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became a funeral. Having fun has ceased to be spontaneous, [and has] unconsciously become an object of determination.'[98]

The analysis of poetic accounts of the Tlatelolco shooting has revealed three distinct focal points: the description of the scene, the narrator's emotional reaction to the event, and the narrator's analysis. In the descriptive poems, the narrator acts as a reporter delivering graphic imagery and direct references to violence. These accounts provide factual information, satisfying the first stage of the taxonomy of learning the acquisition of knowledge. The narrator neither believes nor disbelieves what s/he sees, remaining more of an objective bystander than a participant. It should be noted that there are relatively few works of this type in Tlatelolco poetry.

In the poems revealing the narrator's emotional reaction to the shooting, the narrator perceives the event as incomprehensible. The division between victims and shooters is clear-cut: the victims are associated with the indigenous people of Mexico, the shooters with the conquistadors, and the shooting is paralleled with the Conquest. The narrator is very vocal about his/her sympathies with the victims. In this type of work, linear time is displaced by cyclical or nonlinear time, and the narrator perceives the shooting as a dream; the incomprehensibility of the event renders it impossible to be part of present objective reality. As a result, the narrator changes his/her role to that of a participant, sometimes identifying with the victims and often with the eyewitnesses.

A fragmented depiction of the event with the focus on physical suffering and the graphic nature of violence leads to the reader's rejection of the event as believable. However, the narrator's analysis of the shooting reveals familiar attributes of the event and establishes links with other historical events which have affected national character. In the poems analyzing the shooting, myth imagery and historical parallels prevail over references to violence; the aim of the poem is now of a high cognitive order. The narrator analyzes her/his perception of the event from within because s/he considers her/himself part of the event, identifying with the victims more often than with the

98 Cited in Zolov 1999: 214.

shooters. The narrator's sympathies are unclear because there is no distinct victim/criminal dichotomy – both are from the same community and therefore cannot be separated into warring factions.

There are two distinct approaches to the representation of the shooting as a logical extension of historical events in Mexico. In the poems where emotions prevail over analysis, the 'we/they' dichotomy denotes the juxtaposition of the Aztecs and Spaniards within the context of the Conquest, in which case the role division between victims and attackers is reasonably clear, particularly from the post-colonial perspective. However, in poems where analysis prevails over emotions, the narrator draws parallels with the pre-Columbian practice of human sacrifice, suggesting that the need for it is not an atavism but a surviving and functional part of the nation's character. In this case, the victim/attacker dichotomy is not as clear cut because victims take on the violent character traits reserved for the perpetrators. Ultimately, immediately after the event, the shooting can be explained as a deeply rooted bloodthirstiness still functional in the nation's present character; it is irrelevant whether violence is inherent to the Aztecs, the conquistadors or the new *mestiza* nation. The Tlatelolco massacre is therefore perceived and represented poetically as part of Mexican national character, in a way that absolves society of responsibility since it appears unable to control its intrinsically violent nature.

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