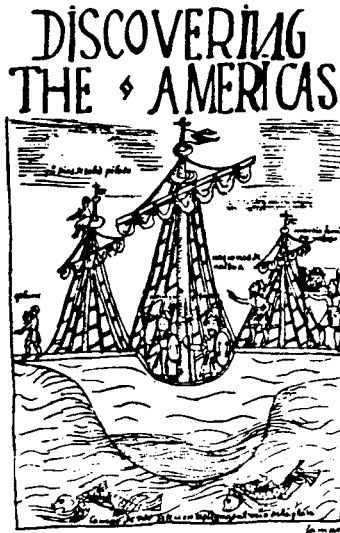


Frank Salomon

Nightmare Victory
The Meanings of Conversion among
Peruvian Indians (Huarochirí, 1608?)



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Nightmare Victory The Meanings of Conversion among Peruvian Indians (Huarochirí, 1608?)

In an unprecedented moment like the invasion of America, imagination and intuition face huge demands. The acts of the imagination amid a torrent of only partly comprehensible experiences were acts that constructed the durable world of colonialism, acts as historic as those of war, ceremony, or law. For before any representation of the situation had a chance to become a shared construct and a cultural constituent of action, it had to arise in someone's mind in the privacy of speculation, imagination, and dreaming. It is in those unseen laboratories that cultural constructs get their hooks into the world.

The acts of the imagination under historic stress are also acts of valor. The makers of the Huarochirí Manuscript, the only known source through which early-colonial Peruvian Indians left us an image of their culture in their own language, say at the start of the text that the subject is *causascancunapas ... sinchi cascanpas*, 'the lives they lived...and the power that was theirs', worthy of memory like the Spaniards'. Some of the examples of power, or, more accurately translated, 'strong being', narrated in the text are acts of imagination: visions and ideas that shaped the responses of 'The people called Indians' (*Runa yndio ñisca*) when they faced Inca and then Spanish invasion.

This essay examines the imaginative thought of a certain colonial "Indian" from that text (which the author has been engaged in translating to English). It suggests that this man's religious outlook, while interpretable in terms of contrasted and superimposed Christian and Andean cultural structures, does not truly synthesize them. It simultaneously makes them inseparable, and juxtaposes them on terms which are irreducibly conflictual. This contradictory vein of thinking is, I think, vital to understanding Andean peoples' ambiguous religious and ideological stances throughout a long history of antagonistic interdependence with non-Indians. It is a colonial way to think.

The man in question is Cristóbal Choque Casa, whose thoughts we learn from a remarkable 17th-century Quechua-language Peruvian source. It is the Huarochirí manuscript, an untitled, undated, and anonymous text conserved as ff. 64-114r of manuscript 3169 of the

Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid. Written in the “Lengua general” dialect of Quechua, this unique and well-known but far from well understood source holds a summation of religious tradition and an image of the supernatural world as imagined, not by Inca descendants, but by provincial Indians dwelling in a group of villages on the west-Andean slopes near Lima. Antonio Acosta’s recent researches show that it was probably compiled c.1608 at the behest of P. Francisco de Avila as secret intelligence for the purpose of attacking, publicizing, and victimizing parishioners opposed to Avila’s faction. It is not from Avila’s own hand, however, and it expresses with remarkable subjective eloquence the thinking of people involved in the ideological crisis Avila created.

Cristóbal Choque Casa was a key ally of Avila’s who himself had a hand in compiling the manuscript. Probably in the hope of promoting his political ambitions, Choque Casa denounced believers in the *huacas* (place deities and other shrines of aboriginal superhumans), served Avila as a friendly witness when natives litigated against him, and preached authoritative Tridentine Catholicism. In exposing his odious political behavior, however, Acosta left out of view the cultural complexity of Choque Casa’s action.

The Tercer Concilio Limense, 1583, which laid down an autoritative doctrine for colonial Catholicism, had demanded erasure of Andean myth and conversion to an imported mythology, but how was that to happen if all previous efforts had left the job undone? Certainly Choque Casa’s contemporaries were already thoroughly familiar with Christian deities; they apparently thought of them as phenomena understandable within the *huaca* paradigm, which in principle allowed the existence of any number of alien deities. Choque Casa’s effort is to create inside Andean mythic thought a new relationship between Christian numina and the *huacas* which would lead by an “emically” normal route – a transition patterned on other Andean mythic transitions – to Catholic worship, and yet at the same time unseat the very same premises of *huaca* worship which the mythic transition employed. One might speak of extirpation from within.

In this path of mythic innovation two acts of imagination play key parts. First, Don Cristóbal tells us how he encountered a certain *huaca* and engaged him in visionary combat. This combat is the content of the second half of chapter 20. It is patterned on ready mythical outlines detailed below. At the close of chapter 20 his victory appears a conclusive solution to the conflict, a convert’s victory. Yet

it is not an end. Instead, in chapter 21, Cristóbal undertakes the same combat a second time in a dream. In the dream, the victory is not conclusive, and the end is not a solution. Don Cristóbal returns to the waking state and resumes his combat all over again. This cycle of dream and struggle, we are told, repeats itself any number of times. And it is this kind of 'strength of being', this fighting through a circular motion of action and imagination, that he himself chose as his monument.

In exploring the two chapters, I will avail myself of Waud Kracke's penetrating comments about the relation of dream to myth. Kracke theorizes that both myth and dream function to integrate new experience into ordered thought and action. Moreover, he suggests, both do it by similar means, namely, by rearranging the "found" materials of experience in varied metaphorical patterns, so as to express complex configurations of thought and feeling, and to resolve their contradictions.

According to Kracke the likeness of form and process between dream and myth makes it possible for dreamers to seize on myth in making the found world their own, and also for myth-performers to seize on dreams, whose unforeseen creations both open new possibilities for variation and electrify the bare structures of myth with feeling and relevance. These are sources of cultural vitality and individual strength.

Let us suppose a case somewhat different from Kracke's Kagwahib examples: a case in which the "templates" available from myth are not parts of an integrated cultural whole, but products of cultures which the subject experiences as acutely polarized and incompatible. This must have been the normal case for innumerable people conquered by proponents of aggressively universalist doctrines, and especially for leading converts like Don Cristóbal. Objective, coercive pressures forbade any public reconciling of structures, and the public, mythic product uses dream patterns only latently. Yet the "self-experience" which continually remakes itself in dreams could not fail to draw on a different mythology, the very one which public mythic performers were required to abjure. Perhaps there ensues a peculiar colonial practice in which the "dream-work", a weaving of experiential residues into mythic patterns learned in the aboriginal setting, is at odds with the public possibilities for structuring and presenting native experience. This essay characterizes a tension between them – the political pressure of conquest as exerted within a person – when public performance demands the erasure of the mythic patterns which themselves underlie the actor's public posture.

Don Cristóbal fights Llocllay in a performed myth (chapter 20 summarized)

In Checa village, a woman named Lanti Chumpi found the *huaca* Llocllay Huancupa while cultivating, and an Inca oracle revealed Llocllay to be a child of the great coastal deity Pachacamac who had come to protect Checa. The elders established Lanti Chumpi's home as Llocllay's sacred precinct. When he temporarily returned to Pacha Camac, the people enticed him back with rich endowments, and they celebrated his "Arrival" festival *ayllu* by *ayllu*.

When Cristóbal de Castilla was parish priest, his ally the anti-*huaca* cacique Gerónimo Cancho Guaman like his people deserted Llocllay. But they and he returned to Llocllay due to a measles epidemic. Only on his deathbed to Gerónimo return to "Dios". Since the next chief, Juan Sacsalli Uya, was devoted to *huacas* his cult flourished.

Cristóbal Choque Casa was the son of the wavering convert Gerónimo Cancho Guaman, and after his father died he too felt himself called by the *huacas*. At this point Cristóbal makes himself present as witness-narrator.

One night Cristóbal went to Llocllay's house to see "his" lover (the possessive marker in the original is ambiguous but seems to mean Cristóbal's), who was a daughter of Llocllay's priest. While he was outside urinating, "that demon (Llocllay) appeared before his eyes like a silver plate which, mirroring the light of the midday sun, dazzles a man's eyesight." This apparition struck him three more times while he fled, and three more at the girl's door. He rushed in praying the Pater Noster and Ave Maria, waking the girl's little siblings, and trembled in fright while Llocllay resounded in his ears and alternately flashed and darkened the inside of the house.

Don Cristóbal fervently prayed his *doctrina* and invoked mother Mary, asking the intercession of "your son, my Jesus". Halfway through Cristóbal's Salve Regina, Llocllay flew away in the form of a barn owl. In the morning,

Cristóbal delivered a Jeremiad against Llocllay to the villagers, and although ambivalent they did stay away from Llocllay.

Chapter 20 as a myth of conversion with Andean subtexts

The part of chapter 20 in which Cristóbal narrates seems to be his oral memoir (probably not a full ritual performance, since it was dictated to interrogators) of an act patterned, I will suggest, on mythic prototypes. Of course we will never know exactly what the act consisted of in terms of behavior. From our exterior point of view, it appears to tell how Cristóbal, entering Llocllay's shrine for profane reasons, caught sight of Llocllay's numen and was moved to perform a religiously ritualized combat against him.

Cristóbal probably meant his performance to act out the dogmatic demands of the Tridentine church, emphasizing favorite missionary, and especially Jesuit, motifs: proof of "idols" ineffectiveness, appeals to divine mercy, and above all the absolute abjuration of the old deity. Nonetheless his story clearly hangs these messages on Andean mythic frames. I will identify two.

The first is present in many other chapters of the Huarochirí corpus, namely the tales of *atiy*, 'victory'. In these a new *huaca* and his human protegés supplant an older cultic community. The new force appears in the person of a stranger, outwardly powerless but inwardly pregnant with a future dominion because he knows what is wrong with the old. Potentates of the old order slight the stranger. He returns to humble them with deeds of magic, sometimes cosmic violence. The *huaca* of the old order is expelled or immobilized, but survives nonetheless as the enduring memento of the transition.

The most elaborated *atiy* myth is chapter 5, the story of Huatya Curi, a poor man who, with intelligence gained by magically eavesdropping on animals, arrives at the house of the great but actually fraudulent lord Tanta Ñamca. This story is framed in remote prehispanic antiquity. Nonetheless chapters 5 and 20 loosely parallel each other.

CHAPTER 5

Huatya Curi has learned of
Tanta Ñamca's fraud

CHAPTER 20

Cristóbal has learned of
Llocllay Huancupa's fraud

Tanta Ñamca pretends to be God, cures people	Llocllay Huancupa pretends to be God, cures people
Huatya Curi arrives seeking access to Tanta Ñamca's daughter	Cristóbal arrives seeking access to Llocllay's priest's daughter
Huatya Curi approaches Tanta Ñamca's house	Cristóbal approaches Llocllay Huancupa's house
Huatya Curi exposes Tanta Ñamca's illness and fraud to his family	Cristóbal scorns Llocllay Huancupa's cult before his family
Tanta Ñamca's brother-in-law challenges him to four contests and Huatya Curi him in a 5th	Llocllay Huancupa flashes at him 9 times
Huatya Curi, relying on magic gifts from Paria Caca, triumphs in all	Cristóbal, relying on magic gifts from Dios, triumphs in all
Tanta Ñamca's brother-in-law flees as deer	Llocllay Huancupa flees as owl

This story appears a straightforward instance of the "template" function of myth, one in which the *atiy* pattern has been used to replace *huacas* with Christian deities through processes normal to local myth. The result, too, appears normal: expulsion and animalization of the old, obeisance to the new.

A second mythic prototype is in play: Llocllay's apparition as a silver disk which shines a dazzling light onto Cristóbal follows a well-established mythic pattern of dazzling disks as theophanies foretelling the fortunes of leaders (Ziólkowski 1984). But in these disks the brilliance is solar, and presumably golden like the sun-disk of Coricancha. Murúa [1590] 1946 t. 2:15) mentions that Inca sages gazed all day "at the face of the sun no matter how brilliant it was, without moving their eyes, and they said that in that blazing brilliant circle they saw and reached great secrets." Sarmiento ([1572] 1942:166) records a myth to the effect that, in the crisis of the Chanca war, "there appeared (to the Inca) a person like the Sun, consoling him and encouraging him to battle. And he showed a mirror in which he indicated the provinces [the Inca] would subjugate

and that he would be greater than any of his forebears". Cobo ([1653] 1964: t.2:78) repeats from Molina "cuzqueño" [1575] a myth about a crystal plaque which fell from heaven and which revealed a figure from whose head "three very brilliant rays, like the sun's rays" shot forth. The figure said to Pachacuti Inca "I am your father the sun, and I know that you will subjugate many nations." The triple ray prefigures the three triple rays Llocllay Huancupa. The overall import of the myth seems to be that Llocllay offers Cristóbal a future of power in return for his fealty, but Cristóbal, unlike the Incas of myth, refuses.

Don Cristóbal fights Llocllay in a dream (chapter 21 summarized)

The night after the above events, Llocllay wanted to conquer Cristóbal in a dream. He sent a man who brought Cristóbal, all unwitting, to his door. An old lady who was there told Cristóbal that Llocllay wanted to know why Cristóbal repudiated him. Cristóbal said he owed the demon no respect. At that moment Don Cristóbal was holding a four-real coin and dropped it. While he scabbled for it on the ground, Francisco Trompetero called him "from outside" saying "Hey, what are you doing there? Your father is very angry and he is calling for you to come at once!"

As soon as he found the coin Cristóbal tried to flee but Llocllay stopped him with another silver flash. Called again to the *huaca's* house he entered, full of anger. Inside, Asto Guaman was chanting to "Father Llocllay" and feeding him burned offerings and coca. Llocllay made only an inarticulate sound "Hu, hu."

While Cristóbal watched he found himself surrounded by a vision of endlessly repeating checkerboard patterns, pictures of llama heads alternating with tiny devils with silver eyes, in a dizzying repetition. When the burned offering was finished Cristóbal attacked Llocllay with versified invocations to Jesus, and defied Llocllay to speak. But Llocllay was mute.

At the crucial moment somebody threw a *llaullaya* (unidentified object) at him and, not knowing if Dios or a demon had sent it, Cristóbal fled defending himself with it.

“From that exact time on, right up to the present, he defeated various *huacas* in his dreams the same way. Any number of times he defeated both Paria Caca and Chaupi Ñamca and told the people all about it over and over again.”

The dream combat and its relation to the public act

The relation between the performed version of chapter 20, and the dreamed version of chapter 21, is not one of simple congruence in spite of the fact that they tell of the same events. In a certain sense, in fact, they are reciprocally inverted.

The performance in chapter 20 introduces the Christian deity with structural success: that is, they replace Llocllay through a recognizable *atiy*. The ‘foreign’, in overcoming the ‘aboriginal’ is at the same time conquered in the sense of being domesticated, legitimated, and subsumed in local categories. Christ and his family become grafted into the culture of the place as the regionally dominant *huaca* Paria Caca had entered with his kin in earlier chapters. The myth seems to arrive at its predictable end under local axioms. But in spite of being mythically resolved on the surface, this version seems to reach an end that solves nothing. It gives way, as we will see, to a dream version in which in which only an arbitrary end mitigates the predominant tone of dilemma, circularity, and unresolved stalemate.

We know that the resolution of chapter 20 is less than decisive because at the very moment of arriving at a victory and a new hierarchy, Don Cristóbal returns to raise again the very same matter. He seems to step back from the resolution just achieved through his own action.

The very fact of including a dream testimony at all itself seems to express unease about the sufficiency of the orthodox Christian resolution. If the purported conversion experience had obliterated Don Cristóbal’s need for “idols,” he would presumably have treated his dream experience posterior to it in the fashion Christianity dictated and not taken it as a foreshadowing of powers newly won (Cobo 1956 [1636]:227). As part of its task of conducting the counterreformation among Indians, the Third Council of Lima had recently laid down the doctrine that dreams are delusions and that converts should not look for religious meaning in them. Mannheim offers a translation from the a 1585 Quechua catechism promulgated by the Council:

Don't be keeping dreams
 "I dreamt this or that,
 why did I dream it?"

Don't ask:
 dreams are just worthless and
 not to be kept (Mannheim 1987:137).

Don Cristóbal, or whoever put chapter titles to the testimony, acknowledged this prohibition in the very act of flouting it. The Quechua phrase which Mannheim translates "Don't be keeping dreams" is *Ama moscoyta yupaychanquichicchu*, more literally 'don't make dreams matters of account' or 'of value' where *yupay* means 'account' or 'value'. (The meanings of the word are complex; González Holguín [1608] 1952:371-372.) The title of chapter 21 starts with *Caymantam mana muscoy yupai captinpas*, 'Next, although a dream is not *yupai*'. This sounds very much like an allusion to the ban and a faint apology for the irregularity involved in recording a dream as significant testimony.

Our task, then is to find the contraband but indispensable significance the teller felt it to possess. Kracke's suggestion that the dream-myth nexus "links conceptual problems of the social order with frequently occurring personal fantasies" and thereby both energizes myth with affect, and opens it to new variation, offers a clue: what additional, personal material does the dream version attach to the socially defined elements of chapter 20?

The dream version, chapter 21, follows the plot of chapter 20 but deviates from it in several ways:

First, it elaborates on the theme of paternity. (Indeed, in contrast to chapter 20, which gives important human and superhuman roles to women – Lloclay's discoverer, Cristóbal's lover, Virgin Mary – chapter 21 mentions only one female, the nameless old Yunca lady.) Internal evidence strongly indicates that the Huarochirí people reckoned religious obligation largely in terms of a patrilineal descent concept called *yumay* ('sperm'), which linked individuals to mythic ancestors at clan-like level and probably also defined corporate groups of the living with shared cult duties. A man's patrilineal filiation constituted his most direct link to superhuman sources of being and power. (Internal evidence on female religious affiliation is less clear.) In this respect Don Cristóbal Choque Casa's position appears problematic. Recall the public facts about his paternity given

20 – to a stalemate at the subjective level, a fluke, and not a resolution.

A second theme of the dream version in contrast to the *atiy* mythic one is the elaboration of the motif of flashing silver. It was mentioned in connection with the flashes in chapter 20, and Cristóbal's response to them, that the first narrative presents a simple inversion of a "readymade" myth about political vocations: the myth of sovereignty announced by a flashing plaque. In that instance Don Cristóbal innovates by transforming day to night, a solar to a lunar-like image, a benign to a malign emotional tone, and acceptance to refusal. But the action takes place within an unaltered structural frame – it constitutes a transvaluation, not a rearranging, of symbolic elements, and therefore an essentially conservative transition to an anti-*huaca* position.

When this mythic device recurs in the dream of chapter 21, "dream work," pulling in elements from private experience, elaborates upon it a more imaginative metaphorical play wherein the disk of theophany is likened to a coin:

In chapter 21 the silver coin suddenly becomes salient at the moment of Cristóbal's forced decision between his "father" Llocllay and his "outside" father:

Don Cristóbal was gripping a silver coin of four *reales* in his hand. He dropped it on the ground. While he was searching for it, Francisco Trompetero called him from outside: "Hey, what are you doing in there? Your father is very angry! He's calling you, saying, 'He'd better come at once!'"

As soon as he said this, Cristóbal replied, "Wait for me, brother, I'm coming right away." He rummaged for his silver coin in feverish haste. As soon as he found it, when he was about to leave, the demon, just as he had scared Cristóbal before with a silvery flash against his face, flashed out once again from inside the place where the cross stood.

Taylor (1987:319) says "the meaning of this coin is ... obscure. It seems a superfluous detail." But perhaps one need not give up on it. This episode occurs at the point where Don Cristóbal has caught onto where the messenger brought him. This realization brings to mind a coin. Why?

In some places silver is offered up [to *huacas*] in the form of reales. In Libia Cancharco fifteen silver duros (i.e. whole pesos) were found, together with some small pieces of ordinary silver. In the town of Recuay Doctor Ramírez found two hundred duros in a *huaca*. They generally hammer the coins or chew them in such a way that you can hardly see the royal arms. Coins are also found around *huacas*, looking as if stained with blood or chicha. On other occasions, the priests of the *huacas* keep the silver that is collected as offerings to be spent for their festivals (Arriaga [1621] 1968:43).

Perhaps Francisco Trompetero's question was rhetorical; he would know very well why a person clutches a coin in a *huaca* shrine.

In his dream Cristóbal cannot hold the coin. It falls from his hand (whether intentionally or not is unclear). Cristóbal scrabbles for the coin while two voices urgently call him (one can imagine the pressure of a nightmare dilemma) and when he finds it tries to exit the shrine, but Llocllay then attacks with silver flashes as before. Taylor (1987:319) dismisses any likeness between the coin and the silver flashing disk, but as dream imagery it does seem like a compelling chain of association.

What might the symbolic value of a coin have been to Cristóbal? The *tawa real* coin was the most commonly used coin at that time and place, and numismatists (Grünthal and Sellschop 1978:48-68, 139-164) have identified 39 types then current, but they all look very much alike. They bear on one side the arms of Castile, a quadripartitioned shield with castles and rampant lions in checkerboard distribution. On the other side they bear the royal shield (Felipe II or III; Riquer 1942:36), which subsumes the Castilian arms as a small field asymmetrically placed in a complex design, or (rarely) the Pillars of Hercules.

The practice of obliterating sacrificed coins shows that these designs were taken as significant of anti-*huaca* meanings. (Perhaps the subsumption of the quartered field, reminiscent of the fourfold *tawantinsuyu* representation of the Inca empire, in a complex and disorderly Habsburg emblem suggested defeat and chaos, or perhaps *huacas* objected to the cross-like shape and Christian association of the Castilian arms.)

Ethnographic evidence from modern Bolivia, gathered by Olivia Harris (1987), makes clearer the religious meaning of money. (Of course, we cannot be sure the meanings Harris elicited were current

c.1608, but it is likely that they are developments of ideas then current.) Coins and mirrors are classed together in a system of taboos, which makes their juxtaposition in a dream seem more understandable. Harris' modern Bolivians say that coins come from both "God's part" – the Christian domain of the state, which coins them – and from *saxra parti*, the domain of those pre-Christian powers who live in the earth and give such earthly wealth as silver. Their double pagan/Christian origin helps make sense of the fact that this is the object which Cristóbal could not hold onto while facing demands from his rival "fathers".

In short the coin, which comes from both opposed powers and is given to both, which in fact would not exist but for the coexistence of both, seems a "natural symbol" for Don Cristóbal's own double inheritance and ambiguous destiny. Holding this object is what precipitates him into a nightmare.

A final point in which the dream of chapter 21 varies from the mythic performance of chapter 20 is the motif of multiplication *ad infinitum*. The motif of the silver disk returns in the authentically nightmarish climax, where Don Cristóbal sees Llocllay's house to be surrounded by a ring of frightening images, like a checkerboard painting, with silver-eyed demons. The language of this paragraph is too difficult to give a secure reading on how the images were disposed in space but translators do agree on the alternate banding, repeating pattern and double icon:

On one band of the painting was a tiny demon, very black, his eyes just like silver (Taylor 1987: 321 has "silver coins"). He gripped in his hand a wooden stick with a hook. On top of him was a llama head. Above that was again the little demon and above that again the llama head. In this way it encircled the whole house in a twofold pattern.

Checkedered patterning is of course a common Andean decorative motif. What Don Cristóbal found frightening seems to be the dizzying quality of the design in its endless repetition, and indeed he reproaches Llocllay with powerless for dwelling amid it:

Look!
 This house of yours!
 Yes, you dwell surrounded by demons -
 Should I believe in you?

Cristóbal does not in fact find his way out of the surround, and is saved by an arbitrary event. Just as a final combat impends, a *deus ex machina* incomprehensible even to the narrator intervenes (the *llaullaya* thrown in by an unknown agent). Cristóbal does not actually know who saved him, Llocllay or Jesus. In contrast with chapter 20, which brings the action to its logical culmination, but leaves Cristóbal in enough unease to cause nightmares, the end of the chapter 21 nightmare brings Cristóbal safety at the expense of a logical culmination.

Don Cristóbal interprets his dream escape as a victory. But there is something inconclusive about it. The last word on Cristóbal's battle is that "any number of times he defeated both Paria Caca and Chaupi Ñamca and told the people all about it over and over again". It sounds like a circular process, repeated indefinitely, and gives an impression different from one of victory and conversion. It gives an impression that the nightmare quality of endless repetition is transported back to daylight. And it is action amid this situation which Cristóbal claims as his own *sinchi cascan*, his strength of being.

Conclusions

To recapitulate: In chapter 20, Cristóbal availed himself implicitly of two Andean mythic "templates" to produce a mythic performance whose explicit content is a transition from Andean mythic combat to conversion experience as demanded by the Colonial (especially Jesuit) church – an act of extirpation from within. Chapter 21, the dream, replays the mythic combat more complexly, with the personal facts of Cristóbal's problematic fatherhood and uncertain identity read metaphorically onto the antithesis between *huaca* and *Dios*. In that light, the transition which Christianity demands produces nightmare anxiety. To attack the *huaca* is to attack the patrilineal connection conferring identity in family terms, that is, selfhood; Llocllay cannot here play the role of the stranger and enemy as in chapter 20 because he is a part of self. Yet neither can Cristóbal yield to Llocllay and still inherit his father's authority as leader. He feels intimately endangered in regard to wholeness and potency. As in all our nightmares the moment of danger is prolonged and unconsummated, and relieved by an arbitrary stroke.

Cristóbal's says he repeated this struggle over and over. Perhaps the deadlock of the nighttime and the need for a daytime victory over the unacceptable, and politically inopportune, parts of his inheritance stirred him to attack without what he could not unseat within. Like

other performers of myth, this colonial propagandist and collaborator seems to have drawn from dreams novel and powerful re-instantiations of inherited cultural creations. But the novelty in this case takes the characteristic colonial form: the publicly presentable resolution – conversion – demands amnesia of the very symbols through which the convert symbolically constitutes himself as a convert (his descent from *huaca* “fathers”, his religious activism via ritual and visionary *atiy*).

The absolute demand of conversion is what makes it nightmarish; if the transition were complete, the subject would not exist any more. The convert publicly displays the elements of his selfhood as error; what he abjures becomes his stock in trade. His reward is political security and a claim to valor - but also the obligation to propagate the dilemma by magnifying it to the scale of history-making practice.

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