Again the dramatist uses images and symbols to show destruction of the Inca Empire. What are these images?

[Another line of Indian porters comes in, bearing gold objects. Like the first, this instalment of treasure is guarded by Spanish soldiers, but they are less disciplined now. Two of them assault an Indian and grab his head-dress. Another snatches a necklace at sword’s point.

Above, in the chamber, the treasure is piled up as before. DIEGO and the CHAVEZ brothers are seen supervising. They begin to explore the sun itself, leaning out of the chamber and prodding at the petals with their halberds. Suddenly DIEGO gives a cry of triumph, drives his halberd into a slot in one of the rays, and pulls out the gold inlay. The sun gives a deep groan, like the sound of a great animal being wounded. With greedy yelps, all the soldiers below rush at the sun and start pulling it to bits; they tear out the gold inlays and fling them on the ground, while terrible groans fill the air. In a moment only the great gold frame remains; a broken, blackened sun.

Enter DE SOTO.]

DIEGO: Welcome back, sir.
DE SOTO: Diego, it’s good to see you.
DIEGO: What’s it like, sir? Is there trouble?
DE SOTO: It’s grave quiet. Terrible. Men just standing in fields for hundreds of miles. Waiting for their god to come back to them.
DIEGO: Well, if he does they’ll be fighters again, and we’re for the limepit.

halberd: a combined spear and battle-axe
limepit: a pit filled with a mix-
How can Diego know more certainly than Pizarro that he will have to kill the Inca? What is the source of Pizarro's newfound ease?

Why does the playwright choose to have the objects described appear in the room above? What is the significance of these objects?

DE SOTO: How's the General?
DIEGO: An altered man. No one’s ever seen him so easy. He spends hours each day with the King. He’s going to find it hard when he has to do it.

DE SOTO: Do what?
DIEGO: Kill him, sir.
DE SOTO: He can’t do that. Not after a contract witnessed before a whole army.
DIEGO: Well, he can’t let him go, that’s for certain … Never mind, he’ll find a way. He’s as cunning as the Devil’s granddad, save your pardon, sir.
DE SOTO: No, you’re right, boy.
DIEGO: Tell us about their capital, then. What’s it like?

[During the preceding, a line of Indians, bent double, has been loaded with the torn-off petals from the sun. Now, as DE SOTO describes Cuzco, they file slowly round the stage and go off, staggering under the weight of the great gold slabs. When he reaches the account of the garden, the marvellous objects he tells of appear in the treasure chamber above, borne by Indians, and are stacked up until they fill it completely. The interior of the sun is now a solid mass of gold.]
DE SOTO: Completely round. They call it the navel of the earth and that’s what it looks like. In the middle was a huge temple, the centre of their faith. The walls were plated with gold, enough to blind us. Inside, set out on tables, golden platters for the sun to dine off. Outside, the garden: acres of gold soil planted with gold maize. Entire apple trees in gold. Gold birds on the branches. Gold geese and ducks. Gold butterflies in the air on silver strings.

Limepits were also used as poor people’s graves to decompose the bodies of those who could not afford a funeral and cemetery plot.
And – imagine this – away in a field, life-size, twenty golden llamas grazing with their kids. The garden of the Sun at Cuzco. A wonder of the earth...

**DIEGO** [rushing in below]: Hey! The room’s full!

**DOMINGO**: It isn’t!

**SALINAS**: It is. Look!

**JUAN**: He’s right. It’s full!

**DIEGO**: We can start the share-out now! [Cheers.]

**PEDRO**: What’ll you do with your lot, Juan, boy?

**JUAN**: Buy a farm.

**PEDRO**: Me, too. I don’t work for nobody ever again.

**DOMINGO**: Ah, you can buy a palace, easy, with a share of that. Never mind a pissing farm! What d’you say, Diego?

**DIEGO**: Oh, I want a farm. A good stud farm, and a stable of Araba just for me to ride! What will you have, Salinas?

**SALINAS**: Me? A bash-house! [Laughter.] Right in the middle of Trujillo, open six to six, filled with saddle-backed little fillies from Andalusia!...

[Enter **VASCA** rolling a huge gold sun, like a hoop.]

**VASCA**: Look what I got, boys! The sun!... He ain’t public any more, the old sun. He’s private property!

**DOMINGO**: There’s no private property, till share-out.

**VASCA**: Well, here’s the exception. I risked my life to get this, a hundred feet up!

**JUAN**: Dungballs!

**VASCA**: I did! Off the temple roof.

**PEDRO**: Come on, boy, get it up there...

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**Araba**: old word for the Arabian horse, a much prized and very expensive breed

**bash-house**: a brothel or establishment of prostitutes

**saddle-backed**: sexual pun on ‘riding’ a horse. ‘Riding’ was a slang term for having sexual intercourse.

**fillies from Andalusia**: a filly is a young, lively and frisky female horse and Andalusia is the southern administrative region of Spain that was settled by the Phoenicians, the Romans and the Moors from North Africa. Salinas draws on the stereotype that women from this area are better prostitutes because of...
with the rest.

VASCA: No. Finding’s keepings. That’s the law.

JUAN: What law?

VASCA: My law! Do you think you’ll see any of this once the share-out starts? Not on your pissing life! You leave it up there, boy, you won’t see nothing again.

PEDRO [to his brother]: He’s right there.

JUAN: Do you think so?

VASCA: Of course. Officers first, then the Church. You’ll get pissing nothing. [A pause.]

SALINAS: So let’s have a share-out now, then!

DOMINGO: Why not? We’re all entitled.

VASCA: Of course we are.

JUAN: All right. I’m with you!

PEDRO: Good boy!

SALINAS: Come on, then!

[They all make a rush for the Sun Chamber.]

DE SOTO: Where do you think you’re going?! ... You know the General’s orders. Nothing till share-out. Penalty for breach, death ... Disperse now. I’ll go and see the General.

[They hesitate.]

[Quietly] Get to your posts.

[Reluctantly, they disperse.]

And keep a sharp watch. The danger’s not over yet.

DIEGO: I’d say it had only just begun, sir.

[He goes. DE SOTO remains.]
Pizarro undertakes to grant Atahuallpa his freedom as promised, but then withdraws it when Atahuallpa will not guarantee the safety of his men. Atahuallpa swears revenge on the army that killed three thousand of his men. Pizarro goes back on his word and changes the 'magic marks' (written contract) he has made. Young Martin sees that the Inca trusts Pizarro, but that Pizarro will abuse this trust. He loses his idealistic devotion to Pizarro. Pizarro tells Atahuallpa that, viewed from Time's long perspective, killing him would be a trivial deed. He cannot, however, bring himself to do it.

[Enter PIZARRO and ATAHUALPA duelling furiously; YOUNG MARTIN behind. The Inca is a magnificent fighter and launches himself vigorously on the old man, finally knocking the sword from his hand.]

PIZARRO: Enough! You exhaust me ...

ATAHUALLPA: I fight well — ‘ye-es’?

[From the difficulty he has with this word, it is evident that it is in Spanish.]

PIZARRO [imitating him]: ‘Ye-es’! ...

Like a hidalgo!

YOUNG MARTIN: Magnificent, my lord.

PIZARRO: I’m proud of you.

ATAHUALLPA: Chica!

YOUNG MARTIN: Maize wine, sir.

PIZARRO: De Soto! — A drink, my dear Second.

DE SOTO: With pleasure. General, the room is full.

PIZARRO [casually]: I know it.

DE SOTO: My advice to you is to share out right away. The men are just on the turn.

PIZARRO: I think so too.
DE SOTO: We daren’t delay.

PIZARRO: Agreed. Now I shall astound you, Cavalier. Atahuallpa, you have learnt how a Spaniard fights. Now you will learn his honour. Martin, your pen. [Dictating] ‘Let this be known throughout my army. The Inca Atahuallpa has today discharged his obligation to General Pizarro. He is therefore a free man.’

DE SOTO [toasting him]: My lord, your freedom!

[ATAHUALLPA kneels. Silently he mouths words of gratitude to the sun.]

ATAHUALLPA: Atahuallpa thanks the lord De Soto, the lord Pizarro, all lords of honour. You may touch my joy.

[He extends his arms. Both Spaniards help to raise him.]

DE SOTO: What happens now?

PIZARRO: I release him. He must swear first, of course, not to harm us.

DE SOTO: Do you think he will?

PIZARRO: For me he will.

ATAHUALLPA [to the boy]: What is that you have done?

YOUNG MARTIN: Writing, my lord.

ATAHUALLPA: Explain this.

YOUNG MARTIN: These are signs: This is ‘Atahuallpa’, and this is ‘ransom’.

ATAHUALLPA: You put this sign, and he will see and know ‘ransom’?

YOUNG MARTIN: Yes.

ATAHUALLPA: No.

YOUNG MARTIN: Yes, my lord. I’ll do it again.

ATAHUALLPA: Here, on my nail. Do not say what you put.

[YOUNG MARTIN writes on his nail.]
YOUNG MARTIN: Now show it to Cavalier De Soto.

[He does so. DE SOTO reads and whispers to ATAHUALPA.]

ATAHUALLPA [to the boy]: What is put?

YOUNG MARTIN: God.

ATAHUALLPA [amazed]: God! ... [He stares at his nail in fascination then bursts into delighted laughter, like a child.] Show me again! Another sign.

[The boy writes on another nail.]

PIZARRO: Tell Salinas to take five hundred Indians and melt everything down.

DE SOTO: Everything?

PIZARRO: We can’t transport it as it is.

DE SOTO: But there are objects of great beauty, sir. In all my service I’ve never seen treasure like this. Work subtler than anything in Italy.

PIZARRO: You’re a tender man.

ATAHUALLPA [extending his nail to PIZARRO]: What is put?

PIZARRO [who of course cannot read]: Put?

ATAHUALLPA: Here.

PIZARRO: This is a foolish game.

YOUNG MARTIN: The General never learnt the skill, my lord. [An embarrassed pause.] A soldier does not need it.

[ATAHUALLPA stares at him.]

ATAHUALLPA: A King needs it! There is great power in these marks. You are the King in this room. You must teach us two. We will learn together — like brothers!

PIZARRO: You would stay with me here, to learn?

[Pause.]
ATAHUALLPA: No. Tomorrow I will go.
PIZARRO: And then? What will you do then?
ATAHUALLPA: I will not hurt you.
PIZARRO: Or my army?
ATAHUALLPA: That I do not swear.
PIZARRO: You must.
ATAHUALLPA: You do not say this till now.
PIZARRO: Well, now I say it. Atahuallpa, you must swear to me that you will not hurt a man in my army if I let you go.
ATAHUALLPA: I will not swear this.
PIZARRO: For my sake.
ATAHUALLPA: Three thousand of my servants they killed in the square! Three thousand, without arms. I will avenge them.
PIZARRO: There is a way of mercy, Atahuallpa.
ATAHUALLPA: It is not my way. It is not your way.
PIZARRO: Well, show it to me, then!
ATAHUALLPA: Keep your swear first.
PIZARRO: That I cannot do.
ATAHUALLPA: Cannot?
PIZARRO: Not immediately ... you must see: you are many, we are few.
ATAHUALLPA: This is not important.
PIZARRO: To me it is.
[ATAHUALLPA hisses with fury. He strides across the room and before PIZARRO’S face makes a violent gesture with his hand between their mouths.]
ATAHUALLPA [violently]: You gave me a word!
PIZARRO: And will keep it! ... Only not now. Not today.
ATAHUALLPA: When?

Note the irony here: those who came to the New World, supposedly to spread the Word of God, break their word.
PIZARRO: Soon.
ATAHUALLPA: When?
PIZARRO: Very soon.
ATAHUALLPA [falling on his knees and beating the ground]: When?
PIZARRO: As soon as you promise not to hurt my army.
ATAHUALLPA [with wild rage]: I will kill every man of them! I will make drums of their bodies! I will beat music on them at my great feasts!
PIZARRO [provoked]: Boy – what have I put?
YOUNG MARTIN: 'He is therefore a free man.'
PIZARRO: Continue: ‘But for the welfare of the country, he will remain for the moment as guest of the army.’
DE SOTO: What does that mean?
ATAHUALLPA: What does he say?
PIZARRO: Don’t translate.
DE SOTO: So it’s started. My warning was nothing to you.
PIZARRO: Well, gloat, gloat!
DE SOTO: I don’t gloat.
ATAHUALLPA: What does he say?
PIZARRO: Nothing.
ATAHUALLPA: There is fear in his face!
PIZARRO: Be quiet! ... [to DE SOTO] I want all the gold in blocks. Leave nothing unmelted. Attend to it yourself, personally!
[DE SOTO goes abruptly. OLD MARTIN appears in the background. PIZARRO is trembling.]
[To the page] Well, what are you staring at, Little Lord Chivalry? Get out!
YOUNG MARTIN: He trusts you, sir.
PIZARRO: Trust: what’s that? Another word! Honour ... glory ... trust: your
If Pizarro was really comfortable with abusing the Inca's trust, would he react as violently as he does? Why does the thought of having to kill Atahuallpa upset Pizarro so much?

How does Martin finally lose his innocence? Notice that this final loss of devotion is told by Old rather than Young Martin.

Read Pizarro's speech very

word-Gods!

YOUNG MARTIN: You can see it, sir. He trusts you.

PIZARRO: I told you: out.

YOUNG MARTIN [greatly daring]: You can't betray him, sir. You can't.

PIZARRO: Damn you – impertinence!

YOUNG MARTIN: I don't care, sir. You just can't! [He stops.]

PIZARRO [coldly]: In all your study of those admirable writers, you never learned the duty a page owns his master. I am sorry you have not better filled your first office. There will be no other.

[The boy makes to go out.]

A salute, if you please.

[He bows.]

Time was when we couldn't stop you.

[YOUNG MARTIN leaves. PIZARRO stares after him, shaking.]

OLD MARTIN: I went out into the night – the cold high night of the Andes, hung with stars like crystal apples – and dropped my first tears as a man. My first and last. That was my first and last worship too. Devotion never came again. [Exit.]

[With a moan, PIZARRO collapses on the floor and lies writhing in pain. ATAHUALLPA contemplates his captor with surprised disdain. But slowly, as the old man's agony continues, contempt in the King is replaced by a gentler emotion. Curious, he kneels. Uncertain what to do, he extends his hands, first to the wound, and then to PIZARRO'S head, which he holds with a kind of remote tenderness. The lights go down all around them.]

PIZARRO: Leave it now. There's no cure
carefully. Note how the themes of time and death, birth and belief, words and meaning are all interwoven in this lament. or more easing for it. Death’s entered the house you see. It’s half down already, like an old barn. What can you know about that? Youth’s in you like a spring of blood, to spurt for ever. Your skin is singing: ‘I will never get old.’ But it will. Time is stalking you, as I did. That gold flesh will cold and blacken. Your eyes will curdle — those wet living eyes ... They’ll make a mummy of your body — I know the custom — and wrap you in robes of vicuna wool, and carry you through all your empire down to Cuzco. And then they’ll fold you in two and sit you on a chair in darkness ... Atahualpa, I’m going to die! And the thought of that dark has for years rotted everything for me, all simple joy in life. All through old age, which is so much longer and more terrible than anything in youth, I’ve watched the circles of nature with hatred. The leaves pop out, the leaves fall. Every year it’s piglet time, calving time, time for children in a gush of blood and water. Women dote on this. A birth, any birth, fills them with love. They clap with love, and my soul shrugs. Round and round is all I see: an endless sky of birds, flying and ripping and nursing their young to fly and rip and nurse their young — for what? Listen, boy. That prison the priest calls Sin Original, I know as Time. And seen in Time everything is trivial. Pain. Good. God is trivial in that seeing. Trapped in this cage we cry out ‘There’s a gaoler; there must be. At the last, last, last of lasts he will let us out. He will! He will!’ ... But, oh my

mummy: a body that has been embalmed and wrapped in cloth to preserve it after death

vicuna: an animal similar to a llama but with fine, silky wool used to weave delicate cloth
boy, no one will come for all our crying. [Pause.] I'm going to kill you, Atahualpa. What does it matter? Words kept, words broken, it all means nothing. Nothing. You go to sleep earlier than me, that's all. Do you see? Look at your eyes, like coals from the sun, glowing forever in the deep of your skull. Like my dream ... Sing me your little song. [Singing] O little finch ...

[ATAHUALPA intones a few lines of the song.]

Nothing. Nothing ... [In sudden anguish, almost hatred] O, lad, what am I going to do with you?

VIII

Estete and De Candia arrive without reinforcements. The gold objects paid in ransom for Atahualpa have been melted down and the booty is divided between the conquerors. Estete tries to persuade De Candia to kill Atahualpa in order to save Spain's name.

[A red light up above. OLD MARTIN appears above in the Sun Chamber. Violent music, the sound of destruction. The light fades and comes up on stage where the soldiers assemble.]

OLD MARTIN: Nine forges were kept alight for three weeks. The masterpiece of centuries was banged down into fat bars, four hundred and forty pounds each day. The booty exceeded all other known in history: the sack of Genoa, Milan or even Rome. Share-out started at once. [Exit.]

DIEGO: General Francisco Pizarro, 57,220 gold pesos. Hernando de Soto, 17,740 gold pesos. The Holy Church, sack of Genoa, Milan or even Rome: Genoa, Milan and Rome are all Italian cities filled with treasures of art and wealth. The treasure was stolen to consolidate various European empires.
2,220 gold pesos.

[Enter ESTETE and DE CANDIA.]

ESTETE: And a fifth of everything, of course to the crown!

PIZARRO: You come in good time, Veedor.

ESTETE: So it seems! Cavalier.

DE SOTO: Veedor.

PIZARRO: Welcome, De Candia.

DE CANDIA: Thank you. [Indicating the earring] I see the living’s become soft here already. The men hung with jewels like fops at court.

PIZARRO: You set the fashion: I only follow.

DE CANDIA: I’m flattered.

PIZARRO: What news of reinforcements?

DE CANDIA: None.

ESTETE: I sent runners back to the coast. They saw nothing.

PIZARRO: So we’re cut off, here. How’s my garrison?

DE CANDIA: Spanish justice reigns supreme. They hang Indians for everything. How’s your royal friend? When do we hang him?

[Pause. PIZARRO tears off his earring and flings it on the floor.]

PIZARRO: Finish the share-out.

[Violehtly he leaves them. The men stare after him.]

DE SOTO: Go on, Diego. Tell us the rest ... Go on, man!

DIEGO: The remainder — cavalry, infantry, clerks, farriers, coopers and all the like — will divide a total of 971,000 gold pesos!

[Cheers. Enter RODAS.]

SALINAS: Well, look. Our little tailor! How are you, friend?
RODAS: Hungry. What do I get?
SALINAS: A kick up the tunnel.
RODAS: Ha, ha. Day of a hundred jokes!
    I got a right to a share.
DOMINGO: What for?
RODAS: I stayed behind and guarded
    your pissing rear, that's what for!
DE SOTO: You've no right, Rodas. As
    far as you cared we could all rot,
    remember? Well, now you get noth-
    ing; the proper wage for cowardice.
[General agreement. The men settle
    upstage to a game of dice.]
[To ESTETE] I must wait on the
General.
ESTETE: I am sorry to see him still sub-
ject to distresses. I had hoped that vic-
tory would have brought him calmer
temper.
DE CANDIA: It must be his new wealth,
    Veedor. So much, so sudden, must be
    a great burden to him.
DE SOTO: The burdens of the General,
sir, are care for his men, and for our
present situation. Let us try to lighten
them for him as we can. [He goes off.]
DE CANDIA: Let us indeed. One throat
cut and we're all lightened …
ESTETE: It would much relieve the
crown if you'd cut it.
DE CANDIA: If I …? You mean I'm not
    Spanish. I don't have to trouble with
    honour.
ESTETE: You're not a subject. It could
    be disowned by my King. And you
    have none.
DE CANDIA: So the Palace of Disin-
terest has a shithouse after all! Look,
    man, you're the Overseer here, so do
    your job. Go to the General and tell
    him the brownie must go. And add this

Why does Estete try to con-
vince the Venetian to kill
Atahualpa?

Palace of Disinterest has a
shithouse: De Candia is point-
ing out that Estete (the repre-
sentative of the King) is not as
unconcerned and without fear
from me: if Spain waits any longer, Venice will act for herself.

[They go off. Enter OLD MARTIN.]

IX

Fear and rumours plague the Spanish. The tension between the Peruvians and the Spanish rises.

[A scene of tension and growing violence. The soldiers, now dirty almost beyond recognition, but wearing ornaments, earrings and head-dresses stolen from the treasure, dice for gold. They are watched silently from above by a line of masked Indians carrying instruments for making bird noises. A drum begins to beat. PIZARRO stumbles in, and during the whole ensuing scene limps to and fro across the stage like a caged animal, ignoring everything but his own mental pain.]

OLD MARTIN: Morale began to go fast. Day after day we watched his private struggle, and the brownies watched us, waiting one sign from the frozen boy to get up and kill the lot of us.

DOMINGO: Play up, then!

PEDRO: Two fours.

[JUAN throws successfully.]

JUAN [grabbing a gold bar belonging to PEDRO]: That’s mine, boy!

PEDRO: No – Juan!

JUAN: Give it! [He snatches it.]

DOMINGO: They say there’s an army gathering in the mountains. At least five thousand of them.

VASCA: I heard that too.

DOMINGO: Blas says there’s some of them cannibals.

[Bird cries.]
Why does Atahualpa not command his army to act? Old Martin earlier referred to him as the 'frozen boy.' Note the similarity with Pizarro who, we have been told, has a 'frost-bitten' soul.

SALINAS: That's just stories. Pissing stupid stories. You don't want to listen to 'em.

RODAS: I'd like to see you when they tie you to the spit.

VASCA [rolling the dice]: Turn up! Turn up! Turn up!

RODAS: Come on, boys, cut me in.

VASCA: Piss off! No stake, no play.

RODAS: Bloody bastards!

DOMINGO: They say it's led by the Inca's top general. The brownies are full of his name.

VASCA: What is it? Rumi ... Rumi ...?

DOMINGO: That's it. Ruminagui, something like that.

[The Indians above repeat the name in a low menacing chant: RU-MIN-Á-GUI! The soldiers look fearfully about them. The bird cries sound again.]

SALINAS: Come on, then, let's play.

VASCA: What for? The sun?

SALINAS: The sun!

VASCA: Turn up! Turn up! Turn up! Turn up! [He throws.] King and ten. Beat that!

SALINAS: Holy Mary, mother of Christ. Save my soul and bless my dice! [He throws.] Two Kings ... I did it! I'm sorry, lads, but that's your sun gone.

VASCA: Go on, then. Let's see you pick it up.

[SALINAS bends and tries to shift the huge gold wheel. VASCA laughs. The bird cries grow wilder.]

RODAS: He can't even lift it, but I can't play!

SALINAS: I'll settle for these. [He picks up three gold bars and walks off with them. RODAS trips him up and he goes sprawling.]
Christ damn you, Rodas – that’s the pissing last I take from you!

[He springs at RODAS and clouts him with a gold bar. The tailor howls, picks up another, and a fight starts between them which soon becomes a violent free-for-all. The men shout; the birds scream; the General paces to and fro, ignoring everything. Finally DE SOTO rushes on just in time as SALINAS tries to strangle RODAS. He is followed by ESTETE and the two priests, who attend to the wounded.]

DE SOTO: Stop this! ... Do you want to start it all off?

[Silence. All the Indians rise, above. Uneasily the soldiers stare up at them.]

You – night watch! You, you go with him! You take the east gate! The rest to quarters. Move!

[They disperse. ESTETE and the priests remain.]

X

De Soto urges Pizarro to act before the frantic Spanish soldiers mutiny (rebel against him). He wants Pizarro to honour his word and let Atahualpa go. Valverde, De Nizza and Estete demand that he be killed immediately. Pizarro and De Nizza debate the nature of Christian charity and love. Pizarro ropes himself to Atahualpa in an attempt to protect him. Atahualpa demands to speak to Pizarro alone.

DE SOTO [to PIZARRO]: Mutiny’s smoking. Act now or it’ll be a blaze you’ll not put out.

PIZARRO: What do I do?

DE SOTO: Take our chances, what else can we do? You have to let him go.

PIZARRO: And what happens then? A

Mutiny’s smoking: an open revolt by the soldiers is smouldering like the coals of a fire about to flare up
Why is his 'name' (how he will be remembered after his death) so important to Pizarro?

Why can De Soto see Pizarro's 'love' for the Inca while the others cannot? What is the nature of this love? How is it different from the Christian love of which De Nizza later speaks?

How does De Soto argue that tiny army is wiped out in five minutes, and the whole story lost for always. Later someone else will conquer Peru, and no one will even remember my name.

DE SOTO: What kind of name will they remember if you kill him?
PIZARRO: A conqueror. That at least.
DE SOTO: A man who butchered his prisoner after giving his word. There's a name for your ballads.
PIZARRO: I'll never live to hear them. What do I care? What does it matter? Whatever I do, what does it matter?
DE SOTO: Nothing, if you don't feel it. But I think you do.
PIZARRO: Let me understand you. As Second-in-Command, you counsel certain death for this army?
DE SOTO: I'll not counsel his.
PIZARRO: Then you counsel the death of Christ in this country, as you told my page-boy months ago?
DE SOTO: That's not known.
PIZARRO: As good.
DE SOTO: No. Christ is love. Love is -
PIZARRO: What? What?
DE SOTO: Now in him. He trusts you, trust him. It's all you can do.
PIZARRO: Have you gone soft in the head? What's this chorus now? 'Trust! trust!' You know the law out here: kill or get killed. You said it yourself. The mercies come later.
DE SOTO: Not for you. I wish to God you'd never made this bargain. But you did. Now you've no choice left.
PIZARRO: No, this is my kingdom. In Peru I am absolute. I have choice always.
DE SOTO: You had it. But you made it.
PIZARRO: Then I'll take it back.

DE SOTO: Then you never made it. I'm not playing words, General. There's no choice where you don't stick by it.

PIZARRO: I can choose to take it back.

DE SOTO: No, sir. That would only be done on orders from your own fear. That's not choosing.

ESTETE: May the crown be allowed a word?

PIZARRO: I know your word. Death.

ESTETE: What else can it be?

VALVERDE: Your army is in terror. Do you care nothing for them?

PIZARRO: Well, Cavalier. Do you?

DE SOTO: I care for them. But less than I care for you ... God knows why. [He goes off.]

ESTETE: The issue is simple. You are Viceroy here, ruling in the name of the King who sent you. You have no right to risk his land for any reason at all.

PIZARRO: And what did this King ever do for me? Granted me salary if I found money to pay it. Allowed me governance if I found land to govern. Magnificent! For years I strove to make this expedition: years of scars and hunger. While I sweated, your Holy Roman vulture turned away his beak till I'd shaken out enough gold to tempt his greed. If I'd failed this time he'd have cast me off with one shrug of his royal feathers. Well, now I cast him! Francisco Pizarro casts off Carlos the Fifth. Go and tell him.

ESTETE: This is ridiculous.

PIZARRO: No doubt, but you'll have to give me better argument before I give him up.

ESTETE: Perverse man, what is Atahuallpa?
Why does Valverde believe that a promise to a pagan need not bind a Christian? What does this reveal about how he views the Indians?

Why does Valverde believe that a promise to a pagan need not bind a Christian? What does this reveal about how he views the Indians?

What do you think about Pizarro's accusation of jealousy to Valverde?

PIZARRO: Someone I promised life.

ESTETE: Promised life? How quaint. The sort of chivalry idea you pretend to despise. If you want to be an absolute King, my man, you must learn to act out of personal will. Break your word just because you gave it. Till then, you're only a pig-man trying to copy his betters.

[PIZARRO rounds on him angrily.]

VALVERDE: My son, listen to me. No promise to a pagan need bind a Christian. Simply think what's at stake: the lives of a hundred and seventy of the faithful. Are you going to sacrifice them for one savage?

PIZARRO: You know lives have no weight, Father. Ten can't be added up to outbalance one.

VALVERDE: Ten good can against one evil. And this man is evil. His people kiss his hands as the source of life.

PIZARRO: As we do yours. All your days you play at being God. You only hate my Inca because he does it better.

VALVERDE: What?

PIZARRO: Dungballs to all churches that are or ever could be! How I hate you. 'Kill who I bid you kill and I will pardon it!' You with your milky fingers forcing in the blade! How dare you priests bless any man who goes slicing into battle? But no: you slice with him! 'Rip!' you scream, 'tear! blind! in the name of Christ!' ... Tell me, soft Father, if Christ was here now, do you think he would kill my Inca? [Pause.] Well, Brother de Nizza, you're the lord of answers: let's hear you. Do I kill him?
What is De Nizza’s justification for the execution of Atahuallpa? How does he argue against Pizarro’s assertion that Peru is a paradise on earth?

DE NIZZA: Don’t try and trap me. I know as well as you how terrible it is to kill. But worse is to spare evil. When I came here first I thought I had found Paradise. Now I know it is Hell. A country which castrates its people. What are your Inca’s subjects? A population of eunuchs, living entirely without choice.

PIZARRO: And what are your Christians? Unhappy hating men. Look: I’m a peasant, I want value for money. If I go marketing for gods, who do I buy? The God of Europe with all its death and blooding, or Atahuallpa of Peru? His spirit keeps an empire sweet and still as com in the field.

DE NIZZA: And you’re content to be a stalk of corn?

PIZARRO: Yes, yes! They’re no fools, these sun men. They know what cheats you sell on your barrow. Choice. Hunger. Tomorrow. They’ve looked at your wares and passed on. They live here as part of nature: no hope and no despair.

DE NIZZA: And no life. Why must you be so dishonest? You are not only part of nature, and you know it. There is something in you at war with nature; there is in all of us. Something that does not belong in you the animal. What do you think it is? What is this pain in you that month after month makes you hurl yourself against the cage of time? ... This is God, driving you to accept divine eternity! Take it, General: not this pathetic copy of eternity the Incas have tried to make on earth. Peru is a sepulchre of the soul.

eunuch: castrated man; figuratively, a man lacking effectiveness

sepulchre of the soul: Peru is a
What does this argument add to the ongoing debate in the play about the nature of belief and political power?

Note the irony and poignancy here: to save his soul and preserve Christian charity, Pizarro must kill a man. Pizarro states that he does not know what love is but that he never will if he cannot love Atahuallpa. This claim is very important.

For the sake of the free spirit in each of us it must be destroyed.

PIZARRO: So there is Christian charity. To save my own soul I must kill another man!

DE NIZZA: To save love in the world you must kill lovelessness.

PIZARRO: Hail to you, sole judge of love! No salvation outside your church: and no love neither! Oh, you arrogance! ... [Simply] I do not know love. Father, but what can I ever know, if I feel none for him?

DIEGO [rushing on after a pause]: Sir! Sir! Another fight broke out, sir. There’s one dead.

PIZARRO: Who?

DIEGO: Blas. He drew a knife. I only meant to spit his leg, but he slipped and got it through the guts.

PIZARRO: You did well to punish fighting.

DIEGO: May I speak free, sir?

PIZARRO: What? I’ve got to kill him, is that it?

DIEGO: What other way is there? The men are out of their wits. They feel death all round them.

PIZARRO: So it is and let them face it. I promised them gold, not life. Well, they’ve got gold. The cripples have gold crutches. The coughers spit gold snot. The bargain’s over.

DIEGO: No, sir, not with me. To me you’re the greatest General in the world. And we’re the greatest company.

PIZARRO: Pizarro’s Boys, is that it?

DIEGO: Yes, sir. Pizarro’s Boys.

PIZARRO: Ah, the old band! The dear old regiment! Fool! ... Look, you spit: pierce with his sword
Note the irony that the dramatist puts in Pizarro's mouth: the Peruvians are condemned as evil for not allowing choice, but the Europeans' idea of 'gang-love', giving up your individuality to a group identity, also does not allow free choice.

How does this image reinforce the link between the Church and violence?

were born a man. Not a Blue man, or a Green man, but A MAN. You are able to feel a thousand separate loves unordered by fear or solitude. Are you going to trade them all in for Gang-love? Flag-love? Carlos-the-Fifth-love? Jesus-the-Christ-love? All that has been tied on you. It is only this that makes you bay for death.

VALVERDE: I'll give you death! When I get back to Spain, a commission will hale you to the stake for what you have said today.

PIZARRO: If I let the Inca go, Father, you'll never get back to Spain.

ESTETE: You madman: see here, you put him underground by sunset or I'll take the knife to him myself.

PIZARRO: ATAHUALLPA!

[ATAHUALLPA enters with YOUNG MARTIN.]

They ache for your death. They want to write psalms to their god in your blood. But they'll all die before you – that I promise. [He binds ATAHUALLPA'S arm to his own with a long cord of rope last used to tie some gold.] There. No, no, some here. Now no one will kill you unless they kill me first.

ESTETE: De Candia!

[Enter DE CANDIA, with a drawn sword.]

DE CANDIA: A touching game – gaolers and prisoners. But it's over now. General, do you think I'm going to die so that you can dance with a darkie?

[PIZARRO pulls the sword from YOUNG MARTIN'S scabbard.]

DIEGO [drawing]: Sorry, sir, but it's got to be done.

ESTETE [drawing]: There's nothing you

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_hale you to the stake_: drag him by force to a post to be burnt alive. Burning at the stake was the Inquisition's method of execution. These words imply that Pizarro is guilty of heresy for questioning the Church.
can do, Pizarro. The whole camp’s against you.
PIZARRO: De Soto!
DE CANDIA: If De Soto raises his sword, he’ll lose the arm that swings it.
PIZARRO: You’ll lose yours first! Come on!
[He rushes at DE CANDIA but ATAHUALLPA gives a growl and pulls him back by the rope. A pause.]
ATAHUALLPA: I have no eyes for you. You are nothing.
PIZARRO: I command here still. They will obey me.
ATAHUALLPA: They will kill me though you cry curses of earth and sky. [To them all] Leave us. I will speak with him.
[Impressed by the command in his voice, all leave. Save the General – now roped to his prisoner – and YOUNG MARTIN.]

XI

ATAHUALLPA claims that if he is killed he will be restored to life by his father, the Sun. Pizarro wants to believe him and is inclined to have faith in the god-like powers of the sun. Young Martin tries to persuade him that a resurrection (rising from the dead) cannot possibly take place. Atahuallpa invests Pizarro with his priestly power and hears his confession in the Peruvian manner.

ATAHUALLPA: It is no matter. They cannot kill me.
PIZARRO: Cannot?
ATAHUALLPA: Man who dies cannot kill a god who lives forever.
PIZARRO: I wouldn’t bet on it, my lord.
ATAHUALLPA: Only my father can take me from here. And he would not accept me, killed by men like you. Men with no word. You may be King in this land, but never God. I am God of the Four Quarters and if you kill me tonight I will rise at dawn when my father first touches my body with light.

PIZARRO [in wonder]: You believe this?

[Pause.]

ATAHUALLPA: All my people know it—it is why they have let me stay with you.

PIZARRO: They knew you could not be harmed ...

ATAHUALLPA: So.

PIZARRO: Was this the meaning? The meaning of my dream? You were choosing me?

YOUNG MARTIN: My lord, it’s just a boast. Beyond any kind of reason.

PIZARRO: Is it?

YOUNG MARTIN: How can a man die, then get up and walk away?

PIZARRO: Let’s hear your creed, boy. ‘I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried’ … and what?

YOUNG MARTIN: Sir?

PIZARRO: What?

YOUNG MARTIN: ‘He descended into Hell, and on the third day He rose again from the dead …’

[His voice dies out. The Inca watches calmly.]

PIZARRO: You don’t believe it!

YOUNG MARTIN: I do! On my soul! I believe with perfect faith!

PIZARRO: But Christ’s to be the only
How are Gods free of time?
Why is this the only way for Pizarro to give life meaning?

one, is that it? What if it’s possible, here in a land beyond all maps and scholars, guarded by mountains up to the sky, that there were true gods on earth, creators of true peace? Think of it! Gods. Free of time.

YOUNG MARTIN: It’s impossible, my lord.

PIZARRO: It’s the only way to give life meaning! To blast out of Time and live forever, us, in our own persons. This is the law: die in despair or be a god yourself! ... Look at him: always so calm as if the teeth of life never bit him ... or the teeth of death. What if it was really true, Martin? That I’ve gone god-hunting and caught one. A being who can renew his life over and over?

YOUNG MARTIN: But how can he do that, sir? How could any man?

PIZARRO: By returning over and over again to the source of life – to the Sun!

YOUNG MARTIN: No, sir ...

PIZARRO: Why not? What else is a god but what we know we can’t do without? The flowers that worship it, the sunflowers in their soil, are us after night, after cold and lightless days, turning our faces to it, adoring. The sun is the god I know! We eat you to walk. We drink you to sing. Our reins loosen under you and we laugh. Even I laugh, here! [He starts to laugh exhaustedly.]

YOUNG MARTIN: General, you need rest, sir.

[Pause.]

PIZARRO: Yes. Yes ... yes. [Bitterly]

How clever. He’s understood everything I’ve said to him these awful
What is Atahualpa’s revenge on Pizarro?

months – all the secret pain he’s heard – and this is his revenge. This futile joke. How he must hate me.

[Tightening the rope] Oh, yes, you cunning bastard! Look, Martin – behold, my God. I’ve got the Sun on a string! I can make it rise: [He pulls the Inca’s arm up] – or set!

[He throws the INCA to his knees.]

YOUNG MARTIN: General ... !

PIZARRO: I’ll make you set forever. Two can joke as well as one. You want your freedom? All right, you’re free.

[He starts circling round ATAHUALPA.] Walk out of the camp! They may stop you, but what’s that to you? You’re invulnerable. They’ll knock you down but your father the Sun will pick you up again. Go on! Get up! ... Go on! ... Get up! ... Go on! ... Go on! ... Go on! ... Go on! ... Go on! ...

Go on!

[He breaks into a frantic gallop round and round the Inca, the rope at full stretch, ATAHUALPA turning with him, somersaulting, then holding him, his teeth bared with the strain, as if breaking a wild horse, until the old man tumbles exhausted to the ground. Silence follows, broken only by deep moaning from the stricken man. Quietly the Inca pulls in the rope. Then at last he speaks.]

ATAHUALLPA: Pizarro. You will die soon and you do not believe in your god. That is why you tremble and keep no word. Believe in me. I will give you a word and fill you with joy. For you I will do a great thing. I will swallow death and spit it out of me.

[Pause. This whole scene stays very still.]

PIZARRO [whispering]: You cannot.
What is the effect of Old Martin’s entrance at this point? What does he add to the scene?

ATAHUALLPA: Yes, if my father wills it.
PIZARRO: How if he does not?
ATAHUALLPA: He will. His people still need me. Believe.
PIZARRO: Impossible.
ATAHUALLPA: Believe.
PIZARRO: How? ... How? ...
ATAHUALLPA: First you must take my priest-power.
PIZARRO [quietly]: Oh, no! you go or not as you choose, but I take nothing more in this world.
ATAHUALLPA: Take my word. Take my peace. I will put water to your wound, old man. Believe.

[A long silence. The lights are now fading round them.]
PIZARRO: What must I do?

[Enter OLD MARTIN.]
OLD MARTIN: How can I speak now and hope to be believed? As night fell, like a hand over the eye, and great white stars sprang out over the snow-rim of our world, Atahuallpa confessed Pizarro. He did it in the Inca manner. He took Ichu grass and a stone. Into the Ichu grass the General spoke for an hour or more. None heard what he said save the King, who could not understand it. Then the King struck him on the back with the stone, cast away the grass, and made the signs for purification.
PIZARRO: If any blessing is in me, take it and go. Fly up, my bird, and come to me again.

[The INCA takes a knife from YOUNG MARTIN and cuts the rope. Then he walks upstage. All the OFFICERS and MEN enter. During the fol-
lowing a pole is set up above, in the
sun, and ATAHUALLPA is hauled up
into it.]

XII

Atahualpa is tried by Estete, Valverde and De Candia
and is found guilty on charges of taking power
wrongfully, murder, idolatry and bigamy (taking
more than one wife). He is sentenced to death by
burning. To preserve his body he allows himself to
be baptized into the Christian faith so that he may be
executed by strangulation. But he affirms his alle­
giance to the sun immediately afterwards. He is
strangled by Rodas, the most unworthy of all the
Spaniards. Pizarro expects Atahualpa’s body to be
brought back to life by the sun’s rays, but this does
not happen. He weeps for the first time in his life,
acknowledging the power of Atahualpa’s faith. Old
Martin reflects on the ruin of Peru and the dishonour
of Spain. He mourns the loss of his youthful faith
and expresses his sorrowful disillusionment (loss of
faith).

Why do you think the Spanish
bother trying Atahualpa when
they have obviously already
decided to kill him? According
to whose laws is he tried? Are
they hoping to feel less guilt for
his death? Why?

OLD MARTIN: The Inca was tried by a
court quickly mustered. He was
accused of usurping the throne and
killing his brother; of idolatry and of
having more than one wife. On all
these charges he was found—

ESTETE: Guilty.
VALVERDE: Guilty.
DE CANDIA: Guilty.
DIEGO: Guilty.
OLD MARTIN: Sentence to be carried
out the same night.

ESTETE: Death by burning.

[Lights up above in the sun. ATAHU-
ALLPA gives a great cry.]

PIZARRO: No! He must not burn! His
body must stay in one piece!
Mote the irony as Old Martin pronounces Atahuallpa's conversion to Christianity. What does this imply about the process of conversion under these circumstances?

Why does Pizarro join the chant for the Sun?

Note how the dramatist builds the emotional intensity to a frenzy of noise and activity and then lowers it into the silence of Pizarro's grief.

Valverde: Let him repent his idolatry and be baptized a Christian. He will receive the customary mercy.

Old Martin: Strangling instead.

Pizarro: You must do it! Deny your father! If you don't, you will be burnt to ashes. There will be no flesh left for him to warm alive at dawn.

[Young Martin screams and runs from the stage in horror.]

You must do it.

[In a gesture of surrender the Inca king kneels.]

Old Martin: So it was that Atahuallpa came to Christ.

[Enter De Nizza, above, with a bowl of water.]

De Nizza: I baptize you Juan de Atahuallpa, in honour of Juan the Baptist, whose sacred day this is.


Valverde: And may Our Lord and His angels receive your soul with joy!

Soldiers: Amen!

[The Inca suddenly raises his head, tears off his clothes and intones in a great voice:]

Atahuallpa: Inti! Inti! Inti!

Valverde: What does he say?


Valverde: Kill him!

[Soldiers haul Atahuallpa to his feet and hold him to the stake. Rodas slips a string over his head and while all the Spaniards recite the Latin creed below, and great howls of 'Inca!' come from the darkness, the Sovereign King of Peru is garrotted. His screams and struggles subside; his body falls slack. His execu-

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*Inti*: the sun or the Sun God

*Garrotted*: strangled
tioners hand the corpse down to the soldiers below, who carry it to the centre of the stage and drop it at Pizarro's feet. Then all leave save the old man, who stands as if turned to stone. A drum beats. Slowly, in semi-darkness, the stage fills with all the Indians, robed in black and terracotta, wearing the great golden funeral masks of ancient Peru. Grouped round the prone body, they intone a strange Chant of Resurrection, punctuated by hollow beats on the drums and by long, long silences in which they turn their immense triangular eyes enquiringly up to the sky. Its rays fall on the body. Atahuallpa does not move. The masked men watch in amazement — disbelief — finally, despair. Slowly, with hanging, dejected heads, they shuffle away. Pizarro is left alone with the dead King. He contemplates him. A silence. Then suddenly he slaps it viciously, and the body rolls over on its back.

Pizarro: Cheat! You've cheated me! Cheat ...

[For a moment his old body is racked with sobs; then, surprised, he feels tears on his cheek. He examines them. The sunlight brightens on his head.]

What's this? What is it? In all your life you never made one of these, I know, and I not till this minute. Look. [He kneels to show the dead Inca.] Ah, no. You have no eyes for me now, Atahuallpa: they are dusty balls of amber I can tap on. You have no peace for me, Atahuallpa: the birds still scream in your forest. You have no joy for me, Atahuallpa, my boy: the only joy is in death. I lived between two amber: yellow, translucent semi-precious stone. It is formed when certain plant and animal secretions harden.
What is the cause of Pizarro's grief? What does Pizarro mean when he says that he has 'lived between two hates'? What are the 'two darks' he dies between?

Notice how in Act I Pizarro is the hunter and at the end of the play he is hunted by Atahualpa's trust.

What is the source of his tiredness? Has Pizarro come to accept death?

In this monologue Pizarro moves from anger against the Inca for not rising from the dead to marvelling at the humanness of his trust and honour and love. Far too late, Pizarro understands that it is this which brings spiritual nourishment and hope.

How does Old Martin convey his bitterness about the conquest?

He says that Spain has fallen in the conquest of Peru. How? What has Spain lost?

What effect does Pizarro's singing of Atahualpa's song have: I die between two darks: blind eyes and a blind sky. And yet you saw once. The sky sees nothing, but you saw. Is there comfort there? The sky knows no feelings, but we know them, that's sure. Martin's hope, and De Soto's honour, and your trust – your trust which hunted me; we alone make these. That's some marvel, yes, some marvel. To sit in a great cold silence, and sing out sweet with just our own warm breath: that's some marvel, surely. To make water in a sand world; surely, surely ... God's just a name on your nail; and naming begins cries and cruelties. But to live without hope of after, and make whatever God there is, oh, that's some immortal business surely! ... I'm tired. Where are you? You're so cold. I'd warm you if I could. But there's no warming now, not ever now. I'm colding too. There's a snow of death falling all round us. You can almost see it. It's over, lad, I'm coming after you. There's nothing but peace to come. We'll be put into the same earth, father and son in our own land. And that sun will roam uncaught over his empty pasture.

[Enter OLD MARTIN.]

OLD MARTIN: So fell Peru. We gave her greed, hunger and the cross: three gifts for the civilized life. The family groups that sang on the terraces are gone. In their place slaves shuffle underground and they don't sing there. Peru is a silent country, frozen in avarice. So fell Spain, gorged with gold; distended; now dying.

PIZARRO [singing]: 'Where is her heart, O little finch?' ...
have? How does it reinforce the idea of what has been lost?

According to Martin, Pizarro dies with Atahuallpa. So does Martin's own sense of hope. He has become a wealthy slave owner, but this does not compensate for the loss of hope.

OLD MARTIN: And so fell you, General, my master, whom men called the Son of His Own Deeds. He was killed later in a quarrel with his partner who brought up the reinforcements. But to speak truth, he sat down that morning and never really got up again.

PIZZARRO [singing]: 'Where are her plumes, O little finch?'...

OLD MARTIN: I'm the only one left now of that company: landowner – slaveowner – and forty years from any time of hope. It put out a good blossom, but it was shaken off rough. After that I reckon the fruit always comes sour, and doesn't sweeten up much with age.

PIZZARRO [singing]: 'She is cut up, O little finch. For stealing grain, O little finch'...

OLD MARTIN: General, you did for me, and now I've done for you. And there's no joy in that. Or in anything now. But then there's no joy in the world could match for me what I had when I first went with you across the water to find the gold country. And no pain like losing it. Save you all.

[He goes out. PIZZARRO lies beside the body of ATAHUALLPA and quietly sings to it.]

PIZZARRO [singing]:

See, see the fate, O little finch,
Of robber birds, O little finch.

[The sun glares at the audience.]

END OF PLAY
Peter Shaffer's spectacular play *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* recreates the true story of Francisco Pizarro's audacious conquest of the glorious Inca empire in Peru with a group of only 167 men. The play is an incisive and dazzling expose of colonization, in which cultural and religious clashes, driven by the promise of immense wealth, lead to betrayal, death and destruction. It is also a deeply moving exploration of personal honour and frailty as Pizarro, an ageing peasant in a personal bid for glory, encounters the Sovereign Inca and Sun God, Atahualpa. The combination of powerful historical and personal themes gives rise to a play with enduring pleasure, topicality and interest.

This new edition, created by Nicole Ridgway, encourages students to experience the theatrical and thematic richness of the play and to grapple meaningfully with its issues by providing extensive support in the form of a comprehensive introduction and user-friendly annotations. Designed to meet the needs of South African students, this edition is invaluable for students and teachers as it offers a stimulating and enjoyable approach to studying a dramatic text.