

## 690 INDIGENOUS AMERICAS, POETRY OF THE

POETRY; MARATHI POETRY; ORIYA POETRY; PUNJABI POETRY; TAMIL POETRY AND POETICS; TELUGU POETRY.

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## INDIGENOUS AMERICAS, POETRY OF THE

- I. Amazonia
- II. Tahuantinsuyu
- III. Anahuac
- IV. Turtle Island

Knowing what may or may not constitute the roots of poetry and poetics indigenous to America involves factors specific to the continent. The first issues from its sheer size and shape, esp. in the midriff tropical zone. Extending northwest from Brazil, the Am. tropics cover one fifth of the globe, an ancient, unbroken, and culturally rich landmass found on no other continent. Then, from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, confidently identified langs. and even lang. families are myriad, some written long before Rome could impose its alphabet. In Mesoamerica (roughly the tropics north of the isthmus and self-defining as *Anahuac*), stone inscriptions written in the visible lang. known as \**tlacuilolli* in Nahuatl—a script that may represent sound while depending on the phonetics of no particular speech—date back more than two millennia and find elaborate expression in scrolls, maps, and screen-fold books of native paper and deerskin (known as the *codices*). Before and after the Classic Period (3d to 10th c. CE), the related story of lowland Maya \*hieroglyphs is similar. Their speech-specific phonetics were transcribed into the Roman alphabet after the invasion, in the *Chilam Balam* books of Chumayel and other Yucatecan towns, notable for their poetic wordplay with philosophical paradoxes and puns emanating from understandings of time both long resident and Eur.

Once arrived, the Eur. invaders are notorious for having burned whole libraries of books in Mesoamerica. On the Pacific Rim, the same fate was accorded in the Andes to libraries of Inca texts written in the knotted cord script known in Quechua as the *quipu*. It is now slowly becoming apparent (Julien, Brokaw) that the quipu recorded in Quechua—besides statistical information pertinent to the pastoral economy and subjects of the Inca Tahuantinsuyu and their calendar—kingship drama, chronicles, and liturgy, notably the \*hymns in praise of the supreme Inca, sun king and shepherd/llama herder. In 18th-c. Europe, these served as a source for the *Encyclopédie* (notably in its entry on script) and inspired the royal performances at Versailles known as *Indes galantes* that were enhanced by Jean-Philippe Rameau’s music and Jean-François Marmontel’s prose.

Besides cultural geography, ling. diversity, and written precedent, most telling of all these given factors in America are the recent revisions of the archaeological underpinnings on which lit. hist. and geography ultimately rely. Most salient is the case of Amazonia now recognized as the site of the continent’s oldest ceram-

ics (Neves), while the clarification of texts inscribed at Chavin de Huantar, the metropolis on the uppermost Amazon that served as portal to the Pacific Ocean, confirmed them as an enduring ideological premise (Burger, Salomon 2004). In the isthmus that joins South America to Anahuac east to west, pointers to ancient travel routes in fresh eds. of classic texts such as the Toltec lament (*Popol Vuh*, 6065–67; *Cantares mexicanos*, folio 26v) are corroborated in the 1570 *Relaciones geográficas* of Cholula and Tepeaca and by archaeology at San Agustín (Colombia), Subtiaba (Nicaragua), and Yojoa (Honduras). Similar attention has been paid to the northwest continuations of Mesoamerica (Neurath), long distorted by U.S. discourse on its Southwest, esp. when it touches the open wound of Turtle Island's Ghost Dance. Chosen in 1825 by the Iroquois historian David Cusick to refer to America north of Mexico, *Turtle Island* has long been the term used by the Algonkian peoples to refer to the widespread territory of their langs.

In this predicament, a useful way to proceed is to rely wherever possible on native authority and start by acknowledging a category of classic texts that weld political histos. onto the world ages of Am. genesis, whose conception and scope make them poetry in the fullest sense. At the same time, we need not relinquish that wondered sense of a New World that animated thinkers in the late 16th c., before the fetters of Eur. ideology and social control (let alone mapping) had tightened. Of these, Michel de Montaigne merits close attention, for the pair of Am. *Essais* that effectively chart the continent, profoundly unsettling the authority of the Bible and the Greco-Roman classics. "Des cannibales" (1580) acknowledges the lowland rainforest of America as a prime source of poetry. "Des coches" (1588) does the same for the Inca and the Aztec empires along the continent's Pacific Rim, Montaigne having read in the meantime Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia general de las Indias* (1552).

With Montaigne and native validation in mind, we proceed, then, by discussing in turn four first sources of New World poetry: Amazonia, Tahuantinsuyu, Anahuac, and Turtle Island, each in its way an indispensable precedent for poetry composed in indigenous speech and in imported Port., Sp., and Eng. A corresponding range of poems trans. and in the original is available in Alcina Franch, Péret 1969, Rothenberg 1972, and Dorn and Brotherston, while Tomlinson provides wide overall contextualization. For drama in verse, see Meneses.

**I. Amazonia.** As the allies of the Fr. who ensured them victory over the Tupiniquin and the Port., the Tupinamba of Brazil (or France Antarctique) were invited to Henry II's court at Rouen in 1550, where they reenacted their triumph in a rainforest setting, singing songs of victory in their lang. A precedent for Montaigne, the event effectively belonged to the Americanist royal court trad. furthered at Versailles in the Indes galantes performances, which lauded Louis the Sun

King in terms borrowed from Inca liturgy. Direct contact with the Tupinamba at Rouen under Charles IX and acquaintance with someone who had lived in their territory provided Montaigne with the two examples of native poetry that he included in "Des cannibales."

In the genre of the taunt (*carbet*), Montaigne's first cannibal poem fuses standard Eur. fear of naked savages who terrify enemy captives by threatening to eat them with the core drama of the Christian Eucharist and actual instances of anthropophagy among the Europeans of Montaigne's day. For their part, as members of the Tupi-Guaraní lang. family and culture, the Tupinamba authors of the taunt explicitly draw on notions of transubstantiation and eschatology widespread in extensive poetic texts composed in Tupi terms and in the Tupi tongue. In them, a principal reference is the *yvy tenonde* (Land without Ill), an obtainable earthly paradise that has for centuries inspired pilgrimage along the length of the Amazon. Fleeing Eur. invaders in 1549, a group of coastal Tupi are reported to have traveled up to Chachapoyas, the ancient Andean city of circular ruins. After missionary beginnings, these texts have come to constitute an enduring focus for anthropology in Brazil, in the work of Egon Schaden, Curt Nimuendajú, and more recently Eduardo Viveiros (Sá). They are usefully complemented in Eng. by Whitehead's ed. of the autobiographical *Warhaftige Historia* (1557) by Hans Staden, who, when captive, heard Tupi taunts firsthand, in the flesh as it were.

In his essay, besides the taunt, Montaigne dwells on a Tupi poem he called \*anacreontic, which asks a snake to allow the speaker to copy the exquisite designs on its skin, in a girdle he would give to his lover. Reveled in biblical teaching, the snake here is honored in an interspecies dialogue characteristic of Amazonian poetics. It plays on the idea of the snake's pride in its speckled hue, paying keen attention to visual design in the serpentine labyrinths likewise found on the continent's oldest known ceramics. In Marajó, the island at the river's mouth, these reached extremes of sophistication.

The Tupi trad., which includes Guaraní, the first lang. of Paraguay, for centuries served as the lingua franca or *Lingua Geral* of lowland South America. In the 20th c., it was enriched by no less than two trans. (by Eduardo Saguler in 1951 and Dacunda Díaz in 1996) of José Hernández's *Martín Fierro*, the great gaucho epic of the Argentinean pampa (see GAUCHO POETRY), being ethnically the despised mother tongue of the eponymous hero; more recently, it has come to play a role in the cultural politics of MercoSur. The poetics of this trad. delights in exploring how word concepts are born in the first place and inhere in trains of thought. These are superbly exemplified in the classic work *Ayvu rapyta* of the Mbya Guaraní, a title that means something like the source of human lang.; through intense cogitation, it establishes the rain forest itself as the mid-earth from whose trees lang. flows.

The concentration on dream and the flow of thought, the dreaming of the world into existence seen

as a precondition for deed and creation, may be held to typify Amazonian genesis and characterize work of Umasin Panlon and other authors of FOIRN (Federação das Organizações Indígenas do Rio Negro). Musings on these beginnings by the Witoto gathered by Preuss begin thus:

a phantasma, naino, nothing else  
 the father touched the image of the phantasm  
 touch a secret, nothing else  
 the father Nainu-ema, who-has-the-phantasm,  
     held it by a dream  
 to himself  
 thought hard about it

Rothenberg translated Preuss's text to great effect in *Technicians of the Sacred*, a foundational work of \*ethnopoetics.

Studies and anthols. of Tupi-Guaraní poetry and poetics (Cadogan 1959, Bareiro Saguier) have abounded since Montaigne's pioneer commentary, and the trad. has been indispensable to the growth of Brazilian lit. Poems and songs in Lingua Geral were collected in the late 19th c. by João Barbosa Rodrigues, when they could still be heard in the markets and festivals in the lower Amazon. He gave the result of his labors under the hybrid title *Poranduba amazonense*, an abundant anthol. of texts that reserves a special place for the Amazonian midwife. We learn of the greenstone *muiraquitã*, the charm typically carved in the form of early vertebrates like the frog or the fish and bestowed on the father of the female rather than the male child; the lean new moon and the full moon mirrored in the lake that yields the *muiraquitã*; moons as measures of time, sidereal (27.32 nights) when black-faced incestuous male and synodic (29.54 nights) when female lying in her hammock; and the armadillo (*tatu*), whose dance leads to safety deep in the forest.

In their ed. of Joaquim de Sousa Andrade's substantial epic *O Guesa* (1888), Augusto and Haroldo de Campos have drawn out the significance of these precedents for the remarkable sequence of cantos known as Taturuma, the armadillo dance-song that celebrates local understandings of genesis. In the complex societies characteristic of Manaus and the confluence of the Amazon with the Rio Negro, Lingua Geral also preserved the legends and the night music generated by the "devil" Jurupari (Medeiros).

Jurupari, himself a recalcitrant product of the midwife cult and the focus of a major epic, affirms his gender and his origins by tracing them to the Milky Way and a gestation period said to last ten (sidereal) moons rather than the usual nine (synodic). He does this when literally orchestrating his federation. He bestows on each of its 11+3 wind instruments, seen and played exclusively by males, word-poem definitions, each belonging to a distinct lang. or dialect of multilingual Manaus, overall Arawak to the east and Tucano to the west. Jurupari appears as the lure in the *Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro* of Charles Darwin's contemp. A. F. Wallace (ch. 17) and, after him, in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (ch. 11).

The Mbya Guaraní *Ayvu rapyta* epitomizes lowland South America as a poetics of dreaming the world into being that is simultaneously cosmogony, a genesis poetic in dealing with primordial origins (Cadogan 1959). In the Carib trad., it is matched as such by *Watunna* of the Soto and by the Makunaima corpus of their Pemon neighbors. Recalled in poetically dense Adeni (a kind of script within speech) and ritually recited at the annual harvest festival of its name, *Watunna* (Civrieux) recounts the felling of the great tree whose branches and roots conjoined sky and earth and whose petrified stump is the Marahuaca massif, the Soto homeland in Venezuela. The felling precipitates a great flood and reveals Marahuaca to be a watershed common via the (hydrographically improbable) Casiquiare canal to both the Amazon and the Orinoco.

The felled tree also initiates the saga of agriculture, the first seedlings being brought from Roraima, a petrified tree stump to the northeast and a botanical El Dorado fondly recalled in Pemon dream songs. While people work in the fields learning to plant from the birds, the known loners tapir and jaguar engage in a wry dialogue that opposes the former's slow wits with the keen senses of the latter in the wild forests of the night (William Blake's bright-burning tiger began life as a jaguar from Surinam). The climax of the whole planting saga comes when Huioo, the great water snake, seeing all the birds flying resplendent above, leaps up in the air to join them, crying "I want my feather crown." There could hardly be a clearer pointer to the multiple meanings embodied in the hybrid bird-reptile figure revered throughout the continent and seminal in Mesoamerican genesis as the plumed serpent Quetzalcoatl.

Gathered by Theodor Koch-Grünberg, the Pemon texts deal with these and cognate motifs, like love for an evanescent fish bride, a fearsome father-in-law figure, and the trickster evident elsewhere in Carib lit. that came to inspire Mário de Andrade's epochal novel *Macunaima* (1928).

In Surinam, the story of the Trio culture hero Pereperewa lends Carib creation a particular resonance at the moment when he is taken by his fish bride to meet her alligator father, who proves to be a creature of many simultaneous identities (Rivière). Reflected in the dark waters of the river, his red cayman eyes produce terror, as does his size as he rises to reveal the load he carries on his back like a canoe, a word synonymous with *alligator*. Surviving the encounter, Pereperewa learns the advantages of cultivation, in food he is able to take back to his people: peanuts, chili peppers, squash, and the Amazonian staple manioc.

Archaeology is now corroborating the deeper reverberations of the Pereperewa story, fine example of Carib poetry that it is, in a cultural coherence that runs for millennia along the entire length of the Amazon. Toward the headwaters in the west, in the ancient city of Chavin, an obelisk carved about three millennia ago to represent two caimans and named after the Peruvian who excavated the city in the 1920s, Julio Tello, identifies the achievements of Amazonian agriculture as the "gifts of the caiman," specifying exactly the same ex-

amples as the Trio do today, far away toward the mouth of the Amazon.

If Tupi-Guaraní and Carib texts indicate the ancient and rich relationship between lowland South America and the Andes, so too do those of a third major Amazonian group, the Bororo-Gé, with whom Claude Lévi-Strauss in the 1930s began the work that culminated in the four volumes of *Mythologiques* (1964–71), the Bororo being the author of his primary myth. In their own *Enciclopedia* (1962–76), the Bororo highlight the dual role of the jaguar, founding father both terrestrial as the occupant of the last of the 7 caves and celestial as the first of the 11 constellations to rise over the eastern horizon. Implicit throughout their culture and songs and quite explicit in their painted jaguar skins (*adugo biri*), the significance of the Bororo pair of prime numbers 7 and 11 can, in its turn, be traced back to stonework at Chavin. There, to either hand in the great circular court, pairs of jaguars with such night-sky identification process toward the exit.

In the Muisca kingdoms that are now Colombia (Krickeberg), lowland precedent is celebrated in the corpus of greenstones directly reminiscent of the *muiraquitã*. One such from Sopó, adorned with the customary midwife motifs of frog and fish, is illustrated in Alexander von Humboldt's great work *Vues des cordillères et monuments des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique* (1810, plate 44), where it merits a commentary as substantial as that he accords to the Mexica Sunstone (plate 23). This logs the Guesa's indiction at 15 years (when the annual difference between sun and moon amounts to 15 nights and the difference between synodic and sidereal cycles of the moon amounts to 15 moons). Drawing on accounts of Muisca belief recorded by Pedro Simón and others, Humboldt's commentary on this greenstone directly inspired the first attempts in independent Latin America at the cl. Eur. epic genre, not only *O Guesa* but Andrés Bello's *Silvas americanas* (1823).

Within the larger Chibcha category, in lang. the Muisca are kindred of the Kogi of northern Colombia, the Cuna of Panama, and the Talamanca of Costa Rica. Kogi songs and legends are notable for naming the 11 constellations that match those of the Bororo and Desana in Amazonia and for monitoring the now ever-higher snow line in their mountains. A prime focus for the Cuna is the declaration by Nele de Kantule of the isthmian republic in 1925 within but independent of Panama.

Extensive and often recorded as verse or incantation in its own local script, Cuna lit. hinges on the *ikala* or "way," a mode proper to curing, initiation, the rhythms of the moon (*Ni*), childbirth (*Mu*), supporting the dead on the journey into the afterlife (*Serkan*), therapy, cosmogony (*Pap*), and political hist. that, in being inseparable from *myth*, is necessarily poetic. Performed over the course of a night once every moon, women sitting in a middle circle with men on three sides of the room, the most comprehensive is the *Tatkan ikala*, which stretches from beginnings of the world to the present. It falls into four parts: cosmic comings into being; epic deeds of culture heroes (*Neles*); migrations

and foundings of villages; and the invasion from Europe and its current consequences (Kramer).

Echoes of Amazonia are constant: the first forefather's two wives, one brown/black, the other white; the felling of the great tree of life, *Palu uala*, and the consequent flood; lunar incest instigated by the brother who advances on his sister's hammock in the dead of night, she being able to stain his face black, the whole being explicitly referred to the female synodic moon and the quicker male sidereal moon; and successive catastrophes inflicted on the world (flood, darkness, storm, warfare) that elaborate the world-age genesis story.

Diagnostic of the Chibcha territory common to the Muisca and the Cuna are creatures and objects formed of gold, the man named El Dorado celebrated in Muisca myth and goldwork and known as Organ in the *ikala*, and the specifically Cuna *Olopatte*, the golden platter on which early heroes arrive on earth. Also, explicit in the *Pap ikala*, though rare in world-age genesis in South America, is the epic that follows the course of the inner planets (Mercury and Venus), which appear to pass through the underworld in moving from the western sunset to the eastern dawn.

**II. Tahuantinsuyu.** In Quechua, the lang. of the Inca empire, *Tahuantinsuyu* means four districts. Montaigne finds poetry in its road system and sheer social organization: the causeway that ran "straight, even and fine" from Quito to Cuzco and the well-stocked palatial inns (*tambos*) along the way. Returning in conclusion to his title and theme ("Des cochés"), he admires the blind courage of those who tried unsuccessfully to save Atahualpa, in his litter, from Francisco Pizarro, in a tragedy that, unknown to Montaigne, entered the cycle of Quechua kingship drama (Lara 1957, 1969).

The early 17th-c. Quechua text known as the *Huaro-chiri Manuscript* (1991) makes clear the antiquity of the Tahuantinsuyu concept, tracing its beginnings to the deeds of Huaro-chiri's own culture hero Pariacaca. Commemorated by a stairway that joins Apurimac and the headwaters of the Amazon to Rimac (Lima) on the Pacific coast, Pariacaca starts life as a glorious snow-covered mountain on Huaro-chiri's horizon. With cosmic force, Pariacaca tames both the rainforest Antisuyu and the coastal Condesuyu, the latter supplying his demand for spondylus or thorny redshell oyster. Brought fresh to the highlands from the equatorial seas of Ecuador, spondylus had value as shell adornment and as shellfish delectable to eat. The bivalve spondylus (*mulla*) stands most tellingly as the initial glyph on the Tello obelisk at Chavin, and its mouth-womb is a motif in coastal ceramics, notably among the Moche, 1–500 CE.

Through his son, Pariacaca sets up the first Tahuantinsuyu dynasty, which passing through Ayacucho and other centers, eventually becomes Inca in Cuzco. Archaeologically, the fourfold Tahuantinsuyu emblem—the open Andean cross—is to be seen on the Tello obelisk, opposing Antisuyu caiman to Condesuyu spondylus, with Chinchasuyu extending to the north and Collasuyu to the south. Unambiguous and unmistakable, this open-cross emblem is also found in the

isthmus, suggesting widespread recognition north and west of Chinchasuyu, to the very threshold of Anahuac.

As evidence of idolatry gathered by the mestizo priest Francisco de Ávila (who provided a brief Sp. trans. of the earlier chapters), the *Huarochiri* text leaves little doubt about the power of pagan belief in world-age genesis expressed through worship of *huacas* (phenomena, natural and constructed, of imposing size and significance), in cults centered typically on mountains like Pariacaca, the stairway over its shoulder that links Amazonian Apurimac with Rimac and canals on the continental watershed engineered to reverse the water flow in favor of Antisuyu and Amazonia. The narrative begins with the initial pair of destructions of the world through flood and solar eclipse; before each, a llama, through its finer senses, warns its duller human masters of approaching catastrophe, and each is tied to a period of five days. Though the biblical parallel is acknowledged in the flood, in the Andes, people are saved not by Noah but a mountain they flee toward. The eclipse provokes the uprising of pastoral creatures like the llama who foresaw it, a rebellion that results from the breaking of the interspecies contract that enables pastoralism in the first place. Christian ideology was seen to have broken this contract by privileging human over other life.

Thereafter, attention focuses on Pariacaca himself as main actor in the world-age genesis. Raining down volcanic fire, he destroys the primeval cannibal Caruíncho, along with Caruíncho's consort, and sets up Huaca guardians toward both Amazonia (Antisuyu) and the ocean (Condesuyu), thereby explicitly establishing the beginnings of Tahuantinsuyu. He then punishes the neighboring Colli for failing to respect fundamental laws of hospitality, sending them winds of hurricane force, evidence being found in eroded rocks of human shape. Like the first pair of catastrophes of flood and eclipse, this pair of events—rain of fire and hurricane—too is tied to periods of five days each, a score in all.

A first concern in the *Huarochiri* text is Pariacaca's precedence over the main god in the Inca system, Viracocha. In Quechua, Viracocha is the focus of extensive liturgy, most concisely the hymns or prayers of the Zithuwa ritual (Rowe 1953) that accords him the \*epithets *earth-maker, lightning, guardian of crops, and herder of humans and llamas alike*.

A work contemp. with the *Huarochiri* narrative, Guáman Poma's (ca. 1535–1616) *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (ca. 1615; see Murra and Adorno), registers the very geography of the Inca Tahuantinsuyu in terms of the music, dance, and song characteristic of each quarter and the metropolitan center, Cuzco. Intercalated with page-framed images, this alphabetic text in Quechua and Sp. notes its immediate source as quipu records. In its own version of world-age genesis, people of each successive world age are distinguished by such features as clothing, houses, and style of prayer. Poma's work reveres the pastoral llama, who at the *raymi* solstice festival literally gives the keynote for the Inca emperor to begin the songs and music proper to Cuzco at the center of the four *suyu*.

El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (1539–1616) gives a privileged version of this heritage in his *Comentarios reales* (1609), also contemp. with the *Huarochiri* narrative and Poma's *Corónica*. Garcilaso confirms the literary functions of the quipu in recording poetry and chronicle, as well as counts of llama herds and people. He includes a hymn collected by Blas Valera (1545–97) in a trilingual version—Quechua, Sp., and Eng.—as well as a love poem, measures of his taste as courtly scion of the imperial Inca. The two Quechua poems quoted by Garcilaso had the egregious distinction of being chosen by J. G. Herder as “voices of the people in song” (*Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*), songs of wild Am. people at that (“die Wilden”). Persuasive as Herder's sense of *Stimmen* may be, his venture into Inca hymnology exemplarily signals a mismatch between beginnings of Eur. romantic need and this branch of Am. poetics with its courtly pastoral underpinnings:

Viracocha, you say  
may the sun be, may the night be  
in peace, in safety  
sun, shine on and illumine  
the Incas, the people, the servants  
whom you have shepherded

The kingship verse drama *Apu Ollanta* (1735) exerted such strong appeal in colonial times that Spain outlawed performances of it after Tupac Amaru II's uprising of 1780, which foreshadowed independence. Deriving from the Quechua *harawi* (elegiac song; cf. *haravek*, the term for poet) and integrated early into \*Spanish prosody, the verse form known as the *yarawi* enjoyed great appeal during this period, thanks initially to the martyr poet Mariano Melgar (1790–1815), while Wallparamachi and his guerrilla fighters sang in Quechua to further their struggle. Extremely sensitive accounts of similar forms in context, like the *huayno* and the *jailli*, are found in the novels and essays of José María Arguedas (1911–69), the anthropologist-poet who compiled the landmark collection *Canto Kechwa* (1938). The resilient huayno conjoins native and mestizo and respects distinctive styles in Huamanga, Apurimac, and elsewhere (Rowe 1996). Some idea of the powerful political charge these trads. acquired during the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) era can be had from the well-titled volume *Sangre de los cerros* (1987) by the Montoya brothers. Their broader aesthetic potential is patent in the work of Odi González (b. 1962) and the trilingual (Quechua, Sp., Eng.), New York-based Fredy Amilcar Roncalla (b. 1953), among others. At the turn of the century (1905), Alencastre, a landowner from Cuzco (see Warak'a 1999), had been preceded at the other end of the social scale by *Tarmapacha huaray*, an anthol. of Quechua poems from Tarma got together by self-professed pariahs (“unos parias”).

Expatriate for much of his life in Paris, the poet César Vallejo (1892–1938) repeatedly acknowledged a debt to his Andean birthplace, from the exquisitely figured gold panels of the Cuzco Coricancha (*Nostalgias imperiales*, 1918) and the wave-and-step motifs of the coastal architecture (*Escalas melografiadas*, 1923) to the

drama of Inca power (*La piedra cansada*, 1938), based on a legend told in Poma's chronicle.

Poetry in Ecuador is known in Quichua, a version of the Inca Quechua that, dating back to Atahualpa's Quito, has its own Amazon approaches (Harrison). As for Bolivia, the superbly documented study of indigenous lits. in the Andes by Arnold and Dios Yapita has made it possible for the first time in Eng. to appreciate the immense wealth and complexity of the entire region's poetry and poetics. This is strikingly so with regard to the Aymara and Collasuyu precedent for Inca and Quechua practice, within the pastoral economy and ideology characteristic of the Andes, starting with Cuzco's appropriation of Tiahuanaco herds. The authors are able to show how much is owed in Andean song and drama to the Aymara, from the quipu numeracy of tethering and the weft and warp of the textile text to principles of origin and rulership.

Diagonally opposite Chinchasuyu and its extension into Colombia and the isthmus, Collasuyu has its heart in Lake Titicaca and the pastoral wealth of the Aymara in Bolivia (Lara 1947) and finds its southern frontier in what is now Chile. On the other side of this Tahuantinsuyu frontier stand the fiercely resistant Mapuche, who, having held off the Inca, did the same when the Spaniards arrived, to be commemorated in Alonso de Ercilla's epic *La Araucana* (1569–89).

Known as *Fiab Mapu* in their lang. (Mapudungun), Mapuche territory concentrates in the landscape of the southern cordillera (Pire Mahuida) around Lacar and the lakeland passage between Chile and Argentina, which functions likewise as the setting for world-age genesis far more ancient than those nation states. In this case, refuge from the flood is sought in Mount Threng Threng and the fossil-rich strata of Trompul, bones of the fish to which protohumans reverted. *Foro-lil* (bone-stone), these fossils kilometers above sea level correspond to nocturnal shades who emerge to haunt as snake, bird, and vampire, with fin-wings and beady eyes that stare back through time (it was here that such fossils were shown to Darwin during his voyage on the *Beagle*). The floodwater threshed up by the snake Kai-Kai in the mountain lakes finds parallels along the ocean coast in terrifying tidal waves and tsunami known as *tripalafken*. After the catastrophes of the world ages, the Mapuche community clusters around the emblematic tree of the Pacific coastal forests as the face carved in the east-facing Rehue and defers to the insight and curing power of the Machi shaman (most often a woman).

Reflecting the cultural resilience and political wisdom that has enabled them still to defend at least some small part of their territory, the poetry of the Mapuche, reborn in 1966 in the work of Sebastián Queupul (b. 1944), stands out on the continental map. *Ūl* (Song) is the title of a 1998 collection of four poets: Leonel Lienlaf (b. 1969), Elicura Chihuailaf (b. 1952), Jaime Luis Huenún (b. 1967), and Graciela Huinao (b. 1956), whose work privileges their native tongue (Vicuña).

Previously recognized and translated into Sp. by the Chilean poet Raúl Zurita (1989), Lienlaf contrives to

recover the sensibility that brings together for the Mapuche, in their lang., world-age genesis, military struggle initially against the sword and the Christian cross, and then "pacification" by machine gun on both sides of the Andes. Enduring over "a hundred generations" and threaded into the Rehue and the Machi chant, time is marked in tree growth by *rupamum* (footsteps). This is the time of ancient trans-Andean memories, recorded just after World War I by Kössler-Ilg, that extend from world-age genesis to the late 19th-c. resistance led by Calfucurá.

Chihuailaf is notable for choosing to translate into Mapudungun the fellow Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (1904–73) in *Ti kom ul* (1995). The poems and volumes of Neruda's that Chihuailaf selects, and the way he plays Mapudungun against Sp., brilliantly begin to recover for Chile exactly the imaginative possibilities that Neruda came to dream of during and after his Am. epic *Canto general* (1950). Translated as "Todos los cantos," the title poem breathes local life and hist. into the elegiac image of the trees and stones of Arauco that closes the first canto of Neruda's epic, peopling and enlivening them in ways unsuspected half a century ago.

**III. Anahuac.** Known as *Anahuac* between the seas, Atlantic to the north and Pacific to the south, and as *Amoxtlán* (the "land of books" in Nahuatl), Mesoamerica has long held a special position in the geography of the continent. Montaigne's encounter with it is striking, since, as proof of its high civilization, in his second Am. essay he actually cites the cosmic poem of world-age genesis: "They believed the state of the world to be divided into five ages, as in the life of five succeeding Suns, whereof four had already ended their course or time." Montaigne had translated his text from Gómar's Sp., who, in turn, had drawn on Motolinía (pseud. of Fray Toribio de Benavente, 1482–1568), an early extirpator of idolatry in Cholula, deeply familiar with the Nahuatl lang. inherited by the Mexica or Aztecs.

The extant version of this cosmic poem closest to the Nahuatl trad. of the Aztecs and their predecessors is found in the *Cuaubtitlan Annals* (ca. 1570; Bierhorst 1992) and begins:

Y ynin ce tonatiuh onmanca yn itzinecan  
4 atl yn itonal  
mitoa atonatiuh  
yc ipan in ye yquac  
yn mochih yn atocoac.  
Yn aneneztihuac  
yn tlaca michtihuac

Y ynic ome tonatiuh onmanca  
4 ocelotl yn tonal catca  
motenehua ocelotonatiuh  
ypan mochih  
tlapachih yn ylhuicatl

(The first sun to be founded  
has the Sign Four Water,  
it is called Water Sun.

Then it happened  
that water carried everything away

everything vanished  
people changed into fish.

The second sun to be founded  
has the Sign Four Jaguar  
it is called Jaguar Sun.  
Then it happened  
that the sky broke down)

The Nahuatl text goes on to tell how, since the sun no longer followed its course, night came and, in the dark, people were torn to pieces by jaguars plunging from the sky; this was the time of the giants. In the third sun, called 4 Rain, fire and volcanic ash (*tezontli*) rained down, and rocks boiled and twisted up; in the fourth, 4 Wind, wind carried everything away, and people changed into monkeys. Having of its own accord started to move (a pun on *ollin*, which also denotes both rubber and earthquake), the current fifth sun, 4 Ollin, will end in earthquake and hunger.

Anticipating Western geology and evolutionary theory by several centuries, the cataclysms and metamorphoses of Anahuac genesis take us back to tlacuillo, the visual lang. of Mesoamerica from which the Nahuatl had been transcribed. Of the several examples of this world-age story that exist on paper and in stone in tlacuillo, easily the most monumental is the Aztec or Mexica Sunstone or *Piedra de los soles*, the inscribed basalt disk that before the invasion proclaimed the world-age story in Tenochtitlan's Templo Mayor. In chronological terms, the sunstone locates the 5,200 or so years of our current fifth world age, named Nauh (4) Ollin, as a fifth (in the thumb-fingers proportion 1:4) of the precessional year that, in turn, forms a core unit of the many millions of years of genesis inscribed in Maya hieroglyphs and reflected in tlacuillo.

The recovery of the sunstone in 1790 from under a corner of Mexico City's nearby cathedral enabled Humboldt to publish an image of it with an extensive commentary in his *Vues des cordillères*. Ideologically, the event fomented the independence cause. In poetics, susceptible to decipherment in many pages of alphabetic prose yet succinct and synchronic in its circular form, a map of simultaneity, the sunstone has come to be acknowledged as a superb poem in the visual lang. tlacuillo. In early 20th-c. Europe, it became the prompt for the first of Guillaume Apollinaire's "concrete" *Calligrammes*, "Lettre-Océan" (see CALLIGRAMME, CONCRETE POETRY, VISUAL POETRY).

In Anahuac, the fullest alphabetic account of this cosmic saga can be found in the *Popol Vuh*, the "Bible of America" written in the mid-16th c., in their lang., by the Maya Quiché of Guatemala. A narrative in paired verses, this text starts from the very beginnings of time and falls into two parts. These hinge on the creation of humankind from maize, a motif developed, e.g., in Classic Period hieroglyphic texts at Palenque that correlate the event with the start of the Olmec and Maya Era just less than 5,200 years ago. In the ingenious way that the text itself offers clues about how they connect and interweave, the main phases of part I

can be seen to correspond to the sunstone, notably the metamorphoses into fish in the flood of the first age and into monkeys (elder brothers of the Hero Twins) in the hurricane of the fourth; these events are recounted in Nahuatl in the *Cuauhtitlan Annals* and *Leyenda de los soles*. Esp. vivid and also reflected in Maya art are the domestic revolt in the eclipse in the second age, the Twins' childhood taming of bird-reptile monsters in the volcanic landscape of the third age, and their epic descent to the underworld Xibalba that prepares for the maize creation.

The line of tlacuillo texts to which the sunstone account belongs begins in the east with the world-age *Map of Coixtlahuaca*, the town that controlled the east-west tribute road taken by the Mexica in the reign of Moctezuma I (1440–69).

At the first level, the *Coixtlahuaca* text is overtly a map of four places subject to that city, which, again in the simultaneity characteristic of tlacuillo, may be read both as town toponyms and as emblems of the world ages. Mictlan (southeast) and Teotlilan (northeast) recall flood and eclipse, while Nexapa (southwest) and Tepexic (northwest) recall rain of fire and hurricane. While this is the pattern inherited in the sunstone, the Mexica make one critical change. For Coixtlahuaca, the fish-tail caiman seen rising from volcanic ash in Nexapa (curiously reminiscent of the life form inscribed on Chavin's obelisk) reappears above in Tepexic, endowed with Quetzalcoatl feathers, atop a twin peak baring tooth and claw. For Tenochtitlan, the two caimans encircle the disk with imperial might, fish tails above, arms and heads (crowned by the septentrion) below. Moreover, their form invokes the metamorphic Xiuhcoanahual, the ophidian familiar that, for the Mexica, configures world-age genesis and the gyres of time counted out on the literal scales of the sunstone caiman.

The sunstone likewise reworks the central chapter of *Codex Borgia* of Cholula, whose chronicles tell of the road east toward the isthmus and beyond, to Popayan and South America. Like the affine screen-folds *Cospi* and *Vaticanus B*, *Codex Borgia* opens with an eight-page chapter based on human gestation, the 9x29 nights of the *tonalpoualli*, which simultaneously may be read as the succession of suns and in space as a map of Anahuac between north and south seas, dazzling tlacuillo prospects of tropical America seen from south (east to right) and north (east to left). Read from top to bottom, the 10 + 8 pages of *Borgia*'s central chapter focus rather on Mesoamerica's other main time cycle, the year of 18 Feasts each of 20 days, beginning with the summer solstice, and involve a turn at midwinter from the end of one side of the screen-fold text to the start of the other. In the switch from recto to verso, the text even contrives visually to register the winter solstice as the passage through the underworld followed by the inner planets and the hero twins of the *Popol Vuh*. The codex pages configure a supremely elegant time map of tropical America.

The highland Maya *Popol Vuh* of the Quiché coincides with and interestingly differs on doctrinal points

of diet from the genesis account of the neighboring Cakchiquels, on the shores of Lake Atitlan. This focus is also that of the Quiché dance drama *Rabinal Achí*. Like *Ollanta* and other Inca kingship propaganda and like an abundance of missionary plays in Quechua, Tupi, Nahuatl, and other langs. whose roots are deeply pre-Cortesian, this highland Maya work explores the boundaries between verse and theater, as Tedlock expertly shows in his ed. (2003).

The lowland Maya version of world-age genesis, transcribed in part into the alphabet from hieroglyphic stanzas (Alvarez), is found in the *Chilam Balam* books of the towns of Yucatan (Barrera Vásquez and Rendón). The *Book of Chumayel* excels in its witty play with biblical notions of time, the successive invasions of the peninsula in which the Christians come third, and the riddles of Zuyua that are invitations to brilliant conceptual insight formally derived from political tests of candidates for official position in the Katun calendar system.

In the dense polyphonic epic that issues into the current world age and Era, the hieroglyphic antecedent (Dresden Codex) has recently been shown to resolve the long-standing debate about correlating its inaugural date (4 Ahau 8 Cumku) with the Roman calendar (Julian day 584.283 in the year 3114 BCE).

Reflecting on the consequences of Eur. arrival, the *Book of Chumayel* draws on the hieroglyph-based prophecy chronicles of the Katun and Tun calendar cycles. (As *Cuceb*, the latter are meticulously edited in Bierhorst's *Four Masterworks*). One such prophecy chronicle begins thus:

[T]he true God, the true Dios, came, but this was the origin too of affliction for us. The origin of tax, of our giving *them* alms, of trial through the grabbing of petty cacao money, of trial by blow-gun, stomping the people, violent removal, forced debt created by false testimony, petty litigation, harassment, violent removal . . .

Such incredulous pain echoes that expressed in Nahuatl in the *Tlatelolco Annals* (1528) and indeed exemplifies a whole mode of postinvasion composition (León-Portilla 1964a).

Because of its scale and ambition in presenting world-age genesis in sharply poetic terms, the *Huaro-chiri Manuscript* has been referred to as the *Popol Vuh* of the Andes. Apt, the comparison requires that we acknowledge the level of theoretical understanding that, during the second world-age eclipse, may equate the pastoral llamas who rebelled in the Andes with their nearest domesticated equivalents in Mesoamerica, dogs and turkeys.

As the provenance of screen-fold books, notably *Codex Borgia*, Cholula was known as the Rome of New Spain. Guardian of cults stemming from the Olmec, this pyramid city was a major precedent for the Mexica, as they make clear in postinvasion codices like *Telleriano Remensis* and in the Nahuatl of their "Twenty Sacred Hymns."

Looking for evidence of idolatry, the Franciscan

missionary Bernardino de Sahagún (ca. 1499–1590), whose 12-book *Florentine Codex* (completed 1577) grew from the four, dense tlacuillo chapters of the *Tepepulco Manuscript*, found these hymns so devilish and difficult that he refrained from trying to translate them from Nahuatl. He left the originals to an appendix to book 2, while book 6 deals with the challenges posed by Nahuatl poetics. Their huge poetic power was acknowledged by D. G. Brinton in the title he gave to his Eng. trans. *Rig Veda Americanus*, a key volume in his Philadelphia Library of Aboriginal American Literature series (1882–90). An important way of facing the difficulty posed by the hymns has proved to be recognizing their dependence on the rich poetic capacity of tlacuillo. The hymn to the rain god Tlaloc, e.g., relies on a multiple pun involving the semantics of the XX Signs, their respective numbers in the series as Snake lightning (V), Jaguar thunder (XIV), and Rain (XIX), and the sheer phenomenon of storm. The arithmetic (V + XIV = XIX) is clearly legible in the hypnotic image of Tlaloc seen on the penultimate page of a book from Teotitlan (*Codex Laud* 45), where this rainmaker is revered as *ocelocoatl*, the Jaguar-Snake of the Nahuatl hymn, and can be seen roaring thunder from under his elaborate Jaguar headdress, while holding the Snake scepter of lightning.

A similar case is the celebration of Itzpapalotl, the Obsidian Butterfly (hymn 4), whose name in tlacuillo when read as a calendrical date comprises numbers belonging to the set of 9 Night Powers (*Yoalitecutin*) and the 13 Fliers (*Quechollí*). Central to these 13 as number 7, the butterfly's metamorphic body conjoins the vitreous edge that, like obsidian, is sharp but brittle with the beauty of the wing that, lacking the vertebrate strength of the other 6+6 fliers, is easily damaged. Relying on the fact that Hermes (Mercury) goes around the sun 22 times every seven years, Itzpapalotl's hermetic teachings underlie the considerable corpus of Chichimec lit. in which, abused and seeking vengeance, she leads the Chichimec archers south into the tropics from Chicomoztoc, their desert fastness that translates as "Seven Caves." As the eponymous *Mariposa de obsidiana* (in Garibay's trans., 1958), Itzpapalotl also prompted one of the most powerful poems in Octavio Paz's (1914–98) *Águila o sol* (1950).

In order to function practically, the Mexica tribute system relied on a multilevel arithmogram that correlates the districts in the quarters west, south, east, and north of Tenochtitlan with the tonalpouilli nights of human gestation, synodic and sidereal moons, and the days of the year. The tribute due from each district is listed in the tlacuillo *Matrícula de tributos*, to which *Codex Mendoza* adds a map (a quincunx oriented to west). The analogies to Cuzco's Tahuantinsuyu are strong, and, in each case, songs served as tribute items of value that characterized cultural geography. Demanding the performance of a song in the lang. and style of a region was a right of conquest in Cuzco and Tenochtitlan alike, which links further back again to the Tupi carbet.

In the imperial court of Tenochtitlan, this practice

helped form the collection of poems known as *Cantares mexicanos*. Copious, this Nahuatl work encompasses poems both ancient, like a Toltec lament that also appears in the *Popol Vuh*, and mod., like those that parody Christian liturgy. Revealing overall the immense richness inherent in the Nahuatl term for poetry itself (*xochi-cuicatl*, “flower-song”), it draws on well-recognized modes proper to mourning (“orphan”), planting (“green”), and war (“enemy”).

After the invasion, analogous encodings of precious knowledge in concept and number continue to inform the shamanic rhetoric of ritual cure, as in the Maya *Ritual of the Bacabs* (Arzápalo) and the Nahuatl *Tratado* of 1629.

The range and power of native poetry in contemp. Mexico are evidenced in the first volume of Carlos Montemayor’s *Escritores indígenas actuales* (1992). A strength of this volume is to show the survival of poetic speech in the three main lang. families of Mexico, Otomanguan, Maya, and Nahuatl. In Otomi, Thaay-rohyadi Bermúdez appeals to that people (and their Purépecha neighbors) who have lived longest along its banks for the life and health of the river Lerma, threatened as it increasingly is by attitudes and policies rooted in the exploitative ideology of the invasion begun by Christopher Columbus. Its concentration on the idea of water, primal and unpolluted, curiously echoes what is known of the celebrated poet-king of Texcoco, Nezahualcoyotl (1402–72), named in the *Cantares mexicanos*, whose first compositions are recorded in Otomi.

We have seen the bridging role of the isthmus between Meso- and South America corroborated from the east in the Andean cross emblem *chakana* found in the ceramic codex of Yojoa in the ambit of the Maya metropolis Copan (Honduras), while from the west, Nahuatl lies at the root of the names *Guatemala*, *Cuzcatlan* (El Salvador), and *Nicaragua*. A theater piece focused on the tall tales of the widely traveled *pochteca* (trader and tax collector) published in Brinton’s library as *The Gueguence: A Comedy-Ballet in the Nahuatl-Spanish Dialect of Nicaragua* (1883) reveals wit sustained by the intense cultural traffic to and fro along the isthmus. For its part, the ceramic codex of Yojoa in the Uluu homeland of the Lenca juxtaposes motifs that include the Olmec caiman whose maw is a cave, the dancing armadillo of the Amazonian midwives, the literal runner bean of coastal Peruvian ceramics, the jaguar defending the night with tooth bared and claw unsheathed, the monkey *pochteca*, the rebellious turkey of the eclipse, the craftsman whose deep inspiration flows vertebally from a fishy forebear, and well-dressed Maya dignitaries of the nearby metropolis Copan, also in Honduras.

In mod. times, the isthmus spirit can be seen to suffice the remarkable line of Nicaraguan poets Rubén Darío (1867–1916), Pablo Antonio Cuadra (1912–2002), and Ernesto Cardenal (b. 1925), who have all recognized native America as a chief source. The poems in Cardenal’s *Homenaje a los indios americanos* (1970) work directly from native texts from the entire continent. Before him, Cuadra had found a manifold refer-

ence for his poetry in the *doble yo* (double I) concept, a human head that is shielded by and beneath a back and head that belong to a powerful beast. This motif is seen alike in Amazonian stone sculpture, in San Agustín at the headwaters of the Magdalena in Colombia, in the isthmus and, most magnificently, in the statues of Maya potentates. As for Darío, the *modernista* founder of Sp. Am. poetry (see MODERNISMO), he spoke for his work and the movement as a whole when, in the “Palabras liminares” to *Prosas profanas* (1896), he wrote that, if poetry was to be found in “nuestra América,” then it would be in the old things, in the legendary Indian, the refined and sensual Inca, the lowland and highland Maya cities of Palenque and Utatlan, and the great Moctezuma’s golden throne. The Otomanguan family is also represented by Zapotec, in Victor de la Cruz’s (b. 1948) *Guchachi’ Reza*, supported by artist Francisco Toledo, which has included trans. of Bertolt Brecht’s poetry. For its part, like that of Rigoberta Menchú (b. 1959), the work of the contemp. Maya Quiché poet Humberto Ak’abal (b. 1952) defends the Maya world in his native lang. and in Sp. as living perception.

**IV. Turtle Island.** A century and a half after Montaigne, Anahuac’s northern continuity with parts of America now occupied by the U.S. and Canada inspired Lorenzo Boturini (1702–1753), a student of Giambattista Vico, to write *Idea de una nueva historia de la América septentrional* (1746). The base of mod. codices scholarship, this “new idea” relies heavily on the royal library built up by Nezahualcoyotl (Lee) in Texcoco, on the east bank of the highland lake, which Boturini cataloged and tried to reassemble. Texcoco is the focus of the *Romances de los Señores de la Nueva España*, an extensive anthol. of Nahuatl poetry that complements the *Cantares mexicanos* of Tenochtitlan on the west bank, being similarly based on both ancient memory and current tribute practice (Garibay 1964–68).

In documenting their origins in Texcoco, Nezahualcoyotl and his ancestors celebrated the Chichimec saga that had first brought them south across the tropical line from the 7th c. on, led by the obsidian butterfly Itzppalotl from their homeland Chicomoztoc (Seven Caves). Visually, the most brilliant version of this saga is to be found in *Codex Borgia*, where the butterfly is seen about to emerge from her cocoon under seven caves marked by the stars of the septentrion, on a path that leads east, north, and west before plunging south. For its part, at Tepexic the Coixtlahuaca map establishes the hermetic nature of her teachings, literally, by correlating in Seven Caves the cycles of the moon and the planet Mercury (Hermes), in the synodic formula that approximates the nights of four moons with the 116 of the planet, and the sidereal formula that does the same for three moons and 88 nights of the planet.

Exactly this hermetic logic pervades corresponding sagas of crossing the tropical line told by those who live north of it, northwest of Mesoamerica. The exemplary case is that of the Zuni, who as neighbors have the Keres-speaking Pueblo to the east and the Hopi (in speech, kin to the Nahuatl) to the west. Culturally, the

coherence of this landscape has long been embodied in the quincunx of mountains seen in Pueblo murals, which later gave shape to the sand or dry paintings of the Navajo, and their corresponding chants or ways (Wyman). The novel *Ceremony* (1976) by the Laguna Pueblo Leslie Marmon Silko (b. 1948) focuses on Tsepina, the turquoise mountain closest to home, later called Tsodzil by the Navajo, where it generates power both poetic and therapeutic. The same power imbues the verse in her *Storyteller* (1981).

In their genesis, the Zuni emerge through rooms that are world ages, upward, as in the architecture of multistory Pueblo houses. They then migrate to find their location on the Continental Divide, between the headwaters of the Rio Grande (southeast) and those of the Colorado River (southwest). Recalled in ceremonies over the year and in corresponding iconography in underground *kiva* temples, the story falls into episodes and culminates in the arrival of Sp. invaders from Mexico, who were successfully resisted, and then of the U.S. in the last years of the 19th c. When the U.S. was still invading, a particularly sensitive account of this trad. was given by Frank Cushing, who learned the Zuni lang. and went to live among them. A century later, Tedlock published versions performed in his presence in *Finding the Center*, a magnificent work that adjusts typography to the needs of ethno-poetics.

Identified at dawn by the macaw feather he wears in his hair as he rises before the sun heliacally, the Zuni hero Nepayatamu by night is honored at the kiva shrine of the Milky Way Newekwe. From the four sides of Newekwe and after four moons, he hails his planet's return, sheltering the metamorphic butterfly in his flute. He shares these hermetic characteristics with counterparts among the Pueblo to the east like the "Sun youth" in Boas's *Keresan Texts* and among the much-visited Hopi, where the butterfly is enshrined at Awatobi and where, journeying back and forth across the tropical line, it is inseparable from genesis and the birth of maize. Throughout this territory, in the hermetic butterfly complex, there are specific and striking echoes of the poetry and visual art of Anahuac, particularly the major cities of Teotihuacan and Cholula.

In the story they tell of themselves as invaders of the Pueblo in *Diné Bahane'* (Zolbrod), the Navajo make many of these connections plain. The case of the Apache is comparable, and as Athapaskan relatives, they defended together a last frontier that stretched from Mexico and Apacheria to the Black Hills of Dakota.

The debt to the Anahuac codices, esp. their quatrefoil and quincunx maps, is patent in the sand or dry paintings laid out on the hogan floor to complement the therapeutic chants of the Navajo ways over as many as nine nights. Mutually enriching each other as they do in tlacuilolli fashion as visual and verbal lang., the dry paintings and the chants may fairly be regarded as literary bedrock among the Navajo, a celebrated example being the *Kledzhe Hatal* (*Night Chant*, last of Bierhorst's four masterworks). Moreover, this is a living trad., from which poets who write in Navajo, like Luci Tapahonso (b. 1953), may draw strength.

In defining territory, the Navajo paintings serve as an excellent guide to cultural hist. Toward the Great Plains that stretch northeast beyond the mountains, we see and hear the buffalo. Shot steadily after 1864 from transcontinental trains so as to starve still-resistant Indians to death, the buffalo embodies time and life itself on the plains. According to the Sioux Winter Counts by High Hawk and Brown Hat (Mallery), it is Buffalo Woman who brings the first gifts to the peoples of the plains, the tobacco peace pipe, maize of four colors and in all its preparations, the tipi circle, and their respective songs, which become a main ingredient in the dazzling visions of Black Elk.

Belief in the return of the buffalo to the plains was fundamental to the Ghost Dance of 1890, coincident with the Wounded Knee massacre. To remain undaunted in the face of ever more violent white assault, tribes from Mexico to Canada and from California to Oklahoma gave each other their songs, ascribing to them the value they had had as tribute items among the Aztecs and the Inca. The trance sought in the songs brought back, too, the ghosts of many thousands of the fallen. On those grounds, Bierhorst (1985) has argued strongly for detecting a similar dimension in the *Cantares mexicanos*.

"We shall live again," a main refrain in the songs heard by such poets as Gary Snyder (b. 1930) and echoed repeatedly in subsequent U.S. mass movements, implies concern with beginnings, notably among the Arapaho and Cheyenne, a principal contingent in the dance (Mooney 1896). The tongue of both is Algonkian, called the "language of America" by Roger Williams in 1643, which stretches east across the continent to include those who first encountered the Eng. in Massachusetts, in Manhattan, and with Powhatan. Algonkian genesis is typified in the song to the turtle (Bruchac), which, floating in the cosmic ocean, has borne the weight of the earth itself since "the beginning of human existence."

Adherence to this "floating island" version of Am. genesis became paramount among the Algonkian-speaking Ojibwa, midway between west and east around the frontier lakes that feed the uppermost Mississippi (a focus mapped in Lévi-Strauss's *Mythologiques*). Before Europeans arrived, these beliefs sustained the Midewiwin, a shamanic society where initiation demanded knowledge of sacred songs whose syllables and stanzas correspond to designs inscribed on birch-bark scrolls (Dewdney). This Mide writing seemed dangerous enough to Anglican missionaries to warrant suppression and Christian replacements, likewise on birch bark but printed alphabetically. Through his Ojibwa wife, Schoolcraft gained privileged insight into this trad. (see also Carr).

Among much else, texts in Mide script graphically chart the chants of genesis, the trance journey through zenith and nadir (in which in shamanic time nights are years, as they can be in the Winter Counts, as indeed they actually are near the pole), and the power of Manito. Widely shared Algonkian belief in the trance journey much strengthened the uprisings led by the

Ottawa Pontiac in 1761 and by his Shawnee successor Tecumseh. Depicted in the scrolls, one of the five most powerful Manitos is the turtle who sustains the earth. Represented ubiquitously in the artwork of Turtle Island, this creature inaugurates the epic of the Lenape (Delaware), of which Constantine Samuel Rafinesque provided a version in Mide script entitled *Walum Olum* (1836; later included in Brinton's Philadelphia library). The importance of these precedents today are made clear in the example of Gerald Vizenor (b. 1934), the Ojibwa novelist who began his career by compiling an anthol. of poetry in his lang.

In northern Appalachia, these beliefs were incorporated into the Iroquoian genesis, which is why, in his *Sketches of Ancient History of the Six Nations* (1825), the Iroquois historian Cusick referred to the whole of America north of Mexico as Turtle Island, distinguishing it from lands farther south with their early knowledge of maize and of humankind's simian forebears (this before Darwin). Belief among the Canadian Iroquois in the turtle that created the island which became the first earth was noted by the Jesuit Joseph-François Lafitau (1681–1746) in 1724. The turtle that can burrow to the very heart of the earth is invoked in the curing chants written by the Cherokee (Iroquoian neighbors in Appalachia) in their Sequoya syllabary (Mooney 1992). The syllabary texts draw likewise on shared Iroquoian reverence for maize as one of the three sisters who are the “three graces” in their common agricultural hist., maize, beans, and squash. Graphic antecedents may be found in the mound culture ceramics at Cahokia.

The syllabary texts also respect the power of mound-builder forebears in southern Appalachia who, according to the chants, still live inside the Cherokee mounds, as a hidden resource in defense. Thereby they establish effective links, often in precise detail, with cultural norms current over a thousand years ago, detected today also among the Yuchi and the Musgokee and their neighbors.

Apart from impinging on the initial framing of the U.S. constitution, the Five (later Six) Nations of the Iroquois left a magnificent record of themselves in their *Ritual of Condolence*, another of Bierhorst's four masterworks. The rhet. relied on what Lafitau called the council style of the Iroquois; its chronology was extensive, and, in it, nights could count for years.

Farther west, connections can be made with Iroquoian speakers beyond the Mississippi, such as the Caddo and the Pawnee, whose Hako ceremony entered western poetics in 1900, having been recorded on the ethnologist Alice Fletcher's (1838–1923) phonograph.

At the turn on the 20th c., H. W. Longfellow's “Song of Hiawatha” (1855) was massively propagated throughout the U.S. school system and was the most read and performed poem of its day. Founder of the Iroquois League of Nations, its eponymous hero lives a life heavily reliant on Algonkian legend, as critics never tire of noting. What tends to be less noticed is the imaginative precision of Mide song symbols in the Eng.-lang. poem and Turtle Island perspectives that had been shared in any case by both Algonkian and Iroquois. Perhaps yet

more consequentially, *Hiawatha* proved to be a major factor in Carl Jung's hypothesis of the collective unconscious and his break with Sigmund Freud.

See GUARANÍ POETRY, INUIT POETRY, MAPUCHE POETRY, NAVAJO POETRY.

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G. BROTHERSTON

**INDONESIAN POETRY** is written in Bahasa Indonesia, the national lang. of the Republic of Indonesia and a distinct dialect of Malay. There are approximately 740 different langs. spoken across the archipelago; although most of these have had extensive oral poetic trads., only eight have longstanding written lits.—Javanese, Balinese, Sundanese, Malay, Minangkabau, Batak, Macassarese and Buginese (McGlynn). A "mod. Indonesian poetry" is the product of sociopolitical and educational changes that gathered momentum from the beginning of the 20th c. Indonesia became a unitary state in 1945; the Indonesian lang. was defined as separate from Malay in 1928 during the emerging nationalist movement and has developed its own lit., most commonly written by young, well-educated, urbanized men and relying on the market distribution of printed books and literary magazines.

Mod. Indonesian poetry is conventionally considered to have begun in 1922 with the publication of *Andalas Nusa Harapan* (Sumatra, Island of Hope) by the Sumatran-born poet Muhammad Yamin (1903–62). The poems collected in this brief anthol. combine the traditional four-line couplets of the indigenous \**pantun* with the longer sonnet form characteristic of the Dutch Neo-romantic movement of 1880 that the emerging Indonesian poets had studied in school. Driven by powerful emotions (real or imagined), this first generation of Indonesian poets contemplated the beauty of nature from a careful distance and were commonly left in a condition of profound melancholy connected to a nostalgia for previous states of emotional comfort. Such longing (*rindu*) found its origins variously in memories of one's parents, childhood, home village, local scenery, cl. monuments, and religious certainty. Yamin's "Sedih" (Sorrow, 1934) is typical of this poetry. The sonnet opens with an evocation of the Barisan Mountain ranges of Central Sumatra and of a distant village that seems to be calling the wanderer home. Alone and uncared for, he sadly remembers his father, now deceased, lying in a grave covered with a basil plant and a single frangipani. The form and lang. are reasonably mod.; the concluding images are common pantun images: the frangipani is found in cemeteries, and the word for "basil" (*selasih*) rhymes with "love" (*kasih*).

The outstanding poet of the 1920s to 1930s was Amir Hamzah (1911–46). A prince deeply steeped in traditional Malay lit., Hamzah imbued these romantic conventions with deeply felt grief arising from his own failed relationships. In his youthful poetry, *Buah Rindu* (Fruits of Melancholy, not pub. until 1941), the rela-