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978-1-108-01334-5 - The Travels of Pedro de Cieza de Leon, A.D. 1532-50: Contained in the First Part of his Chronicle of Peru

Pedro de Cieza de Leon

Excerpt

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TO THE MOST HIGH AND MOST PUISSANT
LORD DON PHILIP, PRINCE OF THE
SPAINS, OUR LORD.

Most high and most puissant Lord,—

AS not only the notable deeds of many very brave men, but also numerous events worthy of perpetual memory in different provinces, have remained in the shades of oblivion for want of writers who will record them, and of historians who will narrate them; I, therefore, having crossed over to the New World, where I have passed the greater part of my time serving your Majesty in wars and discoveries, in which service I have always taken much delight, have determined to undertake the history of the events in the great and memorable kingdom of Peru. I went to it by land from the province of Carthagena, where, and in the province of Popayan, I was for many years. After I had been in your Majesty's service in that last war, which ended in the overthrow of the rebels and tyrants, I thought over the great wealth of Peru, the wonderful things in its provinces, the stirring events of its early history and of more recent times, and how much there was both in the one and the other period which was worthy of note. Then it was that I resolved to take up my pen and accomplish the desire I had conceived to perform a signal service for your Highness, holding it to be certain that your Highness would receive it without noticing the weakness of my powers, but rather judging my intention, and, in your royal clemency, receiving the will

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with which I offer this book to your Highness. It treats of that great kingdom of Peru of which God has made you Lord. I do not fail to consider, O most serene and gracious Lord, that to describe the wonderful things of this great kingdom of Peru would require one who could write like Titus Livius, or Valerius, or some other of the great writers that have appeared in the world, and that even they would find some difficulty in the task. For who can enumerate the mighty things of Peru? the lofty mountains and profound valleys over which we went conquering and discovering? the numerous rivers of such size and depth? the variety of provinces, with so many different things in each? the tribes, with all their strange customs, rites, and ceremonies? so many birds, animals, trees, fishes, all unknown? Besides all these things, who can worthily describe the unheard-of labours which a handful of Spaniards passed through in this vast country? Who can imagine the events of those wars and discoveries, extending over sixteen hundred leagues of country? the hunger, thirst, death, terrors, and fatigue which were suffered? Concerning all these things there is so much to relate, that any writer would be tired out in writing it. For this cause, most puissant Lord, I have collected the most important events which I myself saw or heard, into this history. I have not the audacity to place it before the judgment of an unkind world, but I entertain the hope that your Highness will protect and defend it as a thing belonging to yourself, so that I may freely dare to walk under your protection. For many writers, fearing the same thing, have sought for Princes of great note to whom they might dedicate their works, and some of these works have never been read by any one, being so fantastic and absurd. But what I have written here is concerning true and important things, both pleasant and useful, which have happened in our time; and I dedicate my work to the greatest and most powerful Prince in the world, who is your Highness. The attempt savours of temerity in so unlearned a man, but others of more learning are too much

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

DEDICATION.

3

occupied in the wars to write. Oftentimes, when the other soldiers were reposing, I was tiring myself by writing. Neither fatigue nor the ruggedness of the country, nor the mountains and rivers, nor intolerable hunger and suffering, have ever been sufficient to obstruct my two duties, namely, writing and following my flag and my captain without fault. Having written this work under such difficulties, and it being dedicated to your Highness, it seems to me that my readers ought to pardon any faults which, in their judgments, they may find in it. If they refuse to pardon these faults, it must suffice for me that I have written the truth, for this is what I have most carefully sought after. Much that I have written I saw with my own eyes, and I travelled over many countries in order to learn more concerning them. Those things which I did not see, I took great pains to inform myself of, from persons of good repute, both Christians and Indians. I pray to Almighty God that, as He was served by giving to your Highness so great and rich a kingdom as Peru, He will leave you to live and reign for many happy years, with increase of many other kingdoms and lordships.

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[More information](#)

PROLOGUE

BY THE

AUTHOR,

IN WHICH HE ANNOUNCES THE INTENTION OF THE WORK, AND ITS
DIVISIONS.

I SET out from Spain, where I was born and bred, at such a tender age that I was scarcely thirteen complete years old when I sailed; and I spent more than seventeen years in the Indies, many of them in the discovery and conquest of new provinces, others in new settlements, and in travelling over different countries. As I noted the many great and strange things that are to be seen in this new world of the Indies, there came upon me a strong desire to write an account of some of them, as well those which I had seen with my own eyes as those which I had heard of from persons of good repute. But when I considered my small stock of learning I put aside my desire, holding it to be a vain thing; for I remembered that it was for learned doctors to write histories, throwing light upon them by their learning and judgment, while those who are not learned would be presumptuous even if they thought of writing. I, therefore, passed some time without giving heed to my former intentions. At last the Almighty God, who can do anything, favoured me with His divine grace, and awoke in me the memory of what I had before forgotten. Taking heart, I then determined to spend some part of my life in writing history, to which resolution I was moved by the following considerations.

The first was, that in all parts where I had been, no one was

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engaged in writing anything concerning what had occurred ; and time destroys the memory of events in such sort that soon there is no knowledge of what has passed.

The next was, that both ourselves and these Indians draw our origin from our ancestors Adam and Eve, and that the Son of God descended from the heaven to the earth for all men, and, clothed in our humanity, received a cruel death on the cross to redeem us and free us from the power of the devil, which devil had, for so long a time, held these people captive by God's permission ; and that it was right that the world should know in what manner so great a multitude of tribes, as there is in these Indies, was brought into the bosom of the holy mother church by the exertions of Spaniards. These exertions were such that no other nation in the world could have endured them. Thus God chose us for so great a work, before any other nation.

Another consideration was, that in future times it ought to be known how greatly the royal crown of Castille was enlarged, and how, when the invincible Emperor was our King and Lord, the rich and abundant kingdoms of New Spain and Peru were settled, and other islands and vast provinces were discovered.

I beseech all learned and benevolent men to look upon my work with justice, for they know that the malice and murmuring of the ignorant and stupid are such that they never fail to find fault. Thus it is that many, fearing the rabid envy of these scorpions, consider it better to be called cowards than to allow their works to see the light.

But I will not desist from my intention, valuing more the favour of the few and learned, than caring for the evil which the many foolish readers may bring upon me.

I also wrote this work that those, who learn from it the great services which many noble knights and youths have done for the royal crown of Spain, may be led to emulate their examples ; and, at the same time, by noting how others committed treasons, robberies, and other evil deeds, and suffered famous punishments for them, that they may profit by these examples, and loyally serve their natural king and lord.

For the reasons which I have now set forth, I undertook the

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

present work, for the better understanding of which I have divided it into four parts, in the following manner.

The first part treats of the division of the provinces of Peru, as well towards the sea as inland, with the longitudes and latitudes. It contains a description of all these provinces, an account of the new cities founded by the Spaniards, with the names of the founders, and the time when they were founded; an account of the ancient rites and customs of the native Indians, and other strange things very different from those of our country, which are worthy of note.¹

In the second part, I shall treat of the government of the Yncas Yupanquis, who were the ancient kings of Peru, and of their great deeds and policy, how many of them there were, and their names. I shall describe the superb and magnificent temples which they built, the roads of wonderful size which they made, and other great things that were found in this kingdom. I shall also give an account in this book of what the Indians say concerning the deluge, and how the Yncas magnify the grandeur of their origin.

In the third part I shall relate the discovery and conquest of this great kingdom of Peru, and the constancy of the Marquis Don Francisco Pizarro; the hardships suffered by the Christians when thirteen of them with the same Marquis (God permitting) discovered the country; how the said Don Francisco Pizarro was nominated governor by his Majesty, and entered Peru; and how, with one hundred and sixty Spaniards, he captured Atahualpa. In this third part I shall also treat of the arrival of the Adelantado Don Pedro de Alvarado, and of the agreement made between him and the governor Don Francisco Pizarro. I shall, in like manner, give an account of the notable things which happened in various parts of this kingdom, of the rebellion of the Indians, and of the causes which led to it; of the cruel and perfidious war that the same Indians waged against the Spaniards

¹ This is the part which is now translated, the only one which was ever published, and, indeed, the only one which is suited to form a volume for the HAKLUYT SOCIETY. It is a narrative of travel in the strictest sense, while the other parts would have been purely historical.

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

who were in the great city of Cuzco, and of the death of some Spanish and Indian captains. This third part will end with the return of the Adelantado Don Diego de Almagro from Chile, and his entry into the city of Cuzco by force of arms, the captain Hernando Pizarro, Knight of the order of Santiago, being there as chief justice.

The fourth part is more important than the three which precede it. It will be divided into five books, and will be entitled "The Civil Wars of Peru:" in which will be related stranger things than ever passed before in any other part of the world, among so small a number of people of the same nation.

The first book of these civil wars treats of the war of Las Salinas, and gives an account of the imprisonment of the captain Don Hernando Pizarro by the Adelantado Don Diego de Almagro; it relates how the city of Cuzco was made to receive Almagro as governor, and the causes of the war between the governors Pizarro and Almagro. It describes the treaties and interviews between them until the dispute was placed in the hands of an umpire, the oaths they each took, and the commissions and letters they each had received from his Majesty; the sentence that was given, the return of the Adelantado to Cuzco, and how, with great fury and enmity, he fought the battle of Las Salinas, which is half a league from Cuzco. It relates also the march of the captain Lorenzo de Aldana to the provinces of Quito and Popayan, and the discoveries of the captains Gonzalo Pizarro, Pedro de Candia, Alonzo de Alvarado, and others. I conclude with the return of Hernando Pizarro to Spain.

The second book is called "The War of Chupas." It will treat of several discoveries and conquests; of the conspiracy of the men of Chile in the City of the Kings to kill the Marquis Don Francisco Pizarro, and of his death. It will then relate how Don Diego de Almagro, son of the Adelantado, was received as governor by the greater part of the kingdom; how the captain Alonzo de Alvarado, who was captain and chief justice of his Majesty for the Marquis Pizarro in Chachapoyas, rose against him, and how Pero Alvarez, Holguin, Gomez de Tordoya, and others, did the same in Cuzco; how the licentiate Christoval

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[More information](#)

Vaca de Castro arrived from Spain as governor, and how there was discord among the men of Chile. I shall relate how, after some of the captains had killed each other, the cruel battle of Chupas was fought near Guamanga, and how the governor Vaca de Castro went to Cuzco and cut off the head of the youth Don Diego. This will conclude the second book.

The third book will be entitled "The Civil War of Quito." The writing of it will be very difficult, and it will treat of various important events. There will be an account of how the new laws were promulgated in Spain, and of the consequent meetings and consultations in Peru, until Gonzalo Pizarro was received in the city of Cuzco as procurator and captain general. It will relate what occurred in the City of the Kings until the viceroy was seized by the judges and sent to sea; the entry of Gonzalo Pizarro into the city, where he was received as governor; his chase of the viceroy; and how the viceroy was conquered and killed on the plain of Añaquito. I shall also give an account, in this book, of the events which took place in Cuzco, in Charcas, and in other parts; of the rising of Diego Centeno on the part of the king and of Alonzo de Toro and Francisco de Carbajal on the part of Gonzalo Pizarro, until that constant worthy, Diego Centeno, was constrained to hide in secret places, and his master of the camp, Lope de Mendoza, was killed; also of what passed between the captains Pedro de Hinojosa, Juan de Yllanes, Melchior Verdugo, and the others who were in Tierra Firme; and of how the Adelantado Belalcazar put the marshal Don Jorge Robledo to death in the village of Pozo. I shall then recount how the Emperor our Lord, in his great clemency and kindness, sent out a pardon to all who should submit and enter his royal service; how the licentiate Pedro de la Gasca was appointed president, and how he arrived in Tierra Firme; the policy by which he drew the captains, who were there, into the service of the king; the return of Gonzalo Pizarro to the City of the Kings; the cruelties which were committed there by him and his captains; how a general assembly was convoked to determine who should go as procurators general to Spain; and the delivery of the fleet to the president. Here I shall conclude this book.

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

PROLOGUE.

9

The fourth book will be entitled "The War of Huarina." It will treat of the enterprize of the captain Diego Centeno ; how he entered the city of Cuzco with the few men whom he had been able to induce to join him ; how Lorenzo de Aldana sailed from Panama and arrived at the City of the Kings ; and how many captains left Gonzalo Pizarro, and passed over to the service of the king. I shall also treat of what passed between Diego Centeno and Alonzo de Mendoza, until they gave battle to Gonzalo Pizarro on the plain of Huarina. I shall relate how the captain Diego Centeno was defeated, how many of his captains and followers were killed or taken prisoners, and how Gonzalo Pizarro entered the city of Cuzco.

The fifth book, containing the war of Xaquixaguana, treats of the arrival of the president Pedro de la Gasca in the valley of Xauxa ; of the preparations made by him when he heard that Diego Centeno was defeated ; of his march to Xaquixaguana, where Gonzalo Pizarro gave him battle ; it relates how the president and the troops of the king were victorious ; and how Gonzalo Pizarro was defeated and put to death in the same valley ; how the president arrived at Cuzco and proclaimed the tyrants to be traitors ; how he retired to a village called Huaynarima, where he divided the greater part of the provinces of this kingdom among persons selected by himself ; and how he went thence to Lima, and established the Royal Audience.

Having completed these books, which form the fourth part of my work, I shall add two Commentaries. The first will treat of the events in Peru, from the founding of the Audience to the departure of the president. The second, will give an account of the president's arrival in Tierra Firme ; of the murder of the Bishop of Nicaragua by the Contreras ; of how the Contreras, with tyrannical intentions, entered the city of Panama and stole great quantities of gold and silver, of how the citizens gave them battle outside the town, defeated and put them to death, and recovered the treasure. I shall conclude with an account of the insurrection at Cuzco, relating how the marshal Alonzo de Alvarado was sent by the judges to punish the rebels, and how the illustrious and politic worthy, Don Antonio de Mendoza, entered this kingdom as viceroy.

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[More information](#)

And if this history is not written with the elegance and learning that science gives to letters, it will at least be truthful, and each event will be duly noted with brevity, while evil deeds will be commented upon with moderation.

I truly believe that others would have performed this work with more satisfaction to the reader, being more learned than I am. But, if my good intentions and my endeavours to do my best are considered, it is just, at all events, that I should be favourably received. The ancient Diodorus Siculus says in his prologue, that mankind owes a great deal to authors, for, through their labours, the deeds of men live for many ages; and he, therefore, calls Cicero the witness of time, the master of life, the light of truth. What I ask, in return for my labour, is that,

although these writings may be devoid of elegance, they

may be received with favour, because they are

accompanied with truth. I submit my work

to the judgment of the learned and

virtuous; and I beg that

others will content

themselves

with

merely reading it, without attempt-

ing to judge what they

do not understand.