

# SEBASTIÁN DE BELALCÁZAR, FOUNDER OF CITIES, DESTROYER OF TOWNS

## SEBASTIÁN DE BELALCÁZAR, FUNDADOR DE CIUDADES, DESTRUCTOR DE PUEBLOS

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### Abstract

This article is written in times of the pandemic to which we are subjected, considering that at the beginning of it the indigenous Guambianos risked toppling the statue of the founder of Popayán that was illegitimately erected on the top of an indigenous pyramid of pre-Hispanic character that there was. Obviously, this action sparked the controversy as to whether the Indians had ac-

ted with reason or without reason, and the document attempts to provide an answer, appealing to the incontrovertible fact that, although the story is written by the winner, it is always possible to review the sources used. by the successive historians and to proceed to a revision of the same, tending for a greater objectivity and a greater justice on the past of all of us.

Finally, given the news that reaches us from the world, it is a reality that around the planet there has been a process of destruction of the symbols that have meant slavery, exploitation of non-renewable natural resources and the extermination of peoples, to lighten from them to a universe already sufficiently mocked by fatal events such as climate change or the aforementioned pandemic.

**Key words:** Historical sources, early chroniclers, conquest, colonization and destruction of peoples, slavery, rewriting of history, vindication of the original peoples and historical truth.

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## Resumen

Se escribe este artículo en tiempos de la pandemia a la que estamos sometidos, considerando que en septiembre del 2020 los indígenas Misak se arriesgaron a tumbar la estatua del fundador de Popayán que fue ilegítimamente erigida en la cúspide de una pirámide indígena de carácter prehispánico que allí había. Obviamente esa acción desató la polémica de si los indios habían actuado con razón o sin razón, por lo que el presente escrito intenta dar una respuesta, apelando al incontrovertible hecho de que, aunque la historia es escrita por el vencedor, siempre cabe la posibilidad de revisar las fuentes utilizadas por los sucesivos historiadores y proceder a una revisión de la misma con una mayor objetividad y una más grande justicia sobre el pasado de todos nosotros.

Para finalizar, dadas las noticias que del mundo nos llegan, es una realidad que alrededor del planeta se ha venido dando un proceso de destrucción de los símbolos que han significado esclavitud, explotación de los recursos naturales no renovables y el exterminio de los pueblos para aligerar de ellos a un universo ya suficientemente escarnecido por hechos fatales como el cambio climático o la pandemia referida.

**Palabras clave:** Fuentes históricas, Cronistas primigenios, conquista, colonización y destrucción de pueblos, esclavitud, reescritura de la historia, reivindicación de los pueblos originales y verdad histórica.

## Introduction

This article is a careful reflection of the treatment and choice that historians give to their sources in order to match their contents with their ideological, personal or group interests. To this end, a determining episode in the history of the conquest of Colombia has been chosen, such as the invasion of the first Spaniards through southern Colombia, of the hosts that accompanied Sebastián de Belalcázar on his trips to settle the provinces of Nariño, Cauca and part of southern Antioquia when the Spaniard Sebastián Moyano founded the cities of Pasto, Popayán and Cali. Making extensive use of primary sources such as archive documents and original chroniclers, a constructive criticism is made of the first historians of Popayán, who in their political and ideological eagerness allowed themselves to build a history that greatly favored the European protagonists, without having taken into account the populations and indigenous peoples who were seen and were greatly harmed by it.

## Why the violence in Colombia

When examining the History of Colombia, its innumerable primary and secondary stories and meta-narratives, a question arises from the discipline: why is that beautiful intuition of Vico, the 17th-century historicist who said: "... the limited and petty ends of men become (in the course of history) servants of the highest divine ends and always contribute to the preservation

of the human race on earth"? (cited by Meinecke, 1982, p. 58). And the questions can be extended: why in Colombia, one of the most Catholic countries in the world, the limited and petty ends of men, on the contrary, prevail and human life simply has no value? Why is the supposed base of the Catholic doctrine, the feelings of kindness, forgiveness and love, not valid in these lands and among us does that "cunning of reason" enunciated by Hegel, which makes men and their institutions (with the exception of the miracle) the preferred means of the spirit of the world to manifest itself?

The constant of civil or social war, political war, economic war, simple violence (which is in no way an independent variable) is present practically in all the periods of our past. As historians, or simply as human beings, elementary and humble, it is worth asking: have the circumstances of violence, the quality of its actors, the intentions and modalities, its multiple and chilling expressions changed over time? While it is true that the club, the knife and the machete have been replaced by the chain-saw, the galil, the AK 47, the anti-personnel bomb and the tatuco, has war itself been transformed, cruel and ruthless, or have our schemes Our cognitive processes and our psychologies (as one more accommodating mechanism) have adapted to the circumstances to accept the stubborn and obstinate persistence of the contradictions that besiege us in order to, in a devious way, mask and at the same time preserve (each one in its own way) the statu what? Or, on the other side of the sequence, is it neither more nor less a deliberate attitude

imposed on everyone by the strongest, a brazen and sinister, conscious and systematic strategy of war to exterminate the weakest, as Antonio asserts? Gentleman? (Week, 2004).

It is worth investigating. At least put curiosity to the test. Has the time that has elapsed since the Academy of History (May 1902) been founded been enough for us Colombians today to have an objective version of history at our disposal and to be able to proceed with the unavoidable purification? This is because individuals and peoples need catharsis, the urgent need to cleanse their sins. Exorcism is necessary so that the conscience is able to mitigate the darkest memories and the most disastrous periods to achieve well-being, like the Americans with their "conquest of the west" that was not only recorded, but also represented and ideologized in the cinema. TV and comics, or the Russians, who during the Cold War glorified ad nauseam the resistance against the fascists with which they justified their domination over other peoples and left testimony of their conviction (now history) that they were neither more nor less than the spearhead of history.

The fact is that in Colombia we have not carried out such a catharsis nor have we practiced any purification; Likewise, violence, one of the activities that governs our destinies and dominates our headlines, determines our presence and draws our future, we leave it adrift, we let it go on the back and under the responsibility of its own actors and of the so-called "social communicators" who have succeeded in replacing writers, philosophers, sociologists and his-

torians in our lives. The result is that the majority of Colombians (especially in urban areas) speak of a conflict in which they have nothing to do. They ask to be left out. But it must be borne in mind that this has always been the case: the violence – considered classic – of birds, *blackjacks* and *chulavitas*, of black blood, *sparks* and *revenge* of the 50s and 60s, the feared bandits, materialized in frightening and atrocious massacres mutilations against miserable peasants who had nothing to do with it, was experienced with relative indifference in urban centers – whiskey, beer or brandy in hand – through the radio, gossip and newspapers. In cafes, clubs, shops, billiards and canteens, people talked with some fear, but with admiration and delight, about the barbarities of such bandits, about the “flannel” cut, “the tamale cut” and the “goose” cut, and about the exploits of Guadalupe Salcedo, Eliseo Velásquez, Dumer Aljure, etc., to the point that the figure of Efraín González, a bandit who came to challenge the same army endowed with enormous weapons, was a true myth: his image and his name not only they venerated in villages of Boyacá and Santander, but in the Automatic cafe in Bogotá and in the National Congress.

Despite the numerous university academic programs (around 11,000), Colombians of all strata are “functionally illiterate” and in Colombia less than one book is read per year, one of the lowest averages in the world. And there is the paradox that we occupy second place in Latin America in terms of book production and in countries like Peru or Venezuela the typographers are of Colombian origin. But these are exiled Co-

lombians because the typographer's trade is inextricably linked to thought and in Colombia thought, despite the freedom or debauchery of expression, academic freedom, university “autonomy” and cell phones, is still constrained. We produce books not to read them, but to export them. Why? Because it's just good business.

There are multiple ways of producing real and concrete ignorance indirectly, subliminally, without us realizing it, and one of them is the saturation of information, which is so abundant that we cannot assimilate it. When an event reaches its climax, there is already another of greater magnitude that succeeds it and mercilessly overshadows it. On the other hand, there are the official dispositions or the action of the State that, through ideology, since the supposedly distant colonial times have served to silence us and hide the truth from us. Which explains the effectiveness of religious discourse and the relative inefficiency of the school in our environment (I exclude high-cost schools), which is not capable of teaching how to speak and write the mother tongue, does not provide knowledge of a foreign language. (12% of scholarships abroad are lost due to the absence of a foreign language, especially English), and it does not teach history, geography, chemistry, nor does it teach mathematics.

In the best of cases, we were able to memorize the names, the postulates, the formulas and the dates that were important to forget them immediately after the evaluation. The human, social, exact and natural sciences that school and college smear on us are partial, eminently theoretical, boring

and meaningless. It is not in the least important that José Celestino Mutis, ironically considered the first Colombian scientist (he was neither a Colombian nor a scientist), would have made a dangerous effort at the end of the 18th century because in the schools of the capital of the Viceroyalty, Santa Fe de Bogotá, taught Copernicus. The Dominicans did not excommunicate Mutis, nor did they imprison or burn him, but they achieved something much more effective: they gagged him. And Aristotle's physics, or if you like the absence of physics, continued to prevail in Colombia until today.

Despite the hours of sleeplessness and the burning eyelashes of scholars from Francisco José de Caldas to us, we are still scholastic entities. Kepler, Galileo, and Newton have not passed through our understanding, and we only know of Einstein his famous photograph and his long hair. That was half gone. Thus, children and young people continue to think that the ball stopped at their feet because the original push (kick) ran out or that the doll fell and broke because God wanted it that way, completely ignoring the law of gravity and the entropy. And we should be grateful that the common people do not think that the sun is the one that turns the earth, but we are moved by their ignorance of what a lunar eclipse really is, or how photosynthesis works, and we are even more moved by the ruthless conviction of a mother, any mother, that the primary cause for her daughter to win an Olympic medal was definitely her constant prayers to the Virgin. In this order of ideas, most of our countrymen continue to think that the conquest brought "civilization" and, althou-

gh they have heard the words "pluriethnicity and multiculturalism", these, which are not yet in the dictionary and try to induce some vindication history for attacked and dispossessed peoples (today "ethnic minorities"), are empty of content and float through the brain stripped of meaning, which makes them incomprehensible.

Now, Colombians of all strata, all colors and all phenotypes are intolerant and exclusionary, and that intolerance and exclusion cannot come from anywhere other than the Catholic religion, which practically, as another expression of fundamentalism, convinced us that apart from his doctrine there was no salvation. The separation between the self and the other was and is so strong in Colombia that even anthropologists consider the Indian and the black, their traditional objects of study, as beings of a different nature, as Svetan Todorov (1989) says "as the other." really alien to me." In schools and colleges, the History of 50, 100 or 200 years ago continues to be taught: first of all, an exaltation of national symbols, symbols that, if they ever made sense, no longer do today.

The case of the shield is merely sentimental: the condor practically no longer exists in the Andes and Panama always belonged to Panama. The presence of the cornucopia, distinctive of abundance and prosperity, is embarrassed before the already numerous displaced and destitute people who wander the streets. Even outside the Bronx. According to the Comptroller General of the Nation, there are 44 million inhabitants in Colombia, of which 28 million are poor. There is nothing to say about the lyrics of the national anthem, but in the schools and colle-

ges of our country the hero and the saint, the violent actor, the leader and the caudillo (and the nicknames "Indian" and "black" are still praised). are pejorative). In this regard, José Mosquera (Semana, 2004-09-13), an activist for the rights of ethnic groups, writes: "Three expressions synthesize the economic, political and social reality of ethnic minorities in our country: exclusion, invisibility and stigmatization".

Racism and warlordism run through our history teaching texts, if there are any, and the stone statues of violent men who caused enormous damage, protect our cities and are still valid in the official ways of telling the past. It is not admitted that we are a country of mestizos, blacks and Indians. Take the example of Antioquia, considered the cradle of the "antioqueña race". Jorge Giraldo (Semana, 2004), director of the Observatory for Equity and Social Integration, writes:

Antioquia is not a white department as we have it in the imaginary. Just one example: the population census of 1806 showed that, in Antioquia in that year, 54 percent of the population of Antioquia was mulatto; 22 percent, mestizo; 17 percent black and 5.8 percent white. (p.14)

The Observatory's research, as well as that carried out by the National Planning Department, reaffirms what was already known, pointing out that "1,215,985 blacks live in Antioquia, the equivalent of 26 percent of the country's black population, and that Medellín occupies the fifth place among the cities with the largest number of black population" (p. 14). This indicates that blacks in Antioquia represent 23 percent of the department's population.

All this despite the Extensive History of Colombia, of historians such as Indalecio Liévano Aguirre, Álvaro Tirado Mejía and Jaime Jaramillo Uribe, of ethnohistorians such as Juan Friede and Kathleen Romoli, despite the professionals of New History, North American historians and French amazed with Colombia, despite the professors of the Department of History of the Universidad del Valle, of the National University (cradle of *violentologists*), of the Universities of Antioquia and Santander and their invaluable contributions to regional history, as well as the hard and tenacious work of the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History of extreme value and in which archaeologists are included. Or has all that enormous accumulated social intellectual work failed to reflect among us the irrefutable reality?

That flaw that our "very advanced and developed historical discipline" has not satisfied our inescapable cultural needs and has not served to mitigate, alleviate or suppress the permanent violence that plagues us uncontrollably every day, is in a particularity of our discipline that has existed since Herodotus decided to be recognized as the father of history and that affected him too. It must be stated that another way of hiding reality or falsifying historical facts is deeply imbricated in the very nature of history, since the same discipline has forms of "self-control", and the historian, whatever his lineage, his caliber, or your way of thinking, gets away with it and builds the best possible story, the one that best suits your personal or group conveniences and interests. This way of hiding history is reflected firstly (because it is

a complex way) in the way we choose or discard our sources and secondly, more importantly, in their particular manipulation and interpretation. To instruct such a procedure, I am going to refer to a case belonging to colonial history, an event or creative process on the part of our nationality that in one way or another has been hidden or handled for comfort by successive historians.

### **The historians of Popayán and Sebastián de Belalcázar**

The case of Sebastián de Belalcázar, that is, the actions of the first conquerors in the south of Colombia, is a founding myth that covers a period of two and a half decades (1535-1550) and a space that goes from the Ecuadorian north and the Colombian departments of Nariño, Cauca, Valle del Cauca and Huila to the south of present-day Antioquia. It is a simple research exercise based on the available sources (first and foremost chronicles) which are: Pedro Cieza de León (1553, 1984), Bartolomé de Las Casas (1552, 1985), Juan de Velasco (1789, 1981) and Through him, Father Niza, priest of the Belalcázar host during his military campaign in the north of present-day Ecuador, and Captain Alfonso Palomino, a member of the Juan de Ampudia and Pedro de Añasco host and later of Belalcázar himself who, as it is well known that they were the first European soldiers to penetrate our southern border. And, finally, the historian Jaime Arroyo (1862, 1955) and his later commentators.

The other sources should be consulted in the general bibliography.

Jaime Arroyo was the first regional historian who, together with the military man Joaquín Acosta, made contributions to historiography in the 19th century. Joaquín Acosta (1848, 1953), a predominant character at the time, made known to the public, among other things, the famous Requirement that, according to the historian, was read for the first time to the Indians of the northern coasts of Colombia. As for Arroyo, an outstanding Payanés and political conservative, he finished writing his history in 1862. When Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera won the war against the Arboledas, overthrowing President Mariano Ospina Rodríguez (the only time in history that an armed insurrection triumphed in Colombia), Arroyo was forced to travel to Bogotá where he died the following year aged 44. His work was first published in 1907.

The 1955 edition, which is the one I use, was corrected and augmented with notes in the margin by Antonino Olano and Miguel Arroyo Diez, but it should be noted that it does not include the chronology announced in the title. This will appear in the Revista Popayán and in the work of epigones of Arroyo such as Arboleda Llorente and Arcesio Aragón. Arroyo's story has the merit of being the first regional history after the work of the aforementioned chronicler Velasco. In a heroic and conventional tone, as if it were the definitive version, the historian from Paya creates the myth of Belalcázar and for this he adorns it with details such

as making him arrive in America in 3. er voyage of Columbus<sup>1</sup>. The unconditional adherence of Arroyo to the Hispanidad that this conqueror represented is concretized in the following paragraph:

The little we know about the history of America prior to the conquest shows well how deep were the hatreds that divided the indigenous people, how bloody and disastrous were their struggles, and how vile and cruel the tyranny that the strong exercised among themselves over the weak. Without this, despite the courage and other physical and moral qualities of the sixteenth-century Spaniards and their almost mythological prowess, it is almost certain that they would not have subjected the New World to the crown of Castile (1955, pp. 74, 83).

And Belalcázar, actually called Sebastián Moyano, as he is well known, will be one of the protagonists of the Spanish occupation of northern Ecuador and southwestern Colombia, which was a continuous movement

of what is known as the "conquest of the Incas" or the kingdom of Peru (Cf., Hemming, 1982). This means that, at all times, from when he embarked on the adventure after having wandered and tried to make a "fortune" in Central America until he was awarded the Governorship of Popayán in 1540, Belalcázar acted as a subaltern of Francisco Pizarro and all his followers. movements behind the back of his mentor (which constitute the penetration of current Colombia), considered a crime by contemporaries.

It should be noted that the majority of historians give the events that concern us a heroic and romantic meaning, when they emphasize a curious event that would have taken place in the current Ecuadorian province of Latacunga, where a subordinate of Belalcázar, a certain Daza, took prisoner an Indian named Muequetá who came from a distant place called "Cunderrumarca, or Cundelomarca" which is supposed to be the Cundiboyacense highlands. The historian José Rumazo González (1946), an inveterate disseminator of the legend, reported that the "chibcha" Muequetá exposed extraordinary facts to his captors and immediately, under the nickname of "the golden man", was incorporated into the expedition. In the adventure he found death along with the numerous yanacunas<sup>2</sup> that accompanied the hosts. The legend of El Dorado was generated,<sup>3</sup> which in the most traditional narratives is taken as true, being rather a problem subject to conjecture. The toponymic "Cundelumarca", for example, is considered by Jijón and Caamaño (1936) to be of Quechua or Aymara origin, or better, a possible variation of the Quechua Cunturmarca (land of condors) and original,

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1 Arroyo's assertion that Belalcázar would have arrived in Santo Domingo (Hispaniola) in 1498 caused problems for later commentators who found themselves in tight breeches to explain that, despite this, however, their hero had not participated in the bloody war of Juragua and in the vile assassination of the cacica Anacaona in 1503. Therefore, finally, the commentators accepted the version of Belalcázar himself who alleged in his probanzas that he had arrived in America in 1507 or 1508. Castellanos (1985) says, and it is what is generally accepted, that it arrived in Panama in 1514 in the expedition of Pedro Arias Dávila, better known as Pedrarias.

2 Rumazo states that in Latacunga there was a group called "yanacunas" and that these were the indigenous people that the conquerors used as carriers in their penetration into our country, who bequeathed their name to the successive Indians who served in the hosts, and even later. However, as I have discussed elsewhere ( Buenahora , 2003), the Yanacunas have a more complex, older, and more southern origin . Today the indigenous people of the Colombian Massif consider themselves Yanacunas.

3 The legend of El Dorado also began to forge simultaneously on the Venezuelan coast, where the participants of the German expeditions financed by Jerónimo Sailer and Enrique Ehinger , factors of the Welsers in Seville, from the lips of local Indians began to hear of a mythical country of gold. The story spurred the entries of Federman , Alfinger and von Hutten ( Spira ), who, as is known, prowled with many difficulties through the extensive plains of present-day Venezuela in search of a certain "golden man" possessor of immense wealth. Such crossings were a real failure: starting from Coro, the Germans attempted a bumpy exploration of the continent that was imperfectly verified, all ending either at their starting point or as strangers in the Andes. See von Hagen (1978).

according to Rumazo, from the province of the Chachapoyas, east of Quito. The important thing here is to underline that in my opinion such fantasies justify the European violent excesses (which some historians do not even refer to), grouping them under the fair and just search for wealth and rights by the upstarts, which would have spurred – in a way involuntary – the baser instincts.

But legend aside, the first Spanish and Portuguese actions (Portugal was then part of Spain) in northern Ecuador and southern Colombia drew attention and reached European ears late, in the form of personal letters describing to influential people or to the King of Spain himself the cruelty and horrors of the occupation, or as a way of denouncing at a time when the discussion about the indigenous jurisdiction was in all its fury. It was when the hated by some "black legend" was generated, where, in the hands of gratuitous English and French detractors, Spain was badly off, but also where characters like Pascual de Andagoya, "nobleman" and Spanish native, present in the valley of the Cauca in a reckless and inopportune way when Belalcázar had left for Spain to have his "discoveries" recognized, they would have a lot to do with it. For the year of the Lord of 1540, Andagoya wrote to Emperor Carlos V the following:

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4 La Brevíssima has been widely published and of course implicitly and explicitly vilified, even though it is an admirable synthesis (at a time when the capacity for synthesis was practically nil) of what happened in the conquest at the level of the continent since the Discovery up to the year of its publication. Well, it goes too far in repeating the word "tyrant" (all the conquerors were), but it describes very well what were the procedures used in the occupation from Mexico to the La Plata River, where levels of violence and aggression were reached that were difficult to emulate, but that recall the darkest European Middle Ages and the painful past of Spain since the Moors invaded it in the 11th century. The expression "to give torment", a *leit motive* of the text?, removes the intimate fibers of the reader and one cannot imagine such a situation. Or if?

[...] When the first Spaniards (Ampudia, Añasco and Belalcázar) entered here, in these thirty-two leagues (from Cali to El Patía) there was over one hundred and fifty thousand houses, there was not an inch of land that was not planted by the natives, there was not one house with another that they did not have three or four men without the people of women and children and in all that there are now by copy four thousand and nine hundred Indians before less than more as your majesty would give for a certain declaration that the Popayán Council made (...) and the memory that of it now (the original indigenous population between Cali and Popayán) is the buildings and to say here it was Troy in the whole place and seat of Popayán no one can leave who does not go through bricking of heads and bones of the dead I cannot leave to cry many tears to see such great perdition [...] (in Tovar, 1993, pp. 201-202).

For his part, the Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas denounced and made known to the King, the Council of the Indies and the European public in general, in addition to others, the Spanish actions in the lands of northern Ecuador and southern Colombia in his famous Brief Relation of the Destruction of the Indies, written in 1546 but published in 1552 two decades after the events. In the obsessive style of the religious, the event is one of the most pathetic in the book and according to the author, his data came from eyewitnesses:

[...] and those who now come from there say that it is a great pity and pain to see so many and such large towns burned and devastated as they passed through them (the indigenous populations), that where there was a town of one thousand and two thousand neighbors, they did not find fifty, and others totally burned and depopulated. And in many parts, they found one hundred and two hundred leagues and three hundred, all depopulated, burned and destroyed large populations [...] (Las Casas, 1985, p.155)<sup>4</sup>.

The eyewitnesses to whom Las Casas alluded were the Franciscan Marcos de Niza (who accompanied Belalcázar from the south to Quito) and a soldier from Juan de Ampudia's host or from Belalcázar himself named Alfonso Palomino, mentioned, who would have written a true information that gave an account of the barbarities of the Hispanics in the Cauca Valley (Las Casas, 1985, p. 132-137). Father Niza had arrived in the New World in 1531 and from Santo Domingo he went to Peru where he had the opportunity to witness the initial tragedies of that war. In August 1534 the friar was in Quito and in all likelihood he witnessed, if not its forced construction, then the destruction of the important indigenous town that existed there. It is not certain if Niza remained a custodian (attached to the convent of San Francisco) in Peru for a longer time, or if he went to Central America with Pedro de Alvarado, but in 1537 he was in Mexico and, according to Las Casas, he delivered his writings to Archbishop Zumárraga who certified them.

There are several episodes that both Niza and Palomino collect and that Las Casas transcribes and Juan de Velasco (1981, pp. 157-167) takes up with enthusiasm when elaborating his well-known story, events that were not totally hidden by Arroyo (1955) but were gagged under the euphemism and practically estranged from history texts: the criminal nature of the adventures of Francisco Pizarro and his followers along the Pacific coast, their brutal attacks on the islands of Puná and Tumbes, the first Inca settlements they reached, the assassination of Atabaliba (Atahualpa) and the dispossession of

his treasure, or rather, of the income of the Empire, the assassination of the indigenous captain Cochilimaca "the one who had come in peace to the governor (Pizarro) with other principals", the assassination of the wife of Manco Inca, the insurgent monarch of Vilcabamba, with the sole purpose of offending him, the forced destruction and construction of the city of Quito by Juan de Ampudia, lieutenant of Belalcázar, with thousands of Indians from the surrounding area in pursuit of Atahualpa's treasure, which had already been fleeced. The burning alive of caciques and indigenous leaders, among them Luyes and Alvia, the latter "great lord of those who were in Quito", and Chamba and Cozopanga and others, with the "intent that there be no lord left in all the land", the razing and indiscriminate massacres in the indigenous villages of the Machachi valley, the unjustified annihilation of enormous herds of llamas in the province of Puruhá (Riobamba, Ecuador) subjecting the population to general famine, the incineration of large groups of Indians locked up in houses and temples made of wood and straw, with lurid incidents, the feeding of prey dogs with Indian meat, the genocide perpetrated by a lieutenant of Ampudia (a certain Sánchez) in the province of Huaca where the Spanish, along the way and in the absence of the men of the place, they murdered all the women and children, etc.

Both Arroyo (1955, p. 118) and his commentators, who, as was said, in no way hide the facts, consent and justify them by denying the veracity of the testimonies of Niza and Palomino and therefore of those of the father of Las Casas. Regarding the Dominican, Arroyo expresses the following:

The name of the Bishop of Chiapa (sic), Fray Bartolomé de Lascasas (sic), is well known: noble soul, upright heart, he was one of those beings who appear from time to time to relieve the unfortunate and pride of humanity [..] True to his purpose, he did not waste a moment: all the hours of his life were devoted to the defense of the Americans (sic) [...] As men are not taught to find themselves in the world with that kind of beings [...] they are abhorred in life (our underlining) and they are only esteemed after death [...] With his ardent imagination, the holy anger produced by the excesses he saw [...] predisposed as he was against the cruelty of the conquerors, he easily welcomed as many species as he could hear, and frequently declaimed and insulted instead of reasoning. This is seen in his work of the destruction of the Indies. Belalcázar and his companions appear in it dishonored and infamous to the extreme. And because? Because he took the species from Father Niza, and what he said still disfigures him with vehemence of style and verbose eloquence. (1955, pp. 121-122)

As for Captain Alfonso Palomino, who had arrived with Pedro de Alvarado on the Ecuadorian coast in 1534 and over time became a rich encomendero in Lima, his account was placed by Las Casas at the end of *La Brevísima* under the title of a piece of letter (two or three pages were lost in the printing avatars) that does not always appear in the various editions of the *Brevísima*<sup>5</sup>. Arroyo affirms that the military's motivations to offend Belalcázar would have been the grudges arising

from favoritism towards Ampudia and for having discarded him, Palomino, as captain of the operations to penetrate Colombia, or as our southern border was called at the time: *Los quillacingas*.

His story focuses on Ampudia's activities in the Cauca Valley, where European predatory action exceeds the apparently candid (because of the verses, rhymes and flowery words) assessments, memories and testimonies compiled by Juan de Castellanos, who he wrote in Tunja in the second half of the 16th century and is followed by most historians<sup>6</sup>. Unlike the versifying chronicler, Palomino, as will be seen, with direct language and stripped of adornments as befitted his level of combatant, draws a Dantesque picture that generally fits the version of Castellanos, but whose crudeness and acrimony shake.

Father Niza Arroyo and his commentators accuse him of not having witnessed the events, but if one reads carefully one can realize that the narration or the piece of narration by the Franciscan that is accessed through *La Brevísima* and that it is the same as Juan de Velasco used without perhaps having known the work of Las Casas, goes from the first adventures of Pizarro in the Pacific and the death of Atahualpa, to the violent events of Riobamba and Quito. There it stops and what follows is in charge of Palomino who did participate from then on. Other than that, the supposed excess of imagination displayed by Father Niza in his later chronicles on California would have led him to lie on that occasion and to exaggerate in the cases of Pizarro and Almagro and therefore of Belalcázar.

<sup>5</sup> The edition of the Brief of 1986 by the Spanish Editorial Orbis, does not bring the "piece of letter" to which reference is made.

<sup>6</sup> Castellanos, despite his versified and mitigating style, gives the impression of sticking to the plain truth, in terms of displacements and events. The investigative work behind his verses is titanic and his thoroughness amazes. It has been the fundamental source of the process we are studying. In general, he does not distance himself from the perspective of any chronicler. Castellanos' sources were oral and manuscript, collected in Tunja after 1567 or 70, from participants and eyewitnesses of the events: one of the founders of Almaguer, Vicente Tamayo, for example, "[...] that this cloth provided tunic".

The truth is that in Mexico, where the priest arrived after having been in Peru, the friar had heard the stories of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca about his uneven adventures through Florida and the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and as a consequence, commissioned by Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza and guided by the Negro Estebanico, who had accompanied Cabeza de Vaca on his impressive journey, left Culiacán to the north in search of what was then called the “seven cities of Cibola” (d’Olwer, 1981: 311-317). Another El Dorado, of course.

With hardly believable naturalness for the moment and for others later, the priest described the cities built on high rocky shelters, the stone temples and the astronomical observatories (which from a distance and because of the sunlight at times seem golden) of the Anasassi Indians and their successors, the Pueblos, located in a wide area between the present states of New Mexico and Arizona. The story spurred the expedition of the conqueror Vicente Vázquez Coronado, who entered the region with a large army, but deviating from the original route of Niza. The soldier left the aboriginal constructions on his left, entered the extensive plains and had no chance to observe anything that the Franciscan had described. He concluded, therefore, that the chronicle was a lie, which Antonio Olano and Miguel Arroyo Díez, unaware of the archeology of North America, accepted without reservation:

Of course, we consider that the purpose of those writings was to impress, in favor of justice, both the government and the Spanish nation in order to contain iniquities from now on, arousing general indignation against those already committed, and that in this sen-

se the exaggerations have his reason and his apology. For the same reason, both this (sic) and the resentment that dominated the father, the exaltation of his character, not referring to things as an eyewitness, but following the reports of others, perhaps also resentful and, above all, the Many falsehoods that can be seen in his works, especially in his trip to California, impose on us the duty of not giving him credit except with much criticism and caution (in Arroyo, 1955, pp. 117-118).

A short parenthesis is necessary here: for Arroyo Niza and Palomino, and therefore Las Casas, they are unworthy of credit, but he assures that other chroniclers (who are necessarily Cieza de León, Castellanos, Velasco and Herrera) were objective and their reports they reasonably justified the violation or at least explained it. Horrendous crimes had been committed, many excesses, heinous crimes, but in just defense. All things considered, Cieza, Castellanos and Herrera, despite their textual confusion, also narrate a war in the background, a very cruel and ruthless war, moreover, but why does Arroyo decide that they can be believed? Because it is not the story itself that interests Arroyo or how it was understood by his contemporaries, but the story as it was understood by Arroyo himself (displaying his particular and group interests) and both Castellanos, Herrera and Cieza were complex enough to be subjected to axiological judgment. While the text of Las Casas (La Brevissima) is unidirectional and focuses solely on the character of denunciation, concentrating attention on reprehensible facts, the other chroniclers could and can be subjected to the amphibian and polysemy, having the historian of where to choose

In the case of Pedro Cieza de León (1984, p. 339), a host soldier, who, in addition to historical events, describes nature (phenotypes, mountains, guabas, soursops, papayas), culture (clothing, kinship, dances, beverages, narcotics) and the exotic (witchcraft, shamans, homosexuality or "heinous sin", ritual defilement, cannibalism), is an appropriate example: in his *Chronicle of Peru*, in the section he calls "Discovery and conquest", when referring to the arrest of the Indian leader Rumiñahui (Rostro de piedra) by Sebastián de Belalcázar, recounts what followed in terms that corroborate the narratives – more immediate – of Palomino and Niza, assertions that would force Las Casas to be believed, but that ultimately as we saw were condemned and discarded. Cieza wrote:

And when they arrived at a town called Quioche (Quinche), which is next to Puritaco, they say that, finding (Belalcázar) many women and boys because the men were with the captains (Spanish?), he ordered that they all be killed without have no fault Great cruelty! (1984, p. 317).

It is therefore prudent to examine the European course from the moment when, once Tawantinsuyu (Cajamarca and Cuzco) had been occupied and the Inca Atahualpa or Atabaliba had been assassinated, Diego de Almagro, concerned about the activities of Francisco Pizarro in the south (he had founded Lima, on the coast), embarks on the road to Cuzco and assigns Sebastián de Belalcázar to lead the military conquest of Quito (Chinchasuyo in Inca terminology), with the aim of founding a port on the Pacific coast for communication with Panama: is when what is known as the search for El Dorado or the conquest of northern Ecuador and southern Colombia begins.

According to an anonymous and undated document, but surely belonging to a soldier of the Belalcázar host (different from Palomino), taken up by the chronicler Antonio de Herrera and from whom the historian Jijón y Caamaño (1936) acquired the information to reconstruct part of his story, once appointed the town hall of Quito in 1534, Belalcázar determined to send "where the quillacingas were called, which is the Atriz valley" (where the city of Pasto is located today), Captain Pedro de Añasco (Anonymous, in Garcés, 1936, p. 580). It was the beginning of the year 1535. Although the Quechua term quillacinga (moon or metal ring) as a culture is being questioned, archeology accepts that the Atriz valley was of a quillacinga nature, or at least that there was a certain homogeneity in it cultural (Cf. Groot and Hooykaas, 1991).

For now, with the aforementioned archaeologists, I consider that the Quillacinga River was the current Guaítara called Carchi in its Ecuadorian section; consequently, in Quito for some time after the Cabildo was erected in 1534, "quillacinga" meant all that remained (land and towns) on the course of such current, the one that heads north and empties into the Patía River, just when it turns its course towards the Western mountain range in search of the Pacific. The fact is that Añasco understood that the "quillacingas" was a very populated land and after a few days he sent "five soldiers on horseback and very lightly, and they passed through the towns at night [...]" (Anonymous, in Garcés, 1936, p. 580). These brought good news. It is noteworthy that there was no armed conflict with the Indians here, so much so that

it was due to their demographic abundance, so no more is said about them. The event prompted Belalcázar to send another of his captains, Juan de Ampudia, then mayor of Quito, who, with reinforcements, met Añasco in Pasto and together (160 to 200 men, 80 to 100 on horseback) undertook the road to Popayán accompanied by numerous Indians on duty. Unfortunately, the witness does not provide any details about this journey.

Decades later, the unusual poet-chronicler Juan de Castellanos (1985, p. 61 and *passim*) completes the information at this point and narrates that Ampudia and Añasco, guided by the Indian Muequetá, left Pasto heading east and walked laboriously without finding any aboriginal population, always under inclement weather and conditions. Here the conquerors could well have penetrated the jungles that border the Guamués River without being able to explain why the lake of the same name, better known as La Cocha, is not named. Although it is possible to think about the possibility that leaving Pasto towards the south-east, taking into account the intricacy of the terrain or the fragility of the memory of the witnesses, one could find the Guamués without seeing the enormous lake that extends longitudinally to the mountain range to the north. The fact is that the expeditionaries on this occasion got bogged down, several lost their lives and got lost, they concluded that the best thing was "[...] to decline towards the sinister [...]", that is, to give up crossing the mountain range and heading north while thinking with sorrow that they were losing the trail of El Dorado.

Then they unexpectedly flowed into the Sibundoy valley. In Sibundoy, a fertile transverse plateau that extends 1,200 m above the eastern slope of the Central Cordillera, they found an indigenous population and maintenance and organized crews that explored the area for two weeks. It is conceivable that the Christians must have wandered diligently through the foothills and perhaps observed the extensive plains to the east. It is noteworthy that with the sibundoyes, and always according to Castellanos (1985, p. 61 and *pássim*), the original source of the episode, there was no armed struggle either and, surprisingly, they are not mentioned at all. One of the crews found the Patía valley to the northeast of Sibundoy, which they probably entered from its southeast corner through the Juanambú river canyon. Many suppose that the expeditionaries arrived in the region of La Cruz in this trance and that they went down the Mayo River to the Patiana depression, but this seems unlikely. Castellanos does not give any details, but if they had reached the Cross, the Europeans would have found an aboriginal population worth mentioning, as Kathleen Romoli (1962) supposes, and would have heard about the sedentary populations of the heights of the Colombian Massif to where surely, they would have headed without hesitation. However, according to Castellanos (1985, p. 61), once the Patía valley was found, the exploratory group returned to Sibundoy, notified their captains and they all followed that course.

Once they reached the Patian depression (800-1,000 m high), the Spaniards settled a real estate and dedicated themselves to exploring the land (*Ibídem*). It was established

that the fertile depression was abundantly populated by Indians who displayed flashy gold objects and body adornments. The historians who explain or narrate the episode [with the exception of Jijón y Caamaño (1936) who technically transcribes Castellanos] take it for granted that the Europeans obtained a great military triumph here; but if the chronicler is followed closely and the common exaggerations in terms of numbers, strategy and casualties are ignored (that the Spaniards were 160 and the Indians 3,000; that the Spaniards managed to get the Indians to leave the mountain and descend to the ground flat –where the cavalry were effective- to fight; that the Indians died like flies, etc.), it is understood that although the Indians withdrew and allowed the Spaniards to roam the valley plundering the apparently stocked pantries, the upstarts They suffered relative damage: not only did the Indians almost beat a knight and his mount to death, but Captain Florencio Serrano, one of the important soldiers of the host, received a serious dart wound.

The fact is that the Christian host followed the course of the Patía River to the north and must have recognized that this current was the product of others whose middle and upper courses turned to the east. Although Castellanos does not mention it, Jaime Arroyo supposes that the invaders on that trajectory reached the town of Sachacoco, which still exists, about ten km south of Popayán. It seems to be a correct assumption –it is deduced– because the northernmost current that forms the Patía River is the Timbío River and following it, one arrives precisely at Sachacoco. There

the Spaniards found flat land planted with corn and a fortress made of thick living guaduas that caught their attention, that is, a military border between the inhabitants of the temperate highlands and those of the hot valley that they left behind. It is noteworthy that the guaduas of the aboriginal fort were planted in the ground and that its doors were directed towards the cardinal points of east and west, which is significant. Here there were important battles, at the end of which the defeated Indians fled, but it must be said that the Europeans this time also received relative damage. Ampudia, who had left Añasco waiting in the Patía valley, was struck by a baton that was almost fatal.

In relation to the Patía Valley and in contrast to the above, as a pertinent note, perhaps the first written mention of the mysterious tectonic depression in the middle of the Andes dates back to when Pascual de Andagoya -an occasion already mentioned- arrived in Popayán in 1539, Belalcázar had just left for Spain (Andagoya, in Tovar, 1993, pp. 169-170). There you can see what happened to the Patía Indians after Ampudia, Añasco and Belalcázar passed through their lands, and weigh somewhat the reactions of the Indians to the European presence. In the midst of the destruction and disorder that the hosts of Belalcázar had supposedly produced with their entries, a "Lord" named Patía (whose lands were located some 20 leagues from Popayán) sent a brother to greet the recently arrived Andagoya, since apparently, he wanted to sign a peace pact.

The relationship with the cacique's brother, according to accounts, was charming and Andagoya even sent gifts to the Lord

of Patía, his wife and his daughters. So, the boss thanked and greeted again through the same brother, who, with great knowledge, was solemnly baptized in Popayán along with his twelve companions. Apparently, the celebration was big and was repeated once the main Indian returned to Patía. As a result, Andagoya sent some messengers to Pasto to inform Francisco Pizarro about what happened in Popayán and on the way the messengers were stopped by envoys from the Lord of Patía. The celebrations and attention to the Andagoya post office were very lavish and the indigenous leader stated that he wanted to convert to Christianity and that he would make all his caciques do so as well. It is not known if they proceeded to it, and the Patía vanishes here. But the original inhabitants of that depression were exterminated in the wars that took place at the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th, and the river plains were populated with haciendas administered from Pasto and Popayán and worked with slaves.

But returning to the course of events related to Ampudia and his military, four leagues away from the guadua fortress found in the vicinity of Timbío or Sachacoco, heading north, the expeditionaries found the indigenous town of ¿Pubén? where they found abundant population "and all sumptuous farmhouses" and a temple of worship of great proportions built of wood (Castellanos, 1985, p. 63). The temple was supported by "400 shelves per row" of a thickness that could not be surrounded with the arms of two of the expeditionaries. "House -in the style of the chronicler- they said they were drunk." The height of the building drew great attention. The rooms around the temple

were found empty, because the Indians warned had escaped to the adjacent hills to shout.

The fact is that the Europeans were unable to settle in the place due to the enormous number of insects that infested the environment, and they were forced to set up a "real" somewhere on the banks of the Cauca River that they did not name. and that in my opinion –contrary to what some scholars claim- it is not known at all (which some irresponsibly supposed to be located in the so-called Vega de Prieto) and, furthermore, it did not constitute, technically speaking, any Spanish foundation (*Cf. infra*). What is decisive is that, although Castellanos (1985, p. 65) reports that, on that occasion, to give some political order to the process, "because it was important, Ampudia had a flag made"; that Florencio Serrano went "with the office of ensign appointed" and that the priest Garci Sánchez celebrated mass, it is not thought that any city was founded. Castellanos himself expresses it, wielding an important reason: "But at that time it was not intended to leave a founded town in Popayán, because they still had an eye, to the discoveries of El Dorado" (1985, p. 65).

It is generally accepted that the aforementioned real estate on the banks of the Cauca would have preceded another foundation that Ampudia carried out illegally on the lands of the cacique Cali, in the geographical valley of the Cauca, against the Western mountain range, in a place that is probably the locality of Arroyo hondo (on the Cali-Yumbo road) but that many suppose in the vicinity of the current Jamundí, a foundation that is known in history texts as the Villa de Ampudia.

But this is not what the historian Arboleda Llorente (1966) understands because, "based on an important document," he asserts that Ampudia would have named the real estate in Las Vegas del Cauca as Villa de Ampudia, constituting this a Popayán foundation prior to the one carried out by Belalcázar in December 1536, and another more institutional one that occurred on January 13, 1537 in which the city would have been definitively founded and destined for the Virgen del Reposo, which would have been solemnly fulfilled on August 15 (day de la Asunción), once the houses of the soldiers participating in the war, soldiers in the process of encomenderos and "noble" landowners were built. The latter foundation frankly imagined by the historian Arroyo (1955, p. 204) with a walk of the future Adelantado Belalcázar with the royal standard in his hands included, which Arboleda, despite himself, had to realize, because as Jijón and Caamaño demonstrated (1936, p. 143), data that Arboleda Llorente by force knew, Sebastián de Belalcázar at that time was signing the book of Cabildo de Quito.

Arboleda's proposal is raised in his work Popayán through art and history, t. II, 1966, where the historian alludes to a protest contained in a document dating from 1605 (ACC sig. 8079), by which a notary with the

surname Vega Polanco processed an old document without a signature, but awarded to Belalcázar, where the conqueror alluded to a town in Ampudia found by him on his first arrival from Quito and founded in the province of Popayan. Arboleda's argument is based on the fact that if the town of Ampudia had been located on the lands of the cacique Cali (which is what the chroniclers say), the document would have called it the town of Ampudia in the province of Cali. But as the town of Ampudia in the province of Popayán calls it, necessarily the real one that was installed after the incident of the chiggers, would have been the first foundation of Popayán. The argument is reinforced by Arboleda with the document awarding the Government of Popayán by the King in 1540, where he names each city of that time separately. But geographic ignorance and generalization were the rule, and the expression "province of Popayán" in a document issued thousands of km away could mean anything from Otavalo to Antioquia.

From Popayán to the north, until the Cauca valley acquires a flat texture, the course is unknown, but as the historian Arroyo (1955, p. 161 *pássim*) supposes<sup>7</sup>, who follows Castellanos (1985) in his defeat, the military must have Christians continue along the river current, in this part leaning against the Western mountain range, and they had to arrive at the geographical valley through its southwestern sector, that is, through the current populations of Suárez and Timba. The Europeans found nothing on the site but scattered straw huts and their absent inhabitants. In one room or another, one or another gold object. In one of those places (Timba?), one of the few eth-

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7 Here Arroyo gathers his ingenuity and imagines what could have happened, affirming that the Spaniards must have traveled along the western bank of the Cauca River, whose etymology nobody has any idea about. Neither Arroyo (1955, p. 161, note 13), who took his data from Father Velasco, nor his pointers know for sure the origin of the term. "Cauca", according to Cieza (1984), came from the name of a cacique located on the banks of the stream on the sides of Mompo and insinuates personally and without any responsibility, that the word would come from a deformation of the Quechua "Jauja", by a possible resemblance between the two inter-Andean valleys. But nothing is certain and the origin of a place name with such a historical weight is and will be, apparently, unknown.

nographic views, they noticed the existence of small round constructions where women were confined during menstruation.

Immediately afterwards, the expeditionaries continued north, always through the western sector of the valley, "scrutinizing valleys and corners", until they found the *Xamundi River*<sup>8</sup> where they found a large population and had the opportunity to exercise armed aggression against it. Ampudia then decides to retreat to the Cauca River, which on the flat sole moves away from the mountain range and opts to build a military fort with powerful *guaduas*, which were very abundant. As one of the sides of the fort was the river current, this allowed them to rescue trinkets for food from the curious and friendly inhabitants of the other shore, and possibly inaugurate the first peaceful contact with indigenous women in this part of the country. These, the women, came enthusiastically to the Spanish camp floating on logs, spinning in the meantime, and what is significant, they brought jars of their wine, establishing there a place – albeit temporary – of peaceful and somehow pleasant exchange, between European and vernacular.

It is when Belalcázar's lieutenant sends 100 men under the command of Francisco Cieza to the Central Mountain range, "which they call the Sierra Nevada mountains", but it is not possible for them to cross it, thus frustrating a second attempt at transverse European mobilization in the southwest of the country. Instead, they find the Indians

organized in *cacicazgos* and they can see "at first glance" that at least seven people lived in each indigenous house (Castellanos, 1985, p. 66). The group, under the supposed and constant armed harassment of the indigenous people, travels about thirty leagues (150 km) to the north, along which "passage without a neighbor was never seen" and reaches the river La Vieja (by an old woman with gold ornaments that they found later). On the shores of La Vieja Cartago will be founded, of great importance in the colonial road system. When Cieza returned to the "real" with six wounded men, Ampudia decided to dissolve the *guaduas* fort and move to the lands of a *cacique* named "Cali", against the western mountain range, an arrogant lordship, where apparently, he now founded the authentic village of Ampudio. Here is another point of discrepancy between chroniclers and historians: the location of the first Spanish city in the Southwest.

According to Castellanos (1985), Ampudia founded his town just after the first skirmishes with the *Jamundíes* and the consequent dissolution of the *guaduas* fort on the banks of the Cauca. But according to Jijón and Caamaño (1936, p. 137), who follows an anonymous account, Ampudia would have founded the town later, at the time when he learned from indigenous informants about the arrival of Spaniards in the Cauca Valley. Without suspecting that it was Belalcázar, following the example of 1534 in the case of Diego de Almagro against Pedro de Alvarado in Riobamba, he would have gone ahead to found a city, naming a council in a hasty manner. It was worth nothing: Belalcázar quickly annulled the foundation of Ampudia,

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<sup>8</sup> Just to the east of the current town of Jamundí there is a village called Ampudia.

but we will never know if it was replaced by Cali or Popayán that succeeded it (July and December 1536). The matter becomes more complicated, because according to Captain Palomino, the town of Ampudia was located on the right bank of the Cauca River, in a place called Palo, and there is such a river and such a name near Caloto.

*Freeloading*<sup>9</sup> Indians, and the Europeans try to penetrate the lands of *Mr. Pete*, who lived somewhere in the western mountain range and who brought together all the groups under his authority of the area. In the lands of Lord Pete or *Petecuy*, the small group (6 knights and 30 peons) found the abandoned town and found the cremated remains of the ancestors, a funerary practice spread throughout the southwest (Trimborn, 1949) and on the Ecuadorian coast of Manabí (Jijón and Caamaño, 1936) and that Kathleen Romoli (1987, 1988) attributes to many groups in western Colombia from Panama to Esmeraldas. Soon the Indians were grouped by the adjacent hills and slopes and tried shouting and verbal offenses with the newcomers, the so-called "perneta", where the wife of chief Pete was distinguished by what Castellanos (1985, p. 68) calls a "biting tongue", an addition that the poet uses

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9 It is supposed, according to Cieza, that the freeloaders inhabited "By the mountains that descend from the mountain range to the west and valleys that are made, there are large populations and many Indians, whose population lasts until near the city of Cali [...] (1984, p. 39). And they also occupied the western foothills, since "they border on the Barbacoas". As is known, the name is a nickname imposed by the Spanish from the name "gorrón" that the Indian gave to the fish that he sold and traded profusely to the east and other directions.

10 "O low, vile, lazy, cowardly people// Worthy of feminine appointment// Is it possible that it takes so long// With so few to come to break// And that our part awaits the most// Having for one more than hundred? / Break, break, and take them down// And grab them by their beards and hair" (Castellanos, 1985).

to underline the fact that so many Indians like Pete's were afraid of so few Spaniards<sup>10</sup>.

The fight was bitter and Castellanos (1985, p. 67) is prodigal here in adjectives to darken the speech and at the same time highlight the "cannibalism" that appears for the first time in the whole tour as a file of undervaluation of the fierce resistance found: "monstrosity that scandalizes", "brutality", "carnage". Even the women, who were armed and were extremely aggressive, participated in the anthropophagic act, because "they were also cruel murderers, and used to eat and be eaten". Perhaps here you have One of the fiercest battles took place and it is noteworthy that the Europeans were amazed at the massive rejection of the population, who during the slow retreat towards the Spanish citadel described them as "thieves and robbers". The Christians manage to return to the town of Ampudia unharmed and Belalcázar finds them there around April 1536 celebrating Holy Week at the wrong time (Castellanos, 1985, p. 68). Belalcázar had left Quito around January of that year and the detailed account of such mobilization has reached us in the first place through the discredited captain Alfonso Palomino.

Palomino, as was said, picks up the narrative just as nice leaves it and describes what happened in Quito when Belalcázar decides to follow Ampudia's itinerary. It begins by drawing attention to the great burden that the conqueror imposed on the Indians of the Quito region by sending them to the Pacific coast to load merchandise to serve both the city and the respective and necessary hosts (Las Casas, 1985, p. 155 passim). Simply in the change of climate from the cold peaks

to the hot coasts, Belalcázar would have killed more than ten thousand individuals. It is also noteworthy that, having received the Otavalo Indians in encomienda or allotment, Belalcázar had 500 Indians awarded by the respective cacique who were used as spearheads of the host, with the aim of obtaining maintenance from the groups that were going to find your way. Such Indians were sent a day before, in order to prepare the ground.

They were the well-known *yanaconas*. Thus, in one populated place or another in present-day northern Ecuador, as the host laboriously advanced, indigenous servicemen were forcibly enlisted until reaching six thousand (father Velasco, although he took his data from Palomino, says that 4,000, others that 5,000, which apparently does not matter too much) and we can know, for example, that a certain Alonso Sánchez personally received 100 Indians, Pedro Lobo and a nephew, one hundred and fifty, and a Morán, later a resident of Popayan, two hundred (Las Casas, 1985, p. 156).

The movements of the Spanish hosts were slow because the indigenous captives had to be carried secured with iron collars, and if one fainted, their heads were cut off for not undoing the succession "And in this way the soldiers carried them in chains and on ropes tied" (Las Casas, 1985, p. 157). It is important to point out that in these mobilizations the Europeans used to disrupt established families, surely to facilitate the manipulation of sedentary men and they had the custom of giving young and beautiful women (married or single) to the Spanish or Indian collaborators. Events took place that

gave Palomino the opportunity to denounce the baseness of the conqueror:

And at the time that said captain (Belalcázar) left Quito taking out so many natives, dispossessing them, giving the young women to the Indians he brought and the others to those who were old, a woman came out with a small child in her arms. behind him shouting, saying that she should not take her husband with her, because she had three small children and that she could not raise them and that they would starve to death; and seeing that the first time he answered him badly, he returned to second with greater voices saying that his children would starve to death; I saw that he had her thrown out there and that she didn't want to give it to her husband, she found the child on some stones and killed him (Las Casas, 1985, p. 157).

In the Cauca valley itself, the first conquerors took the actions of war against the indigenous people to an extreme level. Once together, the Spaniards (among whom, as was said, there were Portuguese) now gathered together numbered about 400 or 500, and consequently the Indians fearfully approached to offer respectful greetings and gifts, among them the caciques Solimán, Jamundí, Palo and Bolo, which are one of the few anthroponymics or toponymics that are given to us and still exist. The fact is that the host in this trance robbed, killed, destroyed and burned in a superlative and systematic way:

That after this the said captain sent (from the town of Ampudia) his captains to one place and another to make crude war against the native Indians, and thus they killed a large number of Indians and Indians and burned their houses and stole their haciendas: this lasted many days (Las Casas, 1985, p. 159).

In the town of Ice, the Spanish destroyed more than a hundred houses and the town of Cacique Tolilicuy was left without men

because those who were not recruited had fled to the mountains. The same thing happened in the town of Dagua:

And so he left there (Tolilicuy), without any language, for the provinces of Calili (sic), where he joined Captain Juan de Ampudia, whom he (Belalcázar) had sent to discover by another route, causing much havoc and bad in the natives, the one and the other, wherever they went (Las Casas, 1985, p. 160).

In the village of Cacique Bitacón, possibly today's Bitaco, whose Indians had committed the audacity of making the horses of Antonio Redondo and Marcos Márquez fall into open traps on the ground (his horse died), a massacre was carried out in which in such traps killed at least a hundred people.

It is presumed, according to Palomino, that this made the Spaniard proud and made him remember the actions that took place in Quito when the Hispanics opened holes in search of Atahualpa's treasure and there they buried (alive?) the Indians who, under torture, did not answer the questions satisfactorily. that was done to them on gold. In Ancerma, in the north, whose pacification corresponded in the first instance to Francisco García de Tovar (Cf. infra), 2,000

Indians were seized and turned into slaves and at least 500 corpses were left scattered in the indigenous town. The same thing happened in the town of Lili, south of the geographical valley:

Thus, in this way they all died, and along these roads all the people who took (Belalcázar) from Quito and Pasto and Quilla Cangua (sic) and Patía and Popayán and Lili and Cali and Ancerma were lost, and a very large number of people died. And then on the way back to the big town (Calili), they entered it killing all they could. And on this day three hundred people were arrested. (Las Casas, 1985, p. 161)

After raiding the geographic valley of Cauca, the Adelantado chooses to dissolve the town of Ampudia and, after founding Cali and leaving it under the command of Miguel Muñoz, decides to return to the <sup>11</sup>Pubén valley in order to settle another city in the place with which he had fallen in love and that today is Popayán. Only the procedure was violent. "And when he arrived in Popayán, he populated that town, and the Indians of those regions began to ranch and rob with the disorder they had made in the others" (Las Casas, 1985, p. 161). If we verify, don Juan de Castellanos (1985), with his melodious verb and in any case deceitful, expresses the same thing, but in a moderate tone: "No night was spent without noise//Not a night when he slept quietly//Watching and fighting it is the trade//Without anyone being able to rest//". It was when the royal foundry was built and Belalcázar minted the stolen gold, after which he left for Cuzco to inform Pizarro of the triumphs obtained. Soon he would have to return pursued by Lorenzo de Aldana, lieutenant of the Marquis, with the necessary accessories to undertake the colonization in the form of Valle del Cauca and the search

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<sup>11</sup> Among the conquerors there were some who stood out for their inhumanity. An example was Francisco de Carvajal, lieutenant of Francisco Pizarro, who went down in history with the nickname of the "monster of the Andes". Nuño de Guzmán was well known and feared in northern Mexico and the men who accompanied Jiménez de Quesada in the conquest of the Muisca were not distinguished by their manners. Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas defines the men who participated in that military enterprise as follows:

And because many iniquitous and cruel men who attended there from everywhere were distinguished butchers and shedders of human blood, very accustomed and experienced in the great sins mentioned in many parts of the Indies, that is why their devils have been such and so many. works [...] (1985, p. 138).

The particularity of being a minority in relation to the indigenous population and the monopoly of iron and steel, horses and hunting dogs, were many times determining factors.

for the imaginary El Dorado. Thus, Belalcázar, once united with his lieutenants, decides to continue the discovery of El Dorado and sends Captain Miguel Muñoz, characterized by his military skill, ferocity and cruelty, to travel again through the eastern sector of Valle del Cauca to the river La Vieja, and other of his men to explore the regions further north, through the western sector of the valley, on the indigenous provinces of "Encerma and Cartama"<sup>12</sup>.

It is when the pilot Juan de Ladrilleros crosses part of the Dagua river canyon in search of an unsuccessful exit to the sea at the moment<sup>13</sup>. Here the conquerors have the opportunity to observe that the Indians who inhabited the mountains to the west of Cali used *guaduas* for pole *vaulting*, in which they were very skilled. They used it for their defense and to flee from the enemy. Later, once subdued, they will use them with the

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12 Jorge Robledo will be in charge of penetrating these regions from 1539, along the valley of the Cauca River to the north of Cartago and the mountain ranges that flank it. Thanks to the "benevolent" and interested attitude of the conqueror or possibly due to the fact that the chronicler Cieza de León accompanied him, he left for posterity an interesting account that illustrates the process. Robledo draws attention to the enormous variety of languages in the area, describes the clothing and physical appearance of the Indians, their adornments and "prestigious goods," their food, vaguely their natural resources, and their mountainous territorial layout. Among many, intrigues a paragraph that occurs when the conqueror refers to the towns located between the provinces of Arma, Cenufana and Aburrá, by the Western mountain range, in a space of at least 26 leagues from south to north (about 100 km). : "In all this road there are great settlements of old towns and very large buildings , of roads made by hand and great by the mountains and half slopes, that in Cuzco there are no bigger [...]" (Robledo, 1993, p.350). According to the writer, whoever it was, all of this had been previously destroyed or was in ruins and nobody knew the reason (Robledo, in Tovar, 1993). Was it the product of an internal war, or the effects of the raids of other conquerors like Francisco César y Vadillo? Only archeology can give some answer.

13 Juan Ladrilleros or Ladrillero was born in 1504 in Béjar (León) and died as an *encomendero* in Charcas around 1582. In 1557, by order of the Viceroy of Peru, the Marquis of Cañete, he undertook the passage through the Strait of Magellan from the Pacific. With many difficulties he managed to cross it and write the first defeat on that difficult route that Magellan and Elcano had navigated to the contrary. With unusual precision, Ladrillero also wrote a detailed description of the peoples that inhabited the extreme region ( d'Owler , 1981: 691-694).

same ability to load merchandise and human beings along the road from Cali to the port of Buenaventura, which will make them disappear. After founding Popayán, he leaves it in the charge of his lieutenants and, as stated, leaves for the south in search of logistical provision for his later mobilizations.

It is during his absence that probably one of his subalterns, Francisco García de Tovar, already mentioned, after crossing the Central Mountain range through the Coconucos and the Isnos road, that is, the Paletará valley, discovers the Magdalena River and possibly observes, the first, the statuary of San Agustín, as understood by Jacinto Jijón y Caamaño in 1936. This can be deduced from the story of an anonymous soldier, in which the following can be read:

[...] and gone, those from Popayán (to inform Pizarro of what happened in the Cauca Valley) left with Tobar, leaving a collection in the city, and going through the Coconucos (sic) the soldiers and Captain, walking along the mountains and swamps of Isno (sic) , Timaná and Neyva were discovered , and it seemed to be another world, and so they came with great commotion, saying that it was another Mexico, and Captain Belalcázar was informed of this (he was in Quito), who did many people and returned to Popayán and prepared to go in search of El Dorado, which he understood to be that [...]" (Report of an eyewitness ..., in Garcés, 1936, p. 582).

Tovar had arrived with Pedro de Alvarado in 1534, he had seen Mexico and Guatemala, and he must have related the carved stone in one and other cultures. In relation to this, Cieza de León, when passing through Popayán, notes: "[...] idols have been seen in some parts [...]" (1984, p. 46 *pássim*), but he does not provide details. It is possible that the bloody war that took place in Alto Mag-

dalena as a result of the conquest and the evangelization process caused the event to be overlooked and silenced for little more than two centuries until the first description by Fray Juan de Santa Gertrudis in the 18th century (1970), reactivated by Caldas (1966) in 1808. The historian Jijón y Caamaño (1936), for his part, concludes that, with the aforementioned piece of document, he answered the question asked by the researcher Federico Lunardi in 1934 about who would be the first European witness to the culture of San Agustín. And although Colombian archaeologists do not accept that the 16th century Spaniards could have had any idea about the pre-Hispanic cultural complex (it was underground), an even more mysterious question remains unanswered (perhaps forever): what was the actual name of the culture that produced the megalithic statuary of San Agustín?

### **Sebastián de Belalcázar destroyer of towns**

After the well-known encounter with Jiménez de Quesada and Federman, Sebastián de Belalcázar embarked for the Atlantic in Guataquí, on the Magdalena River, to the north of which would later rise the port of Honda, eventually the main entrance to the capital of the New Kingdom, and landed on the Spanish coast as the first to make such a long journey of at least 9,000 kilometers. In Spain he meets with Carlos V, from whom he obtains the Government of Popayán in 1540, granted in order to weaken the rebels

of Perú. On that occasion, the region of Quito, which he himself had "trampled", was not granted to him, granting him the region of the current Ecuadorian Otavalo as the southern limit of his Government. Quito was granted to Gonzalo Pizarro, brother and successor of the Marquis. It is the remote origin of our southern border.

While Belalcázar headed for the Muisca plains towards Spain, other expeditions arrived in Cali from the north and west. Reference is made to the hosts of Pascual de Andagoya and Juan de Vadillo mentioned. Andagoya was the one who discovered the indigenous road called *Atunzata*, which linked the Pacific coast with the inter-Andean valleys, and which was called over time and after some important variations, the road to La Buenaventura. Vadillo: For his part, he explored the Western Mountain range from its extreme north in a southerly direction and a good part of the middle valley of Cauca. Vadillo had departed from the shores of the Gulf of Urabá in 1536 fleeing a Residence trial and with him came the chronicler Cieza de León, who left a detailed description of the eventful journey.

From a spatial point of view, Vadillo's men discovered the Guaca transversal road that linked the western plains and the Atrato valley with the Western Mountain range and recognized the lands of chief Buriticá; they saw, among the first, the Quimbaya metallurgical art. They also confirmed that the Cauca River empties into the Magdalena, understanding that due to the Momposina depression it could reach the northern shores. The expedition opened up the *Antioquia batholith* for European knowledge, one of

the richest gold deposits in the Government of Popayán and the longest lasting.

When the expeditionaries arrived from the north at the height of Anserma and Cartago, they learned by signs and by the mouth of the Indians, with great disappointment, that "Christians" had been there before. It was the men of Belalcázar. The fate of Vardillo, who did not have authorization from the establishment to be prowling around the southwest of the country, was sealed by Pascual Andagoya who sent him stripped and imprisoned to Spain.

For his part, Belalcázar, having recognized Alto Magdalena and understood its importance, asked some of his lieutenants, among them Juan Cabrera, Juan de Ampudia and Pedro de Añasco, not to accompany him and return to found one or two cities in area. The result was that Cabrera founded Neiva, which had to be removed several times, and Añasco, on a plain surrounded by mountains, planted the city of Guacacallo (possible indigenous toponym for the Magdalena River), which was later called Timaná and which from its beginnings until well into the 17th century it remained under constant threat from the warring Indians ( Yalcones , Paeces , Pijaos and Andaquíes ). Timaná, Neiva and La Plata, the most important Spanish settlements in that area, were able to subsist, thanks to the collaboration that caciques (the famous Inando, son of the most famous Gaitana) gave the settlers, but especially the caciques and men belonging to the Coyaima and Natagaima groups<sup>14</sup>.

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14 For a reasonable development of what happened in the Magdalena valley after the conquest, see Triana (1992).

What was happening in the meantime in the Cauca Valley? What was the situation like in the Government of Popayán during the years after the events described? The city council books have not been preserved until the end of the 16th century and it is difficult to deduce anything satisfactory. But by letters that the royal officials sent to Spain in order to keep the king and the Council of the Indies informed, some situations can be outlined, taking for granted that the letters, especially when they are official, are not trustworthy. But given the need and the apparent absence of documentation (in the uncatalogued Archive of Seville there must be important documents still undercover), it can be established that the possession of the Valley of Pubén by the Hispanics, as we have seen, was something achieved by the indiscriminate violence and the rudeness of the weapons where the captains of Belalcázar stood out for their insanity.

Among them, Juan Cabrera, who after "cleansing" the Indians of the surroundings of Cali and Popayán, after the death of García de Tovar at the hands of the Paeces and of Añasco at the hands of the Yalcones, was commissioned to govern Timaná with the aim of to consolidate a city in Alto Magdalena, but especially to organize the search for what frustrated the hopes in El Dorado, it came to be called "the country of Cinnamon". This space beyond the Eastern Mountain range (present-day Putumayo and Caquetá) during the 17th century was going to acquire the name of the Andaquíes and had been previously explored by order of Belalcázar by a captain named Juan del Río, who

at least carried out in that address an entry. An eyewitness noted:

[...] that there is a Lieutenant in Timaná (del Río), who went eight days, with sixty men on foot, because the land did not suffer carrying horses; and after traveling these days, through land(s) all of highly populated mountains, he went out to the plain, found a very large causeway, and the tongues advised him not to go forward because he would get lost, saying that the lord of the land is very powerful and they few and on foot; and so it turned, and they will be gone with people on horseback; believe that what they have to discover will be a great thing (Report on the trip made by Andrés Guerrero. Piloto..., in Garcés, 1936, pp. 585-86).

But if the indigenous people of Popayán and Cali were attacked, massacred, neutralized and enslaved, other more distant groups resisted. Only such resistance was not to last long. One of the groups exterminated during the first years was that of the timbas, located in the southwestern sector of the geographical valley of Cauca, where today there are precisely two towns with the same name: Timba Cauca and Timba Valle. Several hosts were sent to the Timba groups, which impeded circulation along the road from Cali to Popayán and threatened the port of Buenaventura, and, except for the last one, commanded by Juan Cabrera, they all failed ("Carta a su Magestad, de los Royal officers of Popayán, Luis de Guevara and Sebastián de Magaña"... etc., Cali, February 2, 1544, in Garcés, 1936. P*v passim*).

The secret of the victory of the Spanish arms on that occasion, aside from the professionalism of Cabrera and his men, was that the Timbas had been enslaved to a son of the Adelantado (it is not known whether

Sebastián or Francisco), against the will of the settlers who wanted more "democracy" in such matters. The fact is that the punishment (the word "pacification" had not yet been introduced by the royal censorship) inflicted on the Timbas cost the residents of Cali and Popayán the sum of 4,000 Castilians. Such military campaigns continued their course and would soon extend to the Quimbayas of the middle of Cauca, to the Arms of the western slope of the Central Cordillera, to the Pijao and to the Paeces of Tierradentro and the Nevado del Huila and Tolima, expeditions that lasted throughout the 16th century and part of the 17th (Cf. Valencia, 1989).

It is noteworthy that by 1544, from Pasto and Popayán, an attempt had been made to connect with the Pacific by two alternate routes to the difficult road to Buenaventura: a town had been built to the west of Popayán, probably in present-day Guapi, one of the few places in the coast with a natural port, which was called Compostela. (Letter from Sebastián Magaña...etc." December 12, 1547", in Garcés, 1936, pp. 263-286). It is possible that the city was founded by Captain Hernando de Benavides, sent by Belalcázar in 1541 to explore the lands beyond the Western Cordillera. Apparently, around 1547 Compostela was abandoned and the city of Madrigal de las Blancas Torres (in emulation of the birthplace of Isabel la Católica) *had been founded* (Buenahora, 1999), also known as Chapanchica or *Ciudad lost*. Madrigal disappeared towards the end of the 16th century due to the action of the indigenous Sindaguas, who were exterminated around 1640.

At the beginning of 1547, the visitor of the Royal Boxes of Popayán (which were located in Cali), Sebastián Magaña, described to the Spanish monarch the situation in the Government of Popayán and the panorama was very gloomy. The indigenous war acted against the material well-being of the Spanish settlements that were at the time the cities of Pasto, Popayán, Cali, Antioquia, Cartago and the towns of Arma, Ancerma and Guacacallo or Timaná. Magaña describes a situation of marginalization and poverty that is hard to believe:

[...] and I find it to be, and according to what all those who come to it from other parts say, to be the most sterile and lacking all things that are in the open, as well as food as well as clothing from the earth and to be very expensive. There are no farms in it and in few towns it can be raised or farmed because the land is very curved; pigs are not raised in this Government if they are not very few; all the meat that is eaten in it comes from Quito, and there has been and currently is a great need for meat, and due to past alterations no cattle have come down here, nor is it believed that they would come down so quickly, because there were no heads left in Quito And now a pig is worth ten pesos and more, and a cow fifty. The natives of it are few, and more in some towns than in others; they are of little reason, there are no gentlemen among them who command them, they eat human meat generally throughout this Governorate and in some towns more than in others, they are such butchers that they eat the father to the son and the son to the father and mother and brothers, especially in the town of Arma [...] (Magaña, in Garcés, 1936, p. 266).

The aboriginal ancestral economy had found a dedication different from the traditional one. The Indians, born farmers, had become miners. According to factor Luis de Guevara, who was writing to the king from

Cali that year, the only thing that worked well was gold mining. The surviving indigenous people who had been assigned within the terms of the colonial border, reduced to Pueblos de Indios and subjected to the institution of the encomienda, had abandoned their work, leaving the cement factories in charge of women and children. The metal deposits of the southwest, although not as rich as those of the Antioquia batholith, Quito or Peru, did have the advantage of being numerous. In addition, there was the fact that the Indians who worked the placers did not have to be sent great distances from their original habitats:

[...] it is useful [...] to them and not harmful, because those who extract it (the gold), do not care to make clearings to eat, nor do they take care of storing them, nor do they work in collecting them, nor do they need to weave the blanket to dress, nor to look for other farms for their ransoms (trade), with which they are forced to procure, both for their people and to pay the tributes they give to their caciques and masters, that they have encomienda, and many other laborious loads that they naturally have, and they are constrained by necessity and servitude, from which all are relieved and discharged with only this (mining), since they do not care any more about extracting gold, in which exercise they are very happy, fat, healthy, well dressed and better maintained, because of their condition and own inclination all the Indians are miserable for themselves of their own and long of that of others [...] (Magaña, in Garcés, 1936, p. 266).

The political situation was characterized, according to Guevara, by despotism and the usurpation of functions that Belalcázar exercised indiscriminately, favoring in all aspects a particular clientele that had formed around him and headed by his son

Francisco. The system adopted to grant or circulate the perquisites (land, fruits of the land, indigenous arms for work, women, honors, etc.) to which the conquest and colonization supposedly gave the right, was one in which opportunism prevailed over merit, the upstart over the rooted, the strong over the weak, and the cunning over the cunning:

Because it is a great pity and conscience to see those who have shed their blood, undermined their lives, lost their property, risked their persons to a thousand kinds of dangers, going hungry, thirsty, cold, tired, naked [... ] Some poor, with nothing, deserving much; others rich, by far, deserving nothing... (Guevara, in Garcés, 1936, p. 338).

As the question of where in those large extensions an audience was built was in the air, Guevara also referred to the problem of the ordering of space. He was of the opinion that in the event of a lawsuit it was not better –as the Adelantado suggested to the Spaniards in the Interior– to file a claim in Lima than in Santa Fé de Bogotá or in the Nuevo Reino de Granada. The problem was complex: the journey to the capital of the Viceroyalty to the south, although calmer, was extremely long; while to the New Kingdom by any variant hitherto known (Isnos or Guanacas), although short, it was bad and, above all, dangerous. And pointing out the road to Guanacas, the bureaucrat expressed:

It is true that being in the province of Páez de Paz and Guanaca, which are repartimientos of Popayán, horses will be able to go, but with great risk and work, and this not at all times, because Indians are necessarily the ones who have to do it. suffice (supply) and escotar (pay) their lives and health, because part in the moors, part in the Neyva valley, of those who come from here, they must remain dead, and those who escape must not remain very alive ... (Guevara, in Garcés, 1936, p. 341).

He concluded then that the best thing was to establish an Audiencia in Popayán, because of the "excellent temper", or in Cali, because of the existence of an expeditious road to the sea.

## To end

Given the kind of reports that reached the Council of the Indies from Cali or Popayán, the Crown took action on the matter and sent Juan del Valle as archbishop of Popayán in 1547 (who remained in the area for ten years and sustained a major lawsuit con conquistadores y encomenderos) (Friede, 1961), appointed Mr. Miguel Díaz de Armendáriz as official visitor, but he never arrived. By 1549 they were still waiting for him. A year later, in 1550, the Audiencia de Santa Fé sent Oidor Francisco Briceño, born in Corral de Almaguer, to submit their rulers to a Residency Trial of which Belalcázar and his lieutenants were found guilty, and the Adelantado sentenced to death.

Due to his rank, he was allowed to travel to Spain to explain the problem, but he died in Cartagena, where he had arrived via Panama. In the auction of his goods, in addition to other things, a barrel of sardines, a few almonds, three *boxes* of quince meat, a wool mattress and a sword were auctioned off.

Some historian (Garcés, 1986, p. 341) suggests that Belalcázar was treated unfairly and that the cause of his sentence to death was the murder charge of Jorge Robledo, whose wife, Doña María de Carvajal, had in-

fluence in the Court and, in addition, the lady would have had a sentimental influence on the investigating judge. And although the widow in the conditions of the time could have played some role in the drastic decision, the documentation transcribed by the historian himself <sup>15</sup>indicates something else: of the 33 charges that were made against the advance and his main men, among them his son Francisco, Miguel Muñoz, Gómez Hernández, Alonso Madroñero and Luis Bernal, 22 were related to execrable crimes against the indigenous people, 8 with crimes against the Crown, essentially of a fiscal nature, and only 4 were related to common crimes against the Spaniards themselves. The charge for the death of Robledo was but one more argument in the process.

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15 See Garcés, 1986. pgs. 513-516. The charges against Belalcázar were also published by Jorge Garcés in his 1936 collection of documents.

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Cali, 2020. Año de la Pandemia y del derrumbe en Popayán de la estatua de Sebastián de Belalcázar por parte de los indígenas Mizak.