SPANISH KING OF THE INCAS

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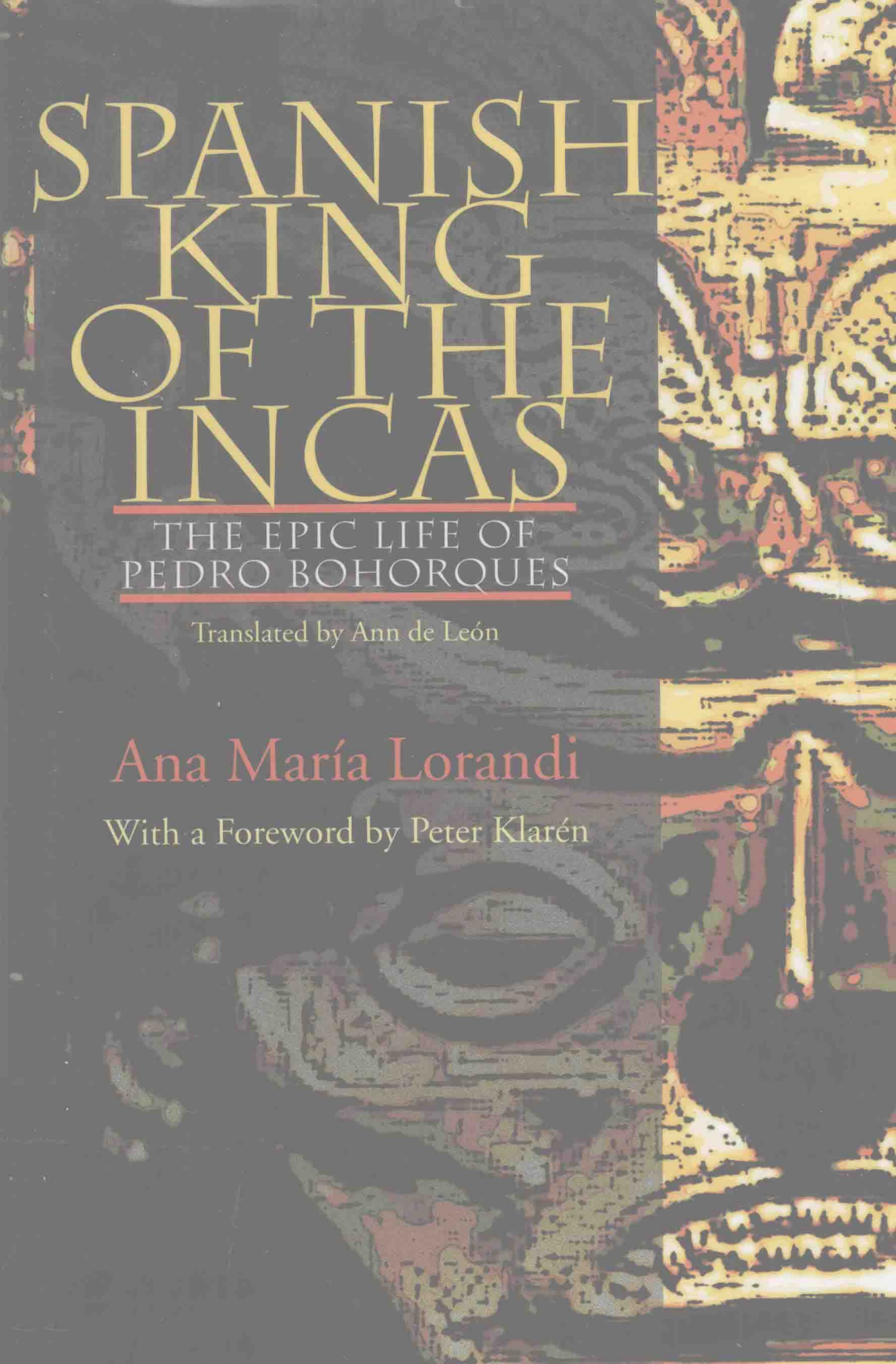
Translated by Ann de León

Ana María Lorandi

With a Foreword by Peter Klarén



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UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH PRESS

TO MY DAUGHTER VALENTINA
WITHOUT WHOSE INSPIRATION, LOVE,
AND PATIENCE MY LIFE
WOULD NOT HAVE ANY MEANING

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FOREWORD

The saga of the late-seventeenth-century conquistador Pedro Bohorques is an extraordinary life story that has been pieced together from painstaking archival research both in Spain and America. It is a perplexing story, at once heroic and hallucinatory, fantastic and picaresque, that reveals many of the contradictions and excesses of baroque America. The book, I predict, will take its place in the historical literature of the period as one of the most complete, carefully documented, and interpretative biographies of a conquistador who proclaims himself Apo Inca and leads a rebellion against the colonial order. In this sense it is reminiscent in broad outlines of what we know about the shadowy life of Juan Santos Atahualpa, the famous eighteenth century self proclaimed mestizo rebel Inca, whose life story Bohorques in some ways resembles.

Arriving in Peru sometime in the 1620s, Bohorques, a young, penniless Andalusian adventurer, takes up a marginal life among the Indians and mulattos of the Viceroyalty of Peru. Like so many of his predecessors in the annals of the *conquista*, Bohorques, like the unsuccessful Lope de Aguirre before him, is drawn by the chimeras of an Amazonian Dorado and motivated by a burning ambition for power and status in colonial society. He launches an expedition of conquest or *entrada* into the fabled Amazonian Paytiti, which he describes in a series of memorials to the Viceroy whom he convinces to authorize an *entrada* to the famous Cerro de la Sal. Living among the Amueshas people, he claims the foundation of numerous cities in the Amazon while committing various assaults on Spanish property.

As a result of these events Bohorques is arrested and sent to jail in Valdivia, only to escape confinement and flee to Tucuman. There, in the most astonishing turn of events, he draws on his knowledge of the indigenous people acquired earlier among the Amueshas and proclaims himself Inca. Embraced by the Paciocas Indians, he proceeds to negotiate with the Spanish authorities over claims to have discovered the long rumored, lost treasures of the region. In the end Bohorques is again arrested by the authorities, spends six years in a Lima prison where he is ultimately implicated in the Rebellion of the Curacas, and is executed in 1667.

In a society where the Inca by the seventeenth century had become a symbol of identity and liberation among the oppressed and splintered multi-ethnic groups of the Andes, Pedro Bohorques became one of the few Spaniards who attempted to cross the frontier that separated the dominated from the dominators, the vanquished from the victors. In Lorandi's words he was, as Inca and Spanish governor of the province, a "man riding a horse between two worlds of the American spectrum . . . between two paradigms that were superimposed in the baroque mentality of the Europeans during the seventeenth century: one of fantasy and medieval ideologies and concepts, and one of the rationality of the Renaissance." For her Bohorques's epic personal actions "reflect on a micro scale the multiple cultural facets that permeated social life in the Americas during the seventeenth century and that continue up to this day . . . as described in the literary magical-realist movement."

Furthermore, in Lorandi's view these events resembled a theater representing the colonial pact hammered out between the dominant and dominated:

> Just as colonial authorities prohibited but tolerated the indigenous strategies to evade economic coercion and the corrupt practices of functionaries, they also prohibited but tolerated adventurous expeditions in search of Dorados [as well as] the *entradas* of the religious orders, groups that opened up pathways and armed hosts that were always defeated by the Indians they encountered. If these attempts failed, or if they had short-lived results, the authorities would look the other way or reprimand them, depending on the case. If they succeeded they expropriated the goods in benefit of the colony.

Either way the crown succeeded in expanding the territories under its control, thus liberating ambiguous spaces for these ambivalent marginal social types who, like Bohorques, were able to operate in the internal contradictions of colonial society.

This is an important facet of post-conquest, colonial society that has heretofore escaped the gaze of historians. Lorandi adroitly combines the tools of the ethnohistorian and literary critic in order to unravel the personal complexities of Bohorques the man while uncovering the larger societal meaning of people like him who populated the margins of baroque Andean America.

Peter Klarén

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book's gestation has not been an easy one. For four years I devoted myself to compiling materials and bibliography, and more broadly to working in a subject I was not familiar with; thus I gradually found myself in increasing debt to my colleagues and students. First I would like to acknowledge the unrestricted support of the University of Buenos Aires, which provided the funding for travel and research (I visited Spain twice to work in archives and libraries) that enabled me to gather a substantial part of the material I needed to write this book. The contribution from the OAS (Organization of American States) was equally important: a three-month grant for surveying archives in Peru and Bolivia. The Fundación Antorchas funded another portion of the research and a trip to Paris, which helped me to complete my bibliographical investigation. Also, as a CONICET researcher I had the privilege of carrying out my work in complete freedom, with funding that granted me access to some of the materials I would use.

I must admit that my interest in studying Pedro Bohorques's life started when I read Teresa Piossek Prebisch's well-documented book, in which she sketched the personality of this peculiar character in a somewhat literary manner. Although her book referred only to Bohorques's deeds in the Calchaquí valley (in northwestern Argentina), leaving out the events that occurred in the Peruvian Amazon, Piossek Prebisch displayed before my eyes a touching, dramatic setting that no doubt has been a significant source of inspiration for the work at hand.

I have had many useful discussions about the exciting subject of Pedro Bohorques's life. Without a doubt, the person who has shared my work most intensely and who has followed its progress step by step has been Roxana Boixadós, with whom I had already written an extended work on the Calchaquí valley. My deepest gratitude and affection go out to her. All the other team members of the Ethnohistory Program of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at the University of Buenos Aires have had the courtesy to read the manuscript and comment on it, and I am particularly indebted to Ana María Presta's observations, because of their degree of detail and care.

I must by all means acknowledge the daily cooperation of Emilio Dalvit, secretary to the Ethnohistory Section of the Faculty, who has encouraged and supported me with his faithfulness and honesty since he first joined the team in 1985. I must also recognize the professional skills of Blanca Daus, our cartographer, who took care of the maps for this book. Among my faculty colleagues, I am particularly indebted to José Emilio Burucúa, who provided me with an interesting bibliography and who also enhanced the Spanish edition with a laudatory preface. My special thanks to Celina Manzoni for her thorough and accurate editing of the Spanish edition. Nor can I forget the erudite contribution of Gastón Doucet, of the Pontifical Catholic University of Buenos Aires, who has often helped me out by catching undetected errors and who has always been close to our team. My gratitude also for the support that Enrique Tándeter has always given to my work.

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In Mexico, a country I visited after I had finished writing this book, I heard very interesting viewpoints that allowed me to make corrections and to emphasize some topics that my Mexican peers considered of particular interest. I want to thank my colleagues from the Research Center and Higher Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS), particularly Teresa Rojas Rabiela, its director, my friend Dr. Virginia García Acosta, Juan Manuel Pérez Zeballos, and Hildeberto Martínez. Also my gratitude for the comments of our fine Argentine historian, Carlos Sempat Assadourian in Mexico, for Margarita Menegus's points of view, and for those of the colleagues of the Michoacán School and the CIESAS at Guadalajara.

Publication of this work in English is a result of the generous endeavors of Sara Castro-Klarén, of the Johns Hopkins University. She took a particular interest in the book and brought it to the attention of the University of Pittsburgh Press. Similarly, my special thanks to Niels Aaboe, my acquisitions editor, who was always there to respond to my countless questions.

Certainly, this book would not have been written without the extensive collaboration I have just mentioned, although I claim sole responsibility for any possible errors and omissions.

Ana María Lorandi
Buenos Aires, 2002

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Introduction

ON August 8, 1657, the governor of Tucumán, don Alonso de Mercado y Villacorta, held a gathering with his *vecinos* (citizens) in Pomán at which he granted the Spaniard Pedro Bohorques Girón the titles of lieutenant to the governor and general captain. His purpose was to introduce Spanish jurisdiction over the Calchaquí valley, a region that had been politically autonomous for more than a century. Three days later, on August 11, the same authorities gave Bohorques the right to use the title of Inca and to introduce himself as such to the Indians in the Calchaquí valley. For the same man to hold both Spanish and Indian titles might seem contradictory, but even though it provoked suspicion and doubt such a conflation suited the objectives of the greedy functionaries who legalized these titles through ritualized ceremonies. (It also reflected a logic introduced by Bohorques himself.) They knew that as the Inca, Bohorques could extract secrets about the mines and mineral treasures that valley inhabitants had kept hidden for more than a century. As lieutenant to the governor, he could force rebellious Indians to fulfill the obligations they owed to the constantly mocked

encomenderos who waited from generation to generation to get some sort of work out of the indigenous peoples under their control. Gold and labor—these were the two riches of the Indies that people in the most populous and supposedly richest valley in the province of Tucumán had managed to keep out of the hands of the conquistadors.

Pedro Bohorques had arrived in the Calchaquí valley fleeing from a prison in Chile, where he had been confined in punishment for his partially illegal adventures in the Peruvian Amazon. In the Calchaquí valley he had led many fruitless expeditions in search of the magnificent Paytiti, one of the many locations of El Dorado that Indians and Spaniards imagined to lie hidden in the green heart of South America. In Calchaquí Bohorques presented himself as a descendant of the Incas, just as he had done with the inhabitants of the Amazon basin. Going beyond the confines of his *peninsular* origins and inserting himself into the native world, Bohorques presented himself as a mestizo with ties to the royal *panaca* lineage of Cuzco.

Bohorques always maintained a position between two worlds: one to which he belonged by birth and one to which he aspired, that is, a place of prominence in the natives' world. To achieve it he presented himself as a defeated noble of Cajamarca, using the power of the Spanish Crown as he zigzagged between these two social and cultural spaces. He manipulated his audience with overt or covert logic, exploiting the ambitions of many functionaries, *criollo* and *peninsular* members of colonial society. Bohorques was a man who oscillated between two utopian fantasies, one of finding the Paytiti and another of revitalizing the Inca state crushed in 1533 by Francisco Pizarro and his host. By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these two unfulfilled dreams, with their deep roots in the colonial period, would come to seem like embarrassments better forgotten. Only if we first understand the rebellions generated by this multiethnic colonial scene, its political and social conflicts, and the profound force of its utopian fantasies, can we correctly frame the character who synthesized these dreams in his persona and singular deeds and who embodied a utopian legacy for later events in Latin American history. Yet Pedro Bohorques has remained a marginal figure to whom historians have devoted only a few belittling lines.[1]

In following the thread of Pedro Bohorques's life, we may ask whether it is possible for one politically marginal character to help us reconstruct the social situation of seventeenth-century South America. The fertile relationships that are now developing among the social sciences enable us to

ask anthropological questions about historical events. The originality of recent historical approaches lies in having incorporated people from all social groups as legitimate agents for investigating the past. In this way we can try to understand global structures by taking into consideration individual actions in combination with the cultural norms accepted by a given community; in effect looking at culture and social behavior as anthropology has always done. Those who study social history recognize that the everyday lives of individuals, who alone or in groups are the active agents of the social process, cannot be understood through large-scale periodization. Many historians have taken up microhistory, or history "from below," whose methodological objective is to visualize with greater precision the articulation of individual or group conflicts within the structure of a society.[2] Georges Balandier notes, following the French sociologist Gurvitch, "The social is both created and the creative"; social actors are both active or passive protagonists of the great political processes, and by the same token, they can act as generators or as obstacles to change.[3]

From this point of view, chaos theory conceives of society as a drama that manifests itself both in a horizontal sense, within social groups, and vertically, among other hierarchically differentiated groups. These two coordinates of the drama can be expressed both in conflicts as in alliances, thus breaking with Marxist theory, which accepts conflict only in vertical situations. This point is essential to understanding networks of relationships and loyalties, as they are determined more by the interests of each community and by specific circumstances than by the relative position of each segment of society. Rivalries among members located at the same hierarchical level can be just as important, if not more important, than class conflict. In this history of Bohorques's rebellion I will try to reconstruct the ambitions of an individual trying to find a place on the new American social map by placing himself in open conflict with his own desired social stratum in his effort to be a conquistador and founder of cities. How this came about and through what networks of interests he maneuvered his ambitions are two questions that I will try to address here.

This book deals with the chimeras, utopian ideals, and rebellions brought to light by the struggle of one man to find a place in the world. It also deals with the construction of the imaginary by those Spaniards who emigrated to the New World, as well as the imaginary elaborated by the Native Americans within the colonial context. Linking both cultures are

the efforts of Bohorques, a socially marginalized individual who constructed a space for himself where he could reign with full autonomy. He is an example of extreme *peninsular* individualism, a man who played astutely (if sometimes naively) with power in order to establish himself in the fissures of society. Sometimes he took illegal alternatives (often tolerated by those in power). Bohorques's skill consisted in discovering how to enter these fissures. It was not the fight of a man against the world, but rather the struggle of a man who manipulated the accepted, semi-accepted, and legally prohibited options available to him. It is the story of a man who navigated the ambiguous space between the colliding projects of two distinct societies.

Chimeras, myths, and utopian fantasies feed off one another, even though they draw from different categories of the universal imaginary. Utopian fantasies, especially colonial ones, perhaps deserve special consideration, because they are held prisoner between the movement of the collective imaginary and the practices of society. There are various types of utopian ideals, and here we find two that partially intersect. The first, reflecting discontent with present conditions, involves designing a new place of order and happiness. Fulfillment of this fantasy is postponed to an uncertain future, either undefined or within reach, depending on the fulfillment of certain conditions. The imaginary of the American baroque saw many of these spaces hidden in the jungle—El Dorado, the Paytiti, Manoa —and hundreds of men went in search of them, only to find hardship and frustration. The second kind of utopian dream is rooted in an idealized historical past. Many scholars today denigrate this type of utopia, seeing the past as something that deserves questioning. They argue, for example, that the Inca state was itself an oppressive state. At this point in the debate, however, one needs to take into consideration the politics of modernity and tradition. Utopias should not be considered as an effort to achieve an accurate portrayal of history by a people. A utopian fantasy is an instrument of power and, as such, seeks to crystallize and idealize the past, not because the past is perfect or because society has remained unchanged through centuries of colonization, but rather because the past needs to be manipulated as if actual changes had not occurred.

A call to mobilize the will of the people depends on the attractiveness and verisimilitude of its proposals, not on their actual veracity. If the deeds and heroes evoked show their strengths and weaknesses, if the ambiguities and conflicts of political practices are revealed, this call will fail. Actors and

heroes from the past must become archetypes of conduct; past events must become examples for the future. This is an essential condition for the "invention of tradition" as Eric Hobsbawm defined it.[4] In other words, a utopian fantasy is an ideological construction that involves a relative falsification of the past, and its objective is to break with present misfortunes. Utopian fantasies are political instruments to be used by our protagonists at a certain historical moment, or by intellectuals for their own political battles. Recognizing these realities does not make them false. Ultimately, objective history does not exist; it is always constructed from the perspective of whoever writes it. Postmodern theory makes much of the power of the word and of discourse. In this book we shall see repeatedly how Bohorques used this power, or even how those gathered at the meeting in Pomán used words and rituals as foundational instruments: to establish cities, create knights, to invest oneself with the symbols of power of the Incas in order to reign as an Inca. The acts and actors alluded to in utopian fantasies are intellectual constructs. In our story, certain protagonists from colonial society used utopian ideals as instruments of power. More than simply rejecting a model of society, they wanted to find their own space, to be legitimately recognized in the social and political sphere.

The life of Pedro Bohorques is the axis of this story. His epic deeds, the twists and turns of his life, his complex personality, and the actions of other participants in his life may reveal much about the general practices of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in these conquered (and being conquered) territories of colonial America. The first three chapters will frame the history of an individual in the global context of the period. First I describe the social map of early Peru and offer other examples of certain marginal or deviant individuals who created "spurious alliances" with the natives, not unlike Bohorques. Chapter 2 describes the utopian goal of preserving the history of the Incas and the social, political, and juridical practices of the descendants of the *cuzqueño* elite who sought to preserve historical memory and ethnic identity. These were conditions that enabled a marginal Spaniard like Pedro Bohorques to slip through the system. Chapter 3 analyzes both European and native beliefs in the existence of golden kingdoms hidden in the Amazon jungle—indications of the coexistence of a fantastic medieval mentality, which accepted the possibility of marvelous places and monstrous beings, with seventeenth-century rationality.

Chapters 4–6 narrate Bohorques's epic deeds. His life reflects important

meanings of the imaginary and the practices of individuals during this unique stage of American history. I will describe the situation of the indigenous populations, especially the strong Calchaquí resistance and its effects on the politics of colonial Tucumán. The last chapter reviews this history and the multiple facets of Pedro Bohorques's personality, which fits no stereotype, except, perhaps, the extreme individualism of *peninsulares* who like Don Quixote sought heroism by jousting with windmills. Yet Bohorques is not a literary Quixote; he is real, and he also evokes less sympathy than Quixote, as we shall see in the episode when he intervenes in Calchaquí, putting into play dangerous regional politics competing for the conquest of a vast territory.

Through the many episodes of his life, from his adventures in the Peruvian Amazon to the Calchaquí valley, we follow Bohorques's hallucinatory search for the Paytiti until he becomes himself a false Inca and appoints himself a leader of a native rebellion. He was undoubtably a demihero, but this does not lessen his importance in the colonial context. If he is unknown today, it is because historians have attempted to denigrate him, successfully erasing him from the official colonial and national history, just as they have done with the native past. In colonial history, native society has been turned into a mestizo population—marginal, cultureless people incapable of autonomously reconstructing their own identity and history. With respect to national history, in my own country (Argentina) historians have failed to recognize that the native populations of the north achieved a high degree of cultural and social complexity. Furthermore, the national territory was "whitened" both by the founding fathers' emergent positivism and by force of repression. The Indians, Spaniards, and *criollos* of the nineteenth century either could not or did not want to reconstruct the history that had affected and mobilized the whole viceroyalty of Peru, of which modern Argentina was then a part. In the Peruvian jungle, Bohorques's steps dissolved into various frustrated attempts at finding the Paytiti. Bohorques did no more than to emulate hundreds of other wishful thinkers, but he committed an unforgivable act: he attempted to establish his own empire, just as Gonzalo Pizarro had tried a century before. He tried to escape from the patterns of conquest and subjugation that have prevailed to this day on the South American continent.

In the Peruvian Amazon, as in Calchaquí, Bohorques tried to weave spurious political alliances: he aligned himself with the enemy to liberate

them from the dominion of the Crown, and he tried to design a new independent (and possibly Christian) society. He paid the price with his head for having the audacity to assume a seat of power over the Indians. His zeal to transcend his marginality in a world where all was possible allowed him to play different roles to achieve his objectives. For Bohorques, life was worth nothing; yet at the same time everything was worth it if he could carry out his dreams.

I

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