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Two Discoveries, Two Conquests, and Two *Vázquez de Coronado*

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Museum of Texas Tech University
Lubbock, Texas
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“Contemporary Vantage on the Coronado Expedition Through Documents and Artifacts”

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Introduction

First of all, I want to thank Richard and Shirley Flint for considering and inviting this Costa Rican, stationed in Lubbock, to come here and present some reflections about the conquistador of Costa Rica, Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya, and his uncle, conquistador of the Southwest, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado y Luján.

The intended goals of this presentation are:

- introduce participants to Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya, nephew of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado y Luján. Don Juan is recognized as one of the main conquistadors of what is now known as Costa Rica;
- compare his *entrada* (discover and conquest) to Costa Rica to his uncle's *entrada* of C'bola; and
- mention the information on the printed and documentary sources that provide information on Don Juan.

Having clarified what I am planning to do, let's go to the points.

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When writing this paper I decided to follow some methodology. First, the readers will realize that I use a lot of quotations, mainly of Costa Rican scholars. Second, I did quote so frequently the letters of Don Francisco and Don Juan, as this paper needs this pertinent information. Third, the paper does not include details of Don Francisco's expedition because it is the author's interest to emphasize more on Don Juan's expedition. Fourth, some important topics were not mentioned. For example, the analysis and description of the Chiefdoms in both territories, their cosmogony, the Indigenous resistance, and military strategies to confront the newcomers. I hope someone will approach these subjects using the comparative analysis and the collaboration of different disciplines and professionals.

I was born in a small and beautiful country with many ecological settings, lakes, trees, and mountains. Now, I am in another beautiful habit, with splendid sunsets, endless horizons, and friendly people. I feel like a kind of link between these two locations, and between the past of the two conquistadors. It is possible that if I keep searching in the past I will find that I might be a descendent of Don Juan, and therefore of Don Francisco.

We wonder about the impressions that Francisco Vázquez de Coronado y Luján had when he saw for the first time the Llano Estacado, and those of Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya when he saw the "rich cost" of Veragua. Fortunately, they left first-hand reports that witnessed their impressions.

Don Francisco, on a letter to the King, October 20, 1541, reports that "After nine days' march I reached some plains, so vast that I did not find their limit anywhere that I went, although I traveled over them for more than 300 leagues." (Casta-eda, et al. 1990: 114). And in the province of Quivira he says "The country itself is the best I have ever seen for producing all the products of Spain,..." (Casta-eda, et al., 1990: 117).

On December 11, 1562, on a letter to the King, Don Juan reports that "The land is one of the best I have seen in Indians, and to me no other part of New Spain compares to it, because I have seen others and governed some in the name of His Majestic." (Fernández Guardia, 1908: 13, fx) .

The immense flat lands represented a real natural obstacle for Don Francisco and his men. The long journeys exhausted men and horses. The asperity of the mountains, rugged roads, and the rain also exhausted Don Juan's men and horses. In Costa Rica the journeys were not as long as the ones in the South Plains, but were as difficult because of the intricate landscape. Both expeditions dealt with the manifestations of mother nature, and the New World societies.

Despite the weather's inclemencies and the Indian opposition and rebelliousness, they

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saw in some of the places they discovered similarities with Spain, and admiration is what they felt for those new lands, ready to be conquered.

In 1492 a Genoan sailor and discoverer, with his men and three seaships, departed from *Puerto de Palos*, Spain, to find an alternative route to India. That man was Christopher Columbus, who later became famous for his discovery. His theory was essentially correct: he planned to reach India from its backyard. But he found a "little", permanent obstacle in his itinerary. He named that little obstacle *Indias* because he thought he reached it. He never imagined he found a New World. As a mere fact, he died without knowing that the land he discovered was a completely new continent. The new ecumene later was baptized. America was to be the name for that multicultural and diversified world of people, flora, fauna, and landscapes. The name of the continent did not honor Christopher Columbus, but Américo Vespucio, a cartographer, who in his first drawings of the New World, realized it was a different continent and not India.

The discovery in 1492 of the New World opened for Spain and Spaniards vast lands and opportunities. It started a constant journey of Iberians that traveled to the new "paradise" to find gold, glory, fame and richness. As the Costa Rican historian Carlos Meléndez observes, "America exerted a strong seduction over the young Spaniards, who found on those remote lands of the new continent, the opportunity to go be worthy, to go to satisfy their anxieties and ambitions without colliding with the strong traditions and the privileges of class and power that limited their lives in the peninsula." (Meléndez, 1966: 56, fx).

Two young Spaniards, came from a wealthy family, born both in Salamanca, saw in the New World the opportunities of their lives. One of them moved to New Spain in 1535, the second did in 1540. The first, the uncle, in 1539 initiated his journey to the southwest of the United States where he became Captain General; the second, the nephew, in 1561 journeyed to the Costa Rica de Cartago, where he became *Alcalde Mayor* and later governor. Don Juan and Don Francisco came to the land of opportunities, as Bolton noted, "...to seek their fortunes, as did hundreds of other younger sons of noble families,..." (Bolton, 1946: 20).

Who were these two post-medieval men that navigated a wide ocean to find hope, lands, and political positions? Who were those Spanish knights, who on behalf of the King and God, went to the New World to discover and conquer lands and peoples for the Crown, and add souls for Our Lord? Who were those pseudo-Quixotes willing to move away from the commodities of their native city to rough geographies? What reasons did compel them to find other horizons searching for the rumored El Dorado, the legendary Seven Cities, and the chimerical Fountain of Youth?

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado y Luján (1510-1554)

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Don Francisco was born into a noble family of Salamanca, Spain, in 1510. As many youth he moved to New Spain in search of opportunities and fortune. He was not an isolated man. He represented an epoch of political, economic, and religious expansion. Moving to the New World was a normal option in the 1500s.

One personal reason compelled him to seek fortune. The *mayorazgo* (the right of the first-born male -primogeniture- to inheritance) practice allowed his older brother but not him to inherit the family patrimony. The fact that he "...had given terminal settlements, without further right of inheritance." (Bolton, 1964: 19-20), was enough reason to find other ways to build his fortune. Thus, in 1535 at the age of 25 he came to the New World as an assistant to New Spain's first Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza.

"Coronado rose rapidly, for he was attractive and popular, and, more to the point, he enjoyed the viceroy's favor. We may assume that he was handsome, which we know was true of his brother Juan, of whom we have a portrait. It has been surmised that, like Juan, he was fair-haired, but this is only an idle guess." (Bolton, 1964: 20).

Few more notes about Don Francisco are worth mentioning.

- 1537: He married Doña Beatriz de Estrada, daughter of the wealthy Alonso de Estrada, the treasurer of New Spain who was a relative of the King (Bolton, 1964: 20; Yglesias Hogan, 1943: 379).
- 1537: In one of his military assignments, he was sent by Mendoza to put down an Indian rebellion.
- 1538: He became *regidor* of the city council, at New Spain.
- 1538: Mendoza appointed him "...governor of the new province of *Nueva Galicia* on the Mexican west coasts." (Riley; 1997: 5).
- 1538: At age 28, on November, the Viceroy Mendoza charged Don Francisco with the enormous task of discovering and conquering the lands and people reported by Cabeza de Vaca.
- 1540-1542: Don Francisco and his lieutenants explored the Southwest.
- 1542-1554; After returning from his expedition Don Francisco spent his last years in México City.
- 1545, 1551: He served as procurator mayor of the México City council;
- 1549: He received a royal grant of Indians in *encomienda* "for meritorious service in discovery and conquest" (Bolton, 1964: 406).
- 1554: "Francisco Vázquez de Coronado died and passed from this present life on the night of a Saturday which was accounted the 22nd day of September of this year of 1554" (Bolton, 1964: 405). He was 44 years old.

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Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya (1523-1565)

Don Juan, a bastard son of Gonzalo Vázquez de Coronado and Catalina de Anaya, was born in Salamanca, Spain in 1523. Being a 17 year-old young man, and "having a uncle in the New Spain..." (Meléndez, 1966: 56 fx), who was carrying out a huge expedition in the New World, he decided to move to New Spain in 1540. The *mayorazgo* condition but not the bastard, was a compelling reason for Don Juan to move and seek fortune.

Historians have not found enough documentary resources to follow in detail the presence of Don Juan in New Spain. However, it is a fact that he was there for a while. The proof is that he mentioned on his letters some geographical places in New Spain such as Atrisco, and Tlascala (Fernández, 1908: 55; Meléndez, 1966: 58). Another proof of why scholars believe he had a long stay in New Spain is that he spoke *nahuátl*, a tongue spoken by some Mexican Indian tribes. (Meléndez, 1966: 60). There is not mention on the records that Don Juan had personal contact in New Spain with his uncle. Remember that he arrived there in 1540, when his uncle had already initiated his expedition to Quivira and the Seven Cities of C'bola in the Southwest.

Again historians have not found the reasons why Don Juan moved from México to Guatemala. Moreover, the different sources quoted by professor Carlos Meléndez disagree about the time he arrived there (Meléndez, 1966: 61). Nevertheless, it was in the mid-1540s when he got there; that is, after his uncle's expedition was over.

Let me present some factual information about the ascension to public duties of our conquistador:

- 1548: Deputy of the Cabildo of the City of Santiago de los Caballeros, Guatemala.
- 1549: *Alcalde Mayor* of San Salvador.
- 1551: Ordinary Interim Alcalde, Guatemala.
- 1551: He married with Do-a Isabel Árias Dávila, daughter of the wealth Captain Gaspar Árias de Ávila.
- 1552, 1554 and 1558 Ordinary Alcalde of Guatemala.
- 1552: He traveled to Sonsinate in an expedition to pacify and subject the provinces of Izalcos, Caluco, Nahulingo and other villages;
- 1556: *Alcalde Mayor* of Honduras.
- 1560: Appointed *Alcalde Mayor* of Honduras.
- 1661: At age 38 he was appointed *Alcalde Mayor* of Nicaragua.

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- 1562: He organized an expedition to pacify the Indians of Solentiname, in the province of Nicaragua.
- 1562: *Alcalde Mayor* of Nueva Cartago and Costa Rica.
- 1562-1564: he lead the expedition to the territories of the provinces of Nueva Cartago and Costa Rica.
- 1565: On April 8, the King gave Don Juan the title of Governor of the province of Costa Rica (Guevara, 1971: 177).
- 1565: On October, he died in a shipwreck when coming back to its new dominions. He was 42 years old.

The relation between both Vázquez de Coronado

Primary documents have also played an important role on the genealogy studies about the Vázquez de Coronado. Several genealogy studies have been carried out in order to reconstruct the Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya genealogy tree. Particularly in Costa Rica the *Academia Costarricense de Ciencias Genealógicas* (**Costa Rican Academic of Genealogy Sciences**) and its members have been pioneers on this matter. Some publications by the *Academia* demonstrate the efforts on that direction (Robert Luján, 1955; Revollo Acosta, 1957; Castro y Tosi, 1964; Fuentes Baudrit, 1981).

Another entity that has promoted the genealogy studies regarding the Vázquez de Coronado family is the *Archivos Nacionales de Costa Rica* (**Costa Rican National Archives**). Its publications contain documented information about this subject (Lines, 1940; Castro y Tosi, 1941; 1948). This institution holds important primary documents, many originals, and many copies of the originals. The *Archivos Nacionales de Costa Rica* is a very good resource for historians and genealogists who want to study the conquest and colonial periods, and the colonial society. It is necessary to say that this institution, founded in 1886, is working hard to provide to the public and scholars, better facilities and access to its documentary resources.

With respect to Don Francisco's genealogical tree not much has been done in Costa Rica, and to be honest I do not know much about what has been done in México or the United States. Nevertheless, Richard and Shirley Flint are working in that direction, and they have spent a considerable and productive amount of time in Spain searching and studying primary documents.

In order to clarify the exact family relation between Don Francisco and Don Juan, primary documents are necessary. One of the main Costa Rican genealogists, Norberto Castro y Tosi, dedicated many of his years in searching the family tree of our conquistador. Among the documents he consulted was the *Minutas*

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geneal – gicas of Don Josef Alfonso de Guerra y Villegas, a 17th. Century chronicler and king of arms (Meléndez, 1966: 52). Norberto found that Don Juan was nephew of Don Francisco (Castro y Tosi, 1948), and historian Carlos Meléndez also found the same (Meléndez, 1966: 54).

The former finding debates the affirmation that both conquistadors were brothers (Bolton: 19-20; Monge, 1974: 83; Rubén Yglesias, 1943: 372). Some other pieces of information were discovered. The first member of the Vázquez de Coronado was Gonzálo Rodr'guez de Cornado who died in 1341. Cornado was the last name. In the middle of the 14th. Century Vázquez de Cornado became just a complete last name. One of Gonzálo's grandsons started using CORONADO instead of Cornado, (Meléndez, 1966: 53), and therefore, in the middle of the 15th. Century Vázquez de Coronado was the official first last name of this rich family of Salamanca.

Another interesting finding is that the conquistador of Costa Rica was a bastard. His father, Gonzálo Vázquez de Coronado y Luján, brother of Don Francisco, married Do-a Antonia de Guzmán with whom he had a son also called Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Guzmán, step-brother of the conquistador. Don Gonzálo had a non-official relation with Do-a Catalina de Anaya; they had a son: Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya. The fact he was a bastard was not an impediment to him. He was still able to hold important assignments and have responsibilities in the discovered territories of Central America.

The expedition of Don Juan

From 1560 to 1562 the enterprise of pacifying and colonizing the province of Costa Rica was carried out by conquistador Juan de Cavall—n and Father Juan de Estrada Rávago. The expenses of the expedition were provided by them. After almost two years of failures, and the conflictive encounters and relations with the *naturales*, Cavall—n was replaced, and he moved to Guatemala to assume his new position. The father stayed for a while awaiting the new conquistador and *Alcalde Mayor* of the province.

On April 2, 1562 the Audiencia of Guatemala appointed the *Alcalde Mayor* of Nicaragua, Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya, with the immense task of continuing the conquest of Costa Rica (Meléndez, 1966: 88). As the new appointed *Alcalde Mayor* of the provinces of Cartago and Costa Rica, Don Juan was in charge of providing justice, keeping the order, the doctrine, and conversion of the *naturales*. He had the faculty of funding villages, and appointing the members of the local government (Meléndez, 1966: 85). Theodore Creedman's book Historical Dictionary of COSTA RICA notes the *Alcalde Mayor* is "A

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subdivision of a large Spanish colony or viceroyalty. In the Kingdom of Guatemala there existed eight *alcaldes mayores*, generally in areas where there was not enough population to warrant a governor. The officer generally exercised the same power as a governor, but with greater emphasis on the military." (Creedman, 1997: 5).

Don Juan gathered people, provisions, animals, and took *pesos* from his own fortune (maybe his wife's fortune) to finance the expedition. The expeditionaries departed from the city of León, Nicaragua on August 18, to continue the task initiated by Cavallón and Estrada Rávago; that is, pacifying and colonizing the province.

On the journey, Don Juan and his lieutenants discovered and traveled over many parts of the isthmian territory as well as encountered Indians, chiefs, and Chiefdoms. They described those encounters, the customs of the *naturales*, and the landscapes. He sent crews to "uncover" other sections of the lands, to find gold, and follow the rumors of rich rivers full of the precious metal. The encounters with the naturals were not always pacific. Even if Don Juan avoided using force, sometimes it was necessary to his goals. Pacifying the *naturales* took him a lot of thinking and strategy.

Don Juan's enterprise took more than two years. During that time, he organized expeditions to different parts of the territory. In those journeys the long distances were not the main inconveniences, but the "...rough, unknown roads, and where not always it was not found the indispensable means of subsistence." (Calvo, 1887: 206, fx).

On July 1563 Don Juan returned to Nicaragua to attend matters regarding his position as *Alcalde Mayor* of the province; he came back to the city of Cartago (former *Garcimuñoz*) in the Central Valley of Costa Rica on April of 1564.

The lack of funds "attacked" the expedition, and especially Don Juan, who was the main provider of *pesos*. This situation was a reason for him to go to Spain and raise funds from his friends, including his step-brother Juan de Coronado y Guzmán. Thus, on May of 1564 he departed to Spain. Another goal of his trip to Spain was to get the total support from the Crown as well as to obtain from it the decision of making the territory of Costa Rica a defined political jurisdiction. Because of his family ties with the Crown he also wanted to get from it favors and benefits such as political appointments and funds.

There are not records that reported his journey from Panamá to Spain. He stayed about 8 months on his motherland, from April to October. There he obtained the title of governor of Costa Rica; his title of governor of Nicaragua was renewed

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for three more years; it was given to him the title of *Adelantado Perpetuo* of Costa Rica. On July 6, 1565 a *Real Cédula* extended the Bishopric of Nicaragua's ecclesiastic jurisdiction to Costa Rica. Finally, on August 17 it was registered the shield of arms of the city of Cartago.

With all these appointments, *Real Cédulas*, powers, privileges and benefits Don Juan got ready to return to his territories, his men, and conquests. But destiny played its role and truncated the life, plans, and the expedition of this forty-two-year-old man who just spent almost three years conquering a promised land. He died in a tragic shipwreck on October of 1565. His men, stationed on the promising land, waited, waited, and waited but their Captain General never returned.

Don Juan had a prolific descent. He married Doña Isabel Árias Dávila, daughter of the wealthy Captain Gaspar Árias de Ávila. They had five sons and a daughter. The older son, Gonzálo Vázquez de Coronado, became governor of the province of Costa Rica (Meléndez, 1966: 63). According to the genealogy research carried out in 1975 by Samuel Stone, in Costa Rica, 31 presidents and 285 representatives descend from Don Juan (Stone, 1975: 149). It does not include other descendants who, along with the presidents and representatives, have been part of the Costa Rican social, economic, and political ruling class. Mr. Stone observes that "From Vázquez de Coronado descend 16 generations whose members have occupied great number of political positions in Costa Rica, during the colonial period as well as later." (Stone, 1975: 148).

The struggle for corn

As typical Europeans, the Spaniards ate wheat, but in the New World they ate corn and other native vegetables. "In the whole continent, at the beginning of the conquest, Indians and Spaniards fought for the possession of such coveted grain: some to capture and others to defend it." (Monge, 1974: 82, fx).

The situation was not the exception to our two conquistadors and their hordes. The provisions that Don Juan brought from Nicaragua, and those brought by Don Francisco from México, were not enough to feed their men through the whole discovery campaign of the lands. The search for provisions in every Indian village they arrived was constant and desperate. Corn (*ma'z*), a very typical Mesoamerican source of food, was the most pursued grain by the Spaniards, reaching the extreme of using force to appropriate such appreciated staple.

In a letter to Mendoza dated August 3, 1540, Don Francisco reported that "But by

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the pleasure of God, these Indians surrounded, and their city was taken with the help of Our Lord, and a sufficient supply of corn was found there to relieve our necessities." (Casta-eda, et al., 1990: 92). And Don Juan, in a letter to King Felipe II, sent from *Castillo de Garcimu-oz*, January 5, 1563, says that "...I have forbidden to take anything from them, only they asked for food, which was given to them and consisted of pigs, danta's meat, and corn..." (Fernández Guardia, 1908: 18, fx). Also in a letter to Licentiate Juan Mart'nez de Landecho, President of the Audiencia de los Confines, January 20, 1563, Don Juan reports "I am in need of food and corn and cattle; I write to Sor dotor that at the cost of my salary send me 800 *fanegas* (Spanish bushel) of corn..." (Fernández Guardia, 1908: 23, fx).

By using some primary documents Dr. Carlos Meléndez Chaverri, a Costa Rican historian and expert on Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya, prepared a table with information about the several occasions Don Juan requested corn. The conquistador used his salary and fortune to pay for it.

fanegas of corn solicited	date solicited
15	June 1562
200	July 16, 1562
200	December 16, 1562
100	December 23, 1562
55	January 20, 1563
30	April 24, 1563

(Meléndez, 1982:61)

The late Costa Rican historian Paulino González observes "...the problem of provisions was not resolved definitely, because at the arrival of the new *Alcalde Mayor*, Juan Vázquez de Coronado, the settlers complained of the lack of sustenance." (González, 1987: 24, fx). It was not unusual that the conquistadors encourage the new settlers to plant corn. Thus, once he found Cartago City (the future colonial capital) Don Juan asked the settlers "first of all, make cornfields for the sustenance, because until now I brought all sustenance from Nicaragua and other parts under my expense." (Fernández Guardia, 1908: 55, fx).

Even if one of the main goals of the conquistadors was to find gold, it went to a second place when supplies ran out and hunger "attacked", and the first priority was to find corn and other food. The search and fight for corn deteriorated the relations between the *naturales* and the invaders. Many times, horses finished on the stomachs of the hungry travelers.

Were both conquests violent or pacific?

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Some of the historians who have studied the conquest process carried out by Don Juan in the Costa Rican territory almost always agree that it was neither violent or bloody. They mention Don Juan as a pacific person who wanted to discover and conquer lands and people by pacific ways (Meléndez, 1966; 1982; Monge, 1974; Calvo, 1887).

What we can say is that his style was different from his predecessor, the conquistador Juan de Cavall—n, who was in Costa Rica from 1560-1562 . In fact, Cavall—n's methods were violent, and force was his recipe. His ways raised the opposition of the *naturales* and made difficult the conquest and settlement of the province. In his relations with the *naturales* Don Juan preferred the pacific ways. He practiced the *rescate*, that is, the exchange of merchandise and other goods with the natives. In every village, he approached the chiefs with gifts. That was the introduction, and chiefs gave him in exchange food, gold, and golden figures.

When mentioning his journey to some villages (Chiefdoms) Don Juan reports that after having the obedience to Your Majestic from some chiefs "...which I obtained with allurements and good manners and gave them *rescates* and other things, which pacified them, so they deal domestically with us, servants of Your Majestic, who live in this province. This event was good because it was bloodshedless..." "...Because I have not consented to do offense to the naturals, nor take anything without paying, and for that reason they suddenly had come to recognize Your Majestic as their King and master." (Fernández, 1908: 43, fx).

Again Don Juan says that "...after I reached this village, has Your Majestic on peace the province of Pacaca and that of Accerri, and that of Botos, and that of Abra, and that of Guarco, and also that of Garabito, without being discharged a drop of blood." (Fernández, 1908: 19, fx). And Mr. Meléndez observes that "The modality followed by Vázquez was that being glad before the presence of the Chiefdoms, flatter and sit them at his table, and give them abundant *rescates* such as shirts, bonnets, scissors, needles, necklaces and other things liked by the *naturales*." (Meléndez, 1964: 96, fx).

Don Francisco, when being in the Valley of Hearts (*Valle de los Corazones*) and in need of food, sent some men to the valley called Se-ora. He exchanged goods to avoid using force and turning Indians against the Spaniards, and "Some little corn was obtained by this trading" (Casta-eda, et al. 1990: 88). He also reports that in Quivira "I have treated the natives of this province, and all the others whom I found wherever I went, as well as was possible, agreeably to what Your Majestic had commanded, and they have received no harm in any way from me or from those who went in my company." (Casta-eda, et al., 1990: 117).

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Why this pacific way of encountering and conquering lands and Indies? Obviously the conquistadors wanted to subject the *naturales* in the easy way. It was imperative to be in good relations with the *naturales* in order to get food, gold, and information about where to get the desired metal. However, in many places that our pseudo-Quixotes arrived, force was for them the necessary and only means to confront the Indian belligerency. Military confrontations regularly happened to Don Francisco more than to Don Juan, but in both latitudes they faced that kind of encounter.

Colonization has never been a pacify process, even if this is bloodless. It is violent from the moment a culture arrives to strange lands and imposes its points of view, its cosmogony, religion, and government. Thus, the expeditions of the two Vázquez de Coronado were violent because they imposed to the naturals their rules, their god, and their values. They also brought some agents of death: diseases and virus to which the New World inhabitants were not immune.

The vision of the conquistadors was that lands, Indians, gold, food, etc., were to become property of the newcomers. They used any necessary means to undertake their dreams and aspirations of glory, and fortune. Those efforts were pacific and violent, but both ways working together put this whole New World under the scrutiny and domain of the King and the Lord.

In the name of God and the Crown: cross and sword together

Gold, lands, and people were mainly the subjects that the conquistadors were looking for to add to the King's domains. Spain needed lands to expand itself and locate part of its increasing population.

The expulsion of the Moors in 1492, signified the political, religious and territorial unification of the Iberian peninsula. The same year Christopher Columbus discovered the New World, a place of new opportunities for the poor, the rich, for priests and knights. The cross and the sword worked together in a holy alliance in taking the lands back from the Moors. That holy alliance did not disappear in the New World. On the contrary, it worked more united than ever. Conquistadors and priests, knights and religious orders put together forces to bring to the Crown and themselves gold, lands and souls.

Don Francisco and Don Juan brought with them friars for the evangelization of the *naturales*. In the eyes of the colonial newcomers, the religious orders were fundamental for the settlement process. Indoctrinated Indians were easy to enslave, and submit. Don Juan repeatedly asked the Viceroy and the King for priests (Fernández, 1908: 16, 20, 57, fx) because they are necessary "...for the

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conversion of these miserable." (Fernández, 1908: 57, fx), and to reduce the majority of them to Your Majestic' service.

The presence of priests was also important to "condone", to "exculpate", and to support conquistadors' actions in their pacifying of the *naturales*. Don Francisco reports that on one occasion when facing the Indians, "On this account I saw that it was no longer time to hesitate, and as the priests approved the action, I charged them" (Casta-eda, et al. 1990: 91). In the Southwest the priests did more than a "celestial" task. Many fathers were real discoverers-conquistadors. That is the case of Friar Marcos de Niza, a very active discoverer on the Southwest expedition. This friar is a typical example of how cross and sword worked together.

Among one of the duties of the conquistadors was the task of carrying out the doctrine, and conversion of the *naturales*. We can see this when Don Juan arrived to one of the villages. He said "I arrived to the fort, did the necessary requirements, offered, in the name His Majestic, forgiveness of what they did, and I exhorted them to predicate the holy gospel and give the obedience to Your Majestic. " (Fernández, 1908: 47, fx). Religion was a very important aspect in the conquering of territories, the pacification of Indians, and the settlement of newcomers' villages.

Did they find gold?

Gold was another revered god for the newcomers. They hoped to find it on every territory they discovered and conquered. For them, gold was not a ceremonial object, but a trading merchandise. It was the fetish, with magical powers of turning the new possessors into rich and powerful men.

On his letter to the Viceroy Mendoza, Don Francisco says "As far as I can Judge, it does not appear to me that there is any hope of getting gold or silver, but I trust in God that, if there is any, we shall get our share of it, and it shall not escape us through any lack of diligence in the search." (Casta-eda, et al., 1990: 98). On a letter to the King, Don Juan says "And of the gold samples I sent to His Majestic, it will be seen that Costa Rica is a land that promises much." (Fernández, 1908: 66, fx).

The name Costa Rica, which means "rich cost", was first mentioned by Christopher Columbus in 1502, because he encountered Indians who brought to him gifts, including gold. This name became an obsession to Spaniards, and Don Juan was not the exception. He searched and searched; he interrogated the *naturales*, but he never found tons and tons of gold. Don Francisco walked hundreds of miles to conquer the "Seven Cities", but he did not find those gilded

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mythical towns, and the running rivers full of gold.

The Southwest and Costa Rica were not the "Mecca" of the desired golden god. Both expeditionaries searched for gold in industrial quantities, but it did not appear in such amounts. Those territories did not show the same "golden qualities" that México and Perú had. This "lack" of gold preoccupied our conquistadors and their lieutenants. Desperation specially "attacked" both Vázquez de Coronado because they took money of their own pockets to finance the expeditions. Recovering the *pesos* invested was fundamental. "I had spent (in *the entrada*) fourteen or fifteen thousand pesos, without having obtained any profits until now..." was Don Juan's complain (Fernández Guardia, 1908: 13, fx). The conquistadors who organized expeditions to the continent generally financed them on their own" (Stone, 1975: 57, fx).

Our two conquistadors did not see, did not find rivers of gold flowing to their hands. Time went by to demonstrate that both lands were not rich in gold. The richness of the Southwest is its multiculturalism, and that of Costa Rica is its biodiversity.

Anthropologists or ethnologists?

The letters-chronicles left by our two personages are unquestionably irreplaceable. They represent first-hand accounts of their journeys. As primary-source documents we must keep in mind that they were written in the 16th. Century. We cannot extract all the information we want from those sources, but by linking these with other sources we can have a better picture of the two conquistadors, their expeditions, and their deeds.

It was not exactly the intention of those chroniclers, including both Vázquez de Coronado, to will the accounts of their voyages to future generations or scholars. The intention was to report to the authorities, including the King, the findings on the new lands. The letters, along with the gifts (feathers, clothes, gold, slaves, etc.) send to the Viceroys and Kings were the proof of the territories they discovered for the Crown. Those letters were also fundamental legal documents that conquistadors and expeditionaries used to claim lands, rights, public appointments, and inheritances.

Besides the purposes mentioned above, the letters helped contemporary scholars and politicians in the international courts. In the case of Costa Rica, in the 19th. Century, government authorities used Don Juan's letters to support the legal litigations regarding the frontier lines of the country. Thanks to the journeys (discoveries and conquests) and the descriptions of them, the limits were

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established. That is the case of Mr. Pedro Pérez Zeledón, late 19th. Century Costa Rican foreign minister, who utilized first-hand documents, including Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya's chronicles, to help the country to find and delimit its frontiers (Guevara de Pérez, 1971). For example, the *Real Cédula* that appointed Don Juan as governor of Costa Rica contained the defined boundaries of the province. That document was signed by King Felipe II (Guevara de Pérez, 1971: 178). And it was used by our 19th Century politicians to defend our territory's boundaries on the international courts.

In the late 1970's the historiography in Costa Rica experimented a complete review, and part of that process included the revaluation of the primary documents and how to use and interrogate them. Several of the publications (thesis, articles, and books) regarding the Costa Rican colonial period have utilized innumerable documents (Rodríguez and Barboza, 1987). Thanks to those primary documents, we know more about our colonial history, material culture, religion, and society.

As an example, in her book Las sociedades cacicales de Costa Rica (siglo XVI), Eugenia Ibarra presents the spatial distribution of the Chiefdoms, the Indian routes, as well as the "reconstruction of the lifestyles of the indigenous societies at the moment of contact with the Europeans..." (Ibarra, 1990: 13, fx). She consulted documents written on the 16th. Century, and among those, were the letters left by Juan Vázquez de Coronado y Anaya. This is probably one of the best researches on ethnohistory that focuses on Costa Rica during the Spanish conquest.

However, all those publications that used primary documents would not be possible without the contribution of charismatic and visionary early Costa Rican historians and scholars. One in particular deserves to be mentioned: Licentiate León Fernández who copied hundreds of primary documents when he stayed in Spain and Guatemala (Fernández, 1963; 1965). He published two volumes respectively in 1881 and 1882 titled Colección de documentos para la Historia de Costa Rica. Some of the documents he transcribed include the letters of Don Juan, later published by his son, Ricardo Fernández Guardia in 1908 (Fernández Guardia, 1908).

Because the contributions of Licentiate León Fernández, other historians of the 19th and 20th Centuries were able to use primary documents to reconstruct the history of the country, specially in its conquest and colonial periods (Calvo, 1887; Monge, 1974; Meléndez, 1966; 1982; Stone, 1975).

The Pedro de Castañeda's narrative as well as Don Francisco's letters are good examples of primary documents used for scholars (Castañeda, et al., 1990). As a chronicler, Castañeda described in detail Don Francisco's journey across the

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Southwest and the "Seven Cities of C'bola". Thanks to their written legacy, historians, archaeologists, and ethnologists had and have the possibility of following the accounts of the expedition, the military campaigns, the encounters with the *naturales*, and the search for gold and mythical places. It is worth mentioning that Castañeda's chronicles, even if they were written twenty years after the expedition, were instrumental to Mr. Herbert E. Bolton to write his excellent book Coronado, Knight of Pueblos and Plains. Because the landscape and route descriptions that Castañeda and Don Francisco reported, Bolton was able to tour those places in an effort to reconstruct them for a better comprehension of the expedition.

Nowadays we take advantage of such primary documentary sources to extract the data we are looking for. We may call both Vázquez de Coronado either early anthropologists or ethnologists because they provided very important information about the landscapes, settings, and they described aspects of the Indian societies they confronted. On those letters the two Captains report details such as:

- names of Indian villages
- population accounts of the places they discovered
- Spanish weapons (harquebuses, muskets, crossbows)
- Indian weapons
- animals they brought (horses, lambs, wethers, pigs)
- animals of the New World (bison, wild goats, bears, wild boars, deer, leopards)
- products cultivated by Indians (corn, bean)
- food that Indians ate
- medicinal plants
- description of naturals' physical features
- landscape and climate descriptions
- funerary customs
- religious practices
- housing patterns
- Indian war strategies
- architecture descriptions of the Indian settlements

With the collaboration of anthropology and history, we assist to the birth of a new discipline: Historical Anthropology or Anthropological Historic. This 20th. Century discipline has unified different techniques and concepts dealing with questioning the past. Today archaeologists use historical documents, and historians utilize excavation and survey methods to uncover humankind's events. We now know that written documents are not just for historians, and digging-survey is not the domain of archaeologists. Both professionals can

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benefit from each other. The investigations about the two Vázquez de Coronado requires this kind of integral view and work.

The excavations at Jimmy Owens site, at Floyd County, Texas, is an excellent example of that collaboration. The team work carried out by Richard and Shirley C. Flint and Donald Blakeslee demonstrates that the multidisciplinary approach is necessary and beneficial. The documents provide new light about the items and artifacts used by Don Francisco's expedition, and help to identify the artifacts that have been uncovered in the camp site.

In Costa Rica the case is different. The collaboration between the two disciplines is in its infancy. Historical research has focused on using the conventional documentary resources such as letters, wills, reports, *Real Cédulas*, sacramental records, diaries, chronicles, etc. Nevertheless, archaeological work has been done little.

We need to keep in mind that the Costa Rican territory is small. It took one or two days for Don Juan's men to do the journeys from one village to the other. The expedition settled down in *Garcimu-oz*, the town found by Juan de Cavall—n. From that location they moved to different locations. There was no need to set up camp sites everywhere. This is one of the reasons why scholars have not found remains of camps. Two more reasons play a role: first, the lack of archaeological and geographical expeditions to reconstruct Don Juan's routes. Second, the environment of the territory is characterized by high humidity, frequent rain, and heat. Possible artifacts made of wood and metal, brought by the Spaniards, decomposed rapidly.

Probably the only archeological approach used to study Don Juan's expedition is that regarding the location of Cartago (called before *Garcimu-oz*), the city found by him (Mélendez, 1960). Cartago, the colonial capital, was moved to different locations. This gave a cause for some historians to do some digging and survey.

In the process of understanding both expeditions and both Vázquez de Coronado it is important to establish cooperation links between the researchers of the United States and those of Costa Rica. That desired joined-scientific journey may provide more light of the impact of each expedition, as well as the psyche of the two conquistadors. I believe, Costa Rican researchers need more feedback in terms of the archaeological approach, and those of the United States should take advantage of the genealogical studies done in Costa Rica about the Vázquez de Coronado family. It is my wish to be one of the first rings on the chain of cooperation.

Truncate discoveries, truncate conquests?

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Can we conclude that both Vázquez de Coronado's expeditions were a complete failure? Were their expeditions truncate? Was something left? That can be answered from different windows.

If we focus only on the gold they found and took for the Crown, it is possible to affirm that in fact both conquistadors failed. They did not find magnanimous quantities of the golden metal. No "*Seven Cities*", "*El Dorados*" or "*Costas Ricas*" were discovered for the King. And with not much gold around, mining did not develop as an important economic activity.

It is evident that these conquistadors did what was possible for them to pacify, conquer, and discover those lands. Don Francisco wrote to the King on October 20, 1541, "I have done all that I possibly could to serve Your Majestic and to discover a country where God Our Lord might be served and the royal patrimony of Your Majestic increased, as your loyal servant and vassal." (Castaeda, et al., 1990: 118). Don Juan reported to the King on September 11, 1563, "With excessive work and expenditure, I have pacified, and discovered, settled, according to what His Majestic will see for the account that Juan Vázquez de Coronado, my brother, will do in that Royal Council." (Fernández Guardia, 1908: 60, fx).

In fact they did the possible. We must take into consideration that the failure or success of those expeditions will play a decisive role on their lives, and fortunes. For Don Juan's expedition, his early death truncated plans and potential journeys to other parts of the small Costa Rican territory. His was an "inconclusive and uncompleted task..." (Meléndez, 1982: 67, fx). The different failures, the confrontation with the Indians, and his health made Don Francisco return to New Spain and abandon his enterprise.

Geographically speaking, both expeditions were of incalculable value. The lands discovered by the expeditions became Spanish Crown's possessions. Indians, lands, and products were discovered and conquered on behalf of the King and, of course, God. Don Juan, Don Francisco and their men also expanded the cartographic ecumene. They reached areas not reached before by Europeans, and added them to the maps.

Don Francisco's expedition discovered the Continental Divide. Mr. Bolton says that "It was Coronado who first acquired a relatively accurate knowledge of the width of the continent in the altitude of his travels." (Bolton, 1964: 396). Don Juan reached one of the highest spots in the province of Costa Rica. There he and his lieutenants, saw for the first time both oceans: the Atlantic and the Pacific (*La Mar del Sur* and *La Mar del Norte*). Spaniards realize of the isthmian geographical

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character of the Costa Rican territory (Mélendez, 1966: 145).

Don Juan's enterprise discovered and reconnoitered almost the whole territory. Even if the expeditions did not "pacify" and settle the whole territory, he and other conquistadors did with the Central Valley. In that valley *Garcimu-oz* city was found, later renamed by Don Juan as Cartago, the colonial capital. The Central Valley became the place where many of the characteristics of the Costa Rican nationality and identity were born.

One scholar said about Don Francisco's expedition that "All in all, the Coronado expedition failed in virtually all its expectations." (Ripley, 1997: 10). I disagree with this affirmation and the best is to quote other scholars. Herbert E. Bolton says that Don Francisco "...and his followers made known the great Southwest and contributed toward its permanent settlement." (Bolton, 1964: preface). George Parker Winship thinks that "...he had added to the world as known to Europeans an extent of country bounded on the west by the Colorado River from its mouth to the Grand Ca-on, on the east by the boundless prairies, and stretching northward to the upper waters of the Rio Grande and the southern boundary of Nebraska." (Translator's preface by George Parker Winship, in: Casta-eda, et al., 1990: viii). Frank Webb Hodge observes that "The expedition of Coronado was of far-reaching importance from a geographical point of view, for it combined with the journey of De Soto in revealing to the world an insight into the vast interior of the North American continent and formed the basis of the cartography of that region." (Introduction by Frederick Webb Hodge, in: Casta-eda, et al., 1990: xxvi). And Joseph P. Sánchez notes that "The expedition of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado was the first major European exploration to penetrate the interior of the present United States." (Sánchez, 1997: 32).

Other conquistadors will follow the Vázquez de Coronado's steps. Those new expeditionaries would continue the task of discovering, conquering and settling the lands and the people. As their predecessors, they financed the enterprises, and tried to find gold, the Seven Cities, El Dorado, and the rich costs. They also increased the geographical ecumene of the New World, and found cities to consolidate the Spanish colonial domination.

Don Francisco and Don Juan never imagined that, despite their failures, their conflictive encounters with the *naturales*, their controversy with their lieutenants, they would be part of the history. They never imagined that their actions would impact the development of future expeditions. And they never imagined that they would have survivors who made of the Vázquez de Coronado a powerful and influential family.

The Vázquez de Coronado are part of our past. More than four hundred years

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have been since they made their marks in the history of the Southwest and Costa Rica. At the distance we can and have the opportunity to condone or condemn their actions and repercussions. What we cannot do is to change the past, but we are entitled to our point of view of it. We cannot go back and alter the facts, but we are able to change our perspectives. The worst is to keep a silent, because, by doing that, we may misunderstand the past, and bias our present and future.

Annex 1 (#)

LIST OF MEN WHO CAME WITH JUAN VÁZQUEZ DE CORONADO Y ANAYA

ACUÑA, Alvaro de (*)
ABREO (ABREU), Melchor de
ADRADA, Antonio de
ALVAREZ DE COY, Bartolomé
AMARILLA, Pedro de
ANDORRA, Pedro de
ARIAS, Gaspar de
ARMERICO, Cipión
ARNIALDE (YRNIALDE), Juanes de
ÁVILA, Juan de

BARRIENTOS, Hernando de
BELTRÁN, Pedro
BETANZOS, Fray Pedro Alonso de (fray)
BIENVENIDA, Fray Lorenzo de (fray)
BLÁZQUEZ, Martín
BONILLA, Alonso (*)
BONILLA, Francisco de (*)
BONILLA, Juan de
BONILLA, Fray Martín de (fray)
BUSTILLOS, Juan de

CABRAL, Gaspar
CABRERA, Miguel de
CALDERÓN, Juan Francisco
CANO, Diego
CARVAJAL, Antonio de
CASTELLÓN, Marcos
CASTILLO, Juan del

DÁVILA, Juan
DÍAZ, Baltasar
DÍAZ DE LORÍA, Pedro (*)
DÍAZ MORENO, Francisco
DÍEZ, Juan

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ESTRADA, Pedro de

FAJARDO, ...

FAJARDO, Alonso (*)

FERNÁNDEZ NAVARRETE, Br. Gonzalo

FONSECA, Francisco de (*)

GALLEGOS DE VILLAVICENCIO, Francisco de

GARCÍA, Miguel

GARCÍA CARRASCO, Pedro (*)

GÓNGORA, Miguel de

GONZÁLEZ, Baltasar (*)

GORDILLO, Gabriel

GUERRERO, Juan

GUEVARA, Miguel de

GUIDO, Alonso de (*)

GUILLÉN, ...

GUTIÉRREZ DE ALGAVA, Gaspar

HERNÁNDEZ, Br. Gonzalo

HERNÁNDEZ, Melchor

HERNÁNDEZ, Pedro

HERNÁNDEZ, Diego

HERNÁNDEZ CAMELO, Antonio (*)

HERNÁNDEZ DE ESPINOSA, Juan

HERRERA, Antonio de (*)

HINOJOSA, Agustín de

HINOJOSA, Juan de

JIMÉNEZ, Alonso (*)

JUÁREZ, Rodrigo

LÁZARO, Rafael

LEÓN, Francisco de

LEÓN, Melchor de

LIDUEÑA, Alonso de

LOBO DE GAMAZA, Francisco (*)

LÓPEZ, Alonso

LÓPEZ, Miguel

LÓPEZ, Pedro

LÓPEZ DE LA TORRE, Alonso

LORENZO, Cristóbal

MADRIGAL, Cristóbal de (*)

MANUEL, Juan

MARÍN, Nicolás

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MARMOLEJO, Francisco de
MARTÍN, Diego
MARTÍN, Juan
MEJÍA, Antonio
MEJÍA, Hernán
MEJÍA DE VALLADARES, Juan
MESA, Bernabé
MILANÉS, Vicencio (*)
MIRANDA, Felipe de
MIRANDA, Martín de (*)
MORALES, Alonso de

NATAREN, Tomás

ORTÍZ, Juan
OVALLE, Juan de

PAEZ, Antonio
PARADA, Luis de
PERALTA, Antonio de (*)
PEREIRA, Juan (*)
PÉREZ SAAVEDRA, Alonso
PORRAS, Diego de
PORRAS, Gregorio de
PUENTE MORENO, Juan de la

RIBERO Y DE ESCOBAR, Pedro de (*)
RÍO, Nicolás del
RIVAS, Alonso de
RODRÍGUEZ CHACÓN, Diego (*)
ROJAS, Gómez de

SALAZAR, Fray Melchor de (fray)
SALCEDO, Andrés de
SALINAS, Fray Diego de (fray)
SÁNCHEZ, Alonso
SÁNCHEZ, Hernán
SÁNCHEZ, Simón
SÁNCHEZ DE GUIDO, Fray Francisco (fray)

TORRALBA, Martín de

VALDIVIESO, Alonso de
VENECIANO, Francisco
VERA BUSTAMANTE, Blas de
VILLAVICENCIO, Agustín de (*)

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XASO, Fray Alonso (fray)

ZARATE, Juan de

Total: 114 people

(*) Founders of Costa Rican families

(#) Taken from

Meléndez Chaverri, Carlos. 1982 Conquistadores y pobladores: orígenes histórico sociales de los costarricenses. San José, Costa Rica. EUNED. Ps. 259-278.

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blancos proclamaban que los indios eran bestias, éstos se conformaban con sospechar que los primeros eran dioses. A ignorancia igual, el último procedimiento era ciertamente más digno de hombres."

Claude Levi-Strauss

(Tristes Tr – picos, EUDEBA, Buenos Aires, 1973, p. 621)

Taken from Eugenia Ibarra Rojas's

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