

**JAMES COOK (1728–1779)**  
***A VOYAGE TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN (1784)***

It is worthy of observation, that the islands in the Pacific Ocean, which our late voyages have added to the geography of the globe, have been generally found lying in groups or clusters . . . I named the whole group the Sandwich Islands [Hawaiian Islands], in honour of the Earl of Sandwich. Those that I saw, are situated between the latitude of 21° 30', and 22° 15' North, and between the longitude of 199° 20', and 201° 30' East.

The inhabitants are of a middling stature, firmly made, with some exceptions, neither remarkable for a beautiful shape, nor for striking features, which rather express an openness and good-nature, than a keen, intelligent disposition. Their visage, especially amongst the women, is sometimes round; but others have it long; nor can we say, that they are distinguished, as a nation, by any general cast of countenance. Their colour is nearly of a nut brown; and it may be difficult to make a nearer comparison, if we take in all the different hues of that colour; but some individuals are darker.

They are vigorous, active, and most expert swimmers; leaving their canoes upon the most trifling occasion; diving under them; and swimming to others though at a great distance.

They seem to be blest with a frank, cheerful disposition; and were I to draw any comparisons, should say, that they are equally free from fickle levity which distinguishes the natives of Otaheite [Tahiti], and the sedate cast observable amongst many of those of Tongataboo. They seem to live very sociably in their intercourse with one another; and, except for the propensity to thieving, which seems innate in most of the people we have visited in this ocean, they were exceedingly friendly to us. And it does their sensibility no little credit, without flattering ourselves, that when they saw the various articles of our European manufacture, they could not help expressing their surprise, by a mixture of joy and concern, that seemed to apply the case, as a lesson of humility to themselves; and, on all occasions, they appeared deeply impressed with a consciousness of their own inferiority; a behaviour which equally exempts their national character from the preposterous pride of the more polished Japanese, and of the ruder Greenlander. It was a pleasure to observe with how much affection the women managed their infants, and how readily the men lent their assistance to such a tender office; thus sufficiently distinguishing themselves from those savages, who esteem a wife and child as things rather necessary, than desirable, or worthy of their notice.

Though they seem to have adopted the mode of living in villages, there is no appearance of defence, or fortification, near any of them; and the houses are scattered about, without any order, either with respect of their distances from each other, or their position in any particular direction. Neither is there any proportion as to their size; some being large and commodious, from forty to fifty feet long, and twenty or thirty feet broad, while others of them are mere hovels

Their amusements seem pretty various; for, during our short stay, several were discovered. The dances, at which they use the feathered cloaks and caps, were not seen; but from the motions which they made with their hands, on other occasions, when they sung, we could form some judgement that they are, in some degree at least, similar to those we had met with at the Southern Islands, though not executed so skilfully. Neither had they amongst them, either flutes or reeds; and the only two musical instruments which we observed, were of an exceedingly rude kind. One of them does not produce a melody exceeding that of a child's rattle.

**Taken from James Cook and James King, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 3 vols. (London: W. and A. Strahan, 1784), 221–222, 228–229, 233, 235–236.**

**ALONSO CARRIÓ DE LA VANDERA (b. 1716)**  
***EL LAZARILLO DE CIEGOS CAMINANTES (1773)***

The first charge I would make against the parish priests [said the postal inspector or visitador] is that they have not thrown themselves into the task of incorporating the Spanish language into their religious instruction. The parish priests' assistants, who are usually ordained as Indian-language priests and have the most contact with Indians, do not want them to speak anything but their native language.

The Jesuits, who for 150 years were the principal teachers, pursued a strategy prejudicial to the State by trying to keep the Indians from any contact with Spaniards and limit them to their native language, which they [the Jesuits] understood very well. Those good fathers asserted that when Indians had contact with Spaniards and learned their language, they became infected and tangled up in enormous vices that they could not even have imagined before.

The parish priests will do a great service to God, the king, and the Indians by eliminating Indian languages from their teaching and replacing them with Spanish, making their assistants responsible and ordering their native constables to carry it out. The corregidores, their lieutenants and accountants, and everyone else passing through their parishes will derive great benefit because the Indians, on the grounds of not understanding Spanish, fail to understand many things, which leads to disputes, unfortunate arguments, and Indian crudities.

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Well, I wonder why the Spaniards, who conquered and subjected seven million Indians to their ways, are unable to subject the Indians of the Chaco and those of the mountains?

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But the barbarous Indians, who have no formal settlements or cultivated fields, would change their locations. They will mock the vain efforts of the Spaniards who, being unable to fortify their strongholds, would abandon them, enabling the Indians to return at their pleasure, at considerable cost to us. By barbarous people I mean those who are not subject to laws or magistrates, who in the end live by their own devices, always following their passions. This is the nature of the Indians on the pampas [of Argentina and Uruguay] and the inhabitants of the Chaco. In New Spain, seeing the impossibility of subjecting the barbarous Indians who occupied the forsaken plains of central Nueva Vizcaya [in northern Mexico], including more than one hundred leagues of the royal road leading into the valley of San Bartolomé del Parral, the Spaniards built four presidios twenty-five leagues apart garrisoned with fifty soldiers each and the appropriate officers.

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[T]he Indians subject to the emperors of Mexico and Peru and their laws, whether good or bad, I say that they have been and are civil, that they are the most obedient nation

to their superiors that exists in the world. From the Chichas to the Piuranos, I observed their way of governing. They are assiduously obedient, whether to the regidor, who assumes the duties of constable, up to the corregidor. They live from their plantings and livestock without aspirations to wealth even if they have had some opportunities through the discoveries of mines and tombs. They are content with a little assistance for their fiestas and drinking parties. Some attribute this timidity to concern that the Spaniards will despoil them of those treasures, which usually are imaginary or depend, as in the silver and gold mines, on the industry of many men and great expense. The Spaniards would be delighted if the Indians were rich so they could trade with them and enjoy part of their wealth. But the sad fact is that in the greatest Indian market, which is that of Cocharcas [in highland Bolivia], where over two thousand Indians gather from various provinces, one does not see anyone buying even a real's worth of goods from a Spaniard because they do not like their stinginess. The Spaniards' commerce is made among themselves, including the fluctuating numbers of Mestizos and other Castas who are outside the sphere of the Indians. The rare Indian who gathers some wealth is esteemed by the Spaniards, who offer him their goods and gladly offer terms, and do not disdain trade with them and invite them to their tables.

No Spaniard is capable of deceiving an Indian, and if a Spaniard takes something from an Indian by force, he is pursued in the courts until his dying day.

**Taken from "Concolorcorvo Engages the Postal Inspector about Indian Affairs, Lima, Peru," in *Colonial Latin America: A Documentary History*, eds. Kenneth Mills, William B. Taylor, and Sandra Lauderdale Graham (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2002), 330–334.**