

From Rafael Tarrago: some historical facts that might explain some of the artworks from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries that looked perplexing.

Limited ManPower Forces Cooperation with Indigenous Rulers

An important fact is that European overseas empires of the 16th century (Spain and Portugal) did not have centralized resources that European overseas empires that came in the 17th century (United Provinces, England and France) or the 19th century (British Empire and the continental empire of the USA) had. The expedition of Heran Cortes to Mexico was a 300 Spaniards band, and the same was true of the expedition of Francisco Pizarro and his brothers to South America. That forced the conquerors to rely on indigenous allies such as the Texcocans and the Tlaxcalans in the case of Cortes. Also, the populations of Castile and Portugal were small, they did not have overpopulation like that in Britain and Europe that brought millions of settlers in the 19th century to the British Empire in Australia and North America (Canada) and to the continental empire of the United States of America. The Spanish American empire needed an indigenous labor force and the cooperation of indigenous rulers to organize it. Two books that are useful to understand these dynamics are

- D.A. Brading, *The First America* (Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- Matthew Restall; *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

Permanence of Alliances under Spanish Crown Sovereignty

For practical reasons those alliances could not be dismissed by the Spanish monarchy, and indigenous rulers became part of the administration of what were called kingdoms of the Indies (Mexico was called New Spain and Peru was called New Castile). After the defeat of the last independent Inca emperor in the 1560s his relatives made peace with the Spanish monarchy and ceded their rights to sovereignty to the Crown of Castille. The latter explains the series of Inca emperors that include at the end either Francisco Pizarro or the kings of Castile from Philipp II on. A descendant of the Inca was one of the representatives of Peru at the meeting of the Spanish Cortes [parliament] in 1812, when representatives of all the domains of the king of Spain were called to gather for the drafting of a constitution (Constitution of 1812) for that conglomerate. Two books that provide information on these complexities are

- Colin M. MacLachlan and Jaime E. Rodriguez O., *The Forging of the Cosmic Race* (University of California Press, 1980).
- John Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas* (London: Papermac, 1993).

Religion Complicated Things for Spain and Portugal

The kings of Castile and Portugal claimed that a bull from the pope (Inter Caetera) gave them right to conquer the regions of the Americas that they conquered and settled in order to spread Christianity (that was their self-serving interpretation), and therefore they either supported missionaries or allowed missionary activities in their American domains, and facilitated the establishment of the Catholic Church as an institution (parishes, diocesis) the Americas. Some of the missionaries, in order to do what they considered their job of spreading Catholic doctrine learned indigenous languages and, with the assistance of indigenous converts, started writing them down using the Roman alphabet (and the Latin pronunciation of Roman letters as the phonetic standard), and wrote manuals for teaching them as well

as bilingual dictionaries. Others, in order to understand the way of thinking of the potential converts learned about the indigenous cosmogonies and wrote them as they were told by indigenous converts (work by Bernardino Sahagun about the Aztecs) sometimes seeing in similarities to Catholic doctrines the remains of the natural law that according to Catholic teaching all humans have in their hearts. Some converted indigenous wrote histories of the Spanish conquest in their own languages, and Garcilaso de la Vega Inca, son of one of the Spanish conquerors of Peru wrote a history of his maternal ancestors and of the conquest of Peru by his father and his companions. Furthermore, missionaries like Father Bartolome de las Casas complicated things for the monarchy when they decided to defend the rights of the indigenous American and Filipino populations according to the natural law mentioned above (right to freedom, property and dominion). Indigenous converts of standing went to court in Spain arguing their rights under the very laws that Spain had drafted for its kingdoms of the Indies. Books covering the issues mentioned in this paragraph are

- The Broken Spears (Beacon Press, 1992), an anthology of accounts of the Spanish conquest of Mexico by indigenous historians, edited by Mexican historian Miguel Leon-Portilla.
- Garcilaso de la Vega Inca, Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 2006).
- Lewis Hanke, The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America (Boston: Little Brown, 1965).
- Nancy E. Van Deusen, Global Indios: The Indigenous Struggle for Justice in Sixteenth-Century Spain (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

The Wars of Independence Were Directed by Euro-American Elites

During both walk thru sessions it was commented that in Latin America not much was changed in society after independence from the European powers. That is true, and it happened because with the exception of Haiti, the wars of independence were won by descendants of the conquerors of the kingdoms of the Indies and descendants of settlers from the conquering peoples, who made a point of not sharing power with other racial groups. But that should not be surprising since that was also true in the United States. Both John Adams and George Washington were members of the elites in Massachusetts and Virginia under British sovereignty, and universal male suffrage (limited to whites) was not adopted in the USA until the administration of Andrew Jackson (1829-1837). Books useful to understand those issues in both regions are:

- John H. Elliott, Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830 (Yale University Press, 2006).
- C.H. Haring, Empire in Brazil (Harvard University Press, 1968).
- Jaime E. Rodriguez O., The Independence of Spanish America (Cambridge University Press, 1998)