

FELIPE GUAMAN POMA DE AYALA (ca. 1535–ca. 1616)
***THE FIRST NEW CHRONICLE AND GOOD GOVERNMENT* (ca. 1616)**

This land . . . they called it “the Indies” . . . not because the natives were called Indians: they got “Indians” from “Indies.” This same land is higher than all Castile and the other lands of the world. The first term for it was “New World.” That is its title and true name, and its people are called “Natives.” Therefore, only the greenhorns [*chapetones*] call them Indians. Even now they call them so, and they err.

Don Francisco Pizarro and Don Diego de Almagro, the two captains general, and the rest gathered together 350 soldiers. Throughout Castile there were great tumults. It was like a dream, both day and night; everyone said, “The Indies! The Indies! Gold, silver! Gold, silver from Peru!” Even musicians sang the ballad, “Indies! Gold, silver!” And these soldiers gathered with the message from our Catholic lord the king of Spain and from His Holiness the Pope.

Everyone was saying that the people here went around dressed all in gold and silver, that all the ground they walked on was solid gold and silver, and that they piled up gold and silver like rocks. The yearning for gold and silver endures to this day. The Spaniards still kill each other and skin the poor Indians over gold and silver, and in some parts of this kingdom the pueblos of the poor Indians have been depopulated because of gold and silver.

Together with 350 soldiers, they embarked for the kingdom of the Indies of Peru, and they did not wish to rest a single day in any port. Every day, they did nothing but think of “Gold, silver, and the riches of the Indies of Peru!” They were like desperate men, foolish, crazy, out of their minds with their greed for gold and silver. . . That was what the first men were like: they did not fear death, with their self-interest in gold and silver. Worse still are the men of this life today—the Spanish *corregidores* [district governors], priests, and *encomenderos* [those “entrusted” with a group of Indians]: with their greed for gold and silver, they are going to hell.

Because of this wealth, the emperor sent governors and magistrates, presidents and bishops, priests and friars, Spaniards and ladies. Everywhere people were saying, “Peru!” and more “Peru!” There was a tremendous increase in numbers from the original 160 Spaniards and one Congo black. Spaniards, merchants, barterers, petty hawkers, and dark-skinned people came. Mestizos—the children of priests—now multiply much more than Indians. “Gold and silver in Peru!”

Taken from Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *The First New Chronicle and Good Government*, trans. David Frye (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006), 102, 104, 105, 120.