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Translation of Selections from Pedro de Quiroga's *Coloquios de la verdad* [Colloquies of Truth]

[Presented here for the first time in English are selections from Pedro de Quiroga's *Coloquios de la verdad*, a vital complement to Buenaventura de Salinas y Córdova's 1630 *Memorial*: see pp. 107–13 of *Who Will Speak the Truth?* Quiroga's literary text possibly influenced Salinas's *Memorial*. More important, the *Coloquios* stands as a remarkable activist effort in its own right that deserves a broader audience.

Quiroga was a Spanish priest who spent many years in Peru and wrote the *Coloquios* sometime in the late 1560s. The text remained unpublished until the twentieth century. Fictional dialogues, the *Coloquios* aim—as their title states—to present the truth of the Peruvian colonial situation. They do so through a virtuoso interplay of colonialist and anti-colonialist voices. However, the strident, denunciatory voice of the Indigenous Tito, a descendant of the Incas who represents all the Indians of Peru, predominates and prevails. In the footsteps of famed reformer Bartolomé de Las Casas and under the cloak of fiction, Tito dares to deliver unfettered condemnations of Spanish colonialism, geared to his time and place.

From the four dialogues of the lengthy *Coloquios*, I have translated sections that sharply convey Tito's grievances and often resonate uncannily with Salinas's *Memorial*. After the preliminary material, the translated portions derive from Quiroga's hard-hitting Second Colloquy. There, Spaniards Barquilón, a longtime missionary to Peru, and Justino, a racist, wealth-hungry newcomer from the Metropolis, come upon an anguished Tito, on the brink of committing suicide. They urge him to desist and to tell them his story. In our selection, Tito begins by recounting in a somewhat picaresque manner his early life and awakening to

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Christianity. He proceeds to air his complaints against the colonizers with increasing vehemence and specificity. Tito frames trenchant contrasts between lawful Inca rule, derailed Spanish attempts at just governance of the New World, and the horrors that reign in his Peru. Among many topics, he subjects the colonizers' abuses of so-called personal service (tribute labor and payments levied on Indigenous New World peoples), *mitayos* (Andean Natives conscripted into corvée labor), and women to scathing criticism.

For maximum impact, Quiroga's characters speak plainly and expressively, in a conversational, colloquial vein of sixteenth-century literary Spanish peppered with light wordplay and occasionally mixed with authentic Quechua. Topics that Salinas addresses in his dramatic, erudite mode and language here appear stripped down—un-Baroqued, as it were—and akin to the vivacious tone of Desiderius Erasmus's sixteenth-century colloquies. Although Quiroga composes the long sentences that were practically inevitable in early modern Spanish and does not divide his manuscript into paragraphs, the *Coloquios* still comes across as dynamic and direct. My translation therefore not only endeavors to maintain Quiroga's verbal register, it also often breaks up sentences and, throughout, divides the text into paragraphs according to the logic of the narrative. Please note that, remaining faithful to Quiroga's nomenclature, I render "indio" as "Indian."

The translation that follows draws on two published editions of the *Coloquios*: that of Julián Zarco Cuevas, published in Sevilla in 1922 (Tip. Zarzuela); and the extensive scholarly edition by Ana Vian Herrero published in 2009 as *El indio dividido: Fracturas de conciencia en el Perú colonial. Edición critica y estudio de los* Coloquios de la verdad *de Pedro de Quiroga* (Iberoamericana-Vervuet). Both texts are available online. Zarco Cuevas's edition can be accessed at https://dokumen.pub/el-indio-dividido-fracturas-de-conciencia-en-el-peru-colonial-9783954871711.html#, and Vian Herrero's heavily annotated edition at

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https://dokumen.pub/el-indio-dividido-fracturas-de-conciencia-en-el-peru-colonial-9783954871711.html. When there are discrepancies between the two editions, I rely on Vian Herrero's minutely punctilious, unparagraphed transcription; some paragraph divisions accord with Zarco Cuevas's. For the reader's convenience, I provide page references for each translated portion of Quiroga's text from both editions, with numbers referring to the printed texts rather than to the online thumbnails.]

📖 TITLE PAGE and CONTENTS:

[*Herrero, 331–32; Zarco Cuevas, 37–38*]

THE COLLOQUIES OF TRUTH

Book entitled THE COLLOQUIES OF TRUTH, which deals with the circumstances and the obstacles that hinder the Christian instruction and conversion of the Indians of the Kingdom of Peru. It further deals with the expedition into and conquest of that kingdom, the harm and evils and injuries that the Indians suffer, and the present state of the justice and Christian instruction administered to them. Written by a priest who lived in those realms. Addressed to the Most Illustrious Doctor Gaspar de Quiroga, President of the Royal Council of Italy, member of His Majesty's Royal Council and of the Holy and General Inquisition, etc.

This book contains four Colloquies, as follows:

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1. The first Colloquy deals with the Spanish conquest and invasion of the Peruvian Kingdom; Barquilón advises Justino on how to conduct himself there as well as on other necessary matters.

2. The second Colloquy deals with the harm and injuries that the Indians of Peru have suffered and continue to suffer from the Spaniards who have invaded their lands and settled there, the justice they administer, the tyranny the Indians endure at the hands of their caciques and native lords, and the Indians' old customs and present way of life.

3. The third Colloquy deals with a bush or the leaf of a small tree called coca and its uses, how it is cultivated and how it grows, the harm it does in that land, and its qualities, effects, and taste. This is an important subject.

4. The fourth Colloquy deals with the Christian instruction and conversion of the Indians, the circumstances that hinder the success of these efforts, the present state of instruction, what we know of the Indians' Christianity, and how they should be taught. This is a subject that needs to be understood.

SELECTED PORTIONS of the SECOND COLLOQUY:

📖 [*Herrero 369; Zarco Cuevas 55*]

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Summary of the second Colloquy, in which Tito, an Indian born in Cusco and representing all the Indians of Peru, discusses and complains of the excessive abuse, evils, and harm they have suffered and continue to suffer from the Spaniards who invaded their lands and settled there. Tito, Cayo, Indians, Barquilón, and Justino appear in the Colloquy.

📖 [*Herrero 386–406; Zarco Cuevas 60–71*]

TITO: [You have asked me to tell you] why I so willingly sought death. If you promise to grant what I will beseech you with a pious heart, in the hope of rousing sympathy for my sad fortune, I will do so—although to explain the reasons for my actions I would have raise ancient Rome's most celebrated orator from the grave, for only his eloquence could give them their proper value and rightful place. You will have read in the acts of King David what happened when he arrived at Ziklag and found it pillaged and burned, the Amalekites having laid siege to the city and taken all its people captive. When David pursued the Amalekite thieves who had pillaged the city, on the road he found one of their servants, an Egyptian so sick and weak that he was on the brink of death. David asked the man what had happened in the city and beseeched the Egyptian to lead him to the thieves. The man replied that he would do so if David swore an oath not to kill him or deliver him to the master who had abandoned him.

You will need to make the same promise to me if you want the answers to your questions. First and foremost, you must swear that afterward you will leave and let me

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fulfill my desire, to commit suicide. And further, that you will not deliver me to my enemies, whose secrets I intend to tell you. What I will reveal is no doubt unknown to you and all the other Spaniards but of great importance to us and to you who rule us.

BARQUILÓN: The longer you stall, the more you whet my appetite to learn these secrets. Say whatever you wish; I swear and promise to do what you ask, if it is just and decent, for one should not promise what cannot be done, nor be bound by the promise if one makes it.

TITO: I hold my cause to be so righteous that I begin thus.

Oh, true God, creator and cause of all that is and should be, untie my tongue, strengthen my understanding. Enable me to express what I hold inside so that matters as necessary and rife as those of which I speak will no longer be buried in silence!

Before all else, I want to inform you of my name and birth. My name is Tito, though I am also called Pedro. That is my Christian name, and I have more than a dozen of them, so many times have I been baptized over the course of my life, believing that the rite hardly mattered. In part, this owed to the Spaniards I have served, who paid no heed and never warned me of the error, and in part to my own cunning, in that I often denied I had ever been baptized. I am a native and citizen of Cusco, a city that flourished before you laid eyes on it, but which under you has been blighted and withered like green grass under the burning sun. I am an Inca by birth, kin to the kings who conquered and possessed these realms, people as esteemed and feared by us as

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those you call knights, even though your so-called knights now affront, belittle, and abominate us for no reason—wholly inhuman actions unworthy of noble spirits like yours.

When you won the battle for this land in Cajamarca, I saw you there and thought you were gods. That is why we called you Viracocha, which means God and signifies an immortal being and the creator of all things. However, after I saw your actions I no longer considered you gods, but agents of the devil's ire and fury, a punishment and fierce scourge sent by God. In Cajamarca, I witnessed all your deeds with my own eyes, and I imagine that even you Spaniards are not capable of suppressing what happened there, the beginning of our perdition and yours. I will make short work of this because, as I say, surely your histories will tell the story and revile your cruelty; no doubt you attacked and defeated us with vigor and zeal, but I will say no more because it is still so raw.

Although I am an Indian, my nature tends toward the lofty and noble. So I approached one of your captains, a well-bred, brave Spaniard, and asked him to save me from your fury and from the death that many thousands of Indians had suffered that day. Refusing to lower myself to curry combs and horses, convinced that I deserved a more noble job than others in the same situation who had been my servants and vassals, I stayed on as his attendant for quite a while. But you began to treat us Indians, of good character or not, with such contempt that you put a price on everyone's head and measured us all by the same yardstick.

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As soon as you Spaniards had the country under control and at peace, I decided to try my luck elsewhere. I began to serve another soldier, less worthy than the first one. When your civil wars broke out shortly after, I quickly learned your language, that is, how to behave as you did in the wars. I therefore became a first-class raider, or to put it plainly, a thief; whichever word you use, the meaning is the same. So masterfully did I rob and pillage the Indians that my master loved me and others, too, sung my praises and desired my services. Around this time, my eyes began to open and I realized that although you are a wise, brave, and warlike people, who have a God and a holy, good religion, you brazenly do the opposite of what you counsel us. This astonished me, because the only way to win disciples is to practice what one preaches, no more or less.

I finally grew sick and tired of this bad, hard life; when all is said and done, every bad deed sickens us and brings disgust and confusion. So I left the wars behind and settled down with a merchant. His life and calling struck me as more stable and possibly less harmful to Indians, though I am still not sure whether his dealings were legal. This man was the first to speak to me of your God, and of my becoming a Christian and adopting your religion. He taught me basic doctrine and instructed me in spiritual matters, although confusedly and briefly, since he lacked the knowledge or tools to do more. Thus was I baptized and did I receive the holy faith of Jesus Christ, with no idea of what either meant. I had committed myself to what no one had explained, the Law of God, and I broke it for many years, more out of ignorance than malice.

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With just the little ray of light the merchant had given me, I started to forge a new path, and, as the Book of Wisdom says, *optavi et datus est mihi sensus* [I wished and understanding was given me]. Indeed, I desired to learn—not what I should avoid, but what it truly takes to be a man. To this end, God sent me a better master than I ever could have asked for or imagined, the type of man you call a hermit because he chose to dress in the poorest clothes and scorned everything you love and seek. He led a holy life, a devout life; he feared God and only aspired to earn his place in heaven. Thanks to him, I came to realize that not all of you are bad and, contrary to what I had believed, you people can do something other than wreak havoc. This good man abhorred your evil deeds, and he wept plaintive tears for the harm you do us. Wherever he saw my people suffering, he would offer consolation, saying that God would take pity on us and cease His punishments as soon as we called to Him and desired to know and serve Him. So good and just was this man, so much did he do for the natives of this wretched kingdom in word and deed that, to my sorrow, you disdained and persecuted him.

In any case, seeing my apt will and inclination, he began to show me the true path and instruct me in the holy faith of Christ. He fed my soul a banquet of teachings more delectable than anything I had ever tasted or even knew that mankind had the ability to create. My master and his teachings were one in the same, both totally infused with caritas and the love of God and one's fellow man; I cannot think of him without shedding tears of longing for his presence and mourning for his death. This world was not worthy of such a man, so God called him to His side.

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However, wicked person that I was, I left my master before he died. The life he preached seemed much too prudent and sensible for someone like me, accustomed to thieving and other acts of injury and evil that others had allowed and even taught me to commit. Bad, perverted beginnings are so harmful that they lead one to reject good and virtue in any shape or form. Yet my master's teachings remained engraved on my soul, for I never could abandon them completely, and I never can. Nor have I lost the ability to read, another gift I owe to him, which has brought me much light and clarity.

Encouraged by the caritas my master had shown me, after experiencing many turns that fortune sent my way, I turned to other priests and holy men. They treated me with goodwill and gave me good counsel and religious instruction, also strengthening my ability to read and write, as I very much desired.

I was struck with a great longing to see Spain, the land you praise and glorify. Fortunately, I happened on some men who were leaving for there from Peru, and they took me with them. I arrived in Spain and saw your land, which you have every right to praise. I came to know the frenzy and unbridled greed that drive you Spaniards to endure so many travails, dangers, and seas. For my part, I felt so much more like a man among men in Spain that I found myself saying that your country breeds men, and ours irrational animals in the shape of men. I saw your—and our—king. I had to see him with my own eyes to believe that such majesty could exist outside of heaven. How right you are to take pride in him and to say that the whole world should have a lord like him. Back at home, I had thought that you Spaniards went in search of new lands to take over and live in because you were poor and Spain lacked basic resources. But now

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that I have seen your country, I realize that, compared to mine, it looks like heaven or the promised land.

I repeat that it is a great folly for you to exchange the good for the far less good. I saw the order and concert of your cities and states, and I was shocked at how you shed that civility here. Either you are not true Spaniards or true sons of its sons, or your minds have become unhinged. The only genuinely Spanish thing left in you is your language; everything else is corrupted. Fine transplants you have turned out to be, trees whose fruit has changed its nature and gone sour.

To finish my story, I will say that at last my homeland called to me, and I resolved to return to my country and place of birth. That is what I did, and time has shown what a grave mistake I made. I came back to the land I call home only to find that it is no longer mine or my home. Reunited with my family, I intended to preach the Holy Gospel to them and win them over to its truth. Alas, just the opposite happened. They won me back to the ancient rites and sins that are theirs and used to be mine. Such is the power of corrupt customs and the force of sinning.

Now I have told you my life and travails; do not ask for more. I earnestly beseech you to leave as you promised and to leave me in peace, for you cannot understand my pain, let alone do anything to cure it.

BARQUILÓN: Truly grievous are the pain and harm that no human effort can cure. But what is this pain you make so much of? How troublesome you are, Tito, beating around the bush like this. Enough now, tell me what I want to know, stop trying my patience.

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Be assured that I will be as glad to know what you are hiding so carefully as I was to hear the story of your life, though I suspect that your reason for killing yourself will be as trivial as all the others that drive you Indians to commit this terrible act.

TITO: I see that I cannot escape you, as you are even more troublesome than you say I am. So I will do as you wish and then ask you at last to keep your word and fulfill your promise to me.

BARQUILÓN: Speak now, Tito, and know that I am astonished by your skill and eloquence in Spanish. You speak our language as if it were your own, although given what you have said of your life, that is not entirely remarkable. But how stealthily you move among us, dressed like all the other Indians! Who would know you are any different from them?

TITO: How mistaken you are about us in this and other more important things! Is it possible that you Spaniards, cautious and private as you are, do not realize that you are surrounded by Hispanicized Indians [*Indios ladinos*] who understand you better than if you were speaking their own language? And who are listening to and watching everything you say and do? Our leaders are clever; to tell you the truth, they have guards keeping watch over people in all the villages of their assigned allotments [*repartimientos*]. No matter how secretly you speak, in a few hours, without you perceiving it or having the faintest idea, the guards will have informed their lords and

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caciques of everything you said, did, or even dreamed. Would to God, Christians, that you understood us as well as we understand you. However, so as not to disrupt or shame you, we keep your evil deeds under wraps, pretending we have not seen them.

There is another important piece to this matter, namely that you say and do all manner of shameful things in the company of an Indian, as if he were a beast or not truly a man; his presence does not abash you in the least. Do you think he does not perceive it or understand you? Well, the Indian who is intelligent enough to keep your shame under wraps is much more of a man than all of you who commit evil acts. Do you realize what is behind all this? I will tell you. Your whole design is to see us as beasts who can neither hear nor understand, so that even more shamelessly you can do whatever satisfies your wanton desires. Indeed, you have made it perfectly clear that you disdain and abhor any Indian who strikes you as intelligent and of good judgment, because you fear that precisely he will condemn your actions. But we are a captive and defeated people, which is why we remain silent and swallow our misfortune.

Ah, it seems that what I have said has raised your hackles and you want to cut me short. Well . . . be silent and swallow it. If you want to be cured, do not interrupt me, for these are matters central to your questions and my grievances.

Are you honestly shocked that I want to end my life, or are you just pretending to be? Well, listen and learn. To tell the truth, when you first invaded this land and we saw your ways and our captivity, we all swore to fight to the death so as not to live under such harsh subjection. We also proposed to stop having relations with our wives so as not to breed more slaves for you. However, regarding the first, we lacked the

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courage and leadership, and regarding the second, we were unable to contain ourselves, and the demands of the flesh won out.

I know that what I am going to tell you about yourselves could put my life at risk, but whatever life you may grant me is not worth living without the freedom that other men enjoy.

What are you doing, Christians? Is there no limit to your audacity? How far will your arrogance take you? The more we silence and swallow, the more furiously you sow disorder. Just finish finishing us off once and for all and take the land for yourselves, because life under you is worse than death. Grave indeed must our sins be in the eyes of God, not because He sent us a punishment but because He delivered us into your hands, for I believe that no nation on earth would treat us as you have. Mark what I say, and if you do not believe me, I beseech you to read and give their due to all the accounts in Sacred and human histories of the rises and falls of kingdoms and of bondage. You will not find any bondage greater or more terrible than that which this kingdom has suffered and endured. And if you should find a rough equivalent, remember that it was perpetrated by pagan and barbarous peoples. But you are Christians, and how can your God suffer the affronts you have committed under the pretext of your religion?

As for me, I assure you that I will not endure your offenses, for I intend to escape from you—not with my feet but fighting with my bare hands, even if it means leaving my life in your claws. Still, I am greatly pained by the cries, wails, and complaints rising

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daily against you from this land and storming the heavens. Can you not awaken from this deep, malignant sleep?

The cloak you wear to cover the evils you do us, and the staff on which you lean, is that you are freeing us from the tyranny of the Inca Kings, a Godless, lawless people. Therefore, you ask us why we are complaining. But would to God that golden age were still with us. It truly seems that you have no understanding of what we are suffering now nor any idea what we lost in losing what you took from us. Some of you say these things about the Inca Kings out of ignorance, because you know nothing about our past; others say them out of malice, taking pleasure in our present misfortune. Yet both sides speak with the wrath and abhorrence you have had toward us from the very start. Woe unto the kingdom and land whose ruler bears wrath toward the people he governs, for that kingdom will soon fall and come to a sad end. I confess to you that the Inca Kings were tyrants, for who can deny it, and that they treated us tyrannically, but, as I have said, they were pagans and barbarians. If they had possessed your knowledge, perhaps they would have acted differently.

BARQUILÓN: Come now, do you really mean to defend something as thoroughly condemned as Inca rule and the way they treated you?

TITO: No. But I do mean to keep on talking without you interrupting me. Let me speak and you will hear, to the letter, what they did and what you are doing. Then you can be the judge, for I wish no other.

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I trust you know that we were ruled by a king whose word and commands were our laws, few in number but known by all and valuable to our preservation. How can you believe that we had no laws? How else could the Incas have ruled as many lands and diverse peoples as they did? I grant that some of their laws were barbarous and cruel, but everyone knew and obeyed them. Thanks to the Inca rule, in short, when you arrived here you found a secure land teeming with people, which would be impossible without good laws. Now look what you did. In one fell swoop, you took away our king and the laws that preserved us. And you have been so remiss that you still have not given us laws, divine or human—neither for the salvation of our souls nor even for a well-ordered civic life or our preservation.

Oh Christians, if you only knew what tyranny reigns among us Indians, how we rob and affront one another, the murders we commit, the violence that runs rampant, with no law, punishment, or justice to obstruct it! And the things I could tell you about the tyranny of our own caciques, the way they treat us when there is no Inca or king to hold them accountable. But I will just touch on that subject now and tell you more later, amid tears. Woe unto you, for it is all on your shoulders! You may have released us from a bad and tyrannical king, our Inca, yet in every village, no matter how small, you have placed one or two or even more caciques, evil, barbarous men who rob and destroy us. They would not have dared to do so in the time of the Incas, whose justice was strong enough to keep such evil men in check.

For heaven's sake, Christians, you have got to understand us. Do you have any idea what is happening? The Indians of this kingdom have realized that you do not

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understand them and never will. That being the case, they have taken to living like wild animals. But consider this, Spaniards, we are not wild animals; we are your flock, who now bear your brand and mark. Govern us, give us justice, consider well the burden that rests upon you.

None of the evils I have just mentioned occurred under the Inca Kings, and in fact no commoner or cacique would have dared to even think of committing them. The crimes they did commit were made public and punished severely, indeed brutally. I have often wondered what sort of people you, our rulers, are. In certain areas I find you so astute that we Indians can hardly believe it. But in others you are so remiss and inept that I am shocked. I do understand why you act this way. Whenever something fails to serve your self-interest, you let it fall by the wayside with no remorse for its ruin. But what can you be thinking? If you only intended to lay waste to this country rather than stay here, you would have returned home as soon as you had filled your hands with all that your hearts desired, left us to ourselves, and kept us from ending up more barbarous than we were before. But if you intend and want to live in these realms, then govern, protect, and preserve us.

We only hear the name of our new King; to our great misfortune, we never see his face. Why are you blaming him for our problems when you are the ones to blame? He is just one person and can only be in one place at a time. The king bears a heavy burden, and it is understood that he has no choice but to rely on others to command and rule. Oh, the false testimonies you present here and the evil you do, saying that the king commands and wills it, when in fact he wants just the opposite. Can you imagine

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what would happen if you actually did what he wants, instead of what you want, as you do? The king can no longer remedy your evil deeds because you employ the devious tactics of appealing and contesting any decree issued in Spain and here that supports or benefits the natives of this kingdom, lodging protests so harsh that they border on treason. Obey the decrees, you warn, and the country will be lost to us. In sum, you thwart any remedy and, worse yet, you get your way.

How can anyone understand you, Christians, who lead the king astray with your false reports and importunate requests? And when someone comes to govern, you place a thousand lures and a thousand obstacles and difficulties in his path to make him do what you want. You obviously employ all your devious tactics to pressure rulers into allowing gross injustices. Then there are the reports you submit to the king, so slanted to your own purposes and self-interests, with no two of you offering the same account of what is happening here. I am astonished that he has the patience to hear you out. How can lying to the king possibly be tolerated and go unpunished when the person who dares to lie knows the truth of the situation, and especially when matters as important as peoples' lives and the governance of these realms are at stake? Lying to one's sovereign is treason, and the more important the situation, the greater the betrayal.

Amongst yourselves, you have evidently made a rule that forbids anyone from daring to tell the king the truth about all matters that serve his interests in this land and protect and preserve the lives of its native peoples. If someone breaks the rule, he incurs your displeasure, and you publicly brand him insane. You scheme to keep His Majesty

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from seeing or believing him; you strip him of honor and deny him friendship; you say that he is blinded by passion and out for revenge, or accuse him of hypocrisy, as supported by false testimonies. When all else fails, you bribe and corrupt him. Thus, no one dares to speak honestly, and you have worn out and greatly distressed the king with your affairs, which are so intricate and convoluted that no one except you, scheming back here, can make sense of them. You bring your king more vexation and troubles than gain, and I would dare to suggest that for the sake of everyone's conscience it might have been better for you never to have discovered this land, so tangled are its affairs.

How proud you are, how you congratulate yourselves on your good fortune, and how you aggrandize your victories, saying that each of you vanquished a thousand of us—as if you had done something worth boasting about, as if we had put up any resistance. God frightened us off without our knowing why or from whom we were fleeing. If you want to know the reason, you will find it precisely in Deuteronomy, which says: *Quomodo persequebatur unus mille et duo fugarent decem millia?; non ne ideo quia Deus suus vendidit eos etc.?* [How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their God had sold them . . .?] According to your version, which gives you and your good fortune all the credit, our evil rogue of a god, who had deceived us so greatly, sold us out and delivered us into your hands to bring about our downfall and the end of our empire.

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JUSTINO: Why are you silent, Barquilón? Why do you not respond to this Indian who is running amok and insulting everyone? If you, who know this land very well, admit defeat, a newcomer like me might as well give up without a fight.

But know, my friend Tito who knows so much, that God's wrath is only provoked and He only sends punishment when humans sin. God delivered you into our hands because of your evil deeds and idol worship, sins too filthy and abominable for earth or heaven to bear any longer. So extensive and enormous were they that no form of vice or sin that mankind has ever invented would fail to find its model in you and your land. That is how wicked you were.

📖 [*Herrero 437–46; Zarco Cuevas 85–89*]

TITO: I must warn you that in certain ways you oppress us more than those barbarians [the Inca Kings] ever did. If you revere and fear this God you keep telling us about, know that we will bring our complaints against you to Him, for although you silence our mouths, our hearts are free to cry out to the heavens, and God, who understands our affliction, will hear us no matter what.

Is it not enough that, as your vassals, we willingly serve you? Why do you demand new tribute payments that no God-fearing people has ever required or invented? Who else, besides tyrants and barbarians like our Inca Kings, invented personal service and so-called *mitayos*? Who bridled and broke men to make them carry loads by force and without pay, if not those same barbarians? Who else, besides the

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Incas, made it a law of this land that no one should have anything they could call their own? Well then, why do you people, who call yourselves civilized beings and Christians, do all this and even worse?

You have acquired such a taste for what you call personal service that you value it over tribute payments, not because it is more important or of greater profit but because of the hold it gives you over us. There we are, right at hand for you to martyr continuously, in an effort to make us esteem and worship you. You shed more blood over this personal service than you did in conquering our land. You are willing to part with your lives and property, but not with the service of the Indians, which you relish tremendously and cannot bring yourselves to give up. And how arrogantly you savor the words "my villages, my caciques," as if you were talking about a herd of cattle! Yet you do not misspeak, for they are all yours, and you do as you please with our lives and property.

Oh, God! Why do you sleep? Why do you not turn your face toward a people so unjustly disgraced and downtrodden? And Christians, what do you think the Indians are saying to you when they say "*O apo, o viracocha, o señor*," and repeat this "O" a hundred thousand times, as if they are they are praising and honoring you? If you only knew that by this "O" they really mean, "Oh, if only we had never met you, Christians; oh, how evil you are; oh, the evil you do us; oh, if only we had never set eyes on you; oh, if only you had killed us once and for all; oh, mercy, gods of ours, who used to favor and protect us!"

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I will move quickly through these matters and discuss them in general terms because to relate the details of such a model of cruelty would prove impossible and cause unbearable sorrow.

You drag us along roads, loaded down like beasts yet treated far worse than animals. For I have seen that when your animals reach an inn, you give them food and drink and even a bed, together with other care and comforts to keep them alive; when they are injured or ill, you heal them; you measure and weigh the load you place on them so that they are not crippled or killed. But when it comes to us, of lesser value in your eyes than the animals, you load us down, and with beatings and lashings force us to haul whatever your Black overseers command. So heavy are our burdens and so long the roads that we are dying on them, cursing the day we were born and begging death to rescue us from such great misfortune.

To this cruelty you add one that can hardly be believed, though it is real and true. Namely, you force women, upon whose natural frailty all other men have mercy, to haul heavy loads like beasts of burden, even while they are nursing or about to give birth. You show no pity for and grant no exceptions to women who are old or weak. Only hearts like yours could tolerate such a thing.

You say that you pay us for our work, but what payment could possibly compensate for the violence and harm to which we have been subjected? Turn your sights to yourselves or other peoples, and see if anyone else has tolerated the like. Granted, you pay us, but so little that it is practically useless, and our tyrannical caciques rob us of even that small sum. In addition to the abuse we suffer from you,

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they line their pockets from our labor, consume us, destroy us, and hire us out like beasts of burden because they see that you allow it. You also say that we have been hauling loads since ancient times and that you did not invent this custom. You are right, but this cruelty arose from the violence and tyranny of our Inca Kings, not from our own will. Further, necessity led us to haul our provisions from the fields to our homes, and anyone else lacking beasts of burden as we did would have arrived at the same solution.

Be that as it may, what does all this have to do with how you are treating us now? Yes, we did haul loads back then, but by our own will and to meet our own needs and dealings. And if we did so for our kings, it was because they were barbarians and tyrants who imposed this violence on us, as I have said. You, who are Christians, should not do the same. Rather, you should abandon and abolish every tyrannical, inhumane custom and law and not insist that because we did these things for the Incas, we must do them now.

We still have lands that are home to everything we rightly or wrongly call our own, but even there you do not let us live in peace or enjoy what is ours. No matter how harsh and rough the land of our villages may be, even if we live in the world's most inhospitable place, you are there to torment us, or you send others to do it for you. In fact, nowhere is safe from you, any more than from death.

Saying that it is for our benefit, you have placed your servant, or friend, or acquaintance, or relative in our lands. Who can recount the evil deeds these men commit with your support? Not I, because no one would believe me. We must bow and

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scrape to your man. He steals our property, forces us to serve him like slaves, violates our daughters and wives, and gives us a hundred thousand beatings. We have to suffer this behavior because you want and allow it, just so he can steal for you. And if we complain to you, we come away empty-handed, with nothing more than a good kick for a remedy.

You leave no forest or woods on our lands standing. You even make us cut down our own trees and haul them away on our backs.

We Indians all think that our assigned allotment belongs wholly to us, from the sky to the land to the entire horizon. Yet you take over our homes and walls, building your own houses with no limits or payment. When lands or fields in the allotments catch your eye, you set your sights on them and lay your hands on them. Or when you see good lands or a good site for a ranch or other profitable enterprise, you pull out Adam's last will and testament and claim that by lawful title the place belongs to you. Oh, how many sorrowful Indians look upon and mourn the lands and possessions that belonged to them or their ancestors, which you have seized and enjoy while they, barely clothed, die of hunger and poverty! And still they dare not ask you for anything that is rightfully theirs, not even a loaf of bread. What law allows such a thing? Has any nation behaved worse than yours? If you have no pity for us, at least have some compassion for yourselves and consider how severely God is punishing you for these evil deeds and the many others you have inflicted on us.

Begin by regarding and taking stock of the first men you sent to rule this land. Note how woefully their glory ended, how fruitless their plans were, and how

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completely the memory of them has faded, as if they had never walked the earth. Then consider the men who invaded this realm with them. What a miserable end most of them have met, for every possible manner of cruel, disgraceful death has been visited upon them. The land that for no reason whatsoever you soaked with the innocent blood of these Indians has now been soaked with your own; you are paying an eye for an eye. And whereas you hate us for no reason, now you are hated for good reasons. When you quit this country, or when you dare to stay, you are branded evil and abhorred, because God suffers you to reap what you sow.

Everyone takes these riches of yours for dreams and fiction, fantasies created by imps or hobgoblins and destined to vanish into thin air. If some men enjoy their wealth, seemingly in peace, mark that God has willed it and pays His debts. Knowing that sinners will be lost and condemned to eternal punishment, He rewards such men with the long and wealthy earthly life that they desire in payment for whatever good deeds they have committed. Yet how can I speak of their deaths? Who can do so without being overcome with pity for the horrendous, terrible deaths these men suffer? How blithely the hapless sinners march into hell, and I doubt that even there they perceive or concede the evil and harm they have done us. They cling so stubbornly to their plunder that no mortal could set them on the right path, and even in death they refuse to change course. But this is the will of God and His justice, to force them to pay for their sins. In short, I tell you that if you want to know what kind of life these men have actually lived, await them at the end of their path. Like migrating cranes, they will follow an unfailing path, and their death will reveal their lives.

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You call us Indians barbarians and say that we are a people with no law or God, that being born and dying are the only laws we know. I am wondering what would happen if you Spaniards were actual barbarians, that is, if you did not have a God and a Christian king. What would become of us? What would you do to us? After all, despite your just laws and just king, look what you have done. Certainly you would be utter monsters, though you are already little better than wild beasts. Tell me, how can you not be moved by the scourges that God metes out to you? How can you not see that God is sending you plagues and pestilence? You are murdering one another, tearing yourselves apart in civil wars, all under the cloak of righteousness to save these Indians whom you profess to love devoutly, just like you love the pigs you fatten up to slaughter for St. Martin's Day feasts.

But you understand none of this. Well then, know that stolen goods can never be consumed or enjoyed in peace. Or perhaps you want to change the ways of the world, which dictate that ill-gotten gains destroy themselves and their owners? Go ahead and have your fill, satisfy your desires, do whatever you wish. You will pay for it, and God will take vengeance on you for us. You too will suffer oppression; you will drink from the bitter cup that you force on us daily. Since yours is a just God, He will render justice for the many evils you make us suffer.

As I see it, there is one crucial matter for which you are to blame—only you, not others or your king. I mean that over there, in Spain, your king never ceases to command and issue decrees that provide for our good treatment and ease our tribute

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payments and labor. But with the king being so conveniently far away, you employ your diabolical tactics to oppose every measure.

📖 [*Herrero 462–65; Zarco Cuevas 98–99*]

If you want to understand, you will concede that, as I am saying, our lives are now more brutal than they were under the Incas. Mark that we call out to God with immense anguish, watering the fields with tears as we work; from our beds and hiding places, we send God a million cries against you. Be assured that God does not sleep, that He listens to what we say and always will, either to save us or punish you.

You have turned your spears into hoes, and all your weapons into plows and plowshares. How confident and presumptuous you are, or foolishly careless. Be warned and beware that the Indians of this land are not so careless. Rather, they all have a great number of weapons, both their own and yours. They are already skilled archers, and they have learned to use your weapons. You are so beguiled by your own deals and affairs that you fail to recognize the danger. And you cannot trust the old men who first conquered this land to be trustworthy guides for the present, because that moment has passed, and passed away like a dream. The mightiest army that could be mounted against you now would have your sins as its soldiers; your worst enemy is your own God and your evil deeds. Mark that you are misusing the good fortune and luck that is yours in possessing this land. Remember that the God who delivered it into your hands has the power to take it away with a sweep of His arm. Either live righteously or guard

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your lives. The greatest safety lies in living a just life; the unjust man lives on guard, finding safety only in his spear.

Valencia and Granada are the most noble of cities, renowned in that Spain of yours, but even there people live with far more caution than they did under the Moors. Your lack of caution in this matter is remarkable. One sees Spaniards traveling through the countryside and roads here without a care or a weapon, armed with nothing more than a small stick. Meanwhile, Indians roam about loaded with arrows, shields, and spears, and they have as many weapons as they could want back in their houses. Do you think you are at home? Mind you, these people here are furtive, restive, and vindictive, and the more fearful they are, the more cruel and expeditious their actions. You have aggrieved them; they suffer from idleness and vices, which summon and beget wicked license.

The Incas, who knew their people well and ruled them for so many years, never felt safe; they were always suspicious and wary of the populace. When the natives of this land entered Cusco or the royal court to bring the Inca King tribute payments and gifts, inspectors at the gates and mountain passes searched them, even stripping them bare to see if they had weapons. If weapons were found, the offenders and four generations of their descendants were severely punished for committing treason, or even executed. After wars ended, the Incas stored their weapons in the armories of garrisons. No one, except relatives of the king and eminent military leaders, could keep weapons at home or bear arms publicly or privately.

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But you allow the Indians, whom you neither know nor understand, to have their fill of weapons, as if no harm could come of it, or as if you were in your own country and among your own people. Aim for what is best and you will find what is right. You have disarmed the Spaniards in this country to achieve goals that, if you consider them well, could be accomplished less dangerously. But you think you have made such a wise decision that you have nothing to fear. I am no longer amazed that you bungle everything related to us, for you cannot even handle your own crucial affairs. Your God must truly be great, since He upholds and bears with you. He must have great love for you, since He watches over and protects you almost miraculously. Well, believe what I say and do not expect God to send miracles when you can manage affairs on your own.

Be wary, and guard your lives against these people, who are your enemies for all the reasons and causes that you have given them. The desire for freedom in itself would be enough to move the spirits of these men, let alone the weight of the yoke you have placed on them and the ill-treatment to which you have subjected them. You reassure yourselves by saying that this servitude is well established and we are hardened to it—but you are wrong. Human malice is ever vigilant, always awaiting its moment. No slave on earth, however well treated, does not long for freedom and try to obtain it. You are far too confident, and may God grant that your confidence not be entirely misplaced nor make complete fools of you.

[END OF THE SECOND COLLOQUY]