

THE ATLANTIC WORLD



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 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2015
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-0-415-46704-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-73921-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by Saxon Graphics Ltd, Derby

Printed and bound in the United States of America by Publishers Graphics, LLC on sustainably sourced paper.

CHAPTER FIVE

FACING EAST FROM THE SOUTH

Indigenous Americans in the mostly Iberian Atlantic World

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Laura E. Matthew

Where do Indigenous peoples of the Americas fit within the Atlantic World paradigm? It cannot be imagined without them. Like their counterparts in the North Atlantic, Natives in the mostly Iberian South Atlantic were prominent allies in European military conquests and active participants in an extraordinary cultural and intellectual exchange. Their lands and labour were essential to the wealth of new empires. Their agriculture helped trigger a demographic boom in Europe. Like Africans and to a lesser extent Europeans, Native Americans experienced dramatic relocation and dislocation in the South Atlantic during the early modern period. 'Indians, far from being marginal to the Atlantic experience, were, in fact, as central as Africans,' writes Jace Weaver, arguing for a Red Atlantic to parallel Paul Gilroy's Black one. 'Native resources, ideas, and peoples themselves traveled the Atlantic with regularity and became among the most basic defining components of Atlantic cultural exchange.'¹

Yet as Paul Cohen has pointed out, there are good reasons for historians of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas to hold the Atlantic World at bay.² The dizzying sense of movement that so often characterizes Atlantic studies stands in stark contrast to Indigenous America's powerful sense of historical permanence: the 'we people here' that the Nahuas of central Mexico used to describe themselves in their own language rather than adopt the Spanish misnomer *indios*.³ Indigenous Americans were and are the only members of the Atlantic World rooted in the hemisphere 'since time immemorial', as they often claimed in Spain's colonial-era courts. In the face of warfare, epidemic disease, and colonization, some Natives reconstituted their communities in relation to known geographies. Others proclaimed their indigeneity despite significant migrations.⁴ And while some Natives were coastal peoples, continents rather than oceans constitute the centre of Indigenous American history. Natives did not cross the sea to the same degree as Europeans and Africans during the early modern period, and for Indigenous history the Pacific represents the shoreline of major civilizations rather than an even more remote outpost of Europe or Africa. To fold Indigenous history into the Atlantic World therefore runs the risk of academic cannibalism. Too often, Native America serves merely as a tragic backdrop to the main stories of Atlantic history thus far: the global rise of Europe and the African slave trade.

My answer to this dilemma is not to provide an overview of Indigenous history under European colonialism, an approach that evades the question of 'where Indigenous peoples fit'. Nor do I wish here to catalogue the ways in which Native America inevitably participated in the rhythms of the Atlantic world, though this approach – exemplified most recently by Weaver – has its merits.⁵ Instead, I will explore three key themes of Atlantic World history that have mostly been developed from a European or African perspective: imperial warfare, transatlantic migration, and imagining the Other. What happens when we interrogate these themes from the perspective of Native America, in this case from the Caribbean and northern Mesoamerica to Patagonia? Do the themes still make sense? Are the histories they tell still Atlantic?

BEYOND CONQUEST: IMPERIAL WARFARE

Atlantic history tends to distinguish between the mostly Spanish, sixteenth-century military conquests of Native America and the violence incited by Dutch, French, and English challenges to the Iberian empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are good reasons to do so; the mutual shock of initial contact combined with the fall of such large, hierarchical polities as the Mexica and Inca empires would not be repeated.⁶ From an Indigenous historical perspective, however, early conquest wars and later imperial rivalries are not so easily separated. Imperial rivalries within and amongst the Mexica and Inca sowed as much destruction as the European invaders, and were replicated on a sometimes smaller scale in nearly all successive encounters with Europeans. The sixteenth century was not uniquely Spanish or even Iberian; French, Italians, English, Irish and Dutch entered the South Atlantic and engaged Native Americans almost immediately. Militarized incursions into un-subjugated Native territory continued into the mid-nineteenth century and beyond. And like their European counterparts, Native leaders consistently confronted the perils and possibilities of the Atlantic World by adopting new methods of warfare to their advantage and exploiting tensions among strangers, from the sixteenth century onwards.

It has long been recognized that internal and imperial rivalries played a major role in the downfall of both the Mexica and the Inca empires. From 1519 to 1521, the Spanish served as crucial allies in what was essentially an uprising of massive proportions against the Mexica centred at Tenochtitlan. Yucatecan Maya initially attacked the Spanish expedition led by Hernando Cortés in 1519. But as Cortés traveled up the Gulf Coast he encountered informants eager to stoke his interest in Tenochtitlan with tales of great riches and abusive leadership. The independent *altepetl* (city state) of Tlaxcala, implacable enemy of the Mexica, attacked the Spanish as they approached Tlaxcalteca territory. At the point of doing away with the intruders, the Tlaxcalteca then proposed an alliance against the Mexica. The partnership was sealed by a joint massacre against the ancient *altepetl* of Cholula, bringing the pacified pilgrimage site into the alliance as well. Accompanied by thousands of Tlaxcalteca and Cholulteca warriors, the Spanish were escorted inside Tenochtitlan and received as guests. For six months, the strangeness of the situation and Moctezuma's clear concern provided Tlaxcala and its partners a perfect opportunity to destabilize the imperial city before being forcibly chased out in June 1520. During the following year the insurgent allies rebuilt their forces, incorporating disaffected *altepetl* subject to the Mexica. They attacked Tenochtitlan again in June 1521, with a new partner:

Ixtlilxochitl of Texcoco, a breakaway member of the Mexica's own Triple Alliance. Weakened by siege and smallpox, Tenochtitlan fell in August of that year. As William Prescott put it in his epic, nineteenth-century Anglo-American history of the event, 'the Indian empire was in a manner conquered by Indians'.⁷

The Spanish conquistadors, despite being the natural heroes of their own letters and chronicles, reported that tens of thousands of Nahuas and others fought alongside and vastly outnumbered them in Mesoamerica. But seeing the conquest of Tenochtitlan from a Native perspective means more than simply acknowledging the extent to which Natives participated in the event. Historians have recently emphasized the Mesoamerican flavour of Hernando Cortés's and other Spanish conquistadors' *entradas* into Tenochtitlan and later, to the edges of the former Mexica empire.⁸ Spaniards relied on Mesoamerican messengers, military and political intelligence, and knowledge of the region for cues regarding future campaigns. They went where the Mexica had gone, towards regions of significant wealth or production on the suggestion of Mesoamerican leaders who also gathered troops, coordinated supplies along the invasion routes, communicated with resistant towns, and colonized recently pacified areas based on their own past experience and strategic aims. The Mexica were key players in these early efforts, supported by their vast military infrastructure. Michel Oudijk and Matthew

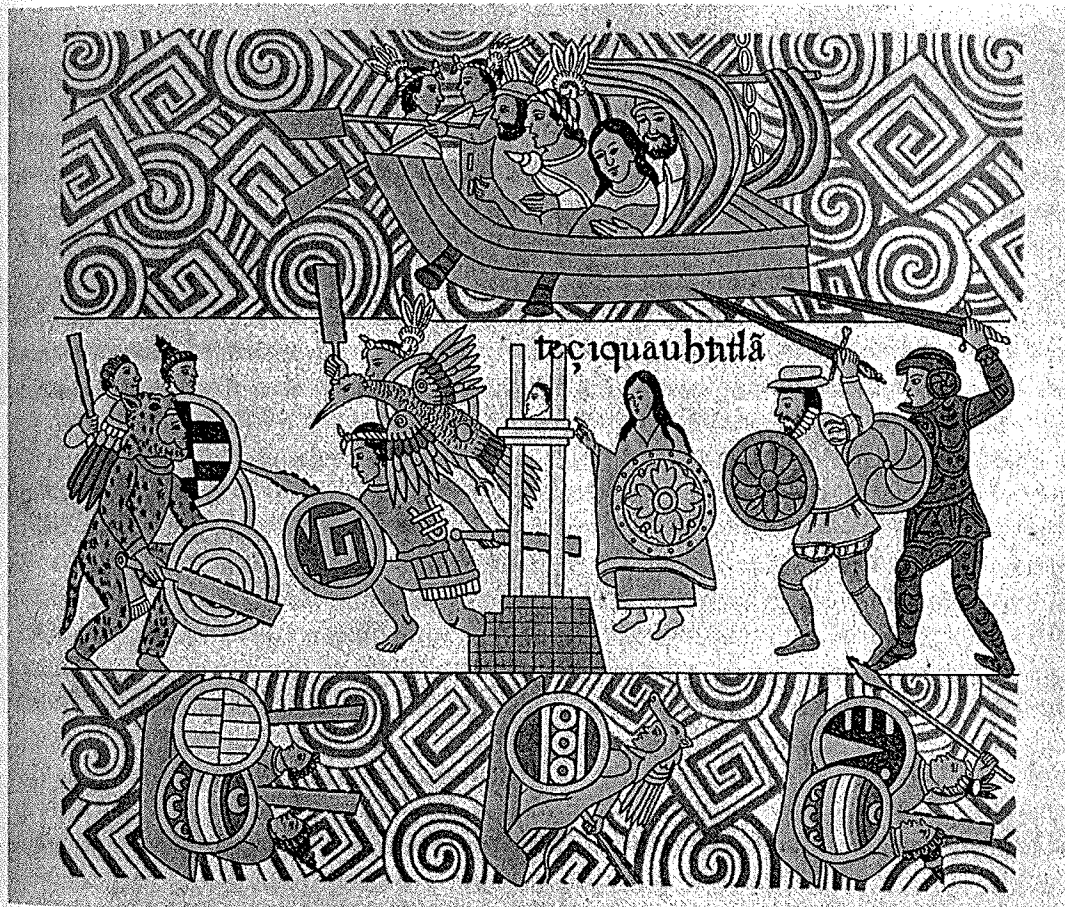


Figure 5.1 Tlaxcalteca and Spaniards fighting the Mexica Tenochca at Tenochtitlan
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Restall deem the spread of joint Mesoamerican-Spanish forces extending from Peru to New Mexico 'precedented expansion', as defeated yet still powerful polities shifted alliances and were recruited for new campaigns in ways that would have seemed utterly familiar to Mesoamericans.⁹ While Spaniards brought valuable new technologies, an element of unpredictability, and in some cases a desperate viciousness, 'Spanish' campaigns against Mesoamerican polities in the sixteenth century followed recognizably Mesoamerican patterns and goals and were fought mostly by Mesoamericans themselves, sometimes entirely independent of any Spanish participation or even awareness.

The Inca empire, too, was famously brought down as much by intra-imperial and regional rivalries as by Spanish attack. The death around 1528 of the Inca Huayna Capac, head of the four-cornered empire Tahuantinsuyu – possibly of smallpox, which arrived in Peru before the Spanish did – set off a fratricidal war of succession into which the Spaniards were inserted. One son, Atahuallpa, seized control of his father's armies in the north. Another son, Huascar, seized the capital city of Cuzco in the south and led a campaign against Atahuallpa that resulted in Huascar's defeat. After the famous, violent encounter between Atahuallpa and the Spanish conquistador Pizarro in November 1532 that led to Atahuallpa's capture, Atahuallpa ordered Huascar's execution in Cuzco from his *own* captivity in Cajamarca. Another son of Huayna Capac, Manco Inca, allied with the Spanish to take over Cuzco after Atahuallpa's execution by Pizarro. Manco Inca abandoned Cuzco to the Spanish in 1536. His sons maintained independent Inca rule in Vilcabamba for almost forty years, until the defeat of Tupac Amaru in 1572.¹⁰ Meanwhile, other Andeans allied with the Spanish against the Inca. The Cañari of modern-day Ecuador and the Chachapoya of the regions north of Cuzco had only been subjugated by the Inca a half century earlier, and sided with Huascar against Atahuallpa. They remained loyal to the Spanish when Manco Inca later broke his own Inca-Spanish alliance, with varied results across their dispersed colonial-era settlements.¹¹ And in Cuzco, the new Spanish ally Paullu Inca carefully built his own political dynasty based on his increasingly sophisticated reading of Spanish ideas of lordship. Andeans gathered intelligence about and manipulated the Spanish as much as the other way around, and maintained particular, even triumphant, memories of the period.¹²

The historiographical prominence of these imperial defeats is what sets the early Spanish conquests apart, not any particular patterns of alliance and warfare. At the same time that the Spanish were fighting wars of conquest in Mexico and Peru, both Spaniards and Portuguese were making steady but less spectacular inroads into independent regions such as the Muisca territory of what would become the Kingdom of New Granada (Colombia), the Brazilian coast, and the Rio de la Plata area, with varying mixtures of violence and diplomacy.¹³ Challenges to Iberian expansion arose almost immediately from English and French pirates threatening both the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts throughout the sixteenth century, and from English, German and Dutch explorations and settlements along the Atlantic coast beginning as early as the 1530s. In every instance, Natives resisted and aided Europeans according to their own strategic aims. Northeastern Brazil and Guyana, where no Native empire existed, is a case in point. Speakers of Karib, Awarak, and Tupi languages alternately fought, fled and allied with the Portuguese, English, Irish, French, Dutch and Scots who established trading posts along the Atlantic coast. The intruding Europeans depended on Native allies to protect them against each other, against hostile Native groups,

and eventually against African slave revolts on sugar plantations. One Native lineage in the Darién peninsula, the Carrisolis, positioned themselves as the main point of contact between Spanish administrators and potential Native allies based on their descent from a Spaniard captured and adopted as a boy.¹⁴ These Native-European alliances, however, depended on remuneration and were easily dissolved. Where Europeans saw treachery and betrayal by subjected Indians, Natives saw opportunities for trade and the maintenance of their autonomy. At the same time, European incursions led to new intra-Native alliances, conflicts and migrations, leading to wholly new tribal configurations still surviving in the Amazon today. In northeastern South America, as Neil Whitehead put it, 'tribes made states and states made tribes.'¹⁵

In the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries, the history of European invasion of the Americas looks much the same. Natives continued to resist and aid Europeans, to maintain their own polities, to suffer and survive epidemic disease, and to play European rivals off each other well beyond the early modern period, in ways that strongly echo the early conquest and colonial experience. In northern New Spain, the Comanches, Apaches, Kiowas, Caddos, Pawnees, Tonkawas, and other Native groups so thoroughly controlled their own and surrounding territories between 1750 and 1850 that they rendered European and Euro-American claims to land and power practically meaningless. Native trade and diplomacy purposefully pitted the French, British, and Spanish against each other in the eighteenth century, and the United States against Mexico in the nineteenth. At their height of territorial and political dominion the Comanches were so unassailable that Pekka Hämäläinen has classified their network of family alliances an empire akin to that of the Mongols. Like the sixteenth-century Natives of northeastern Brazil, the Comanches allied with U.S. agents only as long as they received remuneration (sometimes as ransom for stolen captives), and viewed offers of money as gifts between friends rather than indications of submission.¹⁶ Like the Spanish-descended Carrisolis of Darién in the seventeenth century, Quanah Parker, the son of an Anglo captive woman and a Comanche man, would be the primary point of contact between his tribe and the U.S. government in the 1860s and 1870s though with a decidedly less friendly beginning and less assimilationist attitude. At the other end of the Iberian empire the newly christened Mapuche – in reality, like the Comanche, a shifting mix of alliances and kinship groups – also maintained their independence and control of substantial territory well beyond the beginnings of Chilean and Argentinian statehood. Once again, some chose to ally with invading powers while others resisted.¹⁷ As had been true for the 'Chichimeca' at the fringes of the Mexica empire and the resistant Inca of Vilcabamba in the sixteenth century, only with concerted, violent repression and the continued pressure of European and Euro-American colonization – not only Spanish, Anglo-American, Chilean, and Argentinian, but also German, British, French, and Italian – would the Comanches in the north and the Mapuches in the south finally be subjugated.

In Atlantic history, imperial warfare almost always refers to conflicts between Europeans. It is temporally situated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and geographically near the water (on the ocean, in the Caribbean, along coastlines) or in imperial borderlands (which as Claudio Saunt has pointed out were also Native homelands).¹⁸ But from a South Atlantic Native perspective, the term 'imperial warfare' also brings to mind the sixteenth-century Mexica and Inca whose own militarism and rivalries are impossible to disentangle from their experience of

European conquest. It alludes to the shifting Native alliances that characterized not only these early conflicts but many hundreds of smaller or less famous military encounters throughout the early modern period and across the American continents. It does not preclude the epic battles for Comanchería and Patagonia in the nineteenth century, or the 'rebellions' of Tupac Amaru in Peru and the Caste War of Yucatan. What seems most pertinent in all these military encounters is their inherent sense of instability and insecurity, which quickly hardened into a 'colonial normal' characterized by unequal power relations and enforced by violence.¹⁹ Bernard Bailyn's characterization of the early Atlantic World as imperiled by 'authorized brutality without restraint' can be extended far beyond the sixteenth century.²⁰

INDIANS IN UNEXPECTED PLACES: TRANSATLANTIC MIGRATION

Transatlantic migration from east to west – whether voluntary or forced, European or African – has been a foundational topic of Atlantic Worlds research. Intra- and intercontinental migrations of Indigenous peoples constitute a rich vein of research for the history of Native America. But what about Natives who traveled from west to east? It is an indication of how intermittently this question has been asked that a recent surge of interest in the topic has rested firmly on the foundations of mid-twentieth century scholarship.

The largest numbers of Natives traveling to Europe in the sixteenth century were slaves and servants, many of them children who came primarily from the Caribbean in the earliest years of colonization. Slaving was a natural extension of Christian expansion during medieval times and intensified after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the progression of the Portuguese into the Azores and Madeira Islands and northwest Africa. Christopher Columbus and his associates brought a dozen or so Native slaves from the Caribbean to be shown and sold in their first journey back to Europe, in 1493. By 1495 slaving had become a formal enterprise, and Columbus famously brought some 500 Native captives to Iberia in four ships that year. In a pattern that would be repeated, some died on the journey while others became so ill that they were left in Andalucía while the little more than the half remaining were sent to Barcelona to be presented to the queen. Isabel I was apparently disturbed by the sight of these survivors, and suspended any future slaving until the legal question of the Indians' status as vassals of the Crown could be resolved. Columbus and others meanwhile continued to bring hundreds of Native captives to Iberia, whom they sold primarily in the markets of Seville and Lisbon.²¹

In 1500, queen Isabel declared the liberty of any Natives enslaved in Spain without proper paperwork. Contradictory royal statements in subsequent years allowed for the enslavement of 'cannibals' and the voluntary passage of Natives to Spain with authorization – rules that were bent or broken to continue the trade. Isabel I's request in her will that her husband clarify the proper treatment of the Crown's newest vassals in Spanish territory was followed by a royal council regarding policies of 'just war'. The rate of Native slaves being imported into Europe slowed, but did not stop. Slavers continued to bring Native captives from Spanish America to Lisbon, then sold them as 'Brazilians' or '*indios de Calicut*' since it was legal to buy Natives enslaved by the Portuguese. Other Natives – both newcomers and those already enslaved in the Iberian

peninsula – were classified as ‘*moros*’, ‘*loros*’, or ‘*berberiscos*’ (Muslims from north and west Africa) or as ‘*moriscos*’ (Muslims from the peninsula), all of whose enslavement was also legal. Natives from Portuguese Brazil were increasingly labeled ‘black’ to distinguish them from illegally captured *indios* of the Spanish realms, though all indications are that the numbers of Natives who were transported from Brazil in Iberia in the sixteenth century also remained low due to their vulnerability to Old World diseases. (Disease also threatened *Brasilianen* Natives who fought as allies of the Dutch in Africa in the mid-seventeenth century; a majority died, mostly of yellow fever rather than battle wounds).²² Esteban Mira Caballos has quantified 2,442 Natives brought to Spain between 1493–1550, over 80 percent of these from Hispaniola before 1502 but with significant surges from New Spain and northern South America between 1513–17 and 1528–32. While surely lower than the true total, the decreasing numbers and lack of documentary evidence of Native slaves being brought into Iberia en masse after 1550 suggest a tapering off in the trade towards the second half of the sixteenth century, in part due to the ban on Native slavery within Spanish realms instituted by the New Laws of 1542.²³

What was life like for these Native American slaves in Iberia? If they had not already been, they were branded on the face, usually with the date of sale and name of owner, a practice prohibited in Spain in 1532 but still practiced in the 1550s. As was typical of Iberian slavery, they served as household slaves who worked for the clergy, court, merchants and artisans, sometimes learning new crafts and practicing them independently. Some had come to Iberia as paid servants traveling with their masters, but found themselves treated or even sold as slaves in the peninsula. Many lived a peripatetic life, moving from household to household and city to city. Some became homeless and/or beggars, to be mentioned in court cases and concerned complaints issued by city administrators. Natives were baptized in Spanish churches, and when they married, tended to marry other Natives or perhaps Mestizos. In the second half of the sixteenth century some petitioned the Council of the Indies in Spain for their freedom on the basis of having been illegally enslaved, or sometimes simply out of a desire to return to the Americas. Those whose petitions were successful were supposed to have their passage paid by the Crown, but records indicate that many ended up stranded in the port city of Seville, legally free but unable to afford the trip home.²⁴

Although their mortality rates from the crossing were often high, things were not necessarily as bleak for ‘*criados*’ – both Natives and Mestizos – who were adopted by Iberian clergy, conquistadors and administrators eager to train collaborators for their Christianizing mission and to demonstrate the exotic wonders of the New World. Cristobal Colón brought Natives captured in Hispaniola to Spain to be trained as interpreters in his first return voyage in 1493; in 1515–16 the archbishop of Seville received another such group to be trained as translators at the city’s monastery of San Leandro, where the few who survived were seen playing their famous ball game.²⁵ In multiple trips beginning in 1519 Hernando Cortés brought Native performers to impress the Hapsburg court, servants and noble sons whom he intended to distribute amongst Spanish monasteries.²⁶ Beyond the dangers of mortal illness, crossing the Atlantic could mean both risk and refuge for these ‘go-betweens’.²⁷ Fr. Calixto de San José Tupak Inka, for instance, was an Inca descendant and Mestizo who served the Franciscan order as an adopted servant (*donado*) in Peru. After a Native uprising attacked the Franciscan missions, in 1742 Fr. Calixto became the order’s ambassador to the Inca nobility. In 1748 he traveled illegally to Spain with a fellow Franciscan to

warn the Crown of the nobility's unrest, chasing down the king's carriage on the road towards a hunting expedition.²⁸ Fr. Calixto does not seem to have suffered in Spain for his boldness, professing as a Franciscan lay brother in 1751 and being aided by the Franciscans in acquiring license and money to return to Peru in 1753. Promptly, however, the viceroy of Peru accused him of sedition, dwelling on his Indianness and the 'natural inconstancy of his kind'.²⁹ Fr. Calixto was arrested, sent in chains back to Spain, and died there comfortably but confined to a Franciscan convent in Granada.

Mestizo children of Spanish fathers and Indigenous mothers were particularly liable to be sent to Spain in the first generations of European settlement of the Americas. Young Martín Cortés, son of Hernando Cortés and his Nahua translator and partner Malintzin, was only six years old when he traveled with his father to visit the Hapsburg court in 1529. He remained in Spain to be part of Prince Philip's retinue while his father went back to Mexico, and did not return until 1562.³⁰ The transatlantic experience of Mestizo children like Martín Cortés depended to a great extent on their father's wealth, status and personal concern for their wellbeing. Most were sent to the households of their Spanish father's relatives to be raised, sometimes by an abandoned but legal wife. Most were generally well provisioned as a matter of paternal responsibility and even love. As Jane Mangan has pointed out, European-born fathers who sent their children back to their European families were in a profound way sending them 'home'. But although these children's transatlantic experiences were generally not as traumatic as those of Indigenous slaves, they could nevertheless be difficult. Crossing the Atlantic meant forcible separation not only from their Indigenous families and culture but more painfully, from their mother - whose loss is often perceptible in bequests left many years later to children still in Spain who had never been seen again.³¹

These children might or might not be welcomed in their new homes. They often assimilated into Spanish society, but not all found that process easy or entirely desirable, as exemplified by one of the most famous cases of Mestizo transatlantic crossings: that of Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, or el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega. Born in 1539 to Spanish captain Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega and the Inca princess Chimpu Ocllo (Isabel Suárez), Suárez de Figueroa was raised in a bicultural, bilingual household until age 10 when his father contracted marriage with a young Spanish woman and removed him from his mother's care. Upon his father's death in 1559, Suárez de Figueroa traveled to Spain to continue his education as his father's will had requested and for which he received a substantial sum of money. He presented himself to the Spanish court seeking favours befitting the rank of both his mother and his father, and was granted the required permission to return to Peru when his petitions were rejected. Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, however, did not go home. Instead, he settled in Montilla, Córdoba, and changed his name to Garcilaso de la Vega. He would never leave Europe, but spent the rest of his life writing histories of the New World as 'el Inca'.³² An invented coat-of-arms in the frontispiece of his most ambitious work, the *Commentarios reales* (1609), combines references to his own and his father's military service to the Spanish Crown and Christianity with symbols of Inca rulership and dualistic philosophy.³³ Writing in Spain to a Spanish audience and largely as a Spaniard, Garcilaso nevertheless claimed the authority to write true history - and to point out the errors of such famous Spanish chroniclers as Francisco López de Gómara - based not only on extensive research but also on his childhood experience in Peru and perhaps most importantly, his Native heritage.³⁴

Finally, Indigenous nobles from New Spain and Peru traveled to Iberia to petition the Spanish crown for individual or community privileges throughout the colonial period. Despite the Crown's official sanction against such Native transatlantic crossings, these Indigenous nobles traveled in style, were received with honour, and usually enjoyed the financial support of the Spanish Crown during their stay. The firstborn son of Moctezuma, don Martín Cortés Moctezuma Nezahualtecolotzin, arrived in Spain to request a coat of arms and restitution of lands in 1524, only three years after Tenochtitlan's defeat. In 1527, he returned to Spain accompanied by no less than forty nobles from Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tlacopan (the old Triple Alliance), as well as Tlaxcala (the leaders of the insurgency against that alliance), Culhuacan, Chalco-Tlamanalco, Tlatelolco and Cempoala – all presumably seeking privileges and recognition. By 1532 don Martín had personally petitioned the king three times, had been the guest of the Dominicans at their Toledan convent of Santo Domingo de Talavera de la Reina and the Franciscans at their convent in Madrid, and had married a Spanish noblewoman who returned to Mexico with him.³⁵ The Tlaxcalteca nobility traveled to Spain in 1528–29 with their own agenda: to seek collective recognition as a province and city with the same legal status as any city in Spain, and thus protection from being given in *encomienda*.³⁶ Mesoamerican nobility, both Indigenous and Mestizo, would continue to petition the Crown directly throughout the sixteenth century and beyond. Indeed, some of the most famous images of the conquest period from a Native perspective were finished during one of these trips. Diego Muñoz Camargo of Tlaxcala, Mexico, was a Mestizo nobleman raised in a Spanish household in Mexico, but who had spent much of his adult life writing a laudatory history of Tlaxcala in prose and painting on behalf of that city's petitions for royal recognition. In 1583, Muñoz Camargo traveled with the Tlaxcalteca lord don Antonio de Guevara to Spain to deliver his work to the king, and completed one early version, now known as the *Relación geográfica* or *Descripción de la ciudad y provincia de Tlaxcala*, in Madrid before returning to Mexico.³⁷

Andean noblemen and women also crossed the Atlantic. The case of doña Beatriz Clara Coya of Lima reminds us that some Indigenous women moved to Spain with their Spanish husbands; doña Beatriz received special permission to travel in exchange for a payment of 1000 pesos and the assurance that she was not being forced to leave her homeland.³⁸ Caciques and other descendants of Andean nobility often traveled to Spain illegally, and perhaps more persistently than Mesoamerican elites throughout the colonial period because the Inca policy of absorbing local elites produced a large number of Inca descendants. These Native supplicants petitioning on their own or their community's behalf were not looked upon favourably by the Council of the Indies, which encouraged the Crown to prohibit them for the 'inconveniences' they caused: risk of death for the petitioners, but also the cost and bother of supporting them during their stay in the peninsula for periods that in some cases lasted more than a decade, and the danger that they would remain in Spain indefinitely as 'vagabonds' or as potential subversives interested in restoring Inca power. José Carlos de la Puente Luna argues that Indigenous nobles from Peru learned quickly to manipulate both the Crown's desire to protect its 'poor and miserable' Native vassals and the Council's concerns over their presence in the peninsula. They were practically bribed to return home by grants of titles and generous funds tied to their departure.³⁹

African and European transatlantic crossings are usually treated separately in the historiography of the Atlantic World, yet both help illuminate the Native experience.

Indigenous slaves who were captured, chained and transported in the holds of ships to be branded and sold in Portuguese and Spanish markets obviously had much in common with their African counterparts forcibly sent to the Americas. Their fate depended to a great extent on the qualities of the owners they acquired. They were unlikely to be united with family and neighbors on the other side of the ocean. Being relatively few in number, Indigenous slaves in Iberia also lacked the opportunities Africans had to build new diasporic communities or to maintain their traditions except, perhaps, in port cities like Seville.⁴⁰ But more so than their African counterparts, enslaved Natives could appeal to the Crown as vassals and victims with a reasonable expectation of positive results.

The experiences of free Natives who crossed the Atlantic, by contrast, are more comparable to those of Europeans. Their fortunes would to a large degree be based on patronage, class and connections. Middling sorts had the possibility to make a new life across the ocean and to gradually assimilate into their new milieu. At the level of the nobility and upper classes, however, the subjugation, segregation and even fear of Indigenous culture are apparent. Though they might stay in Iberia for a number of years, most Indigenous nobility returned to America and to their own communities, forming a parallel elite subordinate to Euroamerican *criollos*. Wealthy Mestizos and descendants of Indigenous nobility who assimilated into the Spanish ruling classes, meanwhile, might retain their social position and carefully celebrate the noble parts of their Indigenous heritage.⁴¹ But on either side of the Atlantic, the elite to which they belonged – whether peninsular or *criollo* – was fundamentally European in character.

A STRANGE LIKENESS: NATIVE IMAGINARIES OF THE EUROPEAN 'OTHER'

A great deal of scholarship has considered how early modern Europeans intellectually assimilated the Americas: from Edmundo O'Gorman's *The Invention of America* in 1961 and J.H. Elliott's *The Old World and the New* in 1970, to Anthony Pagden's *European Encounters with the New World* in 1993 and Karen Ordal Kupperman's *America in European Consciousness* in 1995, to Jorge Cañizares Esguerra's *How to Write the History of the New World* in 2001. Most recently, interest in this question has been keen within the history of science.⁴² The Spanish, particularly those involved with Christian evangelization, were enthusiastic students of Indigenous history, language and customs. Other Europeans exhibited considerably less interest in Native intellectual or historical traditions until later in the early modern period. Indigenous peoples, on the other hand, had no choice but to rapidly size up their invaders – but their assessments are more elusive and require a reconsideration of the traditional sources of intellectual history.

The most direct and earliest representations of Europeans in the South Atlantic come from Native painters and scribes who were trained to write in Roman script by Catholic friars. In New Spain, the monumental *Florentine Codex* (1547–79) co-authored by Franciscan Fr. Bernardino de Sahagún and a team of mostly unnamed Natives describes central Mexican history and culture in both Nahuatl and Spanish, with illustrations. The Mexica Tlatelolca who were Sahagún's main partners in the creation of the Codex were ethnically related to the Mexica Tenochca of Tenochtitlan.

In Book Twelve describing the Spaniards' arrival and the battle for the city, the Tlatelolca scribes tend to blame the Tenochca for the empire's downfall. The challenges of reading for a Native perspective via colonial-era texts are exceptionally apparent here. Despite the unusual format of Nahuatl and Spanish versions side-by-side and the fact that the two versions differ in significant ways, it is impossible to untangle the mutual influences of the Codex's European and Native authors. James Lockhart wonders whether the anti-Tenochca bias so apparent in Book Twelve of the *Florentine Codex* may have actually been mitigated by Sahagún; likewise, the use of the loan word '*diablo*' (devil) to describe a preconquest indigenous deity would, Lockhart suggests, have been an entirely natural usage to these Christian-educated Nahua scribes.⁴³ Nevertheless, the *Florentine Codex* provides a distinctively Indigenous view of the conquest of Tenochtitlan. The Spaniards are impressive, at times ruthless, and particularly greedy when it comes to gold. The Tenochca are weak and pitiable; the Tlatelolca are brave and constant; the Tlaxcalteca are conniving and the Xochimilca are treacherous. In a story within the story the Spaniards are described to Moctezuma, who has not yet seen them:

Their war gear was all iron. They clothed their bodies with iron, they put iron on their heads, their swords were iron, their bows were iron, and their shields and lances were iron...and they wrapped their bodies all over; only their faces could be seen, very white. Their faces were the color of limestone and their hair yellow-reddish, though some had black hair...and their dogs were huge creatures, with their ears folded over and their jowls dragging. They had burning eyes like coals, yellow and fiery. They had thin, gaunt flanks with the rib lines showing; they were very tall. They did not keep quiet, they went about panting, with their tongues hanging down. They had spots like a jaguar's...

Of these terrible dogs the parallel Spanish text merely states: 'They also told him [Moctezuma]...of the dogs they brought along and how they were, and of the ferocity they showed and what color they were.'⁴⁴

The *Florentine Codex* seems to confirm the popular idea that Moctezuma and other Natives initially took the Spanish to be gods. Much ink has been spilled on this theme, mostly to discredit it as a Spanish fantasy, mourn it as a retrospective rationalization of the defeated, or ridicule it as a Eurocentric misunderstanding of what the Nahuatl term for 'god' signified.⁴⁵ A deeper consideration of Native epistemologies is needed to get much beyond these conclusions, much as literary scholar Gonzalo Lamana has attempted to do for Peru. According to the 1557 account of Juan de Betanzos, a Spaniard who married an Inca noblewoman and gathered testimony from her relatives, the Spaniards were quickly labeled 'gods' with certain characteristics that could be analyzed via Andean schemas. Messengers reported to Atahualpa that the strangers from the sea did not eat raw meat (i.e. human flesh), and thus had not arrived to conquer. They seemed to consume gold and silver. They looked strange, and their clothes did not indicate any internal hierarchy. They could speed across land (on horses), but could not make water move or do anything else supernatural. By the end of this inquiry, Lamana argues, Atahualpa had discerned that the Spanish were not gods but was deeply curious and worried about them. The massacre that followed shortly after his first meeting with Pizarro's

representatives resulted not from Atahualpa's imagining the Spanish were divine, but from the dangerous situation created by both sides trying to size each other up.⁴⁶

In sixteenth-century Mesoamerican painted manuscripts postdating the fall of Tenochtitlan, Spaniards are commonly shown seated in European style chairs or atop horses with beards, swords, and distinct types of clothing (including hats and shoes), as well as their own banners and armor.⁴⁷ In the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*, a painted depiction of the conquest of Guatemala created by Native allies from that altepetl around 1540, a single African – surely undercounting the number of Africans that would have accompanied the Spanish – is clearly demarcated with unique, rustic costume and barefoot, but with a long Spanish spear. The Maya are also portrayed as barefoot and rustic, a typical convention of barbarism justifying conquest in Mesoamerican pictorial writing. The Quauhquecholteca retain their own traditional warrior costumes of jaguar pelts and eagle feathers, but carry Spanish swords and are painted with the same pale skin tone as the Spanish, which Florine Asselbergs interprets as a visual assertion of their equivalence as conquistadors. The Spanish are shown with their conventional beards, hats, seats and horses, with one important exception: a single Spaniard traveling at the head of the departing troops dressed in full Quauhquecholteca warrior regalia.⁴⁸ Clothing here is not merely communicative but potentially transformative, and could work both ways. When Hernando Cortés executed the Mexica king Cuauhtemoc and his fellow ruler of Tlacopan during a journey through Yucatan in 1526, writes the Nahuatl historian Chimalpahin, he spared the life of a third lord and named him Cuauhtemoc's successor. The surviving lord was prepared for his return journey home with a gift that under the circumstances must have been fraught with meaning: 'their [i.e., the Spaniards' type of] clothing and a sword, a dagger, and a white horse.'⁴⁹

As the colonial period progressed, Mesoamericans began to depict themselves in Spanish-style dress and with beards. This stylistic shift often marked the line between ancient and more recent history. In the 1691 *Tira de Santa Catarina Ixtepeji*, which traces a Zapotec elite lineage from the fourteenth through the seventeenth century, even the ancients have beards. A shift in costume occurs, however, with the Zapotec lord Coqui Lay who allied with the Spanish in the sixteenth century, shown brandishing a sword and in European-looking dress next to a Spanish conquistador on a horse. Coqui Lay's descendants are thereafter also dressed in European style. In these later paintings the claim of being 'we people here' from 'time immemorial' was important, but so was the change in rulership that came with Europeans and Christianity. Affiliation with the Spanish world – in this case, visually signaled through dress, swords and the claim of being Indian conquistadors – asserted both local authority and obedience to the Spanish Crown.⁵⁰ Conversely, Inca-descended lords who in everyday life likely pronounced their authority in part by wearing European dress processed in the festival of Corpus Christi in Cuzco in the late seventeenth century in richly ornamented Inca costumes, presenting themselves as living mediators between the ancient past and the colonial present.⁵¹ A century and a half after contact with Europeans and Africans, these Native elites depicted and reimagined *themselves* according to distinctly colonial codes.

A more satirical tone is struck in the famous drawings of Guaman Poma de Ayala, the Quechua-speaking Andean who wrote the 1,189-page *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* styled as a report and letter to the Spanish king. Like el Inca Garcilaso de la

Vega, Guaman Poma wrote his history of the Spanish invasion and conquest of Peru from a self-consciously Native perspective. In 398 illustrations that accompany the *Nueva corónica*, Spaniards and Africans are judged by the care or cruelty they show the Native population and their own good or bad habits, while those who have sex outside their 'pure' group and the products of these relationships, Mestizos and Mulatos, are ruthlessly criticized.⁵² Like the *Florentine Codex*, the *Nueva corónica* offers a complex portrait of the Spanish. One idealized Spanish couple 'show charity, and rule with love the Indians of this kingdom' while another are 'great gluttons'. Priests are shown lovingly aiding Natives with their petitions, or fornicating with Indigenous women and beating their charges with sticks. Africans are depicted mostly sympathetically: as servants who must deliver punishment to Natives, who are also punished themselves, and who (like good Andeans) can be the most devout converts to Christianity. Again, dress marks identity. Africans, Spaniards, Mestizos and Mulatos dress mostly the same. Andeans wear their own distinctive garb, although some Andean elites are shown adopting elements of Spanish dress such as their hats.⁵³ For Guaman Poma, clothing signaled Native identity and served as a form of protection against sexual and cultural contamination: 'Spaniards, mestizos and mestizas and black women, mulatos, and mulatas, should not wear the clothes of Indians nor should Indians wear the clothes of Spaniards. All of this is a great offense to God.'⁵⁴ This is not so much imagining a faraway Other as creating social boundaries in a very crowded, chaotic social reality.

Indeed, a great deal of colonial Latin American history – as separate from Atlantic Worlds history – considers how Indigenous peoples fit European and African epistemologies into their own understandings of a world that had dramatically, irrevocably changed, often in very immediate ways. Some scholars focus on religious, medical or cosmological questions via language, art and ritual – categories, it should be pointed out, whose definitions cannot be assumed.⁵⁵ Some have tracked changes and continuities in Indigenous worldviews via philological analysis of secular historical or 'mundane' texts.⁵⁶ Some have sought out entirely different hermeneutics, for instance Carolyn Dean's reading of Inca stonework or Frank Salomon's historic-anthropological readings of the Andean khipu.⁵⁷ The question of power is inescapable, particularly when it comes to the Christian intellectual frameworks that underpinned Iberian colonialism. Mesoamerican painting could preserve and rework ancient histories, but only very carefully could it reference fundamentally Native understandings of sacrifice and renewal. Guaman Poma wrote in defense of Andeans, but using the tools of the colonizer and as a devoted Christian whose apparently sincere piety allowed him his voice. The very techniques of preserving and creating knowledge had been forcibly altered, and later generations of Indigenous intellectuals would be products of this hybridity. Under the weight of all this, the Atlantic Worlds category of 'imagining the Other' collapses.

CONCLUSION

Where does this exercise leave us? Of the three themes I have chosen to explore, one – imperial warfare – comes off as unhelpfully Eurocentric. Another – imagining the Other – seems both impossibly large given the profound impact of colonization on the Indigenous world (intellectually, materially, spiritually, artistically, linguistically, etc.),

and dangerously colonial itself in its attempt to create some equivalency between experiences fundamentally marked by unequal power relations. The theme of transatlantic migration, however, challenges the 'we people here' of Indigenous American history in useful ways. It reminds us of the early and brief but important Native slave trade. It encourages us to look for Natives not only in transatlantic crossings but also up and down both the American coasts, for instance survivors of King Philip's War sent to the Caribbean, Nicaraguan slaves and Nahua warriors invading Peru, or Native sailors.⁵⁸ And it raises important questions about the cultural acceptance, rejection and assimilation of Indigenous people and Indigenous history in Europe versus the Americas, in comparison with the experience of other groups in the Atlantic World such as Jews, North Africans and Asians that do not quite fit into the European-African-Indigenous trichotomy.⁵⁹

Perceptive readers will have noticed that throughout this essay I have tipped my hat towards the Indigenous history of the North Atlantic.⁶⁰ This comparative potential is perhaps the most important reason for Indigenous American history not to bypass the Atlantic World completely. Atlantic history's delight in spaces and situations 'shot through with a multiplicity of entangled actors and agendas'⁶¹ may run counter to the agenda of much Indigenous history, which seeks to reclaim and prioritize Indigenous narratives for their own sake.⁶² Some of the questions asked of the Atlantic World simply make no sense in the context of Indigenous history. But in its best manifestations - crossing national and linguistic boundaries, tracing overlapping epistemologies, emphasizing the global chains into which the individual, the familial, the local, and the regional were inserted during the early modern period - Atlantic history encourages us to see connections between the South and North that constitute an increasingly important part of Indigenous activism and scholarly research in the Americas. A great deal more could be gained, for instance, by comparing and supporting research on the relationships between the two largest populations facing east from the Americas in the early modern Atlantic: transplanted Africans and Natives.⁶³ Indigenous American history, for its part, has much to offer Atlantic World studies in its sophisticated analyses of power, loss, transculturation and survival. Neither field should be imagined completely without the other.

NOTES

- 1 Weaver 2011: 422.
- 2 Cohen 2008.
- 3 Lockhart 1992: 115-17.
- 4 Farriss 1984: 67-78; Matthew 2012a; Warren 2014.
- 5 Weaver 2014.
- 6 Lee 2011: 3-8.
- 7 Prescott and Lockhart 2001: 818.
- 8 Hassig 1994 and Lockhart 1993 were fundamental to this reorientation. See also Restall 2003; Asselbergs 2008 [2004]; Townsend 2006; Matthew and Oudijk 2007; Oudijk and Restall 2008; Altman 2010; Matthew 2012a; Levin Rojo 2014.
- 9 Oudijk and Restall 2007: 42-54.
- 10 Yupangui, ed. Julien 2006: viii-ix.
- 11 Oberem 1974; Salomon 1987.

- 12 Dean 1999; 185-99; Lamana 2008: 159-81.
- 13 Francis 2007; Thornton 2012: 175-81.
- 14 Whitehead 1990; Whitehead 1992; Gallup-Díaz 2001; Kars 2011.
- 15 Whitehead 1992.
- 16 Hämäläinen 2008: 323-25; Barr 2007.
- 17 Zavala Cepeda 2008.
- 18 Saunt 2006b.
- 19 Lamana 2008: 147-57
- 20 Bailyn 2005: 62-64; see also Blackhawk 2006.
- 21 Mira Caballos 2000: 46-48; Pagden 1982: 31; Weaver 2014: 38-50.
- 22 Van Deusen 2012; Metcalf 2005: 174; Meuwese 2012: 155.
- 23 Mira Caballos 2000: 107-13.
- 24 Ibid.: 82-84, 94-105.
- 25 Ibid.: 86-90.
- 26 Cline 1969: 70-90.
- 27 Metcalf 2005; Yannakakis 2008.
- 28 Loayza 1948: 7-94.
- 29 Ibid.: 92.
- 30 Townsend 2006: 188-204.
- 31 Mangan 2013: 277, 284-86, 291.
- 32 Chang-Rodríguez 2006: 15-38.
- 33 López-Baralt 2008.
- 34 One of Garcilaso's main sources was the *Historia occidentalis* of the Jesuit Blas Valera, who like Garcilaso was a Mestizo of Spanish-Inca origin and author of an extensive history of the Inca rooted in his Native heritage. Like Fr. Calixto, Valera would end his life exiled in Spain - although in his case, the same religious order that had adopted him was responsible for his denunciation and imprisonment.
- 35 Castañeda de la Paz 2013: 216-27.
- 36 Baber 2009: 36-37.
- 37 Muñoz Camargo and Acuña 2000.
- 38 De la Puente Luna 2012: 29n22.
- 39 De la Puente Luna 2012: esp. 26n19, 28, 30. Fear of subversion was also expressed towards Mestizos; see Burns 2007: 197-99.
- 40 On African diasporas, see O'Toole 2007; Sweet 2003. On European migrants to America, see Lockhart 1994; Altman 2000; Herrera 2003.
- 41 Chipman 2005.
- 42 For example Wey Gómez 2008; Cañizares Esguerra 2006; Bleichmar 2012.
- 43 Lockhart 1993: 31, 186-87.
- 44 Ibid.: 80-81.
- 45 Ibid.: 14-21; Restall 2003: 110-18; Townsend 2003; Gruzinski 1992: 41-53.
- 46 Lamana 2008: 31-53
- 47 Boone 2000: 47-48.
- 48 Asselbergs 2008.
- 49 Chimalpahin et al. 1997: 169. On the potential transformations induced by dress, see Carrasco 1999: 115-63; Olivier and Sule 2004: 144-45.
- 50 Boone 2000: 127; Florescano 2002; Cuadriello 2004; Matthew 2012b.
- 51 Dean 1999: 122-59.
- 52 Adorno 2000.
- 53 Det Konelige Bibliotek, The Guaman Poma Website 2006: images 220, 217, 235, 202, 276, 275, 200.
- 54 Ibid.: folio 553.

- 55 Alberro 1988; Harris 2000; Sell and Burkhart et al. 2004-9; Durston 2007; Wake 2010; Hanks 2010; Ramos 2010; Tavárez 2011; Solari 2013.
56 Lockhart 1993; Schroeder 1997; Terraciano 2001; Wood 2003; Haskett 2005; Osowski 2010; Townsend 2010; Pizzigoni 2012.
57 Dean 2010; Salomon 2004.
58 Weaver 2014: 431, 437.
59 Compare to Vaughn 2006.
60 Beyond specific references, the section titles come from Den Ouden 2005; Deloria 2004; Shoemaker 2006.
61 Cañizares Esguerra and Breen 2013: 602
62 Weaver et al., 2006.
63 Saunt 2006a; Klopotek 2011; Sweet 2003; Restall 2005, 2009.

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