. "These traditions and forms of knowledge range from manuscripts and works of art to the ancient, millennial oral and artistic traditions surviving to the present day."²⁸

Quetzalcoatl-Viracocha

The discovery of America exacerbated European fantasies. On the same day that the Jews were required to abandon Spain, Christopher Columbus sailed into the unknown. That same year the Christians had expelled the last Muslim rulers and continued *la Reconquista* with the Conquest of America. The first explorers like Hernán Cortés, with a mind so full of Spanish literary fantasy, that he became another Quixote, Don Alonso de la Mancha, and confused Mayan and Aztec temples with mosques. Hernán Cortés was also a bestseller of his time, though the stories of his own barbarity were far from the idealism of Don Quixote. Before the conquerors transformed America into a living hell, it was seen as Eden, as described by Amerigo Vespucci, when he found healthy people

and strange customs, such as daily bathing or giving little importance to virginity and freedom to women.²⁹ Europe's machismo was exported to America, but not the custom of daily baths. The natives, which for ages to come carried Vespucci's name, with the exotic habits of ignoring private property and despising greed, represented the opposite of Renaissance Europe, thirsty for conquest and riches. Christian Europe, which had separated the spiritual world from the material, had also failed to condemn wealth; On the contrary, from day to night it came to value greed as the engine of material progress—and as a symbol of belonging to God's elect.

Amerigo Vespucci's letters inspired the politics of Thomas More in his famous *Utopia* (1516). Vespucci complains, "they slander me because I said that those people do not esteem gold or other riches."³⁰ Perhaps these stories should not be taken as strictly true; they are apparently not without exaggeration, but as fiction they reveal much about the time. In fact, few chronicles were written without a good dose of magical realism. But fantasies are often more real than reality. The fanaticism of the conquistadors made possible the submission of millions of Aztecs and Incas to a few Spaniards. The fantasies of the conquered, such as the idea that the Spaniards were Viracocha or Quetzalcoatl returning to claim their thrones, did great damage; the new imported diseases, for which native people had no immunity, did the rest.

According to Amerindian ontology, humans are responsible for maintaining the cosmos in motion. The worst for them was not a crisis and a cyclical collapse, but inertia and immobility. The justice, morality, and behavior of men and demigods was the engine of movement, sometimes harmonious and sometimes violent, brought about a healthy world. The worst was not hell but the fall of the spirit into matter, the desecration of blood and spirit—the exploitation and commercialism of nature.

One of the most paradigmatic gods of Aztec cosmology is the Feathered Serpent or Quetzalcoatl (Figure 1.1), including his many variations. As in any mythological hero, his birth is invested with tragic or unusual signs. Quetzalcoatl was born in a world of conflicts and in many versions, from parents who faced struggle. With strong psychoanalytic overtones, some legends refer to this birth as a result of the eroticism of opponents in a fight. The mother, a Chichimeca descendant of the warrior-god Tezcatlipoca, provoked or challenged the father, the warrior Mixcoatl, leaving their weapons on the ground and disrobing. Mixcoatl also pierces the naked warrior with arrows but all of his attempts failed to hurt her. This symbolism directly translates into a sexual action. After a short flight through the forest, the warrior takes her to a cave and impregnates her.

Quetzalcoatl was born into a world of battles, human sacrifices, and permanent conflicts.³¹ He killed his predecessors and revolutionized society, abolishing temporarily a recurring element of Mesoamerican culture: human sacrifice. A period of great creativity follows this Tolteca revolution. The enlightened people, unlike the more warrior-like Aztecs who came after, created a sophisticated culture where the arts thrived.³²

The change and the flourishing of this new orientation was guided by a human god, as seen in many accounts of Mesoamerican culture. Quetzalcoatl warned about the threat of collapse from the East. But this is not just a psychological condition or the fate of a god with many faces but the very nature of Mesoamerican cosmology. The other gods were also aware of the instability in which they existed, so that they increasingly demanded more action to keep the sun and moon moving. Quetzalcoatl was chosen to execute this redeeming sacrifice of the gods. But his radical action did not produce the desired effect and the sun became motionless. Because of this Quetzalcoatl decides to self-sacrifice. Because of his self-sacrifice, the sun resumes its path and thus the birth of the Age of the Fifth Sun occurs, solidifying Quetzalcoatl's importance. The story of



Figure 1.1 Head of Quetzalcoatl snake in the national Museum of Archaeology, Mexico City.
Courtesy of PRISMA ARCHIVO/Alamy Stock Photo.

Quetzalcoatl reminds us that within Mesoamerican myths, the creation of the world is always incomplete, forever in motion. There is a permanent “divine doubt.” The result is not a vision of the cosmos governed by rhythm and order, which prevails over chaos, but a revolutionary model where one part fiercely confronts the other. Each period of harmony is followed by a period of revolution, which keeps the universe in motion.³³

The idea that Quetzalcoatl is the creator of the *new humanity* is important. In the legend of the Fifth Sun, humanity is created after four failed attempts of the gods, who refused to try for the fifth time. The *new human* of Quetzalcoatl, as a result, is also imperfect. According to the *Legend of the Suns*, the feathered serpent restores human life through a hero-journey—an archetypal element—to the land of the dead. Quetzalcoatl demands from the god of the dead, Mictlantecuhtli, the bones of ancestors in order to create a “new humanity.” In exchange for the remains, he asks Quetzalcoatl an impossible task: to sound a conch shell that has no opening. Faced with this obstacle, Quetzalcoatl turns to the natural world, worms and bees, to pierce the shell. The lord of the underworld recognizes the achievement of Quetzalcoatl and willingly gives him the bones but then orders his servants to detain him. Quetzalcoatl challenges Mictlantecuhtli verbally and tried to escape the underworld. But demons create an abyss where Quetzalcoatl fell and died, breaking his bones. His twin (the duality of Quetzalcoatl) regenerates and escapes the abyss. But his ancestor’s bones were broken and so Quetzalcoatl gave them to his friend, Cihuacoatl-Quilaztli, the goddess of human creation, who puts them into her stone mortar and grinds them up. Quetzalcoatl pierced his penis, which bled over the bone powder, from which a male child is born, and four days later, a female child. From these children humanity descends. This event conforms to the Toltec idea that the human soul descends from heaven to the womb.

Davíd Carrasco summarizes the different variations in the persistence of a duality in struggle fighting from which every age is created by combat or sacrifice of a pair of opposites; or creation occurs with a *cosmic descent*, where the creator descends to an inferior world. The idea of descending makes Quetzalcoatl the most human of all gods. The creation was imperfect; the achievement had not been completed. The existence of unfortunate outcomes is common in Mesoamerican religious culture. But the idea that the final destruction of the world must be deferred through lifelong sacrifice is reversed by Quetzalcoatl of Tollan (or Tula), who replaced the anxiety of instability and chaos of the cosmos and ritual sacrifices with harmony and creativity. For this reason, Quetzalcoatl is a symbol of legitimate authority who is capable of creating sacred order in an unstable world. Even at the time of Chololan (Cholula), Quetzalcoatl is known as the god of the masses, who was able to integrate a great social structure. Later in Aztec Tenochtitlán, it is possible that Quetzalcoatl had become the god of the upper class. The promised return of Quetzalcoatl was met with an atmosphere of cosmic instability that marked the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán. It was this promise that caused Aztec rulers to suffer from the anxiety of illegitimacy authority.³⁴

The repeated idea of an empire boasting an illegitimate power arises in a very particular way, through power itself. To reverse this, the Aztecs resort to psychological shock. They invited representatives of neighboring villages to witness ritual massacres as a way to sustain their power through terror force. This policy contained but also enhanced the rise of rebellion that was later exploited by the Spaniards. Moctezuma, aware of the imminent arrival of Quetzalcoatl, deserted the grand palace and occupied a smaller one, pending the true authority, and subjugated Tula. Moctezuma's case is incomprehensible to Western history but it reveals an interior feature of Mesoamerican culture: A ruler can hold absolute power and then reject it because of his moral conscience. This gives us an idea of the significance of sacred terror that joined the Mesoamerican with the cosmos. A similar view of *the illegitimacy of authority* is taken up by different authors, who refer to the historical perception of Latin American people toward power and rulers.³⁵

Quetzalcoatl is not the creator god of the universe, but a donor of humanity, like Prometheus, who gives men and women the arts, knowledge, and food. He is one who repairs chaos or is a server to the needs of the natural world. Quetzalcoatl is not a god who punishes his creation, but a limited and fragile god struggling against adversity for the benefit of humanity, which has been punished in advance by superior forces. But he is also the ideal of legitimate authority, supreme authority able to order, regulate, and bring prosperity to a town permanently threatened by the cosmos and the imperial violence of warring gods.

A feature of the pre-Hispanic world seems to be the conscience of destruction, abandonment, or resignation. As in many parts of the ancient and modern world, each new culture or civilization was bound to develop with the nearby memory of another great civilization, the creators of monumental buildings, cities, and myths of golden days. The vision of the past had to be radically different from the complacent view that comes from our proud modernity. The cosmogonic myths of Mesoamerica relapse into a cyclical idea of creation and destruction, which is common in older civilizations such as in Asia, but are dramatized, sometimes subtly, by a particularity: the violent destruction by earthquakes and hurricanes, by the fury of nature, or—for the Mesoamerican world—by the fury of the gods. Both gods and nature were directly connected with sacrifice, with human blood. With violent penance, men communicated with the gods hoping to change the unpredictability of nature, humanizing it. The aim was not eternal life of the Christians or the liberation of the Hindus but to prevent the end of the universe or

its movement toward destruction. Not only the enigmatic abandonment of these great cities is a distinguishing feature, but also the similar monumentality of its artistic expression: from Tula and Teotihuacan to Machu Picchu through a celebrated collection of abandoned sites. This memory must have been, at the same time, the teleology of the cycles of grandeur and destruction. A culture or a civilization did not replace another like it did in the Middle East, Asia, or Europe. A space was abandoned and new wanderers settled somewhere else to start again, conscious of the catastrophe to come.

If the myth or the will of Prometheus is a legacy of the enlightened culture of Europe, which opposed and criticized the organization of European conquest and colonization, then the myth or will of Quetzalcoatl-Viracocha is the inheritance of the people—which resisted, imposed, and shaped the mentality of a continent that shares more than a language—and opposed the invader. According to Carlos Fuentes, Quetzalcoatl became a moral hero, like Prometheus; both were sacrificed for humanity, and they gave mortals the arts and education. Both represented liberation, even when it came at the cost of the hero's sacrifice.³⁶ Fuentes points this out in two paintings by the Mexican muralist José Clemente Orozco, one at Pomona College in Claremont, California and the other in Baker Library at Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H. In the first Prometheus symbolizes the tragic fate of humanity and the second Quetzalcoatl, the inventor of humanity who is exiled to discover his face and infer from it their human destiny; that is to say, of joy and pain. At the Hospital Cabañas in Guadalajara, Orozco synthesizes the two figures into one man perishing in the fire of his own creation.

Both Prometheus and Quetzalcoatl are defeated gods because their human trait imparts a degree of imperfection and injustice by the higher gods (Zeus, Mictlantecuhtli, Tezcatlipoca).³⁷



Figure 1.2 Cuban women walking past graffiti of heroes of the revolution including Che Guevara and Fidel Castro; Havana, Cuba, Caribbean. Courtesy of Kumar Srisikandan/Alamy Stock Photo, 2013.

In both, as in Jesus, the symbolism of blood is central, because it is the most human and most sacred element among the elements of the universe against which they must constantly struggle to survive, to ascend (Prometheus) or to avoid chaos, the final destruction (Quetzalcoatl). But if the “divine humanism” of Prometheus and Quetzalcoatl have elements in common, they also have opposing elements, reproducing the Mesoamerican cosmology of opposites in battle that create and destroy: Prometheus defies the ultimate authority to benefit humanity. The history of European humanism from the thirteenth century integrates a historical consciousness of progression, equality, and freedom in the individual and society that radically opposes the traditional paradigm based on religious authority. The humanism of Quetzalcoatl, although it signals a challenge to the upper and lower gods for the benefit of humanity, is also marked by the fatality of the cycles and his own duality. Destructive authorities are replaced by the demigod who is regularly defeated by superior forces.

The god Viracocha in Peru also encompassed multiple representations and probably multiple ways of being. Like the Mesoamerican god, duality is common and can be summarized as a higher god, creator of the Cosmos, and as a human god, overseer of the world’s chaos. Like Quetzalcoatl, Viracocha abandoned his people going off into the ocean, but not to the East but the West, with a promise to return. Viracocha is not only god and the creator but “he who put everything in its place and who told the people when to occupy it”—that is, a kind of great architect and at the same time, the rightful ruler.³⁸

Viracocha possesses the same duality as Quetzalcoatl, while being the creator of the world (emerging from Lake Titicaca) and a “cultural hero.” As in Mesoamerican cosmology, creation is not unique but is preceded by failed attempts. After Viracocha created the world and “certain people” in a second appearance, he turns these people into stones. Viracocha created the sun, the moon, and an archetype of human beings in different places on Earth. Then he departs west for the ocean and disappears. Like in Mexico, the ancient Peruvian world was built and destroyed by the opposition of two forces in battle. In the capital of the Inca Empire the ritual combat consisted of youth confrontation. It was, “the ritual opposition of two halves, Hanan and Hurin, who formed the city of Cuzco. These battles were part of the ceremony of Kamay, linked to the cultivation of maize and legitimacy of indigenous nobility.”³⁹

The tragedies of Moctezuma and Atahualpa are also parallel, although separated by ten years and thousands of miles. They unite a similar cosmology, the sense of the illegitimacy of power and, therefore, the same story of defeat. When the Emperor Huayna Capac died, the Inca empire was split between two brothers: in the north, Quito was in the hands of Atahualpa, and in the south, Cuzco was ruled by Huascar. Soon Atahualpa waged war on his own brother and defeated him.

Like the Aztecs in Mexico, the Inca Empire was composed of different Andean peoples. When Pizarro reached Peru the empire was divided. The idea of power, challenged by the oppressed and also by those who held it, is accented with the dispute Atahualpa had with his brother, before him and the people of the great capital, Cuzco. Atahualpa, after three years of civil strife, was about to celebrate his victory by going to Cuzco to receive the royal insignia, but he received news of the Spanish arrival in Huamachuco, and so, decided to march to Cajamarca in order to question the newcomers.

It was shortly after Atahualpa had become the highest authority when distress signs began to arrive. Every sign, like the passing of a comet, were reminders to Atahualpa of a

coming disaster. Coincidentally, the messengers of the empire began to arrive with news of Viracocha, who had returned from the sea.

Huamán Poma indicates, which has been a consensual idea among peasant beliefs of his time, that at the death of Huayna Capac and during his funeral in Cusco, the prophecy that had been kept secret for many generations was deciphered: men would come from the sea (cocha) to conquer the Empire.⁴⁰

According to the *quipucamayos* de Vaca de Castro, “the natives believe that the arrival of the Spaniards signaled the return of the gods.”⁴¹ Eduardo Galeano in *Open Veins of Latin America* (1971) recalls—and somehow confirms—this popular prophecy, which states that the Incas themselves who wanted to take advantage of the Potosi silver were met with a Quechua warning: “It is not for you; God reserves those riches for those who come from beyond.”⁴² The messengers of the Inca empire said “that people had come to his realm with habits and clothing very different from our own who seemed to be Viracochas, which is the name formerly given in antiquity for the creator of all things.”⁴³ It was then that Viracocha made his march against the sun and in the direction of civilization, “it was a march of punishment.”⁴⁴

On January 5, 1533 Hernando Pizarro, a cousin of Hernan Cortes, arrived at the “mosque” of Pachacamac and managed to “publicly desecrate the sanctuary in order to destroy its spiritual significance.”⁴⁵ The illiterate soldier, “thinking more of his military duties and the collection of precious metal, was not interested in the rituals, but rather, was a good soldier of the sixteenth century dedicated to creating ties of allegiance with ethnic leaders of the Central Coast.”⁴⁶ Noting the return of Viracocha, Atahualpa awaited the god-men in Cajamarca and soon welcomed them. The Spaniards found no armed resistance. “On the contrary, the Inca reverted to their ritual behavior, singing and dancing to celebrate the arrival of foreign visitors.”⁴⁷ At sunset, in a confusion that lasted half an hour, Pizarro and his men attacked the central square and captured Atahualpa. Shortly after they decided to execute him using a *garrote* on July 26, 1533, under the pretext of punishing the murderer of Huascar, the legitimate emperor, and promised to return power to the old nobility.⁴⁸ According to Burga, there was an “open satisfaction of the Cuzco nobility about the execution of Atahualpa.”⁴⁹ Soon after Pizarro named Tupac Huallpa as successor, and later Manco Inca, the descendant of Huayna Capac.

The Spanish spread the rumor that the body of Atahualpa was cremated after his death. Thus, they sought to end the messianic hopes among the natives, which seemed to wake them up. Interestingly, these hopes “appeared as a popular feeling, rather than the attitude of the indigenous nobility.”⁵⁰ According to the version of Huamán Poma de Ayala—who collected the oral tradition, not chronicles, that he knew about—they cut off Atahualpa’s head by order of Pizarro. “This completes a cycle of indigenous distortions on the death of the Inca in Cajamarca and leaves open the possibility of the birth of a new cycle of messianic hopes.”⁵¹

At the same time, the Andean gods “become fallible and as a consequence, liars.”⁵² In captivity, Atahualpa accused Pachacámac of failing when he announced that his father, Huayna Capac, would heal, although he later died. The gods lost credibility and the indigenous resorted to apocalyptic readings of the facts. Huamán Poma de Ayala declared himself Christian but he insisted on making a moral distinction based on greed

as its main defect, which would lead to the destruction of the world. Addressing Spanish readers, he writes:

see here in all of Christian law I have not found the Indians to be so greedy for gold and silver, nor have I found one who owes a hundred pesos, or a liar, or gambler, or lazy, or a whore . . . and you have idols in your hacienda, and silver all over the world.⁵³

Both Incas and Aztecs adapted their mythology for political purposes. In both cases it was the cosmic illegitimacy of their reign and guilty consciousness that brought them to resignation, defeat, and martyrdom. For men and women of the pre-Hispanic world, the power was not merely a question of strength but had a moral nature. Atahualpa and Moctezuma both suffered from their perceived illegitimate power, which aided in their defeat.

The Spaniards, however, did not have a guilty conscience. According to Américo Castro, the belief of being “the chosen people”⁵⁴ helped inspire Spanish and Portuguese overseas companies in the sixteenth century and later brought them to ruin.⁵⁵ However, the idea that equates gold with the favoritism of God was more typical of the Calvinist ethic, not of Catholic Spain. But the motivation of quick riches in the New World never ceased to be a priority in the actions of the conquerors. Repeated invocations for the evangelization of Indians took second place to the lust for wealth, which can be read as moral justifications of their objectives understood as deadly sins by Christian tradition. Both Cortez and Pizarro, solved their moral dilemma—based on greed and the need for fame, both Renaissance features of medieval Spain—by adapting religion to their actions, not their actions to religion or conscience, as Cortés did in his mature years.⁵⁶ That is to say, although motivated by religion, perhaps as moral justification, their faith wasn’t as profound as that of the Amerindians.

Soon the Inca and other conquered peoples began to understand that the Spaniards could not be gods, because they lacked the moral virtues of a legitimate ruler. Their biggest flaw was the pursuit of riches. According to Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, the Indians realized that the Spaniards “were not gods, but simply men and, even more, they were the very embodiment of *Zupay*, a demon.”⁵⁷ Gold became the symbol of death, the antithesis of blood. Eduardo Galeano remembers an anecdote by Humboldt, that, in 1802 shows the persistence of the gold-sin among the indigenous population. Astorpilco, a descendant of Incas,

while walking spoke of the fabulous treasures hidden beneath the dust and ashes. “Do you not feel the craving sometimes to dig for treasures to satisfy your needs?” asked Humboldt. And the young man said, “The craving does not come. My father says it would be sinful. If we had the golden branches with all the Golden fruits the white neighbors would hate us and would do us harm.”⁵⁸

Another popular story, according to Carlos Fuentes, was that Jose Gabriel Condorcanqui (Túpac Amaru) in 1780 rebelled against Spanish rule, captured the governor and “since the Spaniards had shown such a thirst for gold, Túpac Amaru . . . executed him, forcing him to drink molten gold.”⁵⁹ Using the same symbolism, in 1781 the Spanish designed an exemplary death for the rebel, cutting off the tongue first—ridding him of the spoken word, then trying in vain to tear him apart pulling his ends by four horses,

until they eventually decided to behead him. Then they cut off hands and feet. Juan Gelman, in *Exile*, believes that “Europe is the cradle of capitalism, and that the child in the crib was fed gold and silver from Peru, Mexico, Bolivia, and millions of American Indians had to die to fatten the child.”⁶⁰ Literary references like these are endless. All summarize the idea that sin comes from the deconsecration of blood and grows, like the Spanish gods arriving from the sea, consuming gold and silver.

In this cosmology, the martyr’s death becomes a moral victory and, therefore, becomes a memory and example against illegitimate power by greed. Even a questionable emperor like Atahualpa became an example of resistance, for once the ambitious Spanish empire was defeated in a global context, “the Latin American” would resurface as a force in opposition to U.S. materialism. Gold, again, once desacrilized, becomes an agent of desacrilization, in the ultimate sin. The blood of Latin America, which runs through its “open veins” becomes a commodity and, therefore, the greatest sacrilege, the moral defect of oppressed and oppressors. To resist this sin is a moral mandate measured by a sacrifice that sometimes leads to the offering of blood. Francisco Urondo, a poet whose militancy led him to death, had revealed this feeling in his poetry; “Nothing/will set us back: we have more fear of success than of/failure.”⁶¹

Quetzalcoatl, Huitzilopochtli, Coatlique/Guadalupe

What is often identified as the head of the feathered serpent Quetzalcoatl in some Mayan ruins incredibly coincides with representations of Korean dragons. For example, the heads of dragons emerging from the walls of Naksan Temple on the east coast of South Korea, whose origins are not so old (676 AD) but suggest a strong connection with the representations of Kukulcan (600–900 AD), which is the Mayan origin version of the more known Aztec Quetzalcoatl. The head of the Korean dragon, apart from scales, has feathers, teeth, and jaws of a dragon, all represented in the same style of Mexican deities. It is also likely that the original colors are the same since green was a sacred color in the Mesoamerican world.

This leads to other problems. Recall that one of the central allegories of Aztec mythology, which appears today on the Mexican flag, represents the struggle of a snake with an eagle. Aztec culture is much younger than the Mayan and many others that have spread across the continent. In many cases, different versions of Quetzalcoatl appear, either as Kukulcan or the more distant Viracocha in Peru. Quetzalcoatl contains both the serpent or dragon and the quetzal or bird of paradise. From this period, most likely, comes one of the most unique rituals in the world, which originated before the classical period and still lives today in Mexico: the flying men [*los hombres voladores*]. Originally the participants wore green quetzal feathers, and the participants symbolized the four previous worlds (suns), including the 5th sun in the center.

The myth of Huitzilopochtli seems to reinforce this change of ages. His sister, Coyolxauhqui (face painted with *cascabeles*), tried to kill her mother Coatlique because she became impregnated in a dishonorable way when a feather fell between her breasts (or when a feather entered her womb) while sweeping the Mountain of Serpents. Not coincidentally Coatlique in Nahuatl means “Skirt of Snakes,” and not by chance she was impregnated by a feather, a powerful symbolic representation of a betrayal or adultery, a change of era, that of the snake (earth/fertility/female) and also that of the bird (heaven/abstraction/male). Before Coatlique gave birth to Huitzilopochtli, Coyolxauhqui tried to kill her mother. But the newborn Huitzilopochtli, draped in feathers, killed his sister and her followers, and threw them to the sky, turning them to stars.

It is very difficult to know how such an important deity like Huitzilopochtli was represented since there are probably fewer representations of him than minor deities. However, in some *códices*, he usually appears with large green feathers, such as those of the quetzal. Moreover, the name means *hummingbird*, which is also a bird with green feathers. We know he was the chief god of war and we can speculate that he belonged to the celestial sphere because of the origin of his birth (a feather) and for his opposition to his sister, represented by snakes as a representative of the Earth.

Nor is it a coincidence that Coatlicue gave birth to Huitzilopochtli in an asexual way, fertilized by a feather, which is a clear parallel with the birth of a celestial and masculine era over a terrestrial and female past. Huitzilopochtli was also the representation of the sun or was the sun itself. Traditionally, the heavenly gods have belonged to patriarchal religions. Moreover, the importance of the absence of sex in the mother of god is a symbolic substitute of virginity; to Coyolxauhqui this was a sin, but is typically a virtue for patriarchal cultures.

It is no coincidence that the pre-Columbian inhabitants of the valley of Mexico worshiped Coatlicue on Tepeyac hill, the same site where the cult of the Virgin de Guadalupe (Figure 1.3) emerges in the fourth decade of the sixteenth century. At that time, she was known as Coatlicue, goddess of the skirt of snakes, but also as Tonantzin or Teteoinan, “mother of the gods.” If we consider that Huitzilopochtli was the only survivor of the war between his siblings, then indeed Coatlicue was the “Mother of God,” who conceived him without having sex. The skirt or dress in the actual image of the Virgin of Guadalupe (Ave Maria) is decorated with unnecessary figures that are only explained by its indigenous aesthetics. This could well be a stylized snake-skirt and its green layer is the substitute for the figure of the quetzal (bird of paradise). Green was a divine and royal color in the Amerindian cosmos and perhaps also represented freedom because the quetzal cannot reproduce in captivity. Also green was the brilliant color of the hummingbird (Huitzilopochtli, the “left Hummingbird”) and the agave (maguey), which blooms after five years only to die and reproduce.

Although the angel who appears to uphold Guadalupe might have come from the pictorial tradition of Europe, from the perspective of the indigenous the European association is impossible. For them, the angel could not be other than Huitzilopochtli, the hummingbird, the newborn child dressed in feathers to protect his mother.⁶² Some theories have suggested that in fact the Arabic word “Guadalupe,” which gives its name to the Black virgin of Spain, originally had to be Coatlalopeuh, meaning “she who dominates the serpents.”⁶³ The black horns that we see at the foot of the famous Mexican virgin image (often associated with the moon) would be this hidden snake. While this reading is consistent with an interpretation of the Judeo-Christian origins, it would also be similar to what we previously proposed: Through her son, Coatlicue is victorious against her daughter Coyolxauhqui, representing the world of snakes that began to give way to Huitzilopochtli, the masculine world of the birds.

If Huitzilopochtli is the ultimate triumph of the Age of the Bird over the Age of the Serpent, another hypothesis we might consider is Quetzalcoatl as the representation not of a consolidated world but as the myth and character of an ambiguous and transitional world; from the reptile world (the world of land), to the bird world (the world of heaven).

Obviously, the American continent is characterized by its population of birds. But we can not say that Asia has adopted the dragon for its abundance of dragons or reptiles. The reason comes from a period when a culture and a civilization matures or receives its historical imprint, which is consolidated and perpetuated. We can see this in cultures



Figure 1.3 Virgin Mary Guadalupe painting shrine in Mexico City. Courtesy of bpperry/iStock by Getty Images.

derived from the imprint of the Old Testament, from Moses, or Christian cultures from Christ and Greco-Roman cultures in the first centuries of this era.

The symbol of the foundation of Tenochtitlan, Mexico, made relatively recent by one of the last of the Mesoamerican cultures, represents the end of ambiguity, the final contest, and the final victory over the serpent eagle. From what has been discussed, it is no coincidence that it was precisely the god Huitzilopochtli who instructed the Aztecs

to found their city, Tenochtitlan, in the place where an eagle on a cactus was devouring a snake.

The feeling of guilt or illegitimacy that the last Aztec emperor had (and the last Inca emperor) for having displaced the legitimate creators of an earlier culture, Tula, was explicit, especially during the time when both Hernán Cortés and Francisco Pizarro conquered both empires in the early decades of the sixteenth century.⁶⁴ Tula had flourished with the culture of Quetzalcoatl, a culture less warlike and more artistic, more educated and creative. Mexican sensitivity adapts and easily adopted to the Virgin Mary, not only because it is a form of replacement, of the conversion of Huitzilopochtli (or directly from a syncretism between European culture and American), but because it represents a female figure who gave birth to a sky god. One can understand the idea of Ave Maria not only for being an *Ave* [bird], which is *Eva* [or Eve] backwards, as has been explained in a somewhat forced way, but because the sky is the kingdom of birds and the birds (the quetzal, the eagle devouring the serpent, symbols of the earth) are the symbols of the new era.⁶⁵

However, existential and spiritual sensitivity of the Amerindian world is primarily visual. It is characteristic of a living world where the Earth and the body are not part of a kingdom cursed by a celestial abstraction but part of the cosmos, of the union and communion between the Earth and heaven. Within this religious experience, a remarkable aspect is the sightings of the Virgin. While they are known apparitions of virgins in other parts of the world, in Latin America the importance of these appearances is much larger and different in nature. The phenomenon is not about the appearance of the virgin but a physical image of the Virgin and at times of Jesus. The miracle is always material and symbolic, as a footprint is to a foot.

In fact, the apparitions of a virgin are minimal and usually result in a story that justifies the venerated image. The representation is venerated on behalf of the represented. This is how the miracle occurs: It mixes water with oil, making Amerindian sensuality compatible with the Judeo-Christian abstraction. The optical mysteries are of such a degree of importance that those who believe them discover that they are not worried about the message or what the interpretation of the miracle can mean but about the miracle itself and of the image that is often attributed shamanic healing powers. This is resolved with the same repeated message, which is always trivial, like the claim that an apparition means terrible times will soon come.

The process of conquest and colonization was, of course, a process of acculturation and repression. Due to cultural reasons, but mainly because of the massive native population, and that Spanish colonial wealth was superior to British North America, miscegenation and cultural repression were higher and more persistent.⁶⁶ For these same reasons, the survival of myths, practices, rituals, languages and ways of seeing, feeling and thinking about the world and the pre-Columbian period survived in various forms. An academic feature of colonial violence, however, was to systematically deny the relevance of this inheritance.

Notes

- 1 Johnston McCulley, *The Mark of Zorro* (New York, NY: Grosset & Dunlap, 1924).
- 2 Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Our America: A Hispanic History of the United States* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014).
- 3 Octavio Paz, *El laberinto de la soledad* (Barcelona: Penguin, 1993), 108.
- 4 Ibid., 282.

- 5 Guamán Poma de Ayala, *Nueva crónica y buen gobierno*, Transcripción, prólogo, Notas y Cronología de Franklin Pease (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1980), 266.
- 6 Faustino Domingo Sarmiento, "El sistema colonial," [1844] *Conciencia intelectual de América*, Antología de Carlos Ripoll (New York, NY: Las Ameritas Publishing Company, 1966), 72.
- 7 Ángel Rama, *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina* (México: Siglo XXI, 1982), 139.
- 8 *Indigenismo* was a state-sponsored effort in Mexico and other parts of Latin America that sought to incorporate indigenous communities into the life of the nation.
- 9 *Sentipensante* is a neologism that combines two words: *sentir* (to feel) and *pensante* (thinker); that is, the thinker who also feels. The *sentipensante* thinks because he feels and feels because he thinks.
- 10 Manuel Burga, *Nacimiento de una utopía: Muerte y resurrección de los incas* (Lima: Instituto de apoyo agrario, 1988), 390.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 390.
- 12 Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *Comentarios Reales*, Prólogo, edición y cronología de Aurelio Miró Quesada (Venezuela, Sucre: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1976), 63.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 67.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 27–28.
- 15 Carlos Fuentes, *El espejo enterrado* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 138.
- 16 Ángel Rama, *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina* (México: Siglo XXI, 1982), 149.
- 17 Carlos Fuentes, *El espejo enterrado* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 124.
- 18 Laurete Séroujé, *Pensamiento y Religión en el México antiguo* (México: Fondo de la Cultura Económica, 1957), 168.
- 19 Eduardo Galeano, *Días y noches de amor y de guerra* (Barcelona: Laia, 1978), 107.
- 20 Manuel Burga, *Nacimiento de una utopía: Muerte y resurrección de los incas* (Lima: Instituto de apoyo agrario, 1988), 26.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 27.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 23 Luis Vitale, *La mitad invisible de la historia: El protagonismo social de la mujer iberoamericana* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana-Planeta, 1987).
- 24 William Hurtado, de Mendoza, *Pragmática De La Cultura Y La Lengua Quechua* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina, 2001), 77.
- 25 Eduardo Subirats, *Las poéticas colonizadas de América Latina* (Guanajuato: Universidad de Guanajuato, Campus Guanajuato, División de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades, Departamento de Filosofía, 2009), 25.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 35.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 53.
- 29 Américo Vespucio, *El nuevo mundo: Cartas relativas a sus viajes y descubrimientos*, Textos en italiano, español e inglés. Estudio preliminar de Roberto Levillier (Buenos Aires: Nova, 1951), 211.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 165.
- 31 David Carrasco, *Quetzalcóatl and the Irony of Empire: Myths and Prophecies in the Aztec Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1982), 80–81.
- 32 *Codex Vaticanus A: Il Manoscritto Messicano Vaticano 3738, ditto Il Docice Rios*, ed. Franz Ehrle (Rome, 1900).
- 33 David Carrasco, *Quetzalcóatl and the Irony of Empire: Myths and Prophecies in the Aztec Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 80, 98.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 150, 184.
- 35 Carlos Alberto Montaner, *Las raíces torcidas de América Latina* (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés Editores, 2001).
- 36 Carlos Fuentes, *El espejo enterrado* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 107.
- 37 The same fate will follow the so-called Latin American liberators. You could say that, for the collective memory, if the founding fathers of the United States died as successful men, Latin American fathers of the nineteenth century died as defeated gods, as did the emperors and rebel chieftains of past centuries and as Ernesto Che Guevara became in the twentieth century, the "new man."
- 38 Manuel Burga, *Nacimiento de una utopía: Muerte y resurrección de los incas* (Lima: Instituto de apoyo agrario, 1988), 126.

- 39 Ibid., 44.
- 40 Ibid., 58.
- 41 Ibid., 59. The *quipucamayos* were government officials responsible for accounts and records.
- 42 Eduardo Galeano, *Días y noches de amor y de guerra* (Barcelona: Laia, 1978), 31.
- 43 Manuel Burga, *Nacimiento de una utopía: Muerte y resurrección de los incas* (Lima: Instituto de apoyo agrario, 1988), 59.
- 44 Ibid., 132.
- 45 Ibid., 70.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Ibid., 71.
- 48 Execution by garrote was a common practice of the time when the condemned were placed in a chair and strangled with a metal collar.
- 49 Manuel Burga, *Nacimiento de una utopía: Muerte y resurrección de los incas* (Lima: Instituto de apoyo agrario, 1988), 72.
- 50 Ibid., 79.
- 51 Ibid., 81.
- 52 Ibid., 58.
- 53 Ibid., 265.
- 54 Américo Castro, *Los españoles: cómo llegaron a serlo*. [1959] (Madrid: Taurus, 1965), 115.
- 55 Ibid., 79, 103, 105.
- 56 “[L]a manera y orden que yo he dado en el servicio de estos indios a los españoles es tal, que por ella no se espera que vendrán en disminución ni consumimiento [consumación / realización], como han hecho los de las islas [Cuba, etc.] que hasta ahora se han poblado en estas partes; porque como ha [hace] veinte y tantos años que yo en ellas resido, y tengo experiencia de los daños que se han hecho y de las causas de ellos, tengo mucha vigilancia [cuidado] en guardarme de aquel camino, y guiar las cosas por otro muy contrario, porque se me figura que me sería aún de mayor culpa, conociendo aquellos yerros [errores], seguirlos, que no ha los primeros los usaron; y por esto yo no permito que saqueen oro con ellos, aunque muchas veces se me ha requerido [. . .] Ni tampoco permito que los saquen [a los indios] fuera de sus casas a hacer labranzas [trabajo esclavo], como lo hacían en otras islas.” Hernán Cortés, *Cartas de relación* [*Tercera Carta-Relación*: 1522] (México: Ed. Porrúa, 1963), 177.
- 57 Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *Comentarios Reales*, Prólogo, edición y cronología de Aurelio Miró Quesada (Sucre, Venezuela: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1976), 82.
- 58 Eduardo Galeano, *Días y noches de amor y de guerra* (Barcelona: Laia, 1978), 70.
- 59 Carlos Fuentes, *El espejo enterrado* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 223.
- 60 Osvaldo Bayer and Juan Gelman, *Exilio* (Buenos Aires: Legasa, 1984), 39.
- 61 Francisco Urondo, *Obra poética*, Prólogo de Susana Cella (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo, 2006), 262.
- 62 Inga Clendinnen, *Aztecs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- 63 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: The New mestiza. La frontera* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987), 49.
- 64 Enrique Florescano, *The Myth of Quetzalcoatl* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).
- 65 Fr. Pedro Gual, *Discurso teológico sobre la definibilidad dogmática del augusto misterio de la Concepción Immaculada* (Barcelona: Pons y Cia., 1851), 19.
- 66 A paradigmatic example was Haiti. In the eighteenth century, 40 percent of all foreign trade of France, the largest European power of the time, occurred in Haiti. In fact, the island was exporting more wealth than all of North America. A similar situation was Britain in regard to its tropical Caribbean islands.