

Cleft Connection:
Singularity, Authority, & the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*
in Early Modern Spain & England

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ABSTRACT

**Cleft Connection:
Singularity, Authority, & the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*
in Early Modern Spain & England**

Kristine Kowalchuk

Perhaps the most significant marker of the transition between medieval and early modern Europe was the transformation in the relationship between authority and singularity.

In exploring the nature of this relationship in late 16th—early 17th century Spanish and English literature, however, this thesis suggests that such transformation was clearly distinct in each country. Specifically, this thesis offers analysis of El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* and studies the work's comparative reception in Spain and England. As an unauthorized work by a marginalized author, the *Royal Commentaries* sheds light on the tension between singularity and authority through the author's anticipation of difficulty in publishing his work, and its varying reception in Spain and England reflects each country's embrace of, or resistance to, change from medieval to early modern mindsets. In order to explain such difference in attitude toward the *Royal Commentaries*, and toward modernity, this thesis then considers the effect of two principal historical variables—foreign occupation and discovery of the New World.

This thesis combines an analysis of the *Royal Commentaries* with studies of late 16th—early 17th Spain and England, a mixture which has not been previously attempted. The ultimate aim of such combination is to offer a new reading of the *Royal Commentaries*, as well as to introduce the significance of the work in early modern English Literature.

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This thesis is dedicated to the two little *cubanos* who gave me the crayon colored heart, and who taught me to truly appreciate my own opportunities.

cleave 1 *v.* (*past* **clove** or **cleft** or **cleaved**; *p.p.* **cloven** or **cleft** or **cleaved**) chop or break apart, esp. along grain or line of cleavage

cleave 2 *v.i.* stick fast or adhere to

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I

Introduction

The discovery of the New World, said the Spanish historian Francisco López de Gómara in the dedication to his *Historia general de las Indias*, was the greatest thing after the creation of the world, “excepting the incarnation and death of he who created it”. Of course the discovery was most cataclysmic for the New World itself—a fact often overlooked, since the natives of the New World had no writing of their own by which to tell their side of the story; if they had been the victors, perhaps this same event would be described only by *quipus* or hieroglyphs and a written account would be absent. But this discovery also shook the very foundations of European thought, to the point that it may ultimately be seen as the catalyst for the transformation between medieval and modern mindsets. Even minimalist approaches toward the impact of the New World on Europe admit that, eventually, awareness of a whole other reality inevitably placed in question all that Europe held as true, in terms of politics, society, religion, and the natural world. That no definitive answers have ever been supplied for the questions is irrelevant—the significance lay in the questioning itself. What had been taken for infallible authority in medieval times was no longer simply accepted, and the idea that the individual—any individual—might possess authority germinated. As Karen Ordahl Kupperman writes in *America in European Consciousness 1493-1750*, Europe’s contact with the New World ultimately

jolted Europe’s society and economy in the direction of influence by people farther down the social scale. Cracks in the aristocratic mold would certainly have appeared without America, but the timing and the fault lines were affected by transatlantic enterprises that allowed, even encouraged, assumption of initiative by the excluded. America helped open up Europe. (Kupperman, 15)

The transformation from a medieval world governed by God and crown toward a modern world that valued individual authority, was not, however, even across Europe, but rather occurred at different paces in different countries. In the cases of imperial rivals Spain and England, for example, historical circumstances created political, social, and religious differences, as well as unequal stakes in New World interests, and these in turn drove two very distinct transformations in the period of the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

Such uneven transformation of authority in Spain and England can be traced through each country's literature—that is, through its *authors*. And while it is true that virtually all European writing about the New World tells more about European mindsets than about the New World, particularly revealing is comparison of the reception of works by those authors who most seriously challenged the traditional conception of authority—that is, who were hitherto the “least authorized” to write. Such an individual was, of course, the New World author. For ironically, while discovery of the New World created—according to Kupperman—the possibility for individual authority within Europe, the New World individual represented the epitome of the outsider, and the *writing* New World individual the epitome of threat to established authority. As the New World cultures were primarily oral, very few opportunities for such study exist (as Anthony Pagden writes, “the native’s point of view...must, surely, be unrecoverable” (Pagden, “H&A”, 37)), yet there are rare examples of works by 16th century natives who did indeed write in European languages. One such work is the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, by el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega.

Born in Cuzco in 1539, just seven years after the first official encounter between the Incas and the Spaniards, and the day after the conquest by Pizarro, Garcilaso inherited privileged status from both his parents: an Inca princess mother and a Spanish

conquistador father. He enjoyed a childhood of royalty and nobility, and was particularly well educated by his mother's family in Inca myths and traditions, and by Jesuit priests in Peru in linguistics, the classics, and law. Then, in 1560, at the age of twenty-one, he moved to Andalusia. In Spain, Garcilaso's status was radically changed: his *mestizo*—half European, half native—race cast him to a position at the periphery of society and power. To further complicate matters for Garcilaso, doubt was cast over his father's loyalty to the crown, as his father was accused of lending his horse to Pizarro during a decisive battle of nationalists (led by Pizarro) and loyalists in Peru; then the fact that his father eventually married a Spanish woman and handed his mother over to a lower-ranking official meant that Garcilaso also became a bastard son. Garcilaso suddenly experienced a demotion in status. After attempting to improve his social situation through arms, and then failing to receive the recognition he felt he deserved, he turned to letters.

It might be seen that it was in response to this demotion that the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* originated: eventually, it seems that Garcilaso's finances ebbed to the point that he wrote in order to survive. After writing a translation of León Hebreo's poetry (which had been originally composed in Tuscan after León's family was expelled from Spain under the Inquisition), *La traducción del indio de los tres diálogos de amor de León Hebreo* (1590), and then a history of de Soto's expedition based upon the accounts of three eyewitnesses, *La Florida del Inca* (1605), Garcilaso completed his masterpiece, the *Comentarios reales de los Incas* (1609) and *Historia general del Perú* (1617), or Parts 1 and 2 of the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, as he in fact intended the volumes to be called (and to which they are referred in many studies, including this essay). The first part is the "Inca" part, and describes the goodness and order of the Incas, their religion, culture,

history, societal organization and architecture, as well as the flora, fauna, and minerals of Peru, while the second part is the “Spanish” part, describing the battles of the conquest. Together, these parts comprise a work that is one of the most important sources for ethnographic information on the Inca empire and history of Peru. Harold Livermore discusses the work’s significance in providing a native outlook to history, writing in his 1966 translation (seemingly anticipating Pagden’s comment, above) that the work’s uniqueness lay in that it is “perhaps the only American book in which the soul of the conquered races has survived” (Livermore, 1.Introduction.xvi). Similarly, Zamora writes that Garcilaso was “the first writer to attempt to incorporate indigenous elements into a Western discourse, in effect transforming the way a European audience conceived of Inca history and culture” (Zamora, *Language*, 3). Garcilaso also professes that preservation of Inca history is the purpose of his work, as he states: “impelled by my natural love for my native country...I undertake this work” (Preface). Yet other Inca/Indian works existed that were written in Castilian that document pre-conquest Inca history: Titu Cusi Yupanqui’s *Relación de la conquista del Perú* (1570), Juan de Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui’s *Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Pirú* (1613?) and Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala’s *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1612-1615, published after being discovered in Copenhagen archives at the beginning of the 20th century, and valued for its drawings of Peru). So what distinguishes Garcilaso’s works from these?

The *Royal Commentaries* is more complex than pure ethnology and historical documentation; it is the “Inca” side of the story of the history and conquest of Peru only to a point. While the other native texts are directed toward an Indian or *mestizo* audience and express a Peruvian nationalistic aim (Adorno, *CC*, 53), the *Royal Commentaries* is clearly

directed toward a readership of established Spanish authority; it is thus highly concerned with Europe. Livermore in fact also recognizes this aspect of Garcilaso's text, stating that

the special quality of this long, detailed, and often prolix tale of two empires seems to derive from a double but simultaneous vision of the events that are being described for us. By turns Indian and Castilian, Garcilaso, as he himself puts it, has engagements to both peoples—*'prendas con ambas naciones'*. (xvi)

Garcilaso also admits the “European” purpose of his text: “Though there have been many accounts” of the history of Peru, he writes, “they have not described these realms so fully as they might have done...” (Preface); thus, Garcilaso not only wants to preserve the memory of his mother's people *for his mother's people*, he wants to set the record straight in Europe regarding European perception of the Incas. The previous accounts, whose authority Garcilaso *discounts*, were insufficient because they did not fully appreciate the Inca position in pre-conquest Peru; specifically, they undermined Inca nobility. Garcilaso's aim in his work, then, is to prove their legitimacy...and thereby prove his own.

When one takes into account that the *Royal Commentaries* is directed toward a readership of established Spanish authority, Garcilaso's own biography—as a *mestizo* living in 16th century Spain—becomes key to understanding the purpose of his work. The work is an extended rhetorical persuasion, a seeking of Spanish approval, whose success had direct effects on the author himself. In writing the nobility of the Incas (as well as, to a lesser extent, the loyalty of his father) into European history, Garcilaso was consciously attempting to write his way from the margins into a favourable position in Spanish society: he wrote not only as an outsider, but as an outsider who *wanted in*. As one critic asserts, “*Toda su vida se esforzó en demostrar la hidalguía de su sangre y en defender el honor y la memoria de su padre de la acusación de traidor*” (Sánchez Barba, 110) [All of his life

was spent in demonstrating the nobility of his blood and in defending the honour and memory of his father from the accusation of treachery.]¹ This demonstration and defence were in reference to Spain, and the way they are developed in the *Royal Commentaries* is what imbues the work with its literary quality, so that it is not “just” history, but belongs to “fields of both history and literature” (Livermore, Introduction to Part 1, xvi).

The *Royal Commentaries* has long been studied for both its historical/ethnographic and literary value in Latin America (earning Garcilaso consideration as “*pionero de nuestra literatura*” [pioneer of our literature], as José B. Fernández entitled his paper on the writer), but it is only recently that the *Royal Commentaries* has been picked up for study within European literatures. This is perhaps because, as one leading Garcilaso scholar writes, “*pocos han comprendido la inmensa riqueza que hay en [las obras del Inca]...porque tanto los libros como el hombre son casos insólitos en la cultural del mundo occidental*” (Pupo Walker, 145) [few people have realized the immense richness in the works of the Inca...because the books, like the man, are so highly unusual in the culture of the western world]. While the work’s relevance to Spanish literature is perhaps finally becoming obvious, its reception in England is also certainly worth study. This is first simply because of the very uniqueness of the text. As Harold V. Livermore writes in the Introduction to Part 2 in his translation of the work,

Certainly, the other languages of the discovery and conquest, Portuguese, French and English, cannot offer a rival, and if there are earlier American authors in Spanish, none of them can genuinely be said to figure on the great stage of Spanish letters.

¹ All translations listed after the original quotes in this thesis are my own.

Furthermore, and perhaps more significantly, the *Royal Commentaries* merits study within English literature because the work was actually published over a hundred years earlier in England than it was in Spain.

As the New World was interesting to Europe only insofar as it “could illuminate European concerns” (Kupperman, 6)—even the term New World shows reference to the Old (Rodriguez Vecchini, 604)—the *Royal Commentaries* offers a particularly unique opportunity to study an issue central to early modern Europe: that of the relationship between singularity and authority. This thesis will trace how Garcilaso’s singularity as a *mestizo* author in 16th century Spain affected the writing itself, and why the resulting work was received differently in Spain and England. As the *Royal Commentaries* is particularly linked to the society in which it was written, attention will first be paid to historical circumstances and subsequent political, social, and religious contexts, to highlight differences between literature in Spain and England at the time. Then in the light of such context, analysis of the text itself will show how Garcilaso anticipated and reacted to the contradictions and difficulties he would encounter in writing and publishing—showing, therefore, that Garcilaso’s work was actually dependent upon these very challenges; as Michel de Certeau writes, “history is entirely shaped by the system within which it is developed” (de Certeau, 69). Finally, the effects of Garcilaso’s attempts will be shown through comparative study of the reception of the *Royal Commentaries* in Spain and England, as based upon his publication success within each country.

The method of this study will be to synthesize ideas generated principally by J.H. Elliott, Richard Kagan, and George Mariscal on late 16th—early 17th century Spain, and by

Karen Ordahl Kupperman and Robert Weimann on late 16th—early 17th century England, with those by leading Garcilaso scholars Margarita Zamora, Enrique Pupo Walker, and Roberto González Echevarría. The conclusions enabled by such synthesis aim to offer a new understanding of the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* as well as, ultimately, to increase our understanding in English literature of the relationship between singularity and established authority in the early modern period.

II

Spanish Context

Writing about Spain in his Introduction to *Don Quixote*, Carlos Fuentes noted, “The Past is not a problem for the Frenchman or the Englishmen. For the Spaniard, it is nothing *but* a problem; the latent strains of its multiple heritages—Christian, Muslim, and Jewish—throb unresolved in the heart and mind of Spain.” That was in 1975. In the late 16th – early 17th century, the period of the climax of the Catholic counter-reformation, Spain was particularly tethered to its past.

It had been one hundred years since *los reyes católicos* Isabel and Ferdinand had reconquered and unified Spain in the name of the Catholic church, ending nearly 900 years of Moorish rule. Spain had been the only country in Western European history to deal with the significant presence of a racial or religious other, and despite the tolerance of the Moorish era—causing the Spanish historian Américo Castro to call it the period of *convivencia*, “living together”—Isabel and Ferdinand founded the new unified country on the principles of an intertwined crown and church that aimed to purge the country of racial and religious difference. They set loose the Holy Inquisition to carry out the expulsion of Muslims, Jews, and Gypsies, and to force religious conversion upon those who remained (over 200,000 Jews alone were expelled (Hintzen-Bohlen, 413)). The double authority of the crown and church was rigid, all-pervasive, and, since the 1564 Council of Trent had deemed the Vulgate version of the Bible (the Latin version used by Spain) as absolutely free of error, regarded itself as infallible. God had shown his approval for the Christianization of Spain, the Catholic monarchs believed, and this idea was upheld by

Pope Innocent VIII, who set the following guidelines for dealing with the conquered Moors:

Our chief concern and commission from heaven is the propagation of the orthodox faith, the increase of the Christian religion, the salvation of barbarian nations, and the repression of the infidels and their conversion to the faith. (in Codignola, 195)

It had also been one hundred years since Columbus had discovered a whole other world, one which he dedicated to the “most Christian and lofty and powerful sovereigns” (in Zamora, *CCLtS*, 3)), and the greater part of which Pope Alexander VI, in his 1493 bull *Inter Caetera*, acting “by the authority of Almighty God”, had given Isabel and Ferdinand. The Catholic monarchs believed that this land, like Spain itself, was proof of God’s approval of a Christian Spanish empire. In the 16th century, however, this world was now creating major problems for the double authority of crown and church that had funded the discovery in the first place. The discovery of the New World turned the Old one upside down, as Europe was forced to come to grips with the fact that the whole of human history was *not* in the Bible; the Protestant Reformation and Renaissance humanist movements were born. The situation was thus ironic (not to mention historically unique, as noted by Brownlee, ix) for Spain. Its very existence was founded upon Catholic principles that drove unity and centralization, while its pioneer role in the New World entailed unavoidable peripheral forces and unprecedented diversity. Spain’s response to the changes sparked by the New World, changes that threatened to unravel its very foundations, was the same as during the beginning of the Inquisition: it aimed for an even tighter knitting of the established double authority of crown and church. This is not to say that unity was bullet-proof—on the contrary, centralizing aims were constant because of the constant threat of peripheral attempts for authority. J.H. Elliott has largely based his

studies on writing of dissent in Catalonia, for example, and as will be seen, literary works that expressed diverse ideas managed to survive and have come to be regarded as examples of Spain's *siglo de oro*—works like *Don Quixote*, poems by Quevedo, plays by Lope de Vega. But these works are considered such precisely *because* they resist the repressive milieu within which they were produced. Crown and church control might not have been effectively absolute, but the attempt was thorough. The result was rulers who aimed for full control over both court and church: sixteenth century King Philip II, for example, “projected himself as the supreme upholder of law and the defender of justice, a royal Solomon, whose palace of the Escorial was itself conceived as the Temple of Jerusalem” (Elliott, 171).

The tight interweaving of the double authority of crown and church in late 16th–early 17th century Spain in response to its unique historical circumstances, therefore, meant the continuation of particular medieval cultural elements that had been born out of the Inquisition. The most significant of these was an obsession with blood purity. Ideology of the *limpieza de sangre* developed out of Catholic belief in the purity of Jesus' blood, and of interpretation of transubstantiation as a real, physical event; those groups not partaking in the Eucharist were thus perceived as impure. In his book *Contradictory Subjects*, George Mariscal explores the significance of blood purity in Spanish history, describing how it formed the basis of the Inquisition by linking the human body and the body politic. Medieval concepts of medicine such as bleeding, for example, could be seen as paralleling traditional thought that “held aristocratic blood to be the very substance of the social body, requiring the summary purgation of pollutants and contaminants” (Mariscal, 45-46); in this line of thought, Jews were believed to bleed monthly just as women do, and this was used

as proof that the Jews were inherently impure and required purging—hence their expulsion, along with the Moors, gypsies, and other non-Catholics, from Spain. Thus, blood purity came to be the primary determinant of social status and authority. As Emran Qureshi summarizes,

By the late 1400's, *convivencia* met a violent end. The Castilian monarchs captured the entire Iberian Peninsula and forcibly converted Jews and Muslims to Christianity....These new Christians were viewed with suspicion and subject to intense persecution. It is here that the antecedents of biological anti-Semitism begin in Spain, with the idea that only Catholics with "purity of blood" (*limpieza de sangre*) should be admitted to guilds or the broader society. (Qureshi, D8)

The value of blood purity continued for hundreds of years; as Mariscal writes,

The aristocratic subject of 17th century Spain was marked off from its European counterparts in large measure by the ideology of blood.... We cannot underestimate the effect of this complex issue on social relations in general; by representing subject position as the consequence of 'natural' forces, the ideologues of blood attempted to control the distribution of power in Spanish society and ensured the marginalization of certain groups considered to be inferior. (Mariscal, 39-40)

Blood purity had become so central to Spanish culture that even when Harvey discovered the nature of circulation of the blood in 1616, his findings were not introduced into a single Spanish university until 1687...and even then, it was a controversial affair (Mariscal, 45).

As the crown and church were based in Castile (Isabel la Católica herself was Castilian), Castilian blood came to be considered the most pure. The propagation of this idea was then used by the crown and church to further strengthen their control over the rest of the country. The most effective way in which this control was enforced was through quelling of deep-rooted regional differences and a tendency toward homogenization of Spanish culture to reflect Castilian values. Isabel commissioned the writing of Castilian dictionaries and grammar books such as those by Antonio de Nebrija, whose philosophy

was that “language is the perfect instrument of empire” (in Kupperman, 18), and the Castilian language was also promoted through its use, rather than Latin or other Spanish dialects, by official writers. For example, in defence of his choice to write about the New World in Castilian, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo—who “became one of the most often quoted and famous of all historians of the New World” (Delgado Gomez, 53) writes,

Porque siendo estas historias más generalmente entendidas por espanoles, que son los primeros que en estas partes navegaron..., no se debe tener en tanto contentar a los pocos que desde lexos me oyen e son extranos...[Y] para mí tengo por cosa ridicula lo que algunos latinos extrangeros, como autores de lo que no vieron, han escrito destas nuestras Indias.... No quiero contarlo a los que no me conocen, ni a los que viven fuera de Espana. (in Sánchez Barba, 59)

[Since these histories are generally being understood by Spaniards, who were the first to navigate in these parts...I need not worry about satisfying those few people who hear me from faraway, and who are foreign. [And] it seems ridiculous to me that foreign Latinos, as they did not see these places, have written about our Indies.... I do not wish to write for those who do not know me, nor for those who live outside of Spain.]

Spain developed according to (and in fact remains based upon) a labyrinth of legal writings that trace back to Alfonso X’s 13th century *Siete Partidas* (Seven Divisions)—the Castilian legal code. Similarly, for Spaniards interested in promoting their careers, “Madrid...was the center of the universe” (Elliott, *SAIW*, 17-18). Amidst this belief in the superiority of Castilian blood, and Castile’s efforts at homogenization of the country, the best that individuals born with impure blood could do was emulate those with pure blood, even in the most mundane matters. Moors who opted to convert to Christianity in order to remain in Spain, for example, were told

to conform in all things to the practices of the Christians, ‘in your dress and your shoes and your adornment, in eating and at your tables and in cooking meat as they cook it; in your manner of walking, in giving and receiving, and, more than anything, in your speech, forgetting in so far as

you can the Arabic tongue.’ (Elliott and Hernando de Talavera, first archbishop of Granada, in Elliott, *SAIW*, 53)

When Spain discovered the New World then, not only did the Spaniards’ belief in fate and God’s will spark the idea that God had chosen them to expand their empire for the purpose of spreading the message of Christianity, but the fact that Isabel had funded Columbus’ voyage also supported the idea that God approved of Castile’s rule:

The sixteenth-century Castilians saw themselves as a chosen, and therefore a superior, people, entrusted with a divine mission which looked towards universal empire as its goal. This mission was seen as a higher one than that of the Romans because it was set into the context of Catholic Christianity. The highest and most responsible duty of Castile was to uphold and extend the faith, bringing to a civilized and Christian way of life (and the two were regarded as synonymous) all those benighted peoples who, for mysterious reasons, had never until now heard the gospel message. (Elliott, *SAIW*, 9)

Columbus contributed to the development of the myth that Castile was divinely chosen to discover the New World: in his letter to the Catholic monarchs, he writes, “Your Highnesses should order that [many] praises should be given to the Holy Trinity [damaged] your kingdoms and domains, because of the great love [the Holy Trinity?] has shown you, more than to any other prince” (in Zamora, *CCLtS*, 7). Of course, the New World natives were then clearly affected by the ideology of blood purity. While it was decided that since the natives had simply lived in ignorance of Christianity rather than “rejecting” it as had the Moors, Jews, and gypsies, they were to be treated differently, intrinsic markers were still seen to testify to the disposition of their souls. The jurist Juan de Matienzo, in his *Government of Peru* (1567), for example, basing his argument on Aristotle’s doctrine of natural slavery, describes the direct connection that he felt could be made between the natives’ skin color and their intelligence:

Men of this type or complexion are, according to Aristotle, very fearful, weak and stupid' and for this reason they were 'naturally born and brought up to serve. And it can be known that they were born for this because, as Aristotle says, such types were created by nature with strong bodies and were given less intelligence. So it can be seen that the Indians are physically very strong—much stronger than the Spaniards—and can bear more than them, for they carry burdens on their backs of twenty-five to fifty pounds and walk along beneath them without difficulty'....'The stronger they are... the less intelligence they have. (Matienzo in Elliott, *SAIW*, 49)

Even the natives' languages, some believed, revealed that the natives were inferior to the Spaniards, and in fact not quite human; ecclesiastic Ortiz de Hinojosa wrote in an official memorandum that

[native languages are] so inaccessible and difficult that they appear to have been introduced not by men but by nature, as the illiterate noise of birds or brute animals, which cannot be written down with any kind of character, and can scarcely be pronounced for being so guttural that they stick in the throat. (in Elliott, *SAIW*, 54)

Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda took up the case against the full humanity of the natives, and stated in his *Democrates secundus* (1547, commissioned by Charles V) that “wars against the natives were just, and even constituted a necessary preliminary to their Christianization” (Zamora, *Language*, 92); this work has been called “the most virulent and uncompromising argument for the inferiority of the American Indian ever written” (in Clendinnen, 12). In any case, uncertainty regarding the nature of the natives' humanity persisted, especially when their identity was conflicting; higher class *mestizos* were perhaps the most obvious example of individuals who were “new characters” (Maravall in Mariscal, 81), individuals “implicated in multiple positions” (Mariscal, 88):

even as the dominant groups struggled to manage the contradictions that threatened the coherence of their own ideologies, the intervention of such “new” subjects such as those born of the union between nonaristocratic conquistadors and female members of the Incan nobility called into question the entire structure of traditional Castilian life. (Mariscal, 97)

The only thing that was certain was that natives' and *mestizos*' social status remained below that of the Spaniards'; their racial difference was translated into social subordination. There was no way for them to escape the status conferred upon them since, according to Mariscal, the only non-intrinsic determinant of status in late 16th–early 17th century Spain was deeds, expressed through the areas of arms and letters...although these were still largely regarded as a product of fate (so that God willed the winning of battles, for example) and were valued for their support of the absolutist state; meanwhile, valour was also considered an intrinsic virtue of the aristocracy. Like the Christianized Moors living in Granada, the natives of the New World were thus simply encouraged—or forced—to copy the ways of the Spaniards as much as possible. In imposing Christianity in Mexico, for example, Cortés “destroyed the existing idols, whitewashed the existing shrine, washed the existing attendants and cut their hair, dressed them in white, and taught these hastily refurbished priests to offer flowers and candles before an image of the Virgin” (Clendinnen, 20). Similar conversion was also prevalent in Peru, in order to establish the illegitimacy of the powerful Inca sovereigns (Sánchez Barba, 102). Simply, Spain attempted to incorporate the New World into its aims for homogeneity: “sus condiciones y caracteres de unidad, extension, riqueza convierte a los territorios indianos en una pieza clave de la Monarquía universal” (Sánchez Barba, 101). [Spain's conditions and character of unity, expansion, and wealth worked to convert the New World territories into a key piece of the Universal Monarchy.] The extent to which homogeneity had penetrated the core of Spanish values is evident in that even Bartolomé de las Casas, opponent to Sepúlveda and defender of the New World natives, “was directed to the finding not of otherness but of commonality, for it was only by establishing commonality that [he] could

secure the full incorporation of the peoples of America into the human community” (Elliott, *Final Reflections*, 398). “Reduction” to Christianity (the term often used) of the New World natives may then be seen as the attempt to bring difference under control, in order to create a lowest common denominator of at least religious homogeneity, just as had been done in Spain with the Moors and Jews.

It should be noted that besides natives and *mestizos*, other, perhaps less evident, “new characters” also appeared on the stage of Spanish society in the 16th century. These included individuals such as conquistadors and merchants who, despite their lower class beginnings and origins from regions such as Extremadura, were often suddenly wealthier than the upper classes from Castile. (Even Garcilaso derides these conquistadors, saying every one of them “imagined he deserved the whole of Peru” (2.6.6).)¹ Just as with the Moors, Jews, gypsies, natives, and *mestizos*, the Spanish crown and church regarded these individuals as a threat to their own authority and aimed to suppress them. One form of this suppression was the establishment of new laws that limited the conquistadors’ and merchants’ wealth (such as the *Nuevas Ordenances* in 1542, which reduced the land and number of Indians granted to Spaniards in the New World), and consequently, their power. The result of the plethora of new laws was that the Spanish social and political system became increasingly bureaucratic and entangled in legal nitpicking; this led Hernán Cortés for example, to write to Emperor Charles V in 1544, “I find it more difficult to defend myself from your prosecutor than to conquer the lands of my enemies” (in González Echevarría, 109). Besides legal limitations, these individuals also suffered social

¹ Throughout this thesis, quotations from the *Royal Commentaries* will be documented according to Part number, Book number, and Chapter number.

deprivations. In the following document written to Philip II in 1558, for example, the king is urged to punish the newly successful merchants:

besides the penalties incurred through laws and decrees...they and their wives and their sons and daughters and their descendents should be prohibited from wearing silk, riding on horseback, and enjoying all the honors and offices, and...they should be subject to all the prohibitions placed on those condemned by the Holy Inquisition. (in Mariscal, 85)

At the same time, procedures of noble etiquette were revised and “unruly nobles were banished from court, and the palace became, in the words of a contemporary, ‘a school of silence, punctiliousness, and reverence’” (Elliott, 180). In all aspects of Spanish politics and society, therefore, Catholic Castile sought control.

Besides regarding the natives and *mestizos*, the conquistadors, and merchants as a threat to established Spanish authority, Spain also expressed disapproval of singularity through xenophobia. In particular, the crown and church regarded “the figure of the Englishman...as an emblem for a new and dangerous form of the subject—the individual” (Mariscal, 90). Spain even used the image of the singular Englishman to further denounce individuality in Spanish society by couching it within religious differences and thereby relating it to heresy:

[The English] confound and pervert the order of all things, human and divine, preferring the body to the soul, civil to spiritual government, and the reign of the earth to that of heaven, the inferior to the superior, the sheep to the shepherd, and they make the head the feet and the feet the head, and give freedom to the subject so that he may judge his judge. (anonymous Jesuit priest in Mariscal, 91)

Similarly, in his work on England and Scotland, which was published soon after the Armada’s defeat by the English in 1588, official writer Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas describes Queen Elizabeth as a “ruler whose ‘diabolic fervor’ made her the modern, female equivalent of Diomedes, the Greek ruler who taught his horses to eat human flesh;”

Diomedes however, “was eventually vanquished by Hercules...‘[and] this Hercules will be the invincible Philip II, King of Spain” (in Kagan, *Philippus*, 25). And it was true, England itself *was* quite singular—it was the very manifestation of dissent, having broken away from the previous authority of the Catholic church to follow a Protestant path. (Ironically, it has been noted that the defeat of the Spanish armada was the one event that temporarily created a sense of unity amongst the English...(see Weimann, 194).)

Such propaganda seems to have had its effect on Spanish society in general. Popular disapproval of singularity is evident, for example, in an event surrounding Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* (1605). In essence, Cervantes’ work treats of a singular individual: Don Quixote is a lower nobility *hidalgo* or *hijo de algo* (child of something [substantial]) who traverses social barriers as he traverses the Spanish countryside. After the publication of the first part of Cervantes’ story, there appeared an anonymous sequel, and in this anonymous version, every unconventional step Don Quixote takes lands him as the object of public ridicule or violent punishment (Mariscal, 157). These descriptions of public ridicule are particularly significant because they are evidence that society at large regarded singularity as something negative (Mariscal, 165). Other writers agree with this observation about early modern Spanish society:

[t]here were a few *alumbrados*...—“Illuminati”—in Spain, [just] as there were a few Protestants, but they were exceptions, and examples of mere personal eccentricity. The Inquisition had the sincere support of the nation in stamping out both. (Hannay, 176)

It seems that this cultural unity in terms of disapproval of singularity derived from Catholic roots. At its very base, the ideology of religious community quelled any idea of individuality—individuality was interpreted as vanity, and vanity was a deadly sin. Merchants afraid of stepping out of line “consulted with confessor’s manuals that

delineated how to conduct business without fear of spiritual transgression” (Mariscal, 87), and even the King was subject to conformity: Charles V, in the prologue of his autobiography, wrote “God knows that I did not do it out of vanity, and if anyone should take offence at it, my excuse is that it was done more out of ignorance than of maliciousness”; he also wrote from a third person perspective to emphasize his modesty (in Kagan, *Philip II*, 21). The preacher Alonso de Cabrera perhaps most directly showed the church’s denunciation of singularity, as he wrote that “singularity is the property of heretics: refusing to go where others go, disseminating novelty in public places, new doctrines, opinions from their own mind, never before imagined by anyone before them” (in Mariscal, 92).

In any case, popular disapproval of singularity is also suggested in the original *Don Quixote* through its parody of Spain’s social ideal. Don Quixote’s exaggerated and idealistic social aims—not to overturn the existing social structure, but rather become *part* of it, to be accepted as a noble knight-errant by the everyday people he crosses—effectively dissolves his social structure’s credibility. And because Spanish society and power were organized according to intrinsic qualities designed for exclusion, Don Quixote’s real inclusion into society—ultimately through the success of the novel—was a social *coup d’etat* in early 17th century Spain. The fact that Cervantes was inspired to make this parody and dissolution the subject of his novel shows that this topic—that is, the tension between singularity and authority—was completely relevant in Spanish society at the time; such open parody of this tension in *Don Quixote* then made the topic even *more* relevant. Cervantes illuminates the inevitability of social change in Spain at the time and truly initiates Spain’s participation in modernity through the paradoxical link of Don

Quixote. This is because Don Quixote's ideal society involves two irreconcilable things—first, the creation of a “utopian community founded on Christian virtues,” that is, a harmonious community, and second, the proliferation of the individual, “relatively free of the inherited determinants of blood and caste” (Mariscal, 187).

Thus, Spain's history of Moorish occupation directly resulted in its later foundation upon medieval Catholic, centralizing, homogenizing aims that worked to exclude difference in society. And these aims meant that, upon the rise of Renaissance humanism and the Protestant Reformation in late 16th century Europe,

Spain locked its intellectual door ever tighter, and...ensured the intimidation or repression of those who strayed.... The threat of violence cast a pall over intellectual activity that was constant and ominous. (Ross, 106)

As the threat posed by the Protestant Reformation and Renaissance humanism increased, so did centralized control in Spain. Furthermore, as Margarita Zamora points out, the recent conversion to Christianity of a large Jewish population meant that the Crown and church felt particularly threatened by the humanist interest in looking toward original Hebrew passages of the Bible, and suggests that Spanish humanists suffered particularly vehement persecution (Zamora, *Language*, 28). In his discussion on the tension between center and periphery in Spain, J.H. Elliott suggests in *Spain and its World 1500-1700* that centralization and homogeneity were in fact most ardently sought during the era of Count-Duke Olivares, minister to the crown from 1621 to 1643. Olivares' term was characterized by his “insistence on unity conceived as uniformity, which runs right through [his] twenty-two years of power” (Elliott, 179); at which point, the time that is often referred to as the decline of Spain, had begun.

It is not surprising that writing in Spain reflected the society in which it was produced: until the beginning of the 17th century, it remained traditional, largely homogenous, and stringently controlled by the crown and church. In his various writings on the history of writing in Spain, Richard Kagan describes the country's particular tendency to regulate writing, beginning with the establishment of the post of official historiographer of Castile during the reign of John II (1406-54). Through the years that followed, Isabel la Católica agreed that "language is the perfect instrument of empire", and writing came to play an essential part in the development of Spain: "Writing was an important, not to say fundamental feature of the Spanish empire....Never was an empire more permeated by the letter" (Gonzalez-Echevarria, 116). The relationship between writing and the success of the empire was perceived to be so important, and so potentially dangerous, that while sixty-six official writers were listed under Philip II and seventy-six under Philip III (Elliott, 159), even their official manuscripts (along with maps) were often placed in the royal archives without being published, in order to prevent the possibility of the events recorded from being used against the established power (Kagan, *Philippus*, 23). When "secret papers" containing possibly embarrassing material to the crown written by a constable of Castile were found in 1612, Philip III ordered all ambassadors and viceroys to deposit their papers in the royal archives at Simancas, and the council of official writers recommended that "no one except for the royal chroniclers should write" (Kagan *Spain*, 82); all other writings were promptly censored. Even Philip IV, who came to power in 1621, believed that "all history should be royal history". He repeatedly attempted to suppress writings by anyone other than his own chroniclers, as well as local histories that concerned regional interests and which were thus perceived as a threat by the monarchy in Castile (Kagan

Spain, 75). These local histories, or chorographies, were dangerous because they “inverted the focus of Spanish history” and occupied

a historical space denied them by the historians employed by the crown.... [They] offered a vision of the kingdom quite distinct from that of royal history. The latter gravitated toward a unitary, almost homogeneous view of Spain, in which the kingdom was little more than a theatre for the demonstration of monarchical grandeur. In comparison, the kingdom outlined in the chorographies is much more transparent...everything is concentrated on the one [region]...[and] simply by relegating the monarchy to the background of the historical stage, [chorographies] did...little to promote the idea of a unitary state. (Kagan *UI*, 95-96)

As an example of the conflict between centralized and regional writings of history, tensions between Castile and Aragon escalated until in 1578, the province of Aragon created the office of *Cronista del reino de Aragón*, its own official chronicler. In response, Castile ordered a ban on the publication of any history without express royal consent, as well as attempted to appropriate these histories for its own purposes. Similar tensions in Catalonia have been studied intensively by J.H. Elliott.

In order to ensure that the crown and church would be portrayed favourably in historical writings, the individuals entrusted to write the official chronicles were chosen carefully. Pedro de Navarra, in a treatise on royal chroniclers that he dedicated to Philip II in 1565, suggested that the crown should avoid chronicler candidates who were “ignorant of learning, crude in style, low in judgment, lacking in memory, quick in believing, slow in understanding, vile in blood, obscure of life and strangers to virtue and grace” (Navarra in Kagan, *Spain*, 76); thus, the historiographic treatises themselves “regularly devoted much space to considering the *essential* qualities of the historian (Adorno, *DE*, 218; italics are my own). Such selection meant that the writers were “generally officials attached to the royal chancery, a connection which practically guaranteed that the resulting record would

favour both the king and his policies” (Kagan, “Philip II”, 20); it is clear that official chroniclers recognized this responsibility in upholding the crown, and realized that “the chronicles were written for pragmatic as well as academic purposes, and even those that served theoretical ends had at stake practical goals of influencing policy or opinion” (Adorno, *DE*, 211). Gonzales Fernández de Oviedo, appointed official chronicler of the Council of the Indies by Carlos V in 1532, understanding the seriousness of his position (and the privileges it granted him), wrote that “only a royal chronicler like himself...could be trusted to write about royalty ‘with the truth and purity that is required’” (in Kagan, “Philip II”, 20). Oviedo was not unique, as there was a “desire that motivated virtually all writers in early modern Spain...to be somehow associated with the aristocracy” (Mariscal, 154). For the historian often wrote for personal gain, and analyzed the past in order “to obtain compensation for services rendered to the monarchy, services made explicit in the text” (Delgado-Gomez, 5). Despite the privileges the role of official chronicler involved, however, this was also a tricky position to play. In his *Método para escribir la historia* (Method for Writing History) (1555), official chronicler Juan Paez de Castro outlined the double function of his position: to write truthful history as well as to honour the reputation of the crown and church. De Castro includes the king’s demands for the chroniclers

‘to write, declare, and collect all the material pertinent to the royal chronicle’, to emulate the style of...ancient historians and, finally, ‘to embellish their chronicles with judgments based on philosophy and sound doctrine.’ (Cabrero in Kagan, “Philip II”, 20)

No room existed for the author’s (overt) personal interpretation or comment within the text; unlike Italy, England, or France, Spain did not welcome a similar “reinvent[ion of] the *author*, defined by a unique individual style”, nor did it “set the production of such authors as the utopian goal of its educational program” (Quint, 1). Hannay discusses the

persistence of “proven” Spanish influences in historiography over the introduction of new, personal, forms; “men”, he writes, “were driven back on mere playing with words because the Inquisition made thinking dangerous” (Hannay, 28). For this reason, many royal histories imitated the medieval *romances* and other chivalric forms; this is the case of Hierónimo Sempere’s *Carolea* (1560), which recounts the history of Charles V in 40,000 stylized, rhyming verses.

Besides adopting “proven” forms in order to write acceptable historiography, another way in which the chroniclers dealt with the slipperiness of their position was to simply leave out parts of history. This was the case in Ambrosio de Morales’ *Antigüedades de las ciudades de España* (1572), which included Moorish history in Spain only in terms of the reconquest (Kagan, *Philippus*, 23); many other histories also ignored Spain’s Muslim era and began in 1492. In general, references to Moors or Jews were rarely made, as writers preferred to emphasize genealogies of the nobility (Kagan, *Spain...90*). Unease with discourse that involved religious or racial others is even evident in the mixed reception of the aristocratic writer Francisco de Quevedo (1580-1645) in Spain: Mariscal argues that while Quevedo always defines the upper class in his writing, he sometimes does so through exclusionary techniques that necessarily invoke “figures of otherness (women, heretics, picaros)” (Mariscal, 38); Quevedo was ultimately censored because the upper classes were uncomfortable with such depiction in artistic form.

Censorship laws in general were implemented in order to control not only historiography, but rather all forms of writing in Spain: these laws prevented

the printing without formal license by the Council of Castile of ‘letters and relations, apologies and panegyrics, gazettes and newssheets, sermons, discourses, and papers on affairs of state and government...*arbitrios*,

verses, dialogues or anything else, even if short and of a very few lines'.
(from the *Novísima Recopilación*, in Elliott, *SAIW*, 193)

In terms of literary writers, Cervantes was refused an official position with the Royal Council of the Indies for which he applied twice (de Armas Wilson, 234), and spent time in jail (where he apparently began *Don Quixote*). Similarly, Quevedo, despite the often overt support he shows for the crown in his writing, was imprisoned for three years by Count Duke Olivares under charge of being “treacherous, an enemy and critic of the government” (in Elliott, 141). Even clerical writers, such as Ponce Luis de León from the prestigious University of Salamanca was imprisoned by the Inquisition for translating the *Song of Solomon* into the vernacular (the fact that he was a *converso*—had converted from Judaism to Christianity—certainly had something to do with his imprisonment); Martínez and Grajal, also both from Salamanca, died in their prison cells for completing similar translations (Zamora, *Language*, 37); Luís de Granada, despite being a Dominican (and thus promoter of the Inquisition), was imprisoned for five years “on accusations brought by envious rivals at Salamanca” (Hannay, 178); Santa Teresa and Juan de la Cruz also met with opposition. In fact, virtually all writers venerated today as the most illustrious of Spain’s *siglo de oro* encountered tremendous difficulty in publishing their works: 16th—17th century Spain’s

most inspired religious poets and theologians were constantly under the suspicion of heresy. The lives of some of its most admired literary writers, such as Lope de Vega, Cervantes, or Quevedo [or Garcilaso] frequently transgressed the borders of official legality, while other authors barely survived the persecution of the Inquisition. (Gumbrecht, xii-xiii)

The most significant state control over writing, however, is evident in Castile’s establishment of the Royal Council of the Indies in Seville (the city that was the point of departure for the New World and re-entry to the Old). This complex organization was

charged with controlling all information that was written and published with regards to the discovery of the New World. In 1571, Philip II then created the position of *Cronista mayor*, or official chronicler, and assigned this writer the task of shaping history in a way that corresponded to the crown's and church's interests—political, economic, and religious—as well as approving or censoring all other accounts for publication. The diligence of the Council of the Indies in its censorship duties is evident in that reference to the New World is curiously lacking in poetic writing of 16th and 17th century Spain. Only two major exceptions come to mind: Lope de Vega's *La Dragontea*, and Alonso Ercilla y Zuñiga's *La Araucana*; the former was recalled by the Council after the work's initial publication, while the latter told the story of the Chilean battle from a perspective that was clearly loyal to the Spanish crown. In general, the only Spanish writing of the period that dealt with the New World were the official histories. The responsibility of the official chroniclers was to make history neat:

the story-making predilection is powerfully present in the major Spanish sources. The messy series of events that began with the landfall on the eastern coast has been shaped into an unforgettable success story [and involves a] superb irresistible forward movement. (Clendinnen, 14)

The “forward movement” of the official writings was the implication of a kind of evolutionary development of New World history, a sweeping depiction of that history as significant only as a preparation for the coming of Christianity. And in fact, the Bible served as the primary model for Spanish writing of New World history: it was the ultimate authority, as well as the only “familiar unfamiliar”—that is, the only world that Spain could not really see, but yet knew, accepted, and had incorporated into its mindset. Thus, in writing about the New World, the Spaniards “began with a clear conviction of the superiority of their own Christian civilization” (Elliott, 44). As will be seen in section IV,

it was through reference to the Bible that even Garcilaso was forced to establish the very essence of his claims in the *Royal Commentaries*.

The Spaniards' depiction of the history of the New World through the Bible is, according to Anthony Pagden in *European Encounters with the New World*, an example of the human need to deal with the unknown through the known in order to enable understanding. Pagden suggests that when humans encounter empty space, whether in history, or geography, our tendency is to fill that space. He writes,

Nothing terrifies so much as the unimaginable, incalculable, unmapable empty space.... The classical and medieval geographers filled their uncharted, unexplored lands and seas with terrors, with dragons, man-eaters, vast whirlpools which could swallow entire ships, the 'Green Sea of Darkness' which the Arabs had located immediately to the south of Cape Bojador. These unknown lands were filled, too, with clusters of imaginary beings—the Amazons and the Anthropophagi, the Cephalapods.... (Pagden, *EE*, 28)

In Spain, the need to impose familiarity upon the unknown is evident in virtually every early artistic depiction of the New World. The 1493 map *Carta a Santangel*, for example, which announced Columbus' discovery, "depicted Columbus standing on his ship...surrounded by the islands of the archipelago he had 'discovered'—although in the illustration he seems rather to have created them—each with the [Castilian] name he had given it" (Pagden, *EE*, 28). The first European maps of Peru were similar: Cuzco, for example, was depicted as looking like a Spanish city, so that "to look at this image...was to look at the social and political hierarchy of Europe projected onto the New World" (Kagan, *UI*, 97). The 1556 map, by G.B. Ramusio, which accompanied the first full translation of the *Royal Commentaries* in English, showed Cuzco to be symmetrical and European in style (McCormack in Kagan, *UI*, 100). The second Spanish map of Cuzco shows the city as follows:

Perfectly symmetrical and square, the city looked more like the Heavenly Jerusalem imagined by Augustine, Aquinas, and later European writers than the city the Incas had constructed. Other details also reveal the view's European character, among them, the two-and three-story houses of Italianate design, the imposing perimeter wall, and seven large fortified gates—all this was utopia, not Cuzco. In accordance, moreover, with Renaissance ideas about the proper placement of citadels, the artist moved Sacsayhuaman [a fortress]...to a situation overlooking the main square and to a site actually occupied by the palace of the Inca himself. Finally, as if to deny the reality of the conquest and to make Cuzco into a barbarian city, the city appeared in the view as if it were still ruled by Atahualpa, whose figure, seated in a sedan chair supported by servants, is clearly in evidence. (Kagan, *UI*, 69)

(The details in the maps were thus often inaccurate, since the sedan chairs described above in fact existed only in Asia and the Middle East; a 1596 map of Cuzco, meanwhile, shows practically naked natives in the foreground playing ball, although the chroniclers who wrote about Peru, including Garcilaso, included lengthy descriptions of Inca dress, and although it is only ever recorded that Mayas and Aztecs, not Incas, played ball.) The result of such a combination of European architecture and mixed, exotic details that had become conventional was images that were “seemingly familiar yet also quite strange, [places] that only existed in the European imagination” (Kagan, *UI*, 105). Europeans' image of the New World was of “a continent fashioned in their own image yet a land, given its geographical remove and early designation as the “Indies”, that was fantastical, marvelous, paradisiacal, and exotic” (Kagan, *UI*, 73).

While Spain's response to fit the unknown into the known was thus a natural response to its sudden awareness of the New World (in fact, the Incas did the same with the appearance of the Europeans, working them into their own myths), this manipulation, through the carefully controlled documentation by official writers, was exploited by the crown and church to uphold their authority in Spain and in the New World. The very act

of naming confers power upon the one doing the naming. In this way, Columbus' naming of Caribbean islands after Spanish royalty, with disregard for the islands' previous native names, is the most basic form of taking possession. In *Marvelous Possessions*, Stephen Greenblatt explores the process by which wonder turns to claim of possession, so that something new and unknown is "christened" into the known through naming, and that once it is named, it can be transformed and appropriated:

The movement here must pass through identification to complete estrangement: for a moment you see yourself confounded with the other, but then you make the other become an alien object, a thing, that you can destroy or incorporate at will. (Greenblatt, *MP*, 135)

In dealing with the New World natives, then, the Spanish were conflicted, as they were forced to

queasily oscillate between the motives of exploitation and conversion: they had a simultaneous interest in preserving difference—hence maintaining the possibility of grossly unfair economic exchange—and in erasing difference—hence...Christianizing the natives. (Greenblatt, *MP*, 108-109)

Ultimately, Greenblatt concludes, "it is difficult to avoid a sense that [Christianization] was a kind of taking possession" (Greenblatt, *MP*, 121). Christian depiction of New World history revived the Aristotelian concept of natural servitude alluded to above, "for a convenient incorporation of the indigenous American into the natural Chain of Being"; the result was that, "in the words of Cortés's chronicler Lopez de Gómara, the conquest represented 'the redemption of the most primitive people on earth'" (Pagden in Bauer, 205). Greenblatt describes the Spaniards' sense of superiority over New World inhabitants in the following way:

The Europeans who ventured to the New World in the first decades after Columbus's discovery shared a complex, well-developed, and above all, mobile technology of power: writing, navigational instruments, ships,

warhorses, attack dogs, effective armor, and highly lethal weapons, including gunpowder. Their culture was characterized by immense confidence in its own centrality, by a political organization based on practices of command and submission, by a willingness to use coercive violence on both strangers and fellow countrymen, and by a religious ideology centered on the endlessly proliferated representation of a tortured and murdered god of love. The cult of this male god—a deity whose earthly form was born from the womb of a virgin and sacrificed by his heavenly father to atone for human disobedience—in turn centered on a ritual (highly contested, of course, by the second decade of the sixteenth century and variously interpreted) in which the god’s flesh and blood were symbolically eaten. Such was the confidence of this culture that it expected perfect strangers—the Arawaks of the Caribbean, for example—to abandon their own beliefs, preferably immediately, and embrace those of Europe as luminously and self-evidently true. A failure to do so provoked impatience, contempt, and even murderous rage. (Greenblatt, *MP*, 9)

As technologically disadvantaged peoples with no prior writing of their own, it was virtually impossible for the natives of the New World even to reply to the Spanish regarding their conquest; Garcilaso de la Vega, and the three other native writers listed at the beginning of this essay were the exceptional few. The inability for the natives to object to the *Requirimento* (the official speech in which the Spaniards explained their evangelizing aim—in Castilian Spanish—and then used the absence of native objection to legitimize hostilities against the natives) was taken by Columbus as proof of their submission; in his letter to Santangel, he writes “I was not contradicted” (in Greenblatt, *MP*, 58). Thus, the conquests in the New World were carefully shaped and officially written into Spanish history in a way that upheld the crown’s imperial aims on the basis of Christian redemption of the natives. And through this writing, the principles of blood purity to which the Moors, Jews, and gypsies had been subjected within Spain were now applied to the natives of the New World. Rare European contestations, such as de las Casas’ *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552) also met with resistance

from the Spanish state; in this case, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (who was appointed official chronicler by Charles V) was commissioned to provide a counter-history, and in so doing argued that natives were by nature inferior to Spaniards. To make matters worse for the New World natives, their differences were often chalked up to being the work of the devil—recalling Pagden’s map filled with dragons, man-eaters, and cephalopods—and this idea stripped the natives of any agency at all. Official writer José de Acosta presented such a view in proclaiming the Incas’ paganism as worship of the devil in his *Historia general del Perú*, the historiography that was, at the end of the sixteenth century, “the most widely read book on the New World” (Zamora, *Language*, 107)

Spain’s official history of the New World was promoted through extensive control over all New World writings, as noted by Delgado-Gomez:

one of the ways the Spanish crown tried to protect its political and economic interests was through censorship. Since 1502 a royal license issued by the Consejo Real (after 1554, by the Consejo de Indias) was required to allow publication of any book dealing with the Indies, and this resulted in works being banned for publication due to their highly controversial subjects or because the Spanish feared the works would give away classified information. (Delgado-Gomez, 6)

This censorship and the ultimate authority of the official writings directly affected Garcilaso de la Vega. Even after his father had been legally cleared of accusations of treachery, Garcilaso’s claim for recompense for his father’s contribution to the conquest of Peru was denied forever when one member of the Royal Council of the Indies recalled the accusations, “The historians have written it: are you going to deny it?” (*RCI*, 2.5.23). Censors were often the official historians themselves, carefully chosen to represent the interests of the monarchy and who jealously guarded their privileged positions. Herrera y Tordesillas, for example, censored Lope de Vega’s poem *La Dragontea* in 1599, because it

described the exploits of Sir Francis Drake, and contained, he urged, “many things about the Indies that are false and in prejudice of many individuals who have served there well” (Herrera in Kagan, *Spain...*81). While strict censorship rules seriously curtailed unofficial writing in Spain between 1492 and the 17th century, an incredible amount of official writing was amassed with regards to the New World: the tight relationship between Spain’s empire and writing meant that the sheer mass of paper involved in its colonization is overwhelming, and its effect enormous:

Philip II’s obsession with bureaucracy and documentation left a legacy of paper that had crossed the ocean in both directions, and his preoccupation with heresy brought the Inquisition to America in 1571. Thus, both the quantity and quality of writing were affected by the King’s mode of governance. (Ross, 104)

The paper trail had begun the moment Columbus sighted the New World; the double authority of crown and church had demanded it of him, initiating what is perhaps the most infamous examples of Spanish bureaucracy. As Stephen Greenblatt writes in *Marvelous Possessions*,

because Columbus’ culture does not entirely trust verbal testimony, because its judicial procedures require written proofs, he makes certain to perform his speech acts in the presence of the fleet’s recorder...hence ensuring that everything would be written down and consequently have a greater authority. The papers are carefully sealed, preserved, carried back across thousands of leagues of ocean to officials who in turn countersign and process them according to the procedural rules; the notarized documents are a token of the truth of the encounter and hence of the legality of the claim. Or rather they help to produce ‘truth’ and ‘legality,’ ensuring that there are not competing versions of what happened on the beach on October 12th. (Greenblatt, *MP*, 57)

Columbus and subsequent explorers, unlike the official writers who simply *shaped* history, were bound to explain themselves to the established authority because of both the newness of the experience and the fact that they were not traditional types of official writers: “as a

discourse without antecedents, and often written by commoners who held no titles or credentials, the credibility of American historiography was extremely vulnerable and the authority of its narrator constantly in question” (Zamora, 40-41).

Yet it is not only the newness of the experience nor the unorthodox identity of the writers that put their testimony into question; rather, it was also the newness of the writers’ position. As Anthony Pagden explains, the demand on the New World writers to carefully document and submit all information regarding their experience is evidence that their eyewitness position threatened to undermine the sole authority of the state: “It is the ‘I’ who has seen what no other being has seen who alone is capable of giving credibility to the text” (Pagden, *IF*, 89). And Rolena Adorno writes that “the relationship between historical testimony and historiographical authority was, without a doubt, one of the central issues in the histories and relations (*relaciones*) written by participants in the Spanish conquests of America” (Adorno, *DE*, 210). This meant that New World documentation was essentially a matter of authority. Roberto González Echevarría writes of the ubiquity of underlying matters of authority in Spanish writing on the New World, and discusses in “The Law of the Letter” the legal origins of most of this writing:

Legal writing...permeated the writing of history [and] sustained the idea of empire.... The way the Inca wrote, and the reason why he and other chroniclers wrote, has a great deal to do with the development of notarial rhetoric that resulted from the evolution and expansion of the Spanish state. (González Echevarría, 108)

This tension between the established authority and the authority of the “I” is key to understanding Spain’s experience in the later 17th century: resistance to the “I” was arguably the source of its legal bureaucracy, its social fixity, its economic stagnation, its

empirical decline, and, at the same time, the appearance of its Golden Age literature and art. As Adorno writes,

the discursive encounter of Spain and America was characterized by [a] conjunction of history and law, the confluence of historical authority and juridical testimony. [And] in that fluid zone there was room for movement, and distinctions blurred. (Adorno, *DE*, 228)

While Adorno identifies the appearance, in 1632, of the unauthorized account of the conquest of Mexico by the soldier Bernal Díaz as the first evidence that “the dichotomy between testimony (*de re*) and authority (*de dicto*) was breaking down” (Adorno, *DE*, 228), it was within this fluid zone that Cervantes, Lope de Vega, to an extent Quevedo, and Garcilaso all moved, decades earlier.

Thus, while the discovery of the New World planted the seed for singularity in Spanish society and literature, Spain’s past—its history of occupation by the Moors and its subsequent reconquest and foundation according to centralizing, homogenizing, exclusionist principles—made the relationship between singularity and authority in the late 16th–early 17th centuries particularly problematic. In this way, Spain was probably the *least* apt country to discover the New World. The crown and church continually resisted singularity and maintained a rigidly conservative attitude toward change to the country’s political and social structure, and society itself shared such disapproval. (It is for this reason that this study does not refer to late 16th–early 17th century Spain as “early modern”, for any movement toward modernity was firmly resisted.) In terms of writing, Isabela heeded Nebrija’s advice that “language is the perfect instrument of empire” and sought to control and homogenize writing as a result.

While the centralized control initiated by Isabela was more effective than that which existed in England, as will be seen in the next section, it was, however, also ultimately doomed. The discovery of the New World inspired greater aims for control—through, for example, establishment of the Council of the Indies—because it had also created a fissure in Spanish thought. The first-hand eyewitness had inextricably loosened the roots of established authority, and the consequent increased aims for control then worked as further encouragement for marginal writing. Such an unfixed state is “the *only* possible place in which something like an “individual” with a more or less secure status can situate itself” notes Reiss, (140-141), and Gumbrecht points out that “what we call ‘Golden Age culture’ was certainly not ‘the culture of the empire’” promoted by Isabela (xii). The works appreciated today as the fruits of Spain’s *siglo de oro*, such as *Don Quixote*, works by Lope de Vega, certain works by Quevedo, and the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, all originated because of the limits imposed upon them after the fissure had appeared, and were all problematic in relation to the political and social context within which they were written. “Because the history of Spain has been what it has been, its art has been what history has denied Spain” writes Carlos Fuentes (“Introduction” to *Don Quixote*, xviii).

III

English Context

At the very least, England and Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries were competitive; at the most, they hated each other. War began unofficially between them in 1569 and then was waged openly from 1586 until 1604. The Black Legend—“the northern European—primarily Protestant—image of Spaniards as cruel and tyrannical” arose out of England’s view that Spain “was both backward and decadent” (Kagan, *UI*, 94); however, it has also been suggested that English animosity toward Spain might stem from an embarrassment of England’s *own* backwardness: its “imperial belatedness” (Montrose, 192). For compared to Spain and even France, England in the 17th century was still “inferior in many of the indices of power: population, wealth, size of army” (Washburn, 167). In any case, as England strove to replace Spain as the world’s greatest imperial power, patriotism and a desire to prove England’s glory and superiority over Spain inspired entire careers. Sir Walter Raleigh, for example, dedicated his writing to the promotion of English colonialism. Even Raleigh’s lieutenant on his second voyage expressed beliefs similar to Raleigh’s:

it were a dull conceite of strange weaknes in our selves, to distrust our own power so much, or at least, our owne hearts and courages, as valewing the Spanish nation to be omnipotent; or yielding that the poore Portugal hath that mastering spirit and conquering industrie, above us. (Keymis in Montrose, 193)

Meanwhile, Francis Drake’s presence—funded by Elizabeth, who in fact knighted Drake on the deck of his ship the Golden Hind upon his return—in the Spanish colonies was driven by his and his sailors’ aim to be “‘revenged for injury’ to themselves, their fellow-countrymen and co-religionists, to humiliate their enemies, insult Catholicism...and...to...enrich themselves and their principles” (Wright, xvii). Not

surprisingly, English literature of the era depicts the Spaniards as pompous and their empire as short-lived. Shakespeare's portrayal of the Spanish lover Don Adriano de Armado in *Love's Labor's Lost* shows the Spaniard to be self-important, while Bacon suggests the same for the Spanish king:

Now for Spain, his Majesty there, though accounted the greatest Monarch of Christendom, yet if his estate be enquired through, his root will be found a great deal too narrow for his tops. (Bacon in Spedding, 25)

Such sentiment towards Spain meant that the English would have been at least a bit reluctant to read accounts written by Spanish chroniclers and Jesuit priests (accounts which, moreover, tended to glorify Spain). The problem, however, was that the Spanish were the first explorers, so theirs were the first accounts; "texts by Thevet, Oviedo, Las Casas, Acosta, Du Bartas, Gómara, and Aléman constituted a high percentage of all British Americana before 1601" (Kupperman, *America*, vii). Thus, until England had created its own accounts, the solution lay in the way the Spanish stories were presented:

the incentive...for Protestant publishers, whether Dutch, English, German, or French, to provide their readers with up-to-date views of Spain's colonial cities was minimal. Better to do the opposite, highlighting not Mexico City but Tenochtitlan whose urbs served as a symbol of the civilizations the conquistadors had destroyed, a visual reminder of the bigotry and ruthlessness which Protestant writers, starting in the 16th century, attributed to the Spanish nation as a whole. (Kagan, *UI*, 94)

Such emphasis is exactly what is apparent in Samuel Purchas' anthology, *Hakhytus Posthumous or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625). While this work does include excerpts of the Royal Council of the Indies official chroniclers such as Antonio de Herrera y Tordesilla (*Historia general de los hechos de los Castellanos en las isles i tierra firme del mar oceano* 1590), as well as Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (*Historia general de las Indias* 1535), the sections included focus on physical descriptions of the New World; "as for the

Spanish acts,” he writes, “we have them sufficiently written by others” (in Steele, 303). The “others” to whom he refers are Bartolomé de las Casas, who created waves across Europe with his scathing account of the cruelty enacted by the Spaniards on the natives in the New World, and whose account Purchas places right after those of the Spanish writers; López Vas, who was Portuguese, anti-Spanish, and who complained of the cruelty of the Spaniards toward the natives; Girolamo Benzoni, who “identified with the colonized, perhaps because he came from Milan, a part of Italy which was under Spanish rule” (Burke, 46) and who describes the exploits of the revolutionary Pizarro; and Garcilaso de la Vega. In terms of Garcilaso, Purchas focuses on Part I—the “Inca” part—of the *Royal Commentaries*, thereby focusing more on Peru than on Spain. The fact that Garcilaso was *mestizo* rather than a pure Spaniard thus allowed the English to read about the New World without resorting to a purely Spanish text.

Yet beyond England’s simple dislike of the Spanish, it might be seen that there was a more deep-rooted reason why Purchas was willing to publish unconventional Spanish writers—and thus why Garcilaso was published earlier in England than in Spain. This reason relates to the very distinct religious histories of each nation. First of all, Spain was Catholic, England at the time (mostly) Protestant. Protestantism’s symbolic rather than literal interpretation of the Eucharist meant that blood purity was simply not an issue, and religion did not automatically lead to institutionalized exclusion of certain groups or individuals, as in Spain. This difference between Catholics and Protestants cannot be understated; as Stephen Greenblatt notes, “Catholics and Protestants tended to ask different questions, notice different things, fashion different images” (Greenblatt, *MP*, 8). And the distinct ways that Spain and England regarded the world due to their religious differences

affected the way in which they supported authority of the individual. The Spanish crown and Catholic church worked together to maintain their own authority through forces of centralization and exclusion; individual authority was generally discouraged through Castile's aim to homogenize culture and repress dissent. England, on the other hand, lacked this more or less effective monolithic unity.

The Reformation had meant that traditional authority was irreversibly weakened in England; religion, politics, and society were split from each other, and split within. Division is evident even with regards to the New World: while Spain's New World interest was purportedly based on evangelical concerns, "in the constitution of English rule over the New World, religion functioned as a prop for the authority of the state but not as a means of controlling subjects" (Seed,189). In his work *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, Robert Weimann discusses the diversification created by the Reformation in England, despite attempts of the established authority for centralized control:

an awareness of [the] centralization process must not presuppose any monolithic source of power in the period; it must not minimize the ongoing 'unofficial' diversification and differentiation in contemporary uses of authority. Rather, on a rudimentary political, economic, and sociocultural level, the contradiction between centralization and diversification was fundamental to and endemic in the early modern order of things. (Weimann, 192)

Such diversification derived from the principles of English Protestantism itself: in promoting personal interpretation of the Bible, it essentially fostered authority of the individual. The preface to the 1539 Great Bible reveals the new limitless scope of potential readers and interpreters:

herein...all manner of persons, men, women, young, old, learned, unlearned, rich, poor, priests, laymen, lords, ladies, officers, tenants, and

mean men, virgins, widows, lawyers, merchants, artificers, husbandmen, and all manner of persons...may in this book learn all things what they ought to believe, what they ought to do, and what they should not do, as well concerning Almighty God, as also concerning themselves and all other. (Cranmer in McEachern, 92)

Protestant valorization of personal interpretation was timely, for meanwhile, Renaissance humanism had begun to sweep northward from Italy, and promoted new interpretation of the classical texts previously regarded as infallible; this movement was “generally opposed to an older method of allegorical reading that ‘normalized’ the ancient texts by grounding their meaning in apparently stable systems of ethical or revealed truths” (Quint, 2). In his work *Humanism and America*, Andrew Fitzmaurice stresses that humanism was a greater force in England than in Spain in the 16th century, and that it was in fact one of the principle drives behind English colonial expansion. In any case, it might be seen that while the established authority hindered literary freedom in Spain, in England personal interpretation of texts led to an undermining of established authority, in literature and in society. Personal interpretation of the Bible inevitably led to diverse ideas, and these led to the emergence of innumerable Protestant sects. Since the basis for the founding of these sects was personal interpretation of the Bible, they tended to promote literacy and critical reading, and in turn they widely dispersed their ideas in writing—usually in the form of illicit pamphlets that continued to encourage even *greater* literacy and critical reading. Personal interpretation of the Bible thus had a long-standing impact on English culture and society. Gerald Maclean discusses this impact on mid 17th century English literature:

Restoration literature is characteristically political not only because it commonly addresses social and political issues with an irreverent attitude toward established authority, but also because of the ways in which reading and writing had made public debate increasingly central to the political experience of ordinary people living through the social and cultural changes of the 1640’s and 1650’s. Attacks on political

authority published during the early years of the Civil War both accompanied and encouraged widespread public debates on other questions of received authority, most notably those formerly regulated by the established Church, such as biblical interpretation, baptism, communion, and marriage. For two decades and in unprecedented numbers, works of religious and theological controversy, moral tracts, biblical commentaries, sermons, and works of prophecy, often expressing not simply antiprelatical but even heretical ideas, found their way into print and into the conversations, attitudes, and expectations of an increasingly critical reading public. (Maclean, 11)

While the pamphlets, biblical commentaries and so forth described above flourished, they were still officially illicit. And their unlawfulness shows that, while Protestantism seems to have fostered individual authority, unification and repression similar to that in Spain *were* certainly attempted in England—by various members of the court and Parliament, as well as by diverse writers and thinkers (who were then often commissioned by the court and Parliament). Censorship was officially imposed in England in 1538, when it was decreed that “no book in England was to be printed without both the pre-publication authorization of the king, a member of the Privy Council, or a bishop, and its printer’s name on the imprint” (Keeble, 93). In 1637, the Star Chamber Decree limited the nation’s official printers, and then even as late as 1643, *An Ordinance for the Regulating of Printing* was passed, allowing official presses in only London, Cambridge, and Oxford. These laws, however, were clearly less strict than in Spain, judging from the difference in numbers of books published in each country at the time: “the *Short-Title Catalogue* of the Bibliographical Society, which lists works published in English between 1475 and 1640, includes more than 26,000 items, and that is an incomplete list” (Abrams et al, 483). Meanwhile, the *Biblioteca Hispana* has calculated the number of ascetic works (which were the most prevalent genre at the time) at around three thousand during the 150 years or so of the Spanish Golden Age (Hannay, 3). More importantly, English society did not

show the same solidarity behind state censorship as in Spain. By the time the 1643 *Ordinance for the Regulating of Printing* was passed, it was already too late to silence diverse ideas, to curb rampant printing, and to pretend that unity was feasible. The Reformation had created a fissure in English way of thinking, and it was irreversible.

Perhaps the first well-known example of the inefficacy of post-Reformation censorship in England was the Martin Marprelate controversy. Martin, the fictitious pseudonym of the author of a series of anti-episcopal—and thus illicit—pamphlets, achieved enormous popularity in London in the late 1580's. The court attempted to quell his popularity in a way that evokes Alameda's writing of *Don Quixote*—by commissioning writers such as John Lyly and Thomas Nashe to respond to Martin in a way that ridiculed his ideas...by taking up his own style. The effect of their attempt, however, was opposite to that desired: while Alameda's public laughs *at* Don Quixote in the book (and presumably at marginal individuals in real life), the official English pamphlets spurred even greater mirth *with* Marprelate. As one critic writes, "even as he attacks Martin...Lyly inadvertently implies a sort of fellowship with him; momentarily they become two ruffians drinking together" (Tribble in Poole, 30). The result was that

the 'many thousande' who flocked to the anti-Martinist performances began to resemble not so much a jeering mob seeking retribution for Marprelate's affront to ecclesiastical authority as a crowd of carnival celebrants enjoying the antics of a lord of misrule. (Poole, 28)

The popularity of Martin reveals not only the inability of the English officials to enforce effective censorship, but is also proof of the English populace's willingness to accept, and participate in, dissent. In fact, such popular tolerance of dissent might even mean that censorship was only half-heartedly enforced by the officials as well. In any case, Martin's

fame was enduring; many critics see his character taken up in Shakespeare in the character of Falstaff. As Poole writes,

[Falstaff's] rotund, expansive figure, emblematic of carnivalesque festivity, potentially signifies absorption and loss of social distinction. Like Martin, Falstaff challenges the very hierarchies that constitute the structure of church and state. (Poole, 41)

Like Martin and Falstaff, Sir Walter Raleigh proved uncontainable by the English authorities. After being sentenced to hang, some worried that his “death will doe more harme to the faction that sought it, then ever his life could haue done” (Pory in Beer, 96). This concern proved to be well-founded, as thanks to his dramatic *Speech from the Scaffold*, Raleigh suddenly turned into a hero in the eyes of the people. Attempts to suppress the printing of his speech were ineffective; furthermore, this new hero status led to numerous, illicit re-printings of all of Raleigh's other works. As Anna R. Beer writes in her work *Sir Walter Raleigh and his Readers in the Seventeenth Century*, Raleigh's lifetime argues

a decline in the monarchical state's control over interpretation, whether interpretation is discussed in terms of censorship, propaganda or dissident readings. This is exemplified by the contrast between the Jacobean state's attempt, and failure, to control by means of print politically disturbing interpretations of Raleigh's execution in 1618, and the events of 1591 when Raleigh's own role had been to control the interpretation, through printed state propaganda, and in the interests of Tudor power, of an English military fiasco. (Beer, 3)

Besides the popularity of the three above characters, the very fact that the Globe theatre was able to exist just beyond London's city limits—and control—is evidence that English censorship either had significant loopholes or that even officials were reluctant to squash dissent. Similar weakness in attempts at literary control is evident in the 1640's when, despite the reinstatement of state censorship, “a multitude of seditious sermons, pamphlets,

and speeches [were] daily preached, printed, and published with a transcendent boldness” (Keeble, 99). One of these pamphlets suggested that in Parliament,

everie Englishman is entended to bee there present, either in person or by procuracy and attorney, of what preheminance, state, dignitie or qualitie soever he bee, from the Prince...to the lowest person of Englande. And the consent of the Parliament is taken to be everie man’s consent.
(Sir Thomas Smith in McEachern, 9).

Likewise, the very fact that we have Milton’s *Areopagitica* (1644) today is evidence of the weaknesses in English literary control: in the work, Milton openly defends freedom of the press, proclaims the need for diverse ideas, and denounces licensing, saying it “crept out of the Inquisition” (in Abrams, 1802). Similar dissent is expressed in Roger Williams’ *The Bloody Tenant* (1644), which proposed toleration of all religions, including Judaism and Islam, and in Henry Robinson’s *Liberty of Conscience* (1643), which talks of the “sweetnesse of religious liberty” (in Poole, 109). That all of these works were published, and most importantly, read, proves that early 17th century England had come to regard—however unofficially—the individual as a legitimate source of authority.

Once personal interpretation of the Bible was accepted/expected, a crack appeared; this allowed for a questioning of authority, not only in terms of reading and writing, but in English politics and society in general. Weimann discusses the way that the Reformation shook the foundations of England’s established authority, since it

...created the need for, and at the same time made possible the unfixed simultaneous workings of, several contradictory registers of authority and authorization.... As the traditional system of lineage relations, with their family loyalties and fealty, and the universal order of the old church gave way, centuries-old sources of validity came into disarray. (Weimann, 11)

That destabilized authority affected traditional social hierarchies is also evident in that

the “‘conflict between ‘court’ gentry and ‘country’ gentry intensified during the 1590’s,’ especially after the threat of a Spanish invasion had

ceased to induce unity. But even earlier, this state of affairs involved ‘an intensely political situation’ that ‘led to frequent debates about who did what and under whose authority.’” (A. Hassel Smith in Weimann, 194)

Poole draws the direct line from religious dissent to social upheaval:

At the end of the sixteenth century, as ecclesiastical reform became the subject of national debate—and as Scripture became increasingly accessible to an increasingly literate public—new ideas about spiritual community challenged the primacy of the established church....Conceptions of religious community became numerous and complex, contradictory and fluid. This...confusion of religious identities destabilized systems of order and confounded traditional social and ecclesiastical categories.... At stake in discussions of sectarianism and separatism lie far-reaching implications for the relationship of the individual to the community; the grounds for political authority; the autonomy of the individual conscience; the right to participate in public discourse; and the right to determine one’s own religious society. (Poole, 2, 13)

Thus, the result of the more democratic potential for claims to authority was a loosening of the entire social system. Traditional English nobility found that it no longer held privileged access to that which was previously exclusively theirs:

nobility and noble comportment...[were] not a predetermined set of axioms, but rather a series of questions posed and re-posed, whose constantly shifting terms [were] variously imagined, projected, and described by their supposed or would-be possessors. (Posner, 3)

As John Lyly remarked, England had “become an Hodgepodge” (in Weimann, 195), as social mobility increased and various classes mixed. Such mixing is exemplified in *King Lear*, for example, with its “wandering kings and beggars” (Holland, lecture). Shakespeare’s use of the word authority more than sixty times in his work (Weimann, 12) is evidence of its questioning and reinterpretation in England at the time; moreover, most of his history plays end with reference to an act that symbolized the epitome of uprooted authority: the killing of the king. Even the significance of theatre in Elizabethan England in general reveals that disruption of traditional social strata was an issue at the time, as the

donning of masques and enactment of roles is essentially a means of enabling a new identity. In any case, inclusion of diverse social classes in discourse is also evident in the styles of both maps and town histories of London at the time: Richard Kagan notes that English maps and historiographies show a greater cross-section of the city than did those in Spain. In Spain, official maps and histories focused only on the nobility, rather than providing an accurate description of each city's entire inhabitants; there was an "absence in Spanish chorography of a book similar to John Stows' *Survey of London* [1600], which offered a detailed account, borough by borough, of that city's urban development" (Kagan, *Spain*...90). A blurring of social classes is also evident in a kind of geographic levelling of society; Londoners were not seen as intrinsically "better" than the rest of England, as Castilians were perceived (and presented themselves) in Spain. While London was still obviously the center of the country, works like Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, which gives a "Chorographical Description of all the Tracts, Rivers, Mountains, Forests, and other parts of Great Britain", including its various inhabitants, shows that areas outside London were considered.

England was also somewhat more tolerant than Spain of racial and religious minorities in the sixteenth century. It seems evident that such inclusion relates to major historical differences between the two countries. As described in the previous section, 900 years of Moorish occupation had meant that Spain had had to deal with the significant presence of a racial and religious other, and it had done so through the tight knitting together of the crown and church into the Holy Inquisition in order to expel singulars and exert centralized control over the empire. England, too, discriminated against marginal groups—for example, Jews were officially expelled from the country in 1290, and, as James Shapiro

suggests in his work *Shakespeare and the Jews*, their readmission in 1656 was not particularly official. However, the degree of racism and xenophobia was very different between the two countries. In fact, Shapiro's main argument is that, despite expulsion, a Jewish population *did* continue to exist in England throughout the 13th to 16th centuries and that not only were they tolerated, but that the rest of England was fascinated by them. Besides this Jewish population, London also harboured persecuted Protestants from across Europe, gypsies, and a handful of Africans who worked as servants for wealthy families. These groups were tolerated to a greater degree than in Spain because in each case their numbers were small. England's history was that the country had never been threatened by a large-scale racial or religious other, as Spain had been.

Similarly, England's history affected the way the country regarded New World natives. England was approximately 75 years "behind" Spain in terms of exploration and conquest, so it had less at stake in terms of threat to established authority and national identity. This meant that English attitude toward New World natives was similar to its attitude toward Jews, gypsies, and other marginalized groups: it was, to use Shapiro's term, fascinated by them. Although perhaps a more accurate description of this attitude was *uneasy* fascination: a "simultaneous play of repulsion and attraction" (McEachern, 26). The English saw the natives as primitive to the extent that even Europeans born in the New World were believed inferior, an example of "creolian degeneracy" (Kupperman, 23). Even attraction did not always lead to positive results: natives were often brought to England and put on display, as happened with Pocahontas and about a dozen other Algonquian natives, along with Eskimos on various occasions; that the natives usually died shortly after their arrival did little to hinder English interest in them. Trinculo in *The*

Tempest (1611) comments on this, remarking that the English will not give one coin “to relieve a lame beggar”, but will “lay out ten to see a dead Indian” (2.2.32-33). However, despite these drawbacks, English fascination with marginal individuals did at least lead to their inclusion, judging from the literature of the time. Whereas Spain attempted to deny and obliterate marginal groups through omission of the Moorish part of Spanish history, for example, or refusal for publication of accounts by native or *mestizo* writers such as Garcilaso, England showed relative tolerance of religious and racial singulars in that they were openly discussed in theatre. Jews were depicted in Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* (1589) and Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* (1601), while a Moor took center stage in *Othello* (1604) and Africans in Ben Jonson’s *The Masque of Blackness* (performed before the royal court in 1605). In terms of New World natives, “the English public had an insatiable thirst for knowledge about...hitherto hidden peoples, and this thirst made for a rich and varied collection of documents” (Kupperman, *Facing Off*, 4). This “thirst” is evident in that Richard Hakluyt began his anthology *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* in the 1580’s, even before England had possessions in the New World (Armitage, 53). English fascination with marginal individuals compared to Spain is also shown in the maps of the period: while the first maps, which were Spanish, were devoid of human life, the slightly later English and Dutch maps included drawings of natives, often to the point that the drawings took over from the depiction of town or landscape as the main focus of the map (Kagan, *UI*, 95-97).

Thus, while some scholars have claimed that Renaissance Europe in general distrusted novelty (see Elliott, *FR*, 401) judging from the literature produced at the time, this may seem to be the case for Spain, but not England. While peripheral texts were systematically

suppressed in Spain, difference itself became a central theme in much late 16th century and early 17th century literature in England. In fact, it has even been suggested that the English accepted new ideas *because* of their novelty, due to the early modern belief in the gradual revelation of the natural world to human beings (Weimann, 108). As Greenblatt notes, Sir Walter Raleigh subscribed to this philosophy, believing that “it is skepticism rather than credulity that is likely to be misleading” (Greenblatt, *MP*, 22). This is evident when Raleigh writes,

Such a nation [of Amazonians] was written of by Mandeville, whose reports were holden for fables many yeeres, and yet since the East Indies were discovered, we find his relations true of such things as heretofore were held incredible. (Raleigh in Greenblatt, *MP*, 22)

The result of such interest in novelty was that the same accounts considered politically serious and potentially harmful historiography in Spain seem to have been regarded more as travel stories that were read for pleasure in England. Robert Burton, for example, refers to the enjoyment found in reading about faraway places, saying that such writings enabled one to “behold, as it were, all the remote provinces, towns, and cities of the world, and never go forth of the limits of the study” (Burton in Kagan, *UI*, 1). Sir Thomas Elyot shares Burton’s thoughts, writing of

the pleasure...to behold those realms, cities, rivers, and mountains that in an old man’s life cannot be journeyed and pursued; what incredible delight is taken in beholding the diversities of people, beasts, fowls, fishes, trees, fruits, and herbs: to know the sundry manners and conditions of people, the variety of their natures and that in a warm study or parlor, without the peril of the sea or danger of long and painful journeys: I cannot tell what more pleasure should happen to a gentle wit than to behold in his house everything within all the world is contained. (in Kagan and Parker, 25)

It was interest in reading for pleasure that permitted works like Sir Walter Raleigh’s largely fantastical *The Discoverie of...Guiana*, which dealt with Amazonian women and neckless

tribesmen, to be published immediately upon its completion, in 1596, then reprinted in Richard Hakluyt's twelve-volume *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1600). (It seems that this interest was held by Elizabeth herself, judging by her long-term support of Raleigh.) The extent to which English revelled in accounts of faraway places in general is shown by the fact that "the travels of Marco Polo were too well known to be inserted" into Hakluyt's compilation (in introduction to Hakluyt, 13). This apparent preference for writing that pleases, rather than writing that merely lends knowledge, is reflected in criticism of historiography in other English literature of the time: Biron in *Love's Labour's Lost* denounces history writing as "base authority from others' books" (1.1.87, noted by Weimann, 87). Similarly, Sidney argues that poets were nobler than both philosophers and historians; in terms of historians in particular, he writes,

The historian scarcely giveth leisure to the moralist to say so much, but that he, laden with old mouse-eaten records, authorizing himself (for the most part) upon other histories, whose greatest authorities are built upon the notable foundation of hearsay; having much ado to accord differing writers and to pick truth out of their partiality; better acquainted with a thousand years ago than with the present age, and yet better knowing how this world goeth than how his own wit runneth.... (in Abrams et al, 940)

While value on personal interpretation meant that anyone could *read* texts for him or herself, relatively greater social inclusion, and interest in, marginal groups in England meant that anyone could also potentially *write* texts as well. While official writers in Spain were selected according to their blood purity, in England, writers of various races, religions, and social classes was tolerated at least to a certain extent. Thomas More's *Utopia*, for example was published in English earlier than in Spain despite the fact it was written in Latin, and its popularity continued even after England switched from

Catholicism to Protestantism. Literary tolerance is best conveyed by Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* and then by Purchas' *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes*, for their inclusion of largely unedited writings by explorers, colonizers, and natives such as Garcilaso de la Vega. Both Hakluyt and Purchas seem to have in fact favoured singular authors: Hakluyt, perceived his work as a collection of the most diverse accounts, "bringing these rawe fruits unto this ripeness, and in reducing these loose papers into this order" (Hakluyt, 12), while Purchas, despite his staunch patriotism and Protestantism, includes excerpts by writers of all nationalities and classes as well as by Catholics (Greenblatt, *MP*, 8). Purchas himself discusses his inclusion of excerpts from diverse authors: "I mention Authors sometimes, of meane quality, for the meanest have sense to observe that which themselves see, more certainly than the contemplations and *Theory* of the more learned.... My genius delights rather in by-ways than high-ways" (Purchas, Vol. I, "To the Reader"); similarly, he later writes, "without any more distinction of Colour, Nation, Language, Sexe, Condition, all may bee One in him that is One, and only blessed for ever" (Purchas, 656). Purchas' interest in native perspectives in particular is shown in that he considered his woodcut approximations of the Codex Mendoza (a collection of Aztec pictographs—which, incidentally, were stolen by pirates and then bought by Hakluyt) as "the choicest of my Jewels" (Purchas, Vol. I, 1065). It would be a stretch to say that Purchas was "pro-Native"—his own stance largely followed "the continually shifting Indian situation in the American colonies and the needs of his propaganda intentions in regard to Virginia" (Pennington, 107). Yet it is clear that his publication of authors such as Bartolomé de las Casas and Garcilaso de la Vega reveals a level of racial tolerance not present in Spain at the same time (for even while las Casas' *Brevisima*

historia de la destrucción de las Indias was published in Spain in 1552, it was highly controversial and, as stated above, countered by Sepúlveda's arguments). In fact, 16th – 17th century English writing reveals that in some cases the English may have *privileged* writing by marginal authors. Montaigne's *Essais*, which were influenced by the writings of Las Casas with regards to New World natives, were first translated and published in England in 1603, and in turn greatly influenced English writers—such as, for example, Hakluyt and Purchas. In his essay “On Cannibals”, Montaigne suggests that the “simple man” and the cannibal are a more reliable source, than an intellectual, since

clever people observe more things and more curiously, but they interpret them; and to lend weight and conviction to their interpretation, they cannot help altering history a little. They never show you things as they are, but bend and disguise them according to the way they have seen them; and to give credence to their judgment and attract you to it, they are prone to add something to their matter, to stretch it out and amplify it. We need a man either very honest, or so simple that he has not the stuff to build up false inventions and give them plausibility; and wedded to no theory. (Montaigne, 184)

Montaigne himself then strives to employ such simple language:

I mortally hate to sound like a flatterer, which means that I naturally throw myself into a dry, direct, raw manner of speaking which, to those who don't know me, tends to sound a little disdainful. I honor most those whom I honor least; and, where my soul goes in a hurry, I forget the steps of ceremony....[I] present myself least to those to whom I have given myself most; it seems to me that they should read it in my heart, and that my words; expression doesn't do justice to my thoughts. (in Posner, 32)

As Fuller points out, Montaigne prefers plain language because he views authority as deriving not from the writer, but from the thing itself that is being discussed; plain language would not obscure this thing:

Montaigne claims that the reliable report emerges at the end of an unbroken line from writing, to the memory of experience, to the experience of a particular thing, to the thing itself. It is the presence of the *thing* at the beginning which authorizes such writing. (Fuller, 225)

Greenblatt perceives a favouring of “native” perspectives in early modern English travel accounts, and credits this to English value on direct experience and pure perception:

Discursive authority in the early [English] literature of travel then derives from a different source than it would in other forms of poesis—not from an appeal to higher wisdom or social superiority but from a miming, by the elite, of the simple, direct, unfigured language of perception Montaigne in [“Of Cannibals”] and others attribute to servants. (Greenblatt, *MP*, 47)

Such unfigured language is central to *King Lear*, as Cordelia exclaims,

Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love’s
More ponderous than my tongue....
...I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth. (1.1.77-79; 1.1.91-92)

In Spain, Montaigne was not published until the end of the 19th century, and no anthology that privileged native voices existed. Thus, in a way, Spain’s Royal Council of the Indies can be directly contrasted with England’s anthologies by Hakluyt and Purchas: one was a function of the control of the crown and church, and operated according to exclusionist principles, the other revealed acceptance of multiple authorities, and valued singularity.

Hakluyt’s and Purchas’ anthologies were widely read in England, proving English value on direct experience and the pure perception this perspective afforded. In many cases, these anthologies were the only English editions of the works available, although even later, when other editions did become available, the anthologies had become so well known that “many readers would [continue to] derive information from *Pilgrimes* [as well as Hakluyt’s work] rather than from individual specific volumes” (Steele, 303). The inclusion of the Codex Mendoza in the 1625 edition of Purchas’ *Pilgrimes* meant that this edition was most popular—and this happens to be the same edition in which appeared

excerpts from the *Royal Commentaries* (meaning that perhaps Garcilaso was also read by pure association, since it was in this edition that he also first appeared). In any case, the list of literary writers known to have read and made use of Purchas' anthologies for their own writing includes Dryden (for both his *Indian Queen* and *Indian Emperour*), Shakespeare (for *The Tempest*), Milton (for the *Brief History*, *Paradise Lost*, and *Paradise Regained*), More (for *Utopia*) Defoe (for *Robinson Crusoe*), Swift (for *Gulliver's Travels*), Samuel Johnson (for *Rasselas of Abisinnia*), and Coleridge (for "Kubla Khan" and *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*) (Pennington, 10). Likewise, in his poem *Albion's England*, William Warner describes the exploits of many English explorers and navigators, then refers his reader to Hakluyt's collection:

Omitted then, and named men
And lands (not here, indeed,
So written of as they deserve)
At large in Hakluyt read. (Warner in Hakluyt, 97)

It might be assumed that Spenser also read Hakluyt, as in his *Faerie Queene*, he refers to many of the New World discoveries covered in the anthologies:

Who ever heard of th'Indian Peru?
Or who in venturous vessel measured
The Amazon huge river, now found trew?
Or fruitfulest Virginia who did ever view? (Spenser, introduction to Book 2)

Interest in Hakluyt's and Purchas' works was not limited to writers and scholars in England, but also held popular appeal. "As a result of the *Pilgrimes*, much of the English knowledge and attitudes towards Latin America in the [17th] century can be partially attributed to the material in his volumes or the small popular compendiums based upon them" (Steele, 310-311).

England's relative granting of individual authority is revealed not only in its diversity of writers, but also in the role a writer was allowed to play in his own text. While the Spanish historian was expected to offer "precepts and judgments" within his work, this was the extent of his subjective liberty. Self-reflexive subjectivity that highlighted the uniqueness of the *individual*, that is, of the writer himself, is nearly wholly absent from Spanish writings at the time. A changed, more subjective role of the writer was perhaps first argued for by Montaigne in his *Essais* which, as mentioned above, were early published in English. His influence on subsequent English literature is clear: just as he wrote "Dear reader, I myself am the subject of my book", Sir John Davies in 1599 wrote, "My self am center of my circling thought / Only myself I study, learn, and know" (Davies in Burke, 19), Sir Thomas Browne in 1643 wrote "The world that I regard is my selfe" (Sawday in Porter, 44); similarly, the theme of the unfolding of an individual's thought prevailed in Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*—which he referred to as "the true Anatomy of myself"—and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, amongst others. The idea that the author's own thoughts were appropriate as subject matter of a book conveys acceptance of the idea that that writer himself was the ultimate authority on the work; writing of the time reflects the idea that authority was beginning to be claimed by the *author*. Authority of the writer is also evident in anthologies of the era: Hakluyt and Purchas both provide constant commentary in their texts' margins. Such insertion of personal opinions even into another's text was not only allowed (unlike in Spain), but were also seen as valuable: Hakluyt's "own allusions to himself...are not infrequent" and these gave "authenticity to the remarks and memories which he has collected" (in introduction to Hakluyt, 75).

Early modern England's acceptance of individual authority enabled a potential—indeed, even need—for self-fashioning, to use Stephen Greenblatt's term. Creation of oneself was essential to establish a personal authority that was no longer guaranteed nor granted according to one's social standing. Such creation was promoted by works like Sir Thomas Hoby's translation of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* (published in English in 1561); this work shows the importance of “the persuasive effectiveness of performance...as a means of attracting favor...to oneself, and as a means of self-protection” (Posner, 10-11). Singularity, therefore, was actually regarded as a possible advantage: the individual drew on his various abilities and differences to *distinguish* himself. In fact, in writing of personal exercise of arts and arms, Milton describes how singularity could even be of value to England as a whole:

These wayes would trie all their peculiar gifts of nature, and if there were any secret excellence among them, would fetch it out, and give it fair opportunities to advance it selfe by, which could not but mightily redound to the good of this nation.... (in Quint, 4)

The result of this value on singularity was, as John Donne stated, that in England at the time, “every man” aimed to prove that there “can be / None of that kind of which he is, but he” (in Burke, 19). Of course, since official control was at least attempted in England, and censorship did exist, the individual did not experience “unfettered subjectivity” but rather individual authority occurred within the boundaries of reference to established power; this is proven by implication of words like “persuasiveness” and “aimed to prove” (Kushner, 46). Greenblatt discusses the place of individual identity and authority within the context of late 16th century England:

Whenever I focused sharply upon a moment of apparently autonomous self-fashioning, I found not an epiphany of identity freely chosen but a cultural artefact. If there remained traces of free choice, the choice was

among possibilities whose range was strictly delineated by the social and ideological system in force. (Greenblatt, *RSF*, 256).

Self-fashioning thus required a kind of resourcefulness in order to both tap into one's personal advantages and to persuade of one's worth. It is not surprising, therefore, that such resourcefulness also found expression in the new capitalist entrepreneur (Quint, 3); while "new characters" like conquistadors and successful merchants were resisted in Spain, new social characters—and the capitalism they represented—flourished in England. London in particular became a commodity-driven city:

Markets expanded significantly, international trade flourished...London [became] the fastest-growing city not only in England but in all of Europe.... Wages in London tended to be around 50 percent higher than in the rest of the country. (Abrams et al, 471)

In England, writers also belonged to the cast of new capitalist entrepreneurs. While in Spain, unofficial writers were censored, and official writers continued to depend upon the granting of authority from the crown and church prior to the writing itself, English writers were largely able, and indeed were forced, to demonstrate their own authority through the writing itself. Writing, in essence, became a commodity, and its success was determined not by its commission by established authority previous to the writing of the work, but by its publication and dissemination after it was written. This is perhaps one way to interpret Weimann's comment that "Modern authority, rather than preceding its inscription...became a product of writing, speaking, and reading" (Weimann, 5). Writers in early modern England, able to manoeuvre within the loopholes of state control, essentially became subject to a new master: the reader. Thus, the possibility for individual authority in England affected its literature in two main ways:

On the economic level, the individual acquisition of the narrative could not help being geared to its exchange-value: individual ownership plus the

use of the printing press made circulation imperative. On the social and intellectual level, the relationship of the narrative to its readers was both broadened and further differentiated; the author-function...ceased to be tied to the needs and conventions of any one of the late-medieval estates and institutions. (Weimann, 181)

This meant that the reader, like the writer, held a new position of increased authority, and that the writer in fact had to *cater to* the reader; hence the writers' use of novelty to appeal to readers. Authority was now "subjected to the 'imaginary puissance' (and empowerment) of the writer's, reader's, and interpreter's conscience" (Weimann, 29). In turn, English readers were forced—and willing—"to invest more cooperation, imagination, and labor into exploring and assimilating motives, connections, perspectives, and causes" in the reading of books (Weimann, 183). Benedict Anderson sums up the relationship between changing roles of authority and the development of print-capitalism as such:

In their origins, the fixing of print-languages and the differentiation of status between them were largely unselfconscious processes resulting from the explosive interaction between capitalism, technology and human linguistic diversity. But as with so much else...once "there", they could become formal models to be imitated, and where expedient, consciously exploited in a Machevellian spirit. (Anderson, 45)

Thus began a kind of contractual relationship between writer and reader, as the writer engaged various rhetorical devices to appeal to the reader and to support the legitimacy of the text itself, while the reader then granted or withheld authority through purchase—or not—of books. The more "unconventional" the writing (versus forms that borrowed from religious or classical influences), the harder the writer had to work to prove the legitimacy of the text. Weimann writes,

the point is not that thereby the author's subjectivity achieved any autonomous status of self-determined creation (it clearly did not); rather, the author-function, by falling in with a larger political economy of acquisition and appropriation, could communicate its drive for

assimilation, for making things its own, to the very order of (re)reading and (re)writing the text in the world. (Weimann, 14)

Overt appeal to the reader may be seen as a characteristic of much late 16th and early 17th century writing in England. Sir Walter Raleigh, for example, begins *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Beautifull Empire of Guiana* (1596), with an open defence of the work: “I have thought good by the addition of these lines to give answer as well to the said malicious slander, as to other objections...” (Raleigh, 7; I have modernized spelling). In Spain, such assertions were generally absent from official writing; the initial granting of legitimacy by the crown and church deemed them unnecessary. Which means it is not surprising that appeal *does* exist in unofficial works such as *Don Quixote*. In fact, Cervantes has been identified as perhaps the first author to appeal to the reader for authority, thereby indicating the extent to which he is attempting something new in Spanish literature. In the “Preface to the Reader” of *Don Quixote*, Cervantes states:

Idle reader, without an oath thou mayest believe, that I wish this book, as the child of my understanding, were the most beautiful, sprightly and discreet production that ever was conceived. But, it was not in my power to contravene the order of nature, in consequence of which, every creature procreates its own resemblance: what therefore could be engendered in my barren, ill-cultivated genius, but a dry, meagre offspring, wayward, capricious and full of whimsical notions peculiar to his own imagination.... I, who, tho’ seemingly the parent, am no other than the step-father of Don Quixote, will not sail with the stream of custom, nor like some others, supplicate the gentle reader, with the tears in my eyes, to pardon or conceal the faults which thou mayest spy in this production. Thou are neither its father nor kinsman; hast thy own soul in thy own body, and a will as free as the finest; thou art in thy own house, of which I hold thee as absolute master as the king of his revenue.... These considerations free and exempt thee from all manner of restraint and obligation; so that thou mayest fully and frankly declare thy opinion of this history, without fear of calumny for thy censure, and without hope of recompense for thy approbation.

According to Weimann, Cervantes is forced to make this appeal because *Don Quixote* deals ultimately with a “new amalgamation of history and story”, and it was through the experience of reading that the book gained validity: “it was only from within the story that the interaction between feigning and meaning could be realized” (Weimann, 187-188). It is perhaps no surprise that *Don Quixote* was immensely popular in England. Part I was first published in England in 1612 (just seven years after its original publication in Madrid), and Part II first reached England in the Brussels edition of 1616. As James Fitzmaurice-Kelly summed up a speech at Oxford in 1905 in which he outlined specific examples of references to *Don Quixote* in English literature,

England was the first foreign country to mention *Don Quixote*, the first to translate the book, the first country in Europe to present it decently garbed in its native tongue, the first to indicate the birthplace of the author, the first to provide a biography of him, the first to publish a commentary....and the first to issue a critical edition of the text.... English literature teems with significant allusions to the creations of Cervantes' genius.... (Fitzmaurice-Kelly, 19).

The success of *Don Quixote* even in Spain shows the degree to which the work pulled Spanish authority apart at the seams; while Avellaneda's false sequel reveals societal disapproval for singularity through public ridicule of Don Quixote in the text, Cervantes in fact *creates* a readership of individuals through his writing.

Comparative study of the relationship between singularity and authority in 16th-17th century Spain (up to Cervantes) and England might be summarized using Stephen Greenblatt's ideas regarding responses to the “marvellous” (which is, of course, a synonym for singular in this context) in literature. In Spanish accounts, he writes, the marvellous is “subtly revised, enabling it...to function strategically as a redemptive, anesthetising

supplement to a deeply flawed legal ritual of appropriation”; this revision fits history into a sweeping story that supports Spain’s aims for a Christian empire (Greenblatt, *MP*, 24). In other words, the marvellous is tamed and made to submit to existing boundaries of Catholic Castilian history. English accounts, on the other hand, tend to reveal a fascination with the marvellous, to the extent that novelty seems to have been privileged; the success of both Richard Hakluyt’s and Samuel Purchas’ anthologies is the best example of such unbridled interest. This difference in response between the two countries is essentially historical in origin, the result of 900 year conquests, chance trade winds, enlightened queens and remote island geography.

IV

Royal Commentaries of the Incas: Analysis

It is clear when reading the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* that Garcilaso de la Vega anticipated the difficulties he would encounter in convincing Spain of his authority; he was conscious of the paradoxical nature of his own situation as a *mestizo* writer within early 17th century Spain, and of the need to defend himself as such. Ultimately, Garcilaso was precisely one of those illegitimate historians whom the authorized historiography was designed to exclude” (Zamora, *Language*, 47). It is due to this paradox, and this consciousness, that the *Royal Commentaries* is not simply the Inca perspective on the history of Peru, written for the purpose of preserving the memory of his mother’s people—it is also a cleverly crafted attempt to show the worth of the Incas in the eyes of the Spanish crown and church, to prove their legitimacy as members of the noble class. The result is that the work is a balancing act between convention and dissent, a careful (although often contradictory) attempt to place Peruvian history within the pages of Catholic Spain’s understanding of the history of the world. It is an attempt to “vindicate the conquered in the aggressor’s own terms” (Zamora, *Language*, 9). The clever crafting was necessary because the things for which Garcilaso seeks approval—his work, the nobility of the Incas, and his own authority—were intricately bound together and interdependent; each based its legitimacy on the legitimacy of the others. Specifically, because of Castile’s centralized control over writing and establishment of legitimacy upon blood purity, Garcilaso had to establish his own authority by proving, through the writing that as a *mestizo* he was *not* authorized to exercise, the legitimacy of the Incas.... The situation was inherently paradoxical, or, if he succeeded, circular, as the author and the

work created each other. Furthermore, one might say that Garcilaso was forced to write, for he was marginalized by his difference in early modern Spain; he was so defined by it that he had no choice but to depend upon it. Garcilaso's relationship to the *Royal Commentaries* was thus much like that of Scheherazade to the *1001 Arabian Nights*: Garcilaso had to write his way into the Spanish system in order to survive. And this act was precarious, as a failure to persuade meant that Garcilaso would be, at best, censored, at worst, imprisoned by the office of the Inquisition. And "*si un Antonio de Guevara, cronista de Carlos V, y un Miguel de Luna, intérprete de Felipe II, fueron sospechados y acusados de fraude, cuánto menos confiable resultaría el crédito...del mestizo y bastardo Garcilaso, el Inca*" (Rodriguez Vecchini, 607) [if an Antonio de Guevara, chronicler of Charles V, and a Miguel de Luna, interpreter of Philip II, were suspected and accused of fraud, how much less trusted would have been the credit claimed by...the *mestizo* and bastard Garcilaso, the Inca].

Commentary, writes Anthony J. Cascardi, was a quality of all pre-modern thought, in which "historical orientation for and from itself" was not yet enabled (212). It was also a common technique of humanistic writings: "humanism recognizes that it stands in essential need of the tradition as the value-field out of which it arises and to which it ultimately refers" (Cascardi, 212); in Foucault's words, 16th century writers understood the world through "a complex of kinships, resemblances, and affinities" so that representation at the time was understood as "a form of repetition" (in Weimann, 191). This technique of continuation, of commentary, would thus have been particularly significant in premodern Spain, where Castile's interests in centralizing power and homogenizing culture were

founded upon the very literal continuation principles of blood purity. The *Royal Commentaries* then is in this way very much a product of its age. As a commentary, the work builds upon that which has already been written; it is a palimpsest, deferring to, and thus dependent upon, other texts for its legitimacy. Garcilaso recognized that the only way in which he could begin to establish his credibility in early 17th century Spain was to build upon the ideas already accepted in Spanish writing regarding the Incas. Throughout the *Royal Commentaries*, he makes direct reference to the works of official historians:

we find roughly eighty-six references to *cronistas* such as Pedro Cieza de León, Agustín de Zárate, Padre José de Acosta, the Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, and perhaps most indignantly, to López de Gómara. Inca Garcilaso's most cherished source, however, is that "insigne varón" Padre Blas Valera. (Wilson, 242)

In referring to these historians, Garcilaso often quotes directly from their works, then repeats that he has quoted "word for word", and says, for example, "This is from Agustín de Zárate....I found the passage after I had written what I myself knew of it. I was very glad to find the law so fully recorded by a Spanish gentleman who thus confirms me with his authority..." (1.4.4). In fact, while Garcilaso states at the beginning of his work, "I shall plainly tell everything...and make no comparison...for all comparisons are odious" (1.1.19), the *Royal Commentaries* practically overflows with comparisons: between Spanish accounts of specific events and his own interpretation of them, and between the Incas and the Spaniards. Even in terms of the flora and fauna of Peru, Garcilaso makes extensive use of comparison: in describing the coca plant, for example, he writes,

Both sides of the leaf are exactly like that of the arbutus in color and shape, but they are very thin and it would take three or four of them to equal the arbutus in thickness. I am glad to find objects of Spain that can be so appropriately compared with those of my own country yet which do not exist there: it is much easier for those on both sides to understand and know one another. (1.8.15)

The need for comparison and continuation, imitation and commentary in order to begin to establish credibility is also evident in Garcilaso's argument for the nobility of both the Incas and his father through emphasis of their embodiment of traditional Spanish values; these will be discussed below. Suffice to say here that in evoking the Spanish writers and in proving his claims through that which Spaniards themselves could see, Garcilaso suggests his own objectivity in writing. His understanding of the need to portray a lack of self-interest perhaps derived from his knowledge of legal writing: his father had served as *corregidor* (royally appointed magistrate) and chief justice of Cuzco, and Garcilaso had worked as his father's scribe. González Echevarría stresses the significance of this experience on Garcilaso's writing: "taking dictation from his father, the Inca learned at the very seat of authority the link between writing and legitimization" (González Echevarría, 117). Garcilaso's recognition of the seriousness of his duty as scribe is evident within the *Royal Commentaries*, as he describes an exchange of letters between his father and another official:

I had both letters in my hands, for I then served my father as secretary for all the correspondence he had with various parts of the Empire, and I wrote the replies to these letters in my own hand. (2.8.6)

As if he were writing a legal document, Garcilaso proclaims his neutrality at the very beginning of the *Royal Commentaries*:

I shall allow myself to include everything necessary for a full account of the beginning, middle, and end of the Inca monarchy. I declare that I shall simply tell the tales I imbibed with my mother's milk...and I promise that my affection for them shall not cause me to stray from the true facts either by underestimating the ill or exaggerating the good they did. (1.1.19)

Garcilaso asserts his objectivity throughout his text; near the end of the work he writes, “I hope I may be permitted to say truly without offending anyone what I saw, for my only purpose is always to tell plainly what happened without hatred or flattery, since I have no motive for either” (2.4.21), and then shortly afterward,

the obligation of one who writes history of those times for the information of the whole world binds me, and even forces me...to tell the truth about what happened without passion for or against. And I swear as a Christian that I have clipped and cut short many passages so as not to seem to speak with passion against the versions of the historians, especially Fernandez, who must have gone to Peru very late and have heard many fables invented according to the party passions of their authors.... And to show the difference b/w what this author says and what I have said...I shall quote some of the remarks he sets down, which are obviously the sayings of the dregs of the common people and not the words or deeds of such eminent and educated persons as were involved.... (2.5.39)

This quote also reveals that Garcilaso recognizes that to speak passionately—to show emotion—rather than to speak objectively, is precisely the opposite of what legal writing attempts to do.

Related to Garcilaso’s assertion of his objectivity is his feigned humility. While he usually aligns himself with the Incas, whom he has clearly distinguished as superior to the other natives, as in his proclamation, “I, as an Inca, can testify” (1.1.5), such self-portrayal is inconsistent. He conveniently plays with presenting himself as an Inca or an “Indian”, or both, depending upon his purpose. In some places, he collapses both identities in order to emphasize both his singularity and nobility; an example is his statement, “As a Spaniard, [Pedro de Cieza] did not know the language as well as I, who am Indian and an Inca” (1.2.2). In other places, his self-depiction as “a native Indian from those parts” (1.2.10) allows him to feign humility; this is evident in his statement, “I beg the discreet reader to accept my will to give him pleasure and satisfaction, though the strength and skill

of an Indian, born among Indians, and brought up amidst horses and arms, may be insufficient for the attempt” (1.1.19). Such humility allows Garcilaso to more directly criticize the Spaniards: by depicting himself as an Indian (and thereby exploiting Spanish stereotypes of the uncultivated nature and lower intelligence of natives), he is able to absolve himself of responsibility from everything he writes. Similar absolution of responsibility, and thus deflection of criticism, is also attempted by Cervantes in *Don Quixote*: Cervantes writes in the second part that the first was published by a Moor, Cid Hamete Aubergine, and Don Quixote worries that “no truth was to be expected from that people, who are all false, deceitful, and chimerical” (Cervantes, 2.1.3). Cervantes, through parody, is off the hook; he is no longer responsible for what has been written.

Garcilaso also feigns humility through other ways. He is humble on behalf of Peru as a whole: after ceaselessly portraying the Incas and Peru in glorified terms, he writes of Padre Blas Valera’s account of Peru, “all Padre Blas Valera wrote was pearls and gems. My country did not deserve to be so adorned” (1.2.27). Similarly, although Garcilaso conveniently uses language to his advantage (as seen through his various self-representations as an Indian, a *mestizo*, and an Inca, for example), he claims the importance of “plain language,” especially in translation in order to ensure efficient Christianization of the natives: precision and clearness of meaning are “especially important in the teaching of a Christian doctrine for which new words must be devised” (1.2.2). In fact Garcilaso does write in a frank style, suggesting he, like Montaigne, sees the “simple man” as embodying honest reliability. Similarly, Garcilaso conveys humility regarding the limits of his own knowledge; in terms of the migration of species, for example, he writes, “I shall leave these questions, especially because I am less competent than others to enquire into them” (1.1.2).

And regarding his inability to remember the name of a certain Peruvian vegetable, he writes:

I do not recall the Indian name, though I have often racked my brain for days on end....I do not know if my memory...is indeed deceiving me: my relatives, the Indians and *mestizos* of Cuzco and the whole of Peru, shall be the judges of this piece of ignorance on my part and doubtless of many others in my work. I hope they will forgive me, for I am all theirs and have only undertaken a task so out of proportion with my feeble strength as this book, and without any hope of reward from anyone, in order to serve them. (1.8.11)

Most clever in Garcilaso's demonstration of his own objectivity and modesty, however, is his use of the argument that the ultimate source of his authority is God's will. While this technique appears in other early modern European writing as authors sought to establish their own legitimacy (Sir Walter Raleigh writes in the dedication at the beginning of *The Discoverie of Guiana* that he attempts to do what pleases God, for example), Garcilaso amplifies this argument to the point of suggesting that if he completes his book before he dies, it is because God has willed it to be so. He begins the *Royal Commentaries* with a promise to describe "the Inca kings, whose history we propose to write, with divine aid" (1.1.8), and later writes that he had included some details of Peru in *La Florida* for the following reason: "I feared I might not live long enough to reach this point. But as God...has prolonged my life, it seemed best to...put them in their proper place" (1.1.7). This suggestion that the very existence of the text, as well as all its inherent claims, are proof of God's will would have been incontestable by the Spanish crown and church, for their own authority depended upon God's infallibility. Similarly, Garcilaso makes reference to another source in proving his claims, one that was visible and indisputable in Spain itself: the benefits the nation received as a result of the discovery and conquest of Peru:

Although some of what has been said and is to be said may seem fabulous, I have thought fit to include it so as not to miss out the foundations on which the Indians rely for the greatest and best things they tell of their empire. For it was from these fabulous beginnings that the magnificent reality that Spain now possesses emerged. (1.1.19)

At the beginning of this section, it is stated that the *Royal Commentaries* is a balancing act between convention and dissent. So thus, the convention. What about the dissent? Commentary is not only continuation, it not only defers to previous texts, it is a *correction* of these texts; imitation “both utilizes and valorizes the authority of its model by the very fact of continuing it, while at the same time the rewriting process necessarily transforms, distorts, and redefines the model” (Brownlee, xi). Thus, while Garcilaso explains that he does not write to contradict the official Spanish writers, but rather to clarify and correct things they could not know:

...we are not making new assertions, but merely amplifying and extending with our own account—as a native Indian from those parts—what the Spanish historians, as strangers, have told in brief because they did not know the language properly and could not suck in with their mother’s milk, as I did, these fables and facts (1.2.10)

this assertion is really a “*promesa que en verdad anuncia un sutil proceso de desautorizacion de la palabra escrita de los espanoles*” (Rodriguez Garrido, 374) [promise that in reality announces a subtle process of “disauthorization” of the Spaniards’ written word]. If continuation was the conventional part of Garcilaso’s commentary, of his balancing act, what was the nature of his dissent?

Stephen Greenblatt has said that “the eyewitness directly possesses the truth and can simply present it; he who has not seen for himself must persuade” (Greenblatt, *MP*, 129). Yet this statement is problematic, since eyewitness accounts of the New World were essentially works in persuasion—usually of the truthfulness of the account itself; the

primary source of authority, the Bible, did not, after all, mention the New World. In Garcilaso's case, furthermore, most of the other writers on Peru had also witnessed some of the same events that he himself describes (with the notable exception of Gómara, whose long-distance, second-hand accounts Garcilaso does deride), so that Garcilaso was forced to suggest the superiority of his authority—that is, his legitimacy in writing a corrective commentary—in other ways. The way he accomplished this is evident in his very name. Garcilaso was in fact born Gómez Suárez de Figueroa; he renamed himself first after his father (Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega), evidently to emphasize that he was proud of his father as well as to show his connections to the *other* Garcilaso de la Vega, the esteemed Spanish poet and a distant uncle (who, interestingly, has been described as the first Spanish poet to construct a speaker “relatively apart from discourses of blood and status” (Mariscal, 117)). The addition of the epithet of “The Inca” then establishes his position as ultimate authority on them. Thus, in seeking authority in the context of early 17th century Spain, Garcilaso takes an approach that is both extremely risky and, at the same time, the only one actually available to him. Rather than covering his singularity and attempting to fit into the acceptable criteria for authority in Spain at the time, he instead *emphasizes* his singularity, thereby fully depending on his hope that the established authority will accept his legitimacy according to his superior knowledge over that which he writes. His correction of the Spanish writings worked to restructure “‘points of significance in the schemata,’ then—by reconstituting the norms of expectation—[correction] ‘creates its own condition of reception’” (in Weimann, 181)—in other words, once Garcilaso discredited Spanish works by proving his own superior knowledge of the Incas, the reader would then become dependent upon Garcilaso's superior opinion of the Incas as well. Garcilaso had

already practiced this manoeuvre: “*la singularidad de La Florida radica precisamente en la amplificación e intensificación del diferencial ilegítimo...[y así] antecedió a la obra del Inca Garcilaso más conocida, [los Comentarios reales]*” (Rodríguez Vecchini, 619-620) [the singularity of *La Florida* lies precisely in the amplification and intensification of the differential of illegitimacy...[and in this way] it was an antecedent to the Inca Garcilaso’s best known work [the *Royal Commentaries*]]. Garcilaso recognized the risk involved in exploitation of his singularity at that point as well: *La Florida* contains one chapter entitled, “*Donde se responde a una objeción*” [“Where the author responds to an objection”]. Thus, not only does Garcilaso focus on the fact that he was present for many of the events he describes, but that his background ensured his unique, intimate knowledge of Inca culture and beliefs, which he learned first-hand through stories told him by his Inca relatives:

After having prepared many schemes and taken many ways to begin to give an account of the origin and establishment of the native Inca kings of Peru, it seemed to me that the best...was to recount what I often heard as a child from the lips of my mother and her brothers and uncles and other elders about these beginnings. (1.1.15)

Thus, Garcilaso presents the oral stories as a legitimate source of information, and legitimate basis for his authority. This was a provocative suggestion to say the least, considering the European belief that their own superiority over New World natives was proven through their “literal advantage”—Samuel Purchas’ term—of writing (in Greenblatt, *MP*, 9). As Greenblatt notes,

For Purchas, then, as for many other Europeans, those who possess writing have a past, a history, that those without access to letters necessarily lack. And since God ‘speakes to all’ through writing, unlettered cultures (as distinct from illiterate individuals [of which Pizarro was one]) are virtually excluded by definition from the human community: ‘Want of Letters hath made some so seely as to thinke the Letter it selfe could speak, so much

did the Americans herein admire the Spaniards, seeming in comparison of the other as speaking Apes'. (Greenblatt and Purchas in Greenblatt, *MP*, 10)

If one considers history as not events but as “purely a linguistic complication” as Paul de Man suggests (in Greenblatt, *MP*, 49), then cultures with no writing would be seen as having no history. Garcilaso thus strives to portray the Incas’ oral stories as at least as equally legitimate as the Spanish written accounts, and describes the stories as “so excellent an archive” (1.1.17). Of course, he *also* backs up these oral accounts with Spanish written evidence: in discussing Inca belief in resurrection, for example, he writes, “a thing so foreign to non-Christians might seem to be of my own invention, had it not been written by some Spaniard” (1.2.7).

Similarly, and most significantly, Garcilaso emphasizes that he possessed a unique, intimate knowledge of the Quechua language, as this was his most obvious and measurable advantage over the Spanish writers: “the Spaniard,” he writes, “who thinks he knows the language best is ignorant of nine-tenths of it” (1.1.19). Garcilaso establishes his linguistic advantage in the first chapters of the text, talking about the very name “Peru”:

The Christians understood what they wanted to understand, supposing the Indian had understood them and had replied as pat as if they had been conversing in Spanish; and from that time...they called that ...empire Peru, corrupting both words, as the Spaniards corrupt almost all the words they take from the Indian language of that land. (1.1.4)

Similarly, he writes,

The Spaniards do not trouble to ask for clear information...but rather dismiss them as diabolical, as they imagine. This effect is also produced by the fact that they do not know properly the general language of the Incas by which they might understand the...true meaning of such words. (1.2.2)

Perhaps the greatest source of misunderstanding, Garcilaso suggests, relates to *huaca*, a touchy word since its interpretation by the Spaniards was the basis of their accusations that the Incas practiced idolatry. It has innumerable meanings in Quechua, he writes, from “all those things in which the Devil spoke: idols, rocks, great stones, or trees which the enemy entered to make the people believe he was a god,” to “a rose, an apple, or a pippin, or any other fruit that is better or more beautiful than the rest from the same tree” (1.2.4) yet has no direct translation into Castilian. Garcilaso’s emphasis on his unique knowledge of Quechua might have at least partially derived, as pointed out by Margarita Zamora, from his instruction in humanist philologic exegesis, where credit was granted to original meanings of words (Zamora, *Language*, 17). However, the purpose for this emphasis was not simply humanistic in origin, but served personal goals. (This is overtly suggested by Garcilaso’s own admission that he has failed to represent his Inca brethren in Spanish court, after they send him a “white China silk” genealogical tree from Peru as proof of their royal heritage; see 1.9.40.) By suggesting that the Spaniards misunderstood the Inca language, he suggests that they misunderstood the Incas...and it is through this unhinging of Spanish certainty, and replacement with his own singular knowledge, that Garcilaso attempts to establish his own authority.

That the disjunction between Garcilaso’s personal singularity and his claims for authority in 16th century Spanish society, determined—and in fact, enabled creation of—his work, has been somewhat overlooked in studies of the *Royal Commentaries*. Most Peruvian examinations of Garcilaso’s work focus on his contribution toward that country’s *mestizo* national identity, while most studies elsewhere have centered around the work’s credibility as a history: early 20th century critics like Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo and

William Prescott largely regarded the work as fiction (even while Garcilaso is quoted 89 times in Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*, more than any other writer), while later critics such as Raúl Porras Barrenechea and José Durand argued for the work's historical integrity (Zamora, *Language*, 5). However, nearly all critics—including Zamora—seem to ignore the significance of Garcilaso's particular singularity in writing as a *mestizo* in late 16th—early 17th century Spain. She suggests that the *Royal Commentaries* is structured as a philological argument simply in order to revise “what Garcilaso considers the false versions of Inca history written by Spaniards” (Zamora, *Language*, 3) and because incorrect translations were “obstacles in the process of successful Christianization since they communicated erroneous information” to the natives (Zamora, *Language*, 78). While it is clear that language and translation are indeed central to Garcilaso's claim to authority, once one considers the central control exerted by the crown and church in Spain at the time, the personal stakes involved in Garcilaso's writing cannot be ignored; to ignore the *author* is to miss the deepest intentions of the text. Simply, Garcilaso's purposes for writing were not as innocent and benevolent as Zamora suggests; he was not simply a representative of the native or *mestizo* voice, nor is the *Royal Commentaries* a mere expression of Christian ideals. Garcilaso's unique relationship with his text means that the Christian shaping of the *Royal Commentaries* is not motivated by his desire to merely show similarity, as intended by Bartolomé de las Casas, but rather to establish a space within which he can show *difference*. In other words, the only way for Garcilaso to enable meaning was through comparison to that which the Spanish already knew, and the only way for him to attempt to seek authority was through appeal to the authority that already existed. And he sought this authority for personal reasons; in this way, Zamora's

statement that Garcilaso made the original Inca text the ultimate authority (61) seems a bit simplistic. For it was he *himself* whom Garcilaso made the ultimate authority. When Zamora does, briefly, acknowledge the context of 16th century Spain, it is in terms of Garcilaso's participation in Renaissance humanism: "the threat which humanist philology presented was clearly perceived by the Church, and severely punished" (Zamora, *Language*, 28), and she does not recognize any particular risk for Garcilaso over other humanist scholars at the time. Sánchez Barba also suggests that Garcilaso was motivated by his belief in some "*unidad profunda de la historia*" (Sánchez Barba, 112) [profound unity of history]. But because of Garcilaso's unique situation as a *mestizo* however, the *Royal Commentaries* is not simply a humanist document. Garcilaso's humanist reference to other documents does not only work to subvert existing beliefs regarding the Incas, such reference is an attempt to claim authority—in both literature and society—for himself.

Enrique Pupo Walker does acknowledge the personal importance of Garcilaso's writing in the context of 16th century Spain, saying that "*escribir era un acto de afirmación personal....el Inca...relató los hechos del pasado para consolidar desde ellos una imagen digna de su persona*" (Pupo Walker, "*Sobre las mutaciones creativas*", 149) [writing was an act of personal affirmation....The Inca...recounted the events of the past in order to build out of them a dignified image of his very being]. However, rather than developing this idea, Pupo Walker then focuses on the fictional aspect of the work, suggesting even that Garcilaso was "*libre de las exigencias prácticas que impone la documentación histórica*" (155) [free of the practical demands that historical documentation imposes]. On the contrary, it is *because* of these practical demands that Garcilaso was personally implicated in his act of writing, and *because* of these practical demands that the *Royal*

Commentaries takes the structure it does. Similarly, José Rodríguez Garrida briefly refers to the essential link between Garcilaso's place in society and his work, but then says, “*no dudamos que a través del texto podemos acercarnos a la persona histórica del autor (o al menos a un aspecto de él), pero los métodos ensayados...pueden resultar a veces simplificadores*” [there is no doubt that through the text we can understand the historical persona of the author (or at least an aspect of him), but the methods tried...can sometimes result in being simplistic] (Rodríguez Garrida, 382). Rodríguez Garrida then makes no attempt to describe these “tried methods”, nor offer his own description of this link.

For his part, Roberto González Echevarría does acknowledge the interdependence of the author and the work. The *Royal Commentaries* “is not told in the pure Renaissance style of, for example, López de Gómara's portrait of Cortés”, he notes, but is rather in the form of “the notarial rhetoric of the appeal, of the *relación*” (González Echevarría, “LotL”, 126-127), and this appeal is personal: “the individual, who can and does err, writes to the embodiment of natural law (Lázaro to Your Lordship, Cortés to Charles V) to plead for exculpation and to recapture his or her legitimacy” (González Echevarría, “LotL”, 110). He focuses, however, on Garcilaso's interest in defending his *father's* loyalty to the crown, rather than his mother's and the Incas' nobility:

What makes the Inca's story so American is not the narrative of his non-European origin, but the need to include it as part of the scheme of his legitimization. In a sense, one could say that the first part fits within the design of the second; it is a fragment of it, not the other way around. The *General History*...is the paternal side of the book, as it were, where the issue of the patrimonial bureaucracy and its authority over writing is most clearly at stake. (González Echevarría, “Law of the Letter”, 119)

While González Echevarría is right in pointing out that Garcilaso's reference is Europe and not America, and thus while his formula for fitting the *Royal Commentaries'* Inca part as a

fragment into the Spanish part makes sense, the suggestion that Garcilaso's nobility as inherited through his father's side is "most clearly at stake" is strange. Both the first and second parts of the *Royal Commentaries* are essential to the book's plan, and the careful explanation of details and more extensive use of language as a rhetorical device in the first part, as well as the fact that it argues the most "singular" and thus less guaranteed argument—that the Incas are legitimate nobility—suggests that it is in this part that Garcilaso's authority is most at stake. In many ways, the second part feels like a rushed, necessary, addition to the first part, existing because it has to as the point of reference, and perhaps also serving as a foil for comparing the two societies, much like More's Book 1 of *Utopia*. After the benevolence and tolerance shown by the Incas toward the Indians, Part II clearly offers ironic criticism on the violence and cruelty of the conquistadors; the Incas are shown, through contrast, to be more Christian than the Spaniards. Considering Mariscal's discussion of the obsession of blood purity in late 16th century Spain, and considering Kagan's and Elliot's studies on the centralizing forces at work in Spanish politics and society at the time, it seems clear that Garcilaso's authority in writing rested squarely on his ability to convince of his legitimacy in spite of his singularity as a *mestizo*.

In many ways, Garcilaso structures the *Royal Commentaries* as a "lost page of history"—a hitherto unknown chapter of the Catholic understanding of the world. His principal aim is "to dismantle the divisive foundations on which Spanish imperial history rested" (Bauer, *CD*, 213) by inserting Inca history into the Catholic story. "There is only one world," Garcilaso declares at the outset of the work, "and although we speak of the Old World and the New, this is because the latter was lately discovered by us, and not

because there are two” (1.1.1). To emphasize that there is only one history of the world, Garcilaso even overtly explains that he will follow the conventions of Spanish historiography: he will start “like other writers” and begin his history with his opinion on the flatness of the world (1.1.1); indeed, Kagan says that Spanish historiographical convention was to begin with a description of the geography of Spain itself (Kagan, *Carlos V*, 41). Garcilaso also literally begins his work from a Spanish perspective—that is, he positions himself geographically in Spain. For example, he talks of the existence of plants and animals in Peru as if from a Spanish point of view: “if we suppose [the Peruvians] could have gone by land, there arise greater problems: if they took the domestic animals they have, why did they not take others that remained behind?” (1.1.2).

Realizing that the Christian model would be the only one recognized as legitimate history in Spain—and in order to provide a starting point for both knowledge-enabling comparison and ironic contrast—Garcilaso simply inserts the history of the Incas and Tahuatinsuyo (as pre-conquest Peru was known to the Incas) into this Catholic understanding, and tells the story in a way that is “consistent with sixteenth-century [Spanish] norms for the representation of truth” (Zamora, *Language*, 9). He thereby presents the history of Peru and of the Incas, and the arrival of the Spaniards and their conquest, as events ordained by God himself. Even in Part II, which describes the way Spain repeatedly betrayed and violently abused his mother’s people, Garcilaso often chalks the misdemeanours up to God’s mysterious workings in his revelation to the natives. In this fitting of Peru’s history into the Catholic model, Garcilaso “divides preconquest American history into two distinct temporal stages in an upward movement toward civility” (Bauer, *CD*, 215). These two “stages” are in fact a class division, between the

Incas, whom Garcilaso endeavors to portray as royal, and all the other natives, whom he presents as inferior:

For the better understanding of the idolatry, way of life, and customs of the Indians of Peru, it will be necessary for us to divide those times into two periods. First we shall say how they lived before the Incas, and then how the Inca kings governed, so as not to confuse the one thing with the other, and so that the customs and gods of one period are not attributed to the other. (1.1.9)

In order to separate the two, Garcilaso suggests that biblical-like events occurred to enable the supremacy of the one over the other; for example, he interprets a flood that wiped out many non-Inca natives as proof that God was punishing the Indians for their barbarity. He then distinguishes between the idolatry of the natives and the “Christian tendencies” of the Incas: he discounts the natives’ creation myths, saying “the way they have of telling them...make them seem more like dreams or disjointed fables than historical events” (1.1.18), while the Incas, Garcilaso insists, worshipped an all-knowing, elusive god, and even used the cross as a religious symbol (1.2.3). Garcilaso also suggests that the Incas acted like honest, benevolent Christians, converting the Indians for the Indians’ own good, and “persuading them to do unto one another as they themselves would be done by, so that there should be perpetual peace...” (1.1.21). Ultimately, Garcilaso suggests that the Incas were sent by God as “children of the Sun” to establish monotheism amongst the natives of Peru and thereby pave the way for Christianity:

It pleased our Lord God that from their midst there should appear a morning star to five of them in the dense darkness in which there dwelt some glimmerings of natural law.... It has been observed by clear experience how much prompter...to receive the Gospel were the Indians...taught by the Inca kings. (1.1.15)

The division Garcilaso creates between the Incas and the other tribes, therefore, means that he cannot be regarded, as Pupo Walker and others have suggested, as a representative

of the *mestizo* condition in America (see Pupo Walker, “*Sobre las mutaciones creativas*”, 150). In separating the two, Garcilaso is in fact not interested in race, but class. This belief in class difference even leads him to detest the new ordinances set forth by Bartólome de las Casas—the laws that freed the natives from serfdom. And of course, such separation of the Incas and the other natives is highly ironic: he bases their difference on the same distinctions that excluded him from authority in Spain. Royalty of the Inca ruler was determined by blood purity, and society was organized so that those closest to the Inca ruler by blood enjoyed a privileged status over the hordes of unnamed Indians from tribes conquered by the Incas (see 1.1.26). There was no chance of climbing socially or of acquiring greater power than that determined by one’s birth: “All power, all responsibility was assumed by a privileged administrative class. Liberty and ambition were unnecessary and unknown...” (Livermore, Introduction to *RC*). Furthermore, Inca government and society were perhaps even more absolutist than Spain’s:

[The Inca Empire] was authoritarian, bureaucratic, and socialistic to a degree that has perhaps not been approached by any other state at any other time or place.... The Inca imperial government dictated to its subjects, in detail, the locality in which they were to live, the kind of work that they were to do there, and the use that was to be made of the product of their labor. (Toynbee, Forward to *RC*)

And in fact, Garcilaso’s support of the Incas’ absolutist government is shown through his comparison of pre- and post-conquest Peru: while he portrays Peru under the Incas as a harmonious, Eden-like empire, he portrays Spain’s failure to sustain a singular authority to represent the crown as resulting in a country descended into confusion, disorder, and unbearable violence. He praises the Inca rulers as benevolent but strong leaders who were completely intolerant of dissidents (who were, he says, only ever Indians, never Incas):

even the most minor criminals are punished by death, their homes demolished and the land where they lived strewn with salt or rocks (see 1.2.12). As Garcilaso states,

This was the law. But it was never applied, for no one ever transgressed it. As we have said, the Peruvian Indians were very fearful of breaking the laws and extremely observant of them.... But if anyone did transgress, the law was applied literally without any remission.... The Incas never made laws to frighten their subjects or to be mocked by them, but always with the intention of applying them to anyone who dared to break them (1.4.3).

However, like in much else, Garcilaso expresses contradictory ideas. While this separation of the Incas and other natives suggests belief in intrinsic determinants of status, Garcilaso also writes of the significance of deeds rather than race or class: “gentlemen should be just as proud of the nobility they acquire for themselves as of that which they inherit, for it is like a setting of precious stones in fine gold” (2.1.38); and then later, “the sons of unknown fathers should be judged by their deeds and virtues...they are the children of their own virtue and their own right arms....Nobility was born of...virtues and is sustained by them” (2.2.39). Of course, this last statement directly supports Garcilaso’s eventual status as a bastard son.... Thus, Garcilaso twists his argument in a convenient way, to best support his own, personal, purpose throughout the text.

Garcilaso’s desire for approval by the Spanish authorities is apparent not only through his emphasis on the Christian tendencies of the Incas, but also through his depiction of the Incas as embodying other qualities valued by Spain. He argues, for example, that the Incas are a superior race through reference to the classics and comparison of the Incas to the Romans. The first Inca ruler, Inca Capac, writes Garcilaso, in his “greatness, piety, clemency, liberality, justice, and magnanimity” instructed the Indians

in the urbane, social, and brotherly conduct they were to use toward one another according to the dictates of reason and natural law, effectively persuading them to do unto one another as they themselves would be done

by, so that there should be perpetual peace and concord among them.
(1.1.21)

Similarly, he shows the Incas to

deliver gracious speeches replete with Renaissance courtliness. Garcilaso explains that his words are not translations of those used by the speakers, but he asserts that their words in their own tongue were just as polished and well chosen as those he puts into their mouths. (Livermore, Introduction to *RC*)

Garcilaso's uncle, for example, speaks as if he were a European courtier; one particularly lengthy, eloquent speech ends as follows:

I think I have expatiated at length on your enquiry and answered your questions, and in order to spare your tears, I have not recited this story with tears of blood flowing from my eyes as they flow from my heart from the grief I feel at seeing the line of our Incas ended and our empire lost.
(1.1.17)

In fact, Garcilaso inserts this speech directly into his text and only after it is finished, states that the words are his uncle's; in this way, the surprise that a "pure" Inca (rather than a half-European, like Garcilaso) could speak this way is even greater. After this speech, Garcilaso then suggests that his uncle spoke even *more* eloquently in the Inca language:

I have tried to translate [this tale] faithfully from my mother tongue...into a foreign speech...though I have not written it in such majestic language as the Inca used, nor with the full significance the words of that language have...However, it is enough to have conveyed its true meaning, which is what is required for our history. (1.1.17)

Garcilaso's placement of Renaissance language in the mouth of his Inca uncle is an example of what

Mary Louise Pratt has called 'autoethnography,' a colonial genre in which the native object becomes a subject who appropriates metropolitan languages of history and cross-cultural representation. It is therefore neither an 'authentic' indigenous form of expression nor merely an 'adoption' of European historical discourses but, rather, a colonial 'hybrid' that originates in the colonial contexts of unequal relationships of power. (Bauer, *EG*, 276)

Garcilaso's own language (ie. the language of the narration) is, as Juan Marichal describes it, "lapidary" (58). It is intentionally polished, in order to prove that *mestizos* were clearly capable of handling language just as well as European and classical writers. According to Marichal, Garcilaso succeeded: "the art of language made him the most effective representative of the New World in the culture of the Old" (Marichal, 59).

While depicting his relatives as Renaissance courtiers, and in comparing the Inca empire to Rome, Garcilaso suggests that the Incas even exceeded any other people on earth in their accomplishments. Indeed, much of the *Royal Commentaries*' value lies in the anthropological information Garcilaso includes on the achievements and knowledge of the Incas—their understanding of agriculture, astronomy, music, their *quipus* system of cords and knots, and even their poetry, for he includes the translation of one Inca poem, which he says was recorded by the *quipus* (1.2.27). Through his references to the classics, Garcilaso also even defends the idolatry of the non-Inca natives, saying that it is not surprising they had so many gods when the Romans and Greeks, who were literate and held great empires, did the same:

It is hardly to be wondered at that people without letters with which to preserve the memory of their antiquity should have so confused an idea of their beginnings, when the heathens of the Old World, though they had letters and displayed great skill with them, invented legends as laughable as Indian stories, or more so—for example, there is the fable of Pyrrha and Deucalion.... (1.1.18)

Garcilaso also works to establish credibility of *mestizos* by describing their intelligence once given the chance to prove themselves within a Spanish context: Garcilaso "was fond of telling how a professor began Latin classes in Cuzco was so impressed by the attitude of his *mestizo* scholars that he would exclaim: 'How I'd like to see a dozen of you in the

University of Salamanca!” (Livermore, Introduction to *RC*). As intelligent beings, Garcilaso suggests, the natives and *mestizos* were perfectly capable of conversion to Christianity. And as intelligent, Christian-like leaders, who created an empire greater than that of Rome, the Incas’ nobility was evident.

Just as Garcilaso heralds the nobility of the Incas, and even makes some excuses for the other natives, he also proclaims the greatness of Peru itself. He dedicates much of Part I of the *Royal Commentaries* to the natural riches of the country, most likely in an attempt to suggest an inherent, God-given, value of the land, as well as to show its worth to Spain and indeed the rest of the world. Peru is “rightly famous,” he writes, because “it has filled the whole world with gold and silver, pearls and precious stones” (1.1.5). He also goes to great lengths to describe the country as a kind of Eden, and Cuzco as a holy city, a *huaca* (whose meanings include “temple” or “sanctuary”) that also may be compared to Rome, for the two “resembled one another in their nobler aspects”, which Garcilaso then sets out to define (1.7.8). He also dedicates at least seventeen chapters in the text to the country’s abundant flora and fauna. These chapters, of course, also work to suggest Garcilaso’s superior knowledge of Peru. In his detailed descriptions of various plants and animals that would have been new to European readers (such as pimentos, maize, various root vegetables, condors, and llamas), Garcilaso contrasts his own personal knowledge with Spanish ignorance; he writes, for example,

Many other fruits grow wild in the Antis, such as what the Spaniards call ‘almonds’ and ‘walnuts’ because of some slight resemblance with those of Spain. For the first Spaniards who went to the Indies had a mania for applying the names for Spanish fruits to American fruits with very little likeness and no real connection. Indeed when compared the fruits are seen to differ in far more respects than they resemble one another, and some are even the opposite.... (1.8.14)

Besides portraying the Incas' Christian tendencies, their empire's Roman aspect, and Peru's Eden-like quality, Garcilaso also works to present the Incas' natural loyalty to the Spanish crown. He describes how a vision experienced by the Inca king Cápac Viracocha prepared the Incas for their subservience to a people with beards and who were dressed in clothing from head to foot (who were thus not native, since the natives had no facial hair and wore less clothing). And as the Incas believed the end of their empire to be divinely ordained, Garcilaso writes, they met the Spaniards with lavish gifts and declared their willingness to submit to the Spanish king and to Christianity. The Incas never resisted the conquest, he claims, but regarded the arrival of the Spaniards as the fulfillment of a legendary prophecy and their opportunity to serve the true God. The wars that then arose between the natives and the Spaniards arose due to miscommunication: Garcilaso urges that

the violence and crimes committed by the Spaniards are the consequence of a series of linguistic misunderstandings.... In his tragic vision of history, Garcilaso hereby links the fatal mistake of the conquest with the biblical Babel, where men ceased to understand God and one another. (Bauer, 216)

In proving how easily it was for miscommunication to happen, Garcilaso thoroughly explains how Christian concepts like the holy trinity were difficult to translate into the Inca language. This difficulty was then compounded by the incompetence of their translator Felipillo, who translated the trinity as "God three and one make four, adding the numbers in order to make himself understood" (2.1.23). Felipillo, Garcilaso argues, "rendered the words so barbarously and badly, giving many of them the opposite meaning, that he not only upset the Inca, but angered the hearers by belittling the majesty of the embassy, as if it had come from complete barbarians" (2.1.20); Felipillo is also later shown to have used

these misinterpretations to his own personal benefit. Similarly, in defending the Incas in matters of misunderstanding, Garcilaso recounts the initial meeting between the Spaniards Hernando Pizarro and Hernando de Soto and the Inca Cápac Viracocha, recreating entirely their conversation, and showing de Soto to speak in such an unclear manner that it is even complicated for a European reader to understand his meaning. Furthermore, Garcilaso suggests that if the Incas and natives, who were illiterate, could learn Castilian, then surely the Spaniards could learn Inca; plus, he argues, the prudence in ensuring understanding “is especially important in the teaching of a Christian doctrine for which new words must be devised” (1.2.2). Of course, such comparison and allusion to evangelical aims allows Garcilaso the opportunity to criticize the Spaniards. In general, Garcilaso aims to show that the Incas’ incomprehension was completely unavoidable, and that their willingness to believe in Christianity despite such poor explanations demonstrated the particular greatness of their faith and royal loyalty.

Just as Garcilaso presents the Incas’ acceptance of Spanish rule, he also defends his father’s loyalty to the Spanish crown; in fact, this defence is central to his claim to authority. His father’s nobility serves the same purpose as do the references to Spanish historians throughout the work: both provide the established foundation, a kind of “launching point”, that was necessary for difference to be introduced into 16th century Spanish discourse. In this way, successful persuasion of his father’s nobility would have granted Garcilaso greater credibility in persuading of his mother’s nobility—it is for this reason that González Echevarría sees that “the first part [of the *Royal Commentaries*] fits within the design of the second; it is a fragment of it, not the other way around” (González Echevarría, 119). This second part, the Spanish or paternal part, was necessary in order to

legitimate the first, Inca, maternal part. As outlined at the beginning of this essay, Garcilaso's father was accused of lending his horse to Gonzalo Pizarro during a revolutionary battle against crown control in Peru; although Sebastián de la Vega's willingness in the affair was sketchy, since he was a prisoner of Pizarro's at the time, the incident was described in a way that suggested treachery in various official Spanish histories. Again and again Garcilaso counters this depiction by portraying his father in a favourable light, including him in lists of men who resisted the revolutionaries and remained loyal to the crown. Most significantly, after describing the horse incident, Garcilaso begins another chapter, entitled "The author quotes authorities for what he has said; and in case he is not believed, takes pride in what the historians say about his father" (2.5.23). In this chapter, Garcilaso quotes directly from López de Gómara, Zárate, and Fernández, whose accounts were all incriminating, but then refers to the legal proceedings that followed this event, saying that his father "gave formal evidence before magistrates after the battle of Sacsahuana and produced twenty-two witnesses, all supporters of Centeno and none of Pizarro" (2.5.23). He states that while it was natural for the official historians to misinterpret the event due to the chaos of the battle, the way things really happened—that his father was not treacherous—was revealed at the proceeding. He writes,

The historians therefore did not write as they did without cause; and I write what passed, not to justify my father, or in the hope of reward or with any idea of claiming one, but merely to tell the truth about what happened.... I am satisfied to have said the truth. (2.5.23)

Toward the end of Part II (2.8.12) of the *Royal Commentaries* Garcilaso then includes a thirteen page eulogy to his father, a glorification that he claims was written by "a religious", a man whom he has promised not to name. This eulogy highlights exactly what

one would expect: Sebastián's and his ancestors' nobility, piety, and loyalty to the crown; in other words, the traditional Spanish markers of status, all of which could be traced back to his apparent blood purity. The eulogist lists Sebastián's famous ancestors, who included knights, counts, and dukes, and who were already recognized as nobility by the established authority of the church and crown, having received their fame and honour through "strength, valour, industry, virtue, and superhuman deeds". After then describing Sebastián's own "God-given" qualities such as "the charm of his manner, his handsome countenance, his brave and graceful figure, the quickness of his understanding" as well as his skills in horsemanship and the exercise of arms, his natural justice and diplomacy, the eulogy recalls the perils Sebastián endured as a captain in Peru (and which are described at length in a separate chapter). In short, the eulogy glorifies Sebastián to the extent that the "anonymous writer" says

Unless I am blinded by passion or dazzled by the splendour of his deeds, it would be difficult to tell who was honoured by whom, he by his ancestors or his ancestors by him. For all the illustrious qualities that gave each of them undying fame were found united in perfect proportion in the person of [Sebastián] Garcilaso de la Vega. (2.8.12)

All the above glorification—of the Incas through their Christian tendencies and through comparisons to Renaissance courtiers, of their empire through comparison to Eden and Rome, of Sebastián de la Vega according to the values of the crown and church—of course occurs in the *Royal Commentaries* as Garcilaso's attempt to, in essence, glorify *himself*. It was only through presentation of the loyalty and Christian faith of both his mother's people and his father that Garcilaso could assert their nobility, and thus his own as their descendent. And it was only as a noble member of Spanish society that Garcilaso could attempt to claim authority as author of his work.

In many ways, Garcilaso de la Vega was like Don Quixote. Both were “new characters”, singulars caught between the rungs of the traditional hierarchy of Spanish society, and both sensed an opportunity to climb; both were simultaneously somewhat privileged, and yet prevented from possessing any real power. Both transgressed traditional status barriers by their very movement across the Atlantic and across La Mancha: travel for reasons other than war or pilgrimage was reserved for the higher classes; otherwise “lateral movement was as cramped as...vertical ascent” (Anderson, 57). And that which Garcilaso attempts to achieve in Spain through his writing of the *Royal Commentaries* is the same hope held by Don Quixote, that the real world might imitate literature. But as in *Don Quixote*, Garcilaso’s ideal world is just that: a utopia. The infinite impossibility of reconciliation between his singularity and authority is evident in his very name—which is not a blending of Inca and Spanish, but rather the two placed side by side, and in his work—which remains two separate halves of one history. This is the inherent paradox of el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega and the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*. Garcilaso was the epitome of the divided/double subject, an Inca and a Spaniard, lower class and noble, originating from two countries simultaneously divided by and united by an ocean, appealing to established authority for establishment of his own authority, attempting to break down the barriers of one culture through assertion of those same barriers in another, depending upon his singularity—that which separated him from claims to authority—in order to claim authority, writing to protect himself from what he was writing.... Garcilaso and the work were one, in that they depended upon each other for authority, but while the writer was a blend, a *mestizo*, the writing could never truly reflect

this blend—the closest thing to accurate representation was presentation of one half, and then the other. There was, in the words of Carlos Fuentes, “a permanent divorce between words and things” (“Introduction” to *Don Quixote*, xxvii): Garcilaso remained an individual without a system of language and meanings that fully expressed his existence. The author and his work occupied a cleft connection: in creating each other they were one, and yet they were irreparably separate.

Royal Commentaries of the Incas: Reception

Despite Garcilaso's attempts to reconcile his singularity and authority in early 17th century Spain through exploitation of his difference, through depiction of the Incas' and his father's faith, loyalty, and nobility, and through employment of rhetorical devices meant to persuade of the veracity of his claims and to absolve himself of responsibility for the criticism he conveys, the very involvement of all of these elements reveals his anticipation of difficulty in achieving such reconciliation. As Zamora notes, Garcilaso writes in a way that is "a response to his perception of the fragility of his own narrative authority" (Zamora, *Language*, 43). (Thus, as stated above, it was the very disjunction between Garcilaso's singularity as an individual and his access to authority in late 16th century Spanish society that enabled creation of his work.) And his anticipation was well-founded; Spain didn't buy his argument. Garcilaso's very suggestion that he, and not the official, noble, Castilian writers, was the ultimate authority on Peru, threatened Spain's system of status and power: as the "Indian", Garcilaso was meant to be written *about*, not the writer. Ironically, therefore, it was *because* of Garcilaso's Inca heritage that his authority on the Incas was undermined: as a singular individual of impure blood, he was automatically cast below the rigid, established ruling class from which writers were culled. Thus, even if he was the only one with intimate knowledge of the subject being discussed, the centralizing, exclusionary foundation of Spanish society and power meant that he was not regarded as a legitimate authority.

Garcilaso states within the *Royal Commentaries* that he had already met with the Royal Council of the Indies to receive compensation for his father's service to the crown in Peru

and that he had been disappointed in this attempt: “they dismissed my claims and closed the door against others I might have made since for my own services” (2.5.23); most likely, these services included publication of Part 1 of the *Royal Commentaries*. For certainly Spain would have been Garcilaso’s first choice for publication: he wrote in Castilian, lived in Spain, and sought approval from the established authority of the crown and church in Castile. But Part I was published in Lisbon, in 1609, and its dedication to “the Most Serene Princess, the Lady Catarina of Portugal, Duchess of Braganza, etc.” suggests that it was only in Portugal (a country that was, incidentally, not on good terms with Spain) that Garcilaso found support. (Zamora does not acknowledge this fact when she says that the work was published, “uncensored, in 1609” (Zamora, *Language*, 4).)

The second part, or “Spanish” part, of the *Royal Commentaries* was published in Spain—in Córdoba, in 1617, a year after Garcilaso’s death, but was stripped of its original royal title (“*The Second Part*” of the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*) and called instead *General History of Peru*. The enforcement of this alternate title shows the Spanish state’s refusal to allow royal status to be conferred upon an Inca; furthermore, the publication of Part II but not Part I, even under an alternate title, suggests that Spain was simply not interested in reading about an “other”. For the difference between Part I of the *Royal Commentaries* and the works written by the Spanish historians that Garcilaso quotes was that their descriptions of the Incas were limited; they *couldn’t* write in greater detail about the natives because they themselves were Spanish—and, in the case of Gómara, had never even left Europe. (The only *mestizo* historian that Garcilaso quotes, Padre Blas Valera, lost most of his work in a fire; the references to his work that Garcilaso includes, therefore, are perhaps suspect.) Furthermore, as mentioned above, the Spanish writers largely

followed Spanish historiographical convention in beginning their accounts from the moment of Spanish involvement, ignoring whatever happened before.

Garcilaso's works in general were resisted by Spain. His translation of León Hebreo's *Dialogues of Love* was originally published in Spain in 1590, then revoked by the Inquisition, although by this time it had already become an influential text (Cervantes' friend tells him in the Preface to the Reader in Part I of *Don Quixote*, if "you have but two ounces of the Tuscan tongue, you will light upon León Hebreo" (37).) Spain also resisted *La Florida*, so that that work was also published in Lisbon, in 1605. The result of all this censorship was that Garcilaso spent most of his life supported by his father's relatives in Andalusia. He says he

emerged from the war...impoverished and burdened with debts...[and] took refuge in these nooks of poverty and solitude, where, as I said in the foreword to my *History of Florida*, I spend a quiet and peaceful life, like a man disillusioned who has taken leave of this world and its changes, and asks nothing of it, for there is no longer any cause, and most of life is gone by; and for what remains the Lord of the Universe will provide, as He has done hitherto. I hope I may be pardoned for this tiresome outburst...one who has written the lives of so many others can hardly be criticized for saying something of his own. (2.5.23)

The *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* was not published in its entirety in Spain until 1723, over one hundred years after the author's death.

England, on the other hand, did buy Garcilaso's argument. Not necessarily because it believed everything Garcilaso wrote, but because England was less threatened by marginal individuals, and thus regarded them with (uneasy) fascination, and because its authorities were less stringent in applying restrictions of the press. This meant that English readers were relatively free to read what they pleased, and were freer to read for pleasure. There

was official control, it is true, but there was a fissure in this control, and in this fissure there was space in which to move. In this space, writers could strive for individual authority. The timing was perfect for reception of a writer such as Garcilaso and a text such as the *Royal Commentaries*. In many ways, Garcilaso's reception in England can be explained through comparison to another English writer of the period alluded to on numerous occasions in this essay: Sir Walter Raleigh. Essentially, the works of both writers are studies in persuasion: Garcilaso to convince the Spanish crown and church of the nobility of the Incas, and Raleigh, for example in *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empyre of Guiana* (1596), to convince the English crown that everything he describes...actually exists. Besides obvious similarities between the two writers—the fact that they were contemporaries, and that both wrote about the New World—there are also rhetorical similarities. Both Garcilaso and Raleigh describe the personal suffering they endured in order to provide their accounts: like Garcilaso's profession of his poverty, Raleigh writes in his *Apology*, "If I had spent my poor estate, lost my son, suffered by sickness and otherwise a world of miseries; if I had resisted with the manifest hazard of my life the robberies and spoils which my companies would have made; if when I was poor I could have made myself rich..."(Raleigh in Beer, 86). Both writers proclaim higher purposes as their reasons for enduring this suffering: Garcilaso says he writes to set the facts straight on his mother's people (presumably so that their evangelization might be complete), while Raleigh attests that he writes so that England might achieve the glory it deserves. Both writers extol the greatness of the countries with which they're concerned to emphasize the worthiness of their enterprise: just as Garcilaso describes Peru as Eden, and

includes numerous chapters on its natural riches, Raleigh writes in *The Discoverie...of Guiana*,

I never saw a more beautiful country nor more lively prospects, hills so raised here and there over the valleys, the river winding into divers branches, the plains adjoining without bush or stubble, all fair green grass, the ground of hard sand easy to march on either for horse or foot, the deer crossing in every path, the birds towards the evening singing on every tree with a thousand several tunes, cranes and herons of white, crimson, and carnation perching in the river's side, the air fresh with a gentle easterly wind, and every stone that we stooped to take up promised either gold or silver by his complexion. (Raleigh in Abrams, 886).

Both writers then strive to absolve themselves of responsibility for the veracity of their works: just as Garcilaso suggests that if he finishes his work, it is because God has willed it to be so, Raleigh writes "To speak more at this time, I fear would be but troublesome: I trust in God, this being true, will suffice" (Raleigh in Abrams, 887). And ultimately, both understand the power of words and the implications of their success or failure to convince, and employ persuasive rhetoric—including false modesty, feigned disinterestedness, and a convenient inconsistency of facts and meanings—because, first, both are creating fictions—Garcilaso in writing of a Christian Inca empire, Raleigh in writing in extensive detail of all that he did *not* see in Guiana, and second, because their real reason for writing is self-advancement.

In this way, both Garcilaso and Raleigh are playing a new role within their texts, one of not mere geographical and historical documenter, but of a kind of protagonist. Both present themselves as uniquely capable of possessing the information of which they write, and relate it to their own direct personal experience, and they do this in an attempt to assert their authority. Both writers may be seen, therefore, as actors, not unlike Castiglione's courtier whose "performance" is vital in achieving or maintaining a certain status. Like the

courtier, Garcilaso and Raleigh act according to their perception of the possibility (or necessity) of greater authority, yet all recognize that they will meet with obstacles along the way. Rhetoric or performance are thus required in order to convince the established authority of the writer's or courtier's own worth: "[t]hat such an effort of rhetoric is in fact needed suggests that the identity being performed is not what it professes to be, or at least that the person laying claim to it has no intrinsic, 'natural' right to do so" (Posner, 12). While Garcilaso "courts" the Spanish crown and Catholic church through profession of the Incas', his fathers', and his own loyalty and faith, and embodies the feigned sincerity of Castiglione's *sprezzatura* through portrayal of himself as an objective, disinterested commentator, Raleigh "courts" Elizabeth and professes his ultimate loyalty to England. Both writers "must persuade, but that effort at persuasion must itself be covered over by another persuasive effort, one that 'demonstrates' to the audience that no effort at persuasion is being made" (Posner, 12). This new role, of writer as actor who strives to prove his own authority, opened the question of the sincerity of the writer. As a result, "sincerity", "sincere", and "sincerely" appear thirteen times in Shakespeare's works and forty-eight times in Milton's prose work alone (Burke, 19). Timothy J. Reiss defines these two selves—the sincere self, and the feigned sincere self, as private and social, and discusses their appearance in the era of Garcilaso and Raleigh. These halves were not in opposition in the early modern era, he writes, but were

absolutely essential to the other. If the political subject has 'being,' one must find it in the constant movement of thought that alone constitutes the private subject; if the latter has an 'existence,' it is thanks to its projection...into the concrete world of the social. (Reiss, 117)

Thus, in England, Raleigh was caught up in a movement toward individual authority, a movement which he partly created, and which partly created him. Garcilaso, writing in

Spain as an outsider, employed almost precisely the same techniques as Raleigh. As a result, both met with publishing success in England, and in fact in the same place: both the *Royal Commentaries* and Raleigh's *The History of the World* were first printed in Purchas' 1625 anthology. Garcilaso's humanist learning certainly made his work relevant beyond Spain and he could not have appeared in England at a better time.

It was thus within a milieu of rivalry against Spain, of relative acceptance of individual authority, of expectation for individual responsibility and self-fashioning, and of fascination with the singular, that the *Royal Commentaries* landed in England. It first appeared in English in 1625, just eight years after the publication of Part II in Castilian, and nearly one hundred years *before* the publication of Part I in Castilian. This English version was a large excerpt—one hundred and one pages, in Samuel Purchas' *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes*. Purchas focuses on Part I of the *Royal Commentaries*, realizing that this part would be particularly welcome to English readers because of its focus on Peru and the Incas rather than on Spain's conquest. The work allowed the English to learn about the New World without resorting to a purely Spanish text, and the English must have taken pleasure in reading what they would have recognized as a somewhat subversive text against established Spanish authority. The comments Purchas includes in the margins of his work reveal his own national pride and dislike of Spain; he refers to General Gómez, for example, as “an ungrateful proud Spaniard” (407), he says that the Spanish writer Acosta “taxed” the truth (328, 352), and he draws attention to Spanish acts of cruelty by outlining them as such in the margins: “Easie victorie and creull Spaniards which kill so many not resisting,” he writes next to Garcilaso's relation of

the meeting between the Incas and Friar Vincent (403). Thus, while Spain censored Part I (the Inca part) of the *Royal Commentaries*, and printed Part II (the Spanish part), Purchas' excerpt reveals an opposite appeal in England: Purchas extracts most of his excerpt from Part I, while his very brief, and completely paraphrased and summarized inclusion of Part II shows his relative lack of interest in this section. In terms of the *Royal Commentaries'* success, Purchas' inclusion was indispensable. This version remained the only source for Garcilaso in English until Sir Paul Rycaut's translation in 1688—which, interestingly, referred to the work as Garcilaso intended it to be called: the *Royal Commentaries*, Parts I and II. (The British Library has perhaps the only remaining copy; see the British Library catalogue.)

Purchas' and England's interest in Garcilaso de la Vega almost certainly lay partially in Garcilaso's novelty as "the Inca", an example of English fascination with singularity. Enthusiasm for Garcilaso's novelty is in fact clearly conveyed in Purchas' description of the text in his table of contents:

Observations of things most remarkable, collected out of the first part of the Commentaries Royall, written by the Inca Garcilasso de la Vega, Naturall of Cozco, in nine books; Of the Originall, Lives, Conquests, Lawes and Idolatries of the Incas, or ancient Kings of Peru.

Interest in the novelty of Inca culture, rather than the conquest of Peru by the Spaniards, is then shown in the topics Purchas includes: he writes about Inca language, religion, dress, agricultural techniques, law, architecture, as well as significant natural events they regarded as omens, such as earthquakes, volcanoes and comets. Yet it is also clear that, despite the novelty Garcilaso represented in England, his race did not hinder his legitimacy in that country; Purchas did not doubt Garcilaso's authority. In his introduction to the excerpt, he states that he includes Garcilaso's work so that the reader "mightst heare a

Peruan speake of Peru,” and that, despite his previous inclusion of Spaniards’ accounts on Peru, through Garcilaso he has now

collected such things as either they had not, or had by false information received and deceived their Readers, whom this Authour correcteth out of better intelligence. Besides, he seemes to hold counterpoise, as drawing things from their originall....

Thus, Purchas granted prime authority to the *mestizo*. One-fifth of this volume is dedicated to Garcilaso’s text.

Other English writers also regarded Garcilaso as the ultimate authority on Peruvian history. Just as Shakespeare and Spenser and others made use of explorers’ accounts in Hakluyt’s and Purchas’ anthologies for their own writing, certain works seem to have been influenced directly by Garcilaso’s *Royal Commentaries*. Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* (1627), for example, begins with “We sailed from Peru...” and then continues to describe the island of Coya (which Garcilaso said meant “queen” or “empress” in the Inca language) in much the same way as Garcilaso described Peru. Coya’s original king is described as particularly benevolent, “wholly bent to make his kingdom and people happy” (Bacon, 275), so that the people almost never disobey his laws; in the *Royal Commentaries*, Manco Capac (and all subsequent Inca kings) believed that the rulers “should be the first to obey [the laws and commandments] to set an example to the subjects, and they should be mild and merciful, subduing the Indians with love, and attracting them with good works and not by force” (1.1.25), while “the laws were regarded as divine [and] were kept with love and respect” (1.2.13). Similarly, while Bacon’s narrator considers the records of Natural History as the most significant undertaking of Salomon’s House on the island, Garcilaso includes over seventeen chapters on the flora and fauna of Peru in the *Royal Commentaries*. Sir Walter Raleigh might have also read

Purchas' version of the *Royal Commentaries* before writing about Pizarro and "the maidenhead of Peru" (in de Armas Wilson, 238). Similarly, that Dryden knew the *Royal Commentaries* is suggested by his own interest in Peru, as evident in his writing of *The Indian Queen* (first performed in 1663) and its sequel, *The Indian Emperour* (1665). The success of these plays was impressive, as they continued to be enacted for decades, "never failing to draw a crowded house" (Summers, 250); even Aphra Behn, in *Oroonoko*, states that she gives the feathers she acquires in Surinam to the King's Theatre for the dress of the Indian Queen. Sir William Davenant most likely also read the *Royal Commentaries* as background for both his plays, *The History of Sir Francis Drake* and *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1673). That he read Garcilaso is strongly suggested by the fact that the outline of his play parallels the structure of the *Royal Commentaries*, with the further addition of (a much fabricated) description of England's role in Peru:

The Design is first to represent the happy condition of the People of *Peru* anciently, when their inclinations were govern'd by Nature, and then it makes some discov'ry of their establishment under the Twelve *Incas*, and of the dissentions of the two Sons of the last *Inca*. Then proceeds to the discov'ry of that new Western World by the *Spaniard*.... It likewise proceeds to the *Spaniards* Conquest of that *Incan* Empire, and then discovers the cruelty of the *Spaniards* over the *Indians*, and over all Christians (excepting those of their own Nation).... And towards the conclusion, it infers the Voyages of the *English* thither, and the amity of the Natives towards them, under whose Ensigns (encourag'd by a Prophecy of their chief Priest) they hope to be made Victorious, and to be freed from the Yoke of the *Spaniard*. (Davenant, 103)

Davenant's interest in the novelty the New World offers in general is evident in his description of the opening scene of *both* plays as such: "This Prospect is made through a Wood, differing from those of European Climats, by representing of Coco-Trees, Pines, and Palmitos. And on the Boughs of other Trees are seen Munkies, Apes, and Parrots" (Davenant, 87). John Locke also refers to Garcilaso in his journal entry of February 8,

1687, and in his Second Treatise, point number 14, he gives the encounter between Pedro Serrano and another Spaniard, as described in the *Royal Commentaries*, as an example of proof that Truth and Faith can belong to men in a state of nature (see Locke, 277).

Thus, the reconciliation Garcilaso sought between his singularity and authority was never achieved in Spain—at least in his own lifetime, when it counted. He wrote the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* in order to improve his own status, to write himself into a noble position in Spanish society. But Spain resisted difference—arguably resulting in its own infamous decline and the crumbling of its empire. Garcilaso ended his days in poverty; his possessions at his death did not extend much beyond his library and two clocks, which he had been given as a gift (2.7.22). He spent the last of his money procuring a chapel in Córdoba's *mezquita*, the world's largest mosque and center of life in Moorish Andalusia when Córdoba was the capital, in the very center of which was constructed a cathedral after the Reconquest. The *mezquita* is perhaps the perfect testimony to Spain's history of tension between Catholic center and non-Catholic periphery, and it is the perfect final resting spot for Garcilaso: a unique creation of contradictory origins, its two elements are simultaneously divided and connected. Garcilaso's bones are in a glass box on a gold-coloured altar, a crown of dried roses encircles his skull, and two large tablets recording his genealogy and feats end, "Ruegé a Dios por su Anima" [He begged God on behalf of his soul.]; the common word for soul being, however, *alma*, "*Anima*" suggests one's deepest, most animal, essence. Garcilaso died on April 23, 1616, the same day as Shakespeare and Cervantes.

Garcilaso could have never expected that his work would be better received by the rivals of the society into which he fought to be accepted. But England showed great interest in his difference, especially since it could regard him as a dissident against Spanish tradition, and it embraced his *Royal Commentaries*. Its mental image of Peru was largely that drawn by Garcilaso; due to his singularity, he was granted ultimate authority.

VI

Epilogue

If the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* was read in 17th century England, and clearly influenced England's perception of Peru and of the New World, how then did the text get lost along the centuries in the world of English literature? Why have most students of English literature today never heard of el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega? As a unique author and work that, first, had no equivalent in English literature, and second, were especially positively received in 17th century English literature, it is somewhat surprising that it is only recently that Garcilaso and the *Royal Commentaries* are being studied within our field. I can think of various possibilities, and cannot decide on a single one, so include this section as somewhat of a "choose your own adventure" on why Garcilaso disappeared.

One possible answer involves seeing the *Royal Commentaries* as paralleling 16th century maps of the New World. Richard Kagan, in *Urban Images of the Hispanic World: 1493-1793*, writes that these maps generally took one of two distinct forms—chorographic or communicentric. Chorographic maps offered a distant overview and focused on the architecture of a place, and as a result often achieved "mere observation," that is, seeing without knowing...[they could not] enable a viewer to 'know' a town" (*UI*, 108). These maps were directed toward an audience not intimately familiar with the place, as they "not only rendered faraway cities comprehensible to armchair travelers but also offered these readers ready comparison with cities with which they were already familiar", and were thus the dominant form of maps in Europe at the time (*UI*, 109). Communicentric maps, on the other hand, focused on "the essence of things" in order to allow the viewer to "know" the place; they

celebrated subjectivity, viewing the world, so to speak, through the lens of the community that it purported to depict. The communicentric view tended, therefore, to be purposely idiosyncratic and filled with topographical distortions meant to enhance a town's size and overall importance. (*UI*, 108)

These maps were intended for a specific, local, audience who already knew not only the layout of a place, but also its "customs, history, and traditions" (*UI*, 109). In Peru itself, the only pre-1492 "maps", or at least depictions of the Inca world, express a communicentric view; these depictions generally take the form of various native model buildings and homes that are more symbolic than representative (*UI*, 109). Later, the maps Spaniards commissioned by native artists still contained traces of communicentric tradition, mixed with European techniques; one such hybrid map of Texúpa (today in Mexico) depicts a European-style grid layout of a city, over which are superimposed footprints depicting ancient native footpaths, as well as glyphs, which would have only been understood by the natives, referring to the town's native name as well as important points in its history (*UI*, 120). These maps, Kagan writes, "have no independent existence but serve as something approximating...memory sites", and correspond "with the oral traditions of individual communities" in representing the collective memory of the community (*UI*, 117, 118). For even space, he writes,

had no independent, abstract existence. It belonged instead to the people who inhabited it and consisted of a sequence of landmarks...each associated with particular divinities or particular moments...drawn from a community's past. (Kagan, *UI*, 52)

As symbols therefore, communicentric views thus depended upon culturally established ideas in order to be understood.

Like the map of Texúpa, the *Royal Commentaries* may be seen as a hybrid between European tradition and native, communicentric, depiction of history. While Garcilaso

makes use of many European ideals in his shaping of Inca history, his dependence upon his singularity as the basis for his authority also means that he includes extensive detail about the daily life and rituals of the Incas. Such a combination suggests that the text is, like Garcilaso, *mestizo*—and that, perhaps, it could only be fully understood by other *mestizos* (who were, incidentally, becoming literate by this time). Kagan states that

the seventeenth century marked the first era when America's Creoles began to regard themselves as fundamentally different from their metropolitan brethren, a separation that coincided with the tendency among peninsular Spaniards to stigmatize Creoles...as persons of mixed blood...and therefore inferior. (*UI*, 131)

In fact Sánchez Barba regards the *Royal Commentaries* as “*el modelo más sobresaliente*” [the most outstanding model] of *mestizo* literature, and by this he refers not only to Garcilaso's background, but to the quality of the work as a mix between European culture and native connection to nature (Sánchez Barba, 107). In fact, the *Royal Commentaries* has always remained popular in Peru (even despite periodic censorship) and has long been appreciated by the—mostly *mestizo*—population as one of its most acclaimed writers. The work's prologue suggests that Garcilaso sensed his work would be appreciated by others like himself—he dedicates the work to “the Indians, *mestizos*, and Creoles of the kingdoms and provinces of the great and rich empire of Peru”. Perhaps only a *mestizo* could understand the link Garcilaso sees in order to entitle one chapter “Different kinds of marriage and diverse languages; their use of poison and spells”.... This type of exclusive knowledge calls to mind Rabelais' description of the allegory established by hieroglyphs:

The sages of ancient Egypt...wrote in letters that they called hieroglyphs—which none understood who did not understand, and which everyone understood who did understand, the virtue, property, and nature of the things thereby described. (*Gargantua*, 57-58)

In fact, various elements of the *Royal Commentaries* suggest that Garcilaso was influenced—consciously or not—by oral storytelling techniques, and while the Incas recorded events with *quipus*, their history was largely stored and transmitted by professional memorizers (Zamora, *Language*, 44). Garcilaso establishes patterns of repetition within his text and outwardly states that he aims to mix up his topics in order to keep the story interesting—both of these techniques would have been important in keeping the attention of an oral audience. In terms of mixing topics, for example, in the midst of a long list of battles he writes, “In order that the history may not become tedious...we shall interweave between the lives of the Inca kings something of their customs, which will be more interesting to hear than their wars and conquests” (1.2.20). Similarly, he interrupts his physical description of Peru with an anecdote: “Before going any further, it would be as well to tell the story of Pedro Serrano...so that it is not too far from its place, and in order that this chapter may not be too short” (1.1.8). In some cases, this interweaving of topics allows him to foreshadow what is to come later in the story and thus to generate excitement; in writing of the Chancas tribe’s ultimate submission to Inca rule, for example, he says “but they did not lose the rancor of their hearts, as we shall see later” (1.4.15). Besides being privy to such information that is normally guarded by the writer, such as story structure and future development, the reader also feels a sense of participation in creation of the story through Garcilaso’s intermittent use of “we” in the text: he says, for example, “These are the four boundaries of the realms of the Inca kings, whose history we propose to write” (1.1.8). Garcilaso then further empowers the reader by encouraging the reader to use his or her own imagination in filling in details: he writes,

And this shall suffice for now about the Indians of that primitive age and ancient barbarism. What I have not described as fully as necessary I leave

each one to imagine and supply details: however he stretches his imagination, he will not realize how great was the savagery of these gentiles. (1.1.14)

The anecdotes Garcilaso includes also suggest storytelling roots: the story of Pedro Serrano, who Garcilaso says was really the first man who landed in the New World, but who died before being able to seek compensation (although after telling Columbus about it), develops like a fabulous tale and includes colourful descriptions:

Some [turtle shells Pedro found] were as big...as the biggest shields, and others like smaller shields....They were in fact of all sizes....Owing to the harshness of the climate, hair grew all over his body till it was like an animal's pelt, and not just any animal's, but a wild boar's. His hair and beard fell below his waist....[Pedro] kept his pelt...as a proof of his wreck....He made money by exhibiting himself...[then] cut his hair...to just above the waist...and braided it at night to allow him to sleep. (1.1.8)

Garcilaso includes many details like the above that are unnecessary for the historical value of the story, but work simply in providing entertainment for the reader. In many cases, Garcilaso exploits his proclaimed dedication to the truth in order to include certain details that are touchy (and therefore entertaining): “[One tribe’s] dress was so indecent that it is rather a subject for silence....But as history obliges one to set down the whole truth...” he describes it (1.1.13). Similarly, in denouncing cannibalism, Garcilaso explicitly describes one tribe’s practice of it:

[there is] a tribe so strongly addicted to devouring human flesh that they buried their dead in their stomachs. As soon as the deceased had breathed his last, his relatives gathered round and ate him roasted or boiled, according to the amount of flesh he still had: if little, boiled, if much, roasted. (1.1.12)

As in most things, however, Garcilaso is inconsistent. While he gives graphic detail of cannibalism in his self-proclaimed effort to tell the whole truth, in numerous other places it is clear that he is *choosing* his subject matter, and would rather not write about things he

considers “indecent”—in other words, things that might hinder his favour with the crown and church. He states, for example, that at the time of his writing “the villages founded by the [first Inca king] Inca Manco Capac...are not in their ancient sites...because one of the viceroys...had them reduced to large towns...This led to great misfortunes which, being odious, I shall not recount” (1.1.20). Similarly, he openly interprets some of the legends and events he recounts. In his description of the origins of the first Inca, for example, which was a tremendously sensitive subject because of its conflict with traditional Christian doctrine, Garcilaso says that while Manco Cápac was clearly not a child of the sun like the natives believed, he was probably an

Indian of good understanding, prudence, and judgment, perceiving the great simplicity of these tribes, [who] realized the need they had of teaching and instruction about the natural life, and wisely and cunningly invented the fable to win their esteem.... (1.1.25)

Perhaps the most interesting expression of Garcilaso’s storytelling background is his extensive inclusion of miniscule, mundane, everyday details. He writes of the Incas’ bridge-building techniques, the type of manure they used in their fields, their belief of the origin of the moon’s spots, the various types of bees in Peru, how a lawsuit was filed against a certain parrot, why they saved their fingernails in household nooks, the names of the first horses he saw in Cuzco...at another point, he writes, “I had forgotten to mention how the common people repair their clothes, which is worthy of note...” (1.4.14). Inclusion of these details seems not to have occurred because they were of interest to the Spanish crown and church (as they run counter to the Spanish centralizing, sweeping view of history), but because they were important to the Incas and the Indians themselves. In fact, Garcilaso states that he wishes his work to be of use to a potential Inca readership as well; after describing the complex political geography of Peru, he writes, “I name these

provinces in detail for the benefit of Peruvians, for it would be useless to do so for those in other kingdoms: I trust this may be excused for I desire to be of use to all” (1.2.16). In this quality, Garcilaso truly *does* seem sincerely interested in his mother’s people, rather than solely interested in them in order to establish his own legitimacy. One may say that Garcilaso attempts what Vassilis Lambropoulos refers to as a “secular mimesis of redemption: the redemption of the world through representation, the communion of the world” (in Weimann, 4); in other words, it was through his writing that Garcilaso felt he could preserve his mother’s people, at least in representation. (Rolena Adorno states that the foremost characteristic of native Spanish/American encounter texts is “the imperative to preserve the knowledge of the native culture, marginalized, denigrated, or forced into a clandestine existence” (Adorno, *CC*, 39)). In any case, such extravagant use of detail results in a kind of inverted version of the history of Peru; thus, while Garcilaso attempts to fit this history into that of Christianity, the overwhelmingly large amount of space dedicated to these details prevent the story from having the same overarching theme as the official Spanish writings, which regarded the New World’s beginnings as the arrival of the Spanish. As Greenblatt notes,

Spanish stories trace an intricate sequence of action in order to produce the familiar, powerful cumulative explanation through the narrative form; Indian stories are founded on a different principle, one based on a conception of time as multidimensional and eternally recurrent. (Greenblatt, Introduction to *NEW*, ix)

The details work to slow down the text, thereby giving value to everyday matters in both time and space, while the anecdotes work to preserve the uniqueness of a moment in the Incas’ continually cyclical conception of time; they are always introduced as an exception in relation to the “typical”. For example, Garcilaso establishes a pattern of description of

conquests of the Incas over other natives, then after establishing the pattern, includes only those that stand out, saying of more typical conquests, “there is no point in repeating what adds nothing to the story”(1.2.20). While Greenblatt talks of the inclusion of anecdotes in some European encounter texts as well, they are “*representative* anecdotes, that is, as significant in terms of a larger process or pattern... [In European texts,] a purely local knowledge, an absolutely singular, unrepeatable, unique experience or observation, is neither desirable nor possible” (Greenblatt, *MP*, 3). Thus, this argument suggests that the *Royal Commentaries* was appreciated on a somewhat superficial level by the English; that the work was received with enthusiasm only because of the extreme novelty it represented and not because they appreciated its meaning on an enduring level, as another *mestizo* might. Once the novelty wore off, then so too would interest in the work. And as Kupperman states, “by the middle of the eighteenth century America became an accepted part of Europe’s mental landscape” (19).

On the other hand, perhaps the work was not novel *enough*. As a commentary, the *Royal Commentaries* builds upon traditional ideas and techniques before departing from them, it continues the “complex of kinships, resemblances, and affinities” described by Foucault. *Don Quixote*, meanwhile, through parody rejects such continuation of past traditions: “where Cervantes excludes, Inca Garcilaso tends to outdo the reigning authorities” (de Armas Wilson, 243) (although I think “dissolves” is a better word than “excludes” to describe Cervantes’ achievement). Perhaps it is this difference between exclusion/dissolution and outdoing (which implies continuity of tradition) that explains the difference in long-term influence between *Don Quixote* and the *Royal Commentaries* in England; Cervantes’ work was more modern, and thus the ingenious design it represented

was more appreciated than Garcilaso's. For England was headed in the direction of modernity, in which a break from the past was seen as the only way toward escaping deception and uncovering truth. Descartes and Hobbes both proposed freedom from history (and humanist conception of cultural continuity) and its replacement by philosophy (in the form of personal meditation). By the beginning of the 17th century, Foucault writes, "thought ceases to move in the element of resemblance. Similitude is no longer the form of knowledge but rather the occasion of error" (Foucault in Weimann, 191): in literature, complete novelty and self-authorization were sought. In this line of thought, Garcilaso was halfway toward being revolutionary, by promoting his singularity as the basis of his authority; by fitting that singularity into established Spanish understanding, however, he became halfway outdated. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (writing in 1995) suggests that English literary interest in Spanish literature of the 16th and 17th centuries has been "generally overlooked—at least until very recently" and that the reason for this interest now is our postmodernity (Gumbrecht, xiv). It is only since our break from the modernity that rendered Garcilaso out of date that we can relate to the

intrinsic irony and problematization in Golden Age discourses; we enjoy their deconstructive play with institutionalized binarisms; we begin to pursue the margins, the ramifications, and the lateral moves of its worldviews, and we sympathize with the oscillations between its assertions and its dissolutions of Subjectivity. (Gumbrecht, xv-xvi).

Or perhaps Garcilaso disappeared from English literature for a more historical, rather than cultural, reason. As England's own empire spread, it generated its own colonial literature; Latin America in general faded from its thought, replaced by the more pertinent North America and India. At the same time, England began to face the same troublesome issues regarding singularity and authority as had Spain; suddenly, New World literature

directly implicated English society and politics. Sir Walter Raleigh's execution perhaps best reveals the new seriousness with which England regarded its colonies. And in colonizing North America, the first English emigrants proceeded in a way much as Spain had, basing their settlements on religious principles and seeking "a kind of orderliness in the colonies" that could be likened to the extreme control Spain had exerted in Latin America (Kupperman, 280). Elliott points out the similarities of both countries' methods of colonization: a "doctrine of improvement", evident in the writings of progress coming from the English colonies, "is already present in Spanish writings about America in the sixteenth century, as in López de Gómara's expression of pride in 1552 at the way in which his compatriots had 'improved' Hispaniola and New Spain...." (Elliott, *FR*, 404-405). Most significantly, suddenly England had a greater economic interest at stake, and thus rather than be amused by the New World, the English were determined to improve it for their own gain. As Elliott writes,

By the later seventeenth century, at a time when colonial societies, and especially those of the English-speaking world, were showing themselves to be viable communities with obvious potential for the mother country, the language of improvement was beginning to be widely spoken and was helping to pave the way for the full-blown philosophy of eighteenth-century economic imperialism. (Elliott, *FR*, 405)

Most likely, and most fitting, the temporary loss of el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega and the *Royal Commentaries of the Incas* in English literature is due to multiple reasons that are complex and even contradictory...just like the author and his work themselves.

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