3

The Americas

And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.

– Shakespeare, *Othello*, I.iii.144–6

So let us henceforth no longer abhor so very greatly the cruelty of the anthropophagous – that is, man-eating – savages. For since there are some here in our midst even worse and more detestable than those who, as we have seen, attack only enemy nations, while the ones over here have plunged us into the blood of their kinsmen, neighbors, and compatriots, one need not go beyond one's own country, nor as far as America, to see such monstrous and prodigious things.

– Jean de Lèry, 1578[1]

[M]en call that barbarism which is not common to them.

– Michel de Montaigne, 'Of Cannibals'[2]

Allegories of the Four Continents in the late 16th century featured female personifications riding on regionally specific animals.[3] One notable set of engravings (1587–9) was designed by Marten de Vos (1532–1603) for the triumphal entry pageant staged for the regent of the Netherlands, Archduke Ernest of Austria, in 1594; engraved by Adriaen Collaert, it enjoyed wide distribution. In De Vos's designs all non-European figures ride on oversized, exotic beasts: Asia's camel; Africa's crocodile; America's armadillo. Behind the Continent figures, other animals range within each landscape. America has fewer animals: familiar sheep and long-eared goats are European colonial imports, but her armadillo mount faces a prominent parrot in the lower right corner.

America (fig.27) is portrayed fully naked, wearing only an elaborate feather crown. She also shows the greatest ferocity of the Four Continents allegories, by carrying weapons: a bow and arrows plus a distinctive hatchet. Above her giant armadillo, the background shows other naked figures engaged in conflict with hatchets and spears against armored conquistadors,

Fig.27 After Marten de Vos, *Allegory of America*, 1594, engraving, 21.3 x 25.6 cm (8 ⅜ x 10 ⅛ in), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of the Estate of James Hazen Hyde, 1959.

who wield the latest European infantry weapons, long pikes and primitive muskets (arquebuses). Behind the personification figure, other naked people live in caves and hunt with bows and arrows; however, in one disturbing detail, a man is dismembering a recognizably human corpse on a table – a clear, if miniature, enactment of cannibalism. Thus, the primal, even bestial behavior of these naked figures contrasts utterly with any notion of European civilization. They seem to embody an anti-Utopian viewpoint rather than any kind of projected ideal of a simpler life.[4]

Columbus reported about his first visit to the Americas that he had 'not found any monstrous men in these islands, as many had thought.' What he imagined and even expected were those same 'Marvels of the East' from the margins of the map and from the limits of the medieval 'Old World', still represented in the 'Nuremberg Chronicle' (see Chapter 1 above). Yet in his journal (23 November 1492) he offers the first mention of cannibals, reported to him by the indigenous peoples he encountered: 'others whom they called "Canibals" ... because those people ate them and because they are very warlike.'[5]

Fig.28 Anonymous Augsburg artist, *New World Natives*, 1505, woodcut broadsheet, 34 x 25 cm (13 ⅜ x 9 ⅞ in)

In the wake of Columbus's discoveries, what Europe would soon come to call a 'New World' quickly found representation in graphic imagery, prints about Spain's West Indies.[6] The first woodcut illustrations accompanied a famous published voyage letter by Amerigo Vespucci, which described his expedition and provided personal publicity for the author. Though he was neither a seaman nor a cartographer, Vespucci soon would give his name permanently to the region on early maps: America.[7] His successful claims derived from the new power of the printing press, which distributed Vespucci's descriptions to a vaster public than that of Columbus, who chiefly reported back to his patrons, the royal rulers of Spain.

Vespucci's letters first appeared in early 1503 (Venice, Paris and Antwerp) as *Mundus novus* ('New World'). The text spread like wildfire, especially in Germany. Its account already features prurient, sensational details about the indigenous inhabitants:

> Everyone of both sexes goes about naked, covering no part of the body, and just as they issued from their mothers' wombs so they go about until their dying day … Their women [are] very lustful … Human flesh is common fare among them. … I myself met and spoke with a man who was said to have eaten more than 300 human bodies; and I also … saw human flesh hanging from house-beams, much as we hang up bacon and

pork. ...They have no ... private property, but own everything in common: they live together without a king and without authorities, each man his own master. They take as many wives as they wish, and son may couple with mother, brother with sister, and in general men with women as they chance to meet.[8]

While this society is depicted with elements suggestive of a primal state of nature, prelapsarian innocence within an earthly paradise of abundance and favorable climate, in this report it could simultaneously appall and appeal, by offering a total inversion of European social norms of politics, property and even propriety, not excluding incest.[9]

Ultimately, while Vespucci's text does not use the word 'cannibal', his explicit description of flesh-eating, combined with open nudity and sexuality, found immediate representation in accompanying woodcuts. Already in 1505, a woodcut broadsheet (that is, a single sheet with both text description and accompanying image; see fig.28) appeared in Augsburg with the caption, 'This figure shows the people and island ...' Under a humble wooden hut dismembered limbs and a human head hang from beams; below, one local man chews on an arm, as another leg sits on a stone slab, above which a couple openly embraces. Especially striking is the widespread presence of feathers as costume – both skirts and headdresses (even anklets) – worn by figures of both sexes, whose bodies are also adorned with attached stones or gems. In the background, European galleons appear on an open sea to suggest the visitors, with claims to be eyewitnesses.

In 1509 the Strasbourg publication of Vespucci's text was accompanied by three woodcuts. One image shows a moment from Vespucci's 1501 expedition, when two men sent ashore to meet the inhabitants never returned; in addition, their rescue party was mugged from behind while responding to the naked charms of local women. According to the text, that figure was dragged away to be cut up and roasted in plain sight, while his captors shot arrows at the ship. Another woodcut shows a cluster of

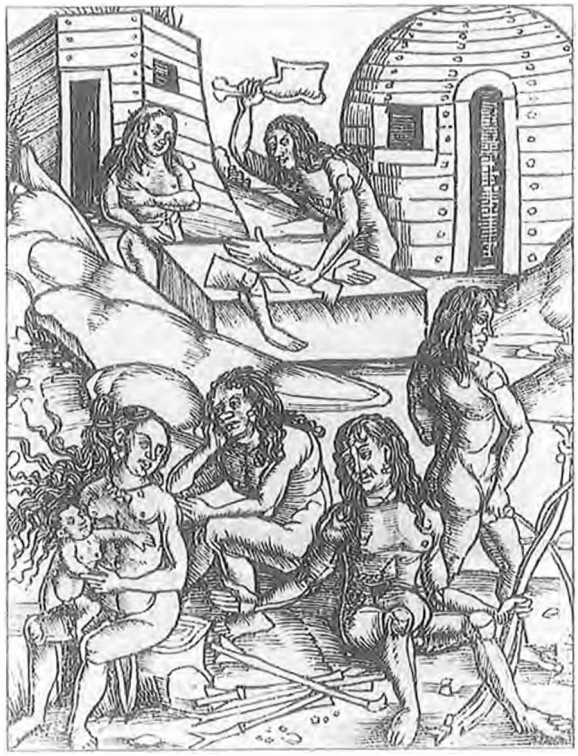

Fig.29 Anonymous Strasbourg artist, 1509, woodcut, from Amerigo Vespucci, *Letter to Soderini*.

nude locals of both sexes seated before wooden plank huts, where another couple cleaves an arm and a leg; at the right edge a man freely urinates in the open air (see fig.29). Thus, the warlike encounter between the distant Americas and Europe already had established a standard iconography by the second decade of the 16th century.

Also important for European consciousness about the discoveries, as well as for the placement of 'America' as a more general term for the most familiar region of Brazil on early maps, was Vespucci's recasting of the voyages as finding a 'New World' rather than located as the outpost of East Asia, as Columbus believed. Soon images of naked cannibals would appear on new maps of South America, usually placed specifically in interior regions of Brazil that had not yet been surveyed.

Fig.30 Hans Holbein, *Typus cosmographicus universalis* ('Universal Cosmographic Map'), 1532, woodcut, 2 blocks, overall: 37.6 x 56.9 cm (14 ⅞ x 22 ⅜ in).

A good, early example of such imagery also registers the expansion of cartographic knowledge since the 1493 'Nuremberg Chronicle': a handsome world map, designed by Hans Holbein the Younger of Basel (1532; see fig.30). Its lower left corner shows characters, labeled as 'Canibali', standing before their primitive thatched hut while busily engaged in chopping up the limbs of a human corpse for outdoor grilling. Holbein's upper left corner still features dragons alongside exotic elephants and human marvels with pendulous lips, derived from ancient reports of Africans, but transposed by this map onto North America.

While seemingly not based on any specific travel account (despite attempts by scholars to pinpoint sources), a painted panel by Dutch painter Jan Mostaert (*c.*1535; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum; plate 2) provides the earliest oil painting of Spanish troops invading the Americas.[10] It introduces European invaders, armored and well-armed (including warfare's new ultimate weapon, cannons), who leave their oceangoing ships at the right horizon. They are resisted by a file of naked warriors, armed only with spears and longbows, who move across the hilly landscape from left to right to defend their homeland. Domesticated animals occupy settled spaces; most appear at the lower right corner. Except for a few exotic species, parrots and monkeys (often transported back to Europe for menageries), all others are quite familiar to Europeans.

Primitive huts nestle in the horizontal hills above, imagined – like the entire image – by an artist who had only verbal accounts to inform his representation of the 'New World'. This setting has been correctly viewed as both rustic and arcadian, cruelly subject now to disruption by the European incursion. While hardly imagined as Golden Age rural innocence – after all, the inhabitants do carry their own weapons – this panel still envisions these indigenous people as a community, well adjusted to local natural conditions. This depiction neither condescends nor views the community members as subhuman. In contrast to those first images of cannibalism, it offers a more sympathetic viewpoint. Back in Spain, heated debates raged about the nature of the newly discovered peoples and their humanity. Their chief defender, Bartolomé de las Casas, strongly opposed enslavement of Indigenous Americans.[11] Thus, Mostaert's panel joins that debate, in early assertion of the inherently human nature of the people of the 'New World', while showing their more primitive state, seemingly with sympathy.

One group of Indigenous Brazilians (mistakenly labeled as South Asians from Calicut, thus confusing 'West Indies' with India proper) was included in the woodcut *Triumphal Procession of Emperor Maximilian*, and thus represented as compliant subjects of a powerful monarch. Brazil was first visited by Portuguese explorer Cabral in 1500, so lay outside the continental claims of Spain. France, too, briefly attempted to establish a colony in Brazil in 1555. French trade for Brazilian wood and dyes already had operated around Portuguese gaps of colonial control from early in the 16th century.

Thus, when newly crowned French king Henri II and his bride Catherine de' Medici made a triumphal entry into Rouen in 1550, their welcome ceremony featured an elaborately staged performance of native life in Brazil. A Seine meadow outside the city was converted into a simulated 'New World', complete with trees and villages plus native fauna: parrots and monkeys. Then, for the king's amusement, some 50 imported Tupinambá people (and several sailors impersonating Tupis) staged a mock-battle, whose final outcome resulted in the full, flaming destruction of the village. A final proclamation to the king declared: 'Thy power to the cannibals extends: / Faithless to others, they remain our friends, / And in those islands we may safely dwell.'[12]

The published program of that French royal entry also contains a woodcut illustration (see fig.32), which richly depicts all aspects of Indigenous American life with small naked figures across a forest. At left center the print features a crowned yet naked couple enjoying sex in a hammock. Before them dancers circle around a tree, while workers carry a beam to the water's edge, where canoes paddle. A foreground hut at lower left contrasts with a burning village at both left and right horizons. Across the middle zone naked couples frolic, climb trees or hunt, lending that section of the forest another Edenic tone; however, across the center foreground and in the right background a full battle rages with clubs, shields, bows and spears. This is not conquest by Europeans like Mostaert's painting, but internecine warfare, displaying both the valor and fierceness of the people of Brazil. Their presence at

Fig.31 Untitled, 1575, woodcut, from André Thevet, *Cosmographie universelle*.

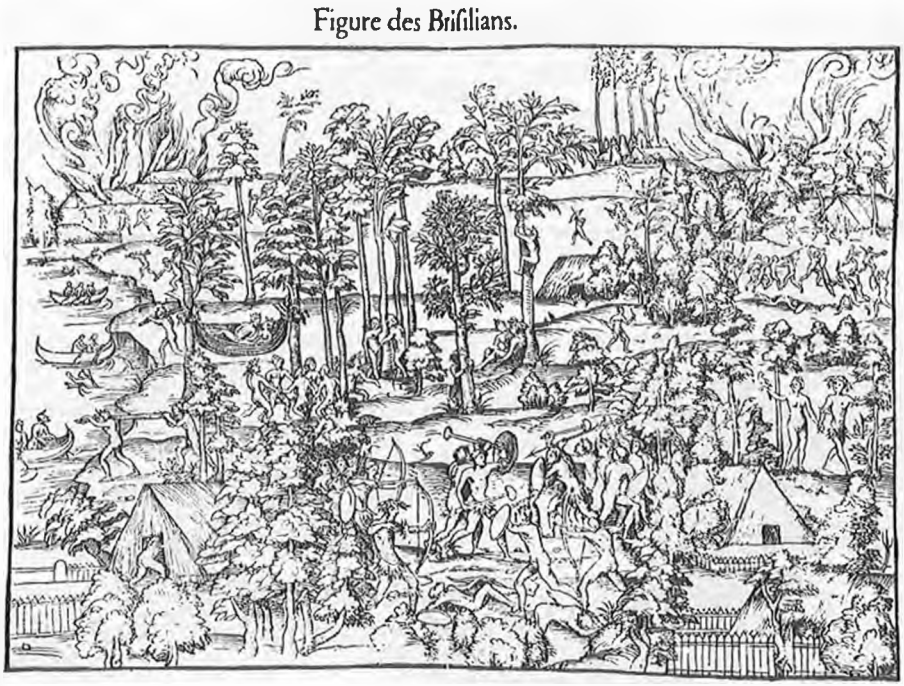

Fig.32 *Brazilian Village, staged at Joyous Entry of Henri II into Rouen*, 1550, woodcut.

a royal ceremony underscores the current French vision of open trade with the region, while it also asserts royal claims to potential future colonization of Brazil.

These representations were based on luxury maps on parchment, prepared for the French king in Dieppe by merchant cartographers. Like the program of the 1550 Rouen entry, these luxurious maps were meant to encourage exploration and inspire confidence about Brazil as a region for French colonization. Seven such maps and atlases survive and, superimposed on their impressive delineations of coastlines, figures of peaceful wood cutters or bow hunters within brazilwood forests predominate over any imputed cannibalism in the area, even though they are still depicted naked or clad with feathers. Appropriate to a mercantile culture, focus remains fixed on natural resources available abroad for exploitation.

Actual French attempts to colonize Brazil began in late 1555 with the voyage of Nicolas Durande de Villegagnon (d.1572), sponsored by the leading Huguenot (i.e. Protestant) nobleman, Admiral Gaspard de Coligny. There they encountered members of both the Tupinambá and Potiguara peoples, who were often hostile to visitors, but did establish trading relations with the French. As before, reports distinguished between approachable local allies and intractable enemies. That first French colonization attempt, however, ended disastrously a mere five years later, in 1560, largely because of home-grown French religious conflicts (Calvinist Huguenots vs Catholics), which could not co-exist any better abroad.

Two celebrated 16th-century French authors visited Brazil and returned home to write about their experiences in early descriptions. The first, André

Fig.33 *Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*, 1592, engraving illustration, from Theodor de Bry, *India Occidentalis*, vol.III.

Thevet (1516–1590), spent a mere three months in Brazil (1555), largely aboard a ship, but he later secured appointment as royal cosmographer.[13] His 1558 publication, which coined the term 'Antarctic France', describes the coastal Tupinambá from the mouth of the bay of Rio de Janeiro, a site that the French named Coligny Island in honor of their noble patron. Thevet calls the Tupis 'Amériques', in contrast to claims of real cannibals, farther north, 'most cruel and inhuman people', who 'eat human flesh as we would mutton'. Thevet even claims that the eponymous Amazons of Greek myth live near that great South American river, but his knowledge of more local peoples stems chiefly from interpreters, 'dragomen'.[14] He further claims that local Tupis also practiced anthropophagy, but only as an act of conquest vengeance over captured enemies, rather than out of some subhuman taste for the flesh of fellow-creatures (Michel de Montaigne would later use this 'fact' in his own celebrated French essay, composed between 1578–80, 'Of Cannibals').[15] Most of Thevet's

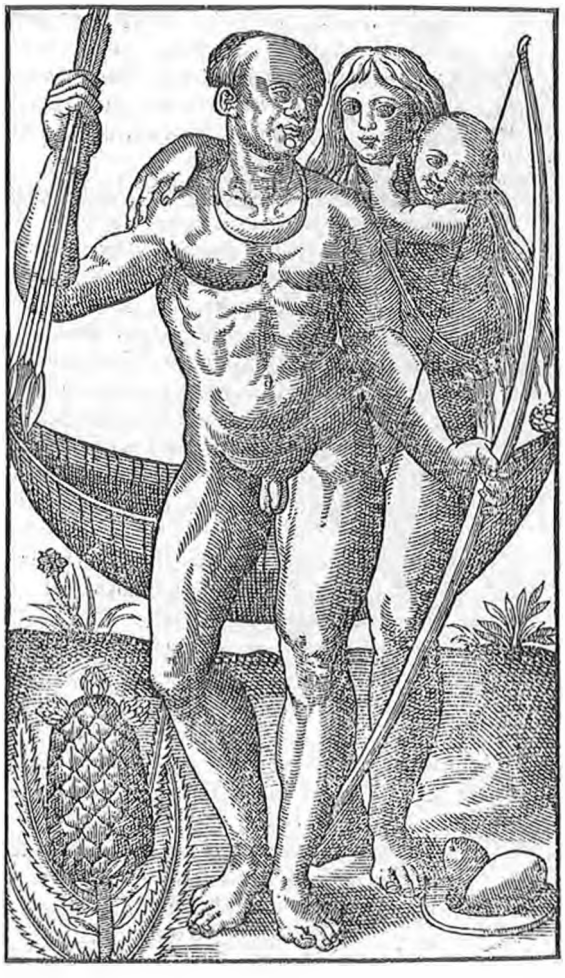

Fig.34 *Brazilian Family*, 1578, woodcut, from Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Otherwise Called America*.

observations actually derive from Vespucci, though he relocates that geography southward to Brazil. He describes them as:

> a marvelous strange wild and brutish people, without King, without Law, without religion [*sans roi, sans loi, sans foi*], and without any *civilité*: but living like brute beasts, as nature has brought them out, eating herbs and roots, being always naked as well women as men, until such time as being more visited and frequented of Christians, they may peradventure leave this brutish living ...[16]

Nevertheless, Thevet's woodcut prints (see fig.31), particularly in his 1575 *Cosmographie universelle*, show the local population as muscular, handsome, classicizing figures; their long bodies support small heads, echoing his description of their tall, tawny-skinned frames. They move gracefully, even in a scene of cutting up limbs of captives for a human feast, which at first glance differs little from a peaceful scene of a *Tupinamba Family Eating* around large vessels and under palm trees. The setting emphasizes both the beauty and uncultivated wildness of the Brazilian landscape.[17] Other images depict naked warrior women, Amazons, who resist male enemies besieging their island in canoes and attack them with both clubs and arrows. Later, those women cruelly fire arrows into naked men who hang from branches above a fire. Another print shows a tribal march together with tobacco use and fire-making. All these woodcuts are professionally modeled with firm outlines and delicate hatchings, even for the corpses. Since Thevet was the official cosmographer of the king, his prints may even have been designed by royal artists, Jean Cousin the Elder and Younger, at least for *Cosmographie universelle* and probably already for the *Singularités* (1558). Thevet's handsome figures in motion link closely to art of the French court, which mitigates the potential horror of their activities.

Credence for Thevet's claims was reinforced by a contemporary publication (1557) by Hans Staden: a sensational, supposedly documentary *True History*, illustrated with 56 crude but striking woodcuts.[18] Staden, a German mercenary employed by the Portuguese, arrived in Brazil in 1549, but was captured by the Tupinambá; he had to survive for nine months as a captive and potential human sacrifice. He calls the natives *Wilden*, 'savages', and emphasizes their warlike nature and ritual cannibalism despite their handsome appearance. Staden himself is shown both naked and

bearded while a prisoner, and his presence in most woodcut illustration images reaffirms his eyewitness veracity and personal textual testimonial. Staden's title page displays costume and body types of a naked, fully feathered pair of warriors with arms – club and bow and arrows. Their bodies display markings, probably painted; their heads are shaved; and their faces appear inset with gems, as mentioned already in Vespucci. Staden's account would later form the first part of volume III in Theodor de Bry's celebrated turn-of-the-century series on the Americas, *India Occidentalis* (1592), luridly and vividly illustrated with engravings (see fig.33), such as one showing men, women and even children feasting on the roasted limbs and trunk of a captured prisoner, based on the Staden woodcuts.[19] Thus, Staden's account and images reinforced the naked, feathered, cannibalistic stereotypes of the earliest woodcuts from the time of Vespucci. As was common in imagery about the Americas, such exceptional, monstrous or 'wondrous' representations often provided a defining extreme against which to measure European norms of viewers.

More authentic as observed ethnography, the *Histoire d'un voyage fait en la terre du Bresil* (1578) by Huguenot pastor Jean de Léry was based on his own longer stay, almost two years in the short-lived French colony, including two months living among the Tupinambá (1557–8); however, it appeared in print later than Thevet, after a 20-year interval.[20] Léry's work enjoyed wide circulation through translations, and it formed another main source for Montaigne's essay (see epigraph, p.56), especially on the subject of eating captives for ritual vengeance in a ceremony that honors the victim as well as the victor. Léry, however, overtly accused his Catholic predecessor Thevet of writing fiction, and asserted his own truer claims due to personal experience with the Tupinambá. He also contrasted the logic of Brazilians' cannibalism of conquered enemies against European tortures of usurers and religious massacres, especially during the height of France's internal Wars of Religion, not to mention his basic Calvinist critique on Catholic ritual practice in the Eucharist as another form of cannibalism:

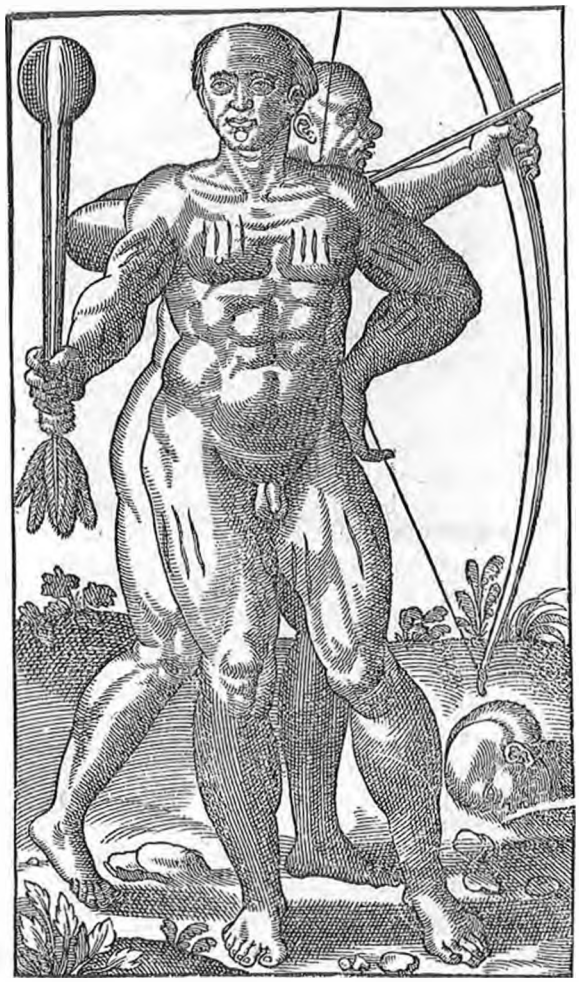

Fig.35 *Brazilian Warriors*, 1578, woodcut, from Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Otherwise Called America*.

> So let us henceforth no longer abhor so very greatly the cruelty of the anthropophagous – that is, man-eating – savages. For since there are some here in our midst even worse and more detestable than those who, as we have seen, attack only enemy nations, while the ones over here have plunged us into the blood of their

Fig.36 Theodor Galle, after Jan van der Straet, called Johannes Stradanus, *Allegory of America*, 1600, engraving, from *New Inventions of Modern Times* (*Nova Reperta*), plate 1 of 19, 27 x 20 cm (10 ⅝ x 7 ⅞ in), Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1949.

> kinsmen, neighbors, and compatriots, one need not go beyond one's own country, nor as far as America, to see such monstrous and prodigious things.[21]

When this kind of hostility in Brazil could be compared to worse contemporary horrors in France itself during decades of religious civil wars, little wonder that early French efforts at colonization in the Americas were unsuccessful.

Léry's describes the 'savages', Tupinambá, as similar in stature to Europeans, but healthier and more long-lived. They are 'not particularly dark, but merely of a tawny shade', as both sexes parade naked without shame. Léry does not endorse their behavior, but he sometimes seems to advance a sympathy for them akin to later Enlightenment concepts of 'noble savages', when he claims, 'it is an incredible thing … how a people guided solely by their nature, even corrupted as it is, can live and deal with each other in such peace and tranquility'.[22] Men paint, scar and pierce themselves, shave or pluck their body hair, and wear facial stones as adults. Léry's six woodcuts, less elegant than Thevet's, emphasize small groups, such as a family, standing naked at full length (see fig.34). The only adornment, worn by the

Fig.37 (left) Theodor de Bry, after Jacques Le Moyne (1564), *Florida Natives Worshiping Column before French Visitor*, 1591, engraving, from *India Occidentalis*, vol.II.

Fig.38 (right) Theodor de Bry, after John White (1585), *Virginia Chieftain*, 1590, engraving, from *India Occidentalis*, vol.I.

heavy-set, thick man, is crescent-shaped neckwear, also shown on Hans Staden's frontispiece. The man carries bow and arrows, and exotic tropical fruits, including a pineapple, sit at their feet.

Certainly, newly discovered produce from America held economic implications for European explorers. Léry not only attends to the animals, birds and fish of Brazil but also to native 'trees, herbs, roots, and exquisite fruits'. He begins by discussing brazilwood, already quite familiar to the French as a valued dye source (to the surprise of the locals), but he also itemizes various palms, nuts and especially fruits, such as bananas and pineapples. Tobacco (*petun*) and smoking receive particular attention, for 'if they go off to war, and necessity presses them, they will go three or four days without nourishing themselves on anything else'.[23]

Another Léry woodcut shows two warriors, again naked, bald and unadorned (see fig.35). The frontal, muscular man shows scarification but no other ornament. He holds up a feathered ceremonial club used in ritual killings, while behind him a companion pulls his bow; a severed head lies at their feet. Thus, the Tupinambá – naked, armed with primitive weapons, and inherently violent – embody uninhibited Nature, in contrast to the observing European's civilized Culture.

In the final analysis, as Léry's account reveals, Europeans went to America to exploit natural resources and to utilize the indigenous population in that process. Conceptually, this encounter is epitomized in a famous engraving (see fig.36) by transplanted Flemish designer Giovanni Stradanus (Jan van der Straet of Bruges), court artist of the Medici in Florence.[24] It shows a European, labeled as Vespucci himself (that earlier Florentine), who appears on the shore of the Americas clad in armor, sword and traveling cloak. He stands erect in profile and plants the staff of Christianity with a cross at its top. Behind him, offshore galleons reveal his transportation. He carries an astrolabe, that essential navigational aid that exemplifies for Europe its own technological superiority, along with the ship. The Latin text declares: 'Amerigo rediscovers America; he called her but once, and thenceforth she was always awake.' Before the explorer a lone, naked female receives him lying down. Representing virgin Nature, supine and

Fig.39 Albert Eckhout, *Mulatto Man*, 1641, oil on canvas, 274 x 170 cm (107 ⅞ x 66 ⅞ in), National Museum, Copenhagen.

vulnerable to his sophisticated Culture, she gestures with outstretched arm – an ambiguous sign that could denote receptivity but also apprehension, surprise and wonder, even accompanying outright fear. She rests in a distinctive local device, a hammock, horizontal and lower than his upright pose. Her only attribute upon unbound hair is a crown of feathers, already (*c.*1590) the standard marker of America's body ornament; however, her club leans against a tree in the right corner, while behind it a strange local animal, an anteater, forages. Certainly the three figures in the background behind the hammock are still capable of their own conquest over, not to mention cannibalism of, their captives, since they are enjoying a feast of human limbs on a skewer. This scene repeats that early image of enticement and ambush by women, already described in Vespucci's letter and pictured in its 1509 Strasbourg woodcut (see fig.29).

Yet Stradanus's print remains more generalized, non-narrative, even allegorical in its effect. It vividly juxtaposes the two Continents and their respective power relations, here gendered. Female America fills dual functions. She personifies an allegory of America but also becomes an object, in dynamic interaction with, even open to sexual conquest by, this visiting, male foreigner, Europe. Thus, this printed epitome of European discovery mixes America's reported attributes – nudity, feathers and cannibalism, mingled with actual indigenous artifacts, whether animals or weapons – to suggest accurate cumulative observation. Meanwhile, it also indulges Europe's ideology of cultural superiority and inevitable military conquest through superior technology and weaponry. Much more explicitly than Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), which proposes an ideal Republic on an imagined 'New World' island, Stradanus's engraving summarizes the process of colonization of the Americas – from a distinctly European viewpoint.

Within Europe, Spanish conquistadors were accused (from an outside Protestant perspective) of indulging their own greed, Catholic bigotry and, especially, for their savagery in attacking and torturing vulnerable native peoples. Their exploitation of Indigenous Americans often focused on enforced mining for precious metals. Illustrating this so-called 'Black Legend' within the later volumes of his *India Occidentalis*, De Bry included all these tales along with shocking accompanying images of atrocities committed by the Spanish in their New Spain colonies. Some De Bry engravings clearly stem from anti-Spanish bias during the height of the dynastic wars in late 16th-century Europe, but he shatters any suggestion of an American arcadian idyll – showing familiar

Fig.40 Albert Eckhout, *Tapuya Woman* and *Tapuya Man*, 1641, oil on canvas, 264 x 159 cm (104 x 62 ⅝ in), National Museum, Copenhagen.

scenes of gruesome cannibalism (see fig.33) as well as violent tortures inflicted on indigenous peoples by Spanish soldiers. Indeed, both parties represent ghastly, distorted, mirror images of European civilization, akin to Michel de Montaigne's essay, 'Of Cannibals', based largely on the accounts by Léry.

De Bry's first volumes had already based their images on other, more dispassionate descriptions: engravings of Indigenous North Americans – from Florida and North Carolina – based on careful watercolor studies made on site, first by French Protestant Jacques Le Moyne (1564; see fig.37), then by Englishman John White (1585; see fig.38).[25] Both illustrations represent chieftains. White's works, transmitted to De Bry by Richard Hakluyt, were originally prepared to accompany a publication by Thomas Harriot, intended to suggest a peaceful land

suitable for colonization from England, yet another ambitious newcomer colonial nation. Like Burgkmair's peoples of the Indian Ocean (see fig.61, p.108–9), White's watercolors also display handsome, muscular male bodies in relaxed *contrapposto* stances, especially the chieftain, whose noble bearing and athleticism suggest harmony with nature. Along with other scenes of hunting or fishing, indigenous community social organization appears in several White/De Bry scenes: festive dancing, a fire ceremony and village layouts.

Pictorial documentation remained important to the nascent colonial enterprise. Later expeditions (beyond the scope of this volume) often included staff painters to record systematically both the topography and the local populations as well as the exotic fauna of distant territories. In particular, the brief Dutch conquest and occupation of Brazil under governor Prince Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen (1637–1644) provided another watershed event for European perception of foreign peoples and places.[26] Like White's watercolors from the 1585 Virginia expedition, artists were brought into the new territory of Dutch Brazil by Prince Maurits, led by painter Albert Eckhout (1616–1665), who made paintings on site of the Indigenous Brazilian peoples, as well as regional fauna and flora.[27] Eckhout first made careful watercolor studies in a picture album (Krakow, Jagiellonian Library), which he then utilized for finished paintings, even featuring still-lifes of exotic local fruits. Other paintings, chiefly landscape views, but also animal studies, were painted by Frans Post (1612–1680).[28] Some Post scenes were added as ornament to published Dutch maps of Brazil, issued in atlases by the Blaeu firm back in Amsterdam. Beyond basic documentation or natural science, this landscape material could also be used for colonial exploitation of Brazil and even for strategic regional defense against the Portuguese by the commercial Dutch West Indies Company.

To decorate the palace of Prince Maurits, Eckhout also made eight life-sized paired images of different ethnic groups, each with one male and one female. Examples show the range of assimilation of their indigenous neighbors by the occupying Dutch. Closest to the Dutch appearance stands the *Mulatto Man* (1641; Copenhagen, National Museum; see fig.39), a character of mixed race, who is entrusted with a firearm and an oversight role of the cash crops represented beside him, coconuts and sugar cane. He carries a sword and wears a white garment, suitable to the climate but also modest. His female companion wears a full-length dress and stands before open plantation fields, holding a basket of bright flowers. At her feet sits a guinea pig, cultivated as both pet and food source. Both figures perform necessary domestic tasks to cultivate the Brazilian environment for their would-be colonists.

By contrast, the wildest couple, Tapuyas, are naked figures, armed with native weapons. The man carries a large club, a blowgun and pointed spears. He stands before undergrowth, ornamented only with a feathered headband and bones that pierce his lips. But the most disturbing of the eight painted figure types is the *Tapuya Woman*, poised at the edge of a stream with only a leaf cluster at her genitals (1641; Copenhagen, National Museum; see fig.40). At first glance the gathering basket on her back merely suggests a hunter-gatherer economy, but closer inspection reveals a disturbing detail: a human foot. The curious object she is holding also resolves as a detached hand. Thus, over a century later, these representations of Indigenous Brazilians still conform to initial reports by Vespucci and mid-16th-century Staden survival accounts of savagery and cannibalism. While some of those peoples have adjusted already to their imposed colonial social structure – indexed by their degree of body coverings – others are deemed to have remained unreconstructed, primitive and violent, even bestial.

COLLECTING AMERICAN ARTIFACTS AND ANIMALS

German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) provides a rare candid glimpse of the significance of Habsburg

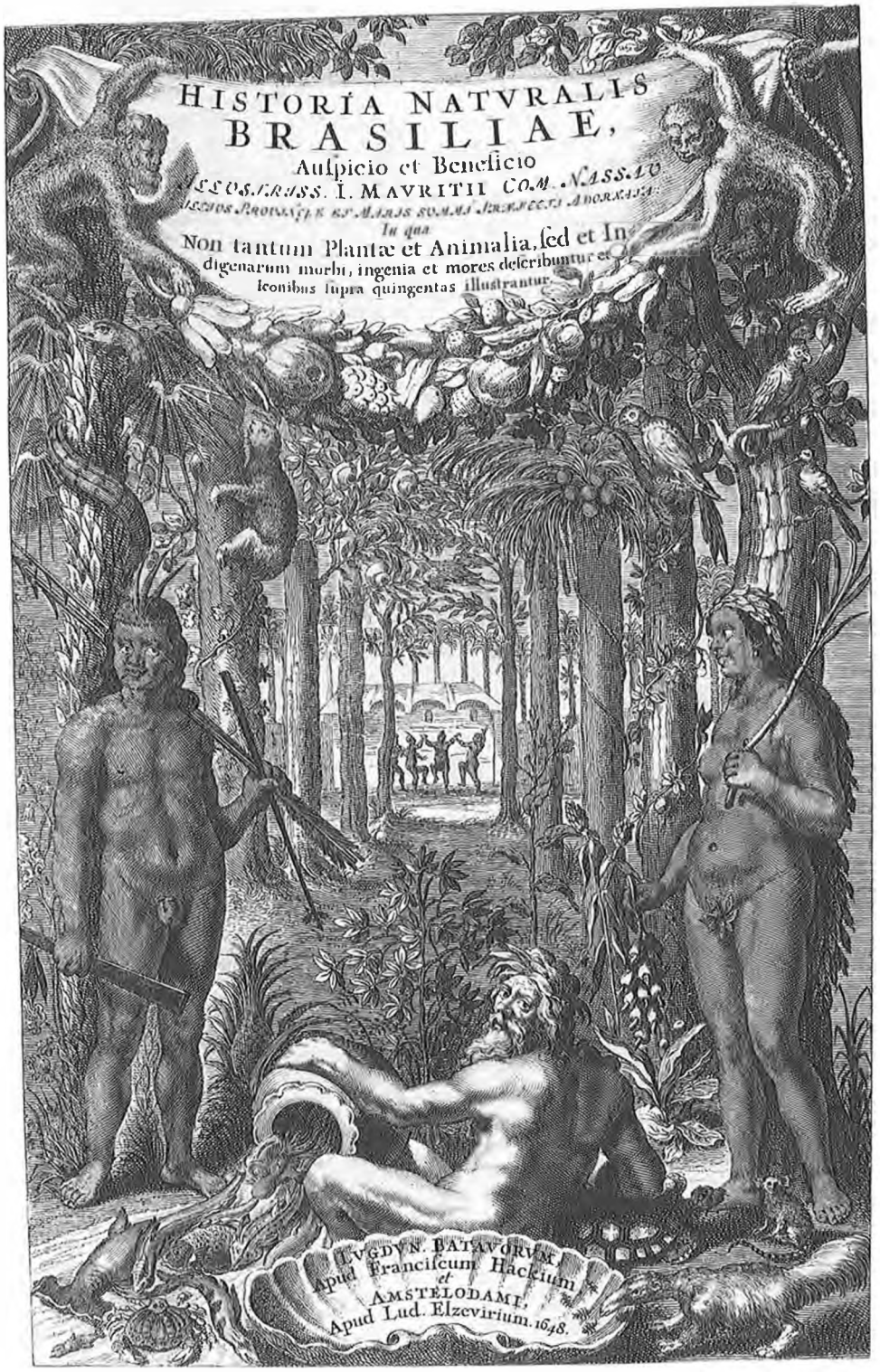

Fig.41 Title page, 1648, engraving, from Georg Marcgraf and Willem Piso, *Historia naturalis Brasiliae*, 37 x 23.7 cm (14 5/8 x 9 3/8 in).

object collecting from the new Spanish territories in the Americas. Visiting the Brussels court of Margaret of Austria, aunt of King Charles I of Spain and also Emperor Charles V, in order to secure his promised pension, Dürer recorded in his diary his often-quoted delight at seeing gold works by Aztec craftsmen from Mexico, gifts sent by Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés to the emperor:

> I also saw the objects which men have brought back for the king from the new Land of Gold: a sun made all of gold, a good six feet across, likewise a moon of pure silver, of the same size, also two rooms full of those natives' armor, all manners of their weapons, military gear and missilery, amazing shields, curious costumes, bed coverings and every kind of spectacular things for all possible uses, more worth seeing than the usual prodigies. These things are so precious that they are valued at a hundred thousand gulden. I have never in my life seen anything that gave my heart such delight as these things, for I saw amongst them marvelously skilful objects and was amazed at the subtle ingeniousness of people in foreign lands.[29]

Unfortunately, almost all those precious metal objects, including newly confiscated silver from Peru, were melted down by Charles V to finance his 1535 Crusade expedition against the Turkish fleet at Tunis (see Chapter 2 above), so they are lost.

Like those recently appropriated objects so admired in Brussels by Dürer, luxury objects of Aztec royalty, such as a rare, green quetzal feather fan or headdress, once considered the crown of King Moctezuma himself (still housed among the Habsburg wonders at the Weltmuseum in Vienna), became trophies in European court collections.[30] Among other rare objects from Moctezuma's Mexico were images composed out of colorful bird feathers, some of which, such as a ceremonial shield with a dragon-like monster, also survive in the Vienna Habsburg collections. A turquoise- and obsidian-covered skull mask (London, British Museum) probably is a vestige of the full costume of a deity. These same indigenous feather artists were also enlisted to make Christian devotional imagery in their exotic medium, some of which survives.

Among seemingly fantastic animals from the Americas, described in the first natural histories of New Spain, particularly the *La Natural hystoria de las Indias* by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (1526), armadillos figure prominently. They also appear among the illustrated animals described by physician Francisco Hernández (1571–*c.*1575). Imagery and description of the armadillo appeared in the *Historia medicinal* (1569, 1571; single volume 1574; also translated into French and English) by Spanish physician and naturalist Nicolás Monardes. Its image soon found a place in Conrad Gessner's definitive *Historia animalium* (1563), whence it passed into the wider scientific community, though Gessner's zoology was devoted primarily to European animals. From there Flemish print designer Marten de Vos used the armadillo image for his personification of America (see fig.27); however, he likely derived it from actual specimens in the Brussels menagerie. The armadillo also appears in later 16th-century travel accounts of Brazil by Thevet, Léry and Staden, which introduced the animal to wider European awareness. It was finally illustrated in its distinctive features by Dutch naturalist Carolus Clusius's book of exotic animals, *Exoticorum libri decem* (Leiden, 1605).[31]

Dutch landscape specialist Frans Post took pains to include armadillos – as well as sloths, anteaters and other native Brazilian animals – in foregrounds and corners of his views of Brazil, particularly after he returned to the Netherlands in 1646. Armadillos were also particularly well suited for taxidermy, since they kept their shape due to bony shells, so they were among the most popular exotic fauna to be collected into contemporary *Wunderkammer*, 'cabinets of curiosity'. For example, one specimen appears alongside tortoise shells and an alligator in a famous engraving of the Danish collection of Ole Worm. Classifying such an unusual specimen

Fig.42 Johann Sadeler, after Dirck Barendsz, *America*, 1581, engraving, 182 x 230 cm (71 ⅝ x 90 ½ in), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

proved problematic, however; even the rhinoceros was sometimes invoked in comparison.

The sloth, also identified with the 'New World' and included on maps after it appeared in natural histories, was first described by Oviedo, but singled out by the French authors Thévet and Léry. Thévet's description was a confusing mixture: the size of a monkey, face of a child, fur of a bear, with three large claws on each foot. His furry woodcut image, adopted as reliable by Gessner, thus deserved its given name, 'bear-ape' (*arctopithecus*). Léry describes sloths as dog-sized with smoky-brown fur and hairy legs with long claws; their diet, unknown, was even supposed by some to be air itself. Clusius saw a sloth skin and altered his illustration accordingly, to something closer to a fierce wolverine. However, on-site depictions by naturalists Georg Marcgraf and Albert Eckhout, produced during the brief Dutch colonial period, derived from sloths that inhabited a substantial Brazilian menagerie and garden of the regent, Prince Maurits. Thereafter life studies were used, such as the sloth that clings to a tree trunk on the frontispiece of a landmark publication, Marcgraf and Willem Piso's *Historia naturalis Brasiliae* (1648; see fig.41), thus assuring accuracy in subsequent

representations. Post's Brazilian landscape paintings also inserted sloths but, despite that artist's time in Brazil, he still shows the creature crouching on the ground like a crawling animal, because Post based his image on an isolated album page by Eckhout which is included in the *Libri picturati* collection (Krakow, Jagiellonian Library).

Such a mixture of observational accuracy with uncritical repetition of trusted inherited imagery resembles the phenomenon of Dürer's *Rhinoceros* (see fig.62, p.110 below), since these unfamiliar mammals rarely provided retrievable specimens, except for easily stuffed animals, especially armadillos or crocodilians. For all the vividness of albums, such as the Dutch *Libri picturati* from Brazil, once those same animals became part of painted ensembles or even of zoological woodcut illustrations, their verisimilitude could be altered or mistaken by artists.[32]

Although parrots were already familiar because of African greys, the colorful macaw, or Amazonian parrot, whether scarlet or blue and gold, quickly came to symbolize the 'New World'.[33] Columbus himself singled out this signature avian representative on his second day ashore: 'other than parrots, I have seen no beast of any kind on this island'. He noted their plentiful population: 'The flocks of parrots that darken the sun and the large and small birds of so many species are so different from our own that it is a wonder.'[34] In 1500, Pedro Alvares Cabral called Brazil 'land of the parrots'.[35] Vespucci, too, claimed that parrot feathers constituted a local form of wealth, presented to the explorer by a tribe, 'feathers of very great value ... numberless parrots of different colors'.[36] Indeed, Oviedo's *Natural History of the Indies* concludes that 'so many species [of parrot] have been carried to Spain, it is hardly worth while to take time to describe them here'.[37]

Many early images of Indigenous Americans also included parrots, and the people are often depicted garbed in feathers, both for skirts and headdresses. For example, another allegory of *America*, designed by Dirck Barendsz (1534–1592) and engraved by Johann Sadeler as one of the Four Continents (1581; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum; see fig.42), shows another female personification, 'naked except for a cape of feathers', carrying an arrow and wearing a feather crown while seated directly beneath a tree bough with two parrots. The only constructions visible in the background are huts, and the sparse population appears naked.

Accumulated descriptive science had already become an important part of European exploration, such as the Brazilian fauna and flora recorded by Eckhout. Eventually that scientific research culminated in the publication by naturalists Marcgraf and Piso, *Historia naturalis Brasiliae* (Amsterdam, 1648), accompanied by some 300 images of both plants and animals. This same combination of vivid artistic representation in the service of scientific description was pursued later in Dutch colonial Surinam at the turn of the 18th century by renowned female naturalist Maria Sibylla Merian.[38]

Eckhout's life-sized, so-called 'ethnographic portraits' of local peoples in paired, single-figure depictions also relate as typical human specimens toward such contemporary collections of possessions and knowledge, the contents of current curiosity cabinets. Taken together, these figures, including varieties of Indigenous Americans, remain types, not portraits, visible specimens of distinction and difference from Europeans. As courtly commissions, significantly, these eight paired figures, formerly used to adorn the Brazilian colonial palace, became state gifts from Prince Maurits to his cousin, King Frederick III of Denmark.

As noted above, Europe's ultimate early modern self-definition found embodiment in allegory, through female figures of the Four Continents. As noted for De Vos (see fig.27), beginning in the later 16th century, in festive presentations as well as print series, personified Europe appeared with her sister continents, but as first among equals. The title page (plate 6) of Abraham Ortelius's landmark first atlas, *Theatrum orbis terrarum* ('Theater of the Globe'), issued in Antwerp by Gillis Coppens van Diest (1570), epitomizes this hierarchy.

Dedicated to the king of Spain, it places Europe atop the page, enthroned and adorned with an imperial crown. Richly dressed, as befits a queen, she wields a scepter in her right hand and sits beside an enormous globe, surmounted by a cross atop a rudder, to suggest both imperial and Christian dominion. Below Europe, holding incense, Asia stands seductive, in a jeweled costume and diadem, like a hetaera. Despite all this orientalist suggestion of her sensual luxury, she is the only other dressed continent. Africa, head silhouetted before a blazing sun of the tropics, stands topless on the heraldically inferior viewer right side and holds flowering balsam.

At the very bottom appears America, reclining before a hammock. Fully nude and adorned only with a feathered hat, her violent nature is evident from the spear held in her right hand and a man's severed head suspended in her left. The image's overall message demonstrates how civilization descends from its height in Europe to a level of utter savagery in America. Like the depictions of the Adoration of the Magi (see Chapter 1 above), Europe, by right of embracing the Christian religion first, now rules over the entire world; her knowledge, especially of geography, encompassed by the very maps in this Ortelius atlas, remains the source of her power. This superiority produces seniority, like the heritage of the sons of Noah on the earlier world map (with America still unknown; see fig.3,p.13) in the 'Nuremberg Chronicle'.

Thus, at the crucial turn of the 17th century, Europe asserted global superiority over the other continents, even ancient but heathen Asia, but certainly also torrid Africa and uncivilized, cruelly cannibalistic America. Confident self-fashioning was complete. By the middle of the 17th century a carved allegory (by Artus Quellinus) on the pediment of the western façade of the building that truly governed Europe's greatest mercantile emporium, the City Hall of Amsterdam, put that claim most forcefully (1650–55). In a harbinger of future empires, including Dutch (and English) colonies abroad, the center of the world no longer resided in Jerusalem, but now instead sat at the principal Dutch port amidst Atlantic powers. Just as the Magi and their retinue in the Bible gathered to pay homage to the King of Kings, in this new world order of trade links and colonial outreach, the entire globe now gathers, bringing its foreign goods in tow, to kneel or bow in respect before the majestic, powerful, central personification of Amsterdam. Ambitious Europe's earlier, energetic centrifugal force outwards into the very corners of the globe has been reversed, now replaced by a new, confident centripetal reverse force, bringing the riches of an increasingly colonized world back in galleons to Europe.

IN RESPONSE

The absolute subjugation of previous cultures in the 'New World', particularly in the Spanish colonial regions from Mexico across South America, did not permit local indigenous artists to make many direct representations of their European conquerors. Indeed, much of the prior Aztec civilization, particularly the massive architecture of their capital, Tenochtitlan, was thoroughly extirpated (although 20th-century archeology has permitted some partial recovery and reconstruction, especially of the Templo Mayor).[39] The famous manuscript image of the founding of the city and layout of the capital (with the appearance of an eagle atop a cactus, the symbol of Tenochtitlan, which was incorporated into the national flag of modern Mexico) appears as the frontispiece of a post-conquest book, made by indigenous artists about their pre-conquest culture in the mid-16th century for the Spanish viceroy of Mexico: the Codex Mendoza (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Arch. Selden, fo.2).[40]

Although most Aztec codices were destroyed as idolatrous by the missionary Christian forces of New Spain, several did arrive safely via Habsburg connections into European collections. Moreover, across the 16th century, surviving indigenous

artists were enlisted by the more ethnographically curious members of the Spanish court to record their vanishing native cosmography and customs, including not only Aztec but also other Mesoamerican cultures (from an Aztec perspective). Most notably, the celebrated Florentine Codex retrospectively attempted to present an encyclopedic record of Aztec culture, as *La Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva España* ('General History of the Things of New Spain'; Florence, Laurentian Library), assembled in 12 volumes in 1576–7 by Fra Bernardino de Sahagún with local draftsmen.[41] The text is bilingual, Spanish plus Nahuatl. It includes images of native plants (including cacao; Book XI, fos 122v–123r) as well as the preparation of feathers by a craftsman (Book IX, fo.64).[42] Book XII shows the conquest of Mexico from the arrival of the Spanish to their conquest of both Tenochtitlan and neighboring Tlatelolco in 1520–21, after which the Aztecs offered tribute to their new ruler (fisee fig.43). After several battle scenes from the Mexicas' point of view about their heroic resistance against Spanish atrocities, one gruesome image (Book XII, fo.40v) depicts Spanish soldiers tossing into water the dead bodies of the two final Aztec rulers. Another pictorial *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España*, called the Codex Durán (1579–81; Madrid, National Library) after Fra Diego Durán, who helped compile it, carries the narrative into the post-conquest period with increasingly European figure conventions. It shows the battlefield confrontation between the locals and their invaders with balanced figures but unequal weapons: spears and shields versus crossbows and muskets (see fig.44).

One final manuscript work from early 17th-century Peru survives, curiously, in the Royal Library, Copenhagen. This *Nueva Corónica y buen gobierno* offers a history of Peru, addressed to King Philip III of Spain, by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, of noble Inka descent.[43] He combined his history with a plea to stop colonial abuses of his Andean people. Additionally, Guaman made his own illustrations (398) for the volume in ink, using a distinctly European figural idiom; he also included maps and topographies. One of them shows him in noble dress standing frontally in the midst of a group of other Inka figures from varied regions who serve him as informants. Guaman's text covers Andean history, Inka royal genealogy, local religious rituals as well as Christian practices, along with recollections of pre-Hispanic life, before itemizing his complaints in both Spanish and native Quechua. This impressive creation, however, never reached its intended audience, the King of Spain.[44]

Fig.43 *Aztec Tribute to Spanish Conquerors*, 1576–7, from Florentine Codex, compiled for Fra Bernardino de Sahagún, Laurentian Library, Florence, Ms Mediceo Palatino 219–20, fo.98v.

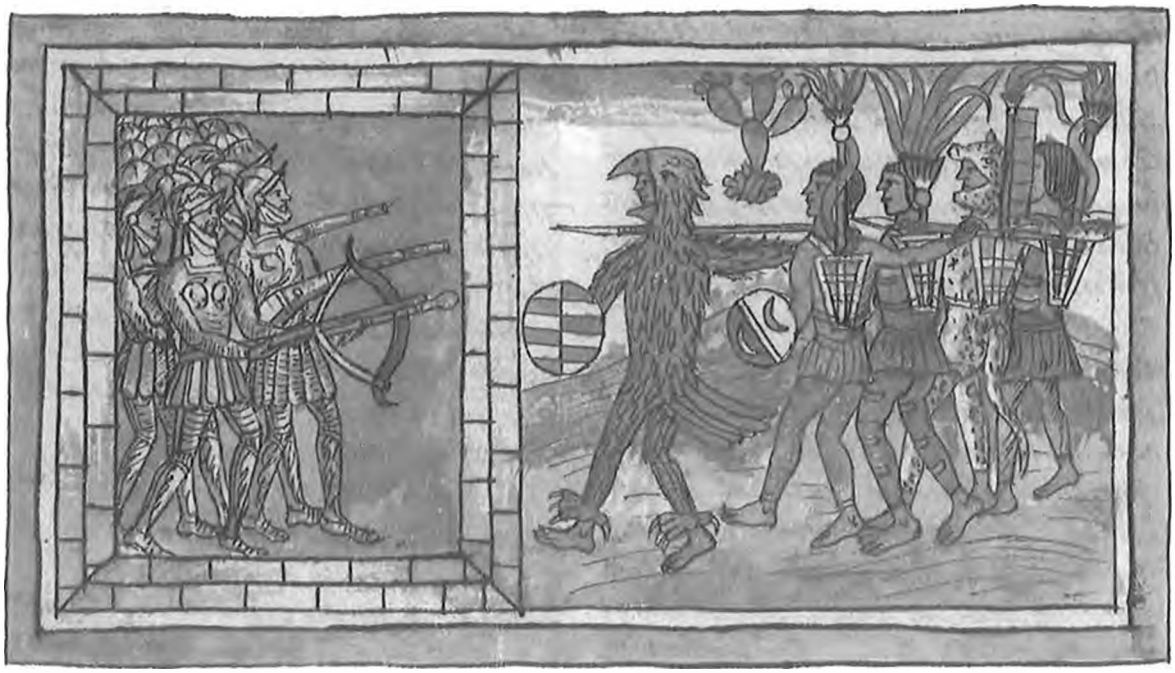

Fig.44 *Aztec Confrontation with Spanish Invaders*, c.1581, from Codex Durán, *History of the Indies of New Spain*, National Library, Madrid, fo.219.