CONVERSATIONS ACROSS TIME AND SPACE:
CLASSICAL TRADITIONS IN THE ANDES

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On a June night in 1557, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, courtier, soldier, imperial official, man of letters and historian, lay on his deathbed, clasping in his hands the key to the fortress of Santo Domingo of which he had

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1 For knowing the answers to many questions, finding and passing on useful information and for their friendship, I thank Clifford Ando, Javier Barrios and Peggy Liss. Sadly, Rob Loomis, whose learning is equalled by his generous willingness to share it, is leaving Ann Arbor. I will miss him greatly and am very grateful that he was still here while I was writing this paper. I would also like to thank the staff of the Clements Library for making research in the Library such a lovely experience.

been commandant, alcaide, during the preceding thirty-four years. His life had been long and eventful. In his youth, he had served in the household of the Infante Don Juan, son of Ferdinand and Isabel, at whose side he witnessed the capture of Granada. After the Infante’s premature death in 1498, Oviedo spent some time in Italy. Long afterwards, he was still exchanging letters with some of the eminent Italians whom he had met during those years. In 1514, he sailed for the Indies. Like so many others, he failed to make his fortune, but in 1532, the emperor Charles V appointed him as royal historian, and in January of the following year, he became alcaide of Santo Domingo. From this vantage point he observed the many comings and goings across the Atlantic and gathered material for his General and Natural History of the Indies, which had reached, by the year of his death, the impressive length of fifty books.

Oviedo’s model and inspiration for this work was the Elder Pliny, Roman imperial official, soldier and polymath. In about 78 AD, Pliny dedicated his

Passages from original sources are cited by book and chapter (at times, for ease of reference, I add page numbers), and where applicable, by section or line. I supply details of editions of classical texts only when they are not available in the Loeb Classical Library (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass.), which gives the original text with English translation on facing pages. All translations are my own. In places, I adjust translations to their context in this paper, for greater clarity.

2 Claudio Miralles de Imperial y Gómez, Del linaje y armas del primer Cronista de Indias, el madrileño Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, Revista de Indias 18 (Seville 1958), pp. 117-126, at p. 124, transcript of a contemporary account of Oviedo’s death and the appointment of a successor.

3 For an account of Oviedo’s life, see Juan Pérez de Tudela Bueso, in his edition of Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, Historia general y natural de las Indias vol. 1, pp. vii-clxxv.

Natural History, a monumental summary of the knowledge of his time about the order of the cosmos and everything in it, to the Emperor Vespasian, or so Oviedo thought. Pliny’s words of dedication evoke his devotion, indeed reverence, towards the bearer of the highest Roman dignity, but they also speak of his heartfelt admiration for the emperor’s qualities of mind and heart. These sentiments anticipate exactly Oviedo’s feelings towards Charles V, who in the eyes of many contemporaries, was the direct successor of the Roman emperors of classical antiquity. In addition, Pliny’s programme of writing a work that would be useful in practical terms matched Oviedo’s aims and circumstances perfectly. Where Pliny left no volume he could lay hands on unconsulted, Oviedo in his turn gathered reports from the Caribbean, Central America, and Mexico, from Venezuela and the Río de La Plata, which appear in his pages alongside further reports that chronicle the tempestuous and tragic history of the Andean region during the years that he served as alcaide of Santo Domingo.

Those years witnessed the Spanish invasion and conquest of the empire of the Incas. Oviedo heard the tale from various onlookers and participants. Informants described how Francisco Pizarro and his men, among them his brothers Hernando and Gonzalo, fell in with the Inca emperor Atahualpa in Cajamarca, and then captured, imprisoned and finally executed him, in July 1533. Not long before the Inca died, Francisco Pizarro’s friend of many years, Diego de Almagro, had arrived with reinforcements. But soon the friendship between the two men came to naught in the rush of competition for wealth and power that consumed the invaders once the Inca imperial fabric began to fall apart. In 1538 Diego de Almagro was defeated by Gonzalo Pizarro and was mercilessly executed. Three years later, the deed was avenged when followers of Almagro’s son murdered Francisco Pizarro in his own house and took control of Peru. Reports of these events that Oviedo heard in Santo Domingo

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6 Or possibly, according to Oviedo, the emperor Domitian, see Oviedo, Historia book 2, chapter 1. Actually, the work is dedicated to Vespasian’s son, the future emperor Titus. 7 Oviedo was aware of this parallel between Pliny and himself, see his Historia general y natural book I, chapter 1, p. 14.

8 Marie Tanner, The Last Descendant of Aeneas. The Hapsburgs and the Mythic Image of the Emperor (Yale University Press, New Haven 1993); see also, José Antonio Maravall, Carlos V y el pensamiento político del Renacimiento (Instituto de Estudios Políticos, Madrid 1960).

9 In the first book of the Naturalis historia, Pliny provides a table of contents, chapter by chapter, of each of the remaining 36 books, and also, for each book, a list of Greek and Roman authorities whom he consulted; Oviedo echoed this arrangement, albeit somewhat cursorily, Historia general book 1, chapter 1. See also, Pliny, Naturalis historia preface 13.

10 See below n. 113.
led the Council of the Indies in Spain to intervene on the side of the Pizarrist faction, which resulted in the execution of the Younger Almagro in 1542. Meanwhile in Spain, searching of consciences about the appalling suffering that the invaders were inflicting on the Indian populations of the Americas moved Bartolomé de las Casas, Dominican friar and bishop of Chiapas in Mexico to pressure the Crown into issuing a set of "New Laws" protecting the Indians, and Blasco Nuñez Vela, a devoted servant of Charles V, was sent to Peru as viceroy to implement the Laws. Whereupon many of the invaders, by now comfortably established on grants of land that had been assigned them by Francisco Pizarro, rallied round his brother Gonzalo, made war on, and killed the Viceroy. Shortly before news of this disaster reached Spain, Pedro de la Gasca had been appointed, with extensive powers, to recover Peru for the crown. La Gasca was a man more of the pen than of the sword, and his prudent diplomacy succeeded where force on its own had failed. The disorders of Peru were not over, but a state of relative peace was gradually established, with a line of viceroys succeeding each other, beginning with Antonio de Mendoza, in September 1551.

Meanwhile, Oviedo, hearing and reading about all this in Santo Domingo, contemplated the fearful destinies of his countrymen. How was it that Pizarros and Almagros, men at the peak of power and possessing fortunes that exceeded even the legendary riches of king Midas, had come to such terrible ends? Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro: they had started out as exemplary friends, like Damon and Pythias of old, whose readiness to die for each other, so Oviedo read in the Roman epitomator Valerius Maximus, had softened even the heart of the cruel tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse. And yet, in the case of Pizarro and Almagro, Oviedo felt, it would have been better had...
they never met; indeed, it would have been better had the Pizarros not been born, given that Peru could not be at peace with any of them alive. Diego de Almagro, by contrast, was a living example of the kind of virtue that in ancient times had transformed Rome from a tiny rural settlement into the capital of a world empire. Like some of Rome’s kings and the great dictator Quinctius Cincinnatus, Diego de Almagro was the “son of a peasant and grandson of other peasants ... tillers of the land, men who live by their sweat and labour.”

But at the same time, he was a leader of men, the only one of the conquistadores, in Oviedo’s estimation, who consistently accommodated the interests of his followers and of His Majesty before and above his own. “I am amazed,” Oviedo wrote, “and often debate with myself the cause of such bloody histories (as those of Peru), and am stunned at the evil ends reached by the majority of these governors of the Indies.”

In one sense, the reason lay in the nature of human affairs, which were changeable. Oviedo himself had witnessed, in Europe alone, the destruction of the kingdom of Naples, the fall of Lodovico Sforza despot of Milan, the accidental and utterly unexpected death of Charles de Bourbon during the siege of Rome, and the capture of Granada by the Catholic Kings. Beyond all that, many other “reversals of human affairs and revolutions of states” that had occurred in classical antiquity came to Oviedo’s mind, and he also reflected on the absence of Aristotelian or any other kind of prudence in the lives and actions of men.

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14 Oviedo, Historia book 46, chapter 1; book 49, chapter 6; book 49, chapter 9, respectively; cf. 49, 9 Oviedo’s prayer “que esta secta pizarrena se acabe.”
15 Oviedo, Historia book 47, preface, hijo de un labrador y nieto de otros ... agricultores hombres que por sus sudores e trabajos viven. For the poverty of Cincinnatus, mentioned by Oviedo, see Valerius Maximus, Factorum et dictorum 4, 4, 7 under the heading “on poverty,” and, for the passage from Augustine that Oviedo mentions, Augustine, City of God 5, 18; The three Roman kings Oviedo mentions, Tullus Hostilius, Servius Tullius and Tarquinius Priscus, appear in Valerius Maximus as examples of “men of humble birth who became famous,” Factorum et dictorum 7, 4, 1-3; Valerius Maximus and Augustine took their information from the longer narrative of Livy, whom Oviedo had also read, see Livy, Ab urbe condita I, 23-31; 35-48; III, 26, 8.
17 Oviedo, Historia book 48, preface, p. 211 ab, Estoy maravillado y conmigo solo muchas veces disputando la causa de tan sangrientas historias como son aquestas, e no poco admirado de tan malos fines como han hecho la mayor parte de estos gobernadores de Indias.
18 Oviedo added to the list the death of Cesare Borgia and the death of Charles de Bourbon during the sack of Rome, see Historia book 48, chapter 2. See further on this passage, Gerbi, Nature pp. 180-181.
19 A powerful phrase, Oviedo, Historia book 48, chapter 2: las mudanzas de las potencias humanas y revoluciones de estados.
of the conquerors of Peru. Oviedo did not live to describe in detail how Pedro de La Gasca defeated Gonzalo Pizarro, the “enemy of his homeland,” although he sensed that “this war, worse than civil war, and no less hellish,” was drawing to a close. The term “enemy of his homeland,” hostis patriae, recurs frequently in the political discourse of the later Roman republic, and the words “war, worse than civil war” recall the opening line of Lucan’s epic poem the Pharsalia, which describes the civil war between Caesar and Pompey. It was worse than civil war, Lucan was suggesting, because Caesar and Pompey were linked by ties of marriage, just as Pizarro and Almagro, as Oviedo had stressed, were linked by ties of friendship.

This same topic also interested the soldier historian Pedro Cieza de León, who spent the years between 1535 and 1550 in South America. Among other revealing episodes, Cieza recorded a conversation between Diego de Almagro and an aged Spanish lawyer. Given that the vexations that partisans of Pizarros and Almagros were inflicting on each other were “no less than if (the
opponent) were the infidel, or another nation," the lawyer pleaded for moderation:

The wars that are most feared and that are fought with the greatest cruelty are civil wars. No enemy of Rome, not Hannibal, Pyrrhus, or any other nation, ever placed her in such straits as did her own citizens, and those enemies, in all the wars that were fought in the course of seven hundred years did less harm to Rome that did Sulla and Marius, and the great Pompey and Julius Caesar in the civil wars... If thus now, having served His Majesty for so many years, you turn yourselves into authors of civil wars in your old age, what do you think you will gain from them, other than this, that once you are all dead, you will have become murderers of each other?^

Earlier, the lawyer had endeavoured to make clear to Hernando Pizarro that there could be no real victors in civil wars. But all to no purpose, for soon Almagro was dead and his son's followers murdered Francisco Pizarro. Here also, Cieza perceived a Roman antecedent; for just as Caesar had resolutely refused to listen to friends who warned him of the conspiracy against him, so did Pizarro, and both died nobly. Caesar was derided as a tyrant by his assassins, and so was Pizarro. Caesar's death so far from ending civil


24 Cieza, Crónica IV,1 chapter 20, pp. 93-94.

25 Hernando Pizarro was at the time Almagro's prisoner; see Cieza, Crónica IV,1 chapter 19, see p.89 quedando Hernando Pizarro muy deseoso de que se concertasen con... don Diego de Almagro: but this was only so as to gain his freedom. Once that was achieved, Hernando Pizarro acted on his implacable hatred of Almagro, and was instrumental in Almagro's death.

26 Cieza admired Francisco Pizarro as a man of great valour deserving of everlasting glory; see Cieza, Crónica del Perú. Cuarta Parte. Vol. II. Guerra de Chupas (hereafter Crónica IV,2) chapter 31, p. 118: facing his assassins, el anciano governador no dexava con su denudo de querer que la fama que nunca muere, tuviese un punto de menoscabar el gran valor con que su persona se adornava; tan animoso y fuerte de corazon se mostrava... But Pizarro was lacking in wisdom and letters: how else could he have failed to learn from the story of Caesar's death that he ought not to discount the many warnings he received of the coming danger? See Cieza, Crónica IV,2, chapter 30.

27 For Caesar's death, see Suetonius, Divus Julius 81-82; also Plutarch, Caesar (in Plutarch's Lives ed. and tr. B. Perrin, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. 1986, volume 7) 63-66; Agustín de Zárate read and imitated Plutarch, see Historia 4,9, 5,4. The passage was appreciated by Garcilaso, Historia general 3,7 p. 183b: Augstín de Zaráte como tan buen historiador, imitando al gran Plutarco, semeja estos dos famosos y desdichados españoles mal pagados del mundo el uno al otro...

28 Zárate, Historia 4,8, "Muera el tyrano..." Cieza, Crónica IV,2, chapter 31, on "death to the tyrant." See also chapter 30, p. 112, comparing the murder of Pizarro to that of Julius
conflict at Rome, broadened its scope, and the same happened in Peru, especially once Gonzalo Pizarro, after eliminating the Younger Almagro, made war on the viceroy Blasco Nuñez Vela. In Rome, Cieza reflected, the defenders of the republic had thrown in their lot with Pompey, believing, in their simplicity, that he "only fought for the common good; but God only knows what he would have done had he been victorious instead of being vanquished." In Peru, by contrast, Gonzalo Pizarro was victorious. People wanted to believe that he would represent their interests, but he, "having more time than did Pompey to make clear the intentions that he carried in his tyrant's heart, demonstrated what these intentions were." 29

Peru was only an outpost in the Spanish empire where the sun never set, but the resonances that Oviedo and Cieza discovered between the history of Rome and that of Peru contributed towards endowing the history of Peru with grandeur and a certain exemplary quality that it retains to this day. This was not only a matter of juxtaposing events and personages, but also, more importantly, it was a matter of comprehending something of the nature of political events, of the interaction between circumstance and character.

Historians who wrote about these events contrasted Mexico, where the New Laws, with some modifications, were introduced gradually and peacably, 30 with Peru, where Nuñez Vela aroused opposition before he even set foot in Lima by short sightedly insisting on immediate and complete implementation. 31 In the same way, Alexander the Great's general Polydamas, so Cieza had read in Quintus Curtius and Arrian, blindly carried out his king's command to murder Parmenio and his sons: the charge caused Polydamas

Caesar. With all that, the precedent of Julius Caesar described as tyrant by his assassins is likely to have been less important to those who killed Pizarro than the precedent of Castilian juridical thinking; see, on tyranny, Las Siete Partidas del sabio rey don Alonso el nono glosadas por el Licenciado Gregario López (Benito Cano, Madrid 1789) II,1,10, and note the commentary.


30 Cieza, Crónica IV,3 chapter 19, mentioning Antonio de Mendoza; in greater detail Diego Fernández, Primera y segunda parte de la historia del Perú (Seville 1571; ed. Juan Pérez de Tudela Bueso (BAE vols. 164-165, Madrid 1963; hereafter Historia) I,1,2-5.

31 Oviedo thought that the viceroy, for all his stem devotion to the Crown, had been swept away by the pomp and circumstance of being received in Lima like "our lord the emperor."

For they placed him under a baldachino of cloth of gold, aldermen and community leaders carried his rods of office, and while he rode on horseback, they walked on foot, ... so that, apart from his ambition and desire to occupy a high estate, the celebration augmented in him the passion for power... instead of fostering the modesty with which prudent men temper their pleasures. (Oviedo, Historia 49,7 p.248a).
"much sorrow, but attending only to what the king had ordered, Polydamas struck down Parmenio, thereby placing himself in very great difficulty.\textsuperscript{32} In either case, Cieza thought, delay would have been preferable to such unbending adherence to the royal will. For it was thanks to Nuñez Vela’s intransigence in promulgating the New Laws that many inhabitants of Lima and Cuzco, in sheer dread that they would soon become destitute, gathered around Gonzalo Pizarro even though they would have preferred to stay on the King’s side.\textsuperscript{33}

There was another quality that Nuñez Vela lacked, that could have been acquired by patient perusal of the ancient historians and would have served Peru well, and this was the art of dissimulation.\textsuperscript{34} The Roman consul Fulvius Flacchus, Cieza thought, possessed it in ample measure. He had been sent by the Senate to punish the city of Capua for defecting to the side of Hannibal in the Second Punic War, and wisely awaited the appropriate time to carry out his mandate.\textsuperscript{35} As Plato had taught, one should act bearing in mind the likely outcome of one’s actions.\textsuperscript{36} Nuñez Vela, however, failed to do this, he did not know how to wait and, as Oviedo had also understood, he was too proud to dissimulate.\textsuperscript{37} The course he chose, accordingly, led him straight to his death,

Cieza also reflected on the passion for power, the impulse that Augustine in the \textit{City of God} had decried as the besetting sin of the Romans; Augustine adopted the term passion, or lust for power, \textit{libido dominationis}, from the Roman historian Sallust (whose work, like the \textit{City of God}, was readily available when Cieza and other historians of Peru wrote), see S. MacCormack, \textit{The Shadows of Poetry. Vergil in the Mind of Augustine} (University of California Press, Berkeley 1998), pp. 194-195). Cieza described this passion as \textit{unsaçiable codici a de mandar}, see Cieza, Preface to \textit{Crónica IV}, 1, and thought it was at work in the Peruvian civil wars, but in a more general non-specific manner than did Oviedo; cf below n. 86.

\textsuperscript{32} Cieza, \textit{Crónica IV}, 3 chapter 33, p.92

\textsuperscript{33} Cieza, \textit{Crónica IV}, 3 chapter 33, pp.92-93.

\textsuperscript{34} See Cieza, \textit{Crónica IV}, 3, chapter 39, where Cieza puts into the mouth of the \textit{oidor} Cepeda the following advice (pp. 105-106): muchas veces los príncipes disimulan con los subditos asta ver tiempo convenible para esecutar el castigo...


\textsuperscript{36} Cieza, \textit{Crónica IV}, 3, chapter 39; the context is Nunez Vela’s arrogant treatment of the \textit{oidores} of the Audiencia of Lima. Possibly the passage Cieza had in mind is from the biography of Plato in Diogenes Laertius, \textit{Lives of eminent philosophers} III, 80.

\textsuperscript{37} Oviedo, \textit{Historia} 49, chapter 8, p. 248, the viceroy “no quiso dissimular.” See also the advice of the licenciado Cepeda, who urged Nunez Vela to delay promulgation of the New Laws: \textit{Crónica IV}, 3, 33 Muchas veces los principes disimulan con los subditos asta ver tiempo convenible para esecutar el castigo.
which provided yet another "testimony of the savagery with which civil wars are fought, and of the crimes committed by those who chose to follow the cruel ensigns of Pizarro." 38

The tenor of events in Peru finally changed with the advent of Pedro de La Gasca, a man of significant learning who, as Cieza understood well, possessed a truly penetrating intelligence and was a consummate practitioner of the art of dissimulation. 39 Hence, over a period of some months, he was able to win over some of Gonzalo Pizarro's staunchest adherents without striking a single blow, and in due course, he gained control of Peru. 40 This evaluation of La Gasca's skill at dissimulation and of his consequent success was shared by Diego Fernández 31 whose Historia del Perú was published in Seville in 1571. Some twenty years had elapsed since Oviedo and Cieza had finished writing, and the import of classical antiquity for historians of Peru, and indeed for historians at large, had shifted. Also, the times themselves had changed. When Cieza asked himself why, in the last resort, "there has been so much uproar and dissension in this new empire of the Indies," he offered this explanation:

It is because His Majesty and those of his excellent Council have entrusted the government of the provinces to men without letters, many of whom have no integrity or stature to administer justice. Note that of old, the Romans who with

38 Cieza, Crónica IV,3, chapter 169, p. 523.
39 Zárate, Historia 6,7, commenting on La Gasca's "prudencia y secreto," his ability to win support thanks to the "gran comedimiento y crianza con que hablava y tratava a todos ... con no perder punto de su dignidad y autoridad;" Cieza, Crónica IV,3 chapter 188, on La Gasca: he is "de muy claro entendimiento, manoso en grande estremo, bastantissimo para medios y uno de los que mejor con dissimulacion supieron hazer sus hechos."
40 In the final battle, between La Gasca and Gonzalo Pizarro, Roman precedent also had a voice. See Agustín de Záárate Historia 7,7: when the battle of Xaquixaguana was clearly lost, el capitan Juan de Acosta dixo a Goncalo Picarro: Señor, demos enellos, muramos como Romanos. A lo qual dizen que respondió Goncalo Picarro: Mejor es morir como christiano. The story is also in the Relación anónima de los disturbios ... en el Perú a consecuencia de unas ordenanzas atribuidas a fr. Bartolomé de las Casas y ... muerte de Gonzalo Pizarro, in Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y colonización de las posesiones españolas en América y Oceania vol. 3 (Madrid 1865), pp.514-526 ast p.524. Garcilaso de la Vega, Historia general (above n. 29) 5,36 also tells the story, which has the ring of truth. In 1562, a planned revolt was discovered in Cuzco, and ferociously punished, in which the conspirators proposed to hacer cuatro consules como en el tiempo del senado romano de manera que si matassen a uno quedassen los demas para govermar, porque no fuese lo de hasta aqui que en perdiendose la caveca se desperdiguan los demas, Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Justicia 1088 fol. 1v.; cf. fol. 15.
41 known from his native city of Palencia as "El Palentino;" this is how Garcilaso referred to him.
their wisdom ruled the world, would not ever have entrusted any public office
to a man who was not wise and educated in the law.42

By the time Cieza left Peru, however, the conquistadores, “men without
letters,” who had been in control so far, were already being replaced by
members of a new elite, men “educated in the law.” Pedro de la Gasca was
among the vanguard of these administrators with highly trained minds.43 This
political transformation, which affected all parts of the Spanish empire and also
the Peninsula, changed the tenor of historical writing.

Oviedo and Cieza had formulated specific analogies between the history of
antiquity, especially of Rome, and the history of Peru. These analogies were
designed to help the reader understand and remember the sequence and nature
of events: to grasp what happened, why it did, and why it mattered. Diego
Fernández also included such analogies in his History. 44 Beyond that, however,
he was the first of the historians of Peru to write in the light of learned considerations about the nature of political life in general. In part, this shift in direction was brought about by Fernández’ subject matter: the cosmic struggle between Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro, who had inspired those grand comparisons with Caesar and Pompey, was being continued in the next generation, but among lesser men. This led to a shift in narrative strategy among the historians of Peru. Livy, and to a lesser degree Sallust, Plutarch, and Diodorus, who had inspired Cieza and his contemporaries, made of history the “teacher of life,” in Cicero’s famous saying, precisely because their accounts of great men and notable events were instructive in the here and now. Fernández and his contemporaries, by contrast, looked not so much for stories from the past, as for general principles. They found these in Tacitus, who wrote about the first century of Roman imperial rule. He described himself as the historian not of memorable events or individuals, but of a period devoid of greatness that “abounded in disasters, was pitiless in battles, riven by discord, and cruel even in peace.” It was Tacitus’ capacity for dispassionate observation as for example, about the pluses and minuses of dissimulation, that appealed to Fernández. Dissimulation was a virtue, in the emperor Tiberius as much as in Pedro de la Gasca. Indeed, it was indispensable: without it, La Gasca could never have brought peace to Peru. But it also was a vice, a form of hypocrisy and a means of deceiving others as much as oneself, as the emperor Tiberius did in many of his transactions with the Roman senate, and as some Peruvian opponents of the New Laws did in their dealings with the Viceroy Blasco Nunez Vela:

45 Cicero, De Oratore (On the Orator) 2,36 historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vestustatis ... “History the witness of the times, the light of truth, the life of memory, the teacher of life, and messenger of antiquity ...” The passage was alluded to by Cieza, Crónica 1, prohemiop. 14; also Diego Fernández, Historia preface to Philip II; Martín de Murúa, Historia general del Perú ed. M. Ballestero-Gaibrois (Coleccion Joyas Bibliograficas. Biblioteca americana vetus I, Madrid 1962, hereafter Historia) preface to the reader.

46 Tacitus, Histories 1,2 opus 2 adgredior opimum casibus, atrox proeliis, discors seditionibus, ipsa etiam pace saevum.

47 See Ronald Syme, Tacitus (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1958), pp. 423 and 429, for example of negative and positive dissimulation, respectively, in Tacitus. Regarding the latter, Syme cites Tacitus, Annals 4,71,3, nullam aequae Tiberius, ut rebatur, ex virtutibus suis quam dissimulationem diligebat; eo aegrius accepit recludi quae premeret. “Tiberius valued none of his virtues, as he considered them, more highly than dissimulation; all the more vexed was he when something he had suppressed was revealed.”

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"their spirits were poisoned..., but they covered this passion with a crafty and false dissimulation." 

Fernández stood at the very beginning of the Tacitist movement in Spain. By the time that, in the early seventeenth century, Antonio de Herrera was writing his *General History of the Indies*, parts of which were translated into Latin, English, Dutch and German, and several times reprinted, the influence of Tacitus was ubiquitous. It is ubiquitous in Herrera. Effectively, he produced a double narrative: an account of events in the Americas arranged, in the manner of Tacitus, as annals, and a running commentary on this account consisting of quotations likewise from Tacitus. Herrera derived much of his material from Cieza’s histories of the Peruvian civil wars, which were not published until the nineteenth century. But there is not a trace here of Caesar or Pompey, nor yet of Alexander the Great, or of anyone else from among Cieza’s cast of characters from the ancient world.

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48 Fernández, *Historia* 1,1,9 pp.15b-16a, tenían los animas tan empozoñados como está dicho, todavía cubriendo esta pasión con una mañosa y fingida simulación ... For La Gasca’s dissimulation, see 1,2,21, p.128a; also, on related qualities 1,2,24, p.132a, secrecy; 1,2,25, p. 133b, prudence; 1,2,82, p.219a, concealment of feeling. Also, 1,2,28, p. 140b, a transaction that is to remain concealed.

49 In effect, to the best of my knowledge, he has not been recognized as a Tacitist before, and predates the onset of Tacitism in Spain as commonly described. On this topic, see Jose Maravall, La corriente doctrinal del Tacitismo politico en España, in his *Estudios de historia del pensamiento español. Serie tercera. El siglo del barroco* (Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, Madrid 1984), pp. 73-98; Francisco Sanmarti Boncampo, *Tacito en España* (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Barcelona 1951), is still of some use; so is Kenneth Schellhase, *Tacitus in Renaissance Political Thought* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1976), except that, like so many others, he all but ignores Spain. As for the beginning of Tacitism in Spain, note Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Foundations of Modern Historiography* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1990), p. 124: “Machiavellian Italy led the Tacitist movement, and Spain, France, and Germany followed - I venture to believe - in this order.” Momigliano did not discuss the issue further, but I think the order he posits, although it contradicts the existing scholarly consensus, is right. Future work on Tacitism can still usefully begin with Giuseppe Toffanin’s classic, *Machiavelli e il “Tacitismo”* (Guida Editori, Napoli 1971, first published in 1921).

50 On Scoto, see Arnaldo Momigliano, The first political commentary on Tacitus, in his *Contributo alla storia degli studi classici* (Rome 1979), pp.36-59.

51 Herrera observed that, since arbitration between Francisco Pizarro and the elder Almagro was unlikely to work, "war seemed safer to Almagro than a dubious and suspect peace," while in the margin he printed the dictum from Tacitus, "In a suspect peace, war is safer;" see Antonio de Herrera, *Historia general de los hechos de los Castellanos en las islas y tierra firme del mar oceano* (4 vols., Madrid 1601-1615; the work is subdivided into Decades, books and chapters, and I cite it accordingly; hereafter *Historia general*) 6,3,3: sobre todo, era cosa mas segura la guerra, que una paz dudosa y sospechosa, with et in pace suspecta, tutius bellum, Tacitus,
Like all other historians who wrote about the Peruvian civil wars, Herrera criticized the intransigence of Blasco Nuñez Vela in implementing the New Laws: the Viceroy’s literal minded devotion to his King’s every behest lacked political acumen. This much had been observed before by others, but Herrera added a new dimension. Quoting Tacitus, he commented: “Good reason of state requires that in obeying the prince, we do not endanger his kingdom.”

Throughout Europe, reason of state was the order of the day during most of the seventeenth century. It meant, *inter alia*, that in the very last resort, the end justified the means, and that the virtue of prudence, praised by philosophers from Aristotle onwards, found one of its finer modes of expression in the art of dissimulation. Herrera put it in a nutshell:

Dissimulation enshrines a certain evident virtue which participates to a degree in prudence, the queen of all the moral virtues; persons of wisdom and good sense, not the ignorant and vulgar, will know how to use it, for they comprehend times, opportunities and the nature of those with whom they interact.

In Peru, however, things were understood differently. How differently, begins to emerge from the *General History of Peru* which is the second part of Garcilaso de la Vega’s *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*. Garcilaso, a

*Histories* 4, 49, 1. Francisco López de Gómara, *Historia general* chapter 139 attributes to Pizarro exactly the opposite saying, “era mejor mala concordia que prospera guerra.” The difference is an indicator of the extent of the Tacitist impact on Herrera, and also, perhaps, of historiographical partisanship not long after the civil wars ended.

Herrera, *Historia general* 7, 7, 14, La buena razón de estado pide que por obedecer al principeno se le ponga su reyeno en peligro. The quote from Tacitus (somewhat garbled in Herrera) is *Annals* 2, 78: haud ignavo ad ministeria belli iuvene Pisone, quamquam susci piendum bellum abnuisset. “The young Piso took an active part in preparing for war, even though he disagreed with war being begun.” Another, more tightly woven link with Tacitus is *Historia general* 7, 7, 20: Gonzalo Pizarro, planning to oppose the Viceroy Nunez Vela, is ensconced in Cuzco, a remote and affluent city that affords the budding rebel good protection. Herrera quotes Tacitus, *Annals* 3, 43 Apud Aeduos maior moles exorta quanto civitas opulentior et comprimendi procul praesidium. “Among the Aedui trouble came in amore serious form, since the city was wealthier (than was the city of the Treveri), and military might to suppress (the revolt) was far away,” the context being that a revolt among the Treveri had just been suppressed by the Roman legions stationed nearby on the Rhine. So: Herrera envisioned the Peruvian coast and Lima as analogous to the Rhine with the Roman legions, and with nearby Trier (the city of the Treveri), while Cuzco was the equivalent of the rebellious city of the Aedui.

Herrera, *Historia general* 7, 6, 3 La disimulación contiene en si un no sé de aparente virtud, que participa algo de la prudencia, Reyna de todas las virtudes morales, de la qual no saben aprovecharse los ignorantes y groseros sino los cuerdoys sagazes, que conocen los tiempos, las ocasiones, y la naturaleza de los hombres con quien tratan. Similarly in *Historia general* 5, 6, 1.
conemporary of Herrera, was born in Cuzco in 1540 and spent his adult life in Spain, but his thoughts and ideas remained rooted in the Andes. Growing up as the son of the conquistador Garcilaso de la Vega and an Inca royal lady, Garcilaso the historian had ideas about the Peruvian civil wars that diverged radically from those of everyone else. Like his father, who abandoned the side of Gonzalo Pizarro at the last possible moment, Garcilaso the historian was a Pizarrist and thought that Diego de Almagro had needlessly exposed Peru to years of bloodshed and civil war. But unlike Herrera and other historians who had written about Peru, Garcilaso communicated his judgements by implication, rather than explicitly.

In concrete, tangible terms, he wrote his history, as he repeatedly stated, merely to serve as a commentary on the work of those who had gone before him, and quoted them extensively. Where thus Herrera's History took the shape of a commentary on Tacitus, Garcilaso's was a commentary on earlier historians of Peru. On the surface, therefore, Garcilaso offered no more than modifications of what had been known and understood earlier. But that was not the whole story. Everyone who wrote about the Peruvian civil wars worried about how to explain why they happened: comparisons with Caesar and Pompey, analogies with events recounted by Tacitus, and scrutiny of the passions that motivate human action all

54 Garcilaso maintained contacts in Peru throughout his life, see Comentarios reales 9,40 p.384 a; Historia general 8,21 p.174; for the power of attorney given by the Incas of Cuzco to Garcilaso, Melchior Carlos Inca, Alonso Fernández de Mesa and Alonso Marquez de Figueroa, see Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Lima 472, Poder de los Yngas, 1603.

55 Unlike other historians, Garcilaso admits no faults in Francisco Pizarro, who, as he saw it, could "never ever be sufficiently praised," diremos otras excelencias de este caballero nunca jamas bastantemente loado, see Garcilaso de la Vega, Historia general 3,8 p. 186a.

56 Garcilaso de la Vega, Historia general 2,22; see also 2,31.

57 On the meaning of "commentary" in this context, see Jose Durand, El nombre de los Comentarios Reales, Revista del Museo Nacional 32 (Lima 1963), pp. 322-332. The Historia general was published posthumously, and its title appears not to derive from Garcilaso himself, since in Historia general 8,19 p. 171b, he refers to "los libros de esta segunda parte de nuestros Comentarios."

58 The third major historian whom Garcilaso refers to in the Historia general was Francisco López de Gómara, who, in his view, denigrated the achievements of the conquerors of Peru, see for a brief but important assessment, Raul Porras Barrenechea, Los Cronistas del Perú (1528-1650 ed. Franklin Pease (Banco de Credito del Perú, Lima 1986), pp. 190-198. Garcilaso also quoted and commented on Blas Valera, e.g. Historia general 2,30; Valera figures prominently in the Comentarios reales.

59 Cf. above n. 44; below n. 80.
figured in these explanations, and Garcilaso mentioned these matters also. But the ultimate cause that he perceived of the civil wars was not so much a political as a human one: this was the force of discord which worked like an evil genius among both Incas and Spaniards. In classical myth, Discord had generated strife among the gods and from there descended to human beings, as in the Trojan war, which caused countless deaths, and lasted for ten years, just as the Peruvian civil wars did. It was Discord that led the Indians of Peru to align themselves on one or the other of the warring sides, and later, she proceeded to create enmity between the Viceroy Blasco Nuñez Vela and the Spaniards whose valour had gained the land for the Crown in the first place. Finally, after having worked clandestinely in people’s souls, Discord, “walking in the squares and running through the public streets,” became embodied in the pernicious talk of partisans, thereby making war between the viceroy and the Spaniards of Peru inevitable.

Perhaps, in creating his figure of Discord, Garcilaso was thinking of the description of Rumour, or even of the infernal goddess Alecto in Vergil’s Aeneid, a book that he had in his library. For it was Rumour hissing unseen from the rooftops who set in motion the tragedy of Dido and Aeneas, and later...
on, it was Alecto who incited Trojans and Italians, peoples destined to live together and intermingle in harmony, to a murderous war. Rumour and Alecto in Vergil led people to do what perhaps they would have done anyway, but they will now do it more vigorously and with more disastrous effect. Similarly, Discord in Garcilaso made disaster inevitable by sharpening negative emotions beyond any possibility of appeasement, and by deepening the rift between Indians and Spaniards, who, like Vergil’s Italians and Trojans, were destined to form a new nation.

Where thus other historians looked for the cause of the Peruvian civil wars in political circumstances and processes that could be documented in other places and times, Garcilaso viewed matters in a more personal way by investigating the inner characteristics of the principal agents in his story, heightened as these had become by the epic force of Discord. Garcilaso’s idiosyncratic manner of deploying voices from classical antiquity in his narrative is part and parcel of his historical vision. He thereby differentiated his convictions from those of the university educated professional elite whose members were by this time running the Spanish empire, and some of whose views were represented by Herrera. Garcilaso thus suggested to his readers that Gonzalo Pizarro, who was executed by La Gasca as a rebel against his King, could equally well have been described as the King’s loyal vassal. In accord with this conclusion, Garcilaso composed


68 A copy of Oviedo’s Historia de las Indias was in Garcilaso’s library, see Jose Durand, La biblioteca (above n. 87), p. 103, number 103. Garcilaso also owned two works of Oviedo’s friend Pero Mexia (see La biblioteca p.251 number 79; p. 252 number 82; p. 258, number 155, with Oviedo, Historia 49, chapters 10 and 14, on Oviedo’s friendship with Mexia). Regarding Garcilaso’s purpose of writing something useful for “princes, kings and monarchs,” see Historia general 3,19. The Greek historian Polybius (in Garcilaso’s library, La biblioteca p.259 number 168) also thought history is useful for statesmen, see Polybius, History 3,31.


70 For a perfect statement of the Pizarrist case, made by Garcilaso’s Gonzalo Pizarro before his execution, in dialogue with La Gasca, see Garcilaso, Historia general 5,36, and contrast the description of the same episode by Herrera, Decadas 8,4,16.
an epitaph for Gonzalo Pizarro and the other conquistadores, in which he evoked the celebrated “Praise of Spain” by Isidore of Seville, but applied it to these men’s homeland,

the province of Extremadura, noble mother, who has produced and raised heroic sons, who have gained the two empires of the New World, Mexico and Peru ... To extoll the greatness of such a homeland, it is sufficient to point to her famous sons whose heroic deeds will praise and glorify the mother who has given such sons to the world.\(^{71}\)

Garcilaso’s old-fashioned viewpoint, in which human and ethical criteria dominated over political ones and over reason of state, was shared in Peru, whose people were, after all, the recipients, not the practitioners of reason of state, and therefore had special grounds to be critical of it.\(^{72}\)

A further more far-reaching dimension of Garcilaso’s work may also have appealed to some of his Peruvian readers. This was that he considered the Inca past in light of the same criteria, and described it in the same terms as the past of Spanish Peru. Ever since Thucydides, whose History of the Peloponnesian War Garcilaso had in his library,\(^{73}\) Greek and after them Roman historians had not merely described the deeds, but also the words and indeed the thoughts of their characters. Important events were preceded by and gave rise to speeches by the principal participants, which Thucydides regarded as integral parts of the event in question and therefore reported in some detail.\(^{74}\) Most historians of the Indies, conscious as they were of classical models, followed the practice of Thucydides, Polybius, Livy, Sallust and Tacitus, but, for the most part, they only reported speeches by Spaniards. In Garcilaso’s pages, however, Inca rulers,
Andean lords and their subjects joined the ranks of the famous Greeks and Romans of the distant past, and of Spaniards of a much more recent past, as men capable of reflection and of reasoned, well ordered political discourses. The Incas as described by Garcilaso were practical people. They created a calendar, knew how to cure diseases, and were able to measure the distances across their vast empire. Hence, they understood much about geometry, because they needed it to measure their lands, settle disputes, and distribute fields. But they did this in practical terms, not by heights and degrees, or by any other speculative method; rather, they did it with their cords and stones, with which they count and divide.

Perhaps, in this assessment of the cultural attainments of the Incas, as distinct from those of the Spanish and other Europeans, Garcilaso had in mind Vergil’s description of the Romans, who were so very different from the speculatively inclined and artistic Greeks:

Others shall mould the living bronze with gentler hand,
I do believe it, and carve from marble the living features.
They plead a more persuasive case, and with the compass trace
the movement of the sky and tell the rising of the stars.
But you, oh Roman, be mindful to govern the nations
with sovereign sway,
this is your calling, engraving fair conduct on peace time,
to spare the conquered and resist the proud.

As Garcilaso often reiterated, it was precisely by sparing the conquered and resisting the proud that the Incas had won and retained their empire.

This same observation had been made, over fifty years earlier, by Cieza in the second part of his Crónica, which described the Inca empire. Like Garcilaso, Cieza thought about the Romans when explaining the cultural and

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75 A notable example is Garcilaso’s Historia general 1.19-26, about the Inca Atahualpa’s speech and inner reasoning in response to Vicente de Valverde’s requerimiento at Cajamarca.
76 Garcilaso, Comentarios reales 2,26 p.77b, with 2, 21-25.
77 Vergil, Aeneid 6,847-853.
78 Garcilaso, Comentarios reales 2. 18-20; 3, 2-7, etc.
79 Cieza, Cronica II, chapter 17.
political achievements of the Incas. In his day, he was a pioneer. Earlier writers had composed brief accounts of the Incas that were embedded, as an ethnographic excursus such as historians in classical antiquity had written, within the principal narrative, which was about the civil wars. Cieza saw things differently in wanting to produce a narrative that, as he expressed it, "was free of rhetoric and ... comes accompanied by the truth." This amounted to including in his history of Peru not just the civil wars of Spaniards, but also, on an equal footing, the Incas. It was in seeing that the Incas had created not only an empire, but also a civilization that Cieza differed from most of his contemporaries. Indeed, he was convinced that the rule of the Incas was preferable to any system of government that the Spanish could ever establish.

Where thus, when Cieza was writing about Spaniards in Peru, his examples from classical antiquity served to make clear what should have been avoided and what could have been done better, when he wrote about the Incas, he adduced parallels from classical antiquity to highlight the excellence of Inca statecraft and administration. Neither the roads constructed by Alexander the Great, nor the excellent Roman road that crossed Spain equalled the extraordinary Inca road system with its rest stations, distance markers and store houses for

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81 See for example: Zárate, Historia I, 4-15; Gómara, Historia 119-129; Diego Fernandez, Historia 3,3,5-11; Klaus E. Müller, Geschichte der antiken Ethnographie und ethnologischen Theoriebildung. Von den Anfängen bis auf die byzantinischen Historiographen 2 vols. (Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden 1972-1980), see on Herodotus vol. 1, pp. 105-115, and similarly throughout. More recent work has focused on very different questions, see, for a notable example, Francois Hartog, The Mirror of Herodotus (University of California Press, Berkeley 1988).

82 But Cieza shared certain concerns with Oviedo and other historians of the Indies. Above all, like Oviedo, he was convinced that people who had never been to America wrote about things American in ignorance and out of prejudice, see Cieza, Crónica I, Prohemio del autor p. 14: lo que pido es que en pago de mi trabajo, aunque vaya esta escritura desnuda de rhetorica, sea mirada con moderación, pues a lo que siento, va tan acompañada de verdad. La qual subejo al parecer de los doctos y virtuosos: ya los demas pido, se contenten con solamente la leer: sin querer juzgar lo que no entienden. In Cronica II chapter 22 p.63, Cieza corrects a statement by Francisco López de Gómara, Historia de las Indias: en estos descuydos caen todos los que escriwen por relacion y cartapacios sin ver ni saber en la tierra donde escriveren.

83 Cieza, Crónica II Prohemio del autor, fol. 6v.

84 Cieza, Crónica II chapter 12, p. 33, con la buena orden y justicia que ay, se restaurarian y multiplicarian para que en alguna manera buelva a ser este reyno lo que fue, aunque yo creo que sera tarde o nunca.

85 Cf. above at notes 33; 41; 45; 47-51.
supplies needed by travellers that Cieza and others admired in the Andes. The impartiality and speed of Inca justice rivalled that of Rome, and Inca religion, given that the Incas were pagans, was in many ways more reasonable than the pagan religions of classical antiquity. Cieza shared these views with Bartolomé de Las Casas, the moving spirit behind the New Laws, whom he probably met in Seville on his return to Spain in 1551. Las Casas appears to have made use of Cieza’s work. Even though Cieza was first and foremost a historian, while Las Casas wrote for the purpose of defending the rights of Indians against his fellow Spaniards, the two men shared the conviction that Inca statecraft matched or rivalled the best that Europe had produced. The

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86 Cieza, Crónica II chapter 64; see also chapter 15, observing that the Emperor Charles V was not in a position to construct roads such as the Incas had; Crónica I chapter 37 mentioning a road across the Alps constructed by Hannibal; but Livy Ab urbe condita 21.32.6-38.5 says nothing about such a road.

87 For Inca justice, see MacCorrnack, History and Law (above n. 112) pp.291-297; for religion, Cieza, Crónica I chapter 50, about Greeks, Egyptians and Romans; see also chapter 4, p.35 and chapter 38 p.124, comparing aclas to Roman Vestal Virgins.

88 Miguel Maticorena Estrada, Cieza de León en Sevilla y su muerte en 1554. Documentos, Anuario de Estudios Americanos 12 (Seville 1955), pp. 615-674, at p. 55: the Crónica I, about the Incas, and Crónica III, about the Descubrimiento y conquista del Perú are to be given to Bartolomé de Las Casas, for publication; the remainder of his historical work is to be withheld from circulation for fifteen years: Cieza thought that the events described were too close in time and too controversial to be discussed in public.

89 I follow the suggestion of David Lupher, who in a letter of July 16, 1999 writes, after quoting Cieza, Cronica II chapter 63, about Inca roads compared to the Roman road in Spain (cf. above n.119): “What especially interests me is how similar this passage is to Las Casas’ account of the same road in the Apologética historia ch. 262, where he dismisses the Roman road from Spain to Italy as a contemptible thing (asco es todo) in comparison to this Inca road. This, of course, gets us into the interesting question of Las Casas’ access to the Señorio [i.e. Crónica II]. Cieza, of course, willed that the MS of it go to Las Casas, but it seems not to have done so. But his dying wish implied that Las Casas had an interest in the MS - and why not some familiarity with it?” See also R. Marcus, Las Casas Peruaniste, Caravelle. Cahiers du monde hispanique et luso-brésilien 7 (1966), pp. 25-41; Isacio Pérez Fernández, Bartolomé de Las Casas en el Perú. 1531-1571 (Centro de estudios rurales andinos Bartolomé de Las Casas, Cusco 1986).

90 ‘Las Casas’ categories came, in large part, from Aristotle’s Politics and Nicomachean Ethics, and differentiated three aspects of the virtue of prudence, which were the regimen of oneself, the ordering of the family, and the governance of society, see Bartolomé de Las Casas, Apologética historia sumaria ed. Edmundo O’Gorman (Instituto de investigaciones históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México 1967, hereafter Apologética) chapters 40-41 for a survey of the programme of the book. See also O’Gorman’s very helpful summary of the argument, pp. xxxvi-lv. Lewis Hanke, All Mankind is One. A Study of the Disputation Between Bartolome de Las Casas and Juan Gines de Sepulveda on the Religious and Intellectual Capacity of American Indians (Northern Illinois University Press, DeKalb 1974) explores some aspects of ‘Las Casas’ Aristotelianism.
story that both of them told was therefore a story of loss: the Inca past was infinitely closer in time than the Roman past, but it was equally irretrievable.

Like Cieza, Las Casas deployed his knowledge of classical antiquity to explain the Incas, but he did so more systematically; in effect, he built a framework for the comparative study of cultures. His criteria of civilized and political life came from Aristotle and other ancient authors, and he began, as Aristotle had done, with the city as the foundation of civilized human coexistence. From Quito, Cuzco, Lima and elsewhere, Dominican missionaries wrote to him about Inca architecture, about professional specialization among Andean populations, about manners and customs, legal precepts, religious beliefs and the gods. Las Casas himself assembled matching materials from ancient texts, and consulted the historical narratives of scholars from Spain writing in the vernacular. There were, furthermore, humanistic encyclopedias focusing on different aspects of antiquity: as for example the treatise on the ancient gods, their priesthoods and cults, by Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus, which Las Casas incorporated into his review of American indigenous societies.

The classificatory schemes that Italian humanists had developed to shed light on classical antiquity recur in Las Casas, who adapted them to his Aristotelian framework. In the light of examples from the ancient world and

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91 He was well read both in the ancient texts themselves, and also in scholarship of his own day bearing on these texts. See, on the ancient texts, the three articles by Bruno Rech, Las Casas und die Autoritaten seiner Geschichtsschreibung, in Jahrbücher für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas 16 (1979), pp. 13-51; Las Casas und die Kirchenväter, Jahrbücher für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas 17 (1980), pp. 1-47; Las Casas und das Alte Testament, Jahrbücher für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas 18 (1981), pp. 1-68.


93 Cf. below at notes 211-233.

94 “Los nuestros,” as Las Casas keeps describing them, for example, Las Casas, Apologética chapter 262, p.624, expressing concern that knowledge about the Americas remains imperfect por no del todo perfectamente por no se haber alcanzado los secretos de aquellas lenguas, o tambien por no se haber hecho tanta diligencia como convenia ...

95 E.g. Las Casas, Apologética I, 625; 679; 701; II, 120, 162, 164; Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus, De Deis Gentilium varia et multiplex Historia, Libris sive Syntagmatibus XZVII comprehensa (Basle 1560 and several other editions).

96 See for example, Las Casas, Apologética chapters 129-133, on funerary customs of the ancient world and New Spain, with citations of ancient texts and of Alexander ab Alexandro Genialium dierum libris sex, varia et recondita eruditione referti: nunc postremum infinitis mendis quibus antea squallebat liber pulcherrimus quanta fieri potuit diligentia perpurgati atque in
the Americas, he discussed the social and political roles of farmers and shepherds, architects, masons and carpenters, weavers and silversmiths, as well as warriors, priests and men of substance, in order to demonstrate that the Incas, as well as the Mexicans, had constructed societies that were perfectly tuned to foster virtue and well-being. He accordingly compared the Inca ruler Pachacuti, founder of the Inca empire as the Spanish invaders saw it in 1532, to the Roman king Numa Pompilius who, according to Roman tradition as recorded by Livy, had formulated some of Rome's earliest laws.

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97 Las Casas, *Apologética* chapter 65, with chapter 46, outlining the explanatory project.


99 Aristotle, *Nicomachaean Ethics* 4,2; 9,8, on magnificence and self-love, cited by Las Casas, *Apologética* chapter 69, p.363. The context described by Las Casas removes Aristotle's observations some considerable distance from their original intent.

100 The classificatory scheme employed by Las Casas, based in part on Aristotle and in part on certain sub-fields of classical scholarship current in his day, were employed once more in Jerónimo Román, *Repúblicas del mundo*, Medina del Campo 1575. Román, who was not an Aristotelian, rearranged and reproduced much of Las Casas' material, subdividing it into separate republics, those of the Hebrews, Gentiles, Indies, etc. The work fell foul of the Inquisition, largely for what Román said about the Hebrew Republic. He published an amended version in 1595.

101 Las Casas, *Apologética* chapter 251, p. 580-581, with Livy, *Ab urbe condita* I,19-21. Deeds of peace were much appreciated in the wartorn sixteenth century, even by Machiavelli, who in his commentaries on Livy, considered Numa to have been of greater benefit to Rome than the first founder Romulus. See Machiavelli, *Discourses*, tr. Leslies J. Walker (Routledge, London 1975), I,11, 3-6, with Philip Jacks, *The Antiquarian and the Myth of Antiquity. The Origins of Rome in Renaissance Thought* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1993), pp. 177-179. Las Casas *ibid.* praises Pachacuti for settling religious before secular matters, where perhaps he had in mind the criticism by Augustine, *City of God* 6,3-4, of the Roman scholar and antiquarian Varro, who, in his *Antiquities* discussed human matters first, and then matters concerning the gods and religion. This issue seems also to have occupied the Jesuita anónimo. In his *De las costumbres antiguas de los naturales del Perú* (ed. Esteve Barba in *Crónicas peruanas de interés indígena* (BAE vol. 209, Madrid 1968, hereafter *Costumbres*), religious precede secular matters. The Jesuita anónimo did his best to make the Incas look like Romans; *inter alia*, he attributed
The comparison is emblematic of Las Casas' overall argument. Roman law remained one of the sources of law in sixteenth century Spain and Europe, and Las Casas himself repeatedly appealed to it as binding on his Spanish contemporaries. Inca statutes about which he learnt from his fellow Dominicans in Peru, so Las Casas suggested, were endowed with the same binding quality. In administrative terms also, Las Casas viewed Pachacuti’s Inca empire as comparable to Rome, and described Inca provincial officials, the tocricocs, in Roman terms as legates and pro-consuls, who had performed their tasks infinitely more successfully than their Spanish successors were doing in the present.

Beyond determining whether and how the Incas practiced the political virtues, Cieza, Las Casas, Garcilaso and all the others who wrote about the Andes were confronted with a further equally intractable problem, which was to shed some light on the origin of the Incas, which amounted to trying to understand Inca myths of origins.

The Incas thought that the world as they knew it had been created at Lake Titcaca by the Maker Ticsi Viracocha and that later their own ancestors, three or four pairs of brothers and sisters, had come forth from a mountain cave at Pacaritambo, the “Inn of the Dawn,” and made their way to nearby Cuzco. One of the brothers was sent back to the cave and ended up being immured there, and another was transformed into a stone and became a deity. The third brother Manco Capac and his sister consort Mama Ocllo settled in Cuzco to Inca priests a head dresse that is almost identical to one of Roman priests depicted in Guillaume Du Choul, Discorso de la religione antica dei Romani, insieme un altro Discorso della castrametatione & disciplina militare, bagni & essercitii antichi di detti Romani ... tradotti in toscano da M. Gabriel Simeoni (Lyons 1569) see p. 236 with Jesuita anónimo p. 161. As regards the estimation of religious over secular matters, however, one could also attribute this order to the Zeitgeist, since it is very frequently observed: see, for example, the Siete Partidas (above n. 40) and other legal compilations.


103 For example, with great insistence, in Doce Dudas (above n. 29).

104 See Las Casas, Apologética chapter 258; whether the laws reported here give an accurate impression of Inca law is a separate question, cf. MacCormack, above n. 112; the Jesuita anónimo, Costumbres p. 177a also thought the laws of his very Roman Incas merited being observed in the present; for a more pragmatic statement of the same project, see below at n. 209.

105 Las Casas, Apologética chapter 252 p. 586.

106 Las Casas, Apologética chapter 261.p. 622 with the statement (apparently a quotation), ipsi iudices nostri erunt.
among people who were already living there. He was the earliest forbear of the Inca rulers, who described themselves as “sons of the Sun” and propagated the cult of their divine ancestor throughout their empire. Some Spaniards, among them Cieza, read this story as explaining the origins of Inca imperial sovereignty, while others thought that it proved that from the very beginning, the Incas had been usurpers and tyrants, warlords who displaced other more peaceful people from their homes.

This political issue was accompanied by a historiographical one because early modern Europeans found in the Andes no real equivalent to writing and therefore believed that Andean people had forgotten much of their past, or had confused different narratives with each other. Earlier historians writing about peninsular Spain had already reflected on the perception that writing compensated for the fragility of memory, and that history, to be worthy of the name, must be recorded, must become a book like the books by Thucydides, Sallust, Caesar, Livy and Tacitus, from whose pages history spoke equally and objectively to all its readers about what had happened, in the words of the Andean historian Joan Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui, “in the gentle times.”

This expectation rested on the credo, going back to classical antiquity, that

107 The speculation that is most appealing to modern minds was by José de Acosta, Historia natural book 1, chapters 20-21, suggesting that there must be some kind of land bridge between Asia and America, which the first inhabitants of the American continent crossed. But note that this idea, commonly attributed to Acosta alone, was first developed by Juan López de Velasco, Geografía y descripción de las Indias ed. M. Jiménez de la Espada (BAE vol. 248, Madrid 1971) p. 2, dismissing, as Acosta also does, the idea that America has something to do with Plato’s Atlantis.

108 Cieza, Crónica II, chapter 32 p. 97 on contradictory accounts of the Inca “dynasty;” see also chapter 8, p. 21 Reydome de lo que tengo escrito destos yndios, yo quento en mi escritura lo quellos a mi contaron por la suya, y antes quito muchas coasas que anadir una sola; chapter 9, p. 24 on remembering and forgetting.

109 See Alfonso X, Primera crónica prologue, taking up large parts of the prologue of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, Historia de rebus Hispanic vivae historia Gothica ed. Juan Fernandez Valverde (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio mediaevalis vol. 72, Brepols, Turnholt 1987).

history can and ought to be true. Truth was the "soul of history" and, as historians of Peru and of the Incas stated in the footsteps of their ancient models, the pursuit of truth must always be preferred over the facile appeal of creating a pleasing narrative.

But this was easier said than done. Not only were the ancient Andean stories not always compatible with each other, but they also contained episodes that were simply not credible. Garcilaso himself expressed dissatisfaction with the "thousand absurdities" of the Pacaritambo story and accordingly omitted mentioning the fate of the two brothers who were lost on the way from Pacaritambo to Cuzco. Las Casas by contrast did write about the two brothers, just as Cieza had done, and pointed out that the problem posed by their supposed disappearance was far from new. For Romulus the founder of Rome, who, according to Livy, had also mysteriously disappeared at the end of his life, was believed by his followers to have ascended to heaven, just like one of those brothers. Other narratives comprising an element of miracle extended even into the more recent Inca past. Las Casas was thus not entirely happy to learn that the Inca Pachacuti had reportedly said "that the Sun had no sons other than himself, and he himself had no father other than the Sun". Yet, Pachacuti’s assertion resembled that of the Roman king Numa Pompilius, who pretended to be married to the divine nymph Egeria, by whose inspiration he claimed to be drafting his laws, just as Pachacuti claimed that his mandates were in effect the mandates of the Sun. Methodologies that had been developed in classical antiquity for endowing ancient mythic stories, "historical fables," as Garcilaso called them, with some kind
Conversations across time and space classical traditions in the Andes

of historical meaning were thus redeployed in early colonial Peru. This process of rendering the mythic past recognizable in historical terms occurred not only in works of learning but also in documents prepared for litigation and personal advancement, and not only in Cuzco, but throughout the Andes.

The Greek and Roman past resonated in Peru both in historical writing and in the more informal context of numerous official enquiries that were initiated by bureaucrats, viceroys and the crown. For all their seeming pragmatism, the questions that were asked in such enquiries are the outcome of a long rhetorical tradition, going back to Aristotle, and more immediately, to the late antique Roman empire, when the Rhetor Menander wrote a manual instructing students how to compose panegyrics, celebratory speeches for delivery during civic festivals. Among Menander’s topics was the praise of cities, where he developed a list of themes about the climate, natural resources, customs, religious observances, myths and histories of any given city that recurs in the questionnaires that were circulated in the name of Philip II. These themes, translated into questions helped to awaken voices in Spanish Peru that Menander could not possibly have imagined, voices, furthermore, that had so far not been heard. Historians collected their evidence mainly Cuzco, where, they felt, the most well informed people, all of them Incas, resided. The Crown, by contrast, sent questionnaires everywhere and wanted to hear from everyone. Information collected in Cuzco was thus confirmed and supplemented, or corrected and sometimes contradicted, by information from elsewhere. The

117 These were learned transactions, that were of interest to a scholarly minority, but they had significant practical outcomes. For in the course of “historical fables” being converted into history, mythic places like Pacaritambo, and legendary characters, like Manco Capac, were located in space and time with such incontrovertible force that they could figure in litigation for economic and social privilege, see Gary Urton, The History of a Myth. Pacaritambo and the Origin of the Inkas (University of Texas Press, Austin 1990).

118 see for example, Archivo de Indias, Seville, Charcas 56, of 1638, don Fernando Ayra de Arriutu petitions for a coat of arms on the basis of his family’s kinship with the Incas and services to them, and his own services to the Spanish.

119 the parallels between Menander and the royal questionnaires are worked out in a magnificent article by Victoria Pineda, La retórica epidíctica de Menandro y los cuestionarios para las Relaciones Geográficas de Indias, in press. I thank the author for allowing me to read this article before its publication. For Menander on the praise of cities and regions, see, apart from Pineda’s article, Menander Rhetor. Edited with Translation and Commentary by D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1988), Treatise 1, 344-367; the topic also recurs, more episodically in Treatise II, 369-370; 387-388; 426-430. Cf. Sabine MacCormack, Latin prose Pengyrics: tradition and discontinuity in the Later Roman Empire, Revuedes Etudes Augustiniennes 12 (Paris 1976), pp. 29-77, especially pp. 30-33.
Inca splendour that was remembered by people throughout the Andes thus echoes very similar memories from Cuzco, but at the same time people recalled traditions and events that had nothing to do with the Incas.\textsuperscript{120}

The Roman empire that Menander thought about was a world of cities, and the preoccupation with cities that the Romans shared with the Greeks\textsuperscript{121} lived on in medieval and early modern Spain\textsuperscript{122} and the Americas.\textsuperscript{123} Cieza, who took this continuity for granted, thus compared the cities that the Spanish founded in Peru to Alexander the Great’s Alexandria, Dido’s Carthage and the Rome of Romulus.\textsuperscript{124} Some of these cities, for example Lima, were new foundations, but many others, like Cuzco, were refounded by the conquistadores in the name of Charles V.\textsuperscript{125} When in the mid-seventeenth century, the Jesuit Bernabé Cobo wrote about the foundation of Lima by Francisco Pizarro in the name of His Majesty, he praised its pleasant healthy air and mild climate, as well as its favourable geographical location, and its buildings, much as

\textsuperscript{120}The deeds of Pariacaca and of his “children” are recounted in Frank Salomon and J. Urioste, Huarochiri Manuscript (above n. 184). Attention to la manera y orden de hablar de estos naturales (cf. above n. 200) is also manifest in the study of Quechua in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Domingo de Santo Tomás had praised Quechua for being elegant like Latin, and had arranged his Grammatica to follow the model of Antonio Nebrija’s Latin grammar. The Quechua grammar by Diego González Holguín, by contrast (Gramática y arte nueva de la lengua general de todo el Perú, llamada lengua Qochua o lengua del Inca, Lima 1607, revised reprint 1842, n.p.) presents the language independently of Latin. Accordingly, in the introduction, González Holguín advocated learning Quechua not because it resembles Latin, but because the Holy Spirit gave the Apostles the gift of languages, to speak to all people (Acts of the Apostles 2,1-21), and Quechua was one of those languages.

\textsuperscript{121}Not that they meant the same thing by the concept, see Clifford Ando, Was Rome a polis? Classical Antiquity 18 (Berkeley 1999), pp. 5-34.


\textsuperscript{123}the best work on this topic remains Richard Morse, Introducción a la historia urbana de Hispanoamerica, Revista de Indias 32 (Seville 1972), pp. 9-53.

\textsuperscript{124}Cieza, Crónica I, chapter 2 p.27. See also RGI 1, p. 134, from the “Relación general de las poblaciones españolas del Peru hecha por el licenciado Salazar de Villasante,” c. 1569, about “dos pueblos de indios que yo poble; el uno esta ... antes de entrar en la ciudad (de Quito) ... a este puse el nombre Villasante, como yo; el otro esta dese cabo a uno cabo del prado que se llama Anaquito; a este puse nombre Velasco, por fundarle en tiempo que era visorey el conde de Nieva que se llama Velasco. Honours claimed by the king were thus being claimed, on a smaller scale, by his officials.

\textsuperscript{125}Horacio Urteaga, Fundación española del Cusco y ordenanzas para su gobierno. Restauraciones mandadas ejecutar del primer libro de cabildos de la ciudad para el virrey del Perú Don Francisco de Toledo (Talleres Gráficos Sanmarti, Lima 1926).
Menander had advised. Addressing issues that were specific to the questionnaires of the Crown, Cobo also wrote about the city’s name, its jurisdiction and the administrative district it controlled. Lima’s streets were laid out by Pizarro himself to intersect at rectangles, making a chessboard pattern that was inspired, however indirectly, by real and imagined city plans of classical antiquity. In Cuzco, the preexisting Inca city made it impossible to create such a street plan. But Cuzco’s climate, its natural resources, and flora and fauna were commended by seventeenth century local patriots in the familiar fashion.

The Andean historian Guaman Poma likewise was acquainted, if distantly, with the ancient Mediterranean typology of city foundation, climate, geographical location, natural resources and local customs. He thus titled his section about Peru’s cities with the words:

All the cities and municipalities and villages founded by the Inca kings, and later Don Francisco Pizarro and Don Diego de Almagro, captains and ambassadors of the Lord King and Emperor Don Carlos of glorious memory founded them. And some cities were founded by the most excellent lords viceroys of this kingdom.

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126 Bernabé Cobo, *Fundación de Lima* in his Obras ed. Francisco Mateos (BAE vol. 92, Madrid 1964, hereafter *Fundación*) book 1, chapter 2 pp.287-288; chapter 7. Possibly, apart from the Crown questionnaires described above, Cobo also had in mind the work of the Roman architect Vitruvius, *De architectura libri decem* (for an edition and German translation see C. Fensterbusch, *Vitruv, Zehn Bücher über Architektur*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 1964), or one of his Renaissance followers.

127 Cobo, *Fundación* book 1, chapter 3, p. 290; chapters 4-5.


130 Guaman Poma, *Primera Crónica* p. 982, describing his mapa mundi, providing some measures of distances and a survey of the political condition and resources of the region depicted. There is a problem in the pagination of the manuscript between Guaman Poma’s p.983-984 (the mapamundi) and the unpaginated text that follows, without a page number in the transcription. Cf. Rolena Adorno’s description of the codex, in this edition, p. xliii.

City by city, the old themes emerge: climate, jurisdiction, flora, fauna, crops and foods, customs and religious observances. In 1552, the printer Froben of Basle published an edition of an illustrated manuscript of the Notitia dignitatum, an administrative survey of the late antique Roman empire, with an accompanying study by Alciati. Guaman Poma appears to have seen this or some similar book, for several of the drawings accompanying his descriptions of cities relate only distantly to the place in question, but do resemble cities and fortifications depicted in the Notitia. In the case of Riobamba, Guaman Poma used a different model, but one that also echoes classical antiquity, and does so somewhat more realistically. For here, he drew a perfect chessboard style street plan, such as Pizarro had laid out for Lima, and such as was mandated for the resettlement towns of the later sixteenth century. In his picture of Cuzco, by contrast, Guaman Poma accommodated Inca buildings that no longer existed alongside recently constructed Christian ones, all within a pattern of squares and rectangles that is formed by Cuzco’s streets and colonnades and by the river Huatanay. This pattern, although equally remote from Greco-Roman and from Inca concepts of urban space, is nonetheless imbued with both.

Such is the nature of conversations, that there is a give and take in them. We have listened to a series of intimate face to face conversations between individuals, as when Oviedo talked with the great men from Peru who passed through Santo Domingo, or when Cieza and Betanzos, each in his own distinct way, talked with the Incas of Cuzco to learn about their past, or when Las Casas and missionaries from Peru and Mexico exchanged news about their experiences. There were also the conversations among supporters of Gonzalo Pizarro that Garcilaso as a child overheard in his father’s house, and

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132 Notitia utraque cum Orientis tum occidentis ultra Arcadii Honortique Caesarum tempor, illustre vetustatis monumentum ... praeedit autem D. Andreae Alciati libellus, De magistratibus civilibusque ac militariis officis, partim ex had ipsa Notitia, partim aliunde sumptus ... (Froben, Basileae MCLII).

133 Compare Guaman Poma, Primera Crónica pp.991; 999 (Atres and Loja) with the illustration in the Notitia for the Correcto Apuliae et Calabriae; other domed structures surrounded by walls depicted in the Notitia could also be adduced. More distantly, Guaman Poma pp. 1019; 1021; 1063 (Zana; Puerto Viejo; Misque) with Notitia for Dux Mogontiacensis.

134 See Matienzo, Gobierno Part I, chapter 14, p. 50.

135 Guaman Poma, Primera Crónica pp. 995; 1051 (Riobamba and Cuzco respectively).

136 See Oviedo, Historia 48, preface p. 212 ab, about Pizarro and Almagro: Al uno e al otro de estos governadores conosí, e fui su amigo, e conversé sus personas, e les vi pobres compañeros, e los he visto tan prosperos e ricos, que su fama e inauditas riquezas atronaban el mundo.
the other conversations that Garcilaso, slightly older, had with his mother's kinsfolk, when they told him about Inca history and government. And then there were the grand conversations between the living and the dead and between cultural traditions that span distances of time and space, as when Cieza thought back to Caesar and Pompey in order to explain the Peruvian civil wars, and when Herrera, writing about the same subject, mirrored those wars in the words and ideas of Tacitus. Each of these conversations ranged far from its origins, yet those origins remained discernible in all their multiplicity within the new world of experience and discourse that came into existence out of the actions and the spoken and written words of the participants.