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Resistance, Protest, and Knowledge: Indigenous Appropriation of Medievalism in Ibero- and Latin America

Los académicos aún tienen que considerar cómo el medievalismo ofrece una manera de apartarse del proyecto settler-colonial *precisamente porque la Edad Media indígena excluyó a Europa, y viceversa, a través del mecanismo de la no-modernidad. Al considerar cómo los autores y artistas indígenas modernos recurren a las formas de expresión indígenas y europeas medievales no modernas en Iberoamérica y América Latina, teorizamos cómo el medievalismo fue y sigue siendo una importante herramienta de resistencia a lo largo de los períodos colonial y poscolonial. Este enfoque nos permitirá encontrar formas de cuestionar la temporalidad de la matriz colonial-moderna del poder, en su intersección con la decolonialidad.*

Palabras clave: *medievalismo, la Edad Media indígena, no-modernidad, decolonialidad, resistencia*

Scholars have yet to consider how medievalism offers a potent retreat from the settler-colonial project precisely because the Indigenous Middle Ages excluded Europe, and vice versa, through the mechanism of nonmodernity. By considering how modern Indigenous authors and artists reach to medieval-nonmodern Indigenous and European forms of expression in Ibero-America and Latin America, we theorize how medievalism was and remains a significant tool of resistance throughout the colonial and settler-colonial periods. This approach will allow us to find ways of undermining the modern-colonial matrix of power's temporality at its intersection with decoloniality.

Keywords: *medievalism, Indigenous Middle Ages, nonmodernity, decoloniality, resistance*

When Indigenous authors such as Guamán Poma de Ayala and Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca engage with the European Middle Ages in their works and make use of European genres of documentation from that period, they are engaging with medievalism. Medievalism comprises any attempt to

describe the European Middle Ages from a modern location. It has historically been used to construct an alternative past meant to inform our present (D'Arcens 325) while disrupting the Western concept of periodization. In the hands of Indigenous people, medievalism powerfully operationalizes a critique of settler-colonial modernity and links the self-determination of the present to a time and place free of modernity and its harms. Medievalism also invokes a period that precedes the invasion on either side of the Atlantic, contradicting the modern-colonial matrix of power, and inscribing medievalism as a tool of resistance and decoloniality through which marginalized presence, knowledge, and experience extrude into the colonial mainstream, disrupting it. Decoloniality provides a methodology for resisting the settler-colonial and modern matrix of power, in this case, through medievalism as praxis (Mignolo and Walsh 106).

Viewed in this light, Guamán Poma and Garcilaso de la Vega, in addition to other author-artists from Ibero-America and Latin America, articulate medievalism to reclaim and critique their present through deliberate acts of resistance to the settler-colonial project. Medievalism, like Indigeneity, discursively elides the teleological imposition of Western temporal constructs, such as modernity, by asserting for itself a present. While medievalisms never existed during the medieval period, their iteration – whether today or four centuries ago – forges a contemporary space for them and their messages. Both medievalism and Indigeneity challenge the status quo of settler-colonial modernity by intruding into it in what could be seen as an empowered form of Philip Deloria's "Indians in unexpected places" (7) in the non-Indigenous and modern world.

In his call for civil and epistemic disobedience, Walter Mignolo proposes that a slow, deliberate delinking from the colonial matrix of power will lead to decoloniality, particularly by addressing the Western dichotomies that sustain power imbalances between dominant and marginalized groups (Mignolo, "Coloniality Is Far from Over" 41-42). Mignolo echoes Indigenous scholars elsewhere, such as Anishinaabe-Ojibway legal scholar, John Borrows, who sees Indigenous self-determination as an outcome of (dis)obedience (Borrows 53).[1] Decolonization may be achieved, as José Rabasa proposes, through the assertion of a nonmodernity that can fundamentally destabilize the colonial matrix of power using decolonial methodologies (28-31). Nonmodernity undermines the teleological implications of time and allows for the coexistence of other times and elsewheres in the settler-colonial milieu. Medievalism and disobedience in concert challenge the settler-colonial status-quo in the push to decolonize our ecumene.

In Ibero-America and Latin America, the Spanish invasion characterizes the onset of the modern project through which Spain, and Europe more broadly, moved itself to be the centre of the world, imposing upon it the (settler-)coloniality of power that marginalizes the original inhabitants of the Americas (Castro-Gómez 47-58). Since the invasion, however, Indigenous peoples, their cultures, and histories not only have continued to resist settler-colonial attempts to disappear, obviate, and disconnect them from their lands, cultures, and identities, they also physically and discursively have challenged the fiction of postcolonialism to its core.[2] Viewed in this way, Indigeneity resists the modern-colonial matrix of power through what Anishinaabe scholar, Gerald Vizenor, has termed survivance – an active presence that renounces the dominance, tragedy, and victimry (in the sense of unavoidable or inevitable victimhood) so common in the Western construction of settler-colonial Indigenous history (vii). Indigeneity embodies Catherine Walsh's invocation of decoloniality as a praxis for "(trans)local struggles, movements, and actions to resist and refuse the legacies and ongoing relations and patterns of power established by external and internal colonialism" (Mignolo and Walsh 16), which makes engaging with these three themes – medievalism, Indigeneity, and decoloniality – a means of articulating a methodology for rejecting the modern-colonial status quo.

Indigeneity as a nonmodern construct also contributes to the empowerment of Indigenous people because, unlike modernity, Indigeneity is not claimed by anybody (Battiste 74). Medievalism in the hands of Indigenous people thus provides a framework through which the modern condition can be criticized, unsettled, and resisted in settler-colonial states throughout the Spanish-speaking world.[3] This intervention builds upon the contention held by Métis scholar Brenna Duperron and Elizabeth Edwards that "Indigeneity is a more incisive concept than 'postcolonialism' for soliciting the positive outcome of decolonization" (95) because the settler remains, even while the colonizer has retreated, leaving in his wake a settler-colonial state with neoliberal interests that connect into a global system of power informed by wealth and corporations.[4] Indigeneity in this sense should be understood as more than an identity that is qualified through blood quantum, claimed by a person, or assigned by others.[5] Rather, Indigeneity describes belonging and originariness (as in aboriginal), both at a local and international level, and ignores the boundaries used by nation states while intently nesting into land and place (Merlan 304). This understanding of Indigeneity can be further contextualized by medievalism as a discursive strategy intended to resist settler-colonial and post-colonial states dominated by settler-colonial normativity, on the one hand, and by

decolonial methodologies and approaches to reading modern texts and images, on the other.

By examining the Indigenous use of medievalism as a nonmodern discourse of resistance and self-determination throughout the modern period in Ibero-America and Latin America, we also attempt to model a decolonial approach to reading texts and images. The methodology that Mi'kmaw scholar Albert Marshall has termed "two-eyed seeing" brings Indigenous epistemologies to bear on all forms of textuality and visuality, whether they come from the Indigenous or non-Indigenous worlds (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall 339). Furthermore, the concept of "all my relations" underlines the connectedness of all things, whether human or non-human, living or dead, and is an important relational methodology and epistemology with which to analyse Indigenous texts and images (Valaskakis 105; Tuhiwai Smith 211). With these two decolonial methodologies, we will also draw on two bodies of decolonial theory: the modernity/coloniality group of scholars (Castro-Gómez, Mignolo, Rabasa, among others), much of whose work remains unpublished in English, and Native American and Indigenous Studies scholars of North America (Borrows, Deloria, Vizenor, among others), much of whose work is likely largely unavailable in Spanish. In so doing, we will bring into dialogue bodies of thought that rarely meet but could benefit from one another's approach to decolonization, decoloniality, and Indigeneity.

With this framework for Indigenous medievalism as a tool for decoloniality in the region now known as Latin America, we will explore disobedience and resistance through a sampling of textual and visual medievalisms from an interdisciplinary selection of genres created within the last 500 years, the first of which is the mappamundi.[6] This genre of cartographic documentation gained popularity in the eleventh century and offered a comprehensive view of the Judeo-Christian and European worlds as understood at the time by Europeans. The holy city of Jerusalem centred the map, near to which the reader finds both biblical and secular geographies intertwined with images of beasts and monsters, as well as biblical figures such as Adam and Eve. Oriented with the east at the top, these maps almost always feature the Garden of Eden at the apex of the world and emphasise the navigability of the world's oceans in intriguing ways. By the time Spaniards invaded the Americas, the map had transformed considerably, resembling more a secular world map with its northern orientation and focus on Europe and the Atlantic Ocean.

In the seventeenth-century viceroyalty of Peru, Andean author and artist Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala prepared a medieval mappamundi that included his people's territories, Tawantinsuyu (Figure 1). Our analysis of

his approach to this map builds upon little scholarship, since Guamán Poma's textual contents have garnered more scholarly attention than his visual production, a topic to which we will return. By this point in cartographical history, the mappamundi has been abandoned for at least two centuries, as has the genre's name; in fashioning the map with the title "Mapa Mundi del reino las Indias: Un reino llamado anti suio hacia el derecho de la marr de norte, otro reino llamado colla suio, sale sol, otro reino llamado conde suio hacia la mar del sur, llanos, otro reino llamado chinchai suio, puniente sol," (Guamán Poma 983-84) its author declares a deliberate intervention into the settler-colonial worldview using medievalism. He also knits together Andean and Spanish epistemologies and histories in what amounts to an excellent example of two-eyed seeing.

Figure 1.
Map of the Peruvian World, by Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (c. 1615), Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen, GKS 2232 4º, 983-84.

Whereas medieval mappaemundi showed European knowledge of the world, Guamán Poma has chosen to depict an Incan worldview, literally the peoples "que fueron sugeto al Ynga" (982), that marginalizes Europe,

pushing it along with Africa and Asia off the map. Our reading of this map will deploy not only a two-eyed seeing approach, but also a relational approach that together decolonize the knowledge offered by the map. His east-oriented portrayal contains a litany of Indigenous and European place names that spread from Mesoamerica to Chile. He adapts medieval European cartographical conventions so that the map centres on Cuzco rather than Jerusalem. Cuzco in this sense occupies the seat of Incan power, not the seat of Spanish viceregal power, Lima. The replacement of one toponym for another should not be viewed lightly, as Lima comprises a Spanish bastardization of an Andean name, whereas Cuzco derives from Quechua and means "rock of the owl," in reference to the settlement's foundation story. The underlying narrative weaves together the settlement's location on a high elevation, being the place where the owl transformed into the mountain upon which the city remains located today, to be possessed and inhabited by his relatives. The removal of settler-colonial names, and the assertion of relational Indigenous ones, echoes Claudio Aporta's observation that Indigenous names exhibit a high degree of complexity in that they point to the connectedness of all things – in this case, the owl, the landscape, and the Andean people throughout time (67-68). In contrast, one of Jerusalem's etymologies is "city of peace," an epithet that contradicts the city's lived history for more than a millennium. The inclusion of Indigenous names furthermore complicates any reading of the map because, were we to undertake an explication of all Andean names on the map, we would need to consider their histories with lives of their own that have touched and bound the human and non-human worlds in extraordinary ways. The presence of names that existed before the Spanish invasion of Peru on a medieval European form of documentation, moreover, makes apparent the anachronism that fundamentally characterizes medievalism as a discourse, making it such a suitable instrument of nonmodernity: not only do Andeans not fit within the medieval Spanish worldview into which Guamán Poma forces them, but neither do Spaniards belong in Tawantinsuyu during the European Middle Ages, making medievalism a means through which Andeans intrude into a European past.

Other parts of the map similarly displace Spanish space with Andean space, sometimes creating entanglements between the two. As the title of the map indicates, it is divided into four quadrants or *reinos* that represent Incan political geography (Chinchaysuyu, Antisuyo, Collasuyo, and Cuntisuyu) and reflect Andean principles of social and spatial order. The left two quadrants are associated with the feminine and the spatial orientation of lower, whereas the right two quadrants are associated with the masculine and the spatial orientation of upper (George 578). The non-Indigenous

viewer would likely not apprehend the meanings of these names and their relationship to Cuzco, whose design is informed by this way of organizing space, particularly because Guamán Poma includes latitudes and longitudes as a means of modernizing his map, being cartographic devices that did not exist in this format during the European Middle Ages.

In the eastern, Atlantic-facing territory, Guamán Poma places not only snakes and tigers, but also monstrous beasts such as the chimera that appeared on the medieval map along the south of Africa (the Antipodes). These zones on both cartographic models are delineated by an impenetrable barrier that prevents humans mixing with what lays beyond. Yet, Guamán Poma claims the area, "que los Yngas con engaño le conquistó aquella gente de la montaña" (982). On this map, the barrier comprises the rio Marañón, beyond which are the remote people of the mountain over whose territory the Incans claimed sovereignty. This land teems with dangerous and fantastic beasts and is the eastern-most land, beyond which he depicts an Atlantic Ocean with a mermaid-inspired siren. Rather than the Garden of Eden, Guamán Poma symbolizes Viracocha, the maker of the Andean universe, with a sun in the top right, and in the top left he positions a moon, Mama Killa. Together, they comprise the male/female sources of all life and reference Andean worldview and cosmology, a version of which is embraced by many other Indigenous groups alongside a gender binary reflected on the European mappaemundi. This same gender binary is also expressed through the map's organization into four quadrants.

By excluding Europe from the map, Guamán Poma sends an important message to his target reader, the king of Spain, Felipe III, to whom he wished to hand-deliver this document. Using the corollary offered by the medieval map, that which lay beyond the mythical Antipodes remained terra incognita, which converts Catholic Spain into an otherly region of the Incan world even as the map itself depicts the impacts of colonization through Spanish toponyms and symbols. As Rolena Adorno has observed, the map, from a medieval perspective, reinforces the period's disinterest with organizing space temporally, whereas in the modern period, time and space had become linked and literal or scientific representations triumphed over allegorical ones. Guamán Poma's deliberate embrace of a cartographic form that often narrativized crusader geographies centred on the recovery of Jerusalem also comprises a form of resistance connecting, in this case, to Cuzco: "el cronista andino propone la vuelta a los orígenes andinos y la recuperación del paraíso, es decir, la restauración del orden, explicitándolo, concretándolo, en la soberanía renovada de los príncipes andinos" (Adorno 18-19). The map converts Guamán Poma and his people into some form of crusader, whose objective to reclaim their ancestral and spiritual

connection to their traditional territory becomes visualized on the map, aligning thusly the Spanish colonizer with the crusaders' medieval foe.

From another perspective, the map affirms an alternative geography that, in Guamán Poma's eyes, should be mainstream, echoing scholars' broad conclusion that, beyond dehumanization and centuries of poor treatment, the grievance expressed today and in Guamán Poma's time centres on land sovereignty and restitution (Battell Lowman and Barker 48). The map reinforces this conclusion through the inclusion of the siren, a fantastic being that also has Andean roots. While the European mermaid known for her seductive and dangerous song influenced Andean colonial art and architecture, appearing on building façades of the period where it substituted angel motifs, the figure is also a pre-invasion, Andean one that Guamán Poma refers to as *huaca*, or water spirits (Turino 110-11). These beings, thought to be ancestral founders of Andean people, live in dangerous waters (Hu).[7] The huaca's presence on the map therefore imprints upon the Atlantic Ocean a sense of danger and offers a warning, perhaps against collaborating with Spanish invaders; unlike European sirens, as a figure she offers Guamán Poma and his people protection from danger (Zevallos Aguilar 17).

The map must be situated, moreover, in the context of the chronicle, which comprises a second genre with medieval roots that Guamán Poma seized as a vehicle to resist and redress Spanish treatment of him and his people. Without understanding how he became exposed to either the mappamundi or medieval chronicle genres, the structure of his chronicle resembles those of medieval Spain. By the sixteenth century, chroniclers increasingly focused on the history of regions and kingdoms, and they tended to commence at the dawn of modernity, which coincided in the case of Spain with the ability to manufacture a Catholic and decolonized treatment of its history once the last Muslim city fell in 1492. Before this period, chronicles started with the creation of the world from a biblical perspective, the formation of the continents and their biblical connotations, the intervention of Hercules in physically separating Spain from Africa, and the invasion of various groups of people, especially the Romans and the Visigoths. The typical chronicle also documented the names and deeds associated with each king up until the author's period. And here we should be careful in claiming that the medieval Spanish chronicle had an author, as they were subject to many hands, could be updated as time went on, were copied and circulated in manuscript book form, and thus comprised living documents maintained by a collective – much as Indigenous oral histories are today.

Like the map, the title of Guamán Poma's chronicle gestures to the medieval, as "corónica" was commonly how chronicle was spelled in the medieval period. It is divided into two parts. The second part resembles a modern chronicle in that it begins with the Spanish invasion of the Incan empire, whereas the first offers a history of his people configured as a medieval chronicle. It commences with the creation of the world, followed by a recounting of the world's various ages as well as the popes and kingdoms that have been on the earth, and then a similar recounting of the ages experienced by the Inca. He continues with a history of Incan leaders, and unlike a European medieval chronicle, he spends an entire chapter detailing the "reinas" of the Incan empire, being a nod to the importance of women's power and authority throughout the Indigenous world, and one that the modern-colonial matrix of power continues to undermine and silence (Lugones 742-59).

Like many other Indigenous chroniclers, he also shares key cultural knowledge such as astrology and spiritual practices, and after concluding this history of the Incan world, he offers a second prologue to Spanish readers, which is where his history turns to the Spanish invasion. Here he warns his reader that "Paréseme a mí, Cristiano, todos bosotros os condenáys al ynfierno" for their activities in Peru (Guamán Poma 367). He goes on to portray the events of the Spanish invasion while continuing his programme of othering them, which overall comprises one important means through which he expresses his discontent and resistance to the settler-colonial norm. For instance, in an illustration and related story portraying the first meeting of Greek-born Pedro de Candía with the Incan leader Huayna Capac in Cuzco in 1527, Guamán Poma mocks historians who claim that the two had any meaningful communication, as they had no language in common. He also gestures to the monstrousness of Europeans, which reinforces our interpretation of the mappamundi, in that when the Incan leader offers Candía a bowl of gold, he asks him, "Cay coritacho micunqui?" [Is this the gold that you eat?], to which Candía replies "Este oro comemos" (369). The author's assertion of Quechua, a language not known by the settler-colonizer, is also an example of a common framework for resistance through either preventing Indigenous knowledge from being possessed by non-Indigenous people or expressing dissent in plain sight (Kimmerer 255-56; Maldonado-Torres). In this way, Guamán Poma articulates disobedience to the settler-colonial project in textual and visual forms while reinforcing his own self-determination.

At the outset of his chronicle, and very much reflecting modern histories, a series of letters frames the book, and one of which was destined for the Spanish king. Guamán Poma relates that his book is an important

first in that it contains "unas historias cin scriptura nenguna, no más de por los quipos y memorias y rrelaciones de los yndios antiguos de muy viejos y viejas sabios testigos de vista, para que dé fe de ellos" (8). He further emphasises that his sources were multiple, in a variety of Indigenous languages as well as from quipus; he portrays this information "a la más común opinion," and he includes an illustration of him asking knowledge holders to tell him their stories (10). This practice of writing down Indigenous testimonies and stories evidently is a modern one, although exceptions for quipus, and in other places pictographic recordings, certainly existed before Europeans arrived. In one way, this instrumentalization of textual culture somewhat resembles how Medieval Europeans moved away from the oral transfer of knowledge and toward the birth of individual, rather than collective, authorship. In another, however, his practice reflects the recognition that individual truths, as Mississauga Nishnaabeg scholar, Leanne Simpson, observes, matter and must be validated, in what promises to be a sweeping and decolonial act of self-determination at the individual and group levels. When they come together, their relationality and plurality paint a broader picture of knowledge and experience (Simpson 58-59). Medieval Europeans would recognize this practice, as oral means of transmission relied upon multivocality and decentred individuals as sources of authority over a collective of voices, which exposes a critical problem of the modern age: our reliance upon individuals as sources of authority over the truths espoused by a collective.

While Guamán Poma's chronicle remained unpublished and obscure until its rediscovery in the twentieth century, these images already have inspired a new generation of artists who have embraced them as a means of critiquing settler-colonial normativity, globalization, resource extraction, and the persecution of Indigenous people. Estefanía Peñafiel, of Quito, worked with the image of the Inka meeting with Candía, reproducing it on a larger scale using chocolate as a means of exposing the impacts of globalization on Ecuador, in "Una cierta idea del Paraíso. 1. Este oro comemos" (2006). Ecuadorian artist Falco (Fernando Falconi) reconfigured Guamán Poma's images so that their language and some visual elements were updated with ones with which contemporary viewers could connect. The series, titled *Nueva crónica y mal gobierno*, began in 2004 and continues; it exposes corruption in government, foreign interference into the country, and the continued harms experienced by Indigenous people.[8] These examples comprise just two ways that Guamán Poma's nonmodern-medieval means of resistance and protest continues to be useful to future generations of settler-colonial Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and authors.

A related and innovative form of medievalism, one that makes use of Indigenous beasts to re-narrativize the landscape in ways that Guamán Poma does in his mappamundi, uniquely links Indigenous and European nonmodern pasts to our present. The bestiary genre is a medieval-era form of illustrated book popular in Europe that featured animals. Each beast became a vehicle for relating a moralizing story meant to educate the reader or remind them about their society's values, particularly linked to Christianity. Guamán Poma includes a version of a bestiary in his chronicle, which he offers as a visual and textual allegory to decry the monstrous behaviour of Spaniards according to the six animals most feared by his people: the *corregidor* is the snake, the *comendero* the lion, the *cacique principal* the rat, the settler-colonizer the tiger, the priest the fox, and the scribe the cat (708). The bestiary became less popular in the Renaissance, as imaginary beasts became supplanted by seemingly scientific and secular representations of the animal kingdom, particularly abroad in Spain's colonies (Cruz, "Humans" 342-43). Ailén Cruz's trailblazing study of the twentieth-century revival of the genre by the likes of Borges, Neruda, and other Latin American authors foreshadows the resurrection of the bestiary's use as a form of critiquing the settler-colonial condition in the twenty-first century. She establishes that these foundations for the modern bestiary seem to have resulted in twenty-first century authors and artists further experimenting with the genre so to frame certain monstrous qualities found in society today.

Works such as Gabo Ferro's *200 años de monstruos y maravillas argentinas* (2015) layers present-day monstrous constructions of humanity upon taboo practices embodied by "El masturbador" and "El anarquista" to comment on settler-colonial Argentinian history. This novel approach "destabilizes Argentina's identity in a form traditionally reserved for the uniformization and molding of society" (Cruz, "Humans" 343). These latter two objectives reflect those of the medieval creators of bestiaries, which makes their use as a form of criticism divergent. And, like Spaniards making their way into Guamán Poma's bestiary, animals from the Indigenous world also penetrate the pages of this medieval genre. In Juan José Arreola's *Bestiario* (1972) and Norma Muñoz Ledo and Israel Barrón's *Bestiario de seres fantásticos mexicanos* (2016), Cruz sees resistance to European and settler-colonial domination through the inclusion of Mexican beasts, being in itself a means of decolonizing the genre. In the former text, the amphibian known as *axolotl*, named for the Aztec deity Xolótl who looked over the dead and could resurrect monstrous beings, comes to signify water monstrosity or sprite, invoking complex folkloric tales that assert their presence in this medieval genre while harkening back to the pre-invasion era (Cruz, "From

the Griffin" 29). These new characters also implicate demographics that were traditionally excluded, including Indigenous peoples, whose presence, names, traditions, and languages become honoured through the genre. As in Guamán Poma's text, bestiaries published over the last few decades either represent humanity's darker and undesirable qualities or find ways of undermining and negating the superiority of humans over animals, particularly from an ecocritical perspective, which tends to reflect the worldviews of Indigenous people and the cosmological implication of "all my relations." Each of these works contribute to a trending tendency to use the modern bestiary as a decolonial location.

It bears noting that the style of Guamán Poma's images has also been characterized by some modern scholars as medieval or primitive, which points not to the origins of the images or the techniques invested into their production, but rather to a critique of their quality from a modern Western perspective. But they are also medieval, as in from the Incan pre-modern period, because they incorporate pre-invasion knowledge and styles of visualization.[9] Guamán Poma attempts to disrupt the modern construction of his people by Spanish historians and artists by offering, instead, a nonmodern intervention that contrasts with the violence of the second part of his chronicle. Guamán Poma embraces European aesthetic codes because his intended reader-viewer was Spanish; unsurprisingly, non-European aesthetic codes become rendered otherly and nonmodern to Western eyes. For Walter Mignolo, his approach in both text and image amounts to an act of decolonization. Mignolo compares his work with that of a well-known and influential publisher and engraver responsible for creating the visual culture of the Spanish invasion, Theodor de Bry. Guamán Poma's "ignorance of Renaissance perspective is no more of an indication of a lack of sophistication than De Bry's ignorance of what it means to live most of one's life in the Andes (in the Royal City of the Inca) under Spanish rule" ("Crossing Gazes and the Silence of the 'Indians'" 199). Guamán Poma and his Indigenous contemporaries experienced sites of knowledge in ways that Europeans, who embraced perspective and detached viewing from a distance, were unaware. His inclusion of self-portraits, for instance, both gives an example of his rejection of distancing while also emulating the medieval practice of visualizing authors in the act of writing (Kilroy-Ewbank 60).

These choices on the part of Guamán Poma leave us questioning whether his embrace of medieval models paralleled some understanding that the European medieval period pre-dated the Spanish invasion and, along with it, better circumstances may be found in that temporal milieu. Some scholars have argued that the Middle Ages, from the perspective of

subaltern groups living in a modern location, looked attractive compared to their present – this well before the emergence of periodizing vocabularies such as medieval and modern times. Aníbal Quijano observes that issues such as racism, which later became associated with skin colour, existed in different and perhaps less harmful forms before the modern age (223). Medievalism as resistance, however, may not necessarily entail a deliberate embrace of the medieval for the purpose of challenging racism, which echoes what Homi Bhaba understands to be colonial mimicry, being itself a process of disavowing the colonizer through the subaltern's representation of difference (Altschul, "Postcolonial Approaches" 12). This is the worldview that Guamán Poma expresses through his cartographical projection of the Andean world layered upon, and in places contesting, the parallel existence of a Spanish-American world. Building upon Bhaba, Nadia R. Altschul concludes that "[t]o mimic is therefore not only to imitate but at the same time to, paradoxically, resist the dominant power, allowing for the observation of subversion and modification" ("Postcolonial Approaches" 12).

Scholars studying places traditionally categorized as not having a Middle Ages are now resisting this exclusion, pointing to the medieval origins of the laws (*Las Siete Partidas*) and governance models (the *cabildo*, a local form of government akin to a town council) that later helped them achieve independence, in the case of Latin America, as well as the medieval origins of castellano (Altschul, "Medievalism" 141). Dipesh Chakrabarty asks what would happen if we included marginalized demographics in the historical narratives from which they have been typically excluded, urging us to consider, rather than minority histories, subaltern pasts (98). If the period before 1492 comprises a subaltern Middle Ages in the Americas, a subaltern medievalism anachronistically points to the assertion of that subaltern pre-invasion culture in the modern period. The linkage between the present and the past unifies humans from any place and time, making those of the past our contemporaries, which recalls Vizenor's use of the term survivance and points to the irrelevance of time when it comes to the relationality of beings and places such as Cuzco and axolotl. "Thus," Chakrabarty contends, "the writing of history must implicitly assume a plurality of times existing together, a disjuncture of the present with itself. Making visible this disjuncture is what subaltern pasts allow us to do" (109).

This temporal plurality sheds light on the problems caused by periodization. Periodized time and knowledge inscribes the agency of the north European culture that devised the division of its cultural history into periods and epochs, while – as single authorship and authority attests – refusing to acknowledge the existence of histories and experiences that do

not fit within these temporal constructs. As José Rabasa observes, "[t]racing the beginnings of modernity back to the sixteenth-century colonial period carries an impetus to claim contributions to modernity, a resistance to a medieval mentality, a need to understand the Spanish process of colonization and empire building as thoroughly modern, and a general tendency to speak in terms of alternative modernities" (27). Rabasa seeks to avoid the concept of alternative modernities by embracing, instead, nonmodernity as a form of elsewhere, so to avoid the teleological implications of that which comes before modernity as pre- or unmodern, as anchored to the European experience of history. But doing so still implies the epistemological structure of time from a Eurocentric perspective through the iteration of modernity as a concept, which implies "before times." Yet, Rabasa argues that in positioning modern as opposite to nonmodern, the notion of temporality –of one period preceding or following the other – and its socio-cultural implications for concepts such as stadialism, progress, evolution, and science, disappear.

The nonmodern-medieval-colonial matrix can be seen as distinct from yet also intersecting with the modern-colonial matrix, as having both a parallel and perpendicular existence that reflects Guamán Poma's simultaneous use of Western latitudes and Andean spatial constructs to order the contents of his mappamundi. Furthermore, as Walter Mignolo theorizes, the modern-colonial matrix of power's foundations has some medieval roots, including institutions such as the university, the *cabildo*, and the church (Mignolo and Walsh 198). But, as Gina Starblanket (Cree/Saulteaux) and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark (Turtle Mountain Ojibwe) caution, "as Indigenous peoples look to a pre-contact past to draw out a more robust vision of our cultural traditions as they existed before they were affected by the violence of colonialism, we must ensure that we are not creating temporal boundaries or reproducing dichotomous ways of thinking about the past and present" (196). In this light, decolonial strategies often involve the pre-invasion past to reach for tools and resources that can influence the present.

In the modern period, particularly in a settler-colonial Latin American context, religious, political, and cultural institutions powerfully operationalized an identity matrix whose teleological objective was modernity. Nonmodernity responds to Starblanket and Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark's concern about rejecting the modern, settler-colonial status quo in favour of another Western temporal construct. They recommend, instead, embracing relationality (the connectedness of all things and people, human and non-human), which is a strategy modeled by Garcilaso de la Vega, studied in due course: "a relational way of being has the potential to

challenge and move beyond dichotomous treatments of past/present or tradition/modernity. By adopting a relational world view, we are better positioned to see the continuity between past, present, and future while also recognizing tradition as dynamic, contingent, and context dependent" (196). This recommendation dovetails with medievalism as a discursive strategy for Indigenous people and, as will be shown, former slaves of African descent in the Americas, as their ancestors did not experience the European medieval period either. By straddling both the European and Indigenous worlds, Indigenous settler-colonial subjects were prepared to navigate but also circumvent colonial governance structures and ways of knowing precisely through relationality. This in turn allowed them to continue with nonmodern life and ways of knowing in important and fulfilling ways that are still evident today in Latin America (Rabasa 35-44). Medieval and pre-contact zones as nonmodern spaces can coexist with modernity while Indigenous and mixed-race subalterns who bridge two worlds live without the confines that modernity imposes upon everyone else.

This assertion of medievalism can also be detected in the work of Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca. Of mixed decent, he rallied for most of his adult life to claim the privileges and wealth that should have been his through his Spanish father who invaded Peru in the mid-sixteenth century. Garcilaso moved to Spain as a young adult and became a cleric; he prepared various literary and historical works, of which the *Comentarios reales* is the most studied today. Medievalisms can be traced throughout that work, but it is his unpublished treatise written in Córdoba, *Relación de la descendencia de Garci Pérez de Vargas* (1596), that demonstrates a different form of relational medievalism. Garci Pérez de Vargas was a thirteenth-century knight made famous for his deeds during the reconquest of Andalusian cities such as Seville in the service of Fernando III. His story and mentions of him appear throughout medieval chronicles, as well as in literary works such as Cervantes's *Don Quijote*, which itself is an example of medievalism intended to critique Cervantes's contemporary modernity. Garci Pérez de Vargas's relation by this same name supported Garcilaso for a while in Montilla, Extremadura, and the work is directed at Vargas.

In preparing this historical work, Garcilaso honours not only his patron, but also his father's ancestry. The Vargas and Figueroa lines intersected centuries before, making Vargas and Garcilaso related (Garcilaso IV). Garcilaso undertakes a journey to experience the places visited by Garci Pérez centuries before, for instance pointing to the Alameda de Hércules in Seville, which was undergoing the renovation that resulted in the erection of its famous columns, three fountains, orange trees, among other features. His reconnaissance of this plaza results in him projecting upon it an Incan

presence in more than one way when he concludes that the plaza's renovation was an "obra que hermoseó grandemente aquella rica ciudad, rica de plata y oro y piedras preciosas, [m]ercedes que mi tierra el Perú cada año le hace" (2v). His observation, which echoes to some degree the colonizing gaze that Pizarro first used when he came to Peru, captures both the medieval plaza and the renovated one as experienced by our modern traveler who sees his people's past and present embodied there. Garcilaso makes room within this traditional chronicle for a Spanish lineage of his own, moreover, and after explaining the lineage of his father, he defines that of his mother's Incan lineage, forging a teleological parallel that straddled the pre-contact Atlantic (11r). After completing the genealogy, Garcilaso comments that the task, given the family's unwillingness to acknowledge him, "para un Yndio no ha sido poco atrevimiento" (13v). With this admission, Garcilaso affirms his awareness that these medieval interventions comprised a form of protest and resistance against his father's family who refused to give him what he believed was his inheritance.

Garcilaso demonstrates how medieval forms of textual authority can be appropriated as vehicles of resistance and decoloniality, and used to criticize mainstream, settler-colonial society. Uniquely medieval genres of literature make manifest the importance of oral culture in the medieval period and throughout the Indigenous world regardless of the temporal construct, including Indigenous groups from other regions of the world. Gregory B. Stone observes that the medieval lyric voice exhibited foreign or alien voices alongside familiar ones, and in this way we can see the Indigenous practice of multivocality described by Guamán Poma: "The voice of medieval lyric is not the voice of an autonomous ego or self-determining subject that masters language but rather that of a fragmented ego mastered by language, the site at which converge various alien and conventional voices" (14).

One final work drawn from medieval ballads (romances) will allow us to explore a form of medievalism that evolved in the Spanish Americas. These medieval songs made their way across the Atlantic borne by the Spanish invaders and example the process of appropriating another culture's oral tradition. Many of the chroniclers of the Indies, such as Bernal Díaz del Castillo, anecdotally recount how conquistadors such as Cortés broke out in traditional songs upon seeing the shores of Mexico in 1519. Some romances, such as the father-daughter incest ballad "Delgadina," offered certain people voices that might otherwise be silenced. This medieval European ballad was intended for women who already found themselves at risk in a patriarchal society, and for children, so to inform their relationship with masculine and paternal authority. Also intriguing is

that "Delgadina," as it would become and remains sung by the Afro-Cuban lower classes, had its own multicultural context. Medieval Spain, as a settler-colonial milieu, balanced the racial and cultural divergences of several groups, particularly Christians, Jews, and Muslims, a mixture that, while different in the Spanish Americas and later Latin America, nonetheless demonstrates rigorously enforced power dynamics with which Indigenous and in this case Afro-Cubans would be familiar in a settler-colonial context. Medieval Spain, like modern Ibero- and Latin America, experienced layers of settler-colonialism, particularly after the Arab invasion in 711. Like many other medieval ballads, "Delgadina" has different medieval versions, each suited to a Christian, Jewish, or Muslim perspective, and the song ends in tragedy as the daughter, Delgadina, after refusing to become the king's lover (who is also her father), perishes from starvation after he locks her up. Her decision to die rather than concede to her father's incestual demands vocalizes the subaltern's own anguish and determination in the face of domination.

In the medieval period, women sang the ballad, and through its thematic framing, they resist patriarchal structures in rehearsing their refusal to submit to a man's unreasonable sexual demands. They vocalize an all-too-rare female protagonist in her refusal to be subjugated by masculine hegemony, as well as heteronormative gender roles that the singers themselves may not be able to challenge in their quotidian lives, yet through song they could explore their own empowerment. In colonial and settler-colonial contexts, women have been vulnerable to men's advances in situations where power imbalances were stark, for instance between a slave and her master, which implies racialized, gendered, and class-based inequalities: "since women are often both the receptors and the protagonists of ballads, the genre represents a socially approved outlet for repressed, perhaps unconscious emotions that could not otherwise be expressed directly" (Portnoy 126). This medieval oral tradition thus becomes a subversive vehicle of empowerment for otherwise subjugated demographics, in this case women of colour, whether Indigenous or Black, of likely limited means, and in Cuba, the song examples Creole medievalism practiced to this day (Warren 224).

This romance also transforms in the Americas, taking on a new life not experienced in Spain, asserting new forms of medievalism that did not experience the European Middle Ages. Versions of "Delgadina" encountered in Latin America contain a motif absent from pre-conquest versions found in Spain. They articulate a sense of allyship with the singer's mother in that after her father proposes that they become lovers, Delgadina tells her mother as a means of appealing to a form of women's authority in the role

of mother, but also as a means of hoping that the women can together find some solution to their now shared problem. As Sarah Portnoy observes, in a Cuban context, the ballad ensures some distance between the woman singer and the trauma invoked by the story in that her father would not be a king, nor would they live in a castle and have unusual names such as Delgadina (133-34). These medieval attributes help to create a safe, faraway-seeming space for subverting traditional gender roles in plain sight.

The romance also signals a collective sense of trauma experienced by the subaltern. Viewing Indigenous, Black, women's, and mixed-blood expressions as informed by the trauma created by the disconnection and restructuring of knowledge, politics, economics, and ideology as a result of invasion, colonization, and slavery requires us to centre on the collective experience, in this case of the trauma caused by catastrophe, of Indigenous and other subaltern peoples. The texts and images studied in this article do more than respond and object to the underlying causes of collective trauma, whether involving genocide, gendered violence, or ecocide. Using medievalism, they also model decoloniality in what Nehiyaw author, Suzanne Methot, calls "killing the wittigo":

> Killing a wittigo is about destroying the negative energy that makes an individual feel disconnected, angry, fearful, or sad. It is about destroying the terror that characterizes the everyday life of someone who has survived trauma. It is about destroying the cannibal: the selfish, greedy behaviours of individuals, systems, and institutions that destabilize communities and prioritize individual gain over collective well-being. In the context of intergenerational trauma, killing the wittigo also means unpacking the traumatic story that keeps Indigenous peoples tied to the past and creating a new story of our own choosing. (10)

Wittigo represents the ways Indigenous peoples feel disconnected from their communities, human and non-human relations, and epistemologies, which manifests as a form of collective trauma. In this sense, medievalism becomes an instrument of survivance, one that fashions an alternative past meant to inform a very real future. From Guamán Poma's map and the bestiary to Garcilaso's genealogy and "Delgadina," each of these works negotiate trauma while erecting from it the scaffolding for a better future – one where women exercise control over their bodies, where marginalized groups do not suffer with fewer resources than the mainstream, where race, gender, and class do not prevent equality among us, and where Indigenous people have sovereignty over their ancestral lands. As Francisco Ortega observes, moreover, with colonial texts, we must look beyond the experiences of a work and its author, in his case of Garcilaso's *Comentarios reales*, to the group culture that they represent (398-99). Overcoming

modernity's proclivity to value the individual, and instead recentring on the experiences of a collective, reinforces the importance of thinking relationally when reading Indigenous perspectives and calls for decolonization, and assists us in thinking about the case studies pursued in this article as a typology.

One such relational practice seen throughout this article, storytelling, remains a primary means through which knowledge becomes shared intergenerationally in the Indigenous Americas. Concerning annals and stories that were written down according to European book-making practices in medieval-nonmodern ways, José Rabasa acknowledges that they come from European manuscript culture but also Indigenous storytelling culture. Both cultures performed "text" orally, whether through reading letters aloud while staring at a painting of its writer or by verbalizing images in a chronicle before an audience (38-39). Some storytellers choose to combat trauma with silence, creating gaps that serve as signposts. These "textual ruins" in some ways refuse to be appropriated and shared unless the storyteller so desires, a practice illustrated by Garcilaso in the *Comentarios reales*. He informs us that each *panaca*, a unit of social organization of the Inca, had its own official history that was told in song to its people. One of Garcilaso's characters, Cusi Huallpa, tells the story not of his panaca, but of their defeat by the Spanish, and in so doing, he loses his ability to speak the words as he is overcome with melancholy and loss. Called an "endecha," the term according to Covarrubias in his 1611 dictionary describes mourners who "dexan de professar algunas palabras y se las comen, y no se entienden distinta y enteramente lo que dicen," while today the Real Academia Española defines it as a "canción triste o de lamento" (Ortega 402-03). His inability to tell a traumatic story can be read as an act of resistance, a deliberate decision to not share a collective experience that could perpetuate intergenerational harm or, on the contrary, a conscious decision not to share his traditional knowledge with non-Indigenous people.

Much like chronicles, bestiaries, ballads, and mappaemundi, Garcilaso's *Comentarios reales* constitutes an archive of oral stories and collective experience. Seen in this light, pre-contact behaviours, attitudes, and cultural practices may be viewed as less modern and less powerful from the perspective of the settler-colonizer. But when practiced at a collective level, medievalism may play a role in Indigenous resurgence and decolonization because it presents as innocuous and operates in plain sight. In the hands of marginalized groups, medievalism others in ways designed to distance the settler-colonizer from the people they marginalize. This is the decolonial tool that Guamán Poma appropriates in his mappamundi, and the resurgence of the bestiary genre also accomplishes this end. The subaltern

storyteller thus involves medieval and/or pre-invasion accounts from anywhere, allowing them to assert a contemporary presence in ways that preserve and perpetuate intergenerational knowledge and the modalities for its transmission, while reinforcing their multivocal origins.

As we have seen, nonmodernity challenges the normalized hierarchies of power inscribed upon our identities in useful ways that also expose the weak foundations of the modern-colonial invention of periodized culture. Indigenous medievalism confronts periodization in the settler-colonial world, rattling its core while asserting an indelible presence and ignoring any need to demonstrate its teleological relevance. These concepts make possible a series of subaltern medievalisms that allows us to witness subaltern resistance to the modernity-coloniality matrix. Indigenous medievalism thus disrupts how that matrix functions by asserting alternative pasts, as well as medieval periods and locations, to both confront and distance oneself from the modern condition.

Finally, by drawing upon two bodies of decolonial thought, this article has attempted to knit together methodologies and epistemologies while bringing thinkers into dialogue with one another across temporal, linguistic, and disciplinary divides. In so doing, we have only scratched the surface of Indigenous methodologies, such as two-eyed seeing and relationality, and how they can be useful for analysing colonial texts and images, allowing us to complicate medievalism as a vehicle for resistance and disobedience.

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NOTES

1 His use of parentheses for this term reflects the reality that what constitutes disobedience for some will be obedience in the eyes of others.

2 For some scholars, postcolonial implies the retreat of settler-colonial actors of European and white descent; for others, however, it signifies Western and post-Western, neoliberal and capitalist forces that continue the colonial project (Mignolo, "Coloniality Is Far from Over" 40). This article takes the position that the former has not occurred, and the latter will not provide a pathway to decolonization.

3 Latin America as a settler-colonial space, or the idea of settler-colonialism in a post-colonial context, is the subject of some debate; see Goebel.

4 For postcolonial and settler-colonial states, we understand that decolonization will involve the removal of the colonizer, or in his place the settler, his knowledge architecture, and culture, and lead to the incorporation of

Indigenous presence and ways of knowing. Settler should be understood as non-Indigenous people, regardless of their place of birth, who live in the Americas. In Spanish, the term *criollo* for a time overlaps with that of settler from a historiographical perspective, although the former term today primarily remains in historical use.

5 We must acknowledge that legal definitions for Indigeneity have impacted severely Indigenous people for centuries. See Alfred and Corntassel (597-614).

6 Little research exists on the influence of mappaemundi on colonial mapping practices in the medieval period. I have taken some inspiration from Brush 2010, although the period is much later and the geography entirely distinct from a Latin American context.

7 *Huacas* are more than water spirits and may exist in mountains, rock formations, and other topographical features. Their association with ancestors constitutes an important element of Andean cosmology (Glowacki and Malpass).

8 The artist has created a website for the series. See http://nuevacronicaymalgobierno.blogspot.com/.

9 See Walter Mignolo's treatment of this topic, as well as the entanglements that his images have with those of De Bry (Mignolo, "Crossing Gazes and the Silence of the 'Indians'" 177).

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