Bárbaros: Spaniards and Their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment

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appearance of Indians, as in the case of various peoples to the south of Lake Maracaibo in today's Venezuela, whom Spaniards called Motilones (from the Spanish verb *motilar,* "to cut the hair") because, in contrast to their neighbors, they wore their hair cropped short.[60]

Applied to peoples whose own name for themselves was usually "the people," these ethnic labels were often capricious and imprecise as well as counterfeit. Outsiders might give the same people a multiplicity of names or apply the same name to several groups, depending on their physical location or relationship at a given time. Who the "people of the north" were depended on how far south the observers were. The groups themselves, whatever name they went by, generally represented mixtures of people who did not see themselves as the single people that outsiders imagined them to be. As is usually the case, ethnic labels suggest a false sense of ethnic purity or ethnic continuity. People met and mingled, became bilingual or multilingual, and moved in and out of ethnic groups. Athapascan speakers of the eighteenth century, for example, did not all derive from Athapascan stock. Navajos, Athapascans of Apache origin, seem to have absorbed some Pueblos and Paiutes who became Navajos, and the number of Pueblos living among Navajos was so great that one scholar has suggested that Navajos "may have been Puebloans for part of their history."[61] By the eighteenth century, many communities of independent Indians had also incorporated individual Africans and Europeans, along with aspects of their cultures and their genes—racially, but not ethnically, many Indians were, like Spaniards, mixed bloods, or mestizos. Just as they conceal racial and ethnic mixtures, ethnic labels obscure local politics and local identities. By the 1700s, for example, a clear division existed between supposed ethnically pure Miskitos and Zambo-Miskitos who had absorbed black African slaves. Nonetheless, in juxtaposing Indians against Spaniards, I often refer to Miskitos as if they were a single society.

Today many Indian peoples prefer to identify themselves in their own languages, but I have chosen to retain the historical names by which Spaniards knew them and with which modern readers are more likely to be familiar. For example, I use Tarahumaras instead of Rarámuris, Seris instead of Comcáac, Pápagos instead of Tohono O'odhom, Cunas instead of Tules, Guajiros instead of Wayús, Matacos instead of Weenhayek, Guahibos instead of Wayapopihíwis, Chiriguanos instead of Avas, Payaguás instead of Evuevís, and Patagonians rather than Tehuelches.

If the words for Indians and their tribal names require explanation, so does the word *Spaniard,* a label that was also originally applied to them by outsiders and whose meaning, like that of all ethnic markers, depends on context.[62] In the narrowest sense of the word, a Spaniard, or *español,* in eighteenth-century Spanish-American society was a *peninsular,* that is, a person born in Spain of Spanish-born parents, or a *criollo,* a person born in America to Spanish parents. Other words, like *mestizo, lobo,* and *coyote,* applied to American-born mixed bloods. Yet all Hispanicized peoples, whatever their place of birth or racial composition, became "Spaniards" when they sought to distinguish themselves from *indios domésticos* or *indios salvajes.* As one missionary wrote in 1788 from the Indian country of Texas, "When I say Spaniard I mean a non-Indian; this is the usage here."[63]

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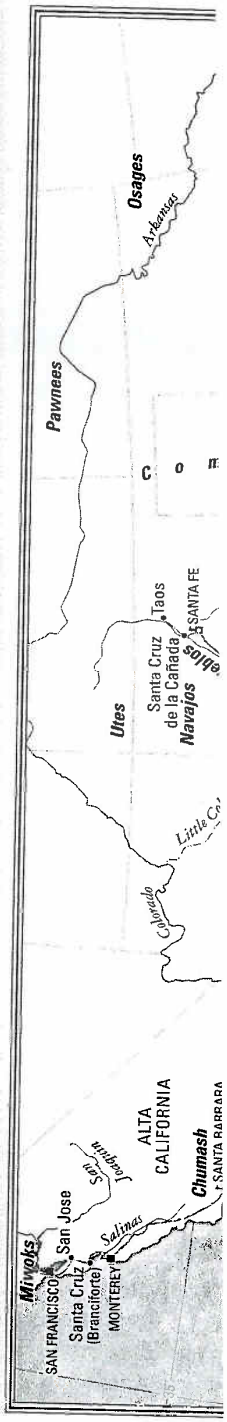
grasses, they raised fine horses and mules. They traded the surplus to the agricultural peoples who lived to their east and west—including Spaniards in New Mexico—and to plains peoples farther north, where hard winters took a heavy toll on horses. The Comanche country—the *comanchería*—exceeded Central America in size and stood as a formidable barrier against Spanish efforts to expand to the north and west of San Antonio.[82]

In the late 1700s, Spaniards understood that Comanches fell into four large divisions: western Comanches, made up of Jupes and Yamparicas, and eastern Comanches, consisting of Kotsotekas and Orientales. Within these large divisions were clusters of family groups, tenuously connected into bands. The Comanches' numbers grew throughout the 1700s as they absorbed members of other tribes, including Apaches, Caddos, Osages, Pawnees, Pueblos, and Wichitas. Spanish captives and renegades also added to their numbers. From a population of about eight thousand in 1750 they grew to twenty thousand in 1780, partly by absorbing captives. Comanche women gained status by indoctrinating captives, and senior Comanche men acquired additional wives as status symbols and domestic laborers. As they incorporated other peoples, one historian has suggested, Comanches became more polyglot, cosmopolitan, and better informed about their neighbors.[83]

Along with an increase in prosperity, Comanche society became more hierarchical and adept at large-scale raiding and military operations. Unlike Araucanians, however, whose political structure began to resemble a state, horse-dependent Comanches seem to have reached a critical mass and then become more decentralized as the need to find forage for their ever-growing horse herds forced them to disperse. When the situation demanded it, however, disparate Comanche bands and divisions cooperated. The four divisions, one New Mexico governor observed in 1794, "agree among themselves perfectly. . . . Their interests are common and they have a common destiny."[84]

Apaches had undergone similar migrations and transformations, but Comanches forced them to scatter across much of northern New Spain, where they became a powerful obstacle to Spanish expansion. Athapascan-speaking peoples linguistically associated with Native peoples in Alaska and Canada, Apaches appear to have established themselves in northern Arizona and New Mexico by the 1400s, if not before.[85] Like Comanches, they called themselves "the people," and Spaniards knew them by a word that meant "enemy," the Zuni word *apachú*, with multiple adjectives denoting individual bands.[86]

Like other Native Americans who acquired horses and new external enemies, Apaches coalesced, at least initially, into larger political units. By the mid-1700s, Apaches whom Spaniards identified as Navajos, Chiricahuas, Gileños, Mimbreños, and others came to dominate parts of present-day western New Mexico and southern Arizona. Others, known to Spaniards as Jicarillas, Mescaleros, and Lipanes, flourished to the east of the Río Grande. There they hunted buffalo on the high plains and alternated raiding and trading with Spaniards and sedentary Pueblo Indians in the Río Grande Valley of New Mexico. Spaniards understood that these Apache bands spoke the same language but did not constitute "one uniform nation in their customs, habits and tastes." Indeed, Apaches remained organized in small bands, each led by a chief who did not recognize



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created new social inequalities, unhinged gender relations, undermined traditional political hierarchies, and intensified resource competition and warfare."[139]

Just as the horse was a powerful agent for change in Indian societies, so too were Spanish manufactures and markets. When used for trading or raiding, horses were often just the means to obtain goods that Indians could not manufacture for themselves. Metal objects like spurs, bits, knives, and hatchets, Spanish cloth and clothing, and luxury items such as flour, sugar, tobacco, liquor, and playing cards in themselves generated profound social and political changes in Native societies.[140] Some nouveau riche war leaders enhanced their status as much through trade as through war by redistributing goods and captives and by mediating between the market economy of the Spanish world and the barter economies that characterized many Native societies.[141] Efforts by some chiefs to control trade in foreign goods could itself lead to intratribal wars—wars made all the more deadly as Natives added metal-tipped lances, swords, and firearms to their arsenals.[142]

Independent equestrian societies did not depend solely on raiding and warfare to acquire European-introduced goods. Their transformation through years of contact with Spaniards and things Spanish opened the way for a range of relationships, including commerce. Some raised horses, cattle, sheep, and goats that they traded to Spaniards "on the hoof." Comanches and Araucanians who traded surplus horses *to* Spaniards inverted the traditional role of the European as supplier. Other Indians traded surplus grain they had produced, fruit and nuts they had gathered, or silver or leather they had worked.[143]

Vast trading networks developed in frontier zones where the economies of Spaniards and independent Indians articulated with one another. In such places, the stabilization of economic relations promoted peace, borders became diffuse, and trade became the norm.[144] We often fail to see the extent of those peaceful relations between Spaniards and their savages. Indian traders inspired fewer governmental reports than Indian warriors, and Spanish record keepers often found it to their advantage to portray Indians as menacing rather than peaceful. Along the Spanish–Mapuche frontier, for example, military officials commonly overstated the danger posed by Indians. José Perfecto de Salas, a royal official who traveled apprehensively through Mapuche lands en route to Valdivia in 1749, was surprised to find himself amidst a peaceful people. Spanish officers, he concluded, had exaggerated the Araucanian threat so they could keep their budgets and positions and so they could control the profitable Indian trade below the Biobío.[145] Missionaries also inflated the Indian menace as a way of extracting greater support from the crown, and ranchers, miners, and merchants won tax breaks from the crown on the grounds that they inhabited a war zone.[146]

Influenced by their sources, historians long viewed the Araucanía as a place where Indians struggled heroically against whites for 350 years, from their first contact with Spaniards in 1536 until their crushing defeat in 1883. Closer study of these years, however, has suggested that Spanish–Mapuche relations entered a relatively peaceful phase in the mid-1600s that lasted until the end of the colonial era. Although relations were often

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tense, complementary economies and the high costs of war created the conditions for peace. Spaniards provoked two so-called Araucanian rebellions, in 1723 and 1766, but those outbreaks were exceptional. Years of close contact between Spaniards and Indians in the broad zone on both sides of the Río Biobío had broken down racial and cultural distinctions. Spanish slaving, which inevitably brought Indian reprisals, had diminished. Meanwhile, each side had come to depend on the other for trade goods. Araucanians needed iron and silver; Spaniards needed horses, agricultural products, textiles, and the labor of independent Indians. In the mid-1700s, then, peaceful commercial relations prevailed between Spaniards and Mapuches in Chile, even as Huilliches and Pehuenches fought one another for control of trans-Andean passes and even as the Araucanized Indians intensified their raids on Spanish trade routes and settlements in Argentina, sending stolen livestock westward over the Andes into Chilean markets.[147]

On a day-to-day basis, however, neither absolute peace nor unqualified war characterized relations between independent Indians and Spaniards, even during times of peace and times of war. Some Natives, like Navajos, raided and traded simultaneously, for no central authority dictated a single Navajo way of interacting with Spaniards.[148] In other areas, outbreaks of violence punctuated long periods of peace or outbreaks of peace punctuated long periods of raiding. Factions of tribes and tribes who made war on Spaniards halted hostilities from time to time in order to trade, sometimes on a regular schedule. As one chronicler noted of the Indian nation in New Mexico in the mid-1700s, "All ask for peace when they find it advantageous, and start war when they find it convenient, every year at a certain time."[149] Some Indians made war on one province while maintaining peace with another. The Abipones, one Jesuit observed, robbed Spaniards on the western edge of the Chaco but took care to maintain peace with one city where they could trade the booty from war for the "utensils necessary for war."[150] Although Indians who alternated raiding and trading struck Spaniards as faithless, they may simply have extended a normal way of dealing with one another into their relations with Spaniards.[151]

Throughout the empire, Spaniards proved to be some of the best customers for manufactured goods and livestock that Indians took from other Spaniards—an irony deplored by some Spanish officials. Notwithstanding frequent orders against trade with *indios bárbaros* in northern New Spain, New Mexicans bought branded livestock from Apaches and Comanches who had driven them north from other provinces. Chileans, at peace with their immediate Mapuche neighbors, traded for livestock stolen on the other side of the Andes. Residents of Corrientes and Santa Fe bought goods and livestock that Guaycuruans had plundered in raids on Córdoba and Asunción.[152]

From the viewpoint of frontier Spaniards, trading with independent Indians bought local peace and profits. From the imperial perspective, on the other hand, Spaniards who bought stolen goods gave Indians incentives to steal and so contributed to the destabilization of the empire's frontiers. In frontier zones where the Spanish demand for labor was high and Spanish institutions weak, Spaniards' trade in one commodity alone, human captives, raised the level of violence. Beginning in the 1580s, at the height of war against

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Argentine side of the Andes, they had easy access to horses, alcohol, and manufactured goods. Without surrendering independence they could enjoy yearly visits by priests who brought them gifts and the sacrament of baptism. Since priests presented them with gifts on the occasion of baptism, Mapuche parents found it advantageous to have their children baptized repeatedly and, with passage of time, Mapuches came to think of baptism as an *admapu*—an ancestral custom.[233]

In this, Mapuches were not unique. Peoples like the upper, or western, Tarahumaras also accepted baptism in large numbers and incorporated Christian elements into their rituals even as they continued to live in "distant places," as one Franciscan said, "subject to nothing but their own free will." The Tarahumaras' success at resisting missionary life owed much to the rugged terrain of their homeland on the western escarpment of the Sierra Madre, with its "almost inaccessible ravines." There they found sanctuary, and Spaniards could not readily find them. Their population, some twenty-five thousand, remained substantial in the late 1700s.[234]

Before the Araucanian revolt of 1766, Jesuits had seventeen missions in the Araucanía. After the revolt, only seven remained. Following the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, secular priests took over the four Jesuit missions closest to the Biobío, where a bishop of Concepción later described the Indians as "converted and no longer neophytes." Franciscans took charge of the remaining three missions, where Indians were "still undergoing conversion"—at the coastal mission of Arauco, below Concepción in Mapuche territory, and at Valdivia and nearby Mariquina in Huilliche country.[235]

Franciscans were not newcomers to the Araucanía. Together with Dominicans, they had first come in the 1550s, preceding the Jesuits' arrival in Chile by forty years. After the great Araucanian revolt of 1598–1603, however, Franciscans and Dominicans had abandoned the field to the Jesuits. The Dominicans turned their attention to running schools and parishes and never returned.[236] The Franciscans established a missionary college at Chillán in 1756 and looked again toward the Araucanía.

Like the Jesuits, Franciscans had a tradition of using a single mission community as a hub, or *cabecera,* from which they visited chapels in nearby satellite villages, which they termed *visitas.* Franciscans, however, performed mass and other sacraments in their nearby *visitas* with frequency, often weekly. Jesuits in the Araucanía, on the other hand, baptized Indians in a circuit so large they could only visit them once a year. Franciscans from Chillán deplored the fact that Jesuits abandoned baptized Araucanians for a year at a time. Without sustained instruction, one Franciscan said, baptized Indians remained "as fixed in the darkness of their errors, superstitions, and savage customs as the other heathen nations who never knew a missionary."[237]

To Franciscan critics from Chillán, the Jesuit circuits had done more harm than good. Heathens, by definition, could not commit sacrileges. By baptizing Indians and then leaving them without further instruction for long periods of time, however, Jesuits had given their neophytes both the capacity and the liberty to commit sacrileges. By way of example, a scandalized Franciscan claimed that one poorly instructed Mapuche had

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Although the precise amount spent on gratifying Indians defies measurement, it was substantial, and there was a direct correlation between Indians' potential to aid Spaniards and the amount spent to mollify them. In New Mexico, for example, Comanche allies received the lion's share of gifts compared to the equally friendly but less numerous Jicarilla Apaches. In Louisiana and West Florida, where Spain had to compete with British and then American traders for Indian loyalties, the annual cost of purchasing gifts for Indians represented a large drain on the economy. It rose from 4,000 pesos in 1769 to 55,209 pesos, or 10 percent of the entire administrative budget, in 1794.[85] Had Spain followed the English practice of sending Indian delegations to Europe to impress them, the costs of entertainment would have been higher. Instead, Spanish officials settled for impressing Indians in viceregal capitals and other imperial cities—many of them more opulent and impressive architecturally than any city in the English colonies.[86]

Certainly not all of the money budgeted for gifts and hospitality found its way to Indians. It appears that some Spanish middlemen found illegal ways to siphon some of the funds to their own accounts.[87] Even the largest sums, however, seemed inadequate to supply Indians' demands. Officials in charge of distributing gifts seemed caught perpetually between the crown's demands for frugality and Indians' demands for generosity.

In the Habsburg era, missionaries obtained converts and workers in exchange for gifts and entertainment, and local officials acquired cheap Indian labor by gifting Indian caciques. In the late Bourbon era, however, gift-giving Spanish officers hoped for little more than security. As Teodoro de Croix baldly put it, Spaniards gave gifts to Indians so they would not need to steal.[88] Buying the "friendship" of potentially hostile tribes seemed like a good return on investment.[89] It was expensive to shower the Mbayás with gifts, the governor of Paraguay observed, but "it will be worse to have them as enemies."[90]

Although Spanish officials self-consciously bribed Indians with gifts, they knew that gifts and hospitality signified voluntary acts of generosity in Native worlds. To be efficacious, gifts had to be presented with magnanimity, equity, and respect. Form was as important as substance. Governor Concha explained to his successor that gifts to Comanches, Utes, Navajos, and Apaches who frequented Santa Fe had to be given by "the hand of the governor himself, in order that they may be more grateful."[91] The bestowing of gifts, which increased the status of the giver, often established an alliance or a familial relationship—a "fictive kinship," and the receipt of gifts came with the obligation of reciprocity, even among "kin." Repayment for gifts might take the form of "courtesies, entertainment, ritual, military assistance, women, children, dances, and feasts," in the words of one scholar.[92]

Native gift economies, in which individuals achieved status by giving away goods rather than accumulating them, did not conform to enlightened Spaniards' notions of Indians as rational consumers and producers. But Indians made their expectations of Spanish largesse clear in the most rational terms. Pehuenches de Malargüe, who had given Spaniards the generous gift of peace, expected generosity in return. Gifts, they had learned from Spanish officers, came in the name of the king, and a powerful cacique like the Spanish king would surely send a generous amount.[93] Adopting a more ingratiating

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tone, the powerful Ranquel cacique Carripilún purportedly explained to a Spanish delegation in 1806 that "since we lack good things we have the life of a dog. . . . The dog loves whoever gives it [things], and is also grateful and faithful to him." Carripilún observed that he, too, was loyal and "rational."[94]

In effect, gifts and entertainment were obligatory gestures for maintaining alliances and friendships between Native societies, yet Spaniards, like Indians, sought to maintain the fiction that they gave voluntarily. Gifts, Croix told the governor of Texas, should be given in such a way that Indians "not be given cause for conceit or arrogance nor acquire our gifts as if we had been forced to give them."[95] Whatever the appearance, however, the reality was that Spaniards, who *collected* tribute from incorporated Indians, *paid* tribute to independent Indians. Like nomads on the steppes of inner Asia, who built great empires by extracting tribute from their Chinese neighbors, Apaches, Comanches, Araucanians, Chiriguanos, and others collected taxes from Spaniards who preferred to identify those taxes as gifts and entertainment.[96] "That which in the name of your majesty are called favors, they receive as tribute," Chilean Governor Guill y Gonzaga bluntly told the king in 1766.[97] "Peace is enjoyed on this frontier," the bishop of Concepción wrote in 1785, "but [is] advantageous only to the enemy," whom Spaniards had to pay and entertain.[98] Indians believe, Antonio de Ulloa wrote after a stint as governor of Louisiana, that they are "more able, wise, and astute than those who ask them [for peace], fear them, and give them gifts."[99]

Just as some war hawks opposed trading with Indians, so did they object to giving them gifts, arguing that presents made Indians insolent rather than cooperative, greedy rather than grateful.[100] In 1795, one Franciscan bemoaned the lack of Indian gratitude in the Interior Provinces of New Spain. "Despite the enormous and even excessive kindness with which they are treated," he said, Indians continued their raids, "returning death and destruction for the gifts and good treatment of their benefactors."[101]

He and other critics of gift giving overstated their case. Indians interpreted graciously given gifts as signs of good faith, and Spaniards who understood that simple fact gained and maintained influence with tribes or tribal factions. Gifts also had more influence *within* Indian societies than Spaniards supposed. Spaniards certainly recognized the symbolic power of the staffs of office, medals, flags, and uniforms they distributed to Indian leaders. They did not seem to understand, however, that some European goods acquired new power when they crossed cultural boundaries into Indian societies. Some Indians believed that European merchandise like medals and flags had power to bring good or evil and imbued beads and mirrors with such spiritual weight that their owners took them to the grave.[102]

Building Peace on the Foundations of Commerce

Spanish trade goods and gifts, then, became powerful lubricants for smoothing relationships, and in some areas their use ushered in a period of relative peace that lasted

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until the wars of independence in the 1810s. One of those areas was northern New Spain, where Gálvez's *Instrucción* of 1786 may have been less a prescription for change in policy than the reflection of a shift already under way. After 1786, authorities offered independent Indians access to trade, gifts, cooperation against mutual enemies, and equitable and consistent treatment—policies once urged by a handful of officials but now the conventional wisdom.[103] By offering Indians more than life in missions and the absence of war, Spanish authorities increased their chances of forging an enduring peace. They did so with Comanches, Navajos, and many Apache groups, ushering in an era of economic growth and demographic expansion for northern New Spain.[104]

In the case of the western Comanches, the peace pact they signed with Anza in 1786 gave them an entrée to the Spanish market and the promise of equitable treatment at the annual trade fair at Taos, where Comanches complained that New Mexican traders had cheated them in the past.[105] The agreement of 1786 endured into the 1810s, as much because of Comanches' interest in being at peace with Spaniards as because of Spaniards' interest in maintaining peace with them. Eastern and western Comanches alike needed new sources of firearms and ammunition. The French and English firearms that once flowed into the Comanchería from French Louisiana via Wichita and Kansas Indians began to diminish after Spanish officials took over Louisiana in 1766 and gradually restricted the trade. Western Comanches had suffered a rare military defeat in 1779, when Anza's forces (nearly half of them Pueblo Indians) destroyed a Comanche camp in southeastern Colorado and killed a prominent war chief, Cuerno Verde. In 1780–81, a continent-wide smallpox epidemic apparently took a terrible toll throughout the Comanchería. Comanches, then, had their own reasons for making peace in 1786 and maintaining it.[106]

Anza's successor, Fernando de la Concha continued to use gifts and trade to maintain alliances with both Comanches and Navajos (Anza had also signed a peace treaty with Navajos in 1786).[107] Concha described Comanches, whom Spaniards once dismissed as faithless, as especially trustworthy: "In this tribe one finds faith in the treaties that it acknowledges, manifest truth, good hospitality, and decent customs."[108] Under Concha's leadership, Comanches and Navajos joined with Spanish forces to increase military pressure on Gileños, Chiricahuas, Mimbreños, and other Apaches. Meanwhile, Spaniards and their Opata and Pima allies from Sonora and Nueva Vizcaya squeezed Apaches from the south. By the 1790s, many Apaches had sued for peace and its attendant benefits—not only in southern New Mexico, but also across the northern frontier.[109]

Spaniards and their Indian allies had pushed Apaches toward peace by fighting a pitiless war in which Spaniards offered rewards for pairs of Apache ears and sent Apache prisoners into permanent exile.[110] In the spirit of the *Instructions* of 1786, however, Spanish officers had offered the carrot along with the stick. They settled some Apaches on reserves near presidios, gave them weekly rations of corn, meat, tobacco, and sweets, and instructed them in the ways of Spaniards.

In these so-called peace establishments—*establecimientos de paz*—soldiers rather than missionaries tried to convert Apaches into town dwellers who farmed, ranched, practiced

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European trades, and learned self-government. Officials in northern New Spain continued to rely on missions to Hispanicize Indians in places where they seemed docile, as in Alta California, but peace establishments became the preferred institution for effecting cultural change among Apaches, who had resisted missions. Pedro de Nava, serving as commander in chief of the Interior Provinces in 1791, expressly forbade missionary proselytizing in the *establecimientos de paz*, lest it annoy Apaches and cause them to flee. Nava supposed that soldiers, like missionaries, would control Apaches' movements; Indians who needed to travel over twenty-five miles from an *establecimiento* were to be issued passports. Nava also ordered the officers who presided over Apaches *de paz* to tolerate "the Indians' crude and gross ways," learn the Apaches' language and customs, dispense Apache justice on the reservations, designate Apache *capitancillos* as judges, and regale Apache chiefs with gifts. He had no illusions that Apache men, "accustomed only to war and hunting," would take up farming and ranching, "but the women and children may." On a personal level, officers were to form friendships with individual Apaches and encourage their own children to play with Apache youngsters.[111]

Peace with the Apache bands, whether they lived inside or outside of *establecimientos de paz*, was never as firm or as enduring as that with Comanches. Even after agreeing to peace, Governor Concha noted in 1790, Gileño Apaches continued to "distrust" Spaniards, "perhaps for good reasons."[112] Continued raids and occasional outbreaks of war notwithstanding, contemporary Spaniards perceived that they had entered a new era in relations with Apaches. With gifts, trade, and diplomacy they had turned former enemies into permanent allies and then used those new allies to control Apaches. "We would not have believed the benefit that has resulted to the province from this policy if we hadn't seen it with our own eyes," one New Mexican recalled in 1812.[113]

Spaniards also tried to convert Comanches and Navajos into town-dwelling farmers without using missionaries. They failed. The commander in chief of the Interior Provinces, Jacobo Ugarte, hoped to introduce both peoples to agricultural settlements following their pacification in 1786. As Ugarte explained, Comanches needed to understand that "the animals they hunt with such effort for sustenance are not at base inexhaustible, like agriculture." Ugarte ordered Anza to settle Spaniards and Pueblo Indians among the Comanches to teach them to farm by example. One Comanche band, the Jupes, agreed. Suffering from drought and eager to firm up their economic relations with New Mexico, which furnished them with trade goods, agricultural products, and a market for captives, meat, and horses, Jupes signed on to build a town on the Arkansas River northeast of Santa Fe. Together with Spanish laborers from Taos, Jupes built and occupied nineteen houses by the winter of 1787 and had more homes under construction. Then tragedy struck. The favorite wife of the band's leader, Paraunarimuco, died, and the Comanches abandoned San Carlos de los Jupes. The town site had become a painful reminder of a death.[114] Spanish efforts to turn Navajos into town dwellers also failed. As Spaniards pushed into Navajo lands in the 1790s, hostilities resumed, and the Spanish–Navajo détente of 1786 unraveled. Punitive expeditions and new peace agreements in 1805

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In 1795, when Spain blundered toward a war with Britain, these ties unraveled. Hoping to win the neutrality of the United States, if not its friendship, Spain surrendered its claims to West Florida above the 31st parallel. Along with its claims, it lost its alliances with Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickasaws, whose lands now fell squarely in U.S. territory. Five years later, in 1800, France forced a weakened Spain to cede Louisiana in a secret treaty, and its hard-won alliances with Indians in that quarter vanished as well.[172]

The Limits of Dominion

From the example of their European rivals, Bourbon administrators learned they could exert influence on independent Indians without exercising dominion over them or paying the cost of governing them. Until their withdrawal from the Mosquito Coast in 1787, for example, English traders recognized Natives as legitimate rulers, and those rulers, in turn, remained fiercely loyal to Englishmen. Not only did Britain avoid the expenses of governance, but its citizens profited from the arrangement. A small number of Miskitos fishing turtles brought in more revenue for English traders in 1769 than fifty thousand tribute-paying Indians in Nicaragua provided for the Spanish crown in that same year.[173]

The thrifty example of England and France inspired Spanish critics and policymakers. The author of the *Nuevo sistema* put it succinctly: "To prefer dominion over the advantages and utilities of commerce and friendly trade with the savage nations caused past conquests to end badly and others . . . not to be carried out."[174] Few Spanish officials went as far as the conde de Aranda, who, in the belief that Spain would collect more from trade than from taxes, advised Carlos III that "your Majesty should rid himself of all his dominions on the continent of both Americas."[175] Bourbon officials did, however, come to see practical advantages to abandoning long-held claims to territory that Spaniards had not occupied and to recognizing the sovereignty of independent Indians. Indians themselves pushed Bourbon policymakers in this new direction.[176]

Initially Spain claimed much of the New World by right of discovery, the controversial papal donations of 1493, and the Spanish–Portuguese realignment in the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494, which gave Spain all but the eastern portion of South America (see map 1). By the late eighteenth century, however, Spanish officials understood, as Malaspina vividly put it, that "an arbitrary [papal] decree that runs from one pole to the other" would not assure Spanish possession over most of the hemisphere, much less over its peoples. Spain could guarantee its borders only through "authentic treaties with other European powers."[177] Acting on that premise, Bourbons had surrendered claims to dominion in the heart of South America when they came under heavy pressure from the Portuguese. In the Treaty of Madrid, signed in 1750, Spain conceded the fact that the Portuguese had moved westward, far beyond the Tordesillas line. The Treaty of Madrid called for a new border, and Spanish and Portuguese surveyors set out to locate natural boundaries, rather than imaginary lines, to separate their possessions.[178]

Even as Spain retreated in the face of Portuguese expansion, however, it tried to

HP22688

expand where it seemed to serve its strategic interests. In 1762, Carlos III reluctantly acquired Louisiana, knowing that it had lost money for France but would buffer New Spain from the British Colonies. In 1788, he sent colonists to the Mosquito Coast to replace the British, who had left the year before. Under Carlos III, Spain also moved to firm up its claims to territory where neither Spaniards nor other Europeans lived: the Falklands, Patagonia, Easter Island, Tahiti, Alta California, and Vancouver Island. The Bourbons recognized that only occupancy buttressed territorial claims. They sent poor residents from the Canary Islands and Iberia to strategic frontiers, from Louisiana to Patagonia, and even permitted foreign Catholics to settle in some particularly vulnerable areas. Until the end of the colonial era, however, Spain had more places to colonize than it had colonists, and it lacked resources to sustain those it sent. At Carmen de Patagones, founded in 1779 at the mouth of the Río Negro in Patagonia, a handful of colonists lived in caves for a generation before the government fulfilled a promise to build housing. Unable to colonize effectively its far-flung pieces of real estate, the government sent soldiers and convicts to built forts. Some of those structures were so small and lightly garrisoned, however, as to be symbolic—mere "signs that the land is ours," one of the king's advisors acknowledged.[179]

Critics argued that constructing forts to hold sparsely populated lands drained the treasury and served little purpose. Malaspina observed that Spain lost money building military posts to establish the right of possession, while its rivals made money by building trading posts. He thought it foolhardy for Spain to build forts on the Pacific coast of North America to stop Russian expansion. He dismissed the cordon of forts that crossed New Spain's Interior Provinces as little more than "fodder" for the savages: "A border that consumes a million pesos to defend property worth 100,000 pesos should be avoided."[180] A generation earlier, the marqués de Rubí had recommended that Spain stop trying to expand in northern New Spain and withdraw instead to a more realistic position closer to the edges of Hispanic settlement. Spain, he said, should build a line of forts that would control only those regions that Spain could effectively occupy—"what should be called the dominion and true possessions of the King."[181] Malaspina, however, suggested that Rubí did not go far enough. Spain, he argued, should forgo costly forts altogether and let colonists develop the region by trading peacefully with Indians. Misinformed by Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* (1787), Malaspina pointed to the United States as the model for peaceful, low-cost relations with Indians.[182]

Malaspina's advice went unheeded. Spain never withdrew its garrisons from the coast of Alta California or the Interior Provinces, although economic stringency forced it to abandon some of its symbolic garrisons. Forts at Nootka (1789–95) on Vancouver Island and on Neah Bay on the Strait of Juan de Fuca (1792–95), some one thousand miles by sea above San Francisco, much like their remote counterparts on the Patagonian coast, could not be sustained.[183]

Although Spain claimed dominion over American land, the exact nature of that dominion raised a number of questions that Spanish jurists continued to grapple with in

HP22689

the eighteenth century. Did the papal donation give Spain permanent or temporary dominion over the lands of the New World? Did dominion include the inhabitants as well as the land? If it included the inhabitants, did dominion extend to organized societies with governmental structures or only to savages who seemed to lack government?[184]

Early on, these troubling questions had prompted the crown to seek additional legal justification for its rule over Indians, and it did so in part by entering into contractual arrangements with them. At first, it sanctioned the use of the notorious *requerimiento* of 1513, a legal document (from the Spanish point of view) that unilaterally required Indians to recognize the Spanish crown as their sovereign or face destruction.[185] As the *requerimiento,* with its tortured logic, fell from favor in Spain (it never seems to have enjoyed favor among Indians), Spaniards simply demanded the allegiance of Indians who occupied Spanish-claimed land. When Indians resisted and succumbed to Spanish force, Spaniards offered terms of peace. Few of these agreements appear to have been written, and so we have only a hazy idea of their nature. What is known of the early accords suggests that they were, in general, little more than terms of surrender—unilateral directives masquerading as bilateral agreements. Usually negotiating from a position of weakness, Indians promised to keep peace, free captives, fight with Spaniards against other Indians, live in assigned areas, accept missionaries, pay tribute, put themselves at the complete service of the crown, and leave their leaders' sons as hostages or human surety bonds.[186] In advice to Spanish caudillos published in 1599, Capt. Bernardo de Vargas Machuca spelled out the ideal peace arrangement: Indians should surrender everything in exchange for Spanish protection from enemies.[187]

When relations of power between Indians and Europeans were markedly unequal, treaties served, in the words of one scholar, as "a weapon in the arsenal of the stronger power." Indians in a relatively weak position signed agreements that made them "virtually captive to the rules of a society that they still saw as alien."[188] This appears to have been the case with a series of agreements Spaniards entered into with Lipan and Mescalero Apaches between 1781 and 1799, in Texas, Coahuila, Nuevo Santander, and Nuevo León. Weakened by struggles with the Spanish military, by Comanches, and by internal conflicts, bands of these eastern Apaches began to seek peace with Spanish officers. In most of these agreements, Spanish officers dispensed gifts and titles to Indian leaders and permitted them to trade in Spanish forts and towns under certain conditions, but Indians made most of the concessions. They had to return captives (Spaniards agreed to return only unbaptized captives), live in restricted areas (sometimes close to Spanish forts), prevent crimes against Spaniards, and fight with Spaniards against common enemies.[189] In 1787, for example, some Mescalero leaders entered into an agreement at Presidio del Norte. The pact required the Mescaleros, whose population Spaniards estimated at three thousand, to live near the fort and not to leave the area without a written permit. Instead of receiving rations, they would support themselves by farming and stock raising —supplemented by hunting, with special permission. Not surprisingly, Mescaleros failed to meet the terms of the agreement, which some Spanish officers saw as unrealistic.[190]

HP22690

Spanish officials referred to the Mescalero accord as a *capitulación.*[191] That word could serve as a synonym for a treaty, as scholars have pointed out, but it could also signify a contract between parties of unequal strength or a concession from the strong to the weak, that is, a capitulation. Terms such as *artículos de paz* ("articles of peace") and *tratado* ("treaty") generally implied greater equality between the parties, but those words, too, could also describe a document of surrender.[192] Each of these words may have held precise meaning for jurists, but legal distinctions blurred in practice as Spanish officials used them interchangeably.

When Spaniards had the upper hand, they saw no need to negotiate with Indians as if they were a sovereign people,[193] but Indians who successfully resisted Spanish aggression forced Spanish officials to regard them as appropriate subjects for negotiations and treaties that recognized their sovereignty. Mapuches may have been the first group to negotiate a written treaty of peace with Spaniards without surrendering their sovereignty. At Quillín in 1641, some Mapuche leaders agreed to a written treaty with the governor of Chile in which they purportedly recognized "their vassalage" to the Spanish crown, accepted "the Royal protection of his Majesty," and permitted missionaries to come among them. Much hinged on the meanings that "vassalage" and "protection" held for Mapuches, and one historian makes a convincing case that in this and subsequent treaties Araucanians and other Indians regarded these words as "signifying a relationship of brotherhood, a reciprocal military alliance, and a promise of assistance."[194] Whatever their thoughts, Araucanians' actions make it obvious that they did not see themselves as Spanish subjects. Neither, legal niceties aside, did Spaniards. The powerful Mapuches forced Spaniards to regard the Río Biobío as a permanent boundary. South of the river these *indios amigos,* as Spaniards in Chile called their new Mapuche allies, had no obligation to pay tribute to the king, as did other Indian vassals between the ages of eighteen and fifty-two, or to provide labor to the crown or to serve individual Spaniards. If Indians worked for Spaniards, it was to be voluntary, and they were to be paid.[195] Parlamentos, written treaties, and generous distributions of gifts became standard mechanisms through which Spaniards maintained peace with Mapuches. Nearly a century later, one embarrassed military officer lamented that his countrymen "make peace treaties with them as with a foreign power."[196]

The Treaty of Quillín of 1641, with its implicit recognition of the independence of the crown's Araucanian "vassals," represented an exception to the Habsburg policy of requiring Indians to surrender, settle in *reducciones,* become Catholics, and pay tribute. This treaty was also exceptional because it was written rather than oral, ratified in Spain, and the only treaty with Indians to appear in a twelve-volume published compendium of treaties that Spain signed with other nations through the mid-1700s.[197] Mapuches, then, had won an extraordinary acknowledgment of their sovereignty at that early date and enjoyed de facto independence until the end of the colonial era. When Capt. Tomás O'Higgins traveled through Araucanian lands south of the Bíobio in 1797, he met friendly caciques who swore loyalty to the crown, but he understood that he had traveled from

HP22691

"our lands" into "their lands." Told by O'Higgins that Mapuches had stolen livestock from a group of Spaniards traveling north toward Valdivia, the cacique Millapanhi assured O'Higgins that Spaniards themselves "were to blame because besides entertaining them very stingily, there were some [in the group] who did not even visit their houses to greet them."[198] Millapanhi had no doubt about whose territory the Spaniards had entered.

Written treaties between Spaniards and Indians became more frequent in the last half of the 1700s, as the Bourbons faced up to the reality that they needed to come to terms with Indians whom they could neither defeat nor convert.[199] By definition, nations make treaties with other nations, not with their own subjects, yet in many cases Spanish negotiators signed treaties with Indian peoples Spain chose to define as vassals, as it had Araucanians. This may seem anomalous, but European states engaged in such a practice among themselves and continued the practice in French America, Spanish America, English America, and the United States.[200] As one German jurist summarized a long-standing facet of European international law in 1788, "Mere alliances of protection, tribute or vassalage, which a state may contract with another, do not hinder it from continuing [to be] perfectly sovereign."[201] Even when they succeeded in requiring Indian nations to put themselves under the crown's protection, then, sophisticated Spanish negotiators did not necessarily believe that Indians had surrendered all sovereignty. Sovereignty was divisible under European international law. And of course, Indians who enjoyed sovereignty in fact did not imagine they had lost it. After the Treaty of Quillín, no Spanish treaties with independent Indian nations appear to have made their way into published compilations of Spanish international accords. Later treaties between Indians and Bourbons, however, reveal much about the way Indians wrung concessions from Spanish officials.[202]

Spaniards believed that written treaties had legal force and could be reviewed, so officers took as much care with their form as with their substance. They found it vexing, however, to deal with kin-based tribal societies that played by different rules. At the most basic level, Spanish officers understood that many Indian groups had no permanent single leader. An annoyed post commander in Arkansas complained of the difficulty in working out agreements with the Quapaws: "It is necessary to make all of them happy, since among these people every voice is equal—the great and the small." Teodoro de Croix similarly lamented the futility of negotiating with Apaches, "a crowd of savages, scattered and without a head, because each Indian is a free republic."[203] He did not mean that as a compliment. To enlightened Spaniards, societies that did not have a single leader seemed dysfunctional, if not freakish—"a monster with many heads," as one friar put it.[204]

On some occasions pragmatic Spanish officers understood that a group had two or more leaders and accepted the fact that they had no choice but to negotiate with them rather than with a single head of state. Eager to begin construction of a new fort, San Rafael, on the Río Diamante over 120 miles south of Mendoza, one militia captain signed a treaty with twenty-three Pehuenche caciques in 1805.[205] Spanish officers preferred, however, to identify a single individual who could be held responsible for enforcing a

HP22692

treaty's terms. Thus, if a kin-based society lacked a single head, Spaniards, like representatives of other colonial powers, often designated one. Anza apparently orchestrated the election of Ecueracapa as chief of the Comanche nation, then put him on the Spanish payroll with the title of captain general and a salary of two hundred pesos a year to be paid in goods.[206] Similarly, New Mexico officials insisted as a condition of peace with Navajos in 1819 that they name "a general of the Navajo nation so that this government of New Mexico might have someone to direct itself to," and the Navajo nation would have someone to "govern and direct it."[207]

The lengths to which Spaniards went to convince themselves that a single individual spoke for an entire people can be seen in dealings that Gov. Gerónimo de Matorras of Tucumán had with the Mocobí leader Paikín and his successor, Queyaveri. In 1773, Governor Matorras asked the king for permission to negotiate with the "famous elder" Paikín, characterizing him extravagantly as "the principal leader or chief of all the nations of Indians in the Gran Chaco."[208] The next year, when he traveled into the Chaco, however, Matorras learned that Paikín was just one of several Mocobí chiefs. Nonetheless, in his official correspondence Matorras continued to describe Paikín as the principal leader of all native peoples in the Chaco and to treat him as such.[209] Matorras had much to gain.

After years of hostility toward Spaniards, Paikín had initiated discussions with Matorras. He said he wanted baptism and peace, and Matorras soon learned he also wanted firearms and Spanish allies in a war against Abipones. He denied Paikín the firearms, but he had him baptized, drew up terms of peace and alliance, and showered him with gifts, including a gold-handled bastón and a suit of fancy clothing. He also promised to build a mission in Paikín's territory to teach religion, along with reading and writing in Spanish, to the young. In exchange, Matorras required Paikín to swear to become a vassal of the Spanish crown but guaranteed the Mocobíes possession of their lands and exemption from tribute. Like other officials who favored pacification over war, Matorras understood that there could be no peace if Spanish *hacendados* and self-serving officers pressed Indians into servitude or despoiled them of their lands. The treaty-signing ceremony, held in July 1774 on the Río Bermejo some 240 leagues from Salta and 60 leagues from Corrientes, represented a triumph for Matorras. It ended with Indians shouting three times, "Long live the King of Spain and the Indies, Carlos the Third"—or so the governor told the king.[210]

Paikín appears to have been one of several Mocobí leaders, but his connection with Matorras seemed to give him an edge over the others. After his death at the hands of Abipones in 1776, Mocobí and Toba caciques took the unhappy news to Salta, along with their wish to renew the treaty. Indian and Spanish leaders alike understood the intensely personal nature of these alliances and sought to renew treaties when original signatories died. On the frontiers of the empire, people made treaties with people, not with abstractions called nations.[211] The caciques also brought Paikín's gold-handled bastón. His widow, they explained, wished to return it to the governor because her children were not old enough to exercise authority. Matorras delegated a Franciscan to return to the Chaco with the caciques and award the bastón to another leader, Queyaveri,

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naming him the "principal cacique." Queyaveri received the bastón with great pleasure, the friar said, "asking me that I do the same thing the next day in the presence of the other caciques."[212]

Just as Spaniards preferred to negotiate with a single chief in order to legitimize treaties with so-called Indian nations, so did Indian leaders like Queyaveri appear to welcome the Spaniards' imprimatur in order to enhance their position as first among equals within their own societies. One well-informed New Mexican understood that Comanche leaders disdained "the titles they receive from their own government . . . unless they are confirmed by our officials in the name of the Great Captain [the king]."[213]

Precisely what an Indian leader's anointment by Europeans signified to other members of his tribe or band must have varied from one Indian society to another and may never be fully understood. It is certain, however, that Spanish authorities altered hierarchies and unintentionally sowed discord within tribal societies as they designated Indian leaders. It is also clear that some Indian leaders valued recognition as paramount chiefs because of the gifts, honors, and status that followed. Spaniards apparently gave those leaders the means to gain ascendancy over rivals and thus contributed to the amalgamation of kin-based peoples into larger social and political units. Just as war with Spaniards promoted the concentration of power in Indian societies, so did negotiations that resulted in gifts, peace, and trade.[214]

In the treaty of 1774 with Paikín, Governor Mattoras conceded the limits of Spanish dominion. Like Araucanians a century before, Mocobíes became vassals of the crown, but they paid no tribute and continued to govern themselves in their own territory. The treaty of 1774 drew no clear line between Spanish and Mocobí territory, perhaps because Paikín governed lands distant from Spanish settlements, and the region lacked a defined geographical border like the Bíobio.

The peace treaty signed in Buenos Aires in 1790 by a group of Pampa caciques, which also testified to the limits of Spanish dominion, did establish a boundary line. Led by Callfilqui (alias Lorenzo), several Pampa leaders agreed to stay south of the Río Salado "in order to avoid all disturbances between Indians and Christians." Indians would return any Christians who fled to their territory to live among them, and Spaniards promised to return Indian fugitives from their side. In a phrase that signatories on both sides must have known to be a juridical fiction, the treaty designated Callfilqui as the "principal cacique of all the Pampas and head of this new republic." In using the word *república,* Spanish officials did not mean to suggest a completely independent nation, but rather that Indians would govern themselves under the larger umbrella of the crown. Since the sixteenth century, Spaniards expected conquered Indians to live in their own political community, or *república,* and to become Christians and pay tribute.[215] The unconquered Callfilqui, however, agreed to a different set of obligations. He would report suspicious foreigners and ill-intentioned Indians to authorities in Buenos Aires and control the hunting of wild horses in his territory, licensing only parties of no more than a dozen Indian hunters so that Spaniards would not mistake them for a war party. If Spaniards

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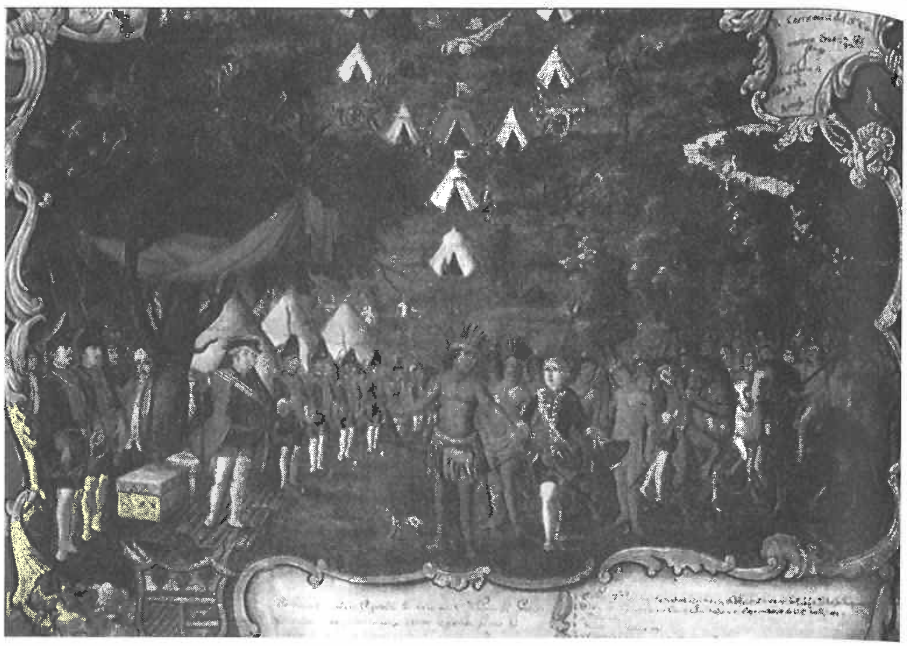

29. In 1775 the artist Tomás Cabrera produced a 910 x 1250 mm oil painting of a Spanish camp on the Bermejo River in Salta de Tucumán in 1775. He followed a firsthand sketch drawn in 1774 by Julio Ramón de Cesar, a military engineer, and the instructions of Governor Matorras, who wrote the captions. Cabrera divided this composition in three parts. The upper part, not reproduced here, shows the Virgen de Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes with San Bernardo on her right and San Francisco de Paula on her left. Their intercession, the caption says, made possible the signing of a treaty with the Mocobí chief, Paikín. The Spanish camp, with its officers, tents, and cannons, dominates the rural setting in the center panel. The lower part, pictured here, shows the key moment when Paikín declares himself a vassal of Carlos III. Detail from "Campamento del Gobernador Matorras," courtesy, Museo Histórico Nacional de Buenos Aires.

needed to cross Callfilqui's territory to transport men and war materials to Patagonia, his people would provide a convoy and the necessary animals, for which they would be paid. In the treaty of 1790, Spanish officials made it clear that Callfilqui governed the lands beyond the Salado. The treaty never mentions hostages, tribute, or evangelization in Callfilqui's lands, where missionaries had already met defeat.[216]

In effect, Spaniards recognized the Río Salado as the Río Biobío of Buenos Aires and Callfilqui's people as juridical equals. As new Indian and Spanish leaders came on the scene, they renewed the treaty. Negotiating differences took precedence over fighting about them. Individual Spaniards moved south of the Salado, and in the early 1800s the government studied various proposals to advance the line of forts. Yet, from the viceroy to the cabildo of Buenos Aires, officials made it clear that any expansion would occur peacefully, in consultation with Pampas. In the last decades of Spanish rule, the *indios*

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bárbaros of the pampa became simply *indios* in official discourse. The cultural divide between Pampas and Spaniards blurred and would have blurred even more if the cabildo of Buenos Aires had its way. In 1808, the cabildo invited Pampa caciques to send their sons to Buenos Aires to be educated in Spanish ways, but only one accepted the invitation before Spanish rule came to an abrupt end in the Río de la Plata.[217]

Six years after Spaniards in Buenos Aires signed a treaty with the Pampas, the Ranquel cacique Cheglén signed a peace treaty at Córdoba, further securing the borderlands between the peoples of the pampa and the viceroyalty of the Río de La Plata. In that treaty, Ranqueles seemed to accept more limits than the Pampas under Callfilqui had. Rather than receive distinction as head of a republic, Cheglén purportedly recognized Carlos IV as his "lord and sovereign," although we cannot be sure these words were his or, if so, what meaning those words would have held for him.[218]

Elsewhere on the edges of empire in the era of Carlos III, other independent Indians like Tawira-Miskitos and Cunas also entered into written agreements in which they apparently acknowledged Spanish authority but did not, in fact, surrender sovereignty. A Tawira-Miskito negotiator, Fara, may have signed a peace treaty with Spain in 1778 and agreed "to live under the flag of our Catholic Majesty," but his majesty's flag never flew over the Miskito villages.[219] In North America, putative leaders of indomitable peoples like Comanches and Navajos signed written agreements for the first time in the mid-1780s, treaties which entitled them to gifts, trade advantages, and a Spanish ally, yet caused them to suffer no loss of sovereignty.[220] In 1786, the principal leader of the western Comanches, Ecueracapa, submitted "his entire nation to the dominion of the king,"[221] Governor Anza of New Mexico reported, and two Navajo leaders, a don Carlos and a don Joseph Antonio, received Anza's assurances that he would seek for them the "protection of the king" if they offered their "subordination and fidelity."[222] Although they spoke of subordination, these treaties of friendship and alliance did not obligate either Comanches or Navajos to accept missionaries, pay tribute, leave hostages, or come under direct Spanish governance or law. As late as 1819, Navajos who signed a treaty in Santa Fe agreed to accept Spanish "protection," in exchange for which Spanish officials, "in the name of the King . . . concede to the Navajo tribe the lands they have enjoyed up to the present." The treaty specified that a boundary line, following local landmarks, would separate Navajo and Spanish spheres.[223]

What treaty-signing Pampas, Mocobíes, Miskitos, Cunas, Comanches, and Navajos had in common was strength relative to Spanish weakness and an interest in pursuing peaceful trade with Spaniards.[224] When peace negotiations got under way, Spaniards' and Indians' perceptions of their relative strengths and economic interests influenced the type and range of concessions they demanded from one another. Even when Spanish officers thought their position was too weak to force missionaries or tribute on Indians, for example, they might still demand that Indians leave hostages, as in treaties with Cunas in 1787, Ranqueles in 1796, and Navajos in 1819.[225] Although concessions on both sides varied with local circumstances, it is evident that these powerful Indian societies

HP22696

had forced Spain to limit its own dominion by recognizing them as "interior nations"—societies that governed themselves within a larger nation's jurisdiction.[226] Their interior status, however, represented a Spanish legal fiction, recognized by Indians and Spaniards alike. Even when leaders of these Indian groups swore to be vassals, or subjects, of the crown, they were not subject to Spanish political authority. Possessed of real power, these putative Indian vassals continued to live beyond the control of the Spanish state. If they were subjects, they remained unsubjugated.

"Free and Independent Nations"

Indians who enjoyed the most power in relation to Spaniards lived on the strategic frontiers of the empire, where they had potential to build alliances with other state societies—England, France, Holland, and Portugal. Some used their accident of location to play one state off against the other and force Spaniards to acknowledge not just the limits of dominion, but the absence of dominion. None did so more successfully than the tribes in southeastern North America.

After Spain acquired Louisiana from France in 1762 and reacquired the Floridas from England in 1783, the southeastern tribes pushed Spaniards to enter into written agreements with them as if they were sovereign—an innovation for that part of the empire, which might have spread westward from there to Texas and New Mexico. Southeastern tribal leaders' recent dealings with the French and the English had taught them to expect written treaties from Europeans. More important, leaders of the southeastern tribes looked to an alliance with Spain as a counterweight against Anglo Americans who, as one delegation reported to a Spanish official, "thought of little more than usurping their lands."[227]

For its part, Spain was pleased to ally itself with independent Indians who might block the "torrent" of Anglo-American settlers streaming westward like a force of nature into territory claimed by both Spain and the United States.[228] Spanish officials understood that the United States sought to establish sovereignty over Indian lands and then force Indians to vacate them so the government could sell them to settlers and shore up its weak treasury. Spain recognized that in reality most of the Southeast remained, as the conde de Aranda put it, "the country of savages." Both Spain and the United States had an equal right to exert claims over lands possessed by Indians, Aranda told the American minister John Jay in 1782, and, he wryly added, "equal *in*justice in wanting to."[229]

Hoping to use independent Indians to contain the flood of Anglo Americans and eager to prevent those Indians from allying themselves with Anglo Americans, Spanish officials signed treaties that made unusual concessions. In 1784 alone, Spanish authorities in Mobile came to terms with representatives of Alabamas, Chickasaws, and Choctaws. That same year in Pensacola officials reaffirmed a treaty with the Creeks, first signed in 1781 after Spanish forces seized that city from the English.[230] These were treaties of peace, trade, and mutual assistance. Representatives of the Creeks and Choctaws purportedly recognized the king of Spain as "our sovereign," but in none of these cases did Indians

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The *audiencia* turned down Cumbay's petition. Five weeks later, in November 179[illegible], the Chiriguano "rebellion" began at the missions of Parapiti. From there, violence against Spaniards spread and continued unabated until 1804, when it intensified in a year of drought and hunger. Some Spanish observers understood that the source of Chiriguano bitterness lay in their hunger and narrowing options as Spaniards encroached on their lands and Spanish cattle trampled their cornfields. Most, however, echoed the view of the president of the *audiencia* of Charcas, who attributed Chiriguano hostility to "the natural inconstancy of Indians, to their propensity to steal and, finally, to their brutal condition."[267] Rather than acknowledge Chiriguanos' rights to land, as Spanish policy required, the president of the *audiencia* of Charcas asserted Spaniards' rights: "All the unknown lands occupied by savages are called borders. Our possessions always continue growing with the population of new missions and ranches established beyond [those borders], because of interest in good pastures and fertile lands, as has always occurred since the pacification of this continent."[268]

Chiriguano resistance to Spanish expansion ended in "an offensive war of fire and blood," ordered by the viceroy in 1808.[269] Spanish forces launched a coordinated *entrada general* into the Chiriguanía in the dry autumn months when soggy terrain would not impede their travel. They burned houses, drove off livestock, leveled orchards and cornfields, and hauled away stores of corn. In the Ingre Valley they captured one leader, Mananday, and cut off his head as a trophy; they took the ears of another executed prisoner as evidence of their achievement. Scouring the canyons, they rounded up women and children, although one Chiriguano cheated them by throwing his two children to their deaths rather than let them be taken alive.[270]

Dependent on mountain valleys for farming, Chiriguanos had no large hinterland to which they could flee and regroup, as did Apaches, Pampas, and Araucanians. They lacked the foreign allies and firearms which strengthened the resistance of Comanches, Miskitos, Cunas, Guajiros, and the various tribes of southeastern North America.[271] Spaniards thus had no need to placate people like the Chiriguanos with treaties, gifts, and trade or to tolerate their independence or transgressions.

In the Age of Reason, then, the peaceful coexistence and slow integration of independent Indians which the crown generally favored and high-ranking Spanish officials often espoused did not always prevail. In places where Spaniards coveted Indian land and had the means to take it, enlightened policies gave way to avarice, opportunism, and collective violence.[272]

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and thus simultaneously rescue the captives and replenish the diminishing population of the Texas missions.[107] Ransomed or purchased Indians, however, seldom ended up in missions. Instead, private citizens took them into their homes and, if they followed the law, saw to their Christianization and acculturation. Ransomed Indians, a Franciscan in New Mexico noted, were, in effect, "emancipated to work out their account." He thought of them as indentured servants.[108]

In official reports, Spanish officers like Amigorena took pains to describe how they followed the king's wishes by treating captives "with humanity." Amigorena oversaw the distribution of women and children "for their care and education" in selected Spanish households.[109] Two of Alejandro Malaspina's officers noted approvingly that Spanish explorers in the Pacific Northwest purchased twenty-two boys and girls from the Nootkas and placed them in reputable homes in the Mexican port city of San Blas "with the knowledge of an absolute liberty once they become adults."[110] The commander in chief of the Interior Provinces of New Spain, Felipe de Neve in 1783, alluded to the "good fortune" of Indian children ransomed from Indians by Spaniards, who "raise them with the same love and affection as if they were their own children."[111] Spaniards' displays of Christian charity, he asserted, contrasted sharply with the cruel treatment Spanish captives received at the hands of Indians.

Less altruistically, Spaniards who favored ransoming captive Indians knew from experience that trade in captives helped keep peace. If Spaniards refused to purchase Indian captives, they might offend Indian allies. In Chile, Ambrosio O'Higgins recommended that Pehuenches be permitted to bring Huilliche captives "to our lands" and sell them to Spaniards, even though the sale of captives is "prohibited by the *parlamentos* and repeated royal orders." It would be difficult to deny the Pehuenches, he said, since they were fighting against enemy Huilliches and working to win the release of Christians captured by Huilliches.[112] Residents of Santa Fe, on the Río Paraná north of Buenos Aires, won decades of peace with Charrúas by offering them horses, cattle, arms, ammunition, clothes, liquor, and playing cards in exchange for captives—many of them Guaraníes whose labor the residents of Santa Fe needed.[113]

Beneath these altruistic and strategic reasons for ransoming heathens from heathens lay a fundamental economic truth: Indian laborers brought profits. In some urban areas, householders valued Indian women and children as servants and bought them in lieu of more expensive African slaves.[114] Frontier zones, characterized by chronic conflict with Indians, did not attract Spanish settlers and Spanish capital, and so local residents turned to Indian captives when they needed extra hands to work on haciendas, plantations, and mines.[115] It was also in these remote frontier areas where royal authority was weakest that laws could be violated with the greatest impunity. In much of northern New Spain, local officials traditionally sanctioned the ransoming of Indians, regardless of crown policy. Some authorities certainly invoked the law, but others caved into local demand and settled for regulating the ransom of Indians by setting prices rather than enforcing directives against it.[116] Indeed, some officials bought and sold Indians themselves, royal threats

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of fines and banishment notwithstanding.[117] Circumstantial evidence from New Mexico suggests that the worst official abuses occurred under the Habsburgs, and that Bourbon administrators behaved more professionally. Successful criminals, however, leave little trace for historians. One is left with bits and pieces of evidence, such as a Franciscan's characterization of ransomed Indians in New Mexico as the "gold and silver and richest treasure for the governors, who gorge themselves first with the largest mouthfuls from this table, while the rest eat the crumbs."[118]

The demand for ransomed or captive Indians varied with local circumstances. Hispanic residents of Alta California had little need for them because the thriving missions that dominated the local economy provided the coerced Indian laborers who did much of the work that supported the province's sparse Hispanic population. Hispanic residents of Buenos Aires made little use of forced Indian labor in the late colonial era because, as residents of a port city, they had ready access to black slaves. Unlike Indians, blacks could not flee to their homeland and thus constituted a more stable workforce. They could also be acquired legally. Although the crown prohibited the enslavement of Indians, it permitted enslaving of blacks. In Buenos Aires, blacks did the work that Indian captives did elsewhere: they were the artisans, domestic workers, ranch hands, and farmworkers. Without them, one historian has pointed out, economic life in the city and its environs "would have come to a standstill in a matter of hours."[119]

In many areas in which Spaniards and independent Indians forged new diplomatic and commercial relationships, however, the capturing and ransoming of Indians became a growth industry that further destabilized frontiers. Comanches, for example, who hunted captives to trade to their new allies in New Mexico after 1786, still needed to fill their own internal demand for captive Indian labor. They met the new demands by intensifying their raids on other tribes and by capturing Spaniards from other provinces.[120]

Like Indians who captured or purchased Spaniards, Spaniards who acquired Indians preferred to assimilate children rather than adults into their societies. Placed in Spanish households, little children were still malleable enough to become fictive kin and to acquire "rational customs."[121] Bourbon officials who sent Apache and Chichimeca prisoners of war into Cuban exile first culled out the children to stay behind, receive an education, and learn a trade at the crown's expense.[122] In 1786, the commander in chief of the Interior Provinces of New Spain, Jacobo Ugarte, made the Spanish preference for children plain. He offered to ransom Apache captives from Spain's new Comanche allies, but only those younger than fourteen years. Adults of both sexes, he said, were "excluded from this mercy, notwithstanding that it appears to us that everyone captured will be destined to suffer death [at the hands of Comanches]." By offering to buy Apache children from Comanches, Ugarte hoped to "stimulate our [Comanche] allies to search and capture because of interest in the ransom."[123] Ugarte's offer of ransom money to Comanches came just a year after officials at San Antonio got Comanches to agree to cease taking captives from other Indian nations.[124] As in other questions of Spanish Indian policy, consistency yielded to pragmatism.

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