"Los trataban como a hijos": The Indians in Inca Garcilaso's *Historia general del Perú*

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> El Inca respondió: "Perro traidor, [....] ¿Nos sabes que tú y todo tu linaje érades nuestros esclavos [...]? (Garcilaso VIII.I 187)[1]

Juan Bautista Avalle-Arce presented a paper at the 1996 Encuentro Internacional de Peruanistas de la Universidad de Lima entitled "Perfil ideológico del Inca Garcilaso" (originally written in 1964). The author identifies the guiding principles which, he claims, inform Garcilaso's historical texts (*La Florida* and both parts of the *Comentarios reales*): historiography as a program of political action, Messianic providentialism as the motor of Spanish imperialism, the historian's moral responsibility to protect the honor and reputation of other men and the "fundamental uniformidad psicológica del hombre" (289).

> Quiero destacar un último aspecto de *La Florida* [...] que forma infragmentable unidad ideológica con los *Comentarios reales* [....,] y que se puede resumir en la frase ponderativa que el Inca pone en boca de Hernando de Soto al hacerle exclamar: "¿No miráis cómo todo el mundo es uno?" (289)

Avalle Arce refers to this latter concept as "un supuesto ideológico en ninguna ocasión analizado en forma explícita por el autor pero que alienta y fundamenta [....] las raíces de

[1] Roman numerals refer to the book and chapter of the *Historia general*.

su pensamiento historiográfico" (289); thus, while on the one hand he characterizes Garcilaso's ideology as consciously-elaborated, transparent principles expressing the fundamental truths of Garcilaso's historical project, on the other hand his metaphor more aptly suggests that some principles are not really as transparent as they seem. Avalle-Arce identifies some of the crucial elements within Garcilaso's *official discourse*, but he has not yet unearthed the hidden ideological roots which sustain the discursive strategies Garcilaso employs in his final book to idealize his politics and the social order they imply.

One of Marx's fundamental lessons in *The German Ideology* consists of his warning against superficial readings of an ideologue's attempts to fictionalize and mask the agenda he proposes in order to legitimate it. By portraying his interests "as the common interest of all members of society, that is, expressed in ideal form [...the ideologue gives his] ideas the form of universality, and [represents] them as the only rational, universally valid ones (65-66). This tactic preserves his ethical self-image on the discursive level by suppressing or disguising the nature of the social relations required in reality to sustain his power. He creates an "abstract ideal expression" of human relations according to the prevailing ethos of his culture—in the present case, "[el u]niversalismo católico" (Avalle-Arce 288):

> Ideology [...] arises only where social relations [...] manifest themselves to people's experience in misleading forms, and the critique of ideology accordingly involves showing—materially—why this should be the case. The task of the critique, thus, is [...] to explicate materially the inhuman character of [...] the "natural Self-understood forms of social life" or *Erscheinungsformen* in society

> [....concealing] the true substance of its underlying social relations. This reified relation, for Marx, is a real social process of estrangement in a world in which social relations take on the mystifying form of "the violence of things." Accordingly, [...] the "abstract ideal expression" of these relations is likely to be a reified one (Keshmiri).

In the *Historia general*, Garcilaso does not always mystify the violent realities of conquest and civil conflict, but we shall see that his depiction of the *encomienda* system in Peru prior to Gonzalo Pizarro's rebellion masks its particular brutalities behind a family romance in which the *encomenderos* were like loving fathers to the Indians, as the title of this essay indicates.

Throughout the *Historia general* Garcilaso bemoans the fate of the conquistadors, "hijos más queridos [del Emperador], por haver ganado aquel riquísimo Imperio" (IV.IV 19) and the legitimate heirs of Huaina Cápac at the hands of a Spanish bureaucratic machine which, he implies, mismanages and selfishly manipulates the King's wishes. The *encomenderos*, unjustly dispossessed by inept and greedy viceroys, would have ensured social progress and equilibrium in Peru had they been allowed to maintain their positions of power. In effect, Garcilaso becomes the quintessential representative of the men who should have ruled Peru:

> La creación de una nueva aristocracia española (la de los encomenderos triunfantes) y el reconocimiento de la nobleza incaica serían la base de un dualismo político paralelo, en que indios y peninsulares gozarían juntos de una paz próspera [....y] se crearía la base de una aristocracia mestiza que heredaría los privilegios de ambos grupos (Mazzoti 318).

The promise of the *Historia general*'s prologue to introduce readers to a Peru "no menos rica al presente con los tesoros de la [...] ciencia de Dios, [...] que siempre por las perlas y piedras preciosas [...], por sus montes de oro y plata [...], ni menos dicohsa por ser [...] sujeta a nuestros Reyes Católicos" remains unfulfilled as Garcilaso's irrepressible political frustrations and economic resentments emerge and categorically negate Avalle Arce's ideological profile. Historiography exposes and critiques a *failed* program of political action, Spanish imperialism's triumph in Peru results in tragedy and injustice for Spaniards and Incas alike, political opponents merit the harshest criticism, and whatever similarity or uniformity Garcilaso perceives to exist among all men, it clearly does not disqualify the majority of them from enslavement and forced labor (Prólogo 9).

I

Throughout the twentieth century most critics cast Garcilaso as a defender of Indians and mestizos. Riva Agüero called him "tan amante de los indios y tan compasivo de sus trabajos y miserias" (xlvi) and Porras Barrenechea praised "su profundo indianismo" (*Los cronistas* 401).[2] For Luis E. Valcárcel, he was "el creador de la patria peruana [....,] de la unidad de la cultura del Perú" (147), and Miró Quesada saw him as a forerunner of civil rights: "Cuando se trate de superar los problemas raciales, allí estarán la obra y el espíritu de Garcilaso, el mestizo ejemplar" (290). For so many Peruvian

[2] Both Riva Agüero and Porras puzzled over Garcilaso's support of the *encomenderos* during Gonzalo Pizarro's rebellion: Riva Agüero finally dismissed it as "[c]ontradicciones muy propias del corazón" (xlvi), and Porras perceived the same "contradicción evidente con el amor demostrado hacia los indios. La insurrección de Gonzalo, pidiendo el mantenimiento de las encomiendas y del servicio personal de los indios, debió producir en el ánimo de Garcilaso la misma repulsa que en el del fraile Las Casas" (402). We shall see that Las Casas was the last person with whom Garcilaso would identify.

writers, Garcilaso seemed to symbolize a compassionate Peru striving to reconcile the complex social problems existing where both indigenous cultures as well as *mestizaje* were perceived as inferior to the white European ideal.[3] He became a "conceptual fetish" (Keshmiri) or discursive palliative for Peruvians whose ideological scope precluded any genuine "integración de las distintas vertientes de la sociedad peruana, profundamente escindida en realidades sociales, culturales, regionales y raciales muy diversas y, en algunos casos, contrapuestas" (Manrique, *La piel y la pluma* 85).

Until the 1990s, very few critics wrote anything which might tarnish the image of Garcilaso's "commitment to the Amerindian cause" (Zamora 9),[4] although, as any reader of the first part of the *Comentarios reales* knows well, his defense of Incan civilization and culture consistently hinges upon the reduction of many of the other indigenous nations to the status of "gente muy pleveya" (*Hg* I.XXIII, 66), "bestiales y brutos" (*Hg* III.XIX, 300), etc. Near the end of the *Historia general*, an Inca offended by a Cañari chieftan reminds him, "¿No sabes que tú y todo tu linaje érades nuestros esclavos [...]?" (*Hg*, VIII.I 187); this species of *lapsus linguae* on Garcilaso's part debunks the meticulously-fostered myth pervading the first part of the *Comentarios reales* of the other indigenous nations' happy and voluntary subjection under the Incas. In his study of *Los Incas frente a España*, the historian Juan José Vega noted that, "gracias a sus concepciones cerradamente aristocráticas, [Garcilaso] se detiene bastante a describir las diferencias clasistas en la sociedad incásica; las que aprueba" (27); his elitism should come as no surprise to any reader who has understands the facts of his life. Antonio

[3] See Manrique *La piel y la pluma* and Portocarrero.

[4] Many critics label Garcilaso as anti-colonial as well as pro-Indian without sufficient qualification of either term; see Jákfalvi-Leiva 1, Pupo-Walker 92 and Sáenz de Santa María, *G. de la Vega* 8. However, Lambright Freire clearly identifies Garcilaso's strategies for establishing the parallels between Incan and European Christian civilization precisely by converting all other indigenous nations into "el Otro" (34).

Cornejo Polar urges the reader to integrate the disquieting and conflictive elements in Garcilaso's life and work:

> Aunque no hay duda acerca de la estremecida tragicidad de la escritura de Garcilaso, [...] ni sobre la gruesa manipulación que sufre en la recepción rivagüeriana, que sigue en buena parte vigente pese a la explicitez con que muestra las tretas de los discursos del poder, cabe sin embargo la opción de leer[la] dentro de un código mayor [...] que remite a la necesidad irrefutable de construir imaginaria y discursivamente un espacio sin conflictos, a la vez que, en el mismo acto, revela sus trizamientos insolubles en su propia constitución interna (79).

Garcilaso's account of the *encomienda* as "un espacio sin conflictos"—a necessary, beneficial and logical extension of Incan administration prior to the conquest—cannot suppress its contradictions. The *Historia general*, which on various levels becomes the tragic antithesis of the first part of the *Comentarios reales*, compels us to recognize a less heroic but no less extraordinary Garcilaso, even though we cannot admire his politics as we do his literary project.

II

In the final pages of the third book and the beginning pages of the fourth book of the *Historia general del Perú*, Garcilaso presents his version of Blasco Nuñez Vela's arrival in Peru in 1544 and the upheaval (eventually resulting in Gonzalo Pizarro's rebellion) provoked by the 49 ordinances he brought with him—the same ones originally

entrusted to Cristóbal Vaca de Castro in 1540 (Hanke 19-20). These ordinances coincided in many ways with the New Laws of 1542, as well as containing various provisions addressing the particulars of the brutality, corruption and exploitation in Peru. They prescribed the punishment of those who had tortured and murdered Indians for their gold, the regulation of tributes and the re-distribution of the excessively large *repartimientos* bestowed by Francisco Pizarro on his brothers and closest allies. "Indios libres" were not to be forced into laboring in the mines, "porque la experiencia ha mostrado que mueren muchos con el trabajo que allí reciben" (Hanke 32); the new Viceroy was also to ensure that Indians did not die in the process of transporting "cargas inmoderadas" (31-32), nor were they to be moved from one region to another "si no fueren aquellos que justamente constare que son esclavos o algunos libres, en número moderado para servicio de los españoles" (31). This last statement occurring in ordinance 30 flatly negates the notion of any legal distinction supposed to exist between free Indians and slaves, thereby demonstrating the Crown's awareness of the necessity of forcing whichever Indians were on hand to perform hard labor; it also contradicts the first ordinance's denunciation of the mistreatment and abuse of Indians "porque redunda en despoblación de dicha tierra y daño de nuestro estado y patrimonio real [....] Y tenemos voluntad [...] que dichos indios sean tratados como cristianos libres" (Hanke 21). The rhetorical lengths to which the Crown felt obliged to go in order to give the impression of concern for the Indians' welfare, all the while vigorously striving to secure for itself ever larger sums of gold, silver and other treasures "que estuvieren encubiertos y se hallaren, [....] de que seríamos muy servidos" (Hanke 35-36), are tragically, ironically patent in documents like this one.

Any attempt to examine such a document in search of legal or ethical coherence constitutes an effort doomed to failure.[5]

All told, nine of the ordinances addressed the abuse and extermination of Indians, echoing a series of provisions repeatedly decreed since the mid-1530s declaring the necessity of restricting the life-threatening labors imposed on the indigenous population; in this sense, the New Laws did not advance anything new, either.[6] Seventeen of the ordinances addressed the Crown's greatest concern—the fraud and larceny affecting its portion of the booty:

> Nos hemos sido informados que en la cobranza de nuestra hacienda no ha habido el recaudo que convenía [...] especialmente después que ha entrado en poder de nuestros oficiales que se ha trocado y puesto un oro y plata por otro en que se puede haber defraudado mucha cantidad de oro y plata (Hanke 26).[7]

Little space remained—at least not above ground—for the Peruvian Indians trapped between the Crown's greed cloaked in the rhetoric of concern for their welfare and that of the *conquistadores* and *encomenderos*, who saw all of their major sources of income--both licit and illicit--threatened by the ordinances. Garcilaso strategically intersperses the *Historia general* with statements attesting to the loyalty of the *vecinos* in Peru to the King, thereby justifying his allegiance to those who were striving to secure their rights

[5] Silvio Zavala's monumental study *La encomienda indiana* diligently traces the incongruities characterizing the history of the Crown's policies on the Indians and their legal status. Also see Mira Caballos' study of the enslavement of Indians in both the New World and Spain, *Indios y mestizos en la EspaZa del XVI.*

[6] Zavala details the ordinance, which, from 1536 onward, repeatedly ordered the reduction of tributes to be paid by Indians, prohibited enslaving them or using them to transport heavy cargo, moving them from one region to another, or forcing them to work in the mines. In 1540 the Crown decreed that Indians could volunteer to work in the mines in order to reduce their tributes (*El servicio personal* 3-11).

[7] In a parallel fashion, the New Laws devoted the first nine ordinances to the problem of corruption in the Consejo de Indias. See Morales Padrón 421-40.

and property against the Spanish Crown in the struggle over land, labor force and precious metal—not that either group valued the Indians as anything more than chattel.

Núñez Vela quickly manifested his intentions to enforce policies which had been disregarded for years. His behavior differed radically from that of Vaca de Castro, whose enthusiastic appropriation of riches during his tenure as governor incited numerous complaints to the king. Members of the Cuzco and Lima *cabildos* detailed in their letters to the Emperor Vaca de Castro's theft of gold and Indians, illegal sales of *repartimientos,* forced indigenous labor in the mines and the overall decimation of the native population.[8] These men begged the king to send someone "celos[o] del servicio de Dios é de Vuestra Majestad, é que no tenga codicia" (Porras, *Cartas* 540); however, those who had found themselves trumped by Vaca de Castro in the rivalry for riches became even more outraged when the new Viceroy actually began to implement the ordinances. Garcilaso describes the furor in Peru: "Trataban generalmente de no recibir al Visorrey ni obedecer las ordenanzas, porque dezían que el día que el Visorrey entrasse en Los Reyes y se pregonassen las ordenanzas, no tenían indios ni otra hazienda alguna" (*Hg* IV.IV 18). In spite of their previous requests to the king, many of the *vecinos* quickly changed their allegiances as well as their minds about what kind of leadership was required in Peru and joined in Gonzalo Pizarro's rebellion.[9]

[8] Refer to the letters written by Francisco Maldonado and Juan de Cáceres in March of 1543 (Porras, *Crtas* 538-41). Also refer to Cáceres' letter of 18 August 1543 (Porras, *Cartas* 548-49). Zavala (*El servicio personal* 7-11) details Vaca de Castro's legislative attempts to delimit the exploitation of Indians in the *tambos* and mines, and notes: "En las ordenanzas de Vaca de Castro todavía se aspiraba a que la decisión de los indios de ir al trabajo de las minas fuese voluntaria, para ayudarse a pagar el tributo, si bien probablemente en la práctica ese requisito quedaría en simple apariencia o formalidad" (11). Refer to the informative "Datos Biográficos" in *Cartas de Indias* Vol. III on Vaca de Castro (852-56), Cáceres (729-30) and Maldonado (793). For more information on Vaca de Castro's illicit gains in Peru, see Pérez de Tudela Bueso, "Observaciones" XXVIII-XXXIII and Vargas Ugarte, *Historia* 175-76.

[9] This was the case with both Cáceres and Maldonado. See *Cartas de Indias* Vol. III (730, 793).

Garcilaso profiles two of his political opponents in this section of the text: Núñez Vela and Bartolomé de Las Casas, who in 1545 described Peru's first Viceroy as one of the few truly valuable and honest administrators in the New World (Las Casas 233). Garcilaso laments "las desventuras, muertes y calamidades del Imperio del Perú, nascidas del rigor, aspereza y mala condición del Visorrey [...], que tan determinadamente [...] quiso executar las ordenanzas" (*Hg* IV.II 7).[10] Whatever Núñez Vela's faults may have been, the kind of self-interest flaunted by Vaca de Castro does not appear to be one of them. Prior to his arrival in Peru, he wrote to the king from Panamá, depicting the corruption and numerous conflicts of interests between government and commerce undermining the Crown's authority as well as its treasury: "[T]odos los que aqui biben son mercaderes fatores de otros y [...] tengo por muy grand ynconviniente que este la justicia en ellos [...] y tengo yo por cierto que avn en la hazienda real de vuestra magestad abria mui grand frabde" (Levillier 87).[11] Unlike Vaca de Castro, Núñez Vela saw the necessity of creating conditions for reducing an administrator's ability to institutionalize corruption for personal gain. His extreme caution with respect to the accusations against Vaca de Castro reveals a concern for both the governor and the King's honor (Levillier 88), although he fears that the accusations are justified: "a avido alguna certificacion" (89) that the governor has sold *encomiendas* and forced Indians to labor in the mines, "del cual dizen a resultado muy gran daño porque en poco tiempo an muerto muchos yndios de los que trayan a las dichas minas" (89). However, Vaca de Castro will not be the only man to deserve punishment,

[10] Garcilaso relies heavily on Diego Fernández's description of the viceroy's character and behavior (*Hg* IV.I 8-10, IV.V 20-23, IV.VI 24-25 and Fernández 11-13); he also cites Gómara (221-25) and Zárate (16-19, 22-23).

[11] This is the only extant letter we have from Núñez Vela during this period. No correspondence from Peru has ever been discovered.

> especialmente en aquellas partes adonde las gentes estan mostradas a bibir tan libres como seria justo que si [Vaca de Castro] huuiese cometido lo que del dizen que por mano de vuestra magestad fuese castigado de manera que fuese en exemplo y temor para que aquellos de quien vuestra magestad confia la justicia [...] tuviesen cuidado de hazer lo que deven quando no lo hiziesen como cristianos (88).

Needless to say, people upheld vastly differing convictions about what it meant to be a good Christian.

Garcilaso's fiercest imputations of heresy and treason are against Bartolomé de las Casas, who is portrayed as a sanctimonious manipulator: "Proponía y sustentava cosas que, *aunque parecían santas y buenas*, [...] se mostravan muy rigurosas y dificultosas para ponerlas en efeto" (*Hg* III.XX 303; emph. added). (Here Garcilaso is paraphrasing Diego Fernández, with one significant divergence: Fernández writes that Las Casas "sustentaba cosas que, *aunque buenas y santas, parecían* dificultosas de se efectuar" [5; emph. added]). Citing Gómara, Garcilaso condemns Las Casas for the massacre of Spaniards on the island of Cumaná en 1520[12] and recounts the popular opinion held in Peru about the corrupt and selfish motives inspiring Las Casas' advocacy of the New Laws, implying that in reality he was not motivated by concern for the Indians' welfare:

> Dezían los del Perú mil disparates que certificavan haver hecho antes que entrara en religión [.... D]ezían que se havía metido a fraile por que Su Majestad no le castigasse por la siniestra relación que le havía dado [...] de [...] Cumaná, y que por restituir a Su Majestad los daños que en su real hacienda le havía hecho, le

[12] Refer to Giménez Fernández 79-84 concerning the events on Cumaná.

> havía dado los avisos para las ordenanzas e insistido tanto en ellas, haziéndose muy zeloso del bien de los indios, que los efectos de su zelo [...] mostrarían cuán bueno havía sido (*Hg* IV.III 14-16).

Las Casas becomes the one man most responsible for the political and social disasters in Peru resulting from the promulgation of the New Laws. Garcilaso's version of the events projects the need to make financial restitution to the King onto the thief and liar Las Casas, while in reality, the men maligning him most bitterly in Peru were in all probability the least concerned about the King's treasury.

In their own texts, the three chroniclers cited frequently in this section of the *Historia general* describe the mistreatment of the Indians in Peru. Diego Fernández, albeit summarily, concedes the validity of Las Casas' support of the New Laws: "parecía muy justificado y necesario para [...] mejor conservarse el número de [indios]" (5); Zárate recounts the "grandes agrauios y crueldades, que los Españoles generalmente hazian en los Indios, assi maltratando y matando sus personas, [...] y echandolos a las minas y en pesquerias de perlas, donde perecian todos" (13). Gómara refers directly to the enslavement and

> malos tratamientos que se hacían a los indios [.... Núñez Vela p]regonó las ordenanzas, despobló los tambos, dio libertad a los indios esclavos y forzados [....L]os vecinos [...] decían que les fuera mucho mejor no tener hijos ni mujer que mantener, si les habían de quitar los esclavos (219-23).

Garcilaso, however, acknowledges no dereliction in duty on the part of the *encomenderos* or Vaca de Castro, who appears as Peru's savior and beloved governor. Indeed, Peru was an earthly paradise under his administration: prior to Núñez Vela's arrival:

> [C]on un governador tan cristiano, tan cavallero, tan prudente, tan amigo de acertar en el servicio de Dios Nuestro Señor y en el de su Rey, florecía aquel Imperio, cada día de bien en mejor; y lo que más se deve estimar era la doctrina de Nuestra Santa Fe Católica, que por toda la tierra la predicavan los españoles con grandíssimo cuidado (*Hg* III.XIX 301).

Garcilaso temporarily displaces the blame onto the Devil for destroying the

> prosperidad de paz, quietud y bienes espirituales y temporales que los indios y españoles del Perú gozavan [.... O]rdenó el Demonio [...que se estorvasse] la predicación del Santo Evangelio y la conversión de aquellos gentiles [...], *que era lo que más le afligía*, porque perdía la ganancia que en aquella gentilidad tenía (III.XIX 301; emph. added).

Evidently, the Devil does not seek out Spanish souls in Peru as potential grist for his mill since they are all exemplary Christians, unlike certain people who,

> mostrándose muy zelosas del bien común de los indios, sin mirar los inconvinientes que en mal y daño de los mismos que pretendían remediar causavan con su mal consejo y poca prudencia, propusieron[...] que convenía hazerse nuevas leyes y ordenanzas para el buen govierno de los imperios México y Perú (III.XIX 301).

The Devil's henchman in this project, "el que más insistió en esto fué un fraile llamado Fray Bartolomé de las Casas" (III.XIX 301), who dooms the Peruvian Indians to eternal damnation.

Garcilaso underscores the idyllic relations between the Indians and their Spanish masters:

> Vaca de Castro, como hombre tan prudente, [...] governó con [...] mucho aplauso, gusto y contento de españoles e indios, porque hizo ordenanzas muy provechosas para los unos y para los otros, de que los indios en particular recibieron grandíssimo favor y regozijo, diziendo que eran leyes muy conformes a las de sus Reyes Incas (*Hg* III.XIX 299).

Here he reinforces the teleology first established in the *Comentarios reales* legitimating the natural progression from Incan rule to Spanish rule, with the *encomenderos* taking over where the Incas left off. In reality, however, Garcilaso could hardly have ignored the decisive differences between the Incan and Spanish systems of labor and tribute: "El encomendero [...] no podía considerar al indio con el mismo criterio que el inca a sus funcionarios [.... y] esquilmaba al indio peor que a un esclavo, en particular cuando se trataba del trabajo en las minas." (Choy 286). He stresses that if a few Spaniards did exploit indigenous labor, in most cases they fostered an entrepreneurial spirit in the Indians, "porque muchos huvo que les pagavan su trabajo y tratavan como a hijos, [...] y mandar que no se cargasen los indios también era hazerle agravio a ellos, porque les quitavan su ganancia" (*Hg* III.XIX 305). His father's situation illustrates the nature of the personal services performed by Indians: "[A] cada vezino le davan, en parte de tributo, algunos indios para el servicio de su casa [....] lo cual [los indios] llevavan de muy buena gana, y lo hazían con mucha facilidad y contento" (III.XX 305-306). Yet he cannot entirely sustain this utopian fantasy, his blunt pragmatism finally revealing the reality he has made every effort to conceal up to this point:

> [A] lo que la ley dize que no se echasen indios a las minas, no tengo qué dezir, sino remetirme a los indios que hoy (que es el año de mil y seiscientos y onze)

> trabajan por orden de los governadores en las minas de plata [...] y en las de azogue [...] que, si lo dexassen de hazer, no trairían la plata y el oro que cada año traen a España de aquel Imperio (III.XX 305).

We have seen how, in Garcilaso's account, the Indians happily undertook whatever tasks were put to them by their Spanish masters who, as devout practitioners of the Catholic faith, neither exploited nor abused the innocent souls entrusted to them whom they promptly converted to Christianity. Indian deaths in the mines appear to be of no consequence under these circumstances, since Spain would reap her due profits, but the Devil would not.

In his final mention of Las Casas, Garcilaso recalls when he met him in Madrid in 1562, "y porque supo que yo era de Indias me dió sus manos para que se las besasse, pero cuando entendió que era del Perú y no de México, tuvo poco que hablarme" (IV.III 16). Yet Las Casas' cold reception did not have anything to do with Garcilaso's nationality; Peru itself did not inspire his disinterest or disgust, but rather *los peruleros,* "porque no obedecen ley ni ordenanza [...], sino aquellos que [...] creen que no son contra sus robos y tiranías [....] Estimámoslos a todos por hombres [...] incapaces de absolución" (Las Casas 224).[131]

In Book Five of the *Historia general* Garcilaso explains that he was in Madrid at that time in order to present a petition before the Consejo de Indias "por los servicios de mi padre y por la restitución patrimonial de mi madre" (V.XXIII 215) which was denied, leaving him, he complains, in "los rincones de la soledad y pobreza [...] como hombre

[13] Las Casas fought on behalf of the Peruvian Indians throughout his entire career. In 1560 he opposed the efforts to establish the perpetuity of the encomiendas (465-68), and wrote in 1563: "ni una blanca sola pueden llevar los comenderos, si no es usurpada. [... y] ha cincuenta y cinco o seis aZos, cuando estas tiránicas y mortíferas encomiendas [...] se enstituyeron" (472). Also see Someda's essay on Las Casas and the *encomienda* system and Pérez de Tudela Bueso, "Estudio" CXLIV-CLI, CLXXVI-CLXXXIII.

desengañado y despedido deste mundo y de sus mudanzas" (216). Garcilaso's economic claims are literally fleshed out in other parts of the *Historia general*, when he criticises the Spanish ladies who made fun of the "conquistadores viejos podridos" whom they were about to marry "*por heredar los indios que tienen*, que según están viejos y cansados, se han de morir presto, y entonces podremos escoger el mozo que quisiéremos" (II.I 113; emph. added). One of the *conquistadores* overhears the conversation with disgust,

> y se casó con una india, mujer noble, en quien tenía dos hijos naturales; quiso legitimarlos *para que heredassen sus indios* [....] Algunos ha havido en el Perú que han hecho lo mismo, [...] aunque pocos; los más han dado lugar al consejo de aquella dama. Sus hijos [...] veen gozar a los hijos ajenos de lo que sus padres ganaron y sus madres y parientes ayudaron a ganar (II.I 113; emph. added).[14]

The same complaint reappears near the end of the *Historia general* in a chapter entitled "El proceso contra el príncipe y contra los Incas parientes de la sangre real, y contra los mestizos, hijos de indias y de conquistadores de aquel Imperio," where Garcilaso reiterates ten times that the sons of conquistadores and Incan women of royal blood were unjustly disinherited:

> no les havía cabido nada, siendo hijos de los más beneméritos de aquel Imperio, porque los governadores havían dado a sus parientes y amigos lo que sus padres

[14] Héctor López Martínez's comments shed significant light on Garcilaso's legal status or lack thereof as an *hijo natural*: "Muy pocos fueron los que legitimaron a sus hijos mestizos casándose con las mujeres en quienes los habían procreado. Fueron momentos difíciles para multitud de mestizos [....] Otros, no obstante, tuvieron mejor suerte. Recibieron socorro de sus padres, algunos fueron legitimados por el Rey y hasta se les asignó fuertes rentas" (15-16). Note four accompanying the final sentence adds: "Tal fue el caso de Gaspar Centeno y de su hermana María, ambos hijos mestizos y naturales del capitán Diego Centeno. Gaspar fue legitmado por la Corona, recibió una fuerte renta y llegó a obtener el grado de 'general'. Todas esas mercedes las recibió por los méritos de su padre, el más importante capitán 'leal' durante la rebelión de Gonzalo Pizarro" (16).

> ganaron y havía sido de sus abuelos maternos, y que a ellos los dexaron desamparados (XIII.XVII, 244).[15]

Let us also recall Vargas Ugarte's discovery of the annotations made by one of Garcilaso's friends, Don Íñigo de Córdoba Ponce, in a first edition copy of Las Casas' *Tratados* which had belonged to Garcilaso: "Nació en el Pirú,[...] vivió como filósofo y de hordinario decía que no le lucía su hacda. por haberse traído de las yndias y *abérsele quitado a aquellas jentes contra derecho* y a este propósito citaba este libro" ("Nota" 47-48; emph. added). We are left to wonder what arguments Garcilaso devised using Las Casas' *Tratados* in order to denounce the illegal dispossession of his vassals, but it is not unreasonable to conclude that in 1562, Las Casas' reception of the young man grew cold when Garcilaso expressed his hopes of returning to Peru in order to take possession of his Indians. Las Casas would have dismissed Garcilaso as one of the "estirpadores del linaje humano, y despobladores destos tan grandes [...] reinos" (Las Casas 224), and, in turn, it would appear that by the time he wrote the *Historia general*, Garcilaso bitterly hated the ideological opponent whose writings denounced not only his youthful pretensions to inherit his father's vassals, but also his identity as a devout Christian.

III

Garcilaso's dedication opens the *Historia general* by uniting religion, military conquest and nobility, thereby affirming his own hereditary alliegance to Spanish imperialism in Peru. He strives to project his personal social status and identity through

[15] Francisco Pizarro expresses the same complaint (*Hg* I.XIII 44).

religious rhetoric (bolstered by the incessant mention of his noble lineage) guaranteed to pass muster with the Inquisition:

> [C]onsagro las armas españolas y mis letras miserables a la Virgen de Vírgines, Belona de la Iglesia militante [.... L]os victoriosos leones de Castilla deven mucho a tan soberana señora, [....y] no menos los peruanos vencidos, por salir [...] vencedores del demonio, pecado e infierno, recibiendo un Dios, una fe y un baptismo. [....A]precio [...] la conversión a *nuestra* fe de mi madre y señora, más ilustre y excelente por las aguas del santo baptismo que por la sangre real de tantos Incas y Reyes peruanos [.... y] la devoción paterna, heredada con la nobleza y nombre del famoso Garcilasso, [...] a quien aquel triunfo [...] havido del moro en la vega de Toledo, dió sobrenombre de la Vega y renombre igual a los Bernardos y Cides [....] (Dedicación 7-8; emph. added).

Such language affirms his support of Spanish imperialism's methods and agents as well as Spain's Christian mission and inscribes a social identity for Garcilaso with which his contemporary readers would feel bound to identify. References to himself as an *indio* (Dedicación 7, Prólogo 14), which might make readers perceive him as an outsider with tainted blood, are eclipsed by the emphasis placed throughout the text on his orthodox Catholic identity; indeed, he insinuates in the preceding quotation that he is a part of the community of *cristianos viejos* when he refers to his mother's conversion to "nuestra fe":

> En el proceso de afirmación de la identidad nacional española la religión terminó constituyéndose en *razón de Estado* [....] Es por eso un indicio fundamental de la dirección del proceso que los cronistas de la expansión hispánica del siglo XVI [...] se autoidentificaran no tanto como españoles [...] sino como *cristianos*. El

> cristianismo, entendido [...] no tanto como una visión religiosa profundamente interiorizada sino como un conjunto de rasgos culturales compartidos, más bien exteriores, terminaba así convertido en el común denominador (*El universo mental* 350).

Lest we forget, however, that some Christians were more equal than others, the "common denominator" of Christianity operated in the same manner as other social institutions with a hierarchical system of superior and inferior estates of which Garcilaso clearly approves. In his "Prólogo" dedicated to the "indios, mestizos y criollos [...] del Perú" (9), he praises the converted Indians who "hazen a los de Europa casi la ventaxa que los de la iglesia primitiva a los cristianos de nuestra era" (9), but he deftly depreciates the value of their zeal by clarifiying that they (merely) hold the spiritual advantage over the apostates in England who have exiled Catholicism (9). The following sentences with their telling economic metaphors shed even more light upon the Indians' permanent inferior status:

> Y por cierto que tierra tan fértil, de ricos minerales y metales preciosos, era razón criasse venas de sangre generosa y minas de entendimientos despiertos para todas artes y facultades, para las cuales *no falta habilidad* a los indios naturales y *sobra capacidad* a los mestizos [...] y a los criollos [....L]a gente española, como herencia propia del Hijo de Dios, [...] reparte con franca mano del celestial mayorazgo de la fe y evangelio con los indios, como con *hermanos menores* [....] (Prólogo 10; emph. added).

Readers in Spain would be reassured by this skillful portrayal of the Christianized Indians who will never possess the superior abilities of nor merit the same rewards in this life or the next as those of Spanish blood. Such distinctions accompany Garcilaso's expectation

to be identified as one of the Indians worthy of "el buen recibimiento que las autoridades españoles proporcionarion siempre a los indios nobles, en contraposición al desprecio que sentían por el resto de los miembros de la etnia" who were brought to Spain throughout the sixteenth century and sold as slaves (Mira Caballos 85).

Garcilaso's continual references to his orthodoxy and to the noble Spanish blood flowing in his veins represent a survival strategy as well as a defense mechanism, for he is conscious of what can happen to any Indian, whether or not s/he is of royal blood, as the death of Manco Inca illustrates:

> Jugando un día el Inca a la bola con Gómez Pérez, [....éste] porfió más y más que solía, [...y] le parescía que podía tratar al Inca como a un indio de servicio [....N]o pudiéndolo ya sufrir el pobre príncipe, le dió una puñada o rempujón en los pechos, diziéndole: "¡Quítate allá, y mira con quién hablas!" Gómez Pérez, que era tan colérico como melancólico, sin mirar su daño ni el de sus compañeros, alzó el brazo con la bola que en la mano tenía, y con ella de dió al Inca un tan bravo golpe en la cabeza, que lo derribó muerto (IV.VII 27).

Early in his adolescence,[16]when Garcilaso saw his mother disposed of in marriage to Juan del Pedroche after his father married a Spanish noblewoman, he would have realized that even an Incan *Zusta* could be treated like an *india cualquiera* by the Spaniards.[17] In the final analysis, Garcilaso realized that all Indians were disposable and even Incan royalty was subject to life-threatening devaluations dependent upon the vicissitudes of Spanish humors and personal interests.

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[16] Miró Quesada cites 1549 or 1550 as the time period of Captain Garcilaso's marriage to Doña Luisa Martel de los Ríos (60-61, 294); Hernández posits either 1551 or 1552 as the period of Isabel Chimpu Ocllo's marriage to Pedroche (74). Also see Varner 105-07.

[17] Nevertheless, Garcilaso denies his mother's status as concubine (thereby denying his own status as an *hijo natural*) and refers to Luisa Martel as the "segunda viuda de mi padre" (*Hg* V.XXIII 215).

Perhaps we are achieving a deeper understanding of why 'la representatividad social de Garcilaso-mestizo no deriva de su condición de mestizo común, [...] sino de su radical excepcionalidad' (Cornejo Polar 77). Contemporary Peruvian sociology continues to insist that the denial of existing social hierarchizations based on race and class perpetuates the "abismo étnico-cultural que fractura la sociedad peruana [...y que] se reproduce con cada nueva generación, con el aprendizaje de que hay gente superior y otra inferior" (Portocarrero 223). Critics idealized and essentialized Garcilaso's *mestizaje* in order to ennoble his world view or his ethno-politics, but this is completely untenable in the case of the *Historia general*. Although Garcilaso depicts the *encomenderos* as benign paternal figures none of whose Indians were worked to death, in reality the new socio-economic conditions in America made it possible for them (and for the Crown's administrators) to depreciate Indian lives entirely in their quest for profit:

> [E]l conquistador no era guidao por las necesidades del señor feudal, sino actuaba como hombre que correspondía a otra era, un nuevo plano económico [....] El tipo de sociedad que estaba muriendo en Europa [...] no prosperó en América porque había un material humano disponible mucho más productivo, que facilitaba la organización de un sistema de explotación que, incipiente como era, ya estaba revolucionando las relaciones sociales (Choy 267, 271).

Because these activities did not enter into conflict with religion, which was conveniently calibrated like any other social tool to accord with economic necessities, Garcilaso perceives no contradiction between the *encomenderos*' behavior and Catholic precepts, or perhaps it is more accurate to suggest that he does not justify violence and enslavement in the *Historia general*: they do not exist. Bartolomé de las Casas becomes the heretic who

sent so many Indians to hell and conspired to deny Garcilaso the vassals who were his birthright. In *Memoria del bien perdido*, Max Hernández argues that Las Casas expressed sentiments which were blocked by "ciertos traumas" and Garcilaso's ideological identification with the landed neo-aristocracy, "[p]ero decir esto no explica cuáles fueron los resortes profundos que movieron la inquina del Inca. Las Casas daba expresión a sentimientos que Garcilaso no podía admitir" (188). We may never be able to determine precisely why Garcilaso demonstrates in the *Historia general* such indifference for all of the people who were displaced, enslaved and worked to death in the Peruvian mines; his anguish was narcissistic, not empathetic. The idea of commiserating with the Indians would have been repugnant or altogether inadmissible to him, and we should understand why Garcilaso would go to any lengths to demonstrate to his readers his spiritual, social and cultural distance from them. The necessity of dehumanizing those with whom it becomes too threatening to identify hardly begins with Garcilaso, nor is it suspended with him. That is why the Indians have no existence as suffering human beings in the *Historia general*; they exist merely as tools for extracting silver and mercury from the mines.

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