

IV

The Spaniards capture an Indian chief, who reveals that Atahualpa is the illegitimate son of the previous king and that he has killed his brother in order to take the throne for himself. Pizarro and Atahualpa's impressions of each other are recorded. Although not present in the central action, Atahualpa reacts to what he is told by his informers as the scene progresses. He sends word to Pizarro to meet him at Cajamarca on the other side of the Andes mountains. This is a test for the 'white god' to prove himself worthy of his godlike status.

[Mottled light. Province of Tumbes. Screams and whoops of alarm imitating tropical bird cries. A horde of Indians rushes across the stage pursued by soldiers.]

DE CANDIA: Grab that one! That's the chief!

[They capture the chieftain. At the sight of this, all the Indians fall silent and passive. DE CANDIA approaches him with drawn sword.]

Now, you brownie bastard, show us gold!

PIZARRO: Gently, De Candia. You'll get nothing from him in terror.

DE CANDIA: Let's see.

PIZARRO: God's wounds! Put up! ...

Felipillo, ask for gold.

[FELIPILLO adopts a set of stylized gestures for his interpreting, in the manner of sign language.]

CHIEF: We have no gold. All was taken by the great King in his war.

PIZARRO: What King?

CHIEF: Holy Atahualpa, Inca of earth and sky. His kingdom is the widest in the world.

mottled light: an irregular arrangement of light and dark shadows to convey the sense of the forest

brownie: a negative (racist) term used by the Spanish for the Peruvians

God's wounds: a curse

DE SOTO: How wide?

CHIEF: A man can run in it every day for a year.

DE SOTO: More than a thousand miles.

ESTETE: Poor savage, trying to impress us with his little tribe.

PIZARRO: I think we've found more than a little tribe, Veedor. Tell me of this King. Who did he fight?

CHIEF: His brother Huascar. His father the great Inca Huayana grew two sons. One by a wife, one by a not-wife. At his death he cut the kingdom in two for them. But Atahualpa wanted all. So he made war, and killed his brother. Now he is lord of earth and sky.

PIZARRO: And he's the bastard?

[All the INDIANS cry out.]

Answer! He's the bastard!

CHIEF: He is the Son of the Sun. He needs no wedded mother. He is God.

INDIANS [*chanting*]: Sapa Inca! Inca Capac!

PIZARRO: God?

CHIEF: God!

PIZARRO: God on earth?

VALVERDE: Christ defend us!

DE SOTO: Do you believe this?

CHIEF: It is true. The sun is God. Atahualpa is his child, sent to shine on us for a few years of life. Then he will return to his father's palace and live for ever.

PIZARRO: God on earth!

VALVERDE: Oh, my brothers, where have we come? The land of Anti-Christ! ... Do your duty, Spaniards! Take each an Indian and work to shift his soul. Go to them. Show them rigour! No softness to gentle idolatry. [To the INDIANS] The cross, you

idolatry: the worship of idols and images; seen by the

pagan dust!
[*They try to escape.*]
Stay them!
[*The SPANIARDS ring them with swords.*]

Repeat. Jesus Christ Inca!
INDIANS [*uncertainly*]: Jesus Christ
Inca!

ESTETE: Jesus Christ Inca!
INDIANS [*repeating*]: Jesus Christ Inca!
[*The soldiers herd them off stage. Their cries punctuate the end of the scene. All go off after them, save PIZARRO and DE SOTO.*]

ATAHUALLPA: He surely is a God. He teaches my people to praise him.

PIZARRO: He's a god all right. They're scared to hell of him. And a bastard too. That's civil war – bastards against bastards!

ATAHUALLPA: I will see him. Let no one harm these men.

PIZARRO: Let's see you, then. What's it look like to be Son of the Sun?

DE SOTO: That's something in Europe no one's ever dared call himself.

PIZARRO: God on earth, living for ever!

DE SOTO: He's got a shock coming. [*He goes off.*]

PIZARRO [*calling up*]: Do you hear that, God? You're not going to like that! Because we've got a god worth a thousand of yours. A gentle god with gentle priests, and a couple of big cannon to blow you out of the sky!

VALVERDE [*off*]: Jesus Christ Inca!

PIZARRO: Christ the Merciful, with his shackles and stakes! ... So enjoy yourself while you can. Have a glorious shine! [*He makes the sign of the cross.*] Take that, Anti-Christ! [*He*

Christian Church as the worship
of false gods
stay: stop

Take note of how Pizarro's cynicism – about the gentle Christ in whose name violence is perpetrated – is contrasted with his fascination with the Inca.

runs off laughing.

VALVERDE [*off*]: Jesus Christ Inca!

[INDIANS (*off*) cry out.]

[Enter VILLAC UMU and CHALLCUCUCHIMA.]

VILLAC UMU: Your people groan!

ATAHUALLPA: They groan with my voice!

CHALLCUCUCHIMA: Your people weep!

ATAHUALLPA: They weep with my tears!

CHALLCUCUCHIMA: He searches all the houses. He seeks your crown. Remember the prophecy! *The twelfth Lord of the Four Quarters shall be the last!* ... Inca, ware you!

VILLAC UMU: Inca, ware you!

ATAHUALLPA [*to* CHALLCUCUCHIMA]: Go to him. Take him my word. Tell him to greet me at Cajamarca, behind the great mountains. If he is a god he will find me. If he is no god, he will die.

[*Lights down on him. Priest and noble- men retire.*]

The lights go down on Atahuallpa and here we can see how Shaffer uses the many devices of the theatre to supplement his tale. By having the lights go down on the Inca, he reinforces the audience's sense that the prophecy will come true.

V

The *conquistadores* begin their journey through the forest. Their fear is at the heart of this scene. Pizarro tries once again to dispel Young Martin's faith in him.

[*Night. Wild bird cries. DOMINGO and VASCA on sentry duty.*]

VASCA: There must be a pissing thousand of 'em, every night we halt.

DOMINGO: Why don't they just come and get us?

VASCA: They're waiting.

DOMINGO: What for?

Yet another reference is made to cannibalism. Note how Shaffer uses irony here: who is going to consume whom? Are the Spanish more 'cannibalistic' than the Peruvians?

As you read this scene work out for yourself what De Candia's motivations are as compared to Estete's. Does Shaffer sympathize with either of them?

What does De Candia's sarcasm about Estete tell us about De Candia?

VASCA: Maybe they're cannibals and there's a feast day coming up!

DOMINGO: Very funny ... Six weeks in this pissing forest and not one smell of gold. I think we've been had.

VASCA: Unless they're hiding it, like the General says.

DOMINGO: I don't believe it. God-damned place. I'm starting to rust.

VASCA: We all are. It's the damp. Another week and we'll have to get the blacksmith to cut us out.

[Enter ESTETE with DE CANDIA carrying an arquebus.]

VASCA: Who's there?

DE CANDIA: Talk on duty again and I'll cut you out.

DOMINGO: Yes, sir.

VASCA: Yes, sir.

[They separate and go off.]

DE CANDIA: They're right. Everything's rusting. Even you, my darling [the gun]. Look at her, Strozzi's most perfect model. She can stop a horse at five hundred paces. You're too good for brownies, my sweet.

ESTETE: What are they waiting for? Why don't they just attack and be done with it?

DE CANDIA: They'd find nothing against them. A hundred and eighty terrified men, nine of these and two cannon. If your King wasn't so mean, we might just stand a chance out here.

ESTETE: Hold your tongue, De Candia.

DE CANDIA: Good: loyalty. That's what I like to see. The only thing that puzzles me is what the hell you get out of it. They tell me royal overseers get nothing.

ESTETE: Any man without self-interest

rust: the conquistadores are in full armour, which is rusting in the damp of the forest

Again we are given a distinction between mission and theft. What does De Candia feel about these justifications? What does this tell us about his character?

What do we learn in this scene about how others view Pizarro?

Why do you think that De Candia can 'see' death in Pizarro? What is this death he sees? How does it prefigure the climax of the play? What does his ability to 'see' this tell us about his world-view?

must puzzle a Venetian. If you serve a King you must kill personal ambition. Only then can you become a channel between the people and its collective glory – which otherwise it would never feel. In Byzantium court officials were castrated to resemble the Order of Angels. But I don't expect you to understand.

DE CANDIA: You Spaniards! You men with missions! You just can't bear to think of yourselves as the thieves you are.

ESTETE: How dare you, sir!
[Enter PIZARRO and YOUNG MARTIN.]

DE CANDIA: Our noble General. They say in the Indies he traded his immortal part to the Devil.

ESTETE: For what, pray? Health? Breeding? Handsomeness?

DE CANDIA: That they don't tell.

ESTETE: I only wonder His Majesty could give command to such a man. I believe he's mad.

DE CANDIA: No, but still dangerous.

ESTETE: What do you mean?

DE CANDIA: I've served under many men: but this is the first who makes me afraid. Look into him, you'll see a kind of death.

[Bird cries fill the forest. PIZARRO talks to YOUNG MARTIN.]

PIZARRO: Listen to them. There's the world! The eagle rips the condor; the condor rips the crow. And the crow would blind all the eagles in the sky if once it had the beak to do it. The clothed hunt the naked; the legitimates hunt the bastards, and put down the word Gentleman to blot up the blood.

Byzantium: an ancient Greek settlement that later became the capital of the eastern Roman Empire. It was then named Constantinople and is today the city of Istanbul in Turkey.

castrated to resemble the Order of Angels: had their testicles removed to resemble the angels. Angels were thought to be desexed messengers who mediate between the realm of the sacred (heaven) and the profane (earth). The implied question here is: how far will someone go to overcome self-interest in service of the state? Shaffer presents both options critically.

immortal part: in Catholic belief each person has a soul which will live forever

condor: a large vulture

Note the way in which Pizarro's sense of being 'outside' or not belonging is reinforced in this speech.

Your chivalry rules don't govern me, Martin. They're for Belonging Birds – like them: legitimate birds with claws trim on the perch their fathers left to them ... Make no error; if I could once peck them off it, I'd tear them into gobbets to feed cats. Don't ever trust me, boy.

YOUNG MARTIN: Sir? I'm your man.

PIZARRO: Don't ever trust me.

YOUNG MARTIN: Sir?

PIZARRO: Or if you must, never say I deceived you. Know me.

YOUNG MARTIN: I do, sir. You are all I ever want to be.

PIZARRO: I am nothing you could ever want to be, or any man alive. Believe this: if the time ever came for you to harry me, I'd rip you too, easy as look at you. Because you belong too, Martin.

YOUNG MARTIN: I belong to you, sir!

PIZARRO: You belong to hope. To faith. To priests and pretences. To dipping flags and ducking heads. To laying hands and licking rings. To prostraters and saluters, and the whole vast stupid congregation of crowners and cross-kissers! You're a worshipper, Martin. A groveller. You were born with feet but you prefer your knees. It's you who make Bishops – Kings – Generals ... You trust me, I'll hurt you past believing! [*A pause.*] Have the sentries changed?

YOUNG MARTIN [*distressed*]: Not yet, sir.

PIZARRO: Little Lord of Hope, I'm harsh with you. You own everything I've lost. I despise the keeping, and I loathe the losing. Where can a man

gobbets: lumps of raw flesh

harry: harass, worry

This is an important speech. What questions, images and themes does it open up? As you work through this scene take note of how the mystification of power via the Church is tied up with the concept of the Word. Think back to Pizarro's earlier assertion about men hiding behind empty traditions and rituals.

What are the two hates that Pizarro feels he lives between?

live, between two hates? [*He goes towards the two officers.*] Gentlemen.

ESTETE: How is your wound tonight, General?

PIZARRO: The calmer for your inquiring, Veedor.

DE CANDIA: Well, and what's your plan, sir?

PIZARRO: To go on until I'm stopped.

DE CANDIA: Admirable simplicity.

ESTETE: What kind of plan is that?

PIZARRO: You have a better? It's obvious they've been ordered to hold off.

ESTETE: Why?

PIZARRO: If it's wickedness, I'm sure the crown can guess it as soon as the Army.

ESTETE: Sir, I know your birth hasn't fitted you for much civility, but remember, in me speaks your King.

PIZARRO: Well, go and write to him. Set down more about my unfitness in your report. Then show it to the birds.

[*He goes off.* ESTETE goes off another way. DE CANDIA laughs and follows him.]

Pizarro sarcastically undermines Estete's attempt to command obedience because of his rank. What does this tell us about Pizarro's relationship to authority, especially authority based on birth and tradition rather than ability and skill?

VI

The Spaniards enter the heart of the empire of the Great Inca – a highly organized, cultivated and rich land. Along with the description of the beauty and abundance of the empire, we are told that the citizens have no free will. They have no choice about their employment, where they live, or when they marry. But we are also told that there is no poverty or social inequality. Chalcuchima tells Pizarro that Atahuallpa awaits him in Cajamarca, one month's march away. Estete is ordered to stay behind with a garrison of twenty men.

[Light brightens to morning.

Enter OLD MARTIN.]

OLD MARTIN: We were in the forest for six weeks, but at last we escaped and found on the other side our first witness of a great empire. There was a road fifteen feet wide, bordered with mimosa and blue glories, with walls on both sides the height of a man. We rode it for days, six horses abreast: and all the way, far up the hillsides, were huge fields of corn laid out in terraces, and a net of water in a thousand canals.

[Lights up on ATAHUALLPA, above.

OLD MARTIN goes out.]

MANCO: Manco your Chasqui speaks!

They move on the road to Ricaplaya.

ATAHUALLPA: What do they do?

MANCO: They walk through the field terraces. They listen to toil-songs.

They clap their hands at fields of llama!

[Enter groups of INDIANS, singing a toil-song and miming their work of sowing and reaping. PIZARRO, the PRIESTS, FELIPILLO and SOLDIERS, among them DE SOTO, DE CANDIA, DIEGO, ESTETE and YOUNG MARTIN, enter and stand watching. YOUNG MARTIN carries a drum.]

DE NIZZA: How beautiful their tongue sounds!

YOUNG MARTIN: I'm trying to study it but it's very hard. All the words seem to slip together.

FELIPILLO: Oh, very hard, yes! But more hard for Indian to learn Spanish.

DE NIZZA: I'm sure. See how contented they look.

DIEGO: It's the first time I've ever seen

Does the picture that Old Martin creates of the Peruvians fit with the images of cannibals and wild tribesmen? What is the point of this contrast?

As you read this scene, focus on what it shows us of Felipillo's character.

people glad at working.

DE SOTO: This is their Headman.

PIZARRO: You are the Lord of the Manor?

[FELIPILLO *interprets.*]

HEADMAN: Here all work together in families: fifty, a hundred, a thousand.

I am head of a thousand families. I give out to all food. I give out to all clothes. I give out to all confessing.

DE NIZZA: Confessing?

HEADMAN: I have priest power ... I confess my people of all crimes against the laws of the sun.

DE NIZZA: What laws are these?

HEADMAN: It is the seventh month.

That is why they must pick corn.

ATAHUALLPA [*intoning*]: In the eighth month you will plough! In the ninth, sow maize! In the tenth, mend your roofs!

HEADMAN: Each age also has its tasks.

ATAHUALLPA: Nine years to twelve, protect harvests. Twelve to eighteen, care for herds. Eighteen to twenty-five, warriors for me – Atahualpa Inca!

FELIPILLO: They are stupid; always do what they are told.

DE SOTO: This is because they are poor?

FELIPILLO: Not poor. Not rich. All same.

ATAHUALLPA: At twenty-five all will marry. All will receive one *tupu* of land.

HEADMAN: What may be covered by one hundred pounds of maize.

ATAHUALLPA: They will never move from there. At birth of a son one more *tupu* will be given. At birth of a

tupu: a measurement of land sufficient to plant one hundred pounds of maize seeds

What dramatic effect is produced by having the headman's speech interspersed with Atahualpa's intonation of the laws? What does this contribute to our understanding of the nature of his power?

Contrast Felipillo's strongly European assessment of individualism with De Soto's view of Inca society and Pizarro's assessment of what is at the heart of European ideology. In Act II, Valverde asserts that those who do not value property do not value God. Notice that the idea of 'God' is used to lend authority to the views of the Church. How does this affect the colonizer's treatment of the Indians?

daughter, half a *tupu*. At fifty all people will leave work for ever, and be fed in honour till they die.

DE SOTO: I have settled several lands. This is the first I've entered which shames our Spain.

ESTETE: Shames?

PIZARRO: Oh, it's not difficult to shame Spain. Here shames every country which teaches we are born greedy for possessions. Clearly we're made greedy when we're assured it's natural. But there's a picture for a Spanish eye! There's nothing to covet, so covetousness dies at birth.

DE SOTO: But don't you have any nobles or grand people?

HEADMAN: The King has great men near him to order the country. But they are few.

DE SOTO: How then can he make sure so many are happy over so large a land?

HEADMAN: His messengers run light and dark, one after one, over four great roads. No one else may move on them. So he has eyes everywhere. He sees you now.

PIZARRO: Now?

ATAHUALLPA: *Now!*

[CHALLCUCHIMA *enters with MANCO, bearing the image of the Sun on a pole.*]

CHALLCUCHIMA: I bring greeting from Atahuallpa Inca, Lord of the Four Quarters, King of the earth and sky.

ESTETE: I will speak with him. A King's man must always greet a King's man. We bring greeting from King Carlos, Emperor of Spain and Austria. We

covetousness: being grasping, greedy, wanting the property of another

We are told that the Inca has spies everywhere. Why would he need this? Is Shaffer naively contrasting Spain (bad) with Peru (good), or is he critical of both nations?

Notice how having Atahuallpa speak at this moment dramatically reinforces his all-seeing aspect.

Throughout this scene ask yourself why Atahualpa, with all his power, would want or need the blessing of the 'white god'. How are we shown that both he and Pizarro are vulnerable despite their power? How does this vulnerability bring them together? How does it foreshadow the tragic climax of the play?

bring blessing from Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

ATAHUALLPA: Blessing!

CHALLCUCHIMA: *I* am sent by the Son of God. He orders *you* to visit him.

ESTETE: Orders? Does he take us for servants?

CHALLCUCHIMA: All men are his servants.

ESTETE: Does he think so? He's got awakening coming.

CHALLCUCHIMA: Awakening?

PIZARRO: Veedor, under pardon, let my peasant tongue have a word ... Where is your King?

CHALLCUCHIMA: Cajamarca. Behind the great mountains. Perhaps they are too high for you.

ESTETE: There isn't a hill in your whole country a Spaniard couldn't climb in full armour.

CHALLCUCHIMA: That is wonderful.

PIZARRO: How long should we march before we find him?

CHALLCUCHIMA: One life of Mother Moon.

FELIPILLO: A month.

PIZARRO: For us, two weeks. Tell him we come.

ATAHUALLPA: He gives his word with no fear.

CHALLCUCHIMA: Ware you! It is great danger to take back your word.

PIZARRO: I do not fear danger. What I say I do.

CHALLCUCHIMA: So. Do.

[CHALLCUCHIMA and MANCO go off.]

ATAHUALLPA: He speaks with a god's tongue! Let us take his blessing.

In Pizarro's assertion that he always does what he says, note how the dramatist is already laying the ground for what is to come and setting the scene for the final tragic moments of the play.

full armour: metal clothing worn to protect the soldier from the weapons of war. It is usually heavy and awkward to wear.

DE SOTO: Well, God help us now.
DE CANDIA: He'd better. I don't know
who else will get us out of this.
Certainly not the artillery.
FELIPILLO [*imitating CHALLCUCHI-
MA's walk and voice*]: So! Do!
DE SOTO: Be still. You're too free.
ESTETE: My advice to you now is to
wait for the reinforcements.
PIZARRO: I thank you for it.
DE SOTO: There's no telling when
they'll come, sir. We daren't stay till
then.
PIZARRO: But *you* of course will.
ESTETE: I?
PIZARRO: I cannot hazard the life of a
Royal Officer.
ESTETE: My personal safety has never
concerned me, General. My master's
service is all I care for.
PIZARRO: That's why we must ensure
its continuance. I'll give you twenty
men. You can make a garrison.
ESTETE: I must decline, General. If you
go – I go also.
PIZARRO: I'm infinitely moved, Veedor
– but my orders remain. You stay here.
[*To his PAGE*] Call Assembly.
YOUNG MARTIN [*banging his drum*]:
Assembly! Assembly!
[ESTETE *goes off angrily.*]

garrison: a fort with troops
stationed in it

VII

Pizarro tells his army the options they have: to go forward or to die. He tries to inspire his men with the thought of unaccountable wealth. He exhorts them to behave as gods. Their journey through the Andes is reported to the Inca.

[*The company pelts on.* PIZARRO ***pelts on***: the company assem-

addresses them.]

bles as fast as possible

PIZARRO: We are commanded to court by a brown King, more powerful than any you have ever heard of, sole owner of all the gold we came for! We have three roads. Go back, and he kills us. Stay here, and he kills us. Go on, and he still may kill us. Who fears to meet him can stay here with the Veedor and swell a garrison. He'll have no disgrace, but no gold neither. Who stirs?

RODAS: Well, I pissing stir for one. I'm not going to be chewed up by no pissing heathen king. What do you say, Vasca lad?

VASCA: I don't know. I reckon if he chews us first, he chews you second. We're the eggs and you're the stew!

RODAS: Ha, ha, day of a hundred jokes!

SALINAS: Come on, friend, for God's sake! Who's going to sew us up if you desert?

RODAS: You can all rot for all I care, breeches and what's bloody in 'em!

SALINAS: Bastard!

RODAS: To hell with the lot of you!

[*He walks off.*]

PIZARRO: Anyone else?

DOMINGO: Well, I don't know ... Maybe he's right.

JUAN: Hey, Pedro, what do you think?

PEDRO: Hell, no! Vasca's right. It's as safe to go as stay here.

SALINAS: That's right.

VASCA: Anyway, I didn't come to keep no pissing garrison!

PEDRO: Nor me. I'm going on.

JUAN: Right, boy.

SALINAS: And me!

DOMINGO: Well, I don't know ...

we're the eggs and you're the

stew: we would be the first course and you the second

what's bloody in 'em: a reference to Salinas's penis, supposedly the site of his masculinity

VASCA: Oh, close your mouth! You're like a pissing girl! [To PIZARRO] We're coming. Just find us the gold.

PIZARRO: All right then! [To YOUNG MARTIN] You stay here.

YOUNG MARTIN: No, sir. The place of a squire is at all times by his knight's side. Laws of chivalry.

PIZARRO [*touched*]: Get them in rank. *Move!*

YOUNG MARTIN: Company in rank. *Move!*

[*The soldiers form up in rank. They stand stiffly.*]

PIZARRO: Stand firm. Firmer! ... Look at you – you could be dead already! If he sees you like that you will be! Make no error, he's watching every step you take. You're not men any longer, you're gods now. Eternal gods, each one of you. Two can play this immortality game, my lads! I want to see you move over his land like figures from a Lent procession. He must see gods walk on earth. Indifferent! Uncrushable! No death to be afraid of! I tell you, one shiver dooms the lot of us. One yelp of fright and we'll never be heard of again. He'll serve us like cheeseworms you crush with a knife. So come on, you tattered trash – shake out the straw! Forget your village magic: fingers in crosses, saints under your shirts. You can *grant* prayers now – no need to answer them. Come on! Fix your eyes! Follow the pig-boy to his glory! I'll have an empire for my farm! A million boys driving in the pigs at night! And each one of you will own a share – juicy black earth a hundred mile apiece – and golden

squire: an attendant to a knight

Why does Pizarro tell his troops to conduct themselves as gods? What does this tell us about Pizarro's relationship to the principles of the Church?

Lent procession: for Christians, Lent is the forty days before Easter, a time of fasting and repentance. A Lent procession would be mournful and dignified.

pig-boy: another reference to Pizarro's supposed birth in a pigsty

ploughs to cut it! Get up you god-boys
– *March!*

[MARTIN *bangs his drum. The Spaniards begin to march in slow motion. Above, masked Indians move on to the upper level.*]

MANCO: They move, Inca! They come!
One hundred and sixty and seven.

ATAHUALLPA: Where?

MANCO: Zaran.

VILLAC UMU: Ware! Ware, Inca!

MANCO: They move all in step. Not fast, not slow. They keep straight on from dark to dark.

VILLAC UMU: Ware! Ware, Inca!

MANCO: They are at Motupe, Inca!
They do not look on left or right.

VILLAC UMU: Ware! this is great danger.

ATAHUALLPA: No danger. He is coming to bless me. A god and all his priests. Praise Father Sun!

ALL ABOVE [*chanting*]: Viracoch'an Aticsi.

ATAHUALLPA: Praise Sapa Inca!

ALL ABOVE: Sapa Inca! Inca Capac!

ATAHUALLPA: Praise Inti Cori!

ALL ABOVE: Caylla int'i cori!

CHALLCUCHIMA: They come to the mountains!

VILLAC UMU: Kill them now!

ATAHUALLPA: Praise Atahuallpa!

VILLAC UMU: Destroy them. Teach them death!

ATAHUALLPA: Praise Atahuallpa!

ALL ABOVE: Atahuallpa! Sapa Inca!
Huaccha Cuyak!

ATAHUALLPA [*crying out*]: *Let them see my mountains!*

[*A crash of primitive instruments. The lights snap out and, lit from the side, the*

What is the effect of the Peruvian words (untranslated) here?

rays of the metal sun throw long shadows across the wooden wall. All the Spaniards fall down. A cold blue light fills the stage.]

DE SOTO: God in heaven!

[*Enter OLD MARTIN.*]

OLD MARTIN: You call them the Andes. Picture a curtain of stone hung by some giant across your path. Mountains set on mountains: cliffs on cliffs. Hands of rock a hundred yards high, with flashing nails – where the snow never moved, scratching the gashed face of the sun. For miles around the jungle lay black in its shadow. A freezing cold fell on us.

PIZARRO: Up, my godlings! Up, my little gods! Take heart, now. He's watching you. *Get to your feet.* [To DIEGO] Master, what of the horses?

DIEGO: D'you need them, sir?

PIZARRO: They're vital, boy.

DIEGO: Then you'll have 'em, sir. They'll follow you as we will.

PIZARRO: Up we go, then! We're coming for you, Atahualpa! Show me the toppest peak-top you can pile – show me the lid of the world – I'll stand tip-toe on it and pull you right out of the sky! I'll grab you by the legs, you Son of the Sun, and smash your flaming crown on the rocks! ... Bless them, Church!

VALVERDE: God stay you, and stay with you all.

DE NIZZA: Amen.

[*Whilst PIZARRO is calling his last speech to the Inca, the silent King thrice beckons to him, and retires backwards out of the sun into blackness. In the cold light there now ensues:*

Note how this scene builds to a climax and how the sense of the magnitude of the mountains is conveyed through music, light and language.

What is the effect of the silent King beckoning to Pizarro when they cannot see each other but we can see both? What is the audience meant to feel?

VIII

THE MIME OF THE GREAT ASCENT

mime: to tell a story by using expressions and gestures; to act out without using words

Old Martin recalls the terrible ascent of the Andes during which they are met by Villac Umu, who orders them to wait on Atahualpa in Cajamarca the next day. Pizarro continues the pretence that he is a God, despite Valverde's accusation that he is blaspheming (speaking against God's holy rule).

Why is the ascent depicted in mime rather than through an attempt to recreate an actual climb? How does the sound of the saws add to the sense of the cold and alienness of the mountains?

[As OLD MARTIN describes their ordeal, the men climb the Andes. It is a terrible progress: a stumbling, tortuous climb into the clouds, over ledges and giant chasms, performed to an eerie, cold music made from the thin whine of huge metal saws.]

OLD MARTIN: Have you ever climbed a mountain in full armour? That's what we did, him going first the whole way up a tiny path into the clouds, with drops sheer on both sides into nothing. For hours we crept forward like blind men, the sweat freezing on our faces, lugging skittery leaking horses, and pricked all the time for the ambush that would tip us into death. Each turn of the path it grew colder. The friendly trees of the forest dropped away, and there were only pines. Then they went too, and there were just scrubby little bushes standing up in ice. All round us the rocks began to whine with cold. And always, above us or below us, those filthy condor birds, hanging on the air with great tasselled wings.

[It grows darker. The music grows colder yet. The men freeze and hang their heads

for a long moment, before resuming their desperate climb.]

Then night. We lay down twos and threes together on the path, and hugged like lovers for warmth in that burning cold. And most cried. We got up with cold iron for bones and went on. Four days like that; groaning, not speaking; the breath of a blade in our lungs. Four days, slowly, like flies on a wall; limping flies, dying flies, up an endless wall of rock. A tiny army lost in the creases of the moon.

INDIANS [*off: in echo*]: Stand!

[*The Spaniards whirl round. VILLAC UMU and his attendants appear, clothed entirely in white fur. The High Priest wears a snow-white llama head on top of his own.*]

VILLAC UMU: You see Villac Umu, Chief Priest of the Sun. Why do you come?

PIZARRO: To see the Great Inca.

VILLAC UMU: Why will you see him?

PIZARRO: To give him blessing.

VILLAC UMU: Why will you bless him?

PIZARRO: He is a God. I am a God.

VALVERDE [*sotto voce*]: General!

PIZARRO: Be still.

VILLAC UMU: Below you is the town of Cajamarca. The great Inca orders: rest there. Tomorrow early he will come to you. Do not move from the town. Outside it is his anger.

[*He goes off with his attendants.*]

VALVERDE: What have you done, sir?

PIZARRO: Sent him news to amaze him.

VALVERDE: I cannot approve blasphemy.

PIZARRO: To conquer for Christ, one

The high priest and Pizarro speak without a translator. Why would the dramatist choose here not to have the translator?

How does this help us to understand the conflict between cultures at the heart of the play?

sotto voce: this refers to a stage convention. Words spoken 'sotto voce' are said in an undertone so that only Pizarro and the audience can hear what is said.

How is Pizarro being ironic here? What does this ironic tone add to our understanding of Pizarro's belief in Christianity?

can surely usurp his name for a night, Father. [*To the men.*] Set on!

usurp: take power wrongfully

IX

The Spaniards arrive at Cajamarca to find the whole town deserted and Atahualpa encamped in the hills. Pizarro plans to ambush and kidnap Atahualpa and, thereby, improve his small army's chances of success.

[*A dreary light. The Spaniards fan out over the stage. DE SOTO goes off.*]

OLD MARTIN: So down we went from ledge to ledge, and out on to a huge plain of eucalyptus trees, all glowing in the failing light. And there, at the other end, lay a vast white town with roofs of straw. As night fell, we entered it. We came into an empty square, larger than any in Spain. All round it ran long white buildings, three times the height of a man. Everywhere was grave quiet. You could almost touch the silence. Up on the hill we could see the Inca's tents, and the lights from his fires ringing the valley. [*Exit.*]

[*Some sit. All look up at the hillside.*]

DIEGO: How many do you reckon there's up there?

DE CANDIA: Ten thousand.

DE SOTO [*re-entering*]: The town's empty. Not even a dog.

DOMINGO: It's a trap. I know it's a trap.

PIZARRO: Felipillo! Where's that little rat? Felipillo!

FELIPILLO: General, Lord.

PIZARRO: What does this mean?

FELIPILLO: I don't know. Perhaps it is order of welcome. Great people.

Here Valverde projects the Europeans' dishonour and deception onto the Inca. Would Atahualpa really behave in this way?

Pizarro is a cunning strategist who doesn't believe in symbols and worship but sees clearly how others do. Why would this form of 'symbolic' warfare be so effective in this case? (Hint: someone who can control what others think can also control their behaviour.)

Much honour.

VALVERDE: Nonsense, it's a trick, a brownie trick. He's got us all marked for death.

DE NIZZA: He could have killed us at any time. Why should he take such trouble with us?

PIZARRO: Because we're gods, Father. He'll change soon enough when he finds out different.

DE SOTO: Brace up, boy! It's what you came for, isn't it? Death and glory?

YOUNG MARTIN: Yes, sir.

PIZARRO: De Soto. De Candia. [*They go to him.*] It's got to be ambush. That's our only hope.

DE SOTO: Round the square?

PIZARRO: Lowers the odds. Three thousand at most.

DE CANDIA: Thirty to one. Not low enough.

PIZARRO: It'll have to do. We're not fighting ten thousand or three. One man: that's all. Get him, the rest collapse.

DE SOTO: Even if we can, they'll kill us all to get him back.

PIZARRO: If there's a knife at his throat? It's a risk, sure. But what do worshippers do when you snatch their god?

DE CANDIA: Pray to you instead.

DIEGO: It's wonderful. Grab the King, grab the kingdom!

DE NIZZA: It would avoid bloodshed.

PIZARRO: What do you say?

DE CANDIA: It's the only way. It could work.

DE SOTO: With God's help.

PIZARRO: Then pray all. Disperse. Light fires. Make confession. Battle

One man: that is, Atahualpa

make confession: acknowl-

Notice how Shaffer shows the contradictions of a religion that calls murder a sin and yet tolerates it.

orders at first light.

[*Most disperse. Some lie down to pray and sleep.*]

DE NIZZA [*to DE CANDIA*]: Shall I hear your confession now, my son?

DE CANDIA: You'd best save all that for tomorrow, Father. For the men who are left. What have we got to confess tonight but thoughts of murder?

DE NIZZA: Then confess those.

DE CANDIA: Why? Should I feel shame for them? What would I say to God if I refused to destroy His enemies?

VALVERDE: More Venetian nonsense!

DE NIZZA: God has no enemies, my son. Only those nearer to Him or farther from Him.

DE CANDIA: Well, my job is to aim at the far ones. I'll go and position the guns. Excuse me. [*He goes off.*]

PIZARRO: Diego, look to the horses. I know they're sorry, but we'll need them brisk.

VALVERDE: Come my brother, we'll pray together. [*They go too.*]

PIZARRO: The cavalry will split and hide in the buildings, there and there.

DE SOTO: And the infantry in file – there, and round there.

PIZARRO: Perfect. Herrada can command one flank, De Barbaran the other. Everyone hidden.

DE SOTO: They'll suspect then.

PIZARRO: No, the Church will greet them.

DE SOTO: We'll need a watchword.

PIZARRO: San Jago.

DE SOTO: San Jago. Good.

[*The old man comes upon his page who is sitting huddled by himself.*]

PIZARRO: Are you scared?

edge, pay penance and be forgiven for your sins to ensure your soul is pure in the eyes of God

YOUNG MARTIN: No, sir ... Yes, sir.

PIZARRO: You're a good boy. If ever we get out of this, I'll make you a gift of whatever you ask me. Is that chivalrous enough for you?

YOUNG MARTIN: Being your page is enough, sir.

PIZARRO: And there's nothing else you want?

YOUNG MARTIN: A sword, sir.

PIZARRO: Of course ... Take what rest you can. Call Assembly at first light.

YOUNG MARTIN: Yes, sir. Good night sir.

DE SOTO: Good night, Martin. Try and sleep.

[The boy lies down to sleep. The singing of prayers is heard, off, all around.]

PIZARRO: Hope, lovely hope. A sword's no mere bar of metal for him. His world still has sacred objects. How remote ...

DIEGO [*Praying*]: Holy Virgin, give us victory. If you do, I'll make you a present of a fine Indian cloak. But you let us down, and I'll leave you for the Virgin of the Conception, and I mean that.

[He lies down also. The prayers die away. Silence.]

Pizarro's world is empty of the sacred or the magical; and yet he feels this loss of belief acutely. How does this sense of loss relate to the larger debates around belief and worship in the play? Bear this in mind as you read the next scene, where we are given more insight into what exactly Pizarro feels he has been cheated by.

X

After the drama of the great ascent and the planning of the ambush, this is a quiet scene. Pizarro and De Soto discuss their motivations for going on this dangerous expedition. They discuss immortality and how earthly experience can sometimes cheat the flux of time. For the first time Pizarro reveals his strange fascination with, and attraction to, the Inca.

Note again Pizarro's sense of his estrangement from Spain. He is not part of the class hierarchy but, having been close to it, he sees it clearly. What does he long for? Pizarro tells us he found it for a moment, but all that's left of his youth is the ache of an old war wound. What does he feel he is lacking?

[Semi-darkness.]

PIZARRO: This is probably our last night. If we die, what will we have gone for?

DE SOTO: Spain. Christ.

PIZARRO: I envy you, Cavalier.

DE SOTO: For what?

PIZARRO: Your service. God. King. It's all simple for you.

DE SOTO: No, sir, it's not simple. But it's what I've chosen.

PIZARRO: Yes. And what have I chosen?

DE SOTO: To be a King yourself. Or as good, if we win here.

PIZARRO: And what's that at my age? Not only swords turn into bars of metal. Sceptres too. What's left, De Soto?

DE SOTO: What you told me in Spain. A name for ballads. The man of honour has three good lives: The Life Today. The Life to Come. The Life of Fame.

PIZARRO: Fame is long. Death is longer ... Does anyone ever die for anything? I thought so once. Life was fierce with feeling. It was all hope, like on that boy. Swords shone and armour sang, and cheese bit you, and kissing burned, and death – ah, death was going to make an exception in my case! I couldn't believe I was ever going to die. But once you know it – really know it – it's all over. You know you've been cheated, and nothing's the same again.

DE SOTO: Cheated?

PIZARRO: Time cheats us all the way. Children, yes – having children goes some steps to defeating it. Nothing else. It would have been good to have

sceptres: staffs carried as a symbol of royal or imperial authority

time cheats us all the way: for Pizarro time cheats us because there is no immortality, except, perhaps, through children,

a son.

DE SOTO: Did you never think to marry?

PIZARRO: With my parentage? The only women who would have had me weren't the sort you married. Spain's a pile of horse-dung ... When I began to think of a world here, something in me was longing for a new place like a country after rain, washed clear of all the badges and barriers, the pebbles men drop to tell them where they are on a plain that's got no landmarks. I used to look after women with hope, but they didn't have much time for me. One of them said – what was it? – my soul was frostbitten. That's a word for you – Frostbitten. How goes it, man?

VASCA [*off*]: A clear night, sir. Everything clear.

PIZARRO: I had a girl once, on a rock by the Southern Ocean. I lay with her one afternoon in winter, wrapped up in her against the cold and the sea-fowl screaming, and it was the best hour of my life. I felt then that sea-water, and bird-droppings, and the little pits in human flesh, were all linked together for some great end right out of the net of words to catch. Not just my words, but anyone's. Then I lost it. Time came back. For always.

[*He moves away, feeling his side.*]

DE SOTO: Does it pain you?

PIZARRO: Oh, yes: *that's* still fierce.

DE SOTO: You should try to sleep. We'll need our strength.

PIZARRO: Listen, listen! Everything we feel is made of Time! All the beauties of life are shaped by it. Imagine a

What happens, for Pizarro, if you try to hold on to a

because death is final

moment? How does time cheat you of life, according to Pizarro? Would Pizarro feel the same way if he believed in the immortality of the soul? What does this add to our understanding of Pizarro's sense of being cheated?

fixed sunset: the last note of a song that hung an hour, or a kiss for half of it. Try and halt a moment in our lives and it becomes maggoty at once. Even that word 'moment' is wrong, since that would mean a *speck* of time, something you could pick up on a rag and peer at ... But that's the awful trap of life. You can't escape maggots unless you go with Time, and if you go, they wriggle in you anyway.

DE SOTO: This is gloomy talk.

[YOUNG MARTIN *groans in his sleep.*]

PIZARRO: For a gloomy time. You were talking women. I loved them with all the juice in me – but oh, the cheat in that tenderness! What is it but a lust to own their beauty, not them, which you never can: like trying to own the beauty of a goblet by paying for it. And even if you could it would become *you* and get soiled ... I'm an old man, Cavalier, I can explain nothing. What I mean is: Time whipped up the lust in me and Time purged it. I was dandled on Time's knee and made to gurgle, then put to my sleep. I've been cheated from the moment I was born because there's death in everything.

DE SOTO: Except in God.

[*A pause.*]

PIZARRO: When I was young, I used to sit on the slope outside the village and watch the sun go down, and I used to think: if only I could find the place where it sinks to rest for the night, I'd find the source of life, like the beginning of a river. I used to wonder what it could be like. Perhaps an island – a strange place of white sand, where the people never died. Never grew old, or

maggoty: rotten with the larvae of flies, like a decomposing corpse

dandled: another old-fashioned word: to dance or bounce a baby on your knee

Note the pause here. Why does Pizarro let these words hang in the air?

sinks to rest for the night: the early Church taught the Ptolemaic model of the solar system, i.e. that the earth was the centre of the universe and that all the planets revolved

felt pain, and never died.

DE SOTO: Sweet fancy.

PIZARRO: It's what your mind runs to when it lacks instruction. If I had a son, I'd kill him if he didn't read his book ... Where does the sun rest at night?

DE SOTO: Nowhere. It's a heavenly body set by God to move round the earth in perpetual motion.

PIZARRO: Do you know this?

DE SOTO: All Europe knows it.

PIZARRO: What if they were wrong? If it settled here each evening, somewhere in those great mountains, like a god laid down to sleep? To a savage mind it must make a fine god. I myself can't fix anything nearer to a thought of worship than standing at dawn and watching it fill the world. Like the coming of something eternal, against going flesh. What a fantastic wonder that anyone on earth should dare to say: 'That's my father. My father: the sun!' It's silly – but tremendous ... You know – strange nonsense: since first I heard of him I've dreamed of him every night. A black king with glowing eyes, sporting the sun for a crown. What does it mean?

DE SOTO: I've no skill with dreams. Perhaps a soothsayer would tell you: 'The Inca's your enemy. You dream his emblem to increase your hate.'

PIZARRO: But I feel no enemy.

DE SOTO: Surely you do.

PIZARRO: No. Only that of all meetings I have made in my life, this with him is the one I have to make ... Maybe it's my death. Or maybe new life. I feel just this: all my days have been a

around it. This earth-centred model was based on theological principles in which the earth was the direct creation of God. In 1543 a scientist named Nicolaus Copernicus published his findings proving that the sun was in fact the centre of the solar system around which the planets moved. The Church initially opposed Copernicus's views. Shaffer is indirectly drawing attention to this belief system and contrasting it with that of the Incas who see the sun as a God, as the central moving force.

going flesh: figuratively, becoming human and therefore subject to death

soothsayer: a diviner or prophet who foretells the future by reading omens and signs, for example, the eagle that falls from the sky is read by the High Priest as a sign of the fall of the Inca

emblem: a symbolic object, here the crown that is the symbol of Atahuallpa's power

Pizarro tells us that he feels no enmity towards the Inca. Even if this meeting leads to his death it is his destiny. We now know that he does not act out of hate or belief in a cause.

Remember this as their relationship unfolds. Again Pizarro implies the possibility of rebirth. How does his growing attraction to the Inca and the possibility of belief that

he stands for reinforce the tragic aspects of what happens later? If Pizarro kills the Inca, he will lose the only possibility of belief still open to him.

path to this one morning.

OLD MARTIN: The sixteenth of November, 1532. First light, sir.

XI

The scene opens with Valverde leading the men in prayer. He calls on God the Lord, exalts Him as their master and asks Him to take away their sins and deliver them safely. The lines here (in Latin) are quotations from Psalms, where David re-emphasizes his reliance on God. The Army conceal themselves all day in 'full armour, cavalry mounted and infantry at the ready, standing in dead silence ...' waiting to ambush the Indians. At sunset the Indians march ceremonially towards Cajamarca. They throw down their weapons and advance to meet the priests.

[*Lights brighten slowly.*]

VALVERDE [*singing, off*]: Exsurge Domine.

SOLDIERS [*singing in unison*]: Exsurge Domine.

[*All the company comes on, chanting.*]

VALVERDE: Deus meus eripe me de manu peccatoris.

SOLDIERS: Deus meus eripe me de manu peccatoris.

[*All kneel, spread across the stage.*]

VALVERDE: Many strong bulls have compassed me.

DE NIZZA: They have gaped upon me with their mouths, as a lion ravening.

VALVERDE: I am poured out like water, and all my bones are scattered.

DE NIZZA: My heart is like wax, melting in the midst of my bowels. My tongue cleaves to my jaws, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

[*All freeze.*]

OLD MARTIN: The dust of death. It was

Biblical language is used here.
How is this ironic?

bulls have compassed me:

a reference to being surrounded by bulls at a bull-fight

as a lion ravening: like a lion tearing its prey to pieces

Note how Shaffer uses Old Martin, the narrator, to convey the sense of the army's waiting and the passing of time. Note also how the characters' sentences get shorter and shorter as the Incas approach. How does this convey their terror to the audience?

in our noses. The full scare came to us quickly, like plague.

[*All heads turn.*]

The men were crammed in buildings all round the square.

[*All stand.*]

They stood there shivering, making water where they stood. An hour went by. Two. Three.

[*All remain absolutely still.*]

Five. Not a move from the Indian camp. Not a sound from us. Only the weight of the day. A hundred and sixty men in full armour, cavalry mounted, infantry at the ready, standing in dead silence – glued in a trance of waiting.

PIZARRO: Hold fast now. Come on – you're gods. Take heart. Don't blink your eyes, that's too much noise.

OLD MARTIN: Seven.

PIZARRO: Stiff. Stiff. You're your own masters, boys. Not peasants anymore. This is your time. Own it. Live it.

OLD MARTIN: Nine. Ten hours passed. There were few of us then who didn't feel the cold begin to crawl.

PIZARRO [*whispering*]: Send him, send him, send him, send him!

OLD MARTIN: Dread comes with the evening air. Even the priest's arm fails.

PIZARRO: The sun's going out!

OLD MARTIN: No one looks at his neighbour. Then, with the shadow of night already running towards us –

YOUNG MARTIN: *They're coming!*

Look, down the hill –

DE SOTO: How many?

YOUNG MARTIN: Hundreds, sir.

DE CANDIA: Thousands – two or three.

PIZARRO: Can you see *him*?

like plague: fear spreads like an infectious disease through the men

making water: urinating

DE CANDIA: No, not yet.
 DOMINGO: What's that? – out there in front – they're doing something.
 VASCA: Looks like sweeping –
 DIEGO: They're sweeping the road!
 DOMINGO: For *him*! They're sweeping the road for him! Five hundred of 'em
sweeping the road!
 SALINAS: God in Heaven!
 PIZARRO: Are they armed?
 DE CANDIA: To the teeth!
 DE SOTO: How? –
 DE CANDIA: Axes and spears.
 YOUNG MARTIN: They're all glittering, glittering red! –
 DIEGO: It's the sun! Like someone's stabbed it!
 VASCA: Squinting blood all over the sky!
 DOMINGO: It's an omen! –
 SALINAS: Shut up.
 DOMINGO: It must be. The whole country's bleeding. Look for yourself. It's an omen!
 VALVERDE: This is the day foretold you by the Angel of the Apocalypse! Satan reigns on the altars, jeering at the true God. The earth teems with corrupt kings!
 DOMINGO: Oh God! Oh God! Oh God! Oh God!
 DE SOTO: Control yourself!
 DE CANDIA: They're stopping!
 YOUNG MARTIN: They're throwing things down, sir!
 PIZARRO: What things?
 DE CANDIA: Weapons.
 PIZARRO: No!
 DIEGO: Yes, sir. I can see. All their weapons. They're throwing them down in a pile.

Again Shaffer uses dramatic irony, as the audience is aware that the country will in fact be bleeding when the Spanish take over.

Angel of the Apocalypse:

this Angel bears the message of God's violent ending of the world to bring an end to sin and take the righteous and redeemed up to heaven. This is part of the prophecy in The Book of Revelation by St. John. In the second part of the book, visions and symbols point to the end of the world and the need for Christians to remain steadfast in the belief that God will overcome his (and their) enemies, especially Satan, the master of evil, who sets himself up as a false God.

VASCA: They're laying down their arms.

SALINAS: I don't believe it!

VASCA: They are. They are leaving everything!

DOMINGO: It's a miracle.

DE SOTO: Why? Why?

PIZARRO: *Because we're gods.* You see? You don't approach gods with weapons!

[*Strange music faintly in the distance. Through all the ensuing it grows louder and louder.*]

DE SOTO: What's that?

YOUNG MARTIN: It's *him*. He's coming, sir.

PIZARRO: Where?

YOUNG MARTIN: *There*, sir.

DIEGO: Oh, look, *look*. God Almighty, it's not happening! ...

DE SOTO: Steady man.

PIZARRO: You're coming. Come on then! *Come on!*

DE SOTO: General, it's time to hide.

PIZARRO: Yes, quick now. No one must be seen but the priests. Out there in the middle, Fathers: everyone else in hiding.

DE SOTO: Quick! jump to it!
[*Only now do the men break, scatter and vanish.*]

PIZARRO [to YOUNG MARTIN]: You too.

YOUNG MARTIN: Until the fighting, sir?

PIZARRO: All the time for you, fighting or no.

YOUNG MARTIN: Oh no, sir!

PIZARRO: Do as I say. Take him, De Soto.

DE SOTO: Save you, General.

PIZARRO: And you, De Soto. San Jago!

DE SOTO: San Jago! Come on.

DE CANDIA: There are seven gunners
on the roof. And three over there.

PIZARRO: Watch the cross-fire.

DE CANDIA: I'll wait for your signal.

PIZARRO: Then sound yours.

DE CANDIA: You'll hear it.

PIZARRO [*to FELIPILLO*]: Felipillo!

Stand there! Now ... now ... NOW!

[*He hurries off.*]

XII

Atahualpa enters in a full and spectacular procession. He demands to see the god who has sent him greetings. Valverde and De Nizza try to explain Catholicism to him but he rejects them angrily. Pizarro sounds the battle cry and his soldiers massacre three thousand unarmed Indians. At the end of the massacre Atahualpa is led off at sword point by the Spaniards.

[*The music crashes over the stage as the Indian procession enters in an astonishing explosion of colour. The King's attendants – many of them playing musical instruments: reed pipes, cymbals, and giant marraccas – are as gay as parrots. They wear costumes of orange and yellow, and fantastic head-dresses of gold and feathers, with eyes embossed on them in staring black enamel. By contrast, ATAHUALLPA INCA presents a picture of utter simplicity. He is dressed from head to foot in white: across his eyes is a mask of jade mosaic, and round his head a circlet of plain gold. Silence falls. The King glares about him.*]

ATAHUALLPA [*haughtily*]: Where is the god?

marracca: a type of musical instrument

VALVERDE [*through FELIPILLO*]: I am a Priest of God.

ATAHUALLPA: I do not want the priest. I want the god. Where is he? He sent me greeting.

VALVERDE: That was our General. Our God cannot be seen.

ATAHUALLPA: *I may see him.*

VALVERDE: No. He was killed by men and went into the sky.

ATAHUALLPA: A god cannot be killed. See my father! You cannot kill him. He lives for ever and looks over his children every day.

VALVERDE: I am the answer to all mysteries. Hark, pagan, and I will expound.

OLD MARTIN: And so he did, from the Creation to Our Lord's ascension.

[*He goes off.*]

VALVERDE [*walking among the Indians to the right*]: And when he went he left the Pope as Regent for him.

DE NIZZA [*walking among the Indians to the left*]: And when he went he left the Pope as Regent for him.

VALVERDE: He has commanded our King to bring all men to belief in the true God.

DE NIZZA: He has commanded our King to bring all men to belief in the true God.

VALVERDE } [together]: In Christ's
DE NIZZA } name therefore I charge you: yield yourself his willing vassal.

ATAHUALLPA: I am the vassal of no man! I am the greatest prince on earth. Your King is great. He has sent you far across the water. So he is my brother.

my father: a reference to the sun

vassal: obedient and humble attendant

How does this scene dramatize the cultural difference between the Spanish and the Peruvians? How does Atahualpa's reaction to the book make sense on the one hand and anger Valverde on the other?

But your Pope is mad. He gives away countries that are not his. His faith also is mad.

VALVERDE: Beware!

ATAHUALLPA: Ware you! You kill my people; you make them slaves. By what power?

VALVERDE: By this. [*He offers a Bible.*] The Word of God.

[ATAHUALLPA holds it to his ear. He listens intently. He shakes it.]

ATAHUALLPA: No word. [*He smells the book, and then licks it. Finally he throws it down impatiently.*] God is angry with your insults.

VALVERDE: Blasphemy!

ATAHUALLPA: God is angry!

VALVERDE [*calling*]: Francisco Pizarro, do you stay your hand when Christ is insulted? Let this pagan feel the power of your arm. I absolve you all! San Jago!

[PIZARRO appears above with drawn sword, and in a great voice sings out his battle-cry:]

PIZARRO: SAN JAGO Y CIERRA ESPAÑA!

[*Instantly from all sides the soldiers rush in, echoing the great cry.*]

SOLDIERS: SAN JAGO!

[*There is a tense pause. The Indians look at this ring of armed men in terror. A violent drumming begins, and there ensues:*

THE MIME OF THE GREAT MASSACRE

[To a savage music, wave upon wave of Indians are slaughtered and rise again to protect their lord who stands bewildered in their midst. It is all in vain. Relentlessly the Spanish soldiers hew their way through the ranks of feathered attendants towards their quarry. They surround him. SALINAS snatches the crown off his head and tosses it up to PIZARRO, who catches it and to a great shout crowns himself. All the Indians cry out in horror. The drum hammers on relentlessly while ATAHUALLPA is led off at sword-point by the whole band of Spaniards. At the same time, dragged from the middle of the sun by howling Indians, a vast blood-stained cloth bellies out over the stage. All rush off; their screams fill the theatre. The lights fade out slowly on the rippling cloth of blood.]

hew: cut or chop with an axe or sword

Rather than representing the massacre realistically, Shaffer chooses to have it enacted in mime (silent acting using only movement and gestures). Why does he choose mime? Why does he choose to imply the horror rather than recreate it? What does the cloth of blood represent?

Why do you think Shaffer ends Act I at this point?

ACT II

THE KILL

I

Act II opens to the sounds of a bitter lament. The cloth of the massacre is still on the stage to remind us of the conclusion of Act I. Old Martin pours scorn on his younger self and recalls the disillusion and loss of faith he experienced after the massacre. De Soto tries to comfort Young Martin by explaining that the killing made Christ's Kingdom possible in Peru.

[*Darkness. A bitter Inca lament is intoned, above. Lights up a little. The bloodstained cloth still lies over the stage. In the sun chamber ATAHUALLPA stands in chains, his back to the audience, his white robe dirty with blood. Although he is unmasked, we cannot yet see his face, only a tail of black hair hanging down his neck.*

OLD MARTIN *appears. From opposite, YOUNG MARTIN comes in, stumbling with shock. He collapses on his knees.*]

OLD MARTIN: Look at the warrior where he struts. Glory on his sword. Salvation in his new spurs. One of the knights at last. The very perfect knight of Sir Martin, tender in virtue, body-guard of Christ. Jesus, we are all eased out of kids' dreams; but who can be ripped out of them and live loving after? Three thousand Indians we killed in that square. The only Spaniard to be wounded was the General, scratched by a sword whilst protecting his royal prisoner. That

lament: song of grief of mourning

the warrior: a reference to his younger self

spurs: sharp instrument worn on a horseman's boots and used to control a horse while riding. 'To gain one's spurs' is a figure of speech indicating that one has gained distinction, made a name for oneself, joined the men of action.

Note the use of the image of time stopped. Pizarro's quest to find an answer to time has led to the stopping of time, but not in the manner he yearns for.

How does De Soto justify his bloody and treacherous actions to himself?

night, as I knelt vomiting into a canal, the empire of the Incas stopped. The spring of the clock was snapped. For a thousand miles men sat down, not knowing what to do.

[Enter DE SOTO.]

DE SOTO: Well, boy, what is it? They weren't armed, is that it? If they had been we could be dead now.

YOUNG MARTIN: Honourably dead! Not alive and shamed.

DE SOTO: And Christ would be dead here too, scarcely born. When I first breathed blood it was in my lungs for days. But the time comes when you won't even sniff when it pours over your feet. See, boy, here and now it's kill or get killed. And if we go, we betray Christ, whose coming we are here to make.

YOUNG MARTIN: You talk as if we're butlers, sent to open the door for him.

DE SOTO: So we are.

YOUNG MARTIN: No! He's with us now – at all times – or never.

DE SOTO: He's with us, yes, but not with them. After he is, there will be time for mercy.

YOUNG MARTIN: When there is no danger! Some mercy!

DE SOTO: Would you put Christ in danger, then?

YOUNG MARTIN: He can look after himself.

DE SOTO: He can't. That's why he needs his servants.

YOUNG MARTIN: To kill for him?

DE SOTO: If necessary. And it was. My parish priest used to say: There must always be dying to make new life. I think of that whenever I draw the

Why does Young Martin not understand an all-powerful God who requires his followers to kill?

sword. My constant thought is: I must be winter for Our Lord to be spring.
YOUNG MARTIN: I don't understand.
[PIZARRO and FELIPILLO come in.]
PIZARRO: Stand up when the Second addresses you! What are you, a defiled girl? [To DE SOTO] I've sent De Candia back to the garrison. Reinforcements should be there presently. Come now: let's meet this King.

II

Pizarro and Atahualpa meet at last. Felipillo translates for Pizarro and deliberately distorts what the two leaders say, hoping to incite them to kill each other so that he can take Atahualpa's wife. Young Martin becomes the translator and dedicates himself to excelling in the Inca's language.

[Lights up more. They move upstage and bow. Above OELLO and INTI COUSSI come in and kneel on either side of the Inca, who ignores the embassy below.]

PIZARRO: My lord, I am Francisco Pizarro, General of Spain. It is an honour to speak with you. [Pause.] You are very tall, my lord. In my country are no such tall men. [Pause.] My lord, won't you speak?

[ATAHUALLPA turns. For the first time we see his face, carved in a mould of serene arrogance. His whole bearing displays the most entire dignity and natural grace. When he moves or speaks, it is always with the consciousness of his divine origin, his sacred function and his absolute power.]

ATAHUALLPA [to FELIPILLO]: Tell him I am Atahualpa Capac, Son of the

defiled: made unclean. This word often refers to a girl deprived of her virginity outside of marriage, hence deprived of her honour. Here it refers to Young Martin, who has been deprived of his honour, made unclean and desecrated.

embassy: representatives of a foreign power

Why does Shaffer choose to use an interpreter here? What

dramatic effect does Felipillo serve? What does this scene tell us about communicating across cultures?

What does Atahualpa define as evil? How is this different from what the priests define as sin?

Sun, Son of the Moon, Lord of the Four Quarters. Why does he not kneel?

FELIPILLO: The Inca says he wishes he had killed you when you first came.

PIZARRO: Why didn't he?

ATAHUALLPA: He lied to me. He is not a god. I came for blessing. He sharpened his knives on the shoulders of my servants. I have no word for him whose word is evil.

FELIPILLO: He says he wants to make slaves of your best warriors, then kill all the others. Especially you he would kill because you are old; no use as slave.

PIZARRO: Tell him he will live to rue those intentions.

FELIPILLO: You make my master angry. He will kill you tomorrow. Then he will give that wife [*he indicates OELLO*] to me for my pleasure. [*OELLO rises in alarm.*]

ATAHUALLPA: How dare you speak this before my face?

YOUNG MARTIN: General.

PIZARRO: What?

YOUNG MARTIN: Excuse me, sir, but I don't think you're being translated aright.

PIZARRO: You don't.

YOUNG MARTIN: No, sir. Nor the King to you. I know a little of the language and he said nothing about slaves.

PIZARRO: You! What are you saying?

FELIPILLO: General Lord. This boy know nothing how to speak.

YOUNG MARTIN: I know more than you think. I know you're lying ... He's after the woman, General. I saw

him before, in the square, grabbing at her.

PIZARRO: Is that true?

YOUNG MARTIN: As I live, sir.

PIZARRO: What do you say?

FELIPILLO: General Lord, I speak wonderful for you. No one speak so wonderful.

PIZARRO: What about that girl?

FELIPILLO: You give her as present to me, yes?

PIZARRO: The Inca's wife?

FELIPILLO: Inca has many wives. This one small, not famous.

PIZARRO: Get out.

FELIPILLO: General Lord!

PIZARRO: You work another trick like this and I'll swear I'll hang you. Out!

[FELIPILLO *spits at him and runs off.*]

PIZARRO: Could you take his place?

YOUNG MARTIN: With work, sir.

PIZARRO: Work, then. Come, let's make a start. Ask him his age.

YOUNG MARTIN: My lord, [*hesitantly*] how old are him? I mean 'you' ...

ATAHUALLPA: I have been on earth thirty and three years. What age is your master?

YOUNG MARTIN: Sixty-three.

ATAHUALLPA: All those years have taught him nothing but wickedness.

YOUNG MARTIN: That's not true.

PIZARRO: What does he say?

YOUNG MARTIN: I don't quite understand, my lord ... [YOUNG MARTIN *bows and goes off.*]

OLD MARTIN: So it was I became the General's interpreter and was privy to everything that passed between them during the next months. The Inca tongue was very hard, but to please

privy: 'to be privy to' means to be allowed to know the inner workings of something, usually private or secret

my adored master I worked at it for hours, and with each passing day found out more of it.

[PIZARRO *leaves, followed by DE SOTO.*]

III

Martin teaches Atahualpa a Spanish card game and Atahualpa realizes that the arrival of the Spanish will lead to great suffering for his people. Pizarro, against the advice of De Soto, promises to free Atahualpa in exchange for a room full of gold. Atahualpa and Pizarro debate the worthiness of Pizarro's word of honour.

[*Re-enter YOUNG MARTIN above. OLD MARTIN watches below before going off.*]

YOUNG MARTIN: Good day, my lord. I have a game here to amuse you. No Spaniard is complete without them. I take half and you take half. Then we fight. These are the Churchmen with their pyxes. The Nobility with their swords. The Merchants with their gold, and the Poor with their sticks.

ATAHUALLPA: What are the poor?

YOUNG MARTIN: Those who've got no gold. They suffer for this.

ATAHUALLPA [*crying out*]: Aiyah!

YOUNG MARTIN: What are you thinking, my lord?

ATAHUALLPA: That my people will suffer.

[*Enter PIZARRO and DE SOTO.*]

PIZARRO: Good day, my lord. How are you this morning?

ATAHUALLPA: You want gold. That is why you came here.

PIZARRO: My lord –

pyxes: vessels in which consecrated bread is kept (the bread that stands for the body of Christ in the ritual of the Eucharist). This word also refers to the box (pyx) at the Royal Mint in which specimens of gold and silver were deposited to be tested for their purity and value. Shaffer is playing on the double meaning of the word, showing the overlap between Christ and gold.

Aiyah: a cry of alarm

ATAHUALLPA: You cannot hide from me. [*Showing him the card of the Poor*] You want gold. I know. Speak.

PIZARRO: You have gold?

ATAHUALLPA: It is the sweat of the sun. It belongs to me.

PIZARRO: Is there much?

ATAHUALLPA: Make me free. I would fill this room.

PIZARRO: Fill?

DE SOTO: It's not possible.

ATAHUALLPA: I am Atahuallpa and I say it.

PIZARRO: How long?

ATAHUALLPA: Two showings of my Mother Moon. But it will not be done.

PIZARRO: Why not?

ATAHUALLPA: You must swear to free me and you have no swear to give.

*you have no swear to give:
your word is not reliable*

PIZARRO: You wrong me, my lord.

ATAHUALLPA: No, it is in your face, no swear.

PIZARRO: I have never broke word with you. I never promised you safety. If once I did, you would have it.

ATAHUALLPA: Do you now?

DE SOTO: Refuse, sir. You could never free him.

PIZARRO: It won't come to that.

DE SOTO: It could.

PIZARRO: Never. Can you think how much gold it would take? Even half would drown us in riches.

DE SOTO: General, you can only give your word where you can keep it.

PIZARRO: I'll never have to break it. It's the same case.

DE SOTO: It's not.

PIZARRO: Oh, God's wounds, your niceties! He's offering more than any conqueror has ever seen. Alexander,

Alexander: Alexander the Great

Tamberlaine, or who you please. I mean to have it.

DE SOTO: So. At your age gold is no lodestone!

PIZARRO: No more is it. I promised my men gold. Yes? He stands between them and that gold. If I don't make this bargain now he'll die; the men will demand it.

DE SOTO: And what's that to you if he does?

PIZARRO: I want him alive. At least for a while.

DE SOTO: You're thinking of how you dreamed of him.

PIZARRO: Yes. He has some meaning for me, this man-god. An immortal man in whom all his people live completely. He has an answer for Time.

DE SOTO: If it was true.

PIZARRO: Yes, if ...

DE SOTO: General, be careful. I don't understand you in full but I know this: what you do now can never be undone.

PIZARRO: Words, my dear Cavalier. They don't touch me. This way I'll have gold for my men and him there safe. That's enough for the moment. [To ATAHUALLPA] Now you must keep the peace meanwhile, not strive to escape, nor urge your men to help you. So swear.

ATAHUALLPA: I swear!

PIZARRO: Then I swear too. Fill that room with gold and I will set you free.

DE SOTO: General!

PIZARRO: Oh, come man! He never will.

DE SOTO: I think this man performs what he swears. Pray God we don't

expanded the Roman Empire by conquering most of the countries around the Mediterranean sea.

Tamberlaine: Actually Tamerlane or Timur; a Tartar conqueror descended from Genghis Kahn, who created a vast empire from the Black Sea to the Indus River and the Persian Gulf. He was legendary for his cruelties and atrocities and for helping to consolidate Russia.

What does Pizarro mean when he says that Atahualpa has an answer for time?

Now Pizarro claims that he is untouched by words. Note how Shaffer carefully foreshadows Pizarro's later dilemma and the character traits that lead him inevitably to tragedy.

pay bitterly for this.

[*He goes off. Enter OLD MARTIN.*]

PIZARRO: My lord – [ATAHUALLPA ignores him] – well spoken, lad. Your services increase every day.

YOUNG MARTIN: Thank you, sir.

[*The General leaves the stage and the boy goes out of the Sun Chamber, leaving ATAHUALLPA alone in it.*]

OLD MARTIN: The room was twenty-two feet long by seventeen feet wide. The mark on the wall was nine feet high.

[*The Inca adopts a pose of command. Drums mark each name.*]

ATAHUALLPA: Atahualpa speaks!

[*A crash of instruments.*]

Atahualpa needs!

[*Crash.*]

Atahualpa commands!

[*Crash.*]

Bring him gold. From the palaces. From the temples. From all the buildings in the great places. From walls of pleasure and roofs of omen. From floors of feasting and ceilings of death. Bring him the gold of Quito and Pachamacac! Bring him the gold of Cuzco and Coricancha! Bring him the gold of Vilcanota! Bring him the gold of Colae! Of Aymaraes and Arequipa! Bring him the gold of the Chimu! Put up a mountain of gold and free your Sun from his prison of clouds.

[*Lights down above. ATAHUALLPA leaves the chamber.*]

OLD MARTIN: It was agreed that the gold collected was not to be melted beforehand into bars, so that the Inca got the benefit of the space between them. Then he was moved out of his

roofs of omen: the roofs of the houses of priests and soothsayers

ceilings of death: burial chambers

Quito, Pachamacac, etc:

a list of cities and provinces in the Inca's kingdom

prison to make way for the treasure,
and given more comfortable state.

IV

Felipillo attempts to attack Atahualpa's wife and is damned by Valverde. Valverde and Villac Umu argue their theological positions. Atahualpa and De Nizza join in. Each tries to show the logical flaws in the other's argument. De Nizza insists that without choice, love is impossible; without the need for love, God cannot approach man, and without the capacity for hunger and yearning, life loses its meaning. Atahualpa accuses the Catholics of symbolic cannibalism and insists that the Sun is the one true God. The 'First Gold Procession' then ensues. Pizarro questions Atahualpa's intentions and is warned by Valverde not to be too familiar with the heathen.

[Lights fade above, and brighten below. Slowly the great cloth of blood is dragged off by two Indians as ATAHUALLPA appears. He advances to the middle of the stage. He claps his hands, once. Immediately a gentle hum is heard and Indians appear with new clothing. From their wrists hang tiny golden cymbals and small bells; to the soft clash and tinkle of these little instruments his servants remove the Inca's bloodstained garments and put on him clean ones.]

OLD MARTIN: He was allowed to audience his nobles. The little loads they bore were a sign of reverence.

[VILLAC UMU and CHALLCUCHEMA come in.]

He was dressed in his royal cloak, made from the skins of vampire birds, and his ears were hung again with the weight of noble responsibility.

to audience: to give his nobles a formal hearing

vampire bird: a large bat that drinks blood from resting animals; vampires are legendary

[ATAHUALLPA is cloaked, a collar of turquoises is placed round his neck and heavy gold rings are placed in his ears. While this is happening there is a fresh tinkling and more Indians appear, carrying his meal in musical dishes – plates like tambourines from whose rims hang bells, or in whose lower shelves are tiny golden balls. The stage is filled with chimes and delicate clatter, and above it is the perpetual humming of masked servants.]

OLD MARTIN: His meals were served as they always had been. I remember his favourite food was stewed lamb, garnished with sweet potatoes.

[The food is served to the Inca in this manner. OELLO takes meat out of a bowl, places it in her hands and ATAHUALLPA lowers his face to it, while she turns her own face away from him out of respect.]

OLD MARTIN: What he didn't eat was burnt, and if he spilled any on himself, his clothes were burnt also. [Exit.]

[OELLO rises and quietly removes the dish. Suddenly FELIPILLO rushes on and knocks it violently from her hand.]

FELIPILLO: You're going to burn it? Why? Because your husband is a god? How stupid! stupid! stupid!

[He grabs her and flings her to the ground. A general cry of horror.]

[To ATAHUALLPA] Yes, I touch her! Make me dead! You are a god. Make me dead with your eyes!

VILLAC UMU: What you have said kills you. You will be buried in the earth alive.

[A pause. For a moment FELIPILLO half believes this. Then he laughs and

half-human creatures that live on the blood of people
ears were hung ... noble responsibility: he was allowed to put on his emblems of nobility and kingship

kisses the girl on the throat. As she screams and struggles, YOUNG MARTIN rushes in.

YOUNG MARTIN: Felipillo – stop!

[VALVERDE comes in from another side, with DE NIZZA.]

VALVERDE: Felipillo! Is it for this we saved you from Hell? Your old god encouraged lust. Your new God will damn you for it. Leave him!

[FELIPILLO runs off.]

[To the INDIANS] Go!

[A pause. No one moves until ATAHUALLPA claps his hands twice. Then all the servants bow and leave.]

Now, my lord, let us take up our talk again. Tell me – I am only a simple priest – as an undoubted god, do you live forever here on earth?

VILLAC UMU: Here on earth gods come one after another, young and young again, to protect the people of the Sun. Then they go up to his great place in the sky, at his will.

VALVERDE: What if they are killed in battle?

VILLAC UMU: If it is not the Sun's time for them to go, he will return them to life again in the next day's light.

VALVERDE: How comforting. And has any Inca so returned?

VILLAC UMU: No.

VALVERDE: Curious.

VILLAC UMU: This means only that all Incas have died in the Sun's time.

VALVERDE: Clever.

VILLAC UMU: No. True.

VALVERDE: Tell me this, how can the Sun have a child?

VILLAC UMU: How can your god have a child, since you say he has no body?

How does Atahualpa shift the accusation of barbarity from his people onto the supposedly 'civilized' Europeans ?

VALVERDE: He is spirit – inside us.

VILLAC UMU: Your god is inside you?
How can this be?

ATAHUALLPA: They eat him. First he becomes a biscuit, and then they eat him. [*The Inca bares his teeth and laughs soundlessly.*] I have seen this. At praying they say 'This is the body of our God'. Then they drink his blood. It is very bad. Here in my empire we do not eat men. My family forbade it many years past.

VALVERDE: You are being deliberately stupid.

VILLAC UMU: Why do you eat your god? To have his strength?

DE NIZZA: Yes, my lord.

VILLAC UMU: But your god is weak.
He fights with no man. That is why he was killed.

DE NIZZA: He wanted to be killed, so he could share death with us.

ATAHUALLPA: So he needed killers to help him, though you say killing is bad.

VALVERDE: This is the Devil's tongue.

DE NIZZA: My lord must see that when God becomes man, he can no longer act perfectly.

ATAHUALLPA: Why?

DE NIZZA: He joins us in the prison of our sin.

ATAHUALLPA: What is sin?

DE NIZZA: Let me picture it to you as a prison cell, the bars made of our imperfections. Through them we glimpse a fair country where it is always morning. We wish we could walk there, or else forget the place entirely. But we cannot snap the bars. or if we do, others grow in their stead.

Who is more free: the 'free'
Europeans or the 'communitic'
Incas?

ATAHUALLPA: All your pictures are of
prisons and chains.

DE NIZZA: All life is chains. We are
chained to food, and fire in the winter.
To innocence lost but its memory
unlost. And to needing each other.

ATAHUALLPA: I need no one.

DE NIZZA: That is not true.

ATAHUALLPA: I am the Sun. I need
only the sky.

DE NIZZA: That is not true, Atahuallpa.
The sun is a ball of fire. Nothing more.

ATAHUALLPA: *How?*

DE NIZZA: Nothing more.

[*With terrible speed, the Inca rises to
strike DE NIZZA.*]

VALVERDE: Down! Do you dare lift
your hand against a priest? Sit! Now!
[*ATAHUALLPA does not move.*]

DE NIZZA: You do not feed your people,
my lord, because you do not love
them.

ATAHUALLPA: Explain love.

DE NIZZA: It is not known in your king-
dom. At home we can say to our
ladies: 'I love you', or to our native
earth. It means we rejoice in their
lives. But a man cannot say this to the
woman he must marry at twenty-five;
or to the strip of land allotted to him at
birth which he must till till he dies.
Love must be free, or else it alters
away. Command it to your court: it
will send a deputy. Let God order it to
fill our hearts, it becomes useless to
him. It is stronger than iron: yet in a
fist of force it melts. It is a coin that
sparkles in the hand; yet in the pocket
it turns to rust. Love is the only door
from the prison, to take on pain, and
imagine lust, so that the torn soldier,

Explain love: as with 'sin' ear-
lier in the scene, Atahuallpa
finds this European concept
abstract and unknown. It is,
however, presumed to be real
by the Catholics. The Inca feeds
his people literally but, for the
priest, hunger allows people to
come to the spiritual nourish-
ment of God.

or the spent lecher, can call out in his defeat: 'You know this too, so help me from it.'

[A further music of bells and humming.
Enter OLD MARTIN.]

THE FIRST GOLD PROCES- SION

[Guarded closely by Spanish soldiers, a line of Indian porters comes in, each carrying a stylized gold object – utensils and ornaments. They cross the stage and disappear. Almost simultaneously, above, similar objects are hung up by Indians in the middle of the sun.]

OLD MARTIN [during this]: The first gold arrived. Much of it was in big plates weighing up to seventy-five pounds, the rest in objects of amazing skill. Knives of ceremony; collars and fretted crowns; funeral gloves, and red-stained death masks, goggling at us with profound enamel eyes. Some days there were things worth thirty or forty gold pesos – but we weren't satisfied with that. [Exit.]

[Enter PIZARRO and DE SOTO.]

PIZARRO: I find you wanting in honesty.
A month has passed: the room isn't a quarter full.

ATAHUALLPA: My kingdom is great; porters are slow. You will see more gold before long.

PIZARRO: The rumour is we'll see a rising before long.

ATAHUALLPA: Not a leaf stirs in my kingdom without my leave. If you do not trust me send to Cuzco, my capital. See how quiet my people sit.

spent lecher: a worn-out fornicator or debauchee; someone who spends his life seeking sexual pleasure and sin. (This is bad spending as opposed to good accumulation.)

knives of ceremony: decorated and ornate knives used in rituals

collars: solid gold neck-bands that hang around the neck and cover the shoulders and part of the chest

fretted crowns: crowns carved and embossed with patterns of straight lines, usually at right angles to each other

funeral gloves: hand coverings used to decorate a corpse

death masks: casts or copies of a dead person's face, usually covered in gold

goggling ... enamel eyes: eyes made of a glasslike substance that seem to stare wide-eyed

PIZARRO [to DE SOTO]: Good. You leave immediately with a force of thirty.

CHALLCUCHIMA: God is tied by his word, like you. But if he raised one nail of one finger of one hand, you would all die that same raising.

PIZARRO [to ATAHUALLPA]: So be it. If you play us false, both these will die before us.

ATAHUALLPA: There are many priests, many generals. These can die.

VALVERDE: Mother of God! There's no conversion possible for this man.

DE SOTO: You cannot say that, sir.

VALVERDE: Satan has many forms and there sits one! As for his advisers, it is you, Priest, who stiffen him against me. You, General, who whisper revolt.

CHALLCUCHIMA: You lie.

VALVERDE: Leave him!

[As before, they do not move until ATAHUALLPA has clapped his hands twice. Then, immediately, the two Indians bow and leave.]

Pagan filth.

DE SOTO: I'll make inspection. Goodbye my lord, we'll meet in a month. [Exit DE SOTO.]

VALVERDE: Beware, Pizarro. Give him the slack, he will destroy us all. [He goes out another way.]

DE NIZZA: The Father has great zeal.

PIZARRO: Oh, yes, great zeal to see the Devil in a poor dark man.

DE NIZZA: Not so poor, General. A man who is the soul of his kingdom. Look hard, you *will* find Satan here. Because here is a country which denies the right to hunger.

PIZARRO: You call hunger a *right*?

gold pesos: solid gold coins. The peso was the currency in Spain at the time.

that same raising: that same morning at the rising of the sun
these will die: referring here to the priests

What is it that De Nizza claims the Incas do not have? What is each man's birthright according to De Nizza? How is Atahuallpa the Anti-Christ according to De Nizza?

DE NIZZA: Of course, it gives life meaning. Look around you: happiness has no feel for men here since they are forbidden unhappiness. They have everything in common so they have nothing to give each other. They are part of the seasons, no more; as indistinguishable as mules, as predictable as trees. All men are born unequal: this is a divine gift. And want is their birthright. Where you deny this and there is not hope of any new love – where tomorrow is abolished, and no man ever thinks ‘I can change myself’ – there you have the rule of Anti-Christ. Atahualpa, I will not rest until I have brought you to the true God.

ATAHUALLPA: No! He is not true! ... Where is he? *There* is my Father-Sun! You see now only by his wish; yet try to see into him and he will darken your eyes for ever! With hot burning he pulls up the corn and we feed. With cold burning he shrinks it and we starve. These are his burnings and our life. Do not speak to me again of your god. He is nowhere.

[PIZARRO *laughs. Hurriedly* DE NIZZA *leaves.*]

V

Atahualpa sees that Pizarro does not believe the teachings of the priests. Atahualpa sings a harvest song to Pizarro, accusing him of being a ‘robber bird’. Pizarro accuses Atahualpa of being a robber bird who stole his throne. Both are revealed to be ruthless in taking what they believe is theirs by right. They debate the necessity of murder to preserve their own lives. Realizing that, like him, Pizarro is also a bastard as well as a powerful man, Atahualpa

gives him the decorations of a nobleman. Atahualpa dances the dance of the nobleman for Pizarro. He forces Pizarro to attempt the dance and they all end up laughing at his attempt.

PIZARRO: You said you'd hear the Holy Men.

ATAHUALLPA: They are fools.

PIZARRO: They are not fools.

ATAHUALLPA: Do you believe them?

PIZARRO: For certain.

ATAHUALLPA: Look into me.

PIZARRO: Your eyes are smoking wood.

ATAHUALLPA: You do not believe them.

PIZARRO: You dare not say that to me ...

ATAHUALLPA: You do not believe them. Their god is not in your face.

[PIZARRO retreats from ATAHUALLPA, who begins to sing in a strange voice:]

You must not rob, O little finch.

The harvest maize, O little finch.

The trap is set, O little finch.

To seize you quick, O little finch!

Ask that black bird, O little finch.

Nailed on a branch, O little finch.

Where is her heart, O little finch.

Where are her plumes, O little finch?

She is cut up, O little finch.

For stealing grain, O little finch.

See, see the fate, O little finch.

Of robber birds, O little finch!

This is a harvest song. For you.

PIZARRO: For me?

ATAHUALLPA: Yes.

PIZARRO: Robber birds.

Why are these 'robber birds' attracted to each other? What does Atahualpa see in Pizarro's face? What does Pizarro see in Atahualpa? What does this scene add to our understanding

of the relationship between
these two men?

ATAHUALLPA: Yes.

PIZARRO: You're a robber bird yourself.

ATAHUALLPA: Explain this.

PIZARRO: You killed your brother to get the throne.

ATAHUALLPA: He was a fool. His body was a man. His head was a child.

PIZARRO: But he was the rightful King.

ATAHUALLPA: I was the rightful god. My Sky Father shouted 'Rise up! In you lives your Earth Father, Huayana the Warrior. Your brother is fit only to tend herds but you were born to tend my people.' So I killed him, and the land smiled.

PIZARRO: That was my work long ago. Tending herds.

ATAHUALLPA: It was not your work. You are a warrior. It is in your face.

PIZARRO: You see much in my face.

ATAHUALLPA: I see my father.

PIZARRO: You do me honour, lad.

ATAHUALLPA: Speak true. If in your home your brother was King, but fit only for herds, would you take his crown?

PIZARRO: If I could.

ATAHUALLPA: And then you would kill him.

PIZARRO: No.

ATAHUALLPA: If you could not keep it for fear of his friends, unless he was dead, you would kill him.

PIZARRO: Let me give you another case. If I come to a country and seize the King's crown, but for fear of his friends cannot keep it unless I kill him, what do I do?

ATAHUALLPA: So.

PIZARRO: So.

[ATAHUALLPA moves away, offended.]

Oh, it is only a game we play. Tell me
– did you hate your brother?

ATAHUALLPA: No. He was ugly like a
llama, like his mother. My mother was
beautiful.

PIZARRO: I did not know my mother.
She was not my father's wife. She left
me at the church door for anyone to
find. There's talk in the village still,
how I was suckled by a sow.

ATAHUALLPA: You are not then ...?

PIZARRO: Legitimate? No, my lord. No
more than you.

ATAHUALLPA: So.

PIZARRO: So.

[A pause.]

ATAHUALLPA: To be born so is a sign
for a great man.

PIZARRO [smiling]: I think so too.

[ATAHUALLPA removes one of his
golden earrings and hangs it on
PIZARRO'S ear.]

And what is that?

ATAHUALLPA: The sign of a noble-
man. Only the most important men
may wear them. The most near to me.

YOUNG MARTIN: Very becoming, sir.
Look.

[He hands him a dagger. The General
looks at himself in the blade.]

PIZARRO: I have never seemed so dis-
tinguished to myself. I thank you.

ATAHUALLPA: Now you must learn the
dance of the *aylu*.

YOUNG MARTIN: The dance of a
nobleman, sir.

ATAHUALLPA: Only he can do this. I
will show you.

[PIZARRO sits. ATAHUALLPA dances
a ferocious mime of a warrior killing his

foes. It is very difficult to execute, demanding great liveness and physical stamina. As suddenly as it began, it is over.]

ATAHUALLPA: You dance.

PIZARRO: I can't dance, lad.

ATAHUALLPA [*imperiously*]: You dance!

[He sits to watch. Seeing there is no help for it, PIZARRO rises and clumsily tries to copy the dance. The effect is so grotesque that YOUNG MARTIN cannot help laughing. The General tries again, lunges, slips, slides, and finally starts to laugh himself. He gives up the attempt.]

PIZARRO [*to ATAHUALLPA*]: You make me laugh! [*In sudden wonder*]
You make me laugh!

[ATAHUALLPA consults his young interpreter, who tries to explain. The Inca nods gravely. Tentatively PIZARRO extends his hand to him. ATAHUALLPA takes it and rises. Quietly they go off together.]

Why does Pizarro exclaim in sudden wonder? Why is laughter so important to Pizarro?

VI

De Soto returns but without reinforcements. He reports that the country is immobilized by the confinement of their King-God. The greedy and undisciplined Spaniards extract the gold from the great sun-like medallion, the symbol of the Inca empire, and they steal the booty. The room is now filled to capacity with gold and the men are restless.

Note how Old Martin's entrance works dramatically to undermine the atmosphere of laughter and growing friendship.

[Enter OLD MARTIN.]

OLD MARTIN: Slowly the pile increased. The army waited nervously and licked its lips. Greed began to rise in us like a tide of sea.

[A music of bells and humming.]