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978-1-108-04946-7 - The Geographical, Natural, and Civil History of Chili: Volume 2: The Civil History of Chili

Giovanni Ignazio Molina

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The Geographical, Natural, and Civil History of Chili

Juan Ignacio Molina (1740–1829) was a Jesuit priest born in Chile but forced to flee to Europe after his religious order was expelled from the Spanish Empire in 1767. He settled in Bologna, Italy, and began to write a natural history of his homeland, which was first published in Italian in 1782 (he is also known as Giovanni Ignazio Molina). He completed a second volume on the history of the people of Chile in 1786, and a version of the book was in the library of HMS *Beagle*. This two-volume English translation was published in 1809, and also includes notes from other explorers, including a 1791 account of Chile by Pedro González de Agüeros (1768–93) and a 1774 description of Patagonia by Thomas Falkner (1707–84). Volume 2 covers the ‘civil history’ of Chile, discussing the indigenous people living there and the arrival of Spanish settlers.

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VOLUME 2:
THE CIVIL HISTORY OF CHILI

GIOVANNI IGNAZIO MOLINA



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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108049467

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2012

This edition first published 1809

This digitally printed version 2012

ISBN 978-1-108-04946-7 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

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THE
G E O G R A P H I C A L,
N A T U R A L, A N D C I V I L
H I S T O R Y O F C H I L I.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL ITALIAN OF

THE ABBE DON J. IGNATIUS MOLINA.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

NOTES

FROM THE SPANISH AND FRENCH VERSIONS,

AND

TWO APPENDIXES,

BY THE ENGLISH EDITOR;

THE FIRST, AN ACCOUNT OF THE ARCHIPELAGO OF CHILOE, FROM THE DESCRIPCION HISTORIAL OF P. F. PEDRO GONZALEZ DE AGUEROS ;

THE SECOND, AN ACCOUNT OF THE NATIVE TRIBES WHO INHABIT THE SOUTHERN EXTREMITY OF SOUTH AMERICA, EXTRACTED CHIEFLY FROM FALKNER'S DESCRIPTION OF FATAGONIA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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**Printed by J. D. Dewick,
46, Barbican.**

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THE
AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO THE
CIVIL HISTORY OF CHILI,

FOUR years have elapsed since I promised to publish the present Essay on the Civil History of Chili, as a continuation of the one formerly written on the Natural History of that country. Engagements of this kind are, however, from their nature, conditional. When I undertook this work, it was in full confidence of being in a short time in possession of the necessary materials to complete it. The first volume of the Abbé Olivares' manuscript I had then in my possession; this, with what works had appeared in print, supplied me with sufficient documents until the year 1665; and I was in constant expectation of receiving from Peru the second volume of the same author, in which he has brought the subject down to a late period.

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In this hope I was disappointed. This volume, on which I had so confidently relied, I have never received, and have been in consequence compelled to seek from various other sources the information which it would have given me. The wars of the natives with the Spaniards being, however, the only proper subject of Chilian History, and but two having occurred since the above period, the first in 1722, and the second in 1767, I have been enabled, by the aid of some of my countrymen now in Italy, who recollect the principal events, to supply in some measure the want of a regular detail, and to give a sufficiently accurate account of them. Having stated these circumstances, I shall merely observe that, without being influenced by national distinctions or prejudices, the chief merit to which I aspire in this narration is that of impartiality. I have related nothing but what I have either found in those writers upon Chili who have preceded me, or have received from persons of unquestionable veracity, and have thought proper to confine myself to a plain narrative of facts, and omit all reflections that might occur, in order not to appear to be too much influenced in favour of either of the contending parties.

The attention of several philologists has of late years been directed to the examination of the barbarous languages. For this reason I have

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been induced to annex to this work some remarks upon the Chilian tongue, which, from its structure and harmony, well merits to be known. Several printed and manuscript grammars of this language are to be met with, but the one which I have principally used is that of Febres, printed at Lima, in the year 1765, and deserving of particular recommendation for its method and its clearness.

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