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Ethnic Complexity and Social Conflicts

[From] small sparks are great fires easily set alight, and it is more prudent to remedy the damage in its beginning than to attempt to quench it when difficult or impossible.

Letter from the bishop of Cuzco, 1635

Even though most of the events in this book took place in the seventeenth century, they were sustained by an imaginary with roots in the previous century and even earlier, from pre-Hispanic times. Since the social structures of Spain’s new overseas kingdoms were designed in the sixteenth century, the narrative will sometimes return to earlier periods to provide a better conceptual framework for the problems I will discuss.¹

The Andes during the seventeenth century have often been characterized as socially stable. However, scholars have debated whether there may have been an economic crisis,² and historians have shown that the century was fraught with conflicts and adjustments between dominant and dominated groups in which different segments of colonial society used various adaptive strategies to recover relics of their pre-Hispanic past.³

Scholars of Peru who assume that the seventeenth century was generally stable contrast this period with the traumatic age of conquest of the sixteenth century. The native population suffered terrible hardships after the coming of the Spanish conquistadors. Their troubles were further aggravated by continuing political turmoil and civil war, in particular, the war between
the followers of Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro, and later between Gonzalo Pizarro and the encomenderos who had received land grants from the Crown (encomiendas) as a reward for service in the process of conquest and colonization. Encomenderos were also in charge of the conquered Indians, from whom, in the name of the Crown, they collected tribute either in goods or labor, and for whose material and spiritual welfare they were responsible. This system produced an economy of plunder as its by-product, creating a privileged stately elite.

After many hardships, in late 1532 Francisco Pizarro and his followers reached Cajamarca, where they found Atahuallpa. Atahuallpa and his half brother, Huáscar—sons of Wayna Cápac, the last reigning Inca—were engaged in a bloody struggle for power. Atahuallpa had grown up in Quito, whereas Huáscar already governed in Cuzco, considered the heart and center of the great Andean state. Thanks to his skilful military strategy, Pizarro captured Atahuallpa, and although fabulous riches were collected and brought to Cajamarca as ransom for his life, Pizarro put him to death.

When the famous Cajamarca treasure was distributed, Diego de Almagro, Pizarro's principal associate in the conquest, was excluded simply because he had not been present when the Inca was captured. There had already been friction between Almagro and Pizarro, but this insult added to the growing mistrust between them. They fought over the distribution of territory, and particularly the question of who should control Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Inca empire. Pizarro gained legal title to Cuzco after sending his brother, Hernando, to Spain, to modify the terms of the agreements. A spiteful Almagro tried to compensate for the loss of Cuzco by conquering Chile, but when this expedition failed, he renewed his determination to seize the city. Almagro had carried out his Chilean expedition with the help of Paullu Inka, a son of Wayna Cápac, whose presence guaranteed Almagro the support of the Incas for his army. On April 6, 1538, the old rivals met at the battle of Salinas, where Hernando Pizarro defeated Almagro and had him executed, for which he later served a lengthy prison sentence in Spain. Almagro's death was avenged two years later by his illegitimate mestizo son Almagro, “El Mozo,” who assassinated Francisco Pizarro at his home in Lima on June 16, 1541. “El Mozo” and his followers then took over the government of Peru. Meanwhile, the Crown had sent the lawyer Vaca de Castro to govern Peru and charged him with defeating and executing the young Almagro. Almagro El Mozo was killed in the battle of Chupas on September 16, 1542.
Clearly, the conquest and colonization of Peru was a series of bloody events. While most of these conflicts took place among the Spaniards themselves, the new Inca sovereign enthroned in 1535 by Francisco Pizarro, Manco Inca, was criticized and humiliated by the brothers of the conquistador. Resenting his mistreatment, he escaped from Cuzco in 1536 and laid siege to the city. After approximately six months, the site was abandoned by the natives. The population was further dispersed by the intervention of Diego de Almagro after his return from his disastrous Chilean expedition. Manco Inca fled to the yungas (the forested eastern slopes of the Andes) and took refuge in Vilcabamba, where he founded what has been called a “neo-Inca state.” His successors remained in the area until 1572, when Viceroy Francisco de Toledo finally defeated them.

Clearly, Charles V of the House of Hapsburg had serious difficulty installing Spanish rule in Peru. Although the colonial governor, Vaca de Castro, did not achieve complete pacification, he managed to continue the work begun by Francisco Pizarro. He pursued territorial expansion by sending exploratory military missions along the four major Inca roads, and he founded cities to be settled by the new waves of Spaniards who would soon be attracted by dreams of achieving fame and riches like those amassed by the first conquistadors.

At this time in Spain, intense debates raged over the nature of the New World Indians and the right to evangelize them by violent means. The Indians’ champion in these debates was the Dominican priest Bartolomé de Las Casas, who persuaded Charles V to proclaim the “New Laws.” These laws prohibited handing Indians over to the new encomiendas in all of Spain’s American territories, and in the case of Peru, gave amnesty to those natives owned by individuals who had participated in the wars between Pizarro and Almagro. When Blasco Núñez Vela arrived in 1544 as the first designated viceroy of Peru, he was firmly disposed to apply the New Laws. The encomenderos immediately rejected him, and his stubbornness resulted in a fierce war among his few allies. Gonzalo Pizarro, brother of Francisco, named himself governor and led the encomenderos’ resistance. A series of dramatic events followed, and the viceroy was murdered in the battle of Añaquito, near Quito, on January 18, 1546.

Gonzalo Pizarro remained at the head of the government with the idea of crowning himself king of Peru, but his project failed, thanks to a new arrival sent by the Crown: the lawyer Pedro de La Gasca, president of the
Audiencia de Lima. La Gasca brought orders from the king to suspend the most irritating articles contained in the New Laws. After two years of diplomatic work, he resolved to put an end to the unruly ways of the encomenderos and Gonzalo Pizarro’s allies, ultimately defeating Pizarro in the battle of Jaquijahuana on April 9, 1548. These battles had virulent reverberations on the Bolivian altiplano of Charcas, where the recently discovered mines of Potosí had attracted a large number of encomenderos and unruly soldiers who competed for the rich silver deposits there. Even though Gonzalo Pizarro was defeated, uprisings against the Crown continued, both in this area and in Cuzco, until 1554. The second viceroy, Don Antonio de Mendoza (who had successfully governed in Mexico), fell gravely ill almost upon his arrival in Peru. His mandate lasted from September 1551 until his death in July 1552, whereupon the government fell into the hands of the Audiencia, and the rebellions of 1554 finally came to an end.

In 1556 the Marques of Cañete, Andrés Hurtado de Mendoza, became Peru’s third viceroy and the real initiator of the colonial enterprise. By implementing a new administrative and judicial system, he laid the foundations for the new colonial state. After five years, King Philip II inexplicably replaced him with the count of Nieva, don Diego López de Zúñiga y Velasco. Unlike Cañete, López de Zúñiga y Velasco was corrupt and had little inclination to carry out the difficult mandate given to him. Notorious for his love affairs (which would eventually cost him his life), he was replaced in 1564 by Lope García de Castro, who arrived in Peru with the title of governor and president of the Audiencia. Evidently, Philip II wanted to take his time before appointing a new viceroy, for García de Castro governed only temporarily until November 1569, when he was replaced by Francisco de Toledo, the great organizer of the Peruvian viceroyalty.

Toledo took firm control of almost all activities and social groups. His most important measures included inaugurating the visita general, in which the viceroy toured the colony, usually accompanied by jurists, clergy, and retainers, to inspect the regulation of tribute; the mita, a system of forced labor (comprising one-seventh of all able-bodied male Indians) intended to provide a constant supply of workers for the mines of Potosí; the settlement of Indians in new small villages; and replacing indigenous technology in metal processing with amalgamation with quicksilver, changes that required new technology and infrastructure. Significantly, Toledo defeated the last Incas at Vilcabamba, a conflict that ended with the execution of the
last rebel sovereign, Túpac Amaru I, in 1572. Toledo headed the viceroyalty until 1581, leaving to his successors an established administrative, legal, and judicial apparatus through which to govern the new viceroyalty of Peru.

Thus the seventeenth century in Peru appears to have established a stable political climate. The indigenous communities were organized or, to be more precise, reorganized by the Toledo government. Nonetheless, an insatiable appetite for riches—and the distance from the metropolis—often led to corruption on all sides, frequently carried out by lower officials of the colonial order. These included the ethnic chiefs (curacas) themselves, the corregidores (chief district magistrates and Indian agents), and the priests. They were able to form alliances through which they could escape the control of the administrative and judicial apparatus installed by Toledo.

The Hapsburgs flooded their overseas kingdoms with laws, orders, and decrees that paradoxically loosened their grip over their Spanish subjects. The famous saying, “I listen, but I do not carry out orders,” was beginning to be heard. There was an implicit, and often explicit, consensus that the Crown did not have enough information about local situations to have any authority, although this may be disputed. Spain’s colonial subjects believed that the Crown did not understand or respect their interests, nor their efforts to sustain these kingdoms that contributed such vast riches to the metropolis. Among the major conflicts between the Crown and its colonies were the following:

1. Spanish authorities annulled any sort of alliance between Inca royalty and their conquerors, thus breaking with the traditional Andean rule that would have enabled a sort of collaboration as a reward for those who participated in the power scheme. The Crown respected the social preeminence of the noble Incas, but only on condition that the Spaniards have dominion over their kingdoms. The viceregal authorities lost no time in setting limits to the Andeans’ legally recognized rights and continued to inflict frequent humiliations upon them.

2. Overseas Spanish subjects and their children born in the colonies, that is, criollos and mestizos, found themselves excluded from positions of authority through legal, political, and social means. They were not allowed to have a seat at the court of Castile and therefore were treated as second-class subjects, a situation that grew worse as power in the peninsula gradually became more centralized and hegemonic, frustrating the colonizers’ hopes of enjoying a certain autonomy over local decision making. This resulted in many corrupt practices by the colonists.
As a result, relations between Spaniards and Indians degenerated. Laws designed to give general protection to the native population were constantly disputed and disobeyed by the colonists. In addition to flagrant abuses, new alliances were formed between curacas and various public and private participants, especially corregidores and priests, as well as encomenderos, hacendados, and miners. These alliances ran contrary to the larger interests of both communities, particularly the Crown, creating a general climate of tension and unrest.

These tensions heightened conflicts throughout the seventeenth century, just as the legal apparatus grew less practicable. Francisco de Toledo’s age-old dream of maintaining two republics—a Spanish and an Indian one, interdependent yet separate—gradually disappeared with the rise of new actors: mestizos and criollos (whose interests were often at odds with those of the Crown), marginalized Spaniards, and African slaves. Peruvian society became more complex, and the colonists’ ideal binary structure for Peruvian society (rich Spaniards on one side and Indians subject to forced labor on the other) lost whatever credibility it ever had.

After the Conquest political alliances between Spanish authorities and descendants of the Inca monarchs never actually occurred. This lack of cooperation helped to plant the seeds of conflict that matured in the seventeenth century and flowered in the eighteenth century—a topic to be addressed in the next chapter.

The massive migration of Spaniards to the New World, attracted by the vast opportunities and reports of gold in Peru, brought about vast changes in the social structure. The first new ethnic category in post-Conquest Andean society were the mestizos, or castas, those of mixed Spanish and Indian blood. Products of consensual or forced sexual relations, mestizos were growing rapidly in number in a society that refused to grant them legal status. Discrimination eventually provoked new dilemmas and contradictions. Individual mestizos could find a place in society, but acceptance depended on the circumstances of their birth, the parents’ social status, and the sociocultural milieu and the period in which they lived.

In addition to a growing number of mestizos, other actors also appeared whose social role and status had not been legally considered. However, even in the sixteenth century some observers had warned of the potential dangers posed by these new elements, such as the criollos. Although they considered themselves Spanish, criollos were often denied appointment to high government posts, which were reserved for peninsulares. Rivalries among
\textit{criollos} and \textit{peninsulares} provoked conflicts even in the religious orders, which had to opt for “alternating” in filling the post of governor for their convents and evangelical provinces.\textsuperscript{5} The majority of \textit{criollos} never traveled to their parents’ homeland, and they continued to build a network of social and political representations in the new overseas kingdoms, as communication with Spain was difficult.\textsuperscript{6} Decisions were made in the colonial homeland, where personal and family interests took priority over the general interests of some faraway place.

New immigrants from Spain also had to compete for a place in the colonial spectrum. James Lockhart describes their attempts at integration into the complexities of Andean society.\textsuperscript{7} A favored group were the “nephews,” already part of family networks, or contemporaries of those already established, who arrived with a solid base on which to found their new lives in the colony. A minority of these newcomers lacked local support and occupied a distinctly marginal place within the social and economic structure.

Lockhart establishes a clear succession in the hierarchies being constructed, subtle layers and dynamics that determined the inclusion or exclusion of \textit{criollos} and mestizos in society. What mattered most was the proximity of kinship, family conditions, and, in the case of immigrants, opportunities at the time of their arrival. Equally important was the political situation and how well these individuals introduced themselves into new economic and social networks or embarked on adventures of conquest if opportunities did not meet their expectations. Vagabonds comprised another group. While Lockhart provides a good picture of those on the lowest rungs of the colonial hierarchy, he seems somewhat indifferent toward their social plight. For him the so-called vagabonds were mainly muleteers and petty merchants who followed “established routes with the reasonable hope of finding opportunities, not wandering around like vagabonds.”\textsuperscript{8} He points out that these persons were frequently well received in the houses of the noble elite, who considered hospitality an obligation of the wealthy nobility.

In contrast, the viceregal authority regarded individuals without a clear status or role in society as a threat to the system. What created such alarm concerning the “general interest” of the public? First, vagabonds, lacking means of support, put such pressure on the economic system that they forced the clients of the \textit{encomenderos} and \textit{hacendados} to intervene in the civil wars. These were groups of unruly mercenaries, called \textit{soldadescas}, who hoped to enrich themselves in these conflicts and thereby establish them-
selves. The second threat concerned the control of the indigenous population, in particular the noble Incas, who in one way or another sought to join the upper ranks of the colonial power or to recover their lost kingdom. “Vagabonds” became a threat because if they could not adapt to the system they could perhaps alter it, seeking to obtain rank by subversive means. These concerns pertain to the central theme of this book, because Pedro Bohorques was one of these subversive Spaniards. An immigrant without ties to the colonial society, bringing as baggage only a richly idealized conception of the American hero, the conquistador, he pushed forth to fulfill his ambitions in ways that transgressed the rules.

To summarize, instead of a two-level society, there emerged a multifaceted one with more social ranks than had been intended, as more and varied participants came to realize their dreams of nobility and wealth. Nonetheless, to reach a high position, one had to relegate others to the lower ranks using multiple strategies and power plays.

Conquerors and conquered had to adapt themselves to the new rhythms of power that were being endlessly constructed and reconstructed in a changing new society. Despite certain weaknesses of the Crown, and even though some power had to be reserved for those coming to the colonies, what was robbed from both Indians and Spaniards in Peru was legal jurisdiction over themselves. The Crown retained exclusive rights to the colonial judicial system. The conflict over the initial occupation of the colonies reveals the ideological keys used to design a new society. The curacas could not maintain legal jurisdiction over their indigenous subjects any more than the new colonists could reproduce in America peninsular feudal practices that had been revived in Spain with the re-conquest of the last Arab kingdoms. As a result, both groups failed to control the social dynamics in which they were embedded.

The symptoms of conflict appeared in the viceroyalty of Peru in 1544–48, above all in the bloody civil wars that ended with Gonzalo Pizarro’s outrageous murder of the viceroy. These wars had two objectives: (1) although it was never openly discussed, some conquistadors hoped to break ties with the Crown of Castile; and (2) many also desired grants in perpetuity, by means of which they could impose a model of nobility, thus bequeathing to their descendants the domains and power over the Indians that had been given to them as vassals of the Crown. With the arrival of Pedro de la Gasca in 1546 as president of the Audiencia in Lima, Peru ap-
peared to be pacified. Problems also seemed to have disappeared with the arrival of Viceroy Francisco de Toledo in the decade of the 1570s, who politically and fiscally organized the colony. However, these problems remained latent and resurfaced during the second decade of the seventeenth century.

**Ideological Keys**

The ideology constructed during the first century of colonization contained the seeds of future uprisings. Sentiment in favor of Bartolomé de Las Casas provoked much concern at the Court of Castile. Concern at the Court was also caused by the Peruvian civil wars and the demands of the *encomenderos* who wanted to obtain permanent grants by defying royal decisions. These demands were the result of the gross disparity between the money obtained through paltry public funds vs. the potential wealth that could be obtained by replicating a Spanish feudal system in Latin America. The Dominicans in Peru took up the flag of Las Casas. Friar Domingo de Santo Tomás, who had been in Spain between 1556 and 1562, was authorized by Philip II to survey the opinions of the Peruvian *caciques* regarding grants in perpetuity. A royal warrant of February 7, 1561, authorized Viceroy Conde de Nieva to assemble the *caciques* to debate the problem. Fearing the pro-Indian sentiment of the Dominicans, the viceroy enlisted the help of a lawyer, Polo de Ondegardo, who favored the colonists’ desire for possession in perpetuity. As a result of these proceedings, three important meetings took place.

At the first meeting, held in Mama (Huarochiri) on January 12, 1562, friar Santo Tomás was authorized by the *caciques* to pay 100,000 ducats to the king, a sum that surpassed that offered by the *encomenderos*, in return for their property. A second meeting took place in Juli on October 24, 1562, with the *caciques* of Chuquito in the presence of the *corregidor* don Diego Pizarro Dolmos, friar Domingo de Santo Tomás, the lawyer Polo de Ondegardo, and the judicial secretary Juan de Torres. At a third meeting, on November 13, 1562, the *caciques* and the Indians of Arequipa testified before the *corregidor* Alonso Rodríguez and friar Domingo de Santo Tomás. At these meetings, the *curacas* offered to pay for the rights to the *encomiendas* in silver and gold—whichever was more convenient for His Majesty—if the Spaniards would relinquish their lands to them and return

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other goods. They wanted to pay tribute to His Majesty. One interesting detail is that the caciques refused the Spanish encomenderos’ efforts to reclaim this property for themselves. They requested “jurisdiction so that among [themselves] mayors, judges, governors, and other officials should be elected in such a manner as they are done among the Spaniards.”¹¹ Powers were granted to friar Santo Tomás, lawyer Polo (in the Juli case), Las Casas, Bishop Loayza, and others to contradict the Spaniard claims that encomienda grants in perpetuity were being threatened. The caciques appealed to the Crown by mentioning their services and were prepared to produce evidence to back up their claims.

As a consequence of the actions taken on behalf of those desiring grants in perpetuity, a long document was created, listing, in great detail, the pros and cons of each proposal that had been offered to resolve the issue. The document includes this illuminating passage:

Although perpetuity in general would benefit the grounding, strengthening, peace, and quiet of the states over here [Peru], and that all that is here in itself should be good, it would be good for the government and its dependents that they keep these states for the government of the kings and the kingdoms of Spain, because it would be better for the foundations and governing of these places in human and divine matters if it was governed from Spain. Thus, for the establishment and strength of these states so that they themselves be good, and what should be governed and established it would be advisable to see that the government of these states depend and be governed from afar by the kings of Castile and by the persons under their name, born into them. Because as it is written above, if perpetuity were to be entrusted to [the locals in Peru], after thirty or forty years the descendants of those Spaniards born here, one suspects, will become strangers to our nation and her enemies, and if all are “per- petuated,” they will be united and made one body; and it is clear that they will be the backbone and force of these kingdoms and could easily rise up against the kings of Castile, fearing, as would be natural, to be governed by a strange kingdom, that as such they will hold Spain to be.¹²

In the opinion of the junta, it would be dangerous to make perpetual grants, because there would be a loss of “national” feelings toward Spain among a group with so many privileges. Many reasons were brought forth to block the passage of grants in perpetuity. After much debate, the proposed alternative was to divide the encomiendas into three parts: one third
for the king, another renewable for the duration of one life, and only a third to be inherited by the encomendero’s descendants. There was an explicit consensus over the inevitable negative consequences of granting land in perpetuity. One danger was that the children of these encomenderos would feel more loyalty to the country in which they were born than to their parents’ country. Thus the junta later stipulated that “this kingdom be renewed and refreshed always with Spaniards that have a love and regard for their king, having been born in Spain and having known him.” Another danger was that the commercial interests of the metropolis could be affected by a political rupture between Spain and its colony. Handing out grants for one lifetime only, although with partial renewal, would enable the king to extend his patriarchal generosity, to reward meritorious achievements of those who made new conquests or to acknowledge other favors to the Crown. The politics of demographic and ethnic renewal thus predated the colony’s formation. Rivalries between criollos and peninsulares born in Spain had so shaken the colonial society that such matters could not be ignored. On the contrary, it was better to formulate an explicit political stance in order to avoid future problems. These writings reveal the strong impact of the recent crisis on colonial politics.

Here are the first symptoms of an incipient nationalism, as much in Spain as in America. According to José Antonio Maravall, nationalism was one of the traits that characterized the newly emerging baroque culture.¹³ Although Maravall is not specifically concerned with America, he identifies the signs of what has been called the “baroque period,” with its zenith in the seventeenth century, appearing a hundred years earlier. We can see these foretelling signs in the overseas kingdoms. The desire to construct a new nation was part of the Crown’s hegemonic project. One sign of this transformation was the growing power of the monarchy, as well as increasing social mobility and changing values. Through changes in social conduct, the conception of honor, and communal love, the loyalty of a subject is transformed into national “patriotism.”¹⁴ Pablo Macera, speaking of the eighteenth-century criollo movement, makes a similar observation. He maintains that “the criollo conditioned his loyalty to the prize. He would be a good subject if he had a good master. The bad king turned the vassal into a conspirator.”¹⁵ The idea of Spain as a nation more than a kingdom was first raised in Peru; and, given the distance and difficulties in communication, it was difficult for colonists to renew and maintain bonds with the peninsula.

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Other concerns in the document sent to the king are the potential problems caused by miscegenation, as well as the necessity of providing grants as rewards for new colonists. In fact, these two problems were linked by the unavoidable social mobility that was produced in the overseas kingdoms, which were of course constantly scrutinized under a magnifying glass for warnings of the possible diminution of royal power. The document reads:

First, as by the considerations in the instructions of Your Majesty it is not forbidden [for encomenderos] to marry Indian women, which occurs often [in these lands], and as it is not prohibited it seems that it is permitted. If it is permitted, it will be a huge inconvenience for the good preservation of these states and their dependence on the kingdoms of Spain, and it is good that Your Majesty prohibit them such marriages.¹⁶

The recommendations extend this prohibition to marriage with female slaves and foreign women, because children born of these unions would pose future problems: “There are already a lot of mestizos and mulattos, and there will be more in the future; . . . [thus it must be feared] that there could be greater damage and uproar in these states.” A constant supply of pure Spanish blood could be achieved not only by regular migrations from the homeland but also by prohibiting miscegenation. If this failed, there would be a risk of “damage and uproar,” i.e., violent outbreaks, separatism, or rebellion. Miscegenation implied, above all, an alliance with the conquered. If the monarchic absolutists wished to remain in power, they had to take care not to grant power to those who would weaken their right to total dominance, or who would introduce strange ethnic elements into the social hierarchy and the established order. Although the word “alliance” does not appear in the actual document, it maintains a ghostly presence throughout.

Any sort of alliance that could erode the power of the Crown posed a threat to the emerging “baroque period.” The document recommended that certain marriages not be allowed—notably, those that might consolidate control of several encomiendas in the hands of one person. Not only was it dangerous to allow some to grow powerful enough to threaten the general interests of the Crown, such consolidation of power could also promote “factions, disturbances to the peace, and altercations that tend to cause scandals and revolutions in kingdoms.”¹⁷ The ideal political resolution would strike a balance between the interests of the colony and those of the
Crown. If the Crown were to grant privileges only to certain individuals in the “kingdoms over here” (in Peru), it would run the risk of losing the incentives it might offer to colonial subjects, or, if it were too excessive in its gifts, the Crown might eventually lose power over its subjects if they felt they no longer needed the crown’s support.

All these warnings pointed toward the dangers of separatism, prefiguring the symptoms of an incipient *criollismo*. Separatists could take advantage of their distance from the homeland and the different character—one could say the originality—of the New World. If the conquest were being financed by its own colonial participants, as some of Gonzalo Pizarro’s ideologists had insisted some years back (such as Lope de Aguirre), then why should colonists economically sustain a monarchy that seemed more preoccupied with its own European affairs than those of its overseas subjects? A second problem concerned the *criollos*, Spaniards born in the Americas. It was feared that their loyalties would shift on account of distance, ignorance, and a lack of interest in enterprises they did not view as their own. This concern also reflected the commonly held notion that transatlantic migrants were escaping the social rigidity of the European legal system in favor of more promising horizons in the New World: the well-known search for *hidalguía*, a Castilian aristocratic ideal, elusive in their native land. Migration had as its principal incentive the pursuit of social and financial mobility. The Crown feared that the new social type created from miscegenation in the colonies would be more likely to form alliances with the conquered people than with the Crown.

But the Crown and its colonial functionaries did not treat these matters lightly—rather, they sought to prevent conflicts. Even in Spain, royal land grants and *encomiendas* were intended to ensure the loyalty of the king’s beneficiaries by “giving them responsibilities in defense and the preservation of order,” Maravall writes.¹⁸ This was doubly true in the New World, where many private interests clashed and canceled each other out. The threat of emerging factions frightened not only colonial authorities, but also the colonists, who saw them as threats to their own well-being. The colonists were more willing to accept the superior authority of the king to contain the greed and ambitions of a few colonial big shots who could prove damaging to them. Hence an enduring characteristic of this colonial society is the permanent tension between the demands of the *criollos* and the potential dangers of anarchy and social disintegration posed by their restiveness.

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Thus dreams of independence began early in colonial history, dreams that would take three centuries to become manifest.

**Spurious Alliances**

Debates about Spain’s rights over its new possessions and over the condition of the Indians were central to sixteenth-century colonial politics. Disputes over the rights of the Indians were tolerated and listened to, finally producing the New Laws that eventually unleashed the civil wars in Peru. However, it was one thing to defend the Indians from the abuses of the *encomenderos* and other colonial authorities; it was another to form an alliance with them. Although Pedro Bohorques became a spurious ally of the Indians, there were not many who attempted to create such alliances. To understand the Bohorques story, it is important to present some historical background. (Despite its importance, we will put aside the attempts of Gonzalo Pizarro to crown himself an Inca.)

An important predecessor of Bohorques was Francisco de la Cruz, who arrived in Peru in 1561 along with Domingo de Santo Tomás. Although this was a century before Pedro Bohorques’s arrival, the two men share some similarities. De la Cruz was a rural priest who worked among the Uros of Pomata, the Chucuito, and as a prior in the Dominican convent of Charcas. Because he deviated from traditional theological, moral, and political views, he was accused by the Holy Office in 1572 and was burned in a solemn auto-da-fé on April 1, 1578.19 Like Pedro Bohorques, he was educated by the Jesuits, and both sowed their wild oats as youths. In Peru de la Cruz appears to have embraced a type of “syncretism” that fell between mundane and theological heresy. He had a son by a married woman and fell into the hands of a mestizo “witch” named Francisca Pizarro, who raised their child as if he were a future messiah.

Just as it was said that Bohorques had a “familiar,” or demonic guardian, the same was said of Francisco de la Cruz: “The dream of his life was to always have by his side, and to the service of his interests and hidden ambitions, a personal genie or demon.”20 His defender before the Holy Office “painted him as a dreaming, quixotic, and lunatic friar; a portrayal that was in turn used to fabricate a mad and stubborn heretic.”21 While Bohorques was never accused of heresy, the terms “mad,” “dreamer,” “quixotic,” and
“lunatic” were applied to him also. Admittedly, the cultural and theological formation of de la Cruz was very different from that of Bohorques. Francisco de la Cruz entered the Dominican order and was an active advocate of the teachings of Las Casas and other distinguished theologians while at San Gregorio de Valladolid. Because of his expertise in theology, he was useful to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in Peru before he succumbed to heresy.

Ironically, his heresies gave rise to another type of accusations. Joseph de Acosta, a Jesuit, in his *De Procuranda Indorum Salute*, labeled him a “here-siarch of diabolical astuteness” and accused him of fostering “a Lutheran theological-political conspiracy, masterminded and mounted by him to definitively rip Peru from the Spanish crown and the Catholic church.”²² Because of his political activities, he was considered a “great rebel conspirator,” even alarming Viceroy Francisco de Toledo. The alleged conspiracy combined the rebelliousness of the *criollos* with the goal of restoring the “Inca Empire,” of “re-installing their kingdoms and lords.”²³ The plot combined magical, mystical, dreamlike, and Lutheran elements. Toledo feared the return of civil war, and it was assumed that the conspiracy extended to Quito, where de La Cruz had as “agents” the priest Antonio Gasco in Cuzco, friar Pedro de Toro, and the Jesuit Luis López, who had left Lima and whose whereabouts were unknown.

The specter of separatism and insurrection always hovered over Lima. Toledo was convinced that he had succeeded in disarming the Las Casasista and para–Las Casasista conspiracy that was being masterminded by Dominicans and Jesuits. This is how he described the situation to His Majesty in 1579 when he had Luis López arrested. Abril Castelló believes that the allegations were all assembled retrospectively. Nonetheless (as we shall see in the next chapter), this was not Toledo’s only attempt to eliminate any hint of an alliance between dissident Spaniards, *criollos*, and the indigenous community. In 1572 he found it necessary to arrest the very “hispanized” son and other relatives of Paullu Inca (one of the last puppet Inca monarchs) under accusation of conspiracy with the rebels of Vilcabamba who still resisted Spanish domination.

Taking a leap to the seventeenth century, we find similar accusations of “spurious alliances.” Santistebar Ochoa cites a document concerning the doctrine of friar Buenaventura de Salinas y Córdoba, whom he presents as a “precursor of Independence in the seventeenth century.”²⁴ The *curaca* of

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Jauja, Lorenzo Limaylla, had traveled to Rome and Spain with this Franciscan, and seventeen years later returned to the Peninsula to urge that the noble caciques be granted an order or knighthood dedicated to Santa Rosa de Lima. (See chapter 2.) Salinas y Córdoba must have had a strong influence over the curaca of Jauja, indirectly inspiring his Andean battles. A letter from the bishop of Cuzco to His Majesty reports that in 1635

with the freedom of speech that religious functionaries have in these kingdoms, as well as in the pulpit of the Spanish government, on February 28 at the cathedral, friar Buenaventura de Salinas, member of the order of San Francisco, preached before me and my chapter and the secular. He said that Your Majesty governed tyrannically and was always asking for loans from this kingdom and gave the encomiendas to those flatterers who hang around near the person of your Majesty, taking them away from the conquistador’s sons.²⁵

The bishop examined twelve religious members from Cuzco and reported to the viceroy, the general commissioner of his order, and the provincial friar Juan Ximénez, from Lima, claiming that “they made it a joint cause for criollos and religion.” He decided that the conspiracy was cause for an inquisition, in as much as he thought it was a question of homosexual relations “el pecado nefando.” He wrote that “as it happens in Aragon and Portugal, there was nuncio (diplomatic representative of the Pope) here and therefore it could not be punished.” The viceroys in Lima, he maintained, “do not know what happens up here.” A friar had reported to him that the king “was a tyrant and that in such manner unjust tribute was imposed on the Indians.” He warned that “[from] small sparks great fires are easily set alight, and it is more prudent to remedy the damage in its beginning than to attempt to quench it when difficult or impossible.”²⁶

In another letter dated November 10, 1637, the same archbishop of Cuzco, friar J. de Vera, said he tried to carry out the orders of His Majesty, that they should be executed “with discretion,” that friar B. Salinas should be sent to Spain, but that he “had convened the parochial chapter to go with a vote to the general chapter of his order,” supported by the commissioner and parochial chief of the Franciscans, and that he had gone to Spain to inform His Majesty. Nonetheless, according to Santisteban Ochoa, the document dated May 27, 1638, states that Salinas y Córdoba was examined in Spain and that “no substantial evidence against him was found.”²⁷
Another case study from the seventeenth century is more relevant to the case of Pedro Bohorques. It involves a mestizo artisan called Diego Ramírez Carlos, said to be the son of a mestiza from Colquemarca in the territory of Carangas and of a certain clergyman known as “Fulano,” or “Ramírez something-or-other.”²⁸ There are two versions of the artisan’s story—his own, which highlights his merits in converting the infidels—and that of the Franciscan priest Gregorio de Bolívar, who participated in expeditions to the Chunchos along with Ramírez Carlos. The latter plays down the effects of what could have been another case of a “spurious alliance.”²⁹ The Memorial y Relación of friar Bolívar summarizes the important facts of this case and contains a detailed ethnographic and geographic description of the Chuncho region, a vast jungle that extends from the valleys of the Andean piedmont between Cuzco and La Paz, reaching Santa Cruz and the plains of Moxos or Mojos. (The people called the Chunchos comprise diverse ethnic groups, most being hunters, gatherers, and fishermen living along the tributaries of the rivers Beni and Madre de Dios.)

Friar Bolívar reports that in La Plata he had met Ramírez Carlos, a “skilled craftsman of harps and guitars” and an excellent musician with a special gift for seduction. Knowing of Bolivar’s interest in converting the Chunchos, in 1620 Ramírez Carlos told him that in Larecaja (a valley east of La Paz), where he had gone in search of an escaped mulatto slave, he had heard about the many descendants of the Incas who had sought refuge in the jungle. The Incas had taken him in with much “delight,” whereupon he had invited them to receive the word of the Gospel, which they had accepted, also agreeing to obey the king of Spain. With this success, he had gone to Lima, where he introduced himself to the viceroy, who gave him funds for the bishop of La Paz so that he could carry out another expedition with priests. When Ramírez Carlos asked Bolívar for his support, Bolívar presented him to the bishop, then organized and accompanied him in the expedition to convert the Chunchos.

Their first dispute occurred when they could not find the supposed Incas, and Ramírez Carlos was unable to show where he had located them before. A second problem arose when the priest discovered that his companion claimed to be the son of Melchor Carlos Inca, grandson of Paulllo Inca and great-grandson of Wayna Cápac, the last reigning Inca before the arrival of the Spaniards. Ramírez Carlos would announce his entry into the towns with his (now recovered) mulatto, who sounded a bugle, and had
himself revered as Inca, as he was dressed in garments that represented him as such. Once Ramírez Carlos gave to a cacique an Inca cumbi outfit of fine fabric used only by certain individuals in special ceremonies. Bolívar tried to denounce him on various occasions, but Ramírez Carlos retaliated by saying that the priest wanted the Spaniards to come to enslave them and that only he told the truth, that he came to convert them and would not subject them to forced labor. Partly because he was a well-Christianized mestizo, Ramírez bears some similarities to Pedro Bohorques, although he did not share the latter's rebellious characteristics. His real motives were never revealed, but reading between the lines of friar Bolívar's story, one assumes that Ramírez desired to create a Christian state independent of Spanish rule.

After a year of disputes and intrigues, Bolívar had not succeeded in making any converts or spotting any of the supposed Inca refugees. He and Ramírez finally convinced some Indians to go to La Paz with Ramírez Carlos to learn the customs and way of life of the Spaniards, with Bolívar remaining as a hostage until they returned. Because Ramírez had presented the natives as caciques and principales of great domains that had come in peace loyal to the king, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of La Paz received them with all pomp and deference. Ramírez later denied that they were caciques, admitting that they were only Indians who were exploring the possibility of initiating “rescues”—that is, mercantile exchanges with the Spanish towns. When they returned, the two Spaniards were reunited, but Bolívar in the meantime had developed his own relations—not always cordial—with the Indians. When Bolívar returned, there were negotiations for other religious orders to continue the work of conversion, but in the end nothing was done. Ramírez Carlos then apparently moved to Potosí, “although a couple days ago they told me he died,” said friar Gregorio in his Memorial y Relación (1628).

The counterversion of this story is the testimony of Diego Ramírez Carlos himself, who does not mention his claim of being related to Inca royalty. According to his account, he was well received by the Indians, and they had accepted the royal authority on condition that they not be forced to work as personal servants, “nor for another encomendero but only for the royal person of his majesty.”\(^\text{30}\) Ramírez Carlos told the king that Bolívar had carried out his mission and that they had successfully convinced the caciques and governors of important towns to pledge their obedience in La
Paz; indeed, he was himself the godfather of the son of the cacique who had accompanied him. He said that his letter was being delivered by Viceroy Príncipe de Esquilache on his return to Spain. He asked for reimbursement for his services, which had been carried out at his own cost. However, Ramírez Carlos did not get what he asked for, and there is no record that he made any further expeditions.

What is interesting in this case is that when the Franciscan Francisco Bernadino de Cárdenas was suggested as a replacement for Bolívar, the latter agreed to go along with a scheme whereby Ramírez should pass for an Inca, seeing it as a good way to convert the infidels. Bolívar attempted to break away from this partnership with Ramírez only after being asked to report on the failure of his mission. It is not clear whether Bolívar had ever disapproved of Ramírez’s conduct and his false mestizo identity. It appears more likely that when the strategy failed, he denied it. Whether or not Ramírez Carlos had any ties with certain royal Inca families is also unclear. Because the Indians had many ways of maintaining historical memory, many claimed to be legitimate and illegitimate descendants of the Incas long after the empire was defeated and destroyed.

The First Armed Insurrections

Various uprisings challenge the apparent political stability of Peru in the seventeenth century. The Indians saw the abuses of the authorities, the encomenderos, and colonial agents as oppression and violations of their rights. They responded in many ways, including escaping the mitas in Potosí, creating a category known as “outsiders.”31 They also illegally extracted minerals from the mines,32 entered markets for themselves, and resorted to legal measures and sending letters to the king—such as Guaman Poma’s letter, nearly 1,000 pages long. Yet these strategies were not sufficient, and, to the dismay of the Indians, new ethnic and social categories began to emerge in colonial Peru.

The first native conspiracy with a wide regional base was created in 1613. The conspirators had organized a network of alliances that encompassed groups from the lowlands (that is, Chunchos) and from the highlands. The plan was to attack all the major colonial cities simultaneously on Corpus Christi day.33 But the conspiracy was discovered, and the corregidor

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of La Paz, according to Saignes, ordered that the incident be put down and its occurrence silenced.

In 1623, an indigenous uprising took place in Songo (a town of coca cultivators in the yungas of La Paz). Exasperated by the abuses to which they had been subjected, local insurgents killed the corregidor, as well as various Spaniards and mestizos. Again, they had formed alliances with towns from the altiplano, such as the Lupacas of Chucuito and "other regions." The strategy was similar to the conspiracy of a decade earlier—that is, to kill the Spaniards and then seek refuge in the jungle. Preparations for the uprising had taken a year. The rebels had prepared caves near La Paz, where they had stockpiled provisions and weapons; those from the Collao hid themselves in an old fort at Tiwanaku. And while three Franciscan priests who had served as go-betweens ultimately dismantled the conspiracy, it was not quelled until six caciques were executed, including the leader, Gabriel Huaynaquile.

In the La Paz region, unrest resurfaced in 1644. The conspiracy again planned to kill the Spaniards and flee, and the same interethnic alliances took place. The difference was that the rebels managed to arm themselves and actually killed a representative of the corregidor. Yet the cacique was able to pacify them. The Indians of Ochusma and Iruito (Uru fishermen from Lake Titicaca) also carried out organized banditry. In 1632–33, they attacked various Aymara settlements, including the church of San Andrés de Machaca, where they desecrated images of the Virgin and child. They insisted that they were not Christians and refused to obey the king. In the first attempt at suppression, several were executed, including their leader, but this did not dissuade them. A replacement for the leader was quickly named, and after retrieving the heads of the executed they continued their attacks. The Aymaras themselves attempted to subdue them, as well as Spanish troops, but without success. The Ochusumas once sought an alliance with other groups, such as the Urus from Titicaca, the estuary, and Lake Poopó. Such attacks on indigenous settlements and rural banditry continued until the end of the seventeenth century.

Not all of these conflicts took place between Indians and Spaniards or agents of the state. In other cases there were various diverse and changing alliances among Indians, mestizos, criollos, and peninsulares. In Puno (more precisely, Laicacota) and La Paz, between 1661 and 1668, competition arose between mining camps, and the situation was complicated by tax evasion.
In this case certain caciques, such as Bartolomé Tupa Hallicalla, cooperated with the authorities, contributing copious resources.³⁷ This rebellion was a challenge to the central power, which finally provoked a strong suppression, headed by Viceroy Conde de Lemos.

The rebellion had two decisive moments: 1661–63 and 1665–68. The first saw a confrontation between two groups, partly differentiated by the ethnic or social origins of the participants. One group, headed in part by a corregidor and the brothers Salcedo, principally involved peninsulares called “criollos of Spain,” and those born in the New World, the “criollos of this kingdom.”³⁸ The other group, enraged by their expulsion from the mines, an action that had provoked attacks culminating in open combat, including some 500 “mestizos and criollos” and 150 Indians recruited from among other salaried miners. The conflict had sprung partly from the competition over the mines in the Puno area, discovered in 1650, and partly over the denunciations of corruption by officials accused of embezzling royal funds. The Salcedo group was at first triumphant. Miners expelled from Puno headed toward La Paz to put their case before the corregidor. However, instead of investigating their charges, he imprisoned one of their leaders. Concerning this event, Alberto Crespo notes that the mestizos sent emissaries to Cuzco and Larecaja to recruit people. When the rumor spread that the ringleader, Antonio Gallardo, would be executed, the rebels stormed the house of the corregidor and killed him, along with other members of his guard, shouting, “Long live the king! May bad government die!”³⁹ From La Paz the rebels continued to Puno, where they were defeated in a brief battle by the combined forces of the miners and the authorities, thus silencing the miners’ charges of corruption.

Antonio Acosta has made an interesting study of the social categories that appear in this case and their subjective value. The victors included Spaniards from Seville, like Salcedo; Basques, and the rest were “natives of these provinces,” or “criollos of this kingdom”—demonstrating that alliances could be formed between peninsulares and criollos if they shared economic interests. The rebels included “common criollos,” “criollo-mestizo people,” “mestizos,” “criollos and mestizo-criollos,” but it is evident that there were no peninsulares. These categories were not fixed, however, and they were subjectively applied. If these classifications are expressed in racial terms—that is, if the rebels were described as to their physical characteristics, as did a silversmith who was interrogated⁴⁰—clearly social marginalization was
added to the general discontent among the rebels caused by political and economic exclusion.

Nevertheless, there are subtle gradations that Acosta does not evaluate. A first-generation *criollo* is different from his descendants. The notion of being a *peninsular* likely decreased as the newer generations were farther removed from the first Spanish immigrants. In the same manner, each individual's history could determine the degree of resentment each felt toward the privileges enjoyed by the *peninsulares*, provoking various responses from the latter. For example, some among the rebels were wealthy individuals, but the writings of Salcedo and authorities call them “delinquents and outlaws.” The problem is complicated and resists generalization, but one observes an intricate network of factors that determined each individual's place in a highly mobile society, both upward and downward. This is even more true for *criollos*, as Bernard Lavalle notes, because *criollismo* is especially linked to the “spirit of possession” of acquired rights and is essentially vindicating and exclusivist, or as Jacques Lafaye terms it, devoted to the “ethics of colonial society.”⁴¹

In the seventeenth century this social panorama was complicated by the constant entry of new *peninsulares*, who, as the Spaniards of the prior century had expected, renewed Spanish blood in the colonies, but who in reality only multiplied the friction between the parties.

Among the indigenous participants in the rebellions of La Paz and of Puno, we find two different types: outsiders from the mines who were recruited to fight, and Indians from the community. The rebels asked the people of Zepita to support them, “following them with all their Indians and killing the Spaniards, [so that] they would not have to pay any taxes or tributes, [and so that] they would not send any more goods to [the Spaniards] and [the Indians] would be set free.”⁴² When the curaca of Zepita rejected the proposal, declaring himself a faithful subject of the king, he was executed. The rebels opposed both authority and interethnic alliances, but the situation was too confused for the rebels to succeed.

In the second stage, 1665–66, the rebels’ cause was similar, but the alliances changed. In the opinion of Antonio Acosta, economic interests determined these alliances among the Spaniards more than place of origin, so that old allies became rivals. The Basques expelled the Andalusians, among them the Salcedos, who had to abandon their mining bases and seek refuge in Juliaca. There they became allies with the camp that included those dissatisfied during the prior rebel episode. The *corregidor* Ángel de Peredo

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(later governor of Tucumán), of Basque origin, allied himself with his compatriots and overturned the support of the authorities, including Viceroy Conde de Lemos. José Salcedo was executed, but his brother, imprisoned in Cuzco, received the help and sympathy of local criollos.

This period of restlessness extended “to the highland provinces,” from Cuzco to Potosí.43 The bishop of Arequipa, who had been sent to pacify the rebels, ended by supporting them; and, except for Peredo, the same thing happened with many local authorities. The officials showed their fear by describing the rebels as “mestizos and loose people.”

The events in Potosí were caused by conflicts among factions representing different Spanish regional origins, namely that of the vicuñas, Andalu- sians and criollos, and the vascongados, Basques, are yet another example of how the fears of emerging and enemy factions that arose in the sixteenth century were not unfounded.44 Mineowners, farmers, and curacas carried out fierce legal attacks and protests against paying wages to the forced Indian mine laborers, which, according to Lewis Hanke, reached a decisive point during this period.45 The crisis caused by the fall in production and by the declining number of Indians in the mita led to the assassination of Bishop Francisco de La Cruz, who had intervened in the disputes.46 Bishop de La Cruz had, some years back, created the mission of Tarma in the Peruvian east, from which he had gained access to the Amazon yungas and opened a path that was later followed by Pedro Bohorques in search of the Paytíti.

During the interim administration by the Audiencia, even before the conflict of Laicacota ended, an uprising of curacas took place in Lima, also supposedly with extensive regional and interethnic ramifications. The uprising was denounced by don Diego Lobo, governor of the outsider Indians of Cajamarca, and Pedro Bohorques also apparently participated in it from jail, where he was imprisoned for his illegal adventures. As a result of this restlessness and the general rebellion, in particular the situation of Laicacota, the Audiencia used force where resistance was weakest: with the Indians, for which it was reproached by Viceroy Conde de Lemos when he assumed his post. The Audiencia ordered the execution of eight caciques47 and Pedro Bohorques, whose sentence had been postponed; the others accused were sent to the galleys or exiled.

As we have seen, there were vast sources of unrest in colonial Peru. Spaniards and criollos struggled over economic and political issues in Potosí.
or Laicacota; nonintegrated Indians like the Urus attacked the Aymaras, who had been more successful within the colonial system; there were alliances between Indians and Spaniards, as in the case of the Franciscan Salinas y Córdoba; and there were quasi-conspiracies, like those attributed to Francisco de La Cruz in the sixteenth century. Then there were Spaniards like Bohorques, or mestizos like Ramírez Carlos, who assumed the role of Inca to organize a territory under their jurisdiction. All these symptoms of unrest and open rebellion worried the authorities: Salinas y Córdoba was accused of calling the king a tyrant and of forming alliances with the Indians; Francisco de La Cruz was accused of heresy and, as if this were not enough, of political conspiracy and attempting to restore a utopian Inca Empire. And in the center of the conflicts was the mining *mita* that encompassed all of Potosí, which took in Indians from a vast area of upper Peru, all accompanied by massive corruption that Viceroy Conde de Lemos tried unsuccessfully to eradicate. This was the moment of greatest weakness in colonial Peru.

But this was not all. At the southern margins of the viceroyalty, in colonial Tucumán, there was resistance among Indians who controlled one of the richest territories in the province: the Calchaquí valley. This could not be tolerated. From 1550 to 1665 this valley, or parts of it, could be neither occupied nor exploited by the Spaniards. Year after year, governor after governor, the Spaniards tried to subjugate it. At the end of each campaign it seemed certain that the area had been pacified and that the Indians, dispersed among *encomiendas*, would serve in the *mita* and obey their *encomenderos*. Year after year, these hopes were dashed. The Indians did not fulfill their promises and, if they did so sporadically, it was more a way to obtain European goods than to submit to pressures from colonial authorities. In this rebellious region Bohorques installed himself for a span of three years. The situation in the viceroyalty of Peru was far from the social stability that some historians have attempted to construct.

All this unrest was promoted, reinforced, encouraged, and dismissed at times, for the appetite for new kingdoms led to new areas where the odyssey of Cajamarca and Cuzco could be reproduced: to find gold in the streets, to bathe in golden waters filled with gold dust, to pick up pearls and precious stones, and, as León Pinelo had dreamed, to find paradise in the New World. Everyone searched in one way or another for paradise, the kingdom of peace, order, leisure, and pleasure. Everyone cherished the utopian hope of finding his own paradise in the New World.

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