

# No More Negotiation: Slavery and The Destabilization of Colonial Hispaniola's *Encomienda* System

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The importation to Hispaniola of massive numbers of enslaved Native Americans from other regions and of *bozales*, non-Hispanicized African slaves, in the first, second, and third decades of the sixteenth century, was a significant factor in the destabilization of the island's *encomienda* system—a system already in peril because of the precipitous decline of the island's native Taínos (also called Island Arawaks). This article will examine the transition from *encomienda* to slavery, focusing on some little explored socio-cultural aspects of Hispaniola's early *encomienda* system, the relocation of commended Indians in 1514, and the various methods that the Crown employed to supplement the island's labor supply. Case studies of rebellions, including that of the *cacique*<sup>1</sup> Enriquillo in 1519, and of the New World's first African slave rebellion in 1521 will be used to help illustrate the destabilization of the island's carefully negotiated and delicately balanced *encomienda* system, a system that had maintained a remnant of the Taíno *caciques*' traditional authority and prestige while fulfilling Spanish needs for manual labor.

Many scholars maintain that the Spaniards on Hispaniola looked upon the *encomienda* system the same way they did slavery, not distinguishing between the two extractive labor systems. Lesly Byrd Simpson, for example, says "In reality the *encomienda*, at least in the first fifty years of its existence, was looked upon by its beneficiaries as a subterfuge for slavery."<sup>2</sup> Carlos Esteban Deive

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<sup>1</sup>*Cacique* is the term that the native inhabitants of Hispaniola used to designate their "chief." The Spaniards adopted the Taíno word and used it for the leaders of native peoples throughout the Americas. See Ricardo E. Alegría, "Origin and Diffusion of the Term 'Cacique,'" in Sol Tax, ed., *Acculturation in the Americas: Selected Papers of the XXIXth International Congress of Americanists, 1949* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1952), Vol. 2, 313-5.

<sup>2</sup>Lesly Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain: The Beginning of Spanish-Mexico* (Los Angeles, CA: U. of California Press, 1966), xiii. Simpson defines the *encomienda* system in the Antilles as "[T]he delegation of the royal power to collect the tribute from, **and to use the personal services of** [emphasis Simpson's] the King's vassals [the indians]. The encomendero undertook to look after the welfare of his

concurrer, atribuyendo abusos del sistema a “la avaricia de los colonos y del propio rey...”<sup>3</sup> Throughout the colonial era, however, the Spanish Crown continually attempted to define and distinguish commended Indians as distinct and separate from enslaved peoples. The *encomenderos* did not legally own the Indians who were commended to them by the Crown, could not legally rent them out, and, particularly after the Laws of Burgos were implemented in December 1512 (amended July 1513), owed carefully spelled-out reciprocal responsibilities to “their” Indians in exchange for labor tribute, including the payment of wages (albeit the standard wage paid to commended Indians was only one to one-and-a-half gold pesos annually<sup>4</sup>). Furthermore, commended Indians, even those who worked for Spaniards in the gold mines, were legally worked for only a portion of the year called the *demora*;<sup>5</sup> initially they lived the balance of the year in their own villages.

The Spanish Crown could and did remove the Indians from *encomenderos* who abused the “vassals” commended to them or who otherwise defied the system’s multitude of rules and regulations; the abused Indians would be commended to other Spaniards. The threat of removal curbed some of the

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charges and to educate them in proper [Spanish] norms of conduct, as well as to discharge the usual feudal obligation of bearing arms in the King’s defense.”

For the initial development of the *encomienda* system, see Robert S. Chamberlain, *Castilian Background of the Repartimiento-Encomienda System* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institute, 1939). Among the best studies of *encomienda* in the New World are: Luis Arranz Márquez, *Repartimientos y encomiendas en la isla Española (El repartimiento de Albuquerque de 1514)* (Santo Domingo: Fundación García-Arévalo, 1991); Carlos Esteban Deive, *La española y la esclavitud del indio* (Santo Domingo: Fundación García-Arévalo, 1995); Lewis Hanke, *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America* (Philadelphia, PA: U. of Pennsylvania Press, 1949) and *The First Social Experiments in America: A Study in the Development of Spanish Indian Policy in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U. Press, 1935); Esteban Mira Caballos, *El indio antillano: Repartimiento, encomienda y esclavitud (1492-1542)* (Seville, España: Muñoz Moya, 1997); Julián B. Ruis Rivera & Horst Pietschmann, eds., *Encomiendas, Indios y Españoles* (Münster, W. Germany: Lit. Verlag, 1996); Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi, *Los Dominicos y las encomiendas de indios de la isla Española* (Santo Domingo: Editora del Caribe, 1971); and José Antonio Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de los indios en el nuevo mundo* (Havana, Cuba: Cultural, 1932).

<sup>3</sup>Deive, “La voracidad de los colonos y del propio rey...,” *La Española y la esclavitud del indio*, 87.

<sup>4</sup>Such a salary could have purchased a locally made suit of clothes, perhaps, but not an imported European. An imported “fancy linen shirt” circa 1503 cost one-and-a-half gold pesos, a pair of silk stockings another one-and-a-half, and a pair of kid shoes three tomines, or one-third of a peso. A single large nail cost one peso. Charles E. Nowell, trans. and ed., *A Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, 1503* (Minneapolis, MN: U. of Minnesota Press, 1965), 49-50.

<sup>5</sup>The length of the *demora* is debatable, somewhere between five and nine months. See Esteban Mira Caballos, “El sistema laboral indígena en las Antillas,” in Ruis Rivera & Pietschmann, *Encomiendas, Indios y Españoles*, 20-21.

system's abuses, but both the reward of encomiendas and the threat of their removal were primarily used to keep power centralized in the Crown and Crown administrators.

The "Indian wars"<sup>6</sup> on Hispaniola were over in the early years of the reign of governor Nicolás de Ovando (1502-1509), after which most of the island's remaining Taínos submitted to the encomienda system: "Although they submit to this restraint with impatience, they do put up with it," wrote Peter Martyr D'Anghiera.<sup>7</sup> The question that is seldom asked is: why? Luis Arranz Márques contends that the encomienda system was one of sheer domination of Spaniards over Indians.<sup>8</sup> Not all scholars agree, for there may have been some perceived benefits in the encomienda system for the remaining Taínos. Submitting to encomienda does not necessarily imply collaboration or collusion—it may instead demonstrate evidence of indigenous adaptation to the Spanish system.

It must be understood that the Taínos, although not as intricately stratified nor as rigidly organized as the Aztecs or the Incas, had at least two distinct social classes. The nobles called themselves *nitaínos*, comprising caciques—some of whom were "paramount" caciques with authority over other lesser caciques—and *behiques* (priests/healers), plus their extended families. Commoners were known as *naborías*. Spaniards on Hispaniola adopted the term "naborías" to designate both Taíno "workers" and other related Indians who were brought from nearby islands, such as the Bahamas. (The imported *naborías* were not slaves, for they could not legally be sold.)<sup>9</sup>

The conquistadors on the island recognized the authority, prestige and privileges of the caciques from the beginning of the encounter. For example,

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<sup>6</sup>The "wars" were pogroms to eliminate the island's most powerful *caciques* and their counsellors.

<sup>7</sup>Peter Martyr D'Anghiera, *De Orbe Novo, The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D'Anghiera*, trans. and ed. Francis Augustus MacNutt (New York, NY: Burt Franklin, 1970 reprint of 1912 edition; originally published in Spain in 1517 and 1526), Vol. 1, 182.

<sup>8</sup>Arranz Márques, *Repartimientos y encomiendas en la isla Española*.

<sup>9</sup>Mira Caballos, "El sistema laboral indígena," 20-27; and Roberto Cassá, *Historia social y económica de la República Dominicana* (Santo Domingo: Editorial Alfa y Omega, 1992), Tomo 1, 53. For more details on the Taínos and the early encounter era in the Caribbean, see Deive, *La Esclavitud del Indio*; Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797* (London & New York: Clarendon Press and Oxford U. Press, 1992); William F. Keegan, *The People Who Discovered Columbus: The Prehistory of the Bahamas* (Gainesville, FL: U. of Florida Press, 1992); Francisco Moscoso, *Tribu y clases en el Caribe antiguo* (San Pedro de Macoris, Rep. Dominicana: U. Central del Este, 1986); Irving Rouse, *The Taínos: Rise and Decline of the People Who Greeted Columbus* (New Haven & London: Yale U. Press, 1992); Jalil Sued-Badillo, *La mujer indígena y su sociedad* (San Juan, PR: Editorial Cultural, 1989); and Samuel M. Wilson, *Hispaniola: Caribbean Chiefdoms in the Age of Columbus* (Tuscaloosa & London: U. of Alabama Press, 1990).

Christopher Columbus wrote glowingly about the richness of the estate of “king” Guacanagarí, the prestige accorded to him, and about how many people he commanded to carry and store Columbus’s supplies off the “Santa Maria,” which wrecked on a reef near the cacique’s principle village on Christmas Eve, 1492. Columbus treated Guacanagarí with the same kind of deference he would have shown to any foreign monarch, giving him gifts and entertaining him aboard ship. Columbus’s “friendship” with the cacique profited him immensely, for Guacanagarí not only safeguarded Columbus’s goods, he gave Columbus gifts in return, several of which were objects decorated with gold.<sup>10</sup> Guacanagarí most likely gained prestige among his own people and among other caciques through his friendship with the exotic strangers from a distant land, strangers who might even have been considered gods,<sup>11</sup> at least at first. As anthropologist Bruce Trigger notes:

The Indians’ increasing familiarity with Europeans led to a “cognitive reorganization” in which the rational component inherent in the mental processes of every human being began to play the dominant role in guiding the native relations with Europeans, while religious beliefs ceased to play the important part that in many cases they had done in the early stages of the encounter. The key factor in bringing about this transformation was the Indians’ observation and rational evaluation of European behavior.<sup>12</sup>

The Taínos had ample opportunity to observe and evaluate European behavior when Francisco Roldan and the other Spaniards who rebelled with him against the Columbus brothers in the mid-1490s spread out across Jaragua in the western half of the island and “married” the daughters of the region’s caciques in order to profit from their kinship with the nobles. Perhaps, in this first decade of the encounter, noble Taínos allied themselves in kinship with Spaniards **in order** to observe them and evaluate them more closely, and in order to learn from them how to negotiate and deal with the Spaniards to improve and maintain their elite status or to better protect their people and their traditions, or both. Unfortunately, we will never know for certain because, although many of

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<sup>10</sup>Oliver Dunn & James E. Kelley, Jr., trans. and eds., *The Diario of Christopher Columbus's First Voyage to America, 1492-1493: Abstracted by Fray Bartolomé de las Casas* (Norman & London: U. of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 276-303.

<sup>11</sup>See Mary W. Helms, *Ulysses' Sail: An Ethnographic Odyssey of Power, Knowledge and Geographic Distance* (NJ: Princeton U. Press, 1988).

<sup>12</sup>Bruce G. Trigger, “Early Native North American Responses to European Contact: Romantic versus Rationalistic Interpretations,” *The Journal of American History* (March 1991): 1210.

the sons of the noble Taínos were taught to read and write by Spaniards, only one left written evidence.<sup>13</sup>

Many encomenderos married into Taíno noble families. Some of these unions were sanctified by the Church. Queen Isabel encouraged intermarriage from the earliest years of the encounter, and royal license for intermarriage was reinforced by King Ferdinand after her death in various letters and *cédulas* to Ovando and Viceroy Diego Colón.<sup>14</sup> More often unions between Spaniards and Indians were concubinage relationships, although the couple probably went through a native ritual, which would have legitimated the Spaniard as a member of the noble family, hence noble himself in the eyes of the Taínos. Marriage into the family of a cacique, or to a *cacica*, a female who had inherited the ruling position herself, would have made a Spanish encomendero's labor demands more acceptable, not only to the workers but also to the nobles.

Francisco Moscoso argues that the Taínos not only had a stratified social hierarchy, but also had a well established tribute system and that it was this traditional system of tribute—which included labor tribute—that the Spanish encomenderos tapped into.<sup>15</sup> The royal *cédulas* granting encomiendas use language indicating that he is correct, that the encomenderos' authority over their commended Indians was filtered through the caciques, who were to *be* “*los*

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<sup>13</sup>That one piece of written evidence is a letter from “don Enrique Yndio” written to Emperor Charles in 1534, in which the cacique agrees, henceforth, to be a model and obedient vassal. It has been preserved at the Archivo General de Indias (hereinafter AGI), Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Legajo 77. Transcribed by Emilio Rodríguez Demorizi in Fr. Cipriano de Utrera, *Polémica de Enriquillo* (Santo Domingo: Editora del Caribe, 1973), 487-8.

The Crown went to considerable trouble and expense to educate the caciques and their sons so that they would be “model vassals.” Both clergymen and lay teachers were sent to the island, such as *bachiller* Fernán Suárez, who “consented to teach the sons of the caciques on Hispaniola,” for which he was to be paid 33,000 *maravedís* annually, beginning in 1513 (AGI, Indiferente General 419, L4, ff127r-127v). See also L4, ff124v; L5, ff467v-468; 1961, L2, ff15v-16, and ff16. The Crown also paid the expenses to send caciques and their sons to Spain, to be educated in the established monasteries there, then sent home to serve as model Christians. One of the earliest *cédulas* to this effect was dated March 5, 1505 (AGI, Indiferente General 418, L1, ff150v-151). Learning to read and write like the Europeans would have been an excellent “tool” for the caciques and their families, one with which they could better understand and negotiate with the Spaniards. See Patricia Seed, “‘Failing to Marvel’: Atahualpa's Encounter with the Word,” *Latin American Research Review* 26/1 (1991): 7-32.

<sup>14</sup>For example, in a royal letter to Ovando dated October 6, 1508 (AGI, Indiferente General 1961, L1, ff78v-81) and in a *cédula* to Colón and the oidores of the Audiencia of Santo Domingo dated September 27, 1514 (AGI, Indiferente General 419, L5, ff270v-271r).

<sup>15</sup>Moscoso, *Tribu y clases en el Caribe antiguo*.

*mejor tratados*” (treated better [than other Indians]).<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, royal cédulas granting commended Indians did so **through** the caciques, as, for example, a cédula dated June 11, 1513, directed to Colón and the *oidores* (judges) and other officials of Hispaniola, which ordered them to commend eighty Indians to Francisco de Arbolancha “*en el cacique Diego Colón de la Maguana*.”<sup>17</sup> Another indication that Spaniards were negotiating labor by manipulating the traditional privileges accorded to the Taíno nobility is suggested by the word “*casyco*,” one of the earliest terms used by Spaniards on Hispaniola for what later was consistently called *repartimiento* or encomienda. *Casyco* appears to be a variant of the Taíno word “*caciczgo*,” which designated the geographical extent of a cacique's authority.<sup>18</sup>

Documents as late as 1547 contain orders from the Royal Crown that Spaniards were to rule through the caciques throughout the American colonies. A provision dated August 26, 1547, orders all the local mayors “not to meddle with nor deprive the caciques of their *caciczgos*, under expressed penalties,” which were detailed in the writ.<sup>19</sup> Susan Kellogg has come up with a compelling explanation of why the Spanish Crown was so insistent upon at least a front of upholding the traditional privileges of the caciques: “Hegemony develops **not** because people have agreed to their own subjugation but because the dominating power has been able to institute or substitute practices and beliefs which eventually appear normal and natural.” She continues with the observation that “hegemony is not simply imposed; it is a product of complex processes of conflict, negotiation, dialogue, and accommodation, even in colonial situations.”<sup>20</sup>

Just so, the caciques and *cacicas* of Hispaniola who appear to have been acting as “agents of Christian values” and as “middlemen” for their Spanish *encomenderos*, who needed mine laborers, agriculturalists, fishermen, construction workers and domestic servants, no doubt did so because it seemed to be a natural extension of their traditional privileges and prestige. Cooperating with Spaniards through the *encomienda* system was not collusion, *per se*, between elites, but it did require a delicately balanced, ongoing series of negotiations that often tipped over from adaptation and accommodation to resistance and, at times, to outright rebellion. In July of 1512, for example, the

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<sup>16</sup>Royal cédula dated September 20, 1518 (AGI, Patronato Real 419, L7, ff10v).

<sup>17</sup>AGI, Panama 233, L1, ff1v.

<sup>18</sup>Three documents from 1509, for example, use “*casyco*” as a synonym for “*repartimiento*.” Santiago Montoto, *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de Ibero-América* (Madrid: Editorial Ibero-Africano-Americana, 1927), Vol. 2, Nos. 9, 10, 11.

<sup>19</sup>The wording of the provision is: “...*que los alcaldes ordinarios de las ciudades de las Indias no se netrometan ni priven a los caciques de sus caciczgos, bajo las penas que se expresan*” (AGI, Indiferente General 424, L21, ff35v-36).

<sup>20</sup>Susan Kellogg, “Hegemony Out of Conquest: The First Two Centuries of Spanish Rule in Central Mexico,” *Radical History Review* 53 (1992): 27-46.

Cacica Isabel de Azua and her twenty-five, fifty or seventy-five *naborías* (as used here, the word probably means "workers"; different documents provide three different quantities) refused to cooperate with Juan de Serralonga, the *escribano mayor* of the island's mines, "whom they did not want to go serve" ("*que no le quieren ir a servir*"). Serralonga was Isabel's *encomendero*, but he had been away in Spain about one year to be cured of an unspecified illness contracted on Hispaniola, during which time she became attached to a Mayorcan named Pere Martin.<sup>21</sup> Despite Serralonga's appeal to Colón and the *oidores*, the *cacica* appears to have gotten her way, for another *cédula* on behalf of Serralonga, who was still or again complaining of ill health, was sent to Colón on August 12, 1512, demanding the return of his *cacica* and her *naborías*. The *cédula* also notes that Serralonga had lost a "*gran parte*" of his *hacienda* to fire, but there is no suggestion of foul play. The information seems to have been added to make him appear more pitiable, more in need of workers.<sup>22</sup> Serralonga died sometime later, in 1512. As late as 1544, his heirs (administrators of the Hospital General de Barcelona) were suing for his *bienes* (goods), which included monetary recompense for the lost Indians.<sup>23</sup>

Undoubtedly the documents contain data on more cases in which Indians refused to cooperate with the demands of *encomenderos*. It is the outright rebellions, however, that held and continue to hold historical attention. The most notable of the era was the rebellion of the Cacique Enriquillo.<sup>24</sup>

Born around 1498 or 1500, Enriquillo (the diminutive form of his baptismal name Enrique) was the grand nephew of the paramount *Cacica* Anacaona. Anacaona was the principle wife of Caonabó, the second most powerful *cacique* on the island when the Spaniards arrived, and sister to Behechío, the most powerful *cacique*, who ruled Jaragua in southwest Hispaniola (today in the Republic of Haiti). She became *Cacica* of Jaragua upon her brother's death, ruling until 1503, when she was hung by order of Governor Ovando, who feared her because she was so powerful and so revered by her people. Enriquillo was one of the first of the *nitaíno* children to be taught to read and write by the Franciscans. He became a Christian (some thought he

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<sup>21</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 418, L3, ffl3r-113v and 334r-334v.

<sup>22</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 419, L4, fflv-12v.

<sup>23</sup>AGI, Audiencia de Santo Domingo 868, L2, f225.

<sup>24</sup>For more detail than this article can provide on Enriquillo's background and rebellion, see José Juan Arrom & Manuel A. García Arévalo, *Cimmarón* (Santo Domingo: Fundación García Arévalo, Inc., 1986); Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias* (Madrid: Alianza, 1988), Tomo 3, Cap. 12; Manuel de Jesús Galván's historical novel, *Enriquillo* (Dominican Republic: Ediciones de Taller, 1989); Gonzálo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general de las Indias* (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1959), Biblioteca de autores, Vol. 117, Book 1: 124-139; Manuel Arturo Peña Batlle, *La rebelión de Bahoruco* (Santo Domingo: Impresora Dominicana, 1948); and Utrera, *Polémico de Enriquillo*.

might become the first native priest) and inherited the cacicazgo of Jaragua some time after Anacaona's death.

Enriquillo had a reputation for cooperating with the Spaniards, even when he and the remaining 109 of his people were moved to the village of San Juan de la Maguana in 1514 to live near his two new encomenderos, Francisco de Valenzuela and Francisco Hernández, as per the requirements of the Laws of Burgos.<sup>25</sup> The Laws of Burgos decreed that the Indians, after 1512, were “to dwell near the Spaniards” to whom they were commended. In the preamble to the new Spanish-Indian legal code, King Ferdinand explains that this was ordered so that:

By continual association with them [the encomenderos], as well as by attendance at church on feast days to hear Mass and the divine offices, and by observing the conduct of the Spaniards, as well as the preparation and care that the Spaniards will display in demonstrating and teaching them, while they are together, the things of our Holy Catholic Faith, it is that they will the sooner learn them and, having learned them, will not forget them as they do now.<sup>26</sup>

Most scholars concur that the Christian motive presented in the preamble was meant to quell the protests of the clergy on the island and to ease the royal conscience. The true motive for the “reductions” was, more likely, to concentrate Indian workers closer to the gold mines in order to increase profits for the royal coffers.

There were thirty-five other caciques and their people relocated to San Juan de la Maguana along with Enriquillo in 1514, where a total of twenty-seven Spaniards were granted 1,529 Taínos in encomienda, and seventeen other Spanish residents of the village received title to 469 naborías. There was probably no question, considering his background, that Enriquillo was the

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<sup>25</sup>The Repartimiento Census of 1514 lists Enriquillo as commended to Valenzuela with forty-six workers and one child, and to Hernández with thirty-six workers, ten Indians too old to work, and sixteen children. The details of the distribution for San Juan de la Maguana are in Joaquín F. Pacheco, Francisco de Cárdenas and Luis Torres de Mendoza, eds., *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y colonización de las posesiones españolas en América y Oceanía* (Madrid: M. Bernaldo de Quirós, 1864), Vol. 1, 196-207; also in Rodríguez Demorizi, *op. cit.*

<sup>26</sup>This translation from Parry and Keith, *New Iberian World* (New York: Times Books, 1984), Vol. 1, 337. For a summary description of the Laws of Burgos, see Lynne Guitar, “Laws of Burgos (1513),” in Junius P. Rodríguez, ed., *Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1998), Vol. 1, 113-4. Several slightly different original versions have been preserved in the AGI (Indiferente General 419, L4, f83 and Justicia 299, for example), evidence of the importance of the Laws of Burgos to the Crown and to the new Spanish colonies.

paramount cacique over the thirty-six of them in San Juan. In the other thirteen towns and villages, however, where the rest of the 22,336 of the island's remaining commended Taínos were redistributed in 1514, tensions must have arisen when so many caciques were relocated and reduced together into one region.<sup>27</sup>

Why did caciques like Enriquillo allow their people to be relocated, to leave behind their ancestral lands and sacred places, without rebelling?<sup>28</sup> The documents provide no clues, but perhaps demography does. The cacicazgo of Jaragua had been the most populous on the entire island in 1492,<sup>29</sup> yet by 1514, Enriquillo, Jaragua's paramount cacique, had only 109 people under his direct jurisdiction, including children and old people. Was this all that remained of those who had survived the pogroms that killed Anacaona and her counsellors, and the plagues and famines that had killed so many other Taínos since the Spaniards arrived?<sup>30</sup> Perhaps Enriquillo and the other commended caciques deduced that, because of the precipitous demographic decline, regrouping would benefit the remaining people. Regrouping was, after all, an extension of the traditional Taíno ways. Five years later, though, in 1519, Enriquillo did rebel, after the relocation and regrouping proved to be unfavorable for him and his people. By 1519, the island had experienced the worst and most devastating wave yet of epidemic disease (smallpox), and the Crown had begun authorizing the importation of massive numbers of enslaved Indians to supplement the island's dwindling native labor supply, both of which acted to reduce the status and leverage of the caciques.

The chronicler Peter Martyr provides extensive detail on the depopulation of the Lucayos, whose people were captured and exported in massive numbers

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<sup>27</sup>For detailed studies of the 1514 repartimiento, see Rodríguez Demorizi, *Los dominicos y las encomiendas de indios de la Isla Española*; and Arranz Márquez, *Repartimientos y encomiendas en la Isla Española*. Note, however, that the census that accompanied the 1514 Repartimiento only counted those Indians who were held in encomienda or who were officially naborías. It did not count those who were "living as Spaniards," those living on the peripheries of the "settled" areas, nor those who had run away to live in cimarrón communities. Nor did it count slaves. There were even Indians under Spanish control who were not counted in the census. Their encomenderos did not report them so that they could not be taken away and commended to other Spaniards (AGI, Patronato 172, R4, ff1109-111v; full text in Arranz Márquez, *op. cit.*, 321-5).

<sup>28</sup>My sincere thanks to Dr. Jane Landers for posing this question in an e-mail communication of January 16, 1997.

<sup>29</sup>See Wilson, *Hispaniola*, 14; and Bartolomé de Las Casas, *Apologética historia sumario*, Vols. 6, 7 and 8, comp. Paulino Castañeda, Carlos de Rueda, and Carmen Godínez e Immaculada de la Corte (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1995), Vol. 3-8, 1279.

<sup>30</sup>A wide variety of scholars have studied the effects of European exploitation and disease microbes on the indigenous peoples of the New World. For one of the most recent, see Noble David Cook, "Disease and the Depopulation of Hispaniola, 1492-1518," *Colonial Latin American Review* 2/1-2 (1993): 213-45.

to Hispaniola as *naborías*, beginning about 1509, to supplement the dwindling supply of native workers on Hispaniola.<sup>31</sup> William F. Keegan estimates “that 25,760 persons were imported in 1510, most of them probably taken from the Bahama [islands];” so many were taken that, based on studies by the geographer Carl Ortwin Sauer, Keegan agrees that it is likely that the islands were totally depopulated by 1513.<sup>32</sup> But the Lucayans were Western Taínos, with a language and costumes, values and beliefs nearly identical to those of the Taínos of Hispaniola. Rodrigo de Figueroa informed the Crown that the Lucayans, “like those Indians of this land [Hispaniola], are already almost one people”<sup>33</sup>—so their arrival did not unduly destabilize the delicate balance between *encomenderos* and commended Taínos on Hispaniola. As early as 1503, however, Queen Isabel authorized the capture of “*caribes*” (cannibals) on the islands of the “*Mar Océano*” and on the mainland. These so-called cannibals could be transported to Hispaniola and sold there as slaves, not as *naborías*, as long as the royal taxes were paid.<sup>34</sup> That 1503 license permitting the enslavement and sale of cannibals was granted to the Archdukes of Austria and the Dukes of Borgoña. In 1509, King Ferdinand issued similar licenses to Governor Ovando and the Royal Treasurer Miguel de Passamonte, the two highest officials on Hispaniola.<sup>35</sup> Then in late 1511, the field was opened up wide. Royal provisions conceded to *vecinos* (neighbors) and residents alike of both Hispaniola (December 23, 1511) and Puerto Rico (December 24, 1511) the rights to go to the other islands and mainland to make war against the cannibals, to capture them, and take them as slaves, as long as they were not sold outside the Indies. The islands of “Trinidad, San Bernardo, Fuerte, Los Barbudos, Dominica, Matenino, Santa Lucía, San Vicente, La Asunción, Tabaco, Mayo y Barú” and the port of Cartagena were specifically identified. Furthermore, the royal provisions conceded Spaniards the rights to these slaves “without incurring any penalties nor paying any taxes” (“*sin incurrir en pena alguna ni pagar derecho alguno*”).<sup>36</sup> Shortly thereafter, other islands and mainland regions were added to the cannibals-available-for-enslavement list, including Florida, Paria, the coast of Tierra Firme from the Gulf of Venezuela to “Coquibacoa” (Cubagua?), the “Gigantes” (islands of Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire), as well as

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<sup>31</sup>Peter Martyr D’Anghiera, *De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D’Anghiera*, Vol. 2, 248-55.

<sup>32</sup>Keegan, *The People Who Discovered Columbus*, 221-3.

<sup>33</sup>AGI, Patronato 174, R19.

<sup>34</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 418, L1, ff116r-116v; orders clarified in a letter dated November 15, 1505, AGI, Indiferente General 418, L1, ff185v-186. Text of the latter available in Real Academia de la Historia, *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas en Ultramar* (Madrid: Establecimiento Tipográfico, 1885-1932), Vol. 5, 110-3.

<sup>35</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 1961, L1, ff117v-118 and f139v, respectively.

<sup>36</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 418, L3, f211v and ff213-214v.

the coasts of Mexico and Yucatán.<sup>37</sup> By 1520, Indian slaves were also coming from mainland Brazil, evidenced by a *cédula* dated January 9 and issued to the *licenciado* Antonio Serrano “to buy Indians from the Portuguese and bring them to whatever part of the Indies” where they were needed.<sup>38</sup> Where they were “needed” was goldmining regions like San Juan de la Maguana.

Recently, scholars have demonstrated that the Spanish slavers accused numerous Indians of being cannibals as an excuse to capture and enslave them and that even those Indians whom the Taínos called cannibals were culturally similar to the Taínos; their cannibalism was primarily ritualistic, not for sustenance.<sup>39</sup> Some scholars even maintain that the so-called Caribs were from the same biological and cultural stock as the Taínos, simply being a more recent wave of migrants to the Antilles from the northeastern mainland.<sup>40</sup> An important point to consider, however, is that the Taínos **perceived** the Caribs as being quite distinct from themselves, perceived them as enemies. Christopher Columbus noted this in his *Diario* only one month after the initial encounter.<sup>41</sup> The arrival of Caribs on Hispaniola in massive numbers must have been very unsettling to the native Taínos. And the Caribs certainly would not have recognized the authority of the native caciques, which had to have affected relations between them as well as the delicate balance that existed between the commended Taínos and their encomenderos. More important, perhaps, the influx of Indian slaves affected the way that Spaniards on Hispaniola perceived all Indians. It is from 1512 on that the word “naboría” is used, more and more frequently, as synonymous with the word “slave” in royal *cédulas* and provisions, and in letters to and from the Crown. For example, two royal provisions dated February 22, 1512, confirmed that the residents of San Juan and Hispaniola could go to capture *indios caribes* and keep them “as naborías

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<sup>37</sup>Respectively: AGI, Indiferente General 419, L5, ff245r-245v; Indiferente General 420, L8, f69r; L10, ff243r-243v; Enrique Otte, “Los Jerónimos y el tráfico humano en el Caribe: Una rectificación,” in *Anuario de Estudios Hispanoamericanos* (Seville, 1958), 5-6; and Cassá, *op. cit.*, Tomo 1, 54.

<sup>38</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 420, L8, ff177r-178r.

<sup>39</sup>See Rouse, *Los Taínos*, 21-5 and 145-6; Cassá, *Historia social y económica*, Tomo 1, 53-4; Keegan, *The People Who Discovered Columbus.*, 8-10 and 226; and Boucher, *Cannibal Encounters*, 2-5.

<sup>40</sup>This was proposed by Jalil Sued-Badillo in *Los Caribes: Realidad o Fábula: Ensayo de Rectificación Histórica* (Río Piedras, PR: Editorial Antillana, 1978) and supported by Peter Hulme in *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean* (London: Methuen, 1986), both of whom have been criticized for the shallowness of their evidence. See Boucher's discussion of the arguments in *Cannibal Encounters*, 2-8. See also the debate over Peter Hulme's *Colonial Encounters*, “Making No Bones: A Response to Myra Jehlen” and Myra Jehlen's “Response to Peter Hulme, II,” in *Critical Inquiry* 20 (Autumn 1993): 179-86 and 187-91, respectively.

<sup>41</sup>Entry of Friday, November 23, 1492. Dunn and Kelley, *The Diario of Christopher Columbus's First Voyage to America*, 166-7.

for their own lifetime and that of their successors” (“*como habirías por toda su vida y la de sus sucesores*”) without paying the “*quinto*.”<sup>42</sup>

By 1512, some encomenderos on Hispaniola had possession of hundreds of Indian slaves. Diego de Nicuesa, for example, had 200 when he died, which his heir, his brother Alonso de Nicuesa, laid claim to on July 30, 1512.<sup>43</sup> No documents indicate how many non-Taíno Indian slaves there might have been in San Juan de la Maguana by 1519, when Enriquillo staged his rebellion. The number was probably quite high, however, for San Juan was an important mining region and one of the first of the Spanish villages to turn to the commercial production of cane sugar, which began about 1515 on the nearby Nigua River west of Santo Domingo.<sup>44</sup>

The chronicles inform us that Enriquillo rebelled because Andrés de Valenzuela, the son and heir of his original encomendero, seized not only Enriquillo's prize mare (an Indian's owning a horse was a sign of high status) but also his wife, doña Mencía, to whom he had been married in a sanctified Catholic ceremony. Enriquillo complained to the town's leading Spaniard, Pedro de Vadillo, but Vadillo reprimanded him for speaking out against Andrés. Enriquillo went to the capital and came back with an order from the Audencia demanding the return of his wife and horse, but Vadillo refused to comply, threatening to put Enriquillo in jail or in the stocks if he continued to pursue the complaint against Andrés. In response, Enriquillo gathered up his wife and an undisclosed number of Indians and led them to the desolate lands of Bahoruco, in the region of his old cacicazgo.

It is highly probable that the lack of diplomacy demonstrated by both Vadillo and Andrés in their dealings with Enriquillo was based on their mistaken belief, due to the growing intermixture of slaves with *naborías* and commended Taínos in the island's work force, that all Indians were of lowly “slave” status, thus could be treated with contempt. Vadillo had arrived only recently in Hispaniola; the date on his permit to immigrate from Seville is January 13, 1513.<sup>45</sup> And Andrés was young, probably not a seasoned veteran of the conquest and settlement of Hispaniola like his father, although it is difficult to ascertain, for there appears to be no documentation on him at the Archivo General de Indias. Additionally, both Vadillo and Andrés were probably too recently arrived to have participated in the wars of conquest, thus they underestimated the potential of the caciques as a “rallying point or threat,” thinking them “tamed,” much as Susan Kellogg found Spaniards had come to believe in seventeenth-century Mexico.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 418, L3, ff223-224 and ff226-227v.

<sup>43</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 418, L3, ff334r-335.

<sup>44</sup>See Sauer, *The Early Spanish Main*, 209-10.

<sup>45</sup>AGI, Pasajeros 5536, L1, f211.

<sup>46</sup>Kellogg, “Hegemony Out of Conquest,” 28.

Vadillo and Andrés soon discovered how wrong they were, for both Spaniards were sent on several expeditions to dislodge the rebellious cacique from the mountains of Bahoruco, none of which were successful. Enriquillo terrorized the southwestern region of the island, staging raids against the Spaniards and successfully eluding them for the next thirteen years. As his fame spread (or infamy, depending upon your viewpoint), he was joined by many other rebellious Indians and by runaway African slaves.

Along with an influx of non-Taíno Indian slaves, African slaves had been arriving on Hispaniola, too, and were put to work side by side with the Indians working the gold mines and the *ingenios* (sugarcane plantations) from the beginning of the island's colonization. Their growing numbers by the second and third decades of the sixteenth century, added to those of the growing numbers of enslaved non-Taíno Indians, would have exacerbated the lack of deference with which Spaniards treated all forced laborers, including commended Indians, even caciques.

In 1519, the Crown granted the first commercial license for the bulk importation of bozales, slaves direct from Africa, to the Indies to "Governor Bressa," the king's *mayordomo mayor* (senior steward), through his Genoese agents Adán de Bivaldo, Tomás de Forne and Lorenzo de Gorvod. The license gave them a monopoly to bring 4,000 bozales to Hispaniola.<sup>47</sup> Before that date, most of the royal cédulas licensing the importation of African slaves to Hispaniola before 1519 were for one to twenty slaves, primarily for the "personal use" of the high-status Spaniards who had requested them, such as Governor Ovando (three on October 6, 1508), Diego Colón (ten on December 13, 1508), Hernando Colón (one on December 23, 1508), María de Toledo (eight on May 10, 1509), Juan Ponce de León (four on October 19, 1514), and Juan Becerra, "the son of Comendador Bartolomé Becerra" (four on August 2, 1515).<sup>48</sup> Some were for more, however, such as a license dated July 6, 1508, allowing Diego de Nicuesa to bring forty African slaves to Hispaniola.<sup>49</sup> Most of the African slaves who were legally imported to Hispaniola early in the sixteenth century were "*ladinos*," slaves of African origin or African descent who had lived in Spain—many had been born there—who knew the language and customs, and were Christians. Scattered evidence suggests, however, that many bozales were brought in illegally.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 420, L8, ff93r-93v.

<sup>48</sup>Respectively: AGI, Indiferente General 1961, L1, f86v; ff107r-107v; f112; f126v; Indiferente General 419, L5, f297v; and ff451v-452.

<sup>49</sup>AGI, Indiferente General 1961, L1, ff71v-72.

<sup>50</sup>In a joint letter to the Crown dated May 20, 1519, five of Hispaniola's high-ranking citizens observed that so many Africans had been brought in illegally over the past fifteen years that to try to set things straight "would cause a thousand law suits and ruin the island." Roberto Martí, ed., *Santo Domingo en los manuscritos de Juan Bautista Muñoz* (Santo Domingo: Fundación García-Arévalo, 1981), Vol. 1, 317-8.

There was a general belief among the colonists on Hispaniola that bozales were more docile slaves, more satble, than ladinos. But this belief was turned around when approximately twenty “Wolof” slaves (from today's Senegambia region) on an ingenio owned by Diego Colón near Azua, about 100 kilometers northwest of Santo Domingo, planned and carried out a rebellion on Christmas Day, 1521.<sup>51</sup> From that moment onward, the history of the island is peppered with African slave uprisings, led by such leaders as Juan Vaquero, Diego de Guzmán, and Diego del Campo, all of whose rebellions took place before 1550.<sup>52</sup> They and others like them established cimarrón communities across the southwestern, northern and eastern regions of the island. Terror spread across Hispaniola due to the many “uncontrolled” Africans who stalked and raided Spanish colonies and who traded freely with Spain’s enemies along the unprotected coasts. Fear of African cimarrones was one of the reasons that Spanish towns in the northern half of the island were abandoned and Spanish settlement restricted to the part of the island south of San Juan de la Maguana in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Veterans of the early decades of Hispaniola settlement who were still around after the 1520s may have yearned nostalgically for the days when Indian naborías worked the gold mines and the *conucos* (native agricultural plots) for their encomenderos under the authority of their own Taíno caciques. The Spaniards had had to deal diplomatically with the caciques, granting them many privileged concessions, such as allowing them to own and ride horses, as Enriquillo had done. This was, no doubt, galling to some Spaniards, as it obviously was to Pedro de Vadillo and Andrés de Valenzuela. But the Taíno caciques, leading their people, organizing and sending out work parties as they had traditionally done since time immemorial, were more willing to negotiate and work within the Spanish system than the African slaves who replaced them turned out to be. That is, many caciques attempted to work within the Spanish

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<sup>51</sup>The most common date given for this rebellion is Christmas Day 1522, but Deive notes in *Los guerrilleros negros*, 33 (full transcription pages 281-9), that the year must have been 1521, based on AGI, Patronato 295, No. 104 (though he mistakenly identifies it as document No. 92) (Carlos Esteban Deive, *Los guerrilleros negros: Esclavos fugitivos y cimarrones en Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1989). This document is a set of new *ordenanzas* (orders) regarding African slaves and their owners, promulgated by Diego Colón to prevent more rebellions like the one that has just taken place. The orders are dated January 6, 1522. (Carlos Esteban Deive, *Los guerrilleros negros: Esclavos fugitivos y cimarrones en Santo Domingo* (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1989).

<sup>52</sup>For details on these rebellions of African slaves on Hispaniola, see Roberto Cassá and Genaro Rodríguez Morel, “Consideraciones alternativas acerca de las rebeliones de esclavos en Santo Domingo,” in *Anuario de la Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos* (Seville) 1(1): 101-31; Deive, *Los guerrilleros negros*; Arrom and García Arévalo, *Cimarrón*; and Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Avldés, *Historia general de las Indias* (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas), *Biblioteca de autores españoles*, Vol. 117, Book 1: 98-100.

system until the mutually beneficial cooperation required by encomienda turned to hegemony, and Spaniards on Hispaniola stopped negotiating with and deferring to the caciques.

The encomienda system began in the early 16th century, and continued till the beginning of the 18th century in most parts of the New World. The prime motivation for this system was to bring Christianity to the "heathens", as the natives were called by the colonial settlers. The Roman Catholic Church had allowed newly conquered territories to be annexed by Spain, only if the natives were converted. This rule was mentioned in the papal bull "Inter Caetera" published in 1493. This was because, they were totally dependent on the exploitation of the natives for their wealth and power, and the passing of the New Laws in 1542 made this impossible, making them take up arms against the crown. When Spain first enslaved Native Americans on Hispaniola, and then replaced them with captive Africans, it established unfree labor as the basis for colonial mass-production. Altogether, the struggle against slavery in the Spanish American colonies left a notable tradition of opposition that set the stage for current conversations about human rights.[15].

Contents. With the rise of Islam, and the conquest of most of the Iberian peninsula in the eighth century, slavery declined in remaining Iberian Christian kingdoms. The other major form of coerced labor in their colonies, the encomienda system, was also abolished, despite the considerable anger this caused in the conquistador group who had expected to hold their grants in perpetuity. Although many writers have emphasized his knowledge of Spanish and literacy gained from his Franciscan education, it is impossible to judge the extent of either. He left a will, but it has not survived.

10 See Floyd, , Columbus Dynasty, p. 29 on the imposition of the tribute system in 1495, and Wilson, , Hispaniola, pp. 91-94. 11 On slave taking and export, see Floyd, , Columbus Dynasty, p. 28 and Deagan, and Cruxent, , Columbus's Outpost, pp. 60-61. 12 Floyd, , Columbus Dynasty, pp. 26-27, 60, 63. Another important source for the study of early Hispaniola and Enriquillo is Marte, Santo Domingo, which is an extensive compilation of transcriptions made by Juan Bautista Muñoz in the late eighteenth century.