



Capítulo 8



ENTRE LA ESPADA Y LA PLUMA

El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega y sus *Comentarios reales*

EDICIÓN E INTRODUCCIÓN DE RAQUEL CHANG-RODRÍGUEZ



FONDO
EDITORIAL

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DEL PERÚ

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El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega y sus Comentarios reales

© Raquel Chang-Rodríguez, editora, abril 2010

De esta edición:

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Av. Universitaria 1801, Lima 32, Perú

Teléfono: (51 1) 626-2650

Fax: (51 1) 626-2913

feditor@pucp.edu.pe

www.pucp.edu.pe/publicaciones

Cuidado de la edición, diseño de cubierta y diagramación de interiores:

Fondo Editorial PUCP

Primera edición: abril de 2010

Tiraje: 500 ejemplares

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Hecho el Depósito Legal en la Biblioteca Nacional del Perú N° 2010-05318

ISBN: 978-9972-42-925-5

Registro del Proyecto Editorial: 31501361000273

Impreso en Tarea Asociación Gráfica Educativa

Pasaje María Auxiliadora 156, Lima 5, Perú

Regarding Colonialism in Garcilaso's *Historia general del Perú*

Margarita Zamora

University of Wisconsin, Madison

a Enrique Pupo-Walker

The eighth and final book of *Historia general del Perú* (1617) contains a memorable triptych of Spanish colonialism. The images of the abuse of political power, among the most vivid in Garcilaso's writings, focus on the execution of the last Inca, Túpac Amaru, the persecution of the mestizos of Inca descent, and the denunciation of Spanish injustice by an anonymous Indian woman whose mestizo son is incarcerated awaiting torture. There is both pathos and a critical edge in these images, as they expose raw social and political iniquities in the practice of Spanish colonialism by giving a voice to the dissent of the colonized. This dissent, moreover, erodes Spanish moral authority, shifting the ethical high ground toward the political margins.

The prevailing opinion among scholars has been that Garcilaso was a partisan of the Spanish imperial enterprise in which his conquistador father had a prominent role. This position blurs the differences, however, between two distinct historical actions: conquest and colonization¹. It favors the heroic equities of the epic discourse employed by the historian to extol the valiant deeds of Spanish conquerors and Amerindian warriors, at the expense of the critical discourse that exposes the injustices and abuses in the imposition of a colonial system of political subjugation, economic exploitation, and cultural hegemony stigmatizing the colonized². This essay offers an integrated textual and historical study of Garcilaso's political imagery, situating it in the concrete historical circumstances that shaped colonial Peru in the second half of the 16th century in order to better understand its ideological implications³.

¹ Leonardo Padura notes that El Inca was Spanish America's first anti-colonial writer «if the term is understood as opposition to the colony as a stage different from the conquest, and not in its narrowest and most common acceptance» (1984, p. 240, my translation).

² My thinking on colonialism and the processes and condition of being colonized is strongly influenced by Albert Memmi's classic treatise, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1957).

³ This interdisciplinary approach to visual representation is known in French as *Imagologie* and in English as Image Studies. See, for example, *Alterity, Identity, Image: Selves and Others in Society and Scholarship*, eds., R. Corbey and J.T. Leerssen (1991).

In fairness to the majority opinion, it is indeed the epic mode that defines Garcilaso's historical discourse in all but the last of the histories he penned, the only one of his writings devoted to colonial history proper. This no doubt explains why his representation of the conquest has attracted more attention than his critique of colonial domination. Moreover, even in the most critical passages of the *Historia* he eschewed inflammatory denunciation in favor of subtler, indirect forms of censure. Yet censure he did, exposing the contradictions and tragic ironies that shaped the colonial Peruvian world.

But there is more to this imagery than its palpable critical edge. These images, like all images of suffering and injustice, are didactic, they invite an active response. If one takes into account not just their constative meanings (what they have to say) but also their performative significance (what is done in the act of representation), one may sense a shift in the semantics of the text. Garcilaso conceived the *Historia* as his service to a specific readership comprised of the Indians, Mestizos, and Creoles of Peru, with whom he identified and to whom he dedicated his work, «Porque sólo mis desseos son de servirles, que es el fin desta corónica y su dedicatoria [...]» (*HG*, 1944 [1617], Prólogo, p. 16). The intended, or 'ideal', readers and the reception anticipated in the «Prologue» have important implications for the interpretation of the searing images Garcilaso conjures in the final book of his history of Peru. A second goal of this essay is to consider the role of the imagined colonial community for whom those images were destined, situating the images in the interlocutory situation, the communicative relationship set up in the text's opening pages. Seen as a speech act, Garcilaso's «service» to his fellow Peruvians and the response it invites come into view as paradigms of colonial agency.

Meaning in the *Historia* is determined by the relationship between writer and intended readers. And this is the case regardless of the debatable actual existence in early seventeenth century Peru of a potential readership like the one Garcilaso identified in the «Prologue». In fact, one of the most unique and important aspects of the text may well be the prescient anticipation of a racially diverse colonial community of readers united by affective ties to a common homeland, a shared history, and a lettered cultural tradition that could facilitate precisely the kind of critical reflection on Peru's past and future that the *Historia* models. I am not suggesting that there is an incipient nationalism in imagining a community of Peruvians such as the one Garcilaso envisioned. I will argue, instead, that there is an emerging anti-colonialist consciousness in the «Prologue» capable of making ideologically astute distinctions between Peruvian colonials and the Spanish-born dominant classes, distinctions that are at the heart of Garcilaso's motivation and purpose in writing his homeland's colonial history. While he considered Peru to be an integral part of Spain and Peruvians loyal subjects of the Spanish Crown, as he reiterated time and again in the prefatory matter of his published works, the *Historia's* prologue addresses a community of readers comprised exclusively of colonial subjects—the Indians, Mestizos, and Creoles of Peru—tacitly excluding the Spaniards⁴. The painful images depicting the colonized in

⁴ «Indian», «Mestizo», and «Creole» were by the mid-sixteenth century legal terms defined, if not invented, by colonialist juridical institutions. See Solórzano de Pereyra, *Política Indiana* (1648), especially Bk II, Chapters 28-30. The work originally was published in Latin in 1627.

Book VIII reflect and respond polemically to colonialist practices and the resulting conditions that characterized colonial life in Peru during the second half of the 16th Century.

«I wish all the good to the Indians and the Spaniards...» (Juan de Matienzo)

The final book of the *Historia* considers the decisive years 1550-1581, spanning the administrations of several viceroys, including the infamous rule of Francisco de Toledo (1569-1581), Lope García de Castro's tenure (1564-1569) as governor and president of the Audiencia, and the short-lived reign of the last Inca, Túpac Amaru, ending with his execution in 1572 and the banishment from Cuzco of the male descendants of the Inca royal lineages on Toledo's orders. It was a time of internal struggle among the colonizers and intense resistance to Spanish rule by the native Andean population. Important moments of Inca history during this period include the return of the rebel Inca Sayri Túpac to Cuzco after lengthy negotiations with the viceroy and the overt hostilities against the Spanish by Inca Titu Cusi Yupanqui⁵. As head of the neo-Inca resistance, Titu Cusi directed regular assaults from his stronghold in Vilcabamba on merchants traveling the road between Cuzco and Huamanga and was implicated in a failed insurrection in 1565. During this same period, Cristóbal de Albornoz launched his campaign of extirpation of idolatry against the popular religious resistance movement known as Taki Onqoy. According to Stern, the Peru Garcilaso left in the early 1560s had reached a watershed: «Bedeviled by native resistance and the specter of wholesale insurrection, intra-European and mestizo strife, and economic bottlenecks, [the Spanish] would need to reconstruct society on terms more favorable to the colonial elite's long-run, uncontested dominance» (p. 72). The principal sources on the state of the Andean viceroyalty at mid-century and the extraordinary measures undertaken to secure Spanish domination include Juan de Matienzo's *Gobierno del Perú* (1567), a «moral and political blueprint to revitalize Spanish imperialism», (Stern, 1982, p. 72); the «Informaciones que mandó levantar el Virrey Toledo sobre los Incas» (1570-1572), a collection of testimonies by Incas and prominent curacas on the questions of Inca political authority and legitimacy prior to the arrival of the Spanish; and the *Historia indica* (1572) by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, a text that faithfully represented the views of Viceroy Toledo relying heavily on the «Informaciones». Collectively, these three texts define the politics of colonialism in the Andes during the second half of the 16th Century.

Matienzo's *Gobierno del Perú* is unique among the works of this period in presenting a comprehensive assessment of colonial policies and practices together with a set of precise recommendations for systemic reform. In the opening chapters, Matienzo sought to establish the moral justifications for colonial rule, based on the alleged tyrannical nature of Inca governance, the justness of the Spanish conquest, and the voluntary acceptance of Spanish rule by an indigenous population happy to be rid of the Inca tyranny. He summarized the ethical premises of the program thus:

⁵ The *Historia* is oddly silent about the hostilities against the Spanish by Titu Cusi Yupanqui.

I wish all the good to the Indians and Spaniards, and that everyone [should] benefit with the least harm possible to the Indians, and even with no harm to them. As this land gives us such riches, it is just that we not pay them with ingratitude⁶.

Matienzo's promotion of «the common good», it turns out, was limited in practice to rein-ing in the most egregious abuses that characterized Spanish exploitation of indigenous labor and resources. In its assessment of the problems of colonial governance and its prescriptions for strengthening Spanish rule, however, *Gobierno del Perú* was comprehensive. And, in framing the colonialist agenda in an ethical-political discourse legitimizing Spanish dominance and promoting the benefits to Peruvian society as a whole, it offered much needed relief to the emperor's conscience.

The impact of Matienzo's treatise was immediate and profound. Circulating widely back in Spain among the highest levels of government, its vision of «the common good» became the moral compass of the reforms implemented by Viceroy Francisco de Toledo that transformed colonial Peru in the 1570s (Lohmann, 1966, pp. 111-116). Matienzo's close ties to Toledo's administration are well documented. He was given the prominent role of head of the commission that inspected the city of La Plata and its environs during the «Visita General» of 1570-1575, a comprehensive inspection initiated by Toledo at the beginning of his tenure to assess the state of the viceroyalty. Lohmann Villena notes the striking similarities between the recommendations contained in *Gobierno del Perú* and the content of the «Instrucción general» composed by Toledan officials for the visitors (pp. 61-62). Perhaps even more significant was the impact of Matienzo's ethical-political discourse on Toledo's explanation and justification of the draconian measures undertaken to eliminate any remnants of Inca political authority. His criticism of the Inca «tyranny» was taken to logical extremes by the viceroy who argued for the eradication of Inca authority from the Andean political landscape⁷.

The «Informaciones» composed by Toledo for the King in 1572, reveal the intensifying political stresses that prompted him to move aggressively against Inca authority. The first of the conclusions drawn by the viceroy based on the information obtained from the native Andean and Spanish witnesses interviewed asserts that the Incas were alien intruders who had imposed a tyrannical and illegitimate government upon the original lords of the land. The Spanish king, then, as liberator of Peru from the Inca tyranny, may consider himself the legitimate sovereign of the territory he conquered, entitled to all the attending privileges, including appointing local governors and distributing lands and riches, without need to concern himself with the rights of the Incas or their descendants. Moreover, he had the right, indeed the obligation, to dictate laws for the benefit of his Indian subjects. In the final analysis, the «Informaciones» appears to have had but one purpose: establishing once and for all the legitimacy not just of the conquest but of the institutionalization of Spanish political authority in Peru (and by extension in the

⁶ Matienzo, p.189. Translated by Stern, p. 72.

⁷ Among the most effective and enduring of the reforms instituted by Toledo was the promotion of the *curacas* over the Inca elite to govern at the local level. These ethnic lords who in Incan times had served the empire at the Inca's pleasure would now serve the Spanish colony, governing in place of their former masters.

rest of the Indies), an authority that had been subject to theoretical debate and threatened by rebellion since the earliest conquests. Toledo's strategy followed in the footsteps of Matienzo, accusing the Incas of tyrannical abuse of the indigenous peoples in order to justify Spanish colonial rule on the ethical-political principle of «the common good». Sarmiento de Gamboa summarized it thus:

[This work is] to give a secure and quiet harbor to Your Royal conscience against the tempests [generated by] your native vassals, theologians, and other learned [individuals] who are misinformed about the events here. Thus, in [Toledo's] general inspection, which he is personally carrying out all across the land, he has examined the sources and spoken with a large number of witnesses. With great diligence and care, he has questioned the most important elders and those of greatest ability and authority in the kingdom, and even those who claim some stake in it because they are kinsmen and descendants of the Incas, about the terrible, deep-seated, and horrendous tyranny of the Incas, who were tyrants in this kingdom of Peru, and about the specific curacas of its towns. [He does this] to disabuse all those in the world of the idea that these Incas were legitimate kings and [that] the curacas were natural lords of this land (Sarmiento, 2007[1572], pp. 14-15).

In 1572, the viceroy implemented his «final solution» to the problem of Inca resistance, ordering the execution of the Inca Túpac Amaru and the exile of the male descendants of the Inca royal lineages from Cuzco. The mestizos of Inca descent were accused of conspiring with the Incas to overthrow the Spanish.

«In the midst of this fury of arrests, charges, and transgressions...» (Inca Garcilaso)

While Garcilaso was already residing in Spain when these events took place, the vividness of his account leaves no doubt that he was familiar with and moved by the plight of his compatriots. In Chapter 17 of Book VIII of the *Historia*, he identifies a Peruvian friend of his youth who visited him twice in Montilla, Juan Arias Maldonado, as the eyewitness source for much of the account of this period. Garcilaso suggests that Arias Maldonado was a victim of Toledo's persecution of mestizos. In fact, he had been punished with exile to Spain by the viceroy's predecessor, Governor Lope García de Castro, for participating in the earlier and more serious mestizo conspiracy of 1567, which allegedly aimed to assassinate high-ranking Spanish officials in Cuzco and Lima⁸. Modern historians have been critical of Garcilaso for inaccuracies such as this one, questioning his knowledge and motives⁹. But poetic license, rather than ignorance about his friend's situation, would seem to be at work here. By rendering Arias Maldonado anachronistically as victim of Toledo's persecution, conflating the mestizo uprisings of the 1560s and the viceroy's onslaught against neo-Inca and mestizo resistance in the 1570s, the narrative gains considerable rhetorical efficacy¹⁰. In the sad and tender image of a destitute and homesick mestizo seeking

⁸ *Gobernantes del Perú. Cartas y papeles, Siglo XVI*. Ed. Roberto Levillier, vol. 3, pp. 226-229, 257.

⁹ See Roberto Levillier, *Francisco de Toledo* (1935).

¹⁰ For an alternative interpretation see Hector López Martínez (1972, pp. 46-47).

financial help from an old friend in order to travel to Peru, only to die within days of arriving in his homeland, Garcilaso joins the viceroy's criminal abuse of power to its tragic consequences¹¹. All the banished mestizos died in exile, according to Garcilaso, and none but the unfortunate Arias Maldonado were able to set foot again in their native land.

In a passage remarkable for its ironic rendering of the plot to commit treason and the grievances that fueled the mestizo unrest, Garcilaso describes the effects of Toledo's offensive:

The mestizos, the sons of the conquerors of the empire by Indian women, were also involved in the charges. They were accused of having conspired with Prince Túpac Amaru and the other Incas to rise in revolt because some of the mestizos were related to the Incas through their mothers, and they had entered the conspiracy by complaining to the Inca, that, though they were the sons of the conquerors of the empire and of Indian mothers, some of whom were of the royal blood and many others of noble families, being daughters, nieces, and grandchildren of curacas, nevertheless they themselves benefited neither from the merits of their fathers nor from the lawful and natural estates of their mothers and grandparents; they were the sons of the worthiest gentlemen of the empire, so they said, yet the governors had seen to it that their own relatives and friends received what their fathers had won and their mothers' people had owned, leaving them destitute, reduced to begging for their bread or forced to live by robbing on the highway and die by hanging. According to the accusation, they had begged the prince to take pity on them, as they too were natives of the empire, and to receive them into his service and admit them as soldiers, in which capacity they would serve him loyally and die if need be. All this was included in the charges against the mestizos. All those in Cuzco of twenty years of age or more and capable of bearing arms were arrested. Some were condemned to torture, in the hope of bringing out what the accusers confusedly feared (*HG*, 1966 [1617], 2, Book 8, chapt. 19, pp. 1474-1475).

The official and rebel perspectives are expressed simultaneously through a double-voiced discourse that insinuates mestizo grievances into the official register of the accusation. From the dissident point of view, the alleged conspiracy is but an act of survival, a desperate reaction to the dire social and economic conditions suffered under colonialism. By allowing the dissident voice to be heard, through and against the official charges, the accusation is made to function as a denunciation of Spanish corruption and injustice. Conflicting political positions (official and dissident) vying for the reader's attention create an intensely ironic image of the mestizos as both avowed traitors and victims of colonial injustice, revealing how the colonial situation in Peru rendered a punishment *de jure* an injustice *de facto*. Tensions uncovered through the double-voiced, ironic treatment of the official charges engage the reader's sympathies and ethical judgment.

Fundamental moral contradictions at the heart of Spanish colonialism are exploited time and again in the *Historia*. In a moving anecdote reminiscent of the creative interpolations Pupo-Walker deemed characteristic of colonial historical narrative, an anonymous Indian woman expresses her outrage at the imprisonment of her mestizo son, railing against colonial injustice:

¹¹ Arias Maldonado had received special license to travel to Peru to attend to his affairs after spending over ten years in exile. He was to return to Spain to live out his life in exile upon expiration of the license.

In the midst of this fury of arrests, charges, and [transgressions], an Indian woman went to visit her son in prison, whom she knew to be among those condemned to torment. She contrived to get to the cell where he was, and shouted: «I know you have been condemned to torture. Suffer and bear it like a man, and accuse no one, for God will help you and repay you for the struggle your father and his companions made to win this land for Christianity and bring its natives into his Church. Shame on them that all you who are sons of the conquerors should die in return for your fathers having won them this empire!» (*HG*, 1966 [1617], 2, Book 8, chapt.19, p. 1475)¹².

The woman's voice in this passage expresses the essence of Garcilaso's criticism of Toledo's campaign against the mestizos—the fundamental injustice of the charges and the punishment, and of the colonial conditions that made them inevitable. Perhaps as a tribute to all the Indian mothers of this unhappy first generation of mestizos, Garcilaso makes the anonymous *india* a focal point of moral authority, agency, and resistance in her denunciation of Spanish iniquity as she urges her son to resist divulging information to the colonial authorities. She is endowed, moreover, with remarkable political acumen and efficacy, for her clamor at the prison was, according to Garcilaso, what finally persuaded the viceroy to desist from his design to execute the mestizos. Nevertheless, as he notes in a haunting phrase that may well contain a personal allusion, it could not save them in the end from the «longer and more painful death» of being exiled from Cuzco to distant parts of the empire¹³. This image, with its unmistakable evocation of Mary and Jesus, victims of Roman colonial power, is iconic. It begs that the Peruvian mother and son be seen as victims of Spanish colonialism, but with an important twist. The Indian woman's protest transforms mother and son from passive sufferers into agents of dissent and resistance, challenging the ethics of Spanish colonialism and the Toledan version of Peruvian history.

«[...] *the saddest event in the whole history of our country, which is indeed a tragedy...*»
(Inca Garcilaso)

The *Historia's* riveting image of the execution of Túpac Amaru puts to the test the notion that any benefit to the colonial community could be derived from ridding Peru of the so called Inca tyranny. The scene opens with the Inca's arrival in Cuzco in the custody of the colonial authorities, followed by a recounting of the charges against him and the mestizos. At the beginning of the next chapter, Garcilaso mentions the banishment of the 36 Incas of royal blood before returning to the climactic series of events leading up the beheading of the Inca: the sentencing of Túpac Amaru, his insistence that he was innocent together with his request for permission to travel to

¹² Livermore renders «delitos» as «condemnations». I could find no justification in modern or 16th century Spanish for his translation. The sense of «delito» is now, as it was in Garcilaso's time, delict, transgression, or crime.

¹³ To see a personal allusion in this phrase, in other words, is to imagine Garcilaso's residence in Spain as not wholly of his own choosing or his own making; it is to see in his departure from Peru in 1560 a dying conquistador's foresight of the dangers his *mestizo* son would face if he remained in Cuzco and in the son's fulfillment of the paternal wishes, a kind of self-exile (Inca Garcilaso, *HG*, 1966 [1617], 2, Book 8, chapt. 17, p. 1476).

Spain in order to plead his case before the king, and his expedited evangelization and baptism¹⁴. The chapter concludes with a description of the general disbelief among the Spanish residents of Cuzco that the sentence would be carried out,

[...] for it seemed contrary to humanity and clemency so to treat a prince bereft of so vast an empire, and it was thought that it would not please King Philip, but on the contrary distress and anger him that the prince had not been allowed to go to Spain (*HG*, 1966 [1617], 2, Book 8, chap.19, p. 1479).

The most striking aspect of the representation of the public beheading is its dramatic staging. In the opening paragraph of chapter 19, the account of the disturbance caused by the sentencing of the Inca and the protests and petitions against its implementation set up the meticulously narrated execution of Túpac Amaru. The reader's attention is drawn first to the women wailing at the entrance to the plaza where the scaffold has been erected, then to the clamoring throng of 300,000 spectators filling the streets, rooftops, windows, and the two squares at the center of the city. The effect is cinematic as the narrative focus pans from the crowd to the scaffold where Túpac Amaru awaits his executioner. Then, as if in slow motion, Garcilaso describes the Inca's final gesture:

The Inca raised his right arm with his hand open, then brought it to his ear, and dropped it gradually to his right thigh. From this the Indians understood that they were being told to be silent and the shouting and crying ceased, as they became so quiet that it seemed as if there was not a living soul in the whole city, to the great astonishment of the Spaniards [...] (*HG*, 1966 [1617], 2, Book 7, chap. 19, p. 1481).

The ironic image of Túpac Amaru's ability to silence the immense crowd and quell the disturbance with a mere gesture, shatters the ethical political pretense of Toledo's charges and sentence. In this performance of the Inca's authority the narrative reaches its unexpected climax. The execution itself is related in a succinct matter-of-fact assertion, almost as if it were an afterthought: «The Inca was then beheaded». Thus the meticulously crafted scene shifts the focus from the decapitation of Inca authority to the ultimate exercise of that authority from the gallows. The effect on the symbolic significance of the execution of the Inca is profound for Garcilaso's image of the beheading of Túpac Amaru exposes Toledo's abuse of power in imposing through regicide an illegitimate colonialist authority.

«A los cuales todos como a hermanos y amigos, parientes y señores míos ruego y suplico se animen y adelanten en el ejercicio de virtud, estudio y milicia ...» (Inca Garcilaso)

The images of Túpac Amaru and of the Indian mother and the mestizo prisoner evoke powerful Christian symbolism. The depiction of the execution harkens back to Jesus's fate at the hands of the Romans while the portrayal of the mestizo and his mother is reminiscent of the imprisonment

¹⁴ In the closing chapters of the *Historia*, Garcilaso repeatedly alludes to the false charges brought against the Inca by Toledo (*HG*, [1966 [1617], 2, Book 8, chapters 16, 18, 19, pp. 1472-1474, 1478, 1480).

and torture he underwent in Jerusalem. Both give voice to the weak and the victimized. In underscoring the agency and authority of the victims, rather than their suffering and resignation, this imagery also constitutes an appropriation of the dominant Spanish Christian culture placed at the service of dissident textual production and reception. Looking at the images now from the perspective of the Peruvian born readers Garcilaso explicitly addressed in the *Historia*, they take on an additional function as mirrors for collective identification and reflection. Garcilaso seems to invite his Peruvian readers to look at and recognize in themselves colonial subjects living and dying within a system of social, political, and economic relations that negated or diminished their agency and authority. In that gesture it is possible to see a summoning of the Indians, Mestizos, and Creoles—classes of subjects that did not exist as such until Spanish colonialism invented them—into a critical awareness of their status¹⁵. But more importantly, it is also possible to see an incitement to action, to seize the moment, no matter how cruel, that history offered them. Thus a colonial community of readers, absent of *españoles*, was imagined and called forth. In such a move there is an ethical political dimension. For in bringing together through the reciprocal agencies of writing and reception a colonial community of his fellow Peruvians, Garcilaso challenged the crippling subjectivities imposed by colonialism in a speech-act that was at once critical and decolonizing.

The profound implications of that unprecedented invitation become evident upon closer examination of the interlocutory relationship Garcilaso established with his Peruvian readers. In the «Prologue» he hailed an audience bound together by affection, fraternity, friendship, and homeland. It was a bond the writer shared and acknowledged in the salutation, where he identified himself as «El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, su hermano, compatriota, y paisano» (*HG*, 1944 [1617], Prólogo, p. 9). In conceiving the act of writing as a service to the Indians, Mestizos, and Creoles of Peru, and eliciting their response, Garcilaso rendered textual production and reception into forms of colonial agency.

The broad semantic range of the verb 'to serve', in English as in the Spanish, includes the connotations of beneficence, obedience, subservience, instrumentality, and mediation. In the paratexts that preface Garcilaso's works the verb «servir» and its nominal form «servicio» appear in the context of complex performances of vassalage and patronage. Following rhetorical convention, the writer conceives of himself as an instrument of, and his writing as a service to, noble or royal authorities; he is also a supplicant seeking protection and favor for his work. In the dedication to the King (1586) that prefaces *La traducción del indio de los tres diálogos de León Hebreo*, for example, there are no fewer than eight references to the text as a service or to the author as servant, not counting similar references in a second note to the king written in 1589 pleading that he have the book evaluated by the censors¹⁶. In the second dedication, to the

¹⁵ On the emergence of the Indians as a class in Peru during sixteenth and seventeenth centuries see the classic studies by Woodrow Borah and Magnus Mörner (1970). More recently, Stern and Silverblatt, respectively, have enhanced our understanding of the question. On the early colonial emergence of the classes *mestizo* and *criollo* see, Mörner (1967) and Lipschutz.

¹⁶ This was apparently because the book had sat unexamined since he had submitted it to the Crown's censors three years earlier.

royal councillor Maximiliano de Austria who had expressed an early interest in the translation, he employs a similar rhetoric of service. Time and again he reiterated the same formula, in the dedications of *La Florida del Inca* (1605) to the Duke of Braganza, and of the *Comentarios reales de los Incas* to the duke's wife, Princess Catalina of Portugal (1609). Years later, in a masterful rhetorical move, he interpolated into the *Historia's* prologue the earlier dedications to the King and to Maximiliano de Austria, strategically positioned in their new context to lead into the affirmation of his commitment to serve his fellow Peruvians. In this way, those remarkable words quoted now in full—«Porque sólo mis desseos son de servirles, que es el fin desta corónica y su dedicatoria, en que ella y su autor se dedican a quienes en todo y por todo dessean agradar y honrar, reconocer y dar a conocer. Y así les suplico y pido por merced me la hagan tan grande de aceptar este pequeño presente, con la voluntad y ánimo con que se ofrece, que siempre ha sido de ilustrar nuestra patria y parientes» (*HG*, [1617] 1944, Prólogo, p. 16)—are made to resonate over and against the conventional dedications to the King, his official, and members of the Iberian nobility. An important effect of the transposition, rhetorically speaking, is to elevate the Indians, Mestizos, and Creoles of Peru to an interlocutory status equivalent to that of the King and his councillor. But there is much more, for the writer also commits to serve his Peruvian readers, supplicates their collective favor for a text written largely to recognize and honor them, and urges them to respond by acting in collectively to advance their interests. Thus the traditional European models for relationships of patronage and vassalage are turned on their heads. The implications for the writer are profound, for the metaphor of writing as service becomes a trope for Garcilaso's figurative reintegration—through an act of cultural agency that could only be fully meaningful in Peru—into the colonial community he had left when he sailed for Spain almost half a century earlier¹⁷.

From the perspective of the final book of *Historia General del Perú*, Spanish Peru comes into view as the dystopian negative of Incan Peru, in Andean terms a world turned upside down. In ways not dissimilar to the *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615) of his compatriot Guaman Poma de Ayala, Garcilaso's history repeatedly puts into question the political certainties and morality of colonialism. The spurious concept of justice espoused by Spanish officials is countered with a dissident ethics responsive to the tragic ironies of life in colonial Peru. In each of Garcilaso's intensely ironic images there is an implicit response to, and an indictment of, the principle of «the common good», touted by Matienzo as justification for his colonialist program, later taken to perverse extremes by Toledo in the implementation of his «final solution» to anti-colonial resistance. Collectively, these images add up to a critique of colonialism that legitimizes—indeed provokes—dissent. Garcilaso invites his addressees—the colonial community of Indians, Mestizos and Creoles to whom he dedicated his work—to consider their own fate and their homeland's. He places in their hands the exercise of ethical-political judgment to interpret the past and to make the difficult choices that would determine the course of Peruvian history in the future.

¹⁷ Garcilaso left for Spain at the age of 20, in 1560. Three years later he applied for and obtained permission from the Crown to return to Peru. He traveled to Sevilla in that same year, but for reasons unknown decided to remain in Spain. Varner offers several interesting hypotheses about the factors that may have contributed to that decision (1968, pp. 223-225).