Writing Violence on the Northern Frontier

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY NEW MEXICO AND FLORIDA AND THE LEGACY OF CONQUEST

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CHAPTER 5

"Porque soy indio": Subjectivity in Garcilaso's *La Florida del Inca*

Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's positioning as an Indian writing in the context of the metropolis calls to mind the "author functions" that colonial subjects could assume in sixteenth-century European historiography of the New World. Clearly, Garcilaso's marginality was inseparable from European ascendancy. To understand the former, we must define the type of subjectivity that underlies Western dominance. As a result, in what follows I move back and forth between the institution of the modern Western episteme and the subjection of indigenous knowledges. In principle, there is no place for an Indian author (i.e., one who writes from the standpoint of an Indian) within a colonial discourse that claims universality for its subjectivity and its history.[1] "The West," "the Western episteme," "Western dominance," and the like are terms that here refer to an always shifting field that defines the legitimacy and rationality, hence the limits, of acceptable contending discourses, rather than a homogeneous entity. For stylistic reasons I avoid a plural form, the "Wests." The "West" may ultimately be understood as *modernity* (even if early) and as the historical horizon that circumscribes both hegemonic and alternative discourses, the cultural space where the *now* is contested.

These are the conditions of representation in which Garcilaso wrote *La Florida*. Indeed, these conditions are decodified in *La Florida*. The quasi-utterance "Porque soy indio" [Because I am an Indian], which, as we will see, constitutes a motif in the work of Garcilaso, places him outside European discourse; it also marks the direction of Garcilaso's "voyage" as the reverse of that taken by Europeans writing about the New World and its corresponding subjectivity as marginal. In this regard, it is highly revealing that Garcilaso always positioned himself as a nonauthor, namely, as the

translator of León Hebreo's *Diálogos de Amor,* as the amanuensis of *La Florida del Inca,* and as the glosser and commentator of the *Comentarios reales de los Incas.* These writing practices situated Garcilaso either at the borders or on the margins of discourse. Undoubtedly, writing from the borders and margins paralleled his illegitimacy as a bastard, a mestizo, and an Indian. As Susana Jákfalvi-Leiva (to whom I owe a great deal of what I have to say on Garcilaso's marginality) has stated, "No había ninguna clase en esa estructura que pudiera asimilar como a elemento propio a un indio, mestizo y bastardo" [There was no class in that structure that could assimilate an Indian, mestizo, and bastard as one of its own] (1984: 35).[2] To borrow Abdul JanMohamed and David Lloyd's phrase, we should read Garcilaso as a "minority intellectual," that is, as a border intellectual—a hybrid subjectivity—who had to "begin from a position of non-identity" (1990: 15). Garcilaso was demonstrably capable of appropriating European forms of discourse, but the very borderline social status that would never allow him to cross over and become a Spaniard was also what made him unique in Spanish American letters. Rare has been the Spanish American writer who has identified himself or herself as an Indian and even rarer he or she who has aspired to become an Indian author. One can certainly claim to find the beginnings of a Spanish American tradition in Garcilaso's mastery of Spanish and European culture; however, such a claim should no be advanced at the expense of other border intellectuals who express themselves through indigenous languages or whose mastery (i.e., appropriation) of Western conventions is less apparent.[3] I am not arguing here for what some feminist critics call an "add-and-stir" approach to the canon, but rather for a redefinition of the politics and poetics of canonicity. Merely incorporating those writers who have been excluded from the canon would amount to simply domesticating them along with Garcilaso.

The issue of an alternative authorship and subjectivity in Garcilaso implies questioning the generally accepted notion among poststructuralist critics of "the death of the author." In very broad terms, these critics argue that the concept of the author as originator becomes useless once we understand, as Roland Barthes put it, "that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-directional

space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (1977: 146). Feminist critic Cheryl Walker, however, has pointed out that questioning the death of the author does not necessarily mean returning to some sort of (patriarchal-)author criticism that would posit an individual as origin of a text; yet "writing is not [as Barthes would have us believe] 'the destruction of every voice' but *the proliferation of possibilities of hearing*" (1990: 568; emphasis in original). Walker goes on to point out that Foucault's concept of the "author function," despite positing what he called the romantic and utopic (read oppressive) disappearance of the author, enables us to examine and apprehend cultural, historical, and gender differences in subjectivities and authorships. It is highly pertinent for us to ask, with Foucault, "What difference does it make who is speaking?"

In "What Is an Author?" Foucault outlined four characteristic traits that define the author function: "(1) The author function is linked to the juridical and institutional system that encompasses, determines, and articulates the universe of discourse; (2) it does not affect all discourses in the same way at all times and in all types of civilization; (3) it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer, but rather by a series of specific and complex operations; (4) it does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, to several subject-positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals" (1984: 113). Of these four traits, the one that interests us least in our reading of *La Florida* is the third, which is concerned with how criticism has constructed Garcilaso's identity (see, e.g., Mazzotti 1996; Cornejo Polar 1994; Wey-Gómez 1991; González Echevarría 1990; Zamora 1988; Pupo-Walker 1982, 1985; Ortega 1978; Durand 1976; Miró Quesada 1971; Varner 1968). The first one will be adjunctive to our analysis insofar as we can only conjecture the extent to which the Estatutos de Limpieza de Sangre (Statutes of Blood Purity) determined Garcilaso's problematic authorship; the allusions to *limpieza de sangre, hidalguía* (literally, the condition of being the son of something, i.e., nobility), and belonging to a *nación* will be read here as figures, or rhetorical moves, rather than as signs or symptoms of the specific restrictions imposed by the Statutes of Blood Purity (cf. Shell 1991;

Caro Baroja 1961, 2: 267–96). On the other hand, traits 2 and 4 are crucial to understanding subjectivity and minority discourse in *La Florida*. The fourth trait will lead us to examine the places, and the corresponding natures, of that quasi-utterance "Porque soy indio" that I cite in the title of this chapter; the second will enable us to retrace the historical conditions that determined—and circumscribed—the possibility of Garcilaso's constituting himself as an Indian author.

Let us now sketch the nature of the subject and the object of knowledge in sixteenth-century European historiography of the Americas. Michel de Certeau, in "Ethno-graphy: Speech, or the Space of the Other: Jean de Léry" (1988: 209–43), mapped an epistemic mutation in Jean de Léry's (1975 [1578, 1580]) *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Brésil.* From Certeau's observations we can derive the premise that in the writing of the New World, Western subjectivity constituted itself as universal, and ethnography defined a set of "fields" where cultural particulars could be inscribed within general categories. As Certeau pointed out, the opposition between orality and writing was the common point of departure for ethnology in Lévi-Strauss, Ampère, and Léry. It is impossible to do justice here to the virtuosity of Certeau's observations on the emergence of ethnography—a reading of Léry in the guise of a Freudian analysis of dream work. I can only reiterate the results of his analysis.

The structural opposition between orality and writing posits a European subjectivity that not only constructs an Other, but privileges itself as knowledge through the practice of writing. This opposition was first expressed in a separation of a "here" from a "there," a break marked literally by the crossing of the Atlantic in the narrative of the transoceanic navigation. A second expression then redefined "the same" and "the Other" in terms of an "exemplary humanity" and an "exotic universe," thereby opening up a space for the translation of culture and the classification of nature. This operation entailed a third transformation, whereby the subject and the object of ethnology could be distinguished. Two planes coexist in the *Histoire:* "On the first is written the chronicle of facts and deeds by the group or by Léry. These events are narrated in a tense: a history is composed with a chronology—very detailed—of

actions undertaken or lived by a subject. On the second plane objects are set out in a space ruled not by localization or geographic routes—these indications are very rare and always vague—but by a taxonomy of living beings, a systematic inventory of philosophical questions, etc.; in sum, the catalogue raisonné of a knowledge" (Certeau 1988: 225–26). This distinction between the subject and the object of knowledge defines the conditions of representability of the *Histoire*. However, as in Freudian dream work, a sort of "secondary elaboration" reinstates a series of stable oppositions as a response to a "return of the repressed" that irrupts in the ethnographic text in the mode of eroticized speech: the primitive as a *body of pleasure*. Orality manifests a fascination that gives way to an ideal primitivism: "Facing the work of the West, that is, Western man's actions that manufacture time and reason, there exists in Léry's work a place for leisure and bliss, the Tupi world, indeed a feast for the eyes and ears" (226–27). But this world is also a *body of pleasure*, where noise, frenzy, nudity, voracity, and anthropophagy threaten the rule of law. This excess (whether in its negative or its positive valorization) leads, in turn, to a reinscription of the initial opposition between orality (the object of knowledge) and writing (the subject of knowledge), but here in terms of a stable series of oppositions under the rubrics of "primitive" and "civilized." Thus, in the process of traveling through and writing about the New World, a new subject and a new science emerged in the process of inventing the Savage. In this regard, Léry's *Histoire* is a figure of modernity, a "scientific legenda," as Certeau calls it, that enables us to retrace the formation of the modern picture of the world.

This emphasis on the Savage as invention entails a displacement of the point of departure from a European "self" that, as Tzvetan Todorov would put it, discovers the Other (1984: 3), to a simultaneous and inseparable production of both Europe and its Others. In the process of traveling to America, the modern Western episteme not only established itself as universal but subjected indigenous knowledges by relegating them to the domains of superstition and witchcraft. Accordingly, Otherness must be a product of discourse rather than some form of unmediated alterity that is anterior to the cognitive self. One could further argue, along with Certeau, that the production of Otherness is a historiographical a priori,

whether in the form of the past (i.e., of the dead, of what was but perhaps still informs the present) or of ethnography (i.e., of foreign ways of life that are nonetheless still apprehensible as such).

I prefer Certeau's analysis of early ethnography to Margaret Hodgen's (1964) emphasis on a "rhetoric of negativity" (i.e., one that stresses what primitives lack: property, government, clothing, etc.) and to John Elliott's (1970) insistence on an "uncertain impact" (i.e., on Europeans' blindness and silence vis-à-vis the newly found peoples), in that Certeau allows for both an ideal primitivism (and its reversal) and an inscription of "objective" data (cf. Mauroby 1990). Negativity, whether as ideal primitivism or as antiprimitivism, does not preclude a will to truth and knowledge. These transformations of the subject and the object of knowledge can be further corroborated, beyond Léry, in Spanish American sources. There is certainly a great power of objectification along with vituperation toward and praise of Amerindian (Nahua) culture in the ethnography of Bernardino de Sahagún, but also in the history of, say, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo.[4] (By objectivity, I mean a consistent and systematic production of objects of knowledge rather than a neutral or "value-free" approach.)

For instance, Sahagún faced the task of devising a method to record Nahua forms of life in their own terms. Although he admired the rhetorical richness of Nahuatl and the Nahuas' forms of government, some of their customs and beliefs led him to perceive the Nahuas as following a different logic, which he defined as irrational and relegated to an earlier historical stage, that is, one rife with superstition and vulnerable to the influence of the devil. According to Sahagún, the Nahuas of the sixteenth century were lying neophytes and, consequently, problematic subjects who continued to practice their rites in secret. Nothing could be further from Sahagunian epistemology than the regime of similarities that, according to Foucault (1973), characterized the sixteenth-century episteme. In fact, Sahagún's epistemology entailed a mutation that enabled him to conceive Nahua forms of life as ruled by their own specific semantic web of resemblances. For Sahagún, such an objectification of Nahua logic was a sine qua non to their complete conversion to Catholicism. Moreover, his work demonstrates a continual reflection on method and on the political circumstances that

enabled or obstructed his ethnographic enterprise. Like Léry's *Histoire,* Sahagún's 1579 *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España,* also known as the *Florentine Codex,* elaborates both a subject and an object of knowledge.[5] Despite Sahagún's greatness as a pioneering ethnographer, he did not exemplify methodological rigor in Spanish American historiography. In fact, the main traits of this great epistemic realignment, which marks a transition to modernity, had already been displayed by Columbus. And, ultimately, it was by means of metaphors derived from treatises on the art of traveling that in the seventeenth century René Descartes would formulate a universalist method of mapping knowledge (see Klor de Alva 1988; Rabasa 1989a, 1993b; Dorion 1988).

Although Garcilaso cites Oviedo only once, one could claim Oviedo's *Historia general* as a subtext in more than one passage of *La Florida.* Oviedo is especially significant in reading Garcilaso because of Oviedo's anti-indigenist position (or at least the grounds he provides for an anti-indigenism), because of Garcilaso's dislike of moralistic comments in historiography (comments that feature prominently in Oviedo's work), and finally because Oviedo included Rodrigo Ranjel's *Relación* of de Soto's expedition in the *Historia general* (see chapter 4).[6] My reference to Oviedo's anti-indigenist statements in the *Historia general* may disturb those readers who find Oviedo too complex to be reduced to such a position. Indeed, there are certainly passages in Oviedo's work that, as Stephanie Merrim has correctly observed, "could have fueled precisely the Aristotelian arguments used by Las Casas in the *Apologética historia* to qualify the Indians as rational" (1989: 177–78). Merrim goes on to explain Oviedo's negative portrayal of Amerindians as the result of his "vaunting moralism" (180). In chapter 4 we saw the difference between Las Casas's and Oviedo's use of the term *destrucción* to denounce Spanish atrocities in the New World: whereas the former denounces the whole institution and project of the Spanish conquest, the latter singles out individuals, for instance, Pánfilo de Narváez and Hernando de Soto, against whom he often holds a grudge. Moreover, as we will see below, Certeau's reading of Léry suggests a means by which the Las Casas–type statements could have proceeded from the same binary oppositions that informed Oviedo's racist remarks. Oviedo's work manifests a fear of differ-

ence, of an excess that cannot be bound by the "jaez de la Historia Natural" [harness of natural history] that he derived from Pliny (*HGN*, 1: 11). For the record, let us recall that Oviedo's allusion to Pliny occurs in the context of giving him proper credit to avoid being accused of plagiarism—a pertinent remark, given the surplus he derived from Pliny, "maxime habiéndose capital de la usura" [especially when one gains capital from the lending] (1:11). Historiography as production entails not only the writing of new objects within the old categories, but a transformation of those same categories in the process of opening new fields of knowledge.

Oviedo's *Historia general* differs from Léry's in design, scope, composition, and intent. We can nevertheless observe within their differences some of the same basic operations and vacillations that constituted and characterized the emergence of modern Western discourse. For instance, the linguistic hiatus that Léry expresses in theological terms between the *unfathomable intentions of the heart* and an *objective nevertheless deceptive religious language* (Certeau 1988: 223) has a corresponding sensualist turn in Oviedo's distinction between the *unspeakable experiences of the flavor, smell, and texture of pineapples* and an *objectification through misnomers* (*HGN*, 1: 239–44). Léry's quotation of Psalm 104, which marks a transition from the hermeneutics of theological language—what is out of this world and unspeakable—to cultural translation, is paralleled by Oviedo's *loores* (eulogies) to Nature, which mediate the passage from ancient and medieval stocks of knowledge to direct description and, consequently, to setting the limits on the representation of New World phenomena. If alterity conveys an excess that leads to a glorification of God, the uncanny lurks at the cultural horizon. We can assume that Garcilaso found insulting Oviedo's physiological characterizations of Amerindians with thick skulls and narrow vaginas that supposedly accounted for the irrationality of men and the lasciviousness of women (see the detailed discussion in chapter 4).

As the appointed chronicler of the Indies, Oviedo organized his *Historia general* not as a voyage in which we can trace the development and discursive transformation of an individual (as in Léry's *Histoire*), but as a collective imperial enterprise in which observations are made and commentaries, corrections, and recommendations offered on matters pertaining to administrative policy and the

acquisition of knowledge. Oviedo perceived the writing of the *Historia general* as an endless task. Moreover, this work constituted, at least in principle, a space for objective representation and a corresponding universal subjectivity that structured the task of chronicling the Indies as one that could be continued by future historians. The terms of the binary oppositions would vary from history to history, and the reflections of the historian, that is, those traces that betray the limits of the enterprise and the construction of those binary oppositions, would eventually disappear (though never completely) as ethnography and the natural sciences evolved into objective, "value-free" disciplines. In this same fluidity between the terms of binary oppositions, which allowed Oviedo to criticize greed and debauchery among the Spaniards, lay the potential for writing a counterdiscourse. The goal of such a counterdiscourse, however, would not be to reiterate the same binary logic through a simple inversion of values.

My discussion of Oviedo and Sahagún suggests that the distinction between the colonial subject as colonized and as colonizer is not simply a matter of different narrative focalizations that would restrict themselves to either defending or condemning the conquest of Amerindian cultures (cf. R. Adorno 1988; Bhabha 1986; JanMohamed 1986). Clearly, these Manichean modalities exist. However, less clear-cut expressions present, to my mind, much more interesting forms of counterdiscourse. If, in fact, all inversions of binary oppositions reiterate the logic that informs them, then the reduction of colonial discursive possibilities to "colonized" and "colonizer" positions that mutually represent each other as an absence of culture would ultimately fall into the same trap.

To the lying neophytes of Sahagún and the insatiable women and irrational men of Oviedo we should add one more fiction: the *noble savage* of Bartolomé de las Casas. I highlight the fictive character of Las Casas's noble savage to underscore its utopian function: the construct "noble savage" is not the opposite of "barbarian" because it embodies the terms that define both the barbaric (the savage as uncivilized, not-civilized) and the civilized (the noble as not-savage). The noble savage as a utopian figure is particularly true to the anthropological reflections (where the noble savage is not defined in opposition to [barbaric] Christians) in the *Apologética historia*

sumaria (Las Casas 1967 [ca. 1555]), but not to the inversion of the conventional roles of lambs (Christians) and wolves (pagans) in the *Brevíssima relación de la destruyción de las Indias* (Las Casas 1991 [1552]).[7] Neither in the *Apologética* nor in the *Brevíssima,* however, did Las Casas intend his Amerindian noble savages to be understood as empirical phenomena, but rather as rhetorical figures. The difference between these two texts is that the polemical nature of the *Brevíssima* led Las Casas to vilify the Spaniards to underscore the plight of the Indians, whereas the philosophical bent of the *Apologética* led him to emphasize anthropological categories that evaluated Amerindian forms of life positively and, ultimately, to deconstruct the concept of barbarism. The concept of barbarism ends up lacking a real referent other than individual instances of monstrosity, never a whole nation; nor can one categorize a people as barbarian because they lack a particular form of life such as alphabetical writing. In reading Las Casas one has to be especially careful not to read conclusions in statements (e.g., "We may call barbarian a people who lacks a learned language") intended as part of reasoning that proves the contrary of what they assert. As I have argued elsewhere (Rabasa 1989b), the figure of the noble savage in the *Apologética* underwrites a utopian discourse that dismantles the negation of the coevalness of the Other, which, as Johannes Fabian (1983) has argued, is the basis of the production of anthropology's object of study. Thus, Las Casas's utopian ethnology manifests the conditions of possibility of anthropological discourse in general and the semantic field where the "West" defines the "rest of the world" and postulates itself as the universal cultural model in particular. The figure of the noble savage at once anticipates and negates the validity of that inherent tendency in Christian universalism (even in its most tolerant forms) to reduce non-Christians to barbarians (see Shell 1991: 327–35). Even though ideological constraints such as writing as a Dominican friar kept Las Casas from abandoning the universalism of the Roman Catholic Church, he certainly curtailed the range of its corollaries. Furthermore, Las Casas's critique of the opposition "barbarism" versus "civilization" entailed the possibility that the "time of the 'Other'" would invade the temporal fortress of the "West" (Fabian 1983: 35). To paraphrase a recent title, the empire has always written back (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989).

Nevertheless, Las Casas never completely shed the tendency to draw Manichean oppositions (manifest in the lambs vs. wolves of the *Brevíssima,* but also in the ironic conjunction of the civilized and the barbarian in the noble savage figure), which suggests that his critique exemplified Louis Marin's (1984) thesis: "Utopia is an ideological critique of ideology." But Marin's point is relevant only within a system that opposes science to ideology (i.e., with utopia prefiguring the social sciences). This valorization, however, has no bearing on minority discourses that draw their *force* precisely from being unscientific, from their marginality, from lack of arts and sciences, as we will see in the case of Garcilaso.

The limitations of Manichean inversions become fully apparent when we compare Garcilaso's idealizations of the conquistadores in *La Florida* with other accounts of massacres and the capture of thousands of slaves, as well as those of *aperreos* (setting dogs on the Indians), mutilation, and torture, that were conscientiously documented by Rodrigo Ranjel and glossed with moralistic diatribes by Oviedo. The two other "primary" sources on de Soto's expedition, Fidalgo de Elvas's *Relaçam verdadeira dos trabalhos q̃ ho gouernador dõ Fernãdo de Souto e certos fidalgos portugueses passarom no descobrimeto da prouincia da Frolida* (1557), in which the massacres and acts of torture are narrated with a "bestial" objectivity, and Luis Hernández de Biedma's *Relación del suceso de la jornada del cap. Soto, y de la calidad de la tierra por donde anduvo* (ca. 1544), with its tone of laconic detachment, neither condemned nor exalted the Europeans (see chapter 4). Garcilaso, on the other hand, idealized both the Spaniards and the Indians. *La Florida* also recorded the atrocities, but it gave a voice to the Indians, who could thereby condemn the random massacres and mutilations that characterized de Soto's expedition. Garcilaso's idealization of both Europeans and Indians, as well as the continual questioning of the criteria for nobility and the means by which European and Indian forms of life were represented, suggests that he was pursuing a deeper truth than a simple inversion of values could yield.

In reading Garcilaso, we must constantly keep in mind his Indian position and a consequently apologetic self-authorization (not without irony) to write history. Thus, in the "Advertencias" to the first part of his *Comentarios reales de los Incas,* he pleads for permission

to alter the then current Spanish spelling of Quechua terms so as to avoid corrupting Quechua any further: "Para atajar esta corrupción me sea lícito, pues soy indio, que en esta historia yo escriba como indio con las mismas letras que aquellas tales dicciones se deben escribir" [In order to forestall this corruption allow me, since I am an Indian, to write this history as Indian with the precise letters which such words ought to be inscribed] (1960 [1609–1617], 2:5). The irony here is that Garcilaso's plea is not appealing to a knowledge of Quechua (i.e., not a plea of a linguist or an otherwise universal subject who seeks objective knowledge), but to his authority as an Indian ("que . . . yo escriba como indio"), one whose subjectivity privileges him as knowledgeable about the correct Quechua phonetics and ultimately about the *incario* (i.e., all things pertaining to the Incas). This sort of appeal to a privileged Indian subjectivity destabilizes, however slightly, the grounds of knowledge in European consciousness.

Beyond asserting a relationship to Inca culture through immanence, Garcilaso's plea seems almost a parody of a parallel passage in Oviedo's *Historia general:* "Si algunos vocablos extraños e bárbaros aquí se hallaren, la causa es la novedad de que se tracta; y no se pongan a la cuenta de mi romance, que en Madrid nascí, y en la casa real me crié, y con gente noble he conversado, e algo he leído, para que se sospeche que habré entendido mi lengua castellana, la cual, de las vulgares, se tiene por la mejor de todas" [If there are some strange and barbaric words, the reason is the novelty of the subject matter; and should not be ascribed to my Spanish, since was born in Madrid, and bred in royal quarters, and conversed with noble people, and read some, and so there should be no question whatsoever of my understanding of the Castilian language, which of all the vernacular tongues, is the best] (*HGN,* 1:10). All that missing in this show of credentials is Oviedo's certificate of *lim-pieza de sangre,* which, one can assume, along with his biographer he had, as it was the king himself who had ordered him to write the *Historia general:* "Se escriben por su mandado, y que me da de comer por su cronista destas materias" [You have ordered me to write them, and you feed me as your chronicler of these matters] (1:12). Oviedo's breeding would certainly have guaranteed his mastery of the language and, by extension, of the arts and sciences,

domain from which Garcilaso was excluded as an Indian: "Las faltas que lleva [*La Florida*] se me perdonen porque soy indio, que a los tales, por ser bárbaros y no enseñados en ciencias ni artes, no se permite que, en lo que dijeren o hicieren, los lleven por el rigor de los preceptos del arte o ciencia, por no los haber aprendido, sino que los admitan como vinieren" [I plead now that this account be received in the same spirit as I present it, and that I be pardoned its errors because I am an Indian. For since we Indians are barbarians and uninstructed in the arts and sciences, it seems ungenerous to judge our deeds and utterances strictly in accordance with the precepts of art or science, which we have not learned, but rather accept them as they are] (Garcilaso de la Vega 1986 [1605]: 69; 1951: xlv). Right after this passage comes one of Garcilaso's autobiographical anecdotes about the poor schooling that Indians and mestizos received in Peru. An overtly rhetorical use of modesty, this *excusatio* suggests not Garcilaso's lack of letters, but rather the pursuit of an alternative discourse. In contrast to Oviedo's need to boast of writing a major work, Garcilaso was apparently quite comfortable with minor genres—not to mention minor roles, such as those of translator, amanuensis, and commentator.

As I have already pointed out, Garcilaso's license to revise the spellings of Quechua terms was not based on identifying himself with a master "scientific" discourse, but rather with a minority position that authorized him to counteract the violence done to Indian culture by a colonizing language. In Oviedo's claiming Spanish as the best of all vernacular languages, one can infer a sense of entitlement to translate indigenous terms and, ultimately, indigenous cultures. Akin to Talal Asad's (1986) recommendation that we soften stronger languages in the process of translating weaker ones, Garcilaso's correctives were aimed at the tone and tenor, not just the phonetics of Quechua expressions: "Es lástima que se pierda o corrompa, siendo una lengua tan galana" [It would be a pity to lose or corrupt it, since it is such an elegant tongue] (1960 [1609–1617], 2:6). Not coincidentally, it is in the context of these *porque soy indio* expressions (including the variant *pues soy indio* [since I am an Indian]) that Garcilaso indirectly establishes an American audience (if in posterity) as his addressee.

Accordingly, in the *Comentarios,* Garcilaso effectively privileged a

reader versed in Quechua who could appreciate the differences between Quechua and Spanish, Italian, or Latin: "Las cuales [diferencias] notaran los mestizos y criollos curiosos, pues son de su lenguaje, que yo harto hago en señalarles con el dedo desde España los principios de su lengua para que la sustenten en su pureza" [Such (differences) will be appreciated by attentive mestizos and criollos, since they belong to their tongue, and thus I endeavor from Spain to point out accurately the principles of their tongue so that its purity is sustained] (1960 [1609–1617], 2: 6). This cultural schema presupposes that both criollos and mestizos would be Quechua speakers. When "los indios, mestizos y criollos del Perú" are addressed in *La Florida,* it is to champion a minority discourse and to underscore the value of writing by those who lack *arte o ciencia* (art or science): "Y llevando más adelante esta piadosa consideración, sería noble artificio y generosa industria favorecer en mí . . . a todos los indios, mestizos y criollos del Perú, para que viendo ellos el favor y merced que los discretos y sabios hacían a su principiante, se animasen a pasar adelante en cosas semejantes, sacadas de sus no cultivados ingenios" [It would be a noble and magnanimous idea to carry this merciful consideration still further and to honor in me all of the Indians, mestizos, and criollos of Peru, so that seeing a novice of their own receive the favor and grace of the wise and learned, they would be encouraged to make advancements with similar ideas drawn from their own uncultivated mental resources] (1986 [1605]: 69; 1951: xlv). Far from constituting himself or his "mastery" of Spanish as a model, Garcilaso called for a capitalization on marginality. It seems to me that "no cultivados ingenios" [uncultivated mental resources] suggests both an untapped potential and a reminder not to judge American writers according to "el rigor de los preceptos del arte o ciencia, por no los haber aprendido, sino que los admitan como vinieren" [the precepts of art or science, which they have not learned, but rather (to) accept them as they are]. Their lack of *arte o ciencia* should definitely not keep "Indians, mestizos, and criollos" from writing.

Thus Garcilaso makes manifest the fact that it was not just the West that invented itself in the process of writing about the New World. Cultural identification as an Indian, though certainly a product of contact, was never solely due to a misnomer borne passively. Being an Indian conveys the sense of nationality and raciality in *La Florida* that linked Garcilaso with all Amerindians throughout the continent: "Pues decir que escribo encarecidamente por loar la nación porque soy indio, ciertamente es engaño . . . que antes me hallo con falta de palabras para contar y poner en su punto las verdades que en la historia se me ofrecen" [But to say that I exaggerate my praise of the nation because I am an Indian is indeed a falsehood, for . . . I lack sufficient words to present in their proper light the actual truths that are offered me in this history] (1986 [1605]: 192–93; 1951: 159). Garcilaso makes two important points in this statement: the potential for a Pan-Indian identity, and the lack of a rhetoric in which to represent Indian voices. Hugo Rodríguez-Vecchini has quite correctly pointed out that *La Florida* is the story of how to write a credible history of America: "Es la historia de como hacer una historia de América que parezca verdadera" (1982: 588). However, we should modify this statement: *La Florida* is not just the story of how to write a history of America, ***but of how to write one from the point of view of an Indian.*** Indeed, *La Florida* exposes those motifs and binary oppositions (and their logic of reversals) that have sustained Western discourse on America: precisely those materials that have lent credibility to European histories of America. Garcilaso anticipated that his history would be dismissed as racially biased—and not because readers would question well-established representations of a positive primitivism that were, as we have seen, mere inversions of an equally well-rehearsed de-negation, but because they would doubt the political as well as the literary propriety of Garcilaso's specific version of an ideal primitivism. For this reason, he drew on images, topoi, and rationales from the European storehouse of poetic, political, and historical motifs, comparing, for instance, Vitacucho's speeches to Orlando's in the *Enamorado* and the *Furioso,* and Cofachaqui's pomp to Cleopatra's in Caesar's *Commentaries,* all the while exposing historiography as plagued with circularity (Rodriguez-Vecchini 1982: 613, and passim).

We should not be surprised, then, that the conquistador in *La Florida* is also an ideal type that has fascinated readers and inspired the equally idealized biographies of Hernando de Soto by Miguel Albornoz (1971), R. B. Cunninghame Graham (1912), and John S. C. Abbot (1898). I cannot resist citing here again (see chapter 1) Joseph

Conrad's praise of Cunninghame Graham's biography: "H. de Soto is most exquisitely excellent: your very mark and spirit upon a subject that only you can do justice to—with your wonderful English and your sympathetic insight into the souls of the Conquistadores" (in Watts 1969: 148). In his letter to Cunninghame Graham, Conrad goes on to say that his book has given him "a furious desire to learn Spanish and bury [himself] in the pages of the incomparable Garcilaso—if only to forget all about our modern Conquistadores" (148). This nostalgic looking back to the conquistadores of olden times ignored the fact that Garcilaso was writing against the moralistic posturing of Oviedo's negative portrait of de Soto (see chapter 4).

Quite explicitly eschewing moralizing in historiography, Garcilaso refused, for example, to derive a lesson from the experience of Diego de Guzmán, who chose to remain among the Indians after losing an Indian woman in a gambling match: "Se podrá ver lo que del juego inconsideradamente nace y donde teníamos bien que decir de los que con propios ojos en esta pasión hemos visto, si fuera de nuestra profesión decirlo, mas quédese para los que la tienen de reprehender los vicios" [One may see what is born of reckless gambling; and at this point I might deem it wise, were it my business to do so, to tell what of this passion I myself have seen, but such matters remain for those whose duty (it) is to reprehend vices] (1986 [1605]: 454; 1951: 481). This dislike of moralizing did not prevent Garcilaso from showering us with information on slave raids, *aperreos,* massacres, or the fixation on gold that drove de Soto to roam the country without direction or any ultimate destination. He simply lets the Indians speak for themselves, articulating their own condemnation of such practices: "Tened paciencia, hermanas, y alegraos con las nuevas que os damos, que muy presto os sacaremos del cautiverio en que estos ladrones vagamundos os tienen, porque sabed que tenemos concertado de los degollar y poner sus cabezas en sendas lanzas para honra de nuestros templos y entierros y sus cuerpos han de ser atasajados y puestos por los árboles, que no merecen más que esto" [Be patient, sisters, and rejoice in the news that we bring you, for very soon we are going to release you from the captivity in which you are held by these wandering thieves. For know you that we have agreed to decapitate them and impale their

heads on great lances for the glorification of our temples and burial places; and we will cut their bodies into small pieces to be placed on the trees, this being all they deserve] (512–13; 553).

Although this passage expresses Quigualtanqui's sense of justice, it is not he who speaks here but one of his spies. (Quigualtanqui is a cacique who leads a province bearing the same name and comes close to annihilating the Spaniards toward the end of *La Florida.*) We must remember that there was nothing "barbarous" about such calls for retribution; it was, after all, an accepted European practice to cut up bodies as well as to deny burial to traitors and enemies. Quigualtanqui's curse, moreover, subverts a commonplace in Western epics. As David Quint has pointed out, such curses by the "vanquished" in epics do not suggest an alternative history, but an ideological gesture that reinforces the epic plot and its concluding triumph of the "vanquishers" (1989b: 111–18; see chapter 3 above). Accordingly, the curses of Polyphemus, Dido, and Adamastor all ultimately convey impotence and justify violence. In Garcilaso's narrative, however, Quigualtanqui not only survives the de Soto expedition, but is remembered for his courage. Thus, epic topoi, as Bakhtin would put it, are *novelized* in *La Florida* (see Bakhtin 1981). Elsewhere, Garcilaso mentions how Francisco de Mendoza (the son of Antonio de Mendoza, the viceroy, who was also present when the survivors arrived in Mexico City) was fond of praising the great Quigualtanqui every time he recounted the expedition of Florida: "'Verdaderamente, señores, que debía ser hombre de bien Quigualtanqui.' Y con este dicho refrescaba de nuevo las grandezas del indio, [y] eternizaba su nombre" ["'Truly, my lords, Quigualtanqui must have been an honest man." And with this remark he revived the grandeur and eternalized the name of that Indian] (1986 [1605]: 543; 1951: 589). One gets the impression that beyond Garcilaso's exaltation of Indian valor, it was the articulate speech and sense of justice that he had in mind when he begged his readers not to be offended by his telling both sides of the story: "Porque la verdad de la historia nos obliga a que digamos las hazañas, así hechas por los indios como las que hicieron los españoles . . . suplicamos no se enfade el que lo oyere porque lo contamos tan particularmente" [Since the facts of history demand that we narrate the

brave deeds of the Indians as well as those of the Spaniards . . . we beg that our readers not be offended because we relate this incident in such detail] (439; 460).

The figure of the anonymous oral informant as the author of an account, which Garcilaso transformed into chivalric history in the process of writing it, corresponds to the transition from orally transmitted romances to written chronicles in medieval historiography. Although Garcilaso was always cautious, his aesthetics would seem to have been at odds with the emphasis on pragmatics in Spanish American historiography. We must remember that in the early modern period, writing-as-labor was opposed to orality-as-nonproduction (see Certeau 1984; Rabasa 1993b). Indeed, the adoption of the chivalric model was a self-conscious anachronism that ultimately reveals Garcilaso's understanding of subjectivity in historical writing. Alonso de Carmona and Juan Coles, whose written accounts Garcilaso supposedly used to validate his oral informant, basically confirmed the facts but not the meaning of the events. Though I cannot prove it, the nonexistence of these texts leads me to believe that these sources were invented by Garcilaso and fulfill primarily the taxonomical function of describing the type—as well as the material condition—of the kinds of documents that conform the "archive" (which would include oral testimonies). Accordingly, Garcilaso describes the length and the handwriting of their accounts, and mentions that Coles's had been damaged by termites and mice: "comidas las medias de polilla y ratones" (1986 [1605]: 66). Neither of these accounts is, strictly speaking, history. As Garcilaso put it, neither one arranged his account in a historical manner: "puso su relación en modo historial" (66). These texts nevertheless confirmed the account of his oral informant, who, by the way, was the only one Garcilaso identified as pertaining to the nobility, an "hombre noble hijodalgo" (literally, a nobleman son of something). Thus did Garcilaso subvert the hierarchy with an Indian who wrote history and an *hidalgo* who provided an oral account. In citing his sources, Garcilaso revealed his rhetorical skills, reproducing both the disorganized discourse of Coles and Carmona and the conversational tone of his oral informant. His self-deprecating claim to lack "los preceptos del arte o ciencia" seems highly ironic in conjunction with such obvious writing skills.

Much meaning depends on those European images, topoi, and rationales that paradoxically enabled Garcilaso to invent an Indian subjectivity, namely, one not ruled by the binary logic that informs Western representations and histories of America. Garcilaso's Indian identity and corresponding subjectivity were intimately bound up with the emergence of European history and subjectivity as universals. It is to Garcilaso's credit that he could capitalize on his marginality without resorting to an inversion of values that would merely have reiterated the same logic he set out to overturn.

But to speak of Garcilaso's writing in terms of race or nationality would be to invite the charge of anachronism. The category of race did not exist as such in the sixteenth century, nor, for that matter, does it make sense to speak of Garcilaso as an Indian when he was equally proud of his father's Spanish heritage. But the question here is not so much that of his pride or how he reconciled the two halves of his cultural identity as a mestizo, but of what was at stake when he asserted the impossibility of constituting himself as a reliable author. The quasi-utterance "Porque soy indio," which is associated in his preface with a declaration of his inadequacy as an author given his lack of education, must be read as an allegorization of the system that authorized the writing of history. Beyond attributing his Indian condition to his lacking *arte o ciencia,* Garcilaso's preface suggests a cultural construct that would define his Indianness as an essential trait—a lack of blood purity. If one of the precepts of Renaissance historiography was that only the wise could write history, then it follows that Indians, at least as Indians, could not have been wise, hence allowed to write history (see Mignolo 1981: 369). To write history as an Indian would therefore be to court paradox, to say the least. It seems to me that what was truly at stake in these historiographical negations was the possibility of producing an alternative to the authorized Western account. Garcilaso's alternative historiography in *La Florida* has less to do with factual contradiction than with exposing the codes that define and make historical truths believable.

Because Garcilaso lacked the *limpieza de sangre* that would have certified him as a trustworthy subject, he underscored his informant's trustworthiness: "Volviendo a nuestro primer propósito, que es de certificar en ley de cristiano que escribimos verdad en lo pasado, y

con el favor de la Suma Verdad, la escribiremos en lo por venir, diré lo que en este paso me pasó con el que me la daba relación, al cual, si no lo tuviera por tan hijodalgo y fidedigno, como lo es y como adelante en otros pasos diremos de su reputación, no presumiera yo que escribía tanta verdad, como la presumo y certifico por tal" [But returning to our original purpose, to certify upon the word of a Christian that we have written the truth in the past, and that with the favor of the Highest Truth, we shall write it in the future, I shall tell what happened at this point in the story between me and the one who gave me my facts. If I did not hold this man to be such an hidalgo and the trustworthy person he is, as later in other passages I shall speak of him as being, I would not pride myself on having written as much truth as I have, and moreover would guarantee it as such] (1986 [1605]: 193; 1951: 159–60). There is a certain irony to Garcilaso's having testified to the *hidalguía* of an anonymous informant, a status that in turn allowed Garcilaso to claim trustworthiness for his history. Moreover, as Rodríguez-Vecchini would argue, it constitutes a decodification of how historical facts are grounded on circular arguments. But though this passage cries out for an unpacking of the historiographical criteria of truthfulness based on *limpieza de sangre,* this is not the place to undertake such an analysis. However, a cursory look at prefaces to other accounts and at letters from Cabeza de Vaca to Lope de Aguirre will verify how commonly such appeals to illustrious ancestry were used to justify a request to be taken at one's word. On the other hand, it was no coincidence that Garcilaso never identified himself, in plain terms, as a Spaniard. Nor was his *mestizaje* (mestizoness) advanced as some sort of metaphysical identity in need of expression (cf. Cornejo Polar 1994). His identification as an Indian was bound to discrimination and the limitations imposed on him as a colonial subject. We must note that this certification of the nobility of his source follows the passage in which Garcilaso states that his magnanimous representations of Amerindians may be questioned as racially biased: "Pues decir que escribo encarecidamente por loar la nación porque soy indio, cierto es engaño" [But to say that I exaggerate my praise of the nation because I am an Indian is indeed a falsehood].

The juxtaposition of these two passages in which Garcilaso anticipated that his objectivity would be questioned because he

praised his *nación* and in which he certified his informant's *hidalguía* and trustworthiness suggests a paradox that we could also find in a number of *converso,* Marrano, and Jewish apologetic works. The predicament of each of these groups is obviously different: whereas *conversos* argued against the Statutes of Blood Purity, which distinguished them from the *viejos cristianos* (old Christians), Jews and Marranos argued for Judaism; the Marranos, furthermore, as Yosef Yerushalmi has pointed out, constituted "the first body of Jewish writers *contra cristianos* to have known Christianity from *within*" (quoted in Shell 1991: 320). As is well-known, in the course of the sixteenth century, *hidalguía* and *limpieza de sangre* came to be identified with the Spanish character. Garcilaso himself testified to that *germanidad* (Germanhood), or Spanish *hermandad* (brotherhood)—*hermandad* is derived from *germanidad*—by which nobility was identified with the Goths, thereby consigning the alternative identities of other nations to a corresponding legacy of negative cultural traits (Shell 1991: 315–16 and passim). I cannot imagine Garcilaso declaring with a straight face that "la nobleza de nuestros españoles, y la que hoy tiene toda España sin contradicción alguna, viene de aquellos godos" [the nobility of those Spaniards and of all the people of present day Spain comes without any question whatsoever from those Goths] (1986 [1605]: 473–74; 1951: 505). As I noted above, in *La Florida* belonging to a nation is an attribute that unites all Indians in America. Garcilaso's continued insistence on the nobility of the Indian nation allows us to read the series of *porque soy indio* statements as a contribution to the debate over the Estatutos de Limpieza de Sangre that differentiated *viejos cristianos* from *conversos.*

Garcilaso's questioning of what constitutes nobility was elaborated through an alternative discourse that emphasized his subjectivity. His was an opinion that lacked *arte o ciencia,* yet Garcilaso was fully conscious of the fact that he was advancing new forms of argumentation, as well as new modes of representing, understanding, and conceptualizing Amerindian cultures. The title *La Florida del Inca* itself highlights the subjectivity of his knowledge—an admittedly untrustworthy history, yet a valid alternative discourse. Toward the end of *La Florida,* Garcilaso further underscored the subjective stance of his text by acknowledging the impossibility of

providing an adequate geographic description of de Soto's expedition. He attributed this failing to de Soto's objective, which "no era andar demarcando la tierra . . . sino buscar oro y plata" [was not to mark off the land . . . but to search for gold and silver] (1986 [1605]: 545; 1951: 592). This implicit denunciation of de Soto's greed actually represents an attempt to decolonize historiography, as it displaces Garcilaso's apparent intention of writing a history that would facilitate a new conquest: "Para que de hoy más . . . se esfuerce España a la ganar y poblar" [Our purpose in offering this description has been to encourage Spain to make an effort and acquire and populate this kingdom] (64; xxxviii). *La Florida* is not a text that records information of strategic value, but rather one that vindicates Amerindians by presenting them as magnanimous and capable in all realms of culture. In his repeated insistence on the nobility of spirit expressed by Amerindian discourses, Garcilaso not only provided an idealized vision of Indians, but legitimated himself as an Indian writer of history: an Indian who writes/speaks so eloquently could not be anything less than noble. But this attribute of nobility also went hand in hand with the savage, that is, with lacking *arte o ciencia*. As such are his Amerindians and himself.

Garcilaso simultaneously questioned the category of *limpieza de sangre* as a criterion of nobility and elaborated the semblance of Amerindians that embodied all the attributes of nobility. The eloquence of his Amerindians not only disproved European prejudices, but, in the voice of his informant, Garcilaso asserted that Spaniards familiar with the classics would compare Indian speeches to the most famous ones in Roman histories and would conclude that "los mozos . . . parecían haber estudiado en Atenas cuando ella florecía en letras morales" [the youths . . . seemed to have been trained in Athens when it was flourishing in moral letters] (1986 [1605]: 194; 1951: 160). Obviously, he was not alluding to antiquity in reference to a common paganism, but to ancient cultures and languages as cultural ideals of the Renaissance. Garcilaso was fully conscious of how these allusions to speeches in classical historiography would efface Indian modes of address, and he was careful to signal that his "translations" were not literal but cultural: "Es estilo de los Indios ayudarse unos a otros en los razonamientos"

[It is the style of the Indians to assist each other in discourse] (187; 153). Thus Garcilaso defined cultural differences and underscored another subjective dimension of his history. His role of amanuensis was closer to the collective authorship of Indian discourse, to assisting "unos a otros" in discourse, than to the humanist Author-God. But this evocation of an Indian form of collective discourse also promoted ideological pluralism by questioning the universality of Western subjectivity and history.

Beyond offering a vindication of Amerindians, *La Florida* presented a more general critique of the myth of *limpieza de sangre*, especially as a criterion for nobility. Garcilaso's brief account of the French Protestant corsair who fought for days against a Spanish merchant provided him with a means of extending his critique of blood statutes to the wars of religion that plagued Europe in the sixteenth century. First relativizing, if not democratizing, the concept of nobility, Garcilaso observed, "No se sabe cuál fuese la calidad [del mercader español], mas la nobleza de su condición y la hidalguía que en su conversación, tratos y contratos mostraba decían que derechamente era hidalgo, porque ese lo es que hace hidalguías" [The quality of (the Spanish merchant) is not known, but the nobility of his equipage and the cavalier mien which he displayed in his conversation, manners and business dealings revealed that he was by rights a gentleman, for these are the things which constitute nobility] (1986 [1605]: 94; 1951: 32). *Derechamente* (by rights), both the French corsair and the Spanish merchant behaved like hidalgos. But after describing the ritualism they maintained on the battlefield as well as in their exchanges of gifts during truces, Garcilaso comments on rules that had to be kept in mind with enemies of another religion and nation: "[Los del puerto que se negaron a ayudar al español] no advertían que el enemigo de nación o de religión, siendo vencedor, no sabe tener respeto a los males que le dejaron de hacer, ni agradecimiento a los bienes recibidos . . . como se ve por muchos ejemplos antiguos y modernos" (Those in the harbor who refused to help the Spaniard) did not take into consideration the fact that the enemy of nation or religion, being a victor, knows neither respect for ills withheld nor for good deeds rendered . . . as is proved by examples both ancient and modern] (99; 38). In my

reading, this observation conveys a criticism of the meanness of the Spaniards in the port rather than an argument for intolerance or a justification of the wars of religion.

Menéndez de Avilés's 1565 massacre of the French Huguenots in Florida was still a fresh event in the memories of Garcilaso's contemporaries. This massacre spawned a series of Protestant accounts—by Laudonnière, Le Challeux, Gourgues, Haykluyt, and Le Moyne—that denounced the cruelty of the Spaniards in the context of the *leyenda negra* (black legend) (see chapter 6). Toward the end of *La Florida,* Garcilaso mentions that Menéndez de Avilés brought back to Spain seven Amerindians from Florida. As they were passing through a village in Cordoba, Garcilaso's informant hurried out to the countryside to meet them and get news from Florida. Having learned that he had participated in de Soto's armada, the Indians asked him, "'Dejando vosotros esas tierras tan mal paradas como las dejasteis queréis que os demos nuevas'" ["Having left those provinces as desolate as you did, do you want us to give you news of them?"]. They were so angry, in fact, that they took their bows and shot arrows into the air, "por dar a entender el deseo que tenían de tirarselas y la destreza con que se las tiraran" [in order to make this man realize their desire to shoot arrows at him and the skill with which they might do so] (1986 [1605]: 585; 1951: 641). A few years later, one of the caciques, by then baptized, returned to Florida to aid a group of Jesuits in converting his nation. He and his people ended up killing all the Jesuits. The Amerindians danced, wearing the priests' vestments and ornaments, but three took up a crucifix and, "estándolo mirando, se cayeron muertos" [as they gazed upon it, suddenly fell dead] (586; 642). Although we are not told who witnessed this divine intervention, Garcilaso mentions that Father Pedro Ribadeneyra documented it in writing.

One could argue that if the rule covering war between nations and religions were a universal principle, then the massacre of the Jesuits would have been justified. However, I would rather read a discourse on tolerance in these examples of killings and other cruelties between nations; after all, Garcilaso concludes *La Florida* calling for compassion, "misericordia como la de Cristo Nuestro Señor" [compassion in the manner of Christ Our Lord], and not revenge "como la de Abel" [in the manner of Abel] (1986 [1605]: 586).[8]

This would not preclude reading Garcilaso's novel argumentation on the nobility of Amerindians as a beautiful vision that could compete with the magnificent watercolors and engravings of John White, Jacques Le Moyne, and Théodore de Bry. In this respect, Garcilaso both performed an intended service to the Crown by rescuing Florida from foreign nations and elaborated an apology for his own Indianness. To the extent that Garcilaso views *La Florida* as an exemplary work, we may also argue that the critique of the intolerance of the Estatutos de Limpieza de Sangre (and, by extension, of the wars of religion) entails an ethics that would ultimately redeem Spain by posing as its representative.

The novelty of Garcilaso's position lies in his having avoided simple inversions of binary oppositions while raising the possibility of a discourse of tolerance. It is well-known that John Locke was an admirer of Garcilaso and had also read (but perhaps not admired) that great thinker on tolerance, Baruch Spinoza. It is thus not idle to presume that the ideal of a tolerant society, which we have come to identify as a Western conception, was actually the invention of the marginalized groups who lived—and were discriminated against—in Western societies. Nevertheless, we must differentiate Garcilaso's and Spinoza's locus of enunciation from that of liberal thinkers. I will return to this question in chapter 6; here, let me point out that for both Spinoza and Garcilaso, the possibility of articulating a true discourse was paradoxically bound up with the acceptability, if not the validity, of their subject positions: Garcilaso's as an Indian historian, Spinoza's as a Jewish freethinker (see Shell 1991: 332–35).

Garcilaso intercalated a wonderful "life-text" in the second part of the *Comentarios* that further illuminates how the colonial situation vexed the project of writing as an Indian who could not claim author*ity:*

> Pidiendo yo mercedes a Su Majestad por los servicios de mi padre y por la restitución patrimonial de mi madre . . . el licenciado Lope García de Castro, que después fue por presidente del Perú, estando en su tribunal me dijo: "¿Qué merced queréis que os haga Su Majestad, habiendo hecho vuestro padre con Gonzalo Pizarro lo que hizo en la batalla de Huarina y dádole aquella tan gran victoria?" Y aunque

yo repliqué que había sido testimonio falso que le habían levantado, me dijo: "Tiénenlo escrito los historiadores ¿y queréislo vos negar?" Con esto me despidieron de aquellas pretenciones y cerraron las puertas a otras que después acá pudiera haber tenido por mis particulares servicios. (1960 [1609–1617], 3: 360)

[In the process of asking for grants due for the services of my father and the restitution of my mother's patrimony . . . *licenciado* Lope García de Castro, who later on became the president of Peru, told me from his court: "What grants do you want (His) Majesty to give you, since your father did what he did with Gonzalo Pizarro in the battle of Huarina and gave him such a victory?" Although I replied that false testimony had been given on this matter, he told me: "Historians have it in writing and you want to deny it?" With this they turned down my claims and closed the door to others that I could have presented later on for my own services. (My translation)]

Garcilaso resigned himself to being unable to refute the three historians who had testified against his father, alluding to his withdrawal from worldly affairs as described in the preface to *La Florida:* "Como lo dije en el proemio de nuestra historia de la Florida, paso una vida quieta y pacífica, como hombre desengañado y despedido de este mundo y de sus mudanzas" [As I stated it in the preface to my history of Florida, I live a quiet and peaceful life, like that of a man who has been disillusioned and has withdrawn from this world and its inconstancies] (3:360; my translation). There is an element of teasing or parody in this intertextual reference to *La Florida,* as that work also features three witnesses, those who validate his history of de Soto's expedition. Garcilaso ultimately echoed the injunction of Corinthians 13:1: "In the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (see Henige 1986: 12). In the life-text of the *Comentarios,* it is writing by historians that gains the upper hand over Garcilaso's oral testimony; *La Florida,* however, is a trustworthy oral history that nevertheless depended on an untrustworthy amanuensis for its validation.

This ongoing elaboration on orality and writing and the insistent repetition of *porque soy indio* suggest an extended metaphor whereby one thing is said and another meant—that is, an ironic allegory of the privileged claim of the "West" to write "the rest of the world."

Close attention to the constitution of an oral "author" for this text, to the corpus of texts that supposedly informed and verified the information in *La Florida* (besides Coles and Carmona, Garcilaso mentions the approval of a *coronista*), and to the silence regarding the written accounts that have survived (Rodrigo Ranjel's account in Oviedo's *Historia general,* the *Relaçam verdadeira* by the anonymous Fidalgo de Elvas, and the *Relación* of Luis Hernández de Biedma) further illuminate Garcilaso's "unscientific legend," or how a minority discourse could inscribe itself in the margins of Western historiography. In the context of sixteenth-century Spanish imperialism, Foucault's question, "What does it matter who is speaking?", is hardly academic. By the same token, in reading Garcilaso, it certainly matters that we read his marginality and practice of writing as the *proliferation of possibilities of hearing.*

17 Miguel Albornoz's argument that the "fact" that de Soto never read the *Requerimiento* demonstrates his realism, is an example of how de Soto has been idealized by modern historians: "De Soto era un hombre realista; pese a las disposiciones del Consejo de Indias se había abstenido del inútil formalismo del 'requerimiento' y así había dado instrucciones a sus hombres para toda la expedición" [De Soto was a realist man; in spite of the dispositions of the Council of the Indies he had abstained from the useless formalism of the 'requerimiento' and thus he had instructed his men for the whole expedition] (1971: 289). See chapter 1 above for a discussion of the *Requerimiento* in the context of Cabeza de Vaca and Pánfilo de Narváez.

18 On the contemporary use of these sorts of phantasmagoric constructs in the images of the underworld in the press and its link to the appearance of death squads, see Taussig (1989: 13). Also see Bolaños (1994) for a study of Fray Pedro de Simon's rhetoric in his account of the war against the Pijaos and how the same stereotypes continue to inform twentieth-century anthropological, medical, and sociological explanations of violence in Colombia.

19 It is worth remembering that if the Crown listened to Las Casas, it is because he too sought to represent its interests: his call for the dissolution of the *encomienda* is couched in terms that benefited the Crown; that is, the *encomiendas* would revert to the Crown. See, e.g., the *memorial* by Bartolomé de las Casas and Domingo de Santo Tomás in García Icazbalceta (1971 [1866], 2: 231–36).

5. "Porque soy indio"

1 Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (1539–1617) was the illegitimate son of Sebastian Garcilaso de la Vega, one of the first Spanish conquerors of Peru, and Chimpu Ocllo (baptized as Isabel Suárez), a descendant of Inca nobility. Garcilaso's father recognized him in his will as a natural son and left him an inheritance of four thousand pesos so that he could study in Spain. Baptized Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, Garcilaso adopted his father's surname when he established himself in Spain. He arrived in Spain in 1560 and settled in the Andalusian village of Montilla, where he lived for most of his life. His first publication was a Spanish translation from Italian of the *Dialoghi di amore* by Jehudah Abarbanel (better known in Spain as León Hebreo), which was published in Madrid in 1590 and entitled *La traducción del Indio de los tres Dialogos de Amor de León Hebreo, hecha de Italiano en Español por Garcilaso Inga de la Vega natural de la gran Ciudad de Cuzco, cabeza de los Reynos y provincias del Piru.* Although it is common knowledge that, as early as this first publication and later in his other two main works, Garcilaso identified himself in his titles as well as in numerous passages as an Indian, or "the Inca," insufficient attention has been paid to how these self-referential statements express a problematic authorship. Two notable exceptions to this rule are Nicolás Wey-Gómez (1991) and Jákfalvi-Leiva (1984). Garcilaso's other main works were *La Florida del Inca* and the *Comentarios reales de los Incas* (in two parts). *La Florida del Inca* first appeared in Lisbon in 1605 under the title *Historia del Adelantado Hernando de Soto, Gobernador y capitan general del Reyno de la Florida, y de otros heroicos cavalleros Españoles è Indios.* The first part of the *Comentarios,* which covers precontact Peru, appeared in Lisbon in 1609 as *Primera parte de los Comentarios Reales, que tratan del origen de los Incas, Reyes que fueron del Perú, y de su idolatría, leyes y gobierno en paz y en guerra: de sus vidas y conquistas, y de todo lo que fue aquel imperio y su Republica, antes que los españoles passaran a el. Escritos por el Ynca Garcilaso de la Vega.* The second part, which covers the conquest and the subsequent civil wars among the Spaniards and which was supposed to be entitled *Segunda parte de los Comentarios Reales,* first appeared posthumously in 1617 as *Historia general del Perú. Trata del descubrimiento dél; y cómo lo ganaron los españoles. Las guerras civiles que hubo entre Picarros y Almagros, sobre la partija de la tierra. Castigo y levantamiento de tiranos; y otros sucesos particulares que en la Historia se contienen. Escrita por el Ynca Garcilaso de la Vega.* For a biography of Garcilaso, see John Grier Varner (1968). See also the English translation of *La Florida del Inca* by John Grier Varner and Jeannette Johnson Varner (Garcilaso de la Vega 1951 [1605]), from which I quote here, with some modifications.

2 More recently, Castro-Klarén (1996a), Sommer (1996), Mazzotti (1996), Rabasa (1994b, 1995b), and Cornejo Polar (1994, 1995) have emphasized the tensions in Garcilaso's mestizo identity rather than a harmonious synthesis of the two cultures. Cornejo Polar and Mazzotti take the discussion of harmony in different directions. Cornejo Polar traces in Garcilaso a hegemonic (indeed, tragic) will to harmonize the European and Quechua traditions in the *Comentarios,* and in so doing to legitimize his condition of mestizo and, consequently, to advance a homogeneous view of Andean culture (1994: 93 and passim). On the other hand, Mazzotti traces Quechua voices, that is, Andean origins in the *Comentarios* that raise questions regarding Garcilaso's purported will to homogenize Andean culture and also regarding the influence of European sources on Garcilaso. Castro-Klarén has elaborated a comparison of Garcilaso and Giovanni Botero in which she suggests a reading of the *Comentarios* as a political tract where his

commentaries on the Andean history are a close parallel to Machiavelli's comments on Livy in the *Discourses.* Sommer finds in Garcilaso's translation of León Hebreo a rehearsal of a style that weaves in and out of Spanish and Quechua cultures. Beyond a reference to his racial or even his cultural hybridity, his self-reference as mestizo or *indio* point to his position of marginality, to the place from which he writes. The *porque soy indio,* then, is not a gesture that aspires to validate an identity, but a rhetorical move that exposes hegemonic discourses and thus serves as a marker of an alternative historiography. I view these references to being an *indio,* as well as those that speak of himself as mestizo or Spaniard, as a baroque-like production of a *superject* (i.e., an emergent self), a discursive product, rather than a stable, essential mestizo *subject-author* that would underlie the process of a certain kind of mestizo writing. My reading points to how Garcilaso disrupts the categories that lend solidity and permanence to hegemonic selves. Otherwise, we run the risk of reading Garcilaso as anachronistically responding to the Cartesian subject. A baroque exuberance seems to me a more appropriate description than a Renaissance humanism in the likeness of Michel de Montaigne because Garcilaso lacks the introspection and convolution of the latter's writing self. Garcilaso's style is delightfully superficial, but nonetheless profound. On the notion of the baroque superject, see Deleuze (1988), who derives this concept from Whitehead (1969 [1929]).

3 Castro-Klarén (1996b) has elaborated a comparison of Garcilaso's and Guaman Poma's modes of writing subalternity that avoids establishing an opposition between them. For studies that oppose Garcilaso and Guaman, see, e.g., Seed (1991) and Wachtel (1971).

4 For extended discussions of Spanish historiography of the New World, the modern Western episteme, and the formation of Eurocentrism, see Rabasa (1993b).

5 Bernardino de Sahagún was the most accomplished ethnographer among the Franciscans in sixteenth-century Mexico. He arrived in New Spain in 1529 and remained there until his death in 1590. Sahagún was an active member of the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlaltelolco, where the sons of the indigenous elite were trained to read and write Latin, Spanish, and Nahuatl. These trilingual students assisted Sahagún in the collection of materials, the Roman alphabetic transcription of oral reports, and the various tasks involved in producing the *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España.* The *Florentine Codex* is the most finished version of a series of texts that Sahagún developed over the years. For a discussion of Sahagún's methods, the different texts, and the stages in the production of the *Historia,* see Klor de Alva (1988). Recent editions of the *Historia* include a Spanish one by Angel María Garibay K. (Sahagún 1956 [1579]) and an English bilingual edition of the Nahuatl version and the Spanish prologues by Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble (Sahagún 1950–82). For a facsimilar edition of the *Florentine Codex,* see Sahagún (1979).

6 For bibliographical and biographical information on Oviedo, see note 11 in chapter 1.

7 For biographical and bibliographical information on Las Casas, see note 21 in chapter 1.

8 I thank Anna More for making this observation in the course of a seminar.

6. Of Massacre and Representation

1 Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Spanish and French texts are my own.

2 For studies on the black legend, see, e.g., Juderías (1917), Carbia (1943), Maltby (1971), Powell (1971), Robinson (1973), and Sánchez (1990).

3 "Los españoles, de carácter soberbio, rudo y violento, bastante exacerbados por sus largas y sangrientas luchas contra los moriscos, fuertemente movidos además de insaciable ambición y exaltados hasta grado sumo por crudelísimo fanatismo; veían en los indios á seres 'más semejantes á bestias feroces que á criaturas racionales,' y como á tales les trataban: creían que por ser gente sin fé, podían indiferentemente violar á sus mujeres é hijas, 'matarlos, cautivarlos, tomarles sus tierras, posesiones y senorios é cosas, é dello ninguna conciencia se hacía.' Los Franceses, de carácter alegre, comunicativo y amable, un tanto desprendidos y de espíritu religioso amable, cuando no escépticos, miraban en los naturales á seres humanos inteligentes, más robustos, más agiles y hermosos que ellos, y no les despojaban de su riqueza, ni les arrebataban su libertad, ni estupraban á sus mujeres é hijas, ni tampoco les asesinaban, sino que les trataban afablemente como á iguales" [The Spaniards, with an arrogant, rough, and violent character, greatly exacerbated by the long and bloody struggles against morisco, moved by ambition and exalted by crude fanaticism, saw in the Indians beings "more like ferocious beasts than rational creatures," and as such they treated them: they believed that because they were people without faith, they could indifferently rape their wives and daughters, "kill them,