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Inca Garcilaso. Francisco Gonzáles Gamarra. Oil on canvas, 1959.

INCA GARCILASO AND THE BIRTH OF MESTIZO CULTURE IN THE AMERICAS  
AFRICAN AND ASIAN MIGRATION / FORESTS OF PERU  
THE CUISINE OF AREQUIPA

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# INCA GARCILASO AND HIS ERA

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In 1609, a book that would forge new dreams and utopias and create a new understanding of the most famous monarchs of ancient Peru appeared in Lisbon: *The Comentarios Reales* [published in English as *The Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru*]. Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, a writer and historian of mestizo [Spanish and indigenous] origins, took the greatest effort in this work to appreciate and integrate the two worlds he belonged to: the west and the Andes. *The Comentarios Reales*, full of nostalgic exaltation, subterranean conflicts, and dramatic tensions, marked the course of the new mestizo culture of the Americas and made its author the first canonical writer in the western hemisphere.

Life, art, memory, and aspirations are all nurtured and projected in this extraordinary adventure.

In 1539, the son of conquistador Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega, scion of a minor branch of a powerful family of Spanish nobles, and Princess Chimpú Ocllo, niece of the Inca Emperor Huayna Cápac, was born in Cuzco and baptized Gómez Suárez de Figueroa. On his father's side, he was related to such illustrious names as Zafra, Feria, and Garci Pérez, as well as two of the greatest Spanish poets, Jorge Manrique (his great-grandfather's cousin) and the Renaissance master Garcilaso de la Vega (his great-grandmother's cousin.) On his mother's side, he was linked to the members of the highest nobility, in particular the aristocratic faction led by Túpac Inca Yupanqui.

## A childhood in Cuzco

Gómez Suárez de Figueroa spent his childhood at his father's dwelling in Cusco. Chaos reigned in the city, which was shaken by civil wars between partisans of the *Encomienda* system, in which those who had led the conquest of Peru were given large landholdings in return for evangelizing the Indians who lived on said lands (led in rebellion by Gonzalo Pizarro), and troops loyal to the Spanish Crown. The first few years of Gómez's life were marked by a lack of basic foodstuffs, fear of attacks, and the absence of his father, enlisted with Pizarro's troops and branded a traitor by the Crown. He shared this painful experience with his mother and Inca relatives, his governess, and the other children of the household, including his half sister Francisca de la Vega, the daughter of *palla* or Inca Concubine María Pilcosisa. "Children, whether of Inca nobility or the common people, regardless of social distinction, would cry out strangely upon receiving even slightest gift". (RC IV-12).

While Gonzalo Pizarro was taken prisoner, found guilty of fomenting and leading the rebellion, and executed in Cuzco in 1548, Captain Garcilaso de la Vega was left unpunished and was, in fact, appointed mayor of the city. Like many of his conquistador counterparts, he was required to marry a Spanish woman, in his case Luisa Martel. Princess Chumpu Ocllo, baptized Isabel, was given in marriage to Juan Pedroche. Gómez



Façade of Garcilaso's house in Montilla.

Suárez remained in his father's home, and slowly became conscious of his fragile status as the mestizo son of his father's previous relationship despite the strong bonds of affection between father and son.

"There were too few schools and too many arms," writes Garcilaso (FI, 27). Along with other young mestizos, also the children of powerful conquistadors, Gómez Suárez attended Latin, grammar, and music classes taught by the expert Juan de Cuéllar. Cuéllar strongly encouraged his students to pursue their studies in Salamanca, Spain.

## Departure

Captain Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega died of "departure" in Cuzco in 1559. At the end of his life, his son transcribed the eulogy read in his honor, in a style that recalls that of Jorge Manrique's *Coplas por la muerte de su padre* [Couplets on his father's death].

"Because with his death fell a bastion of Christianity, the departed was.....the father of this nation, tireless supporter of the poor, friend to the good, enemy of the wicked, and, finally, the refuge of all that are natural." (H VIII).

The captain left his mestizo son the sum of four thousand pesos to travel to Spain and complete his studies. Towards the end of 1559, at the age of twenty, Gómez Suárez left his native land, never to return. Prior to his departure, Mayor Polo de Ondegardo took the young traveler to see the mummified bodies of the Incan Emperors, which he had just discovered. The subsequent voyage took him from Cuzco to Lima and from Lima to the isthmus of Panama, where he embarked at Port Nombre de Dios for Europe. Weather conditions made for a difficult crossing. He disembarked in Lisbon and from there went to Spain. After a short stay in Madrid, where he attempted to win recognition for his

father's feats at the court of Felipe II, Gómez Suárez settled in Montilla, at his uncle Alonso de Vargas' house, where he would live for the next thirty years. For a time, he shared his quarters with Luis de Góngora, the famous poet and playwright, who was the nephew of Luisa Ponce de León, Alonso de Vargas' wife.

## A warrior and a scholar

After an incursion into military life as part of the campaign against the Moorish remnants in Alpeujarras (1569-1570) which earned him the rank of Captain, Garcilaso decided to devote himself to his two great passions: horseback riding and literature. In Montilla, which he described as his "corner of poverty and loneliness," he was nevertheless able to acquire a broad knowledge of classical culture through the Priego library and his links to the Jesuits and other Cordoba based men and women of letters. One such man was Ambrosio de Morales, of the Order of Saint Jeronimo, who felt great esteem for the Inca. Morales was a highly influential and respected figure, as well as an erudite linguist and an expert in archeology. As an official historian, he was given the mission of increasing the El Escorial Library's funds, which gave him access to a plethora of manuscripts, including that of Cieza de León on the Incas of Peru. Morales also encouraged the surveying of Spanish towns, which was also undertaken in the Americas and later published as *Relaciones Geográficas de Indias* [Geographical Relations of the Indies].

## A chosen people

Archeology and references to the classical age are the theoretical framework that Garcilaso used to organize his materials. The neoplatonic philosophy of León Hebreo offered a model to reinterpret the Incas' sun worship as a from of monotheism and precursor to Christianity. The Temple of the Sun appears as the Western Hemisphere replica of Solomon's Temple, and Cuzco as a South American New Jerusalem. The Incas are presented as a chosen people that follows divine commandments. "In addition to worshiping the Sun as a visible god...the Inca Emperors and

Picture courtesy of Ayuntamiento de Montilla/Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ PUCP Cultural Center.



their *amautas*, who were the empire's philosophers, traced the illuminated path to the true God and Our Lord, who created heaven and Earth... which they called Pachacámac... which means he who gives life to the whole universe...he who gives the universe life gives it to the body as well." (RC II-2).

"And so, that they might see the love that, like his own sons, he had for them, he made it so that they and their descendants would always be called Incas (CR I-23). "The Sun had sent them to Earth to uplift men from the miserable life that they lived" (RC II- 19). Before his death, Manco Cápac gathered his sons and "told them that like him they must keep his laws and commandments" (CR I-15).

«...I went to the lodge of the educated Polo de Ondegardo [...] who was mayor of that fair city [Cuzco,] so that I might kiss his hands and bid him farewell before my journey. The former, between other favors he granted, told me, "Since you go to Spain, enter these chambers, you shall see some of yours who I have brought to the light of day, that you might bring something to speak of there." In the chamber, I found five bodies of the Inca Kings [...] I remember when I came to touch a finger of Huayna Capac's hand; it was like a statue, strong and hard [...] They would be carried wrapped in white sheets; on squares and streets the Indians would kneel before them; paying reverence with tears and wailing, and many Spaniards would take off their hats, as these were the bodies of Kings» (RC V-29).

### Inca society as political model

The description of the Inca form of government became part of the then ongoing debate in Europe regarding political models, and Inca Garcilaso became interested in the subject through the works of Tomás Moro, Guicciardini, and Jean Bodin. In his work *Tratado de las Repúblicas del Mundo* [Treatise on the Republics of the World] (1575), Jerónimo Román y Zamora provided an example of a Platonic republic based on virtue. Classical Latin works in Garcilaso's library led him to compare the first Inca emperors and the first Roman kings. The Inca government described in *The Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru* is fair and forward thinking; the empire

## THE WORKS OF INCA GARCILASO

### DIALOGS ON LOVE

Attracted to *Dialoghi d'amore*, by Leone Ebreo (also known as "Leon the Hebrew" in older English texts), an essay written by a doctor and rabbi who was forcibly exiled from the Iberian peninsula in 1492, Garcilaso decided to translate the work, despite its prominent position on the list of works banned by the Inquisition. In order to achieve this goal, Garcilaso learned the Tuscan dialect of Italian, as well as undertaking a rigorous study of neoplatonic philosophy and the Kabbalah. The common points of thought between the Old Testament, Judaism, and ancient Greek philosophy allowed Garcilaso to harmoniously integrate the paganism of the Incas with Christianity, as well as interpreting the Greek myths as allegories that brought Man closer to the divine. This is perhaps excessively abstract and can only be conceived of through its visible manifestation, the Sun. The importance of the cosmos in the Neoplatonic philosophy of Leon Ebreo would become a key element in Garcilaso's

quest to create a universal theology which encompassed the Incas as well as European thought. The synthesis of conflicting elements relating to Love created by Ebreo ("...There is nothing that unites the entire universe with its infinity of elements except Love.... [...] the sun is the simulation of the Divine understanding on which all understanding depends, and the moon is the likeness of the soul of the world") allowed Garcilaso to understand mestizo culture as the reconciliation of Incas and conquistadors. Love, in all its forms, is the divine engine of creation and the link which binds all mankind. In 1590, he published a Spanish translation of the work in Madrid, signing as "Garcilaso Inca de la Vega." Faithful to its original text and written in an elegant prose, this translation, "the new fruit of Peru" is still considered authoritative.

Leone Ebreo was not the only Jewish author who influenced Inca Garcilaso, "Josephus Flavius, whose works the Inca [Garcilaso] kept in his library, is a fundamental element in the construction of Inca identity. Firstly, due to his biography, in which Garcilaso saw a reflection of his own life. Josephus, a Jew from Jerusalem born in the year 37 AD, crosses over to the Roman camp and Latinizes his name[...]" The preface Josephus wrote to *The Jewish War* also had a great deal of impact on Garcilaso. This text, according to the author, was written in Aramaic and translated into Greek, just as the *Royal Commentaries* are the fruit of oral narration in Quechua and the existential dilemmas of a boy brought up in the language, later re-transcribed into Spanish.

### THE FLORIDA OF THE INCA

On par with the translation of Leone Ebreo's work, Inca Garcilaso took it upon himself to write the story of



the conquest of Florida based on the testimony of Gonzalo Silvestre, an old conquistador living in retirement in the countryside near Cordoba, "It made me indignant and seemed a great shame that such heroic works of men in this world have remained perpetually forgotten. As such, seeing myself in debt to both nations, because I am the son of a Spaniard and an Indian, I disturbed that fine gentleman many a time that we might write his story, and I served as his scribe." The two men often met in the town of Las Posadas, not far from Montilla. Silvestre would spin yarn after yarn of his story, while his partner put things in order and painstakingly wrote them down. Later, in the *Royal Commentaries*, Inca Garcilaso would argue for the excellence of the method which consisted in making oral narration the basis of writing in service of the truth. The book was published in Lisbon in 1606. In it, Garcilaso sung the praises of the Indians of the Mississippi, and stated that many *caciques* [local Indian rulers] were more generous than many Christian princes. For the first time, Andean terminology (*curacas*, *apus*,

royal highways) was used to describe other American Indian societies, "we are doing it (writing about the Indians in Florida) either for the conceit of writing, or to praise our nation, which, though its regions and countries are quite distant, are still Indies. (FI, II-27).

### THE ROYAL COMMENTARIES

In 1609 Inca Garcilaso published his most celebrated work, dedicated to his maternal ancestors and entitled *The Royal Commentaries*, which was the first part of his *General History of Peru*. In a style worthy of the Spanish Golden Age, Garcilaso produced the first work dedicated entirely to the glory of the Incas, refuting the criticism of most commentators of the age, who saw their rule as tyrannical. ●



Isaac Abrabanel, Leone Ebreo's father.



was organized in such a way as to best take advantage of tax labor, but also to supply the communities of the Empire with basic necessities. Blas Valera, the son of an Indian woman from Chachapoyas and a member of the Jesuit Order ordained in 1568, played an important role in the creation of the *Royal Commentaries*. In 1583 Valera was accused of immorality and imprisoned for three years in the basement of a house owned by the Jesuits in Lima, followed by six years of slightly less rigorous imprisonment until his liberation and subsequent trip to Spain. During his years in prison, he composed *Historia occidentalis* in Latin. Once he arrived in Cadiz, he was able to continue the Grammar classes he had begun before imprisonment, until 1596, when the English attacked the city. The Jesuits, who had a school there, were forced to flee Cadiz, and Valera, who had been weakened by years of suffering, had to be evacuated to Malaga, where he died a few months later. Parts of his works were saved from the fire that destroyed the school by Pedro Maldonado de Saavadera, who decided to give them to Garcilaso. He then translated them from Latin to Spanish and included key elements in the *Royal Commentaries*.

### The Celestial Empire and the Empire of the Sun

Through Jesuit missionaries, with whom he was closely linked, Inca Garcilaso discovered China, a kingdom ruled by a single moral system, Confucianism. Joseph de Acosta, a Jesuit brother and seemingly unavoidable figure, is referred to often in the work of Inca Garcilaso, contributing to the latter's knowledge with his work *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* [*Natural and Moral History of the Indies*], in which he compared China with the kingdoms of Mexico and Peru. In the chapter of the *Royal Commentaries* devoted to Emperor Pachacútec, he cites Valera's interpretations of the laws that "these Incas of Peru should be preferred, not only to the Chinese and Japanese and the East Indians, but also to the gentiles of Asia Minor and Greece." In this boastfulness, might there not be the key that would allow us to understand the disconcerting similarity between the Inca state of Garcilaso and the blue empire of China? ... We can extend this link to the same relationship that Spanish historians, as foreigners, have conceded, but they are unable to speak its language nor did they suckle its fables and truths at their mothers' breasts, as I did." (RC, II-10)

Obviously, this idealized portrait of the Inca Empire did not exactly correspond to historical reality. The Incas were not the first "civilized" people of Peru. The annexation of a variety of ethnic groups to Tahuantinsuyo [as the Inca Empire was known] would not have been possible without great bloodshed and killing. Human



The Death of Atahualpa as described by Guaman Poma de Ayala (XVII century.).

«Many times father Blas Valera told us that they should never be called Kings, but rather prudent and diligent teachers of pupils. And the Indians...called them lovers of the poor." (RC II-14). "...speaking of the antiquities of Peru and of the sacrifices the Incas made to the Sun [...] he spoke these words which are faithful to the letter: in whose reverence their successors made great sacrifices to the Sun, of sheep and other animals, but never of men, as Polo and his followers falsely affirm." (RC II-10). "The custom of never begging alms from anyone was still practiced in my time, and up to the year 1560, when I left Peru, wherever I may have gone, I never saw an Indian man or woman beg» (RC V-9).



"Spaniard and Mountain or Coffee Colored Indian woman together give birth to a Mestizo." Pictorial representations of the casts of Peru sent by Viceroy Amat to King Carlos III in 1770. Andean School. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Madrid.

sacrifice was practiced, as proven by historical witnesses and archeological evidence, although the Incas did confine it to a very small scale.

Inca monotheism is an illusion that induced Garcilaso to minimize the ritual importance of the worship of "huacas," sacred geological entities that are venerated to this day by rural residents of the Andes. Still, by presenting ancient Peruvians in such a positive light, and legitimized by his authority, Inca Garcilaso discredited other writers who justified the conquest in the name of overthrowing the tyranny of "natural despots." Garcilaso also constructed a historical model that was later used throughout the Americas for the recognition of dignity and rights.

### General History of Peru

The second part of the *Royal Commentaries*, entitled General History of Peru, was published in 1617, after the author's death. The book deals with the conquest of the Inca Empire by Spanish troops and subsequent civil wars between the victors; it also includes references to life in Cuzco in the 1540's. Inca Garcilaso does not miss the chance to refute the accusations of treason wielded against his father, whose presence illuminates an interesting narrative, unfairly overshadowed by the success of the *Royal Commentaries*. The development of the wars that pitted conquistadors, who demanded the perpetuity of *encomienda* landholdings, against representatives of the Spanish Crown, who sought to limit these privileges, constitutes the main focus of the work. The resulting "politically incorrect" narrative converts the rogues and traitors of official works, like Gonzalo Pizarro and Francisco de Carvajal, into heroes. Carvajal appears as mentor to Gonzalo Pizarro and the defender of a new society founded on an alliance between Incas and conquistadors, opposed to the Crown's inappropriate wishes. The plan was a failure and the two were executed to serve as an example to others. Captain Carcilaso de la Vega will therefore achieve in extremis a new status as a loyal follower of His Majesty.

Photo: Daniel Giannoni.





## Túpac Amaru

In 1572, Viceroy Francisco Toledo dispatched Martín García de Loyola and his troops to Vilcabamba, refuge of the last Inca Emperor. The Inca was captured and taken to Cuzco in chains, where he was sentenced to death and decapitated. Garcilaso had already left Peru when the incident took place, but included the execution in his *General History*, basing his text on reports sent by his friends. He is visibly on the side of Inca Túpac Amaru, and severely judges Viceroy Toledo, putting the following words in the mouth of King Felipe II: "That His Majesty had sent him to Peru, not that he might kill kings, but rather that he might serve kings." (H. VIII-10).

## Final Years

Disappointed by his inability to win official recognition of his father's deeds, Inca Garcilaso joined a religious order, and in 1596 was ordained as a simple cleric, taking vows of penitence, poverty, and chastity. Around the beginning of the seventeenth century, he became a superintendent of the staff of the Hospital of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady of Córdoba in San Nicolás de la Villa, a facility specializing in the treatment of "Gallic sickness" (syphilis.) As he wrote in a letter to Juan Fernández Franco in 1593, "As such I beg of Your Grace to treat me as would befit a soldier who, through perdition, has become a humble student too late."

In September 1612, Inca Garcilaso solicited the Bishop of Córdoba's permission to acquire a crypt for his remains. Preparing for death and eternity, he also drew up a will with numerous codicils, for which he bequeathed his furniture, along with a small annual inheritance of 80 ducats for his concubine Beatriz de Vega, who he referred to as "my maid." He freed Marina, a Moorish slave, from her condition, and also mentioned three servants, among them his son Diego de Vargas, in whom he entrusted the care of the crypt. Inca Garcilaso died in Córdoba on the night of April 22, 1616, and his body is buried in his crypt at the mosque-cathedral of said city. The epigraph on his tomb reads, "Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, distinguished man, worthy of perpetual memory, illustrious of blood, expert in letters, valiant in arms, son of Garcilaso de la Vega, of the ducal houses of Feria and Infantado, and of Elizabeth Palla, niece of Huayna Cápac, last emperor of the Indies. Wrote the commentary on *La Florida del Inca*, translated León Hebreo, and composed the *Royal Commentaries*. Lived in Córdoba, with much religion, died an exemplary death; left a bequeathment for this crypt, and lies herein, linked his worldly goods to the enfranchisement of the Lost Souls of Purgatory, who are forever patron, master and ruler of this Holy Church." Three years after the death of his father, Diego de Vargas became verger of the chapel of the Blessed Souls of Purgatory.



"A Mestizo and an Indian woman together give birth to a Cholo". Pictorial representations of the casts of Peru sent by Viceroy Amat to King Carlos III in 1770. Andean School. Museo Nacional de Antropología, Madrid.

«They called us, the children of Spaniards and Indian women, or of Indians and Spanish women, "mestizos," which meant that we were a mix of both nations. This term was created by the first Spaniards who had children with Indian women. And, as the name created by our fathers, I use it and am honored by it.» (RC IX - 31).

## The Impact of Inca Garcilaso's works

With the exception of Bartolomé de Las Casas' Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies, no book on indigenous civilizations in the Americas enjoyed such complete success as The Royal Commentaries. For more than four centuries, the image of the Incas throughout the world was that which Garcilaso forged in his work. In France, Enlightenment philosophers used the work to criticize colonial and religious despotism. The illustrated edition of 1714 inspired part of the plot of Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera *Les Indes galantes*. A similar tone can be found in the work of Jean-François Marmontel (1777.) In debates on the collectivization of land during the French revolution, the Incas were mentioned. Ten years after the United States won its independence, poet Joel Barlow called Manco Capac, "our Western patriarch" and considered the Incas to be the most noble of civilizations.

In Peru, Cuzco born rebel José Gabriel Condorcanqui Túpac Amaru II (1780-1781,) kept the Royal Commentaries in his library. The book, deemed subversive by colonial authorities, was banned after the execution of the rebels. Leaders of the South American independence movement such as José de San Martín and Manuel Belgrano considered restoring the Garcilaso Inca Monarchy, and the Inca-stylized sun became one of the symbols of the new South American republics. In 1850, Justo Sahuaraura's "Recuerdos de la monarquía peruana" were published in Paris, with sixteen watercolor illustrations. Based on the Royal Commentaries, Sahuaraura's work elaborated a

prophecy inserted into the 1723 edition of the book, which announced the redemption of the Incas.

In the early 1900's, Peruvian essayists Luis E. Valcárcel and José Carlos Mariátegui revisited this idealized version of the Inca past to construct a new world. In 1928, Louis Baudin published *L'Empire Socialiste des Incas*, in which he emphasized the importance of reciprocity and redistribution in Inca society. Raúl Porras Barrenechea summarizes the contribution of Peruvian Garcilaso researchers with, "Riva Agüero considers him to be the representative incarnation of Peruvian intelligence in his use of classical contemplation [...] Mariátegui considers him to be the first Peruvian, understood as the product of two distinct races with the Spanish element predominating [...] Valcárcel sees the Royal Commentaries as the Indian bible."

In 1978, John V. Murra, the leading authority in the field of Andean Studies of his time, took stock of the historiographical importance of Garcilaso's work in these terms,

"Stressing the aspects of welfare, principally in the work of Blas Valera and the ample echo that his ideas had after being incorporated into the widely read Royal Commentaries of the Incas, .... both remake Inca history by making it seem longer and more glorious than it was. Finally, both exaggerate the paternal benevolence with which the Inca empire treated its subjects, if we consider this myth against the harsh reality in which both grew up....Such criticism, however, does not mean that in their opinion that in the Inca Empire there was a greater ethnic and com-

munitarian responsibility. That would be completely illusory in terms of individual well-being...it was a local, ethnic society, which, in the time of the Inca empire, before the conquest, organized the efforts of its members in order to allow access for all to the group's strategic assets."

If, in light of advances in historical research, certain understandable spurious statements have been found in the Royal Commentaries, this does not invalidate its impact in the process of creating a conscience and utopias in the Americas during the last four centuries, nor the validity of many of its assertions, bolstered by the excellence of its style. The ideological projections of the mythical element of Tahuantinsuyo have changed, and Inca Garcilaso himself has been successively praised, reviled, turned into a schoolbook "fact," and the target of criticism, without the disappearance of the Royal Commentaries as a captivating and essential work.

The Peru of today is not, obviously, the one that our author left behind when he left for Spain in 1559. If he could come back, he would surely appreciate the complex results of an intercultural exchange that in his time he incarnated as part of a small, growing minority that was seen as dangerous and untrustworthy, and now represents the majority population in Peruvian life. This majority remains full of hope, despite the problems that it has yet to overcome. Inca Garcilaso particularly tried to value the cultural richness of his Inca ancestors and would surely be happy to see the appreciation with which other cultural expressions of native groups, which sustain the richness of the cultural kaleidoscope in Peru and throughout the Americas, has blossomed. His struggles against prejudice and discrimination, despite the limitations of these very concepts in his time and his own perspective, would undoubtedly be further strengthened in present day life, in which his works continue to exert a special fascination for those who read them. The continued relevance of his message is summed up in the dedication to the second part of his seminal work: "To the Indians, Mestizos, and creoles of the Kingdoms and provinces of the great and glorious Empire of Peru, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, your brother and countryman, with health and happiness." ●



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1. Túpac Amaru I.



2. The Marriage of Martin de Loyola to Beatriz Ñusta. Anonymous. Cuzco school. Late XVII century. Oil on canvas. Church of...

## TIMELINE OF THE LIFE AND ERA OF INCA GARCILASO DE LA VEGA

- 1532 Francisco Pizarro and his troops undertake the conquest of Peru.
- 1533 August 29th- the execution of Inca Emperor Atahualpa in Cajamarca.  
November- Arrival of Spanish troops in Cuzco.
- 1534 March-The City of Cuzco is re-founded by Spanish troops.
- 1534 January 18th- The City of Kings (Lima) is founded.
- 1539 Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, future Inca Garcilaso, is born in Cuzco.
- 1541 Francisco Pizarro assassinated in Lima by the son of Diego de Almagro and partisan supporters.
- 1544 Beginning of civil wars between *encomienda* holders and supports of the Spanish Crown's "New Laws" limiting the privileges of the former.
- 1545 Gonzalo Pizarro performs the execution of Viceroy Blasco Núñez.
- 1548 Gonzalo Pizarro executed.
- 1549 Captain Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega marries Luisa Martel, from Spain. Carlos V prohibits illegitimate mestizos from holding public office, except by special permission.
- 1551 Pacification of Peruvian territory. First Provincial Council meeting takes place in Lima. *Encomienda* landholders' interests are limited by Crown administration. Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza visits Cuzco.
- 1559 Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega dies in Cuzco. Gómez Suárez leaves for Spain.
- 1561 Gómez Suárez de Figueroa arrives in Montilla, Spain. On his uncle Alonso de Vargas' advice, he changes his name to Garcilaso de la Vega. He travels to Madrid and presents King Felipe II with a request for recognition of his father's services to the Crown. The request is denied.
- 1570 At the request of Alfonso Fernández de Córdoba, the Marquis of Priego, he leaves Montilla and participates in the war against the Moors in Alpujarras, under the command of Juan of Austria. He reaches the rank of Captain. Garcilaso becomes a writer and develops friendships with local historians and antique dealers such as Ambrosio de Morales, along with members of the Jesuit order.
- 1572 Inca Emperor Túpac Amaru is executed in Cuzco on Viceroy Toledo's orders.
- 1590 *Dialogues on Love*, by Leone Ebreo, is published in a Spanish translation signed by Garcilaso Inca de la Vega.
- 1591 Garcilaso de la Vega moves to Cordoba.
- 1596 Garcilaso writes *Genealogía de Garci Pérez de Vargas escrita por su descendiente* Garcilaso de la Vega, llamado el Inca, [The Genealogy of Garci Pérez de Vargas written by his descendant Garcilaso de la Vega, known as the Inca] originally meant to be used as the prologue to *La Florida del Inca*. That same year, English troops invade the Port of Cadiz and burn the Jesuit school to the ground. Some documents are saved from the fire, including the notes Blas Valera took about the Incas, which were sent to Garcilaso.
- 1606 Publication of *La Florida del Inca. Historia del adelantado Hernando de Soto... y de otros heroicos caballeros españoles e indios* [published in English as *The Florida of the Inca: The Fabulous De Soto Story*] in Lisbon, edited by Pedro Crasbeek.
- 1609 Publication of the *Royal Commentaries* in Lisbon, edited by Pedro Crasbeek.
- 1616 Inca Garcilaso de la Vega dies in Cordoba, on the night of April 22. He is buried in the mosque there. The same day, Miguel de Cervantes dies in Madrid, and the following day William Shakespeare dies in Stratford-upon-Avon (according to the Julian calendar, while in the Gregorian calendar the date is May 3rd.)
- 1617 The *Historia general del Perú*, is published in Cordoba, posthumously dedicated to the widow of Andrés Barrera.
- 1625 *Observations of Things Most Remarkables, Collected Out of the First Part of the Comentarios Royal written by Inca Garcilaso de la Vega* is published by Samuel Purchas, *His Pilgrims*, London.
- 1633 The French translation of the *Royal Commentaries*, entitled *Le Commentaire royal ou l'Histoire des Yncas, Roys du Pérou écrite en langue péruvienne par l'Ynca Garcilaso de la Vega, natif de Cuzco, fidèlement traduite sur la version espagnolle* translated by J. Baudoin and edited by Auguste Courbé, is published in Paris.





f the Company of God. Cuzco.

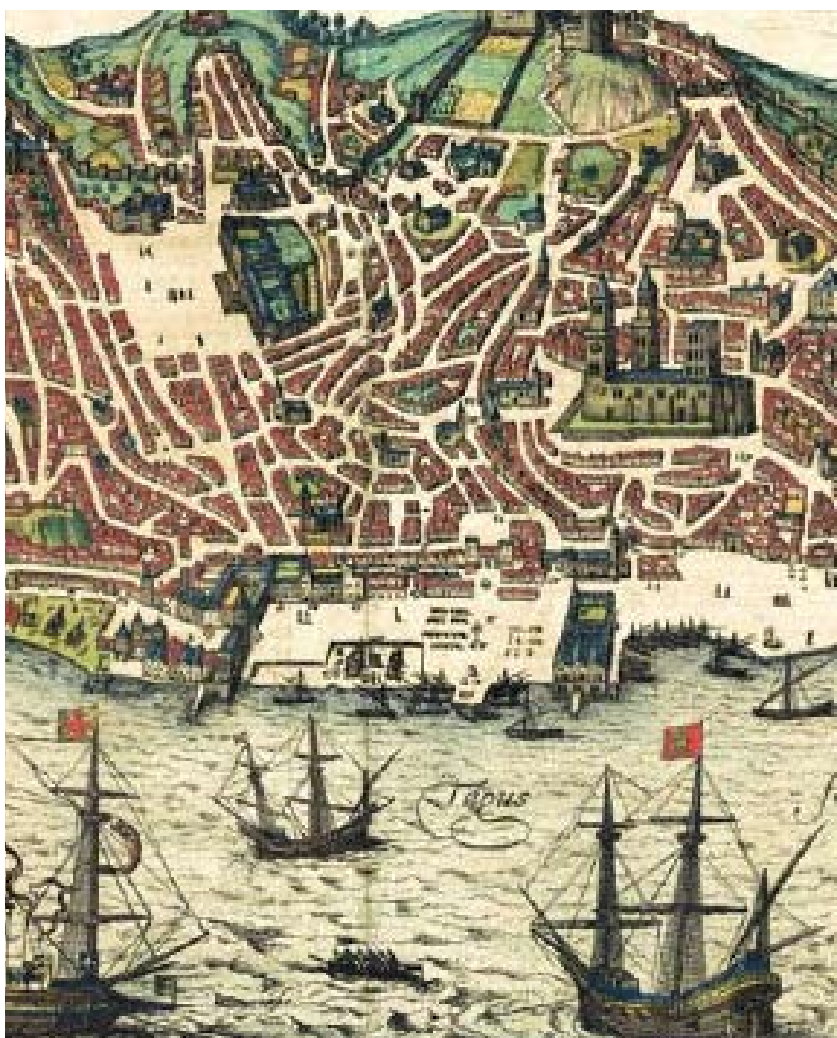


3. Mosque of Cordoba.



Illustration: T. de Bry.

4. The assisination of Francisco Pizarro at the hands of followers of Diego de Almagro.



5. Lisbon, mid XVI century.



Cuzco. San Antonio Abad del Cusco University.

6. Marcos Chinquán Topa Inca. XVIII century. Anonymous. Oil on canvas.



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# AN APPETIZING TRILOGY

Teresina Muñoz-Nájar

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Last year, three books were published on the same illustrious subject: the culinary riches of Arequipa. Each of these works brings its own important contribution to the field and the three have, in a short time, become fundamental texts for anyone interested in the origins and history of the city's famous *picanterías*, as well as those whose interest goes no further than preparing one of the many mouth-watering specialties that Arequipa is so well known for. The following text is drawn from these three delightful books.

## AREQUIPA, PICANTES Y PICANTERÍAS [Arequipa, Spices and Local Restaurants]

By: Raúl Vargas y Sergio Carrasco.

Published by the Backus Foundation in celebration of Arequipeña brand beer, August, 2008.

"Books on Peruvian cuisine generally focus on recipes, which does not necessarily seem like a mistake to me. Nevertheless, this book was conceived using an approach to *picanterías* as the expression of a cultural phenomenon. The idea was to focus not only on what goes into the frying pan, or is served at the table, but rather to stir the spoon beyond the stove itself, to stir it as deeply as possible into the culinary experience, but without losing sight of it as an object," Sergio Carrasco, Arequipa born and raised journalist and co-author of *Arequipa, picantes y picanterías*.

And, as a matter of fact, the book contains prolific and detail oriented research on perhaps the best part of Arequipa's mestizo cuisine: *picanterías*, the local restaurants that offer up spicy regional dishes of world renown. We asked Carrasco if the book was an homage to the latter. "Without a doubt, it is an homage to *picanterías*. But it is much more than just that. It is also a look at Arequipa, at its traditions- while maintaining a critical distance from this or any other corner of the earth; at the way traditions are transforming, preserving or losing their essence, through the prism of an empty glass of local anisette liquor or a farm worker's binoculars. For me personally, it has been a way to go back to the good old days, as I don't get back to Arequipa as often as I'd like to and am a vehement *picantaría* fan, as well as a way to reconnect with this past that seems irredeemably far away.

*Arequipa, picantes y picanterías* is divided into three sections: the splendor and saga of *picanterías*, tradition and renewal, and legendary chefs. It also offers 29 recipes gathered in the best *picanterías*, a useful glossary of Arequipa slang, an extensive bibliography, and an annex with the entire text of the book translated into English. Each chapter also features, page by page, the testimony of numerous famous chefs, both women (who make up the vast majority of *picantería* chefs) and men.

Raúl Vargas' introduction to the book deals with gender in Arequipa cooking as follows: "Bit by bit, as has



Scenes from a chicha bar, based on an engraving by Paul Marcoy. 19th century.

occurred in other parts of Peru in which the kitchen was the private domain of women, men have begun adventurous sorties into the timeless embers of the hearth, firewood, and suffocating heat. This space in which the cries of stately women defending the home, punishing children, scolding husbands, and welcoming friends and family ring incessantly. The women of Arequipa are admirably portrayed in this book, including Angélica Aparicio of *Los Geranios Picantería*, Celmira Cerpa Rodríguez who works at the unbeatable *Sol de Mayo picantería*, Chávez Delgado, of *La Escondida*, Mónica Huerta Alpaca of *La Nueva Palomino*, María Meza Cárdenas, head chef at *Sabor Caymeño*, Lucila Salas Valencia of *La Lucila*, Marilú Vera Pinto of *La Manuelita*, Laura Salas, of the immortal *Cau Cau* and her four daughters: Socorro, Lily, Velmy, and Zaida Villanueva. Also included are those who have inherited and continue their mothers' culinary skills at other classic *picanterías*: José Díaz Huerta of *La Capitana*, Alberto Rodríguez Chávez of *Yaraví*, and, finally, Alfredo Valderrama Pérez of *La Mundial*."

Throughout the book, the authors immerse themselves in early writings on the Americas and the Andes as well as ancient documents to evoke the spirit of *picanterías*, (whose origin lies in the Colonial era bars that served *chicha*, a fermented corn drink) and show us what was eaten and who was served there. So, for example, we find this rich description by Zoila Aurora Cáceres in *La Ciudad del Sol* [City of the Sun] (1927), "on that crudely hewn table, set with a favorite cut of meat, known as 'picante' ['spicy'] which is prepared in an infinite variety of ways, and whose aroma is eminently appetizing thanks

to the hot pepper contained in the recipe. In large crystal glasses, painted with lovely flower motifs, they serve that most appreciated popular drink known as 'chicha,' composed of several fermented grains. Each glass contains at least two liters, and, though it would seem impossible to drink even half of one, after tasting the first bite of 'picante,' you could order a second glass without succeeding in quenching your thirst." Zoila Aurora, like many other writers, emphasizes the two fundamental elements of the *picantería* since its inception: chile peppers and chicha.

Finally, we asked Sergio Carrasco to reveal what the most important discovery that he made was during the research for his book. "It might be to prove that the regional cuisine of Arequipa, particularly the cuisine of the *picanterías*, is not necessarily born of a single culinary tradition, as is almost universally believed today. Rather, what happened is that, while many of these dishes were not created in Arequipa (from Chupe de Camarones [shrimp soup] to soltero de queso [cheese and corn salad] to cite just two, which were also served in other parts of the country at least until the nineteenth century), what Arequipa has done is to put its own mark on them, to make them its own and then return them to the national repertoire." Another relevant finding—again, according to Carrasco—is related to the contradiction that, "it is hard to understand something that is both a sign of change and endurance at the same time: while *picanterías*' chefs toil endlessly in the defense of a tradition, which is also in some ways mine, and they are able to compete, now more than ever, with innovative, modern restaurants, the variety of

dishes they serve is constantly in decline, as if they were going into battle with ever fewer weapons."

*Arequipa, picantes, y picanterías* also features a stupendous map of the *picanterías* still in existence in the city, those that have disappeared, and those that have become more conventional restaurants.

## ENTRE HORNOS Y ROCOTOS

[Between Ovens and Rocotto Peppers]

By: Blanca Chávez. Published by San Martín de Porres University Press, March, 2008.

Over twenty years ago, Blanca Chávez opened *El rocoto*, the emblematic restaurant for Arequipa residents who, for one reason or another, had to move to Lima. Where could they speak that unique language known as 'arequipeño' and at the same time knock back a glass of *chicha* or savor a nice piece of meat in *pebre* [onion, chili, coriander, parsley and tomato] sauce, if not at *El Rocoto*?

Through all these years, Blanca Chávez has also devoted herself to promoting the customs and traditions of Arequipa in Peru's capital city, through numerous festivals and meetings, until finally she was able to publish *Entre hornos y rocotos*, a book that has caused quite a sensation since being released.

The book, which contains almost one hundred recipes, came out in March of last year, and immediately became the authoritative luxury picture and recipe work on the cuisine of Arequipa. Chávez explicitly pays homage to the *picanterías* run by her "countrywomen" and extracts from each one she visits a recipe for a dish on the culinary endangered species list. This extraordinary selection includes guinea pig in a blood sauce and fava bean omelets wrapped in sea kelp. *Entre hornos y rocotos* also features beautiful pictures taken by photographer Walter Wust and more than one research thesis regarding the origin of *picanterías* and their importance as meeting places, born at the same time as the Colonial government. A great cookbook that the city has long deserved.

## LA GRAN COCINA MESTIZA DE AREQUIPA [The Great Mestizo Cuisine of Arequipa]

By: Alonso Ruiz Rosas. Published by the Regional Government of Arequipa with the support of Cerro Verde Mining Corporation, August, 2008.



This is a book that defies the boundaries of genre. In fact, it defies all boundaries. It is almost 500 pages long, and, as Ruiz Rosas himself (Arequipa born poet and cultural promoter) explains, contains three self-contained but complementary sections: Studies, Recipes, and Epilogue. As such, the book could easily be divided into three individual publications. In “Studies,” Ruiz Rosas not only examines the Andean and Hispanic roots from which Arequipa’s Mestizo cuisine flourished, but prolifically describes the main products in these traditions (rocotto pepper and the fig-leaf gourd, among others) He does not limit his research solely to *picanterías*, but rather he explores other “laboratories of gastronomic fusion” including private homes, and convents, the places where, along with *picanterías*, Arequipa cuisine was born. If you’ve ever wondered what was served at the cloistered tables of Arequipa’s leading convents at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, this book will delight your culinary imagination. Other interesting documents that Ruiz Rosas weaves seamlessly into the text are an excerpt from the nineteenth century traveler Paul Marcoy’s notes, as well as one from Flora Tristan’s *Peregrinations of a Pariah*. Marcoy writes, “Each one of these congregations has its own specialty. Santa Rosa has a carmine red pudding, which tastes much like our own red eggs, and is exposed overnight on the convent roofs, where the cold winds impart a particular flavor. Santa Catalina stands out in the preparation of pastries and bird sweets made from layered almonds, the region’s version of caramel. El



Urban tavern. Distillation and drinking of chicha. Based on an engraving by Paul Marcoy. 19th century.

Carmen, finally, offers honey fritters dusted with rose petals and gold straw, as well as its imperial egg yolks beaten and mixed with powdered sugar and set using a method we are unaware of.” For her part, Flora Tristan, who was the biological niece of leading Arequipa citizen Pío Tristan, had this to say, among other things, about her stay in the city in 1833: “I will tell you the way in which they eat. Their breakfast is at nine in the morning. At this meal they eat rice with onions, (cooked or raw, they put onions in everything) and roast mutton, but so poorly cooked that you can never eat it. Then they have chocolate. At three they serve a rotten pot filled with a confused mix of a variety of foods: beef, bacon, and mutton boiled with rice, seven or eight kinds of vegetables, and any fruit they happen to have at hand, such as apples, pears, peaches, plums, grapes, etc. A concert of tone deaf singers or untuned instruments would not attack the senses of sight, smell, and taste as this barbarous amalgamation does.”

Flora’s commentaries are indeed damning, but—as Alonso Ruiz Rosas notes—“It must be kept in mind that

our Flora Tristan, so admired for other aspects of her work, came from what was then the culinary capital of the world, where Antonio Carème, the “Napoleon of the Oven,” created and codified the art of cooking, headed by a thorough process of refinement of the emerging bourgeois palette. It must also be remembered that the author’s extraordinary sensitivity in other matters and problematic issues is, interestingly, accompanied by an evidently limited ability to appreciate the differences between different cultures and customs. Her testimony is, however, illuminating, and allows us to see the continuation of many characteristics of local gastronomic expressions.

Ruiz Rosas also adds annexes to his own work, another section which allows the reader to achieve an even better understanding of how and what people ate in Arequipa in the nineteenth century. *La mesa peruana o sea el libro de las familias* [The Peruvian Table, or the Book of Families] which is no less than the first cookbook (anonymously) published in Peru. It was written and published in Arequipa, at Francisco Ibáñez’s print shop, in 1867, and republished in 1896 and

1924. The document is, without a doubt, a treat.

This book also contains close to 500 recipes for a variety of dishes native to the Arequipa region, collected with an enviable patience by the author. Another Arequipa born poet, Oswaldo Chanove, who kindly permitted Ruiz Rosas to use them, had already compiled many of them. The inclusion of nine different versions of the famous “cheese cauche” demonstrates the painstaking work involved in compiling the work. Nothing, it seems, was left out.

In addition, the author annexes five recipes (from four women from Arequipa) that were included in *Cocina ecléctica* [Eclectic Cuisine] published in Buenos Aires in 1890 by the Argentinian writer Manuela Gorriti. One of these, ‘April Soups’ was submitted by María Nieves y Bustamente, who was the author of the novel *Jorge o el hijo del pueblo* [Jorge, or the son of the people] (1892).

Finally, in the section entitled “Memory and the palette’s guide,” Alonso Ruiz Rosas, Oswaldo Chanove, and Rosario Núñez, three Arequipa born poets, give testimony to their culinary experiences in Arequipa, from childhood to the present. The three stroll through every corner of the city in their mind’s eye and tell us what a three cornered roll, Scottish Kola, a *mollendino* ice cream, and Mrs. Lucha’s pasties tasted like.

Also included is a guide to all the restaurants and *picanterías* in Arequipa where you can eat (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) with their respective addresses and telephone numbers, and, of course, and extensive glossary. Alonso Ruiz Rosas has accomplished an amazing feat. His book is truly a literary gem. ●

## RECIPES

Collage by Gredna Landolt.



### SUCKLING PIG IN PISCO SAUCE WITH ROCOTTO PEPPER SPIKED LIMA BEAN PURÉE

Taken from *Entre hornos y rocotos*.

**Ingredients:** 1 five kg (11 lb.) suckling pig, 6 tablespoons salt, 2 cups of vinegar, 4 roasted potatoes. For the Rocotto pepper spiced Lima bean purée: 1kg (2.2 lbs) Lima beans, 10 cloves garlic, 4 large rocotto peppers, 6 tablespoons olive oil, 2 tablespoons butter. Marinade: 1 cup *Acholdado pisco*, ¼ cup vinegar, ½ teaspoon cumin, ½ teaspoon black pepper, 1 teaspoon dried oregano and thyme, 6 tablespoons ground garlic, 3 tablespoons pureed hot red pepper, 3 tablespoons butter, beef broth, salt.

**Preparation:** Suckling Pig: Soak overnight in plenty of water, salt, and vinegar. Throw out this mix and rinse the pig thoroughly before soaking in the marinade, making sure the marinade penetrates both inside and out. Put in oven on medium (180°C/350°F) for two hours, basting it often in its own juices and adding beef broth as necessary to avoid drying the meat out, but allowing for a uniform roasting. Purée: Soak the Lima beans for at least five hours and peel. Then boil, adding garlic to the water. The initial water level should be enough to immerse the beans. Once boiled, whisk with a large spoon until the mix becomes a thick paste. Add butter. Remove all veins and seeds from the rocotto pepper and wash thoroughly before peeling and mixing in a blender with olive oil. Mix into the pureed Lima beans. Serve a good sized piece of the suckling pig on a bed of purée. Garnish with rice, roasted potatoes, and onions marinated in lime juice with hot pepper.

### CELADORES

Taken from: *Arequipa, picantes y picanterías*. Recipe courtesy of La Capitana *picantería*.

**Ingredients:** ¾ kilo (1.5 lb) small shrimp, 2 sliced onions, 3 sliced tomatoes, 2 cloves of garlic, 4 boiled white potatoes, 6 limes, oil, vinegar, salt, *canchita* (corn kernels toasted in an earthenware pot with salt and a little bit of oil).

**Preparation:** wash the shrimp and peel. Tenderize lightly with a wooden hammer. Mash the garlic into a puree in a blender and mix in lemon juice. Marinate the shrimp in this mixture for 15 minutes. Mix the tomatoes, onions, oil, vinegar, and salt into the marinade. Serve with the potatoes and *canchita*.

### QUINOA AND SHRIMP STEW

Taken from: *The Great Mestizo Cuisine of Arequipa* Recipe courtesy of Lorenza Mamani.

**Ingredients:** 300 grams (2/3 lb.) thoroughly washed quinoa, 800 grams (1 ¾ lb.) medium sized fresh shrimp, 1 liter boiling water, 4 tablespoons panca chili

paste, 1 large red onion, diced, 3 medium sized tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and diced, 2 sprigs fresh oregano, 1 sprig huacatay, 1 ½ cups evaporated milk, olive oil, salt, black pepper, 150 grams (1/3 lb.) Paria cheese, 6 medium potatoes, peeled and boiled.

**Preparation:** Boil the quinoa. Set aside. Clean the shrimp, peel, and keep the heads. In one finger of water, parboil the shrimp heads and bodies, mix with milk in a blender, sift, and set aside. In a little bit of oil, brown the garlic and onions. Add the panca chili paste and reduce. Pull the oregano off of the sprig, and add, along with the tomato, stir vigorously until the tomatoes begin to come apart. Add the shrimp heads and tails, salt and pepper to taste, and stir for two to three minutes. Pull the huacatay leaves off the sprig and add. Then add the quinoa, the sifted milk, and mix carefully. Let cook for one more minute on low flame, stirring to avoid having the mixture stick to the pot. Thickly grate the cheese and add to the mixture, check seasoning, and serve with boiled potatoes.



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# AFRICAN AND ASIAN INFLUENCES IN THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE PERUVIAN PACIFIC COAST

— Humberto Rodríguez Pastor\* —

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The ships that brought African slaves and Asian indentured servants to Peruvian shores were laden not only with workers, but also with cultural traditions. The historical and social context which awaited these men, women, and children would determine the future of these traditions.

The periods in which workers arrived at these latitudes, first from Africa and later from Asia, were completely different, as were the conditions under which they worked; nevertheless, there are certain common denominators, which characterize the situation of both immigrant groups. Important differences include the number of immigrants who were brought to Peru and the extent to which these immigrants and their descendants were integrated into Peruvian society. Immigrant populations were destined almost exclusively for labor on the coast, and if there were groups of workers that were taken to the mountain or jungle regions of Peru, this occurred in specific situations in which the fixed need for laborers was larger than the available workforce. The pattern for these regular flows of immigrants was constant: wherever there was a greater need for workers than the local population area was able (or willing) to satisfy, an attempt was made (usually successfully) to bring workers from elsewhere, even from Asia and Africa, despite the great distances involved. This shortage of manpower, considered endemic throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is linked to the ups and downs of economic activity. African slaves were brought to work in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when additional manpower was required for mining work, and “pieces of ebony,” as the slave trade’s merchandise was cruelly known, were again brought to Peru when the *hacienda* farming system on the coast had somewhat solidified in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. There was also interest and even anguish to bring Chinese “coolies” over from Asia when a workforce was needed to extract and package guano and when the feudal farming elite needed “arms” to pick cotton and for sugar cane, and for these same purposes Polynesian workers were brought to Peru during the early 1960’s, and, earlier in the twentieth century, thousands of workers were brought from Japan, in addition to many other successful and unsuccessful attempts to bring ever cheaper labor to these shores. Interestingly, though, there is an explanation: while all this was going on, less than 100 kilometers (60 miles) away from the coast, in the mountains, there were great masses of indigenous workers who refused to go down to the shore, and at the same time it was difficult to convince workers native to the coast to work in the sectors that required an ever greater number of field laborers.

**Afro-Peruvian life on the coast**  
Having lived far longer on the coast than



Sound of the demons. Watercolor by Pancho Fierro, mid XIXth century.

any other immigrant group (with, perhaps, the exception of the Spanish) Afro-Peruvians have become culturally and biologically interwoven into the deepest level with regards to what is thought of as “Coastal” culture. What we now think of as Afro-Peruvian contributions to Peruvian culture are in fact the condensation of a process whose beginnings varied widely, in as much as slaves were brought to Peru from throughout Africa and Latin America and had very different cultures. Just to mention musical genres, instruments, and dances of African origin would give us a multitude of cases. To further complicate matters, in many cases, forms of cultural expression that are now almost exclusively the domain of Afro-Peruvian communities are not, in fact, of African origin. For example, today, Afro-Peruvian poets are the most well known practitioners of the poetic genre that is the “*décima*,” (a ten line verse in tetrameter, sometimes known as “the little sonnet”) and yet, many years ago, we read that, “in *decima* the conquest of the Inca empire was sung, in *decima* the chronicle of more than one battle in the civil war between conquistadors was celebrated, in *decima* the Viceroy was criticized, and in *decimas* they were praised.” The tradition of *decima* verse in Peru gave birth to a whole body of pro and anti-colonialist poetry that reached a frenzied pace during the revolt of Tupac Amaru.

Contact between African slaves and their white owners brought the former to adopt much of the latter’s culture, including their language, foods, culture, and the Catholic religion. There are less than 500 words that have come into

Peruvian Spanish from the multitude of languages that the slaves brought with them, and each has been assiduously studied by Fernando Romero. But the Spanish spoken in Spain and brought by the conquistadors had already been influenced by African languages, due to large sub Saharan African communities living throughout the Iberian peninsula, particularly in cities like Seville. In the Americas, and as is the case in Peru, the Spanish language incorporated further African influences which are now used in daily life.

On the other hand, Afro-Peruvians were able to preserve their own music and dances, and, until the mid nineteenth century, these were still secretive, organic expressions of an independent cultural life. They also had their own “kings,” continued venerating their own spirit gods, and performed elaborate African dances. When they were forced to celebrate Corpus Christi European style, with traditional European music, they consented, and immediately followed the festivities with their own lasciviously pagan, intricately musical version, which continued by torchlight until dawn.

## Chinese-Peruvian culture on the coast

According to our own conservative estimates of the population descended from Chinese immigrants (if we consider just the coolies who were brought to Peru during the nineteenth century) there are most likely more than two million of them. This, of course is nothing more than an estimate of their genetic legacy. The cultural legacy

of Chinese immigrants is, of course, incalculable. This goes as much for the ostensibly visible contributions made to the culinary arts, and, more in the past than the present, to the legions of small businesses they ran, as well as subtler aspects of life, such as the image that Peruvians have of China. In fact, the Chinese influence in Peru has been more intense than in almost any other country except Cuba, which had very different patterns of migration. As such, we have frequently wondered; what exactly have these Asian immigrants contributed to modern Peruvian society? How did this cultural transmission take place? Have the cultural differences between the two peoples been so accentuated that there has been no assimilation of Chinese into the culture of the Peruvian coast? Were Chinese immigrant groups closed off into their own communities, and only sporadically in contact with the surrounding neighborhood?

If we estimate that 100 thousand Chinese workers arrived in Peru over the course of the nineteenth century, at least 45 thousand of these might have left descendants, and if we take an average of 3 children each, then, the first generation of Chinese-Peruvians (sometimes called *injertos*, or hybrids, in the popular language of the day) would have numbered around 135,000. And if this generation, in turn, also had three children each, (average figures for nineteenth century families in the region) then the second generation would be made up of 405,000 people; and current generations would number more than one million descendants of Chinese coolies. These figures leave out Chinese immigrants who arrived after 1874. This estimate is just a conjecture, and needs to be further investigated and refined.

It would seem impossible for Chinese workers to have been completely isolated from the rest of the population. This was far from the case on *hacienda* farms, or while the laying of track for the railroad, or at Chinese owned restaurants and stores. As for the *Barrio Chino*, or Chinatown in Lima, which has been in continuous existence since the 1860’s, it was and has been an area basically dedicated to commerce where, though Asian family life was predominant, non-Asian customers were regular visitors. There are many cases of mixed marriages between Chinese men and Afro-Peruvian and indigenous Peruvian women. In the homes formed by these marriages, the children were brought up in both cultures, but one where the mother’s cultural traditions were



dominant, since this was the same as in the surrounding environment. This Asian influence survived to some degree, but with each passing generation, the Asian and Chinese tradition cedes further to contemporary Peruvian life. In homes where both the father and mother were, or are, Chinese, this influence is, in contrast, kept alive. Middle class Chinese families are those who have been most successful in defending their culture and language, and those whose children continue to be "Chinese." Poorer Chinese, for the most part, have been absorbed into the cultural environment (whether on the coast, in the mountains, or in the jungle) where they live. Possibly due to a pattern of immigration that has experience great ebbs, flows, interruptions, and other drastic changes over the years, the strength of Chinese cultural presence and influence in Peru has been such that it is not something separate from the rest of society, but rather within each and every member of the socio-cultural space that is the Peruvian coast.

For decades now, the taste of Chinese food has been widely known throughout the Peruvian coast as part of each family's daily diet. Office or family celebrations are often held at Chinese restaurants, which in Peru are called *chifas*. Such is the Peruvian passion for Chinese food that even in the smallest outdoor market, Chinese ingredients and vegetables are available for sale. And there is almost no store or supermarket where you can't find at least a small bottle of soy sauce. But, of all Chinese foods consumed in Peru, the one that is most popular is rice, which is widely accepted and celebrated at virtually every meal. Not that the Chinese were the first to eat rice, but their presence prompted a much larger volume of the grain to be produced and consumed. Currently, every citizen of the Peruvian coast is a regular consumer of rice. How do we know that this culinary custom is an integral part of the culture? Possibly because it is tangible and can be easily proven. There are other elements of Chinese cultural traditions that are just as well integrated into coastal idiosyncrasies, but we don't even notice them, much less have an awareness of their origins. A sociologist has informed us that in some small towns on the coast that once had large Chinese populations, which have since been diluted through intermarriage, local residents are always friendly, polite, and more refined in their daily interpersonal dealings. If such is the case, why not consider that important but subtle aspects of Asian culture have been woven into the cultural identity of residents of the Peruvian coast, and are part of their cultural universe? ●

Extract from *Negritud. Afroperuanos: resistencia y existencia* [Negritude. Afro-Peruvians: Resistance and Existence] Centro de Desarrollo Étnico (Cedet). Lima, 2008. 460 pp.

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## SOUNDS OF PERU

ANDRÉS SOTO. *EN VIVO* [LIVE] (Self published, 2008)

This album had to wait six years to come out. It was recorded live on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002, at the Peruvian National Museum, in Lima, where Soto was honored as part of the "Living Cultural Heritage of the Nation." It is not easy to make live recordings without destroying the magic of the moment. On Andrés Soto's CD there are songs like "El ropavejero" [a profession exclusive to the metropoli of the third world, where men come asking for old clothing to be resold] —the song that starts the disc off— which recalls the streets of Lima, where the esthetic is governed by urban characters like those who recycle glass bottles and scrap metal, and together make up a portrait of the human being as a father and husband. Andrés Soto majored in Sociology and then began his musical career in the 1970's. In those years he met Chabuca Granda, the great Peruvian singer and composer, which inspired him to continue songwriting. Guest singers on the disc include Cecilia Barranza, Mocha García Naranjo, and Elsa Palao, who won the Chabuca Granda Popular Song Award with her hit "Al Adalid." "Quisiera ser caramelo," [I wish I was a piece of candy] "Negra presuntuosa," [Arrogant Black Girl] and "El tamalito" [The Tamale.] are just a few of the stylings that the masterful Soto includes on this disc, songs that he wrote and which subsequently have gone around the world, sung by other performers. A worthy addition to any music collection. Information available online at [www.myspace.com/AndresSotodelPeru](http://www.myspace.com/AndresSotodelPeru)

VÍCTOR MIRANDA. *HERENCIA. PERUVIAN CHOL OUT*

(Self-Published, 2008) *Herencia* is the first album from an experienced author, songwriter, and composer of a

variety of scores for plays, television shows, and films. Peruvian genres, especially music from the coast (*criolla* and Afro-Peruvian music) predominate, with dabs of jazz, pop, and electronica, creating an urban fusion that Miranda calls "chol out." He explains that, "All of my friends call me *cholo* [a sometimes pejorative term for indigenous Peruvians who move to large cities]. That's why I called the album 'chol out,' which sounds like *chill out*, but is something else." Each of the eleven songs on the CD gives the feel of a mature musician with his own style. The city, love, and nature are part of his musical imagination; "Bolero de los malecones" [Singer on the boardwalk] and "Serenó" [Cop] take us through downtown Lima and the Miraflores district, while "Solos son dos" [Two are Alone] and "Hay un lugar" [There is a Place] explore love and relationships. "Valle" [Valley] and "Aves" [Birds] on the other hand, take us through the beauty of Peru's Andes Mountains. Each is part of a group of musical feelings. "My interest in music is essential personal and artistic escape and atonement... My goal is not to make music and create hits or be on the radio." His next album, entitled *Hotel Horizonte*, should be coming out soon, but enjoy *Herencia* in the meantime. More information available online at: [www.myspace.com/victormirandacholout](http://www.myspace.com/victormirandacholout)

VARIOUS ARTISTS. *LA GRAN REUNIÓN. LOS GUARDIANES DE LA MÚSICA CRIOLLA. RENACIMIENTO* [THE BIG MEETING. GUARDIANS OF CRIOLLA MUSIC. REBIRTH]

(Sayariy, 2008) The CD of *La gran reunión* is smartly designed and supplemented with beautiful black and white pictures taken by Philippe Gruenberg. From the very first track, we are enveloped by the album's at-



From left to right: Willy Terry, Genaro falcón, Francisco Rodríguez, Víctor Arce, Víctor Chumpitaz, Eduardo Aban "papeo".

mosphere, which is like a small party where music and feeling are one and the same. Nineteen seasoned artists who incarnate the very essence of *criolla*, or traditional coastal music, are brought together for the first time in history. Genaro Falcón, José Villalobos, César Oliva and César Molina are among the voices on *La gran reunión*, singing favorites like "Saltimbalqui", "José Herrera" and "Sueños de opio" [Opium dreams] (by Felipe Pinglo), "Anhelos" [Wishes] and "Inquietud" [Restlessness] (by Pedro Espinel) or "Vida" [Life] (by Pablo Casas.) This album-document, whose production was led by Willy Terry Sáenz and Fernando Urquiaga Heineberg, is a valuable resource not only for diehard fans of the genre, but also for anyone wishing to enjoy the vitality and charm of good music. Instruments go to the very heart of *criolla* tradition, using the guitar, drums, and the famed Peruvian *cajón*, a percussion instrument whose form evolved from the fruit crate. The music of the Peruvian coast hits a perfect note, with a few detours through genres like drinking songs, polkas, and fox-trots. A great addition to any music lover's collection. More information available online at: [www.sayariy.com](http://www.sayariy.com)

(Piero Montaldo) ●

### CHASQUI Cultural Bulletin

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# PERU, LAND OF FORESTS

Antonio Brack

Given its large extension of forests and jungles, the great opportunities for productive and protective reforestation, and the high level of dependence of a considerable part of its population on woodland resources, Peru is undeniably a country linked to its forests.

## A country devoted to forestry activities

The forest, and especially the Amazon rainforest, provides a plethora of goods to the local populations who use them in their everyday lives, goods such as firewood- a source of energy for the home; food (fruit, palm heart, game animals, etc;) medicine (medicinal herbs;) and many others (pigments, colorants, fibers, ichthyotoxines, etc.).

There are over 25.4 million hectares (62.76 million acres) of permanent forest in Peru. This means that the land in question is able to be used for forestry activities. In fact, this activity has not reached anywhere near its full potential, which is proven by forestry and forest products' small share of Peru's GDP, hovering between 1% and 4%.

Peru ranks fourth worldwide in the number of flora species, and fifth worldwide in the size of its forests, but the lack of a real forest management program causes the costly and inefficient importing of products (lumber, wood, pulp, etc.) that could be produced domestically.

## The environmental services of forests

Environmental services provided by forests are natural processes. Worthy of mention are the removal of contaminants and CO<sub>2</sub> from the air, weather regulation, water production, and the maintenance of soil nutrients.

The Amazon basin has the largest extension of tropical forests on Earth, and humans have claimed only 12% of this area. The remaining 88% continues to be virgin forest, and its ecosystems are mostly intact.

The Amazon rainforest boasts the biggest diversity of flora and fauna in the world, and scientists estimate that within these forests dwell 50% of existing species on the planet. According to research carried out in several places in the Amazon (San Carlos de Rio Negro, Venezuela; Camisea, Peru; Loreto, Peru; and Madre de Dios, Peru) one hectare (2.4 acres) of Amazon rainforest contains an enormous biomass (some 900, 200 kilograms of animal and plant life,) up to 300 species of trees, with more than 10 centimeters of DBH, around 2,000 plant species, and a great variety of fauna (367 species of both diurnal and nocturnal butterflies, 55 different species of ants, 54 of bees and wasps, 200 of spiders, 81 different species of beetles, 66 of amphibians, 48 of reptiles, 200 of birds, and 100 different species of mammals, mostly bats).

The aquatic ecosystems in the Amazon provide environmental



Young girl drinking Yarina palm nectar.

services like the regulation of water flows, the dilution of waste water, the maintenance of both the nutrient cycle and aquatic biodiversity, serving as a means of transport, supplying water to the atmosphere, and as a place of recreation and scenic beauty.

The Amazon basin is the most extensive on planet Earth. The Amazon river is not only the longest and deepest river on Earth, but also the one with the largest volume of flow and the highest diversity of fish. While the entire continent of Europe hosts just 200 species of fish, the Amazon basin is home to at least 3,000.

The diversity of aquatic environments in the Amazon is enormous, as is its biodiversity. There are rivers of brown and white water, dark or crystalline rivers, thousands of lagoons, millions of hectares of swamps shaded by Moriche palms, and long expanses of Hooding lands. They are home to unique species of dolphins, giant river otters, and the longest freshwater fish on the planet, known as the *paiche* or the *piranucu*.

## The forests Peru could have

There are about 10 million hectares (24 million acres) of forest land in Peru that must be reforested. The lion's share of lands apt for reforestation is in the Andes mountains, where erosion and soil degradation have caused considerable harm. Since 1980, only 500,000 hectares (1,235,500 acres) have been reforested a figure dwarfed by the 10 million hectares (24 million acres) that are chopped down every year.

Reforesting 100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) annually would generate some 50,000 jobs, and the cost would not surpass US \$50 million. But the social impact of this reforestation on the Andean region, an area that has suffered from chronic poverty since the colonial era, would be remarkable due to the influx of jobs and the provision of now scarce resources (firewood, lumber, and other tree products).

The economic impact would be even more considerable due to the creation of new economic activities in the medium term, such as a vibrant

logging industry, wood pulp treatment plants, and the like. Countries like Chile have undertaken aggressive reforestation programs (2.1 million hectares, or 5 million acres, in 25 years) and succeeded in creating a highly productive export sector (US \$2.4 billion in 2003).

The environmental impact of reforestation would be both local (soil, water, fauna, and flora conservation) and global, as each replanted hectare would remove at least 200 tons of existing CO<sub>2</sub>, the leading cause of global warming, from the air.

Forest plantations are one of the most interesting options that could be used to overtake rural poverty, given their high capacity to generate permanent, sustainable jobs and resources in the medium term. In the Andes mountains, there are at least 7 million hectares (18 million acres) of farmland, of which about 2 million are suitable for productive reforestation, while the rest could be reoriented to protect hydrographic basins.

In the Amazon region there are at least 3 million hectares (7.5 million acres) located in both lowland jungle and high altitude cloud forests. The most interesting areas lie in the high altitude cloud forest regions of the departments [provinces] of Cuzco (Quillabamba-Yanatile, with about 300,000 hectares,) Ayacucho (the Apurimac River Valley,) Junin (Chanchamayo and Satipo,) Pasco (Oxapampa,) Huanuco (Tingo Maria,) San Martin (the Huallaga and Mayo river valleys,) Ucayali, and Loreto.

Peru would be wise to implement a 20-year reforestation program based on the following criteria: reforest no less than 100,000 ha/year; use a wholly entrepreneurial approach based on private investment; encourage the association, when necessary, of rural communities and private corporations; complement the project with processing and export industries; establish a legal framework that guarantees state support in order to attract investment; integrate reforestation programs with existing and new programs aimed at generating employment and alleviating poverty.

The benefits of such a program would be astounding: the creation of a new economic sector in the country, whose exports would gradually reach the threshold of US\$ 3 billion annually, the creation of around 800,000 permanent jobs, the conservation of water and soil resources, and the recovery of unproductive land. ●

Adapted from Peru, Land of Forests. Graph Publishers Ediciones and La Positiva Insurance Company. 178 pp., 2009.  
www.graphediciones.com.

## TYPES OF FORESTS IN PERU

Tipo	km <sup>2</sup>	Hectares
Dry forests, north coast	36.345	3.634.500
Algarroba woodlands	24.307	2.430.700
Hill woodlands	1.514	151.400
Ceiba woodlands	10.524	1.052.400
Inter.-Andean dry forests	3.106	310.600
Mangrooves	45,5	4.550
Tropical forests of Tumbes	225	22.500
Upper Amazon rainforests	154.362	15.436.263
Lower Amazon rainforests	471.226	47.122.600
Flooded rainforests	36.902	3.690.00
Moist rainforests, slopes	76.198	7.619.800
Moist rainforests, hills	304.097	30.409.700
Moriche palm woodlands	14.151	1.415.100
Pacal woodlands	39.978	3.997.800
Andean forests	937	93.700
TOTAL	666.246,5	66.624.650