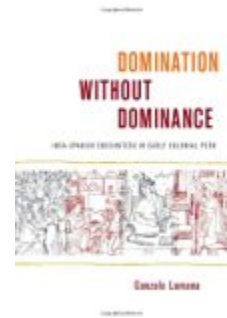


**Gonzalo Lamana.** *Domination without Dominance: Inca-Spanish Encounters in Early Colonial Peru.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. xiii + 287 pp. \$79.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8223-4293-9; \$22.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8223-4311-0.

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## Domination Complicated But Domination Nonetheless

The encounter between Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro and the Inca lord Atahualpa at Cajamarca is an iconic moment in European explanations of how they came to dominate the Americas. In his widely read and influential book *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, anthropologist Jared Diamond attributed the Europeans' success—their slaughter of Atahualpa's guard and capture of his person—to better weaponry (steel swords and horses) and writing (which gave the Spanish, as Tzvetan Todorov suggested many years ago, a superior ability to interpret “human behavior and history”).[1] Diamond argues that these alleged advantages were accidents of history rather than genetics. Nevertheless, the basic outline is familiar. The Spanish were stronger and cleverer. The Inca were more numerous, but unable to fight against their technologically and culturally superior foes. Disease also played a role, though in this case not a decisive one. The Spanish dominated the Inca at Cajamarca.

Gonzalo Lamana revisits this and five other canonical episodes in the first twenty years of Spanish-Inca encounters, with a single aim: to deconstruct this narrative. For him, Cajamarca marks the beginning of a long transition toward European political domination in the Andes that was difficult, contested, and incomplete. In the tradition of Walter Mignolo's *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* (1994), Lamana insists that systematic disregard of non-European epistemologies not only has produced a one-sided historiography of this crucial period, but also has contributed to a self-serving racism toward

colonial and neocolonial subjects as lacking the ability to see the world through a rational (be it Christian or scientific) lens.

Six chapters chronologically follow the initial encounter at Cajamarca in 1532; the kidnapping, ransom, and execution of Atahualpa in 1533; the alliance between Spanish and Inca factions opposed to Atahualpa in Cuzco from 1533 to 1536; the war of Atahualpa's successor, Manco Inca, against the Spanish from 1536 to 1537; the rule of the Spanish ally Paullu Inca in Cuzco until his death in 1549; and the “civil war” among the Spanish in the 1540s. In common with other recent reevaluations of European conquest in the Americas, Lamana wishes to destabilize narratives of Spanish rationality and superiority that have been passed down by generations of scholars since the sixteenth century.[2] He does not deny that the eventual result of early Inca-Spanish encounters was conquest and colonial domination, but argues that neither result was apparent to the actors involved. Rather, later generations' understanding of the dynamics of conquest derives from a retrospective ordering by Europeans of these disorderly early years, which created a “mystifying tale of impotent Indians facing all-powerful colonizers ... confirming all-too-familiar taxonomies” (p. 18).

Lamana emphasizes the instability of the European-Andean encounter, full of mutual confusions and “a plurality of partial understandings” (p. 79). At stake was not only mastering the immediate situation, but also de-

termining “which paradigm of meaning will prevail” (p. 126). In the earliest encounters of the 1530s, Inca rather than European epistemologies predominated. The Spanish, far outnumbered by Inca enemies and allies in a context that was unfamiliar in the extreme, resorted to mimicking the Andeans’ actions (which they only poorly understood) in an attempt to gain some control. The Inca reacted first with curiosity, then craftiness, and sometimes desperation. Lamana uses the wonderful metaphor of a “flipping the coin” game to describe this back-and-forth dynamic, each side assessing and trying to stay a few steps ahead of the other. The Spanish launched attacks according to the lunar cycles they discerned were important to their opponents, while Atahualpa’s general in Cuzco tricked the Spanish into desecrating the temple of Atahualpa’s opponents. Manco Inca knowingly manipulated the Spaniards’ belief that the Andeans regarded them as gods, and Paullu Inca adopted the Spanish idea of *señor natural* (natural lordship) to carve out a legitimate authority for himself in Cuzco that was “outside the conquerors’ designs” (pp. 105, 175). The Inca, as it turns out, played this game as successfully as the Spanish.

The groundwork for what Lamana calls a “colonial normal” was established during these years of uncertainty. For the Spanish this meant inserting themselves into Inca patterns of behavior toward their own ends. When this failed to get them what they needed or wanted, the Spanish often reacted with a violence to which native institutions adjusted, and which gradually became part of the established way of doing things. Colonial-era realities, such as Indians being forced to carry Spanish goods, thus resulted not from a rational ordering from above, but by a ground-level working out of relationships with only immediate aims in mind. Lamana calls these attempts at momentary control “hegemonic pulsations” (a decidedly more awkward metaphor than the coin-flipping game) (p. 127). Again arguing against the stereotype of Europeans acting rationally, he emphasizes emotions that he claims are evident in the Spaniards’ recorded violence: the “chaotic and frenzied” nature of the attack on Atahualpa by Pizarro’s men, or their “annoyance” at having to live and maneuver in an Inca-centric world (pp. 53, 85). Gradually, the accumulation of past acts created precedents that told each side what it could expect from the other. Chapter 4’s careful discussion of the “colonial normal”—the quotidian ways in which Europeans and Andeans developed a working relationship with long-lasting if unforeseen consequences—is one of the book’s most valuable theoretical contributions.

Lamana approaches history with a literary scholar’s tool kit. He contrasts his approach with that of “historical realism”—a critique that seems slightly out of date—and is more interested in closely reading his chosen texts than amassing data. The texts in question are the standard fare used by scholars to challenge more famous narratives of conquistadors and chroniclers: depositions on behalf of individual conquistadors and noblemen (both Spanish and Inca) that feature the testimony of lesser-known actors, judicial reviews of Spanish bureaucrats, city council records, and colonial indigenous (what Lamana calls “native-like”) narratives. Still, what might have “really” happened (i.e., what European narratives and epistemologies have suppressed) is a central concern of the book, as is change over time. Lamana sees an important shift around 1540. New players enter the stage, complicating the colonial normal thus far achieved between actors who soon fade from the scene: the sons of Huayna Cápac on the one hand, and the Spanish conquistadors on the other. Friars, merchants, and bureaucrats upset the tense equilibrium, and a new kind of Andean emerges as well, epitomized in the “new mestizo consciousness” of Paullu Inca.

Often depicted as a puppet king or collaborator of the Spanish, Paullu Inca according to Lamana was a merciless manipulator who artfully negotiated his power after 1540 by using his understanding of “Western designs” to his advantage (p. 190). (Lamana, reminding the reader of connections between past and present, usefully compares this to the double consciousness of W. E. B. DuBois and the border crossings of Gloria Anzaldúa.) A second important shift happens when the Spanish Crown attempted to impose its own authority on the colony in the mid-1540s. Lamana again emphasizes how Andeans, increasingly savvy about European ideas and goals, positioned themselves favorably in this new political atmosphere. The aftermath of the war in 1548 marks the beginning of the end of the “long transition from contact to domination” (p. 25). But Lamana insists that this is no watershed, but merely a new phase of complex negotiations.

The tension between Lamana’s deconstruction of European narratives of triumphant colonial order on the one hand and the power of those narratives to restrict what negotiations can take place on the other is left unresolved. If “it was unclear who were the producers and who the consumers” of the colonial normal in 1540s Cuzco, by the end of Lamana’s long transition to domination he sees Andeans facing an institutionalized order that increasingly characterized them as either crim-

inal, stupid, or both (pp. 189, 229). Lamana intimates that the mestizo children of native-Spanish unions would shape the colonial normal of succeeding generations. But what, then, happened to the non-mestizos? One closes this book with a sense that by the mid-sixteenth century the scales had tipped, that European domination over Andeans and Andean epistemologies had been shakily achieved and was growing stronger, and that any future Andean negotiations would be matters of de Certeauian tactics of the weak rather than the strategies of those with power.

Nevertheless, Lamana's careful consideration of the first twenty years of Spanish-Andean encounter reminds us not to take the narratives of those with power too literally—and leaves open the possibility that for later periods, too, things may not have been as they were constructed in retrospect to seem. To specialists, Lamana's book will be a useful addition to a growing literature on what Matthew Restall has called the myths of the Spanish conquest. While methodologically distinct, Lamana's approach particularly reminded me of the work of historian Inga Clendinnen on the conquest of Tenochtitlan (which he cites), and anthropologist Helen Rountree's *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Indian Lives Changed by Jamestown* (2005) on early European-Powhatan encounters at Jamestown, Virginia.[3]

As a challenge to still-persistent popular notions of Andeans and other colonized peoples as "developing," Lamana's book hits harder. We all have a stake in stories that continue to circulate, which collapse the messiness of the early contact and conquest period into neat narratives that presume rapid, rational European control of the situation. It is unfortunate that the specialized language

of this book will likely keep it from reaching a wider audience.

#### Notes

[1]. Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 67-81; and Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984).

[2]. In English-language scholarship, the most broad ranging of these recent assessments is Matthew Restall's synthesis, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Academic reconsideration of the conquest wars has perhaps been stronger for Mesoamerica than for the Andes. See, for example, James Krippner-Martínez, *Rereading the Conquest: Power, Politics and the History of Early Colonial Michoacán, Mexico, 1521-1565* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); Stephanie Wood, *Transcending Conquest: Nahua Views of Spanish Colonial Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003); Laura Matthew and Michel Oudijk, *Indian Conquistadors: Indian Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007); and Florine Asselbergs, *Conquered Conquistadors: The Lienzo de Quauhquechollan, A Nahua Vision of the Conquest of Guatemala* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2008). A similar approach is evident in the introduction to Titu Cusi Yupanqui, *History of How the Spaniards Arrived in Peru*, trans. and ed. Catherine Julien (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006).

[3]. Inga Clendinnen, "Fierce and Unnatural Cruelty: Cortés and the Conquest of Mexico," *Representations* 33 (1991): 65-100.

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