

The Behavior of Spanish Conquerors and Colonizers in America Is a Root Cause of Political Instability in Argentina

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ABSTRACT

The political stability of Argentina is a striking phenomenon in the scientific realm. This work factually demonstrates that one of the origins of instability is the contempt of the Spanish in America for the authority of the Spanish Crown, a behavior born during the stage of conquest and colonization of America. The validation process consists of a historical analysis that is summarized in propositionally logical statements, which allow the deduction and confirmation of the initial hypothesis. For the demonstration, violations of Royal edicts are analyzed, including the prohibition of slave labor and the obligations to only buy products from Spain, to treat the indigenous people well, and to consider them free men with rights to their territories. In all cases, the violations did not have significant punishments, probably due to the practical impossibility of controlling offenders from a distance, in a historical context where efficient means of communication did not exist. This lack of punishment gave rise to a contempt for authority, a custom that was passed down from generation to generation and is currently manifested as the contempt of all citizens for laws and regulations issued by any authority. This behavior partially explains the current political instability in Argentina.

1. Introduction

Argentina is a unique case in the concert of nations. For the rest of the world, it is a country perpetually in crisis (González, 2021), paradoxically possessing natural, human, and economic resources (Dalto, 2019) in an extensive and privileged territory. Argentina has a long history of economic defaults from 1827 to 2023. In 1827 was the first default, only 11 years after declaring independence from Spain; in 1890, it almost bankrupted Baring Brother Bank; in 1956, it led to the formation of a group of creditor countries (The Paris Club), a relationship that still endures. In 2001, Argentina experienced the largest default in history with \$96 billion, in 2006 it fully paid off its debt with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but then in 2018, it took the largest loan in the history of the IMF (Roming, 2014; Diaz-Cassou, 2008). In 2023, Argentina remains the main debtor to the IMF.

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The endless sequence of failures over the last 200 years is reflected in a lack of economic and social stability in Argentina, highlighted in numerous publications (Jouet, 2008; Martins, 2020; Calvert, 1989). Due to its peculiarity, the Argentine case is extensively studied in academic circles attributing the failure to various reasons, including failure to seek alternatives to compensate for the end of geographical expansion (Di Tella, 1967), unequal land distribution (Solberg, 1987), economic growth blocked by institutional instability (Prados de la Escosura, 2004), the breakdown of democratic institutions (Spruk, 2019), lack of institutions to support growth, adverse external shocks, and poor political decisions (Glaeser, 2018), among many others, as analyzed in publications that have examined the Argentine phenomenon.

In two previous publications by our working group, we demonstrated that Argentine political instability is an endemic phenomenon with more than 450 years of persistence in society (Felice and Ruiz 2023a,b). In those works, it was shown that the primary cause of instability is contempt for authority, which can manifest directly by affecting the time a ruler remains in office, or indirectly by violating laws issued by the authority. In the direct case, the analysis of temporal series of tenure times of American rulers, from conquest and colonization to the present day, showed the existence in Latin America of chaotic social behaviors in mathematical and human terms, revealing how contempt for authority affects the political stability of a country. In these publications, the time series were descriptively analyzed without delving into the origin of the primary cause, but *post-hoc* it was proposed to separate the primary hypothesis into two variants:

- 1) The contempt of the Spanish in America for the authority of the Spanish Crown is a primary causal factor of political instability in Argentina.
- 2) The indigenous contempt for the authority of the white conqueror and colonizer is a primary causal factor of political instability in Argentina.

This work is motivated by the desire to understand why these customs originated, as any government plan depends first on respect for authority and compliance with the laws by the citizens who make up a country. Understanding how these behaviors originated can help take concrete measures to reduce political instability in Argentina.

In this paper, the first hypothesis is analyzed, which refers to the non-compliance by the Spanish in America with the Royal Decrees issued by the King of Spain, excluding the analysis of compliance with these decrees in Spain. The hypothesis is demonstrated through an analysis of historical and sociological information, and the results are expressed as propositionally logical statements. Historical aspects include information from historians, archaeologists, and bioarchaeologists, while the sociological aspects take into account the intergenerational transmission of social behaviors.

To enhance the readability and comprehension of this publication, we will now describe the sections of this work and their thematic relationships.

In the Materials and Methods section, the relationship between contempt and political stability is first described. It then explains how words with significant social connotations, such as "contempt," are used. The section ends by outlining where the analysis of historical information is focused.

In the Literature Review section, the primary cause that might have led to everything analyzed in this work is first presented: the Spanish attempt to control colonies from a distance without adequate communication means due to the era in which they tried.

Next, before analyzing the origins of toxic social customs, it describes how these customs can be transmitted between generations, showing that if the causes persist, these customs become

entrenched in society. The section concludes with a detailed analysis of the origins of smuggling, along with its inseparable custom of tax evasion, and an examination of violations of Royal Decrees regarding the treatment of indigenous people, which led to their contempt for the authority of the white conqueror and colonizer.

In the Results section, a logical analysis of all the generated information is conducted, and the initial hypothesis is demonstrated in the Corollary section. The work concludes with a final analysis in both textual and graphical form, which summarizes all the findings.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Political Stability and Contempt for Authority

In this work, we define political stability as the stability over time of a ruler's tenure in office (TIO). The relationship between these concepts and the justification for using this definition is explored in depth in other publications (Felice and Ruiz, 2023a, 2023b). In this work, we present the main concepts and a diagram that shows how political stability and contempt for authority are related.

- The time series of a ruler's tenure in office (TIO) is an indicator of a country's political stability.
- The TIO indicator quantitatively describes the political reality of almost all nations in the Americas and other countries such as India and Singapore, with the exception of very long-lasting dictatorships or absolute monarchies.
- The definition replaces the construct of *political stability* with the quantitative indicator of *politicians' stability*, focusing the problem on individuals rather than the abstract concept of politics. Politicians' stability is affected by the behavior of the surrounding people, and such behavior depends on their level of contempt for authority. If it is zero, there are no problems, but if it is greater than zero, the greater the contempt, the greater the problems.
- The time series of a ruler's tenure in office is sensitive to multiple causes and does not disturb the interaction between them or their quantity. The causes can have an involuntary origin, such as illness, accident, or death, or can be voluntary owing to various authoritative problems. Some causes that can affect the TIO are coups, military intervention, civil intervention, self-coups, protests, strikes, social tension, corruption, and economic or Ethnic problems. The list of variables can be extensive, such as those described by the World Bank for analyzing the political stability index (Cruz, 2016), but they can all affect the TIO.

The TIO indicator assumes that behaviors depend on the level of contempt for authority among a country's citizens. Figure 1 shows the relationship between contempt for authority and the stability of rulers.

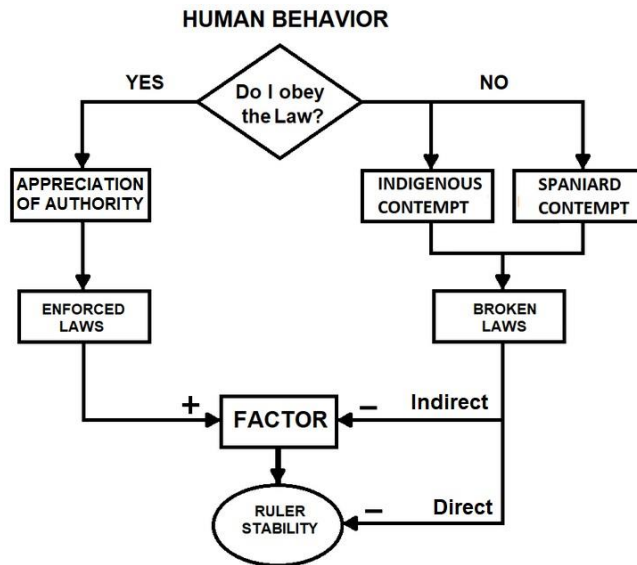


Figure 1. Relationship between contempt and ruler stability

Contempt, a human feeling, can manifest **directly** against a ruler, such as through a coup d'état or an assassination, or **indirectly** through noncompliance with laws and regulations.

To understand how the direct and indirect manifestations of contempt for authority contribute to a ruler's instability, the following examples are shown as the sequence *Factor: direct or indirect manifestation*:

- Coup d'état: violating basic constitutional laws, such as the periodic renewal of rulers.
- Assassination of a ruler: violating explicit and punishable prohibitions by law, such as regicide or illegal possession of weapons.
- Indefinite re-election: violating the number of re-elections allowed by law.
- Terrorism: violating criminal code laws, national security, border control, international conventions, or human rights among others.
- State terrorism: when the state violates its own laws.
- Tax evasion: violating tax laws, committing tax fraud, economic crimes, or international treaties among others.
- Territorial claims: violating the constitution, indigenous policy laws, territorial usurpation, or international treaties.
- Labor strikes: violating labor laws and regulations.
- Non-productive government expenditures: violating laws on budget execution, misuse of public funds, corruption in public administration, lack of transparency, manipulation of financial reports, or public ethics laws among others.

Except for natural phenomena or external invasions, the factors used to estimate a country's political stability always.

2.2. Language Usage

In this work, we use the terms Amerindian, indigenous, and native interchangeably to refer to people self-defined as descendants of pre-existing peoples before the arrival of the Spaniards. These words are also used as adjectives for the noun "genes," indicating that we are referring

to genetic material specific to descendants of peoples pre-existing before the arrival of the Spaniards.

We also use terms such as racial mixing, genetic flow, or genetic admixture to refer to genetic material with a multi-continental origin, such as an individual with European, American, African, and Asian genes. The word ethnicity encompasses a group of individuals with similar phenotypic characteristics.

Regarding the use of the concepts of race and racial mixing, among anthropologist-biologists, there is consensus to replace the concept of race with population, as race is a social construct and not a biological reality. Individuals classified within a race do not have identical genetic contents, as even a population belonging to the same ethnic or geographical group shows variations in its gene frequencies (Carnese, 2019). In fact, population genetics has demonstrated Charles Darwin's statement that it is not possible to detect discontinuities between human races (Darwin, 1871). The concept of the black race only considers the level of melanin concentration in an individual, an evolutionary adaptation that allows better tolerance to ultraviolet rays from the sun in the equatorial zones of the planet and is not related to other physical or intellectual capabilities of an individual (Jablonski, 2000). In practical terms, perhaps the only advantage of white skin is that it needs six times less UV radiation than dark skin to synthesize vitamin D, but the lighter the skin, the higher the risk of developing skin cancer or suffering from sunburns (Fajuyigbe, 2016).

Thus, since races do not exist, it makes no sense to talk about racial mixing. We can replace this concept with the more appropriate genetic flow or gene combination, which better represents the dynamic situation of human interactions. We adhere to these concepts, but as they are not yet fully disseminated, we will exceptionally use races and racial mixing, as they are the most used nomenclature in bibliographic references, allowing us to maintain conceptual clarity in our work.

2.3. Definitions and Context

To validate our hypotheses, we begin by defining contempt as *an intense sense of disrespect and aversion towards another person whose capacity and moral integrity we doubt*. In the specific case of *contempt for the authority* of a president, governor, viceroy, or any governing figure, we define it as *the undervaluation of the power an individual expresses in relation to the one who governs or holds command, de facto or by right*. This can manifest directly or indirectly, **directly** in practice (Felice and Ruiz, 2023a,b), stripping the granted authority from the individual, with or without a formal agreement, or **indirectly**, by violating laws or norms issued by the authority and intended to be enforced (Villegas, 2009; Hirschkind, 2012). The context is Latin America during the conquest, colonization, and the independent stage after Spanish rule, with an analysis focused on the historical, cultural, geographical, sociological and psychological characteristics of Argentina.

2.4. Factual Analysis

In this work, to demonstrate the hypothesis, factual statements or premises are deduced through historical and sociological analysis. In the historical analysis, data from the past is examined and evaluated. This includes the review of historical documents, records, past events, and scientific publications from various authors to deduce a comprehensive view of how things were in the past. Interactions between individuals and social groups over time are also analyzed. This includes studies of behavior, social structures, and statistics about groups of people.

To demonstrate the contempt for the authority of the Spanish Crown by the conquistadors and colonizers in America, the analysis focuses on the non-compliance with two major sets of Royal decrees: 1) those related to all productive activities of the settlers, and 2) those that legislated the relationship between the Spaniards and the indigenous people.

As will be seen, the non-compliance within these two major groups forms the historical root of two major groups of law violations in the 21st century: smuggling with its associated tax evasion, and the pigmentocracy that keeps part of Argentine society discriminated against based on skin color.

For the logical analysis, we have used the logical connectors \wedge (and) and \rightarrow (implies) to relate the basic statements and identify the cause-and-effect relationships. Each analysis conducted concludes with a logical premise deduced from the facts, which subsequently serves to factually demonstrate the initial hypothesis in the form of logical analysis of the presented premises. These statements are based on the presented evidence and are not mere opinions or suppositions.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Origins of Spanish Contempt for Crown Authority in America

To understand the origin of the contempt of the Spanish in America towards the authority of the Royal Crown in Spain, it is necessary to first position ourselves temporally and define the geographical and legal context. To administer the vast territories of America, the Spanish Crown created in the late 15th century a local administrative institution called the ViceRoyalty, with a representative of the monarchy called the Viceroy. The set of legal norms within which institutions and individuals had to operate was called the Laws of the Indies and was received by officials in America through Royal Decrees, a legal monument unprecedented for the time, attempting to regulate all possible aspects of life in the colonies. This colonial governance model clashed with reality when trying to enforce the rules in America. The Spanish Crown had no experience in governing such vast and distant territories. In fact, their only previous experience was conquering and governing the Canary Islands between 1402 and 1496, which, in geographical terms, had irrelevant distances and allowed real-time governance as shown in Figure 2.

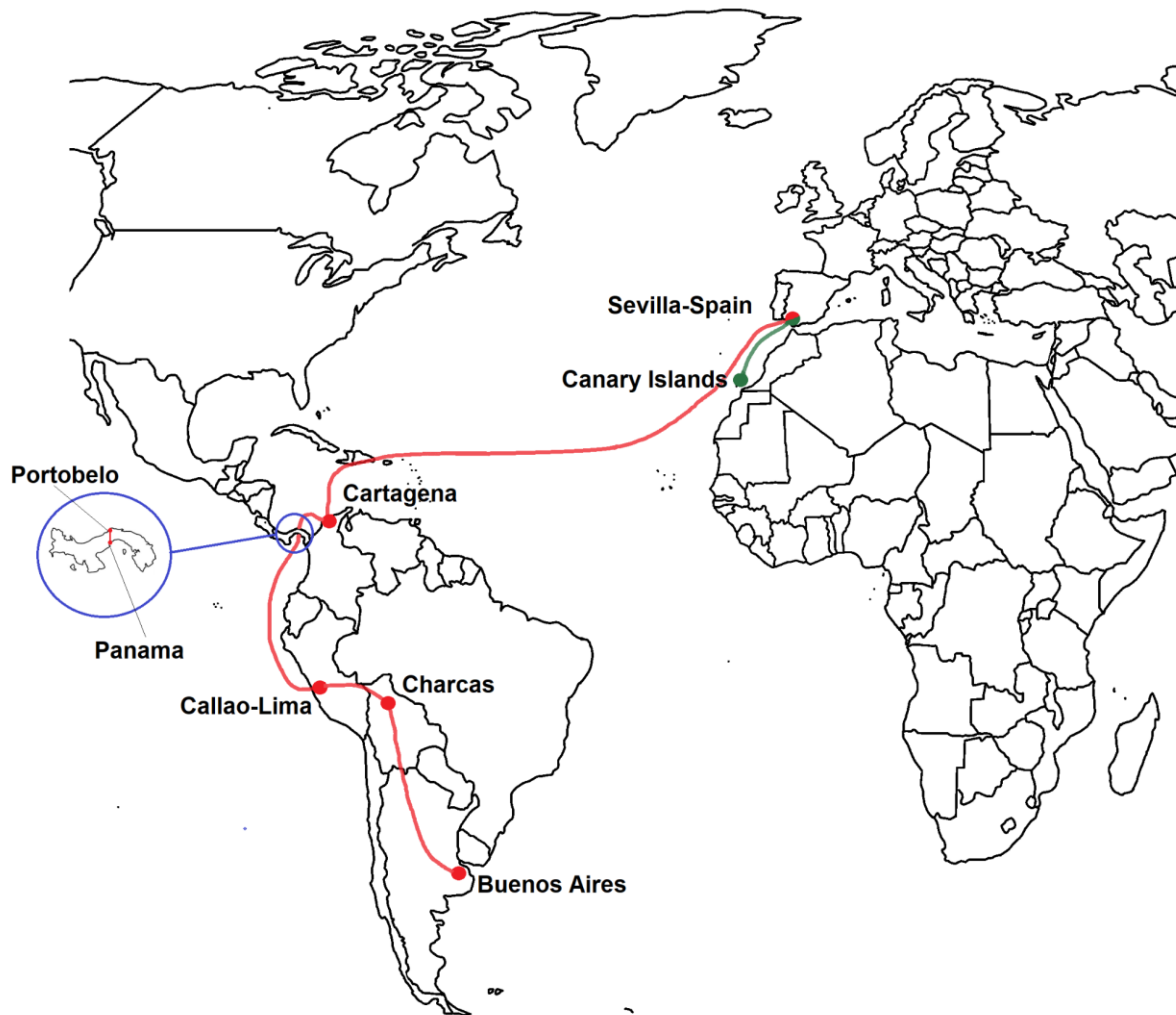


Figure 2. Routes between Spain and its colonies in the Canary Islands and Buenos Aires in the 16th century. In red, the route from the Port of Seville to the Canary Islands. In green, the route from the Port of Seville to Buenos Aires

The time lapse between issuing a decree, receiving it, and monitoring its application was much shorter than necessary for the same sequence in America. Between the islands and Spain, there was only a journey of a few days by ship, whereas, between the current Argentine territory and Spain, there was a several weeks' voyage to Lima by sea and a much longer journey by land to reach the destination in Argentine territory.

A Royal Decree could take years to reach its recipient. These excessive temporal delays, from a control system perspective, mean that control actions can be inadequate or untimely, as happened in America.

In the supplementary material "S1 Time delays," typical time delays between the issuance of a Royal Decree and the recipient's response or acknowledgment are observed, ranging from 326 to 3987 days, including responses never received. The paradigmatic example of the control problem is Juan de Garay's response to the King, informing him that the eclipse he was supposed to observe had occurred a year earlier.

In addition to the time delay between sending and receiving a response from Spain to America, the enormous bureaucracy was added to the lack of proper control. Both factors contributed to the non-compliance with the Royal Decrees, and are available in the supplementary material "S2 Colonial Bureaucracy".

- **Logical analysis**

A0: Communication between America and Spain in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries was highly inefficient.

3.2. Intergenerational Transmission of Social Behaviors

To support the hypothesis that the contempt of the Spanish in America for the authority of the Spanish Crown can be transmitted between generations, we will analyze publications describing the long-term permanence of some social behaviors.

A clear example of a firmly established social custom over time in a society is the carrying of weapons in the USA. The right of citizens of that country to bear arms was legally enshrined in 1791 when the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed. From the perspective of this work, carrying weapons can be considered a toxic social custom. In fact, the homicide rate with firearms in the USA for young people aged 15 to 24 in 2010 was 4900% higher than in other [high-income OECD countries (Grinshteyn, 2016). There are, of course, many efforts to overcome the problem, but deeply rooted social behaviors are difficult to overcome because they were established by intergenerational transmission and are part of behaviors socially accepted by citizens.

A dramatic example of the transmission of toxic social customs on a global scale is anti-Semitism, which persists with varying degrees of intensity in many countries worldwide. This set of behaviors, consisting of showing hostility or prejudice towards Jews, their culture, or their influence, can be expressed in practice with different levels of intensity, from a minimum of derogatory words in everyday speech to outright military hostility at the other extreme. These toxic social customs are deeply rooted and passed down from generation to generation, adapting to each era but maintaining their target, the Jews (US, 2008).

The pigmentocracy is other social behavior transmitted through generation. It is defined as *a social system where wealth and status are determined by skin color*. In the Argentine case, phenotypic characteristics were crucial in cementing pigmentocracy in the 20th century. In the first half of the 20th century, the term 'criollo' clearly stopped identifying the children of peninsulars born in America and came to be associated with the gaucho, the Indian, and the individuals from northwest and Cuyo of Argentina (Grimson, 2016).

Pigmentocracy is a phenomenon present in Argentina in the 21st century. It manifests in a wide range of indicators in health, education, income, electoral discrimination, and clientelistic efforts during elections, among numerous other events. The mestizaje resulting from the union of Spanish men and Amerindian women gave rise to ethnic nuances during the conquest, colonization, and independence phases of Argentina. Genetic mixing blurred the ethical and ethnic boundaries in the Argentine population, leading to *pigmentocracy*, a social phenomenon that diluted ethnic and ethical distinctions (Felice and Ruiz, 2024).

Another piece of evidence to support the hypothesis of intergenerational transmission of behavior patterns is the well-known fact that the predominant values in a culture strongly influence attitudes toward corruption. For example, the level of trust a person has in others depends on their country of origin. In Britain, immigrants from different nationalities show that their level of trust in others depends on cultural aspects specific to their country of origin, which continue to affect individual beliefs even in the new environment and several generations later (Guiso, 2006).

In our context, when a cultural habit is established and persists, it affects social relationships beyond the relationships that formed it, influencing individual behaviors, social institutions,

and prevailing cultural norms about right and wrong (Henrich, 2001). These statements tell us that social culture determines individual decisions, further validating our hypotheses.

If a social custom is deeply rooted in a society, the arrival of immigrants to a country may not be enough to change it. Between 1860 and 1920, 27 million immigrants arrived in the United States, which did not change either the custom of carrying weapons, a toxic cultural habit, nor the stability of its democratic institutions or the tenure of its leaders in office, a positive cultural habit. The same happened in Argentina, as between 1857 and 1940, more than 6 million immigrants arrived, who did not alter the great instability of its institutions or the chaotic tenure time of its leaders in office (Felice and Ruiz 2023a,b), both toxic cultural habits.

Attitudes towards corruption or the abuse of political power for private purposes can also persist through generations and be a cause of corrupt behavior. An analysis conducted among 848 individuals from 16 European countries shows that ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and norms about corruption could persist in respondents born in the country where they were surveyed, even if their parents were born in a different country, i.e., second-generation immigrants (Simpser, 2020). The study demonstrates a strong and robust relationship between attitudes towards bribery and two measures of bribery behavior. These results align with laboratory findings using individuals familiar with real-world corruption, indicating that corrupt individuals are more likely to make decisions that lead to bribery (Campos-Ortiz, 2011). Both results reinforce our hypothesis that a contempt for authority is transmitted through generations in Latin America.

It is essential to emphasize that the results we present should be analyzed within the context of Latin America and its history. Understanding this is crucial because measures to address instability issues depend on the personal history of each country.

- **Logical analysis**

P1: Toxic social behaviors can be transmitted across generations.

P2: Toxic social behaviors deeply rooted in a society are difficult to eradicate.

P3: Pigmentocracy is a set of toxic social behaviors.

3.3. Royal Decrees Unfulfilled by Spaniards in America

This section describes different Royal decrees that sought to order and compel specific behaviors by Spaniards residing in America, the subsequent massive non-compliance with them, and the practical impossibility of the Spanish Crown enforcing its rights. This sequence of events is the historical origin of socially toxic behavior patterns, stemming from the *lack of punishment* for law non-compliance.

Of course, sanctions effectively applied by the Royal Crown to conquistador-colonizers existed, but, as we will see, they were insufficient. The enormous practical limitation of the Royal Crown in applying punishments to subjects in America in the 16th and 17th centuries is the origin of a social custom transmitted through generations in Latin America, known as 'It is obeyed but not fulfilled'.

3.2.1. Obligation to Purchase Products from Spain

One of the most significant factors contributing to the contempt in Spanish America for the authority of the Spanish Crown in Spain was the overwhelming monopoly imposed by Spain on America to supply the expenses of the unproductive Spanish Royalty (Elliot, 1965). This monopoly severely restricted local merchants in almost all aspects of their commercial transactions, forcing them to survive through smuggling (contrabando).

The monopoly was imposed on the conquistadors and colonizers by the Spanish Crown through a large set of provisions and practices. The creation of the *House of Trade* (Casa de Contratación) in Seville, which allowed for the control and regulation of all trade between Spain and its colonies; the Fleet and Galleon system, protected convoys that carried Spanish products to America and brought colonial products to Spain, limiting the colonies' ability to trade with other nations; and a large set of decrees and laws that prohibited the American colonies from trading directly with other European nations or their colonies. The most important regulations from the perspective of trade relations were: 1) the Laws of the Indies (1511-1680), which controlled and centralized trade for the benefit of the metropolis; 2) the *House of Trade* of Seville (1503), which registered goods, supervised ships, collected taxes, and ensured that only authorized products were sent to the colonies and vice versa; 3) the Ordinances of Burgos (1512), which mandated that products in the colonies originate exclusively from Spain; and 4) the Ordinance of Commerce (1538), which reinforced the regulations by requiring all products to pass through the *House of Trade* and be transported by official fleets (Vegas Calzado, 2016; Walker, 2016; Fisher, 1997).

The monopoly operated from the very beginning of the conquest and colonization of the future Argentine Republic. In the mid-16th century, the Crown decided that the only city authorized to trade with Spain would be Lima, the capital of the ViceRoyalty of Peru, prohibiting the commercialization of any product through the port of Buenos Aires, except for what was necessary to supply the population. This measure marginalized Buenos Aires, preventing it from engaging in any legal trade and delaying its commercial development for 200 years, as it could not access affordable goods or the gold and silver needed to pay the exorbitant prices of legal merchandise from Spain.

Local entrepreneurs found ways to bypass the draconian measures by establishing trade relations with the Dutch, Portuguese, and French. These maneuvers to evade the Spanish monopoly resulted in the closure of the port of Buenos Aires in 1622 and the establishment of a dry customs office in Córdoba. The restrictions led to the decision to defy the law and the birth of smuggling in the Río de la Plata. Smuggling, 'contrabando' in Spanish, means 'against the royal edict' (contrabando = contra el bando real)". Since then, numerous methods to evade the law have appeared, such as evading customs controls, clandestine landings, or buying from unregistered sources.

Both the goods purchased and the silver from the mines of Bolivia used to pay for them came from smuggling. There was no colonial official who dared to stop illicit trade, and some even demanded that smuggling be allowed to continue.

So, placing ourselves in the colonial context of the 17th and 18th centuries, smuggling was the way Spanish merchants could thrive despite the Royal monopoly, turning law non-compliance into a widely spread social custom.

By the late 18th century, smuggling in Buenos Aires was openly practiced, violating legal provisions in broad daylight, unlike other ports worldwide where such practices were concealed and considered vulgar crimes. In 1776, alarmed by the magnitude of the silver flow that generated no public revenue, the government acknowledged the reality and included Upper Peru in the new Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, with Buenos Aires as its capital.

While there was some commercial openness with the *Free Trade Regulation* of 1778, smuggling did not disappear; instead, it intensified as a protest against the control exerted by resident Spanish merchants over economic and political life, both in the port and in the interior cities (Olivero, 2005). The declared Free Trade did not prevent deep-rooted social customs from disappearing. A detailed analysis of ship records, notarial, judicial, and commercial

documents revealed that between 1778 and 1818, trade between Spain and its colonies was affected by various types of fraud. The variety was extensive, including declaring goods for export as if they were for consumption during the journey and therefore exempt from taxation and excluded from records; evading the declaration of transported goods when they were valuable items of little volume, such as gold or silver; or exporting foreign goods, passing them off as Spanish with much lower tax rates (Alvarez, 1985).

Smuggling is a deeply ingrained social custom in Argentine society. Socially, it maintains acceptance among citizens, to the point that significant figures in Argentine history were smugglers without it being a stain on their records (Mauro, 2018). Smuggling is still practiced on a daily basis in the 21st century. Tax evasion on imports at the Argentine Customs occurs through "incorrect" classifications of goods from a high tariff category to others with lower taxes or by underdeclaring the quantities transported in Customs (Park, 2020), repeating customs with more than 200 years of existence.

Again, it follows from the paragraphs above that between the 16th and 19th centuries, there was a significant lack of control and punishment for the Spaniards in America who violated Royal Edicts. These events also contributed to fostering contempt for the authority of the Spanish in America toward the authority of the Spanish Royal Crown in Spain.

- Logical analysis

A1: The Royal decrees mandating the purchase of products only from Spain were not obeyed by the Spaniards in America.

B1: The violators of the decrees did not face significant punishments.

C1: Smuggling was the practical way to circumvent the Royal decrees.

D1: The custom of smuggling was passed down through generations until the 21st century.

E1: Smuggling in the 21st century does not face significant punishments.

$A1 \wedge B1 \rightarrow C1$ (The imposed monopoly and the absence of significant punishments allowed smuggling to emerge as a socially accepted illegal activity.)

$C1 \rightarrow D1$ (Smuggling was transmitted between generations as it was socially accepted.)

$D1 \rightarrow E1$ (Smuggling continues without significant punishments in the 21st century.)

3.2.2. Prohibition of Slave Labor

This section deals with what we consider a precursor to the current crime of unregistered labor, the evasion of conquistadors and colonizers from the obligation not to employ slave labor.

In the early days of the Spanish conquest in America, the way subjugated individuals were to pay tribute to the Royal Crown was through slave labor. This labor was the means by which the conqueror collected tribute from indigenous people as supposed *citizens* of the Spanish Crown, in the form of forced, arbitrary, and limitless personal services (Friede, 1969). Those who benefited from these labors were the encomenderos, Spaniards who received payments for their services in the form of the encomienda, a group of indigenous people whom they had to support and educate in exchange for the monopoly on their labor.

An initial attempt from Spain to end this exploitation was in 1536 when it promulgated a Royal Decree that established procedures to assess tributes and defined some of their values as reference. However, the decree allowed the commutation of tributes in kind for personal services, making exploitation continue in practice. In 1542, again, the Spanish Crown tried to control the encomenderos with Royal decrees prohibiting indigenous slavery and forced

personal services, and ordering that all indigenous people be freed from the *encomenderos* and placed under the direct protection of the Crown. This abolition of *encomiendas* was not complied with and led to revolts that, although crushed, concluded with the revocation of the *encomienda* prohibition in 1545 (Oriz, 2015). In 1549, there was another attempt to control the behavior of *encomenderos* through a Royal Decree that established voluntary and remunerated leasing as the preferred form of service provision by indigenous people to settlers. These changes were not respected; Royal Decrees were not followed, and the reality in America forced the Crown to propose an intermediate system. Instead of *entrusting* (*encomendar*) indigenous people to *encomenderos*, they proposed forcibly redistributing them, but these individuals had to be remunerated (Zavala, 1985). The new intermediate system failed, quickly tainted by abuses and arbitrariness. Distributing judges were threatened and bribed, turning the supposed improvement of labor conditions into a hell that prompted many indigenous people to flee to inaccessible places or to Spanish enterprises to become free laborers. It follows from the above paragraphs that in the 16th century, there was a significant lack of control and a lack of punishment for Spaniards in America who violated Royal Decrees.

The forms of labor exploitation of indigenous people did not disappear despite Argentina's transformation into an independent country in 1816. The 1813 Assembly in Argentina abolished *encomiendas*, *mita*, *yanacozgo*, and all personal services that indigenous people provided to religious institutions, declaring them free men.

Despite this declaration, in practice the situation of many indigenous people did not change, and there was a need to reaffirm these freedoms in the Constitution of 1853.

However, exploitation persisted in the 19th century through debt peonage, a coercive system where landowners or entrepreneurs retained their workers, forcing them to work without pay until their debts were fully paid off. In this case, the worker was the collateral, and the creditor acquired rights over them, which they could transfer like any other asset (Campi, 2013). Authors argue that debt peonage was a way to incorporate a large mass of workers into the capitalist system (Campi, 1991; Djenderedjian, 1998). However, other authors show that, in practice, the working conditions of this system were clear labor exploitation, particularly in the Argentine NOA and NEA regions (Wald, 2013; Guy, 1978; Loveman, 1979; Bauer, 1979).

Despite debt peonage not being slavery, it shared many characteristics with traditional slavery, including economic coercion, restricted mobility, abusive working conditions, lack of alternatives, and ambiguous legality (Landaburu, 2007, 2015).

During the 20th century, the free worker came into full existence, with debt peonage and forced labor through the *work ticket* (*boleta de conchabo*) being eliminated, at least legally (Campi, 2001). However, debt peonage gradually transformed into unregistered work, a condition where the employer does not record the employment relationship, does not contribute to retirement funds, does not provide health benefits, or declares fewer hours than the worker actually works. This situation results in the lack of protection for workers regarding their working conditions, accidents, and retirement income.

Informal employment is a serious issue in Argentina, as despite significant cultural and political changes, it persisted throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, reaching 2018 with an informal labor rate exceeding 45% (Bonnet, 2018).

From the preceding paragraphs, we can infer that *slave labor*, as social policies evolved, transformed into *debt peonage*, eventually leading to the current unregistered labor. The common factor is employers' non-compliance with employee social protection norms, within each era's context.

These social behaviors are part of the causes of contempt for authority, in this case, of Spaniards in America towards the authority of the Spanish Royal Crown.

- **Logical analysis**

A2: The Royal decrees prohibiting slave labor were not obeyed by the Spaniards in America.

B2: The Assembly of 1813 and the Constitution of 1853 declared all slaves free.

C2: Slave labor persisted over time until the emergence of debt peonage.

D2: Violators of the Royal decrees and the laws of the Argentine Republic did not face significant punishments.

E2: Legally valid debt peonage shared characteristics with slave labor.

F2: It was prohibited but gradually disappeared during the 20th century.

G2: Violators of the prohibition did not face significant punishments.

H2: Informal employment shares characteristics with debt peonage.

I2: In Argentina in the 21st century, the proportion of informal employment is greater than 45%.

J2: Violators of the prohibition of informal employment do not face significant punishments.

$B2 \wedge G2 \wedge J2 \rightarrow K2$ (Labor abuses do not have significant punishments)

3.2.3. Obligation to Consider Indigenous People as Free Men

Laws issued by the Spanish Crown regarding the treatment of indigenous people were many and from very early dates. The Royal Provision of Queen Isabella the Catholic on December 20, 1503, declared that indigenous people were free persons and should not be mistreated. The Laws of Burgos of 1512 by King Ferdinand the Catholic stated that indigenous people were free men with property rights and should not be exploited. Despite these laws, the norm was slavery and abuse, so much so that in 1530, King Charles I of Spain prohibited all forms of slavery under any circumstances, tacitly acknowledging the non-compliance with previous laws. Abuses continued, and in 1542, under the reign of Charles I in Spain, the *New Laws for the Treatment and Preservation of the Indians* were issued, classifying indigenous people (Indians) as full-fledged subjects of the Crown, preventing them from being enslaved under any circumstances. Article 31 of these laws directly prohibited *Encomiendas*.

Encomenderos rebelled, and the violation of Royal laws continued in the form of mistreatment of indigenous people. Successive attempts by the Royal Crown to curb the rebellion of the conquerors failed, reaching the absurdity of King Philip II granting privileges to the encomenderos, thereby ignoring all laws prohibiting servitude as well as the freedom of the indigenous people (Viáfara, 2014). Historically, the mistreatment of indigenous people occurred both in the colonial period and in the post-independence period, reaching into our present day in the 21st century.

Once again, the non-compliance with the law and the lack of punishment also contributed to fostering contempt for the authority of the Spaniards in America towards the authority of the Spanish Royal Crown in Spain.

- **Logical analysis**

A3: The decrees ordering that indigenous people be treated as free men were not obeyed by the Spaniards in America.

B3: Violators of the decrees did not face significant punishments.

3.2.4. Obligation to Recognize Territories for Indigenous People

During the conquest and from the very beginning, the Spanish Royal Crown in Spain recognized indigenous possession of the land, a philosophy it sought to implement in America through a large set of Royal Edicts.

Despite this, in the following centuries, there was a continuous dispossession of indigenous lands, both through legal and illegal processes within Spanish legislation. These processes continued after the Argentine independence, exacerbated because the fledgling nation did not recognize many pre-existing treaties of the Spanish Crown with the indigenous peoples.

One of the many possible examples of defense by the Spanish Royal Crown of indigenous rights is the Royal Edict of 1560. This document sought to prevent the dispossession of indigenous lands and aimed to do everything possible to conserve and care for their properties (Cedulario, 1560).

The edict had no practical effects due to a lack of control, as it could not prevent the uncontrolled expropriation of indigenous territories. To control the conquistador-colonizers, prevent the formation of fiefdoms, and increase their income, the Spanish Royal Crown issued the Royal Edicts of composition from Felipe II in november of 1591. In these edicts, the Crown acknowledged indigenous rights, sought to respect them by legitimizing indigenous possessions prior to the conquest, and tried to define land titling processes for both parties. In practice, these guidelines were not respected, and the edicts became a formal way of legalizing the loss of lands occupied by indigenous people. Examples include the lands of the town of Sumaro and the district of Charca in the ViceRoyalty of Peru (González, 1998; Glave, 2009), which were *legally* assigned to the Spaniards.

In the independent period of Argentina, dispossession continued as the ownership of colonial reservations expired, and the properties passed into the domain of the state. The new owners of the territories dedicated themselves to granting lands to individuals, disregarding the rights that the Crown had granted to the natives. These disposals through leasing, auction, and perpetual or long-term assignments occurred in Tucumán, Jujuy, and Córdoba, where provincial authorities validated the dominion of families over territories previously belonging to indigenous peoples (Boixadós, 2022).

In Tucumán, there were also multiple disposals, such as the illegitimate transfer in 1811 of part of the lands of the indigenous town of Chuscha to private hands (Noli, 2015), or the loss of part of the territorial rights of the indigenous community of Amaicha (Rodriguez, 2009), despite the formal recognition of possession and rights over their lands by the Spanish Royal Edict of 1716, accepted by the Public Ministry of Buenos Aires in 1853 (Sosa, 2015).

In the province of Mendoza in 1833, the government legitimized the possession of fiscal lands to the Huarpe indigenous people, but a few decades later, they lost more than 75% of the fiscal lands assigned to them, with the problem still persisting in the 21st century (Katzner, 2010).

The Guaraní indigenous people occupied various territories in Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, and Uruguay by the late 16th century (Nimuendajú, 1981). The Guaraní are migrants from the plains of Paraguay and Brazil, who first conquered and colonized the Argentine mesopotamia and then expanded in the 16th century to northern Argentina and southern Bolivia (Saignes,

2007; Bonomo, 2015). In Argentina, they occupied lands in the current provinces of Salta, Jujuy, Misiones, Formosa, Chaco, Corrientes, Entre Ríos, and Buenos Aires in the 16th century, according to evidence from archaeological sites attributed to the Guarani (Noelli, 2004) and chronicles of the Spaniards who accompanied the Guarani in their incursions into the Inca Empire (Nordenskiöld, 1917).

Unlike the community of Amaicha in the province of Tucumán, the Guarani do not have formal documents endorsing the possession of their lands. In the 21st century, different Guarani communities, despite occupying the same areas in the mesopotamia and northwest of Argentina as in the 16th century, now do so in much more restricted territories, marked and subject to dispossession by various public and private entities. Being an interstate nation covering three different countries and being geographically distributed over large territories of northern and eastern Argentina (<https://guarani.map.as>), their territorial claims are diluted in front of the authorities of eight or more provinces, private forestry companies, sugar mills, and the national government.

We can say that the dispossession of indigenous territories occurred due to a combination of factors, including the great mortality resulting from wars and diseases that caused large territories to remain involuntarily unoccupied; the conflict between the Spanish system and the indigenous one over land ownership, where there was a transition from a subsistence economy, which ignored the concepts of private property, market, and currency, operating in isolation from the world, to a strongly planned colonial economy that was part of the Spanish empire; the forcible subjection of the indigenous people to Spanish laws, where initially the monarch recognized the indigenous people as free vassals with property rights in exchange for them tributing to him, but later there was a lack of compliance with Royal edicts by the Spaniards in America.

This set of causes led to the almost total dispossession of the assets of indigenous people, the conversion of collective and ancestral lands into private property of their colonial masters, and the conversion of communal work into poorly paid or simply unpaid servile obligations (Glave, 2009; Madrazo, 1994; Green, 2020; Escobar, 2013). In contrast to the previously analyzed breaches in this section, the lack of recognition of territories for indigenous people contributed to generating the two types of contempt that we analyze in this work. On the one hand, the conquerors did not recognize the authority of the King that obliged them to cede lands to the indigenous people, and on the other hand, the indigenous people learned not to recognize the authority of the Spaniard who did not respect the Royal Edicts and deprived them of their territories. These types of non-compliance spread through generations and remain valid in the 21st century. The first, with the ongoing and gradual territorial dispossession of indigenous peoples (www.territoriosindigenas.com.ar), and the second expressed in the greater non-compliance with laws in areas where the Amerindian and admixed population is higher, as described in another paper.

- Logical analysis

A4: The decrees ordering the respect of indigenous lands were not obeyed by the Spaniards in America.

B4: Violators of the decrees did not and do not face significant punishments.

3.2.5. Obligation of Good Treatment to Indigenous Peoples

In 1512, the Royal Ordinances for the Good Rule and Treatment of the Indians, also known as the Laws of the Indies, were enacted in Spain. These laws expressed that the treatment of the native population should be with 'love and tenderness as much as possible,' in contrast to the

'rigor and harshness' with which black slaves were treated. The Laws of the Indies are considered by some as the beginning of the recognition of Human Rights and International Law (Monje Santillana, 2009) and by others, they were designed for 'total subjugation' (Pizarro Zelaya, 2013).

The reality is that in America, these ordinances were not respected. Seeking to maintain control and prevent abuses, the Crown issues the Ordinances of Granada in 1526, which require each expedition to be accompanied by religious figures. It is again stated '...that the Indians be well treated and favored and that no force or harm be inflicted upon them, nor should they be robbed or mistreated...' (Sánchez-Pedreño, 2004, p. 337).

The mistreatment continued, so in 1542, the "New Laws" were issued, definitively regulating the relations between Indians and Spaniards. Indians were supposed to be treated as free individuals and subjects of the Crown.

Paradoxically, these laws prohibited taking natives as slaves but simultaneously obligated indigenous people to 'personal service,' which, in practice, was a disguised form of slavery. When non-compliance was detected by control authorities, the rulings favored the accuser, the judge, the church, and the Crown, never benefiting the indigenous people, who received at most the benefit of being transferred to another encomendero (Mueses, 2016).

Genetic mixing over the centuries did not prevent the mistreatment from the lighter-skinned individuals towards the darker-skinned ones, as explained in other paper of ours in pigmentocracy section.

In the 20th century, both pure indigenous people such as the Tobas, Wichí, Chorote, and Pilagás, as well as Creole peons and sugar cane workers, were exploited and mistreated in the sugar mills of northern Argentina (Campi, 2009; Weinberg, 2017; Fernández de Ullivarri, 2017).

The previous paragraphs serve to justify the two types of contempt, both for the authority of the Royal Crown and for the authority of the white population, both transformed into a general feeling of contempt for authority and reflected in the non-compliance with laws issued by authority.

- Logical analysis

A5: The decrees ordering the good treatment of indigenous people were not obeyed by the Spaniards in America.

B5: Violators of the decrees did not face significant punishments.

C5: Mistreatment of indigenous people continues into the 20th century.

4. Results

4.1. Proof of the Hypthesis

All the information analyzed in this work can be condensed into a set of factual statements that will serve us to demonstrate our first hypotheses about the contempt for authority. The statements are validated from the point of view of propositional logic.

4.2. Logic Statements Analysis

Table 1.

Logic statements analysis

Logic operation	Result
$E1 \wedge K2 \wedge B3 \wedge B4 \wedge B5 \rightarrow A7$	The violations of the Royal decrees did not have significant punishments
$A0 \wedge A7 \rightarrow B7$	The inefficient communication between Spain and America facilitated non-compliance with the Royal decrees.
$D1 \wedge H2 \wedge I2 \wedge C5 \wedge P1 \rightarrow C7$	The toxic behaviors were transmitted across generations
$B3 \wedge B4 \wedge B5 \wedge C5 \wedge P3 \wedge C7 \rightarrow D7$	The violations of the Royal decrees regarding indigenous people cemented pigmentocracy in Argentina.
$A7 \wedge C7 \rightarrow E7$	The absence of punishments cemented toxic social behaviors across generations, giving rise to the current contempt for authority.

All premises among A7 and E7 have their respective historical, psychological, and sociological foundations, stated in the corresponding sections of this work.

4.3. Corollary

From the set of premises, it can be deduced that the absence of significant punishments resulted in a social custom, the contempt for the authority of the Crown. This contempt manifested in practice through non-compliance with the Royal decrees, a custom passed down through generations, evolving into contempt for laws and regulations issued by any authority.

However, it is necessary to take into account that pigmentocracy has blurred ethnic and ethical boundaries, causing toxic social customs to become widespread and affect society as a whole, in a gradient between indigenous communities and those considered "white" at the other extreme. Furthermore, non-compliance with laws and regulations is also a widespread social behavior in Argentine society due to pigmentocracy (Felice and Ruiz, 2024).

Thus, the proposed hypothesis that *the contempt of the Spanish in America for the authority of the Spanish Crown is a primary causal factor of political instability in Argentina*, is factually demonstrated.

5. Discussion

People comply with the law for different reasons. Because they perceive the risk of a sanction, because their internal morals prevent them from violating the law, or because they trust those who are supposed to enforce the law (Jackson, 2012). In our analysis, we observe that Argentine citizens do not feel obligated to comply with the law, do not adhere to it morally, nor accept the authorities responsible for enforcing it, and they do not receive significant punishments when they break the laws. These socially toxic behaviors originated in the lack of initial control and the absence of effective punishments for the Spanish conquerors and colonizers.

This behaviors were transmitted through generations and dispersed within society due to the profound genetic and cultural admixture that diluted the ethical and ethnic boundaries among its inhabitants. Currently, this contempt for authority is a social custom expressed through non-compliance with the laws and regulations issued by any authority.

In a country, political stability is key to achieving economic growth. One of the most important factors for achieving stability is the rule of law because it makes a country strong and

flourishing (Li, 2017; Baklouti, 2020). When this factor is weak or nonexistent, as in Argentina, there is great tolerance for corruption and permanent economic crises and political instability (Roich, 2017).

In Figure 3, a schematic representation shows how breaches evolved over time, indicating how some persist while others gradually diminish, and how pigmentocracy appears.

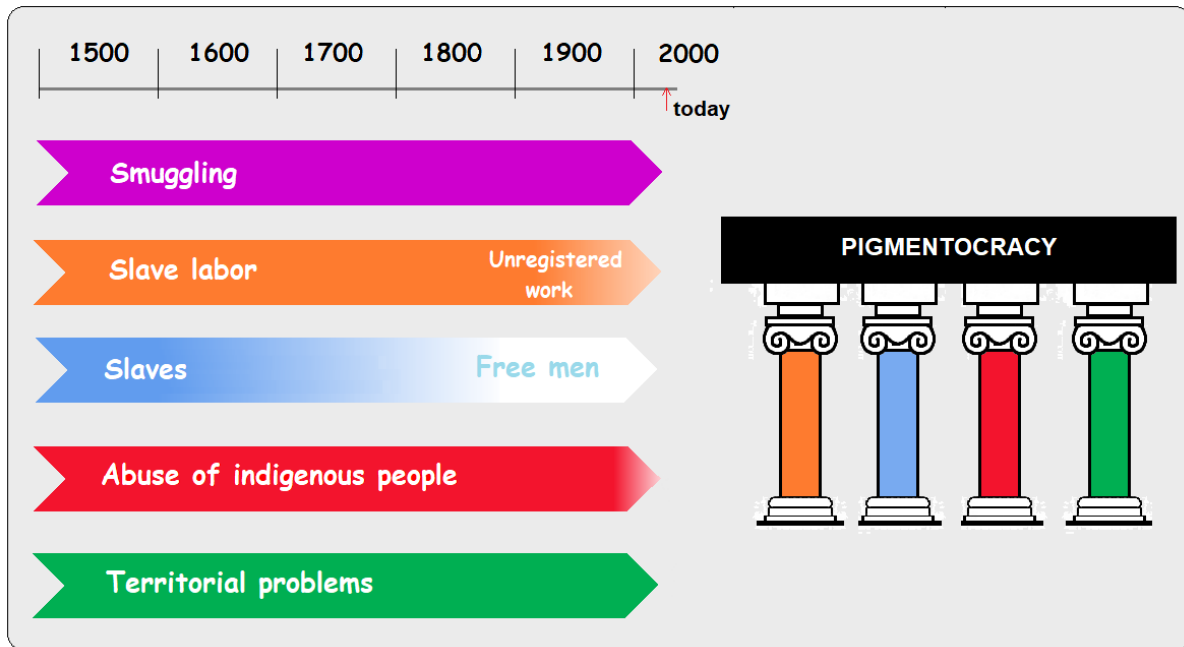


Figure 3. Left: Timeline of breaches. In violet, smuggling; in orange, slave labor and unregistered labor; in light blue, slaves or free men; in red, abuse of indigenous people; and in green, territorial issues. Right: How Toxic Social Customs of the Spanish in America Cemented Pigmentocracy

In Figure 3 on the left, smuggling continues to be a problem in the 21st century, slave labor transformed into unregistered labor, slavery was legally abolished in the 19th century but its practical extinction ended in the mid-20th century. The mistreatment of indigenous people only began to decrease at the end of the 20th century with a greater social awareness of the problem, and territorial issues have remained unchanged since the beginning of the conquest.

Figure 3 on the right symbolically shows how the persistence over time of the attitudes of the conquerors and colonizers cemented and allowed the establishment of pigmentocracy in Argentina.

All results are viewed from the perspective of the Spanish disregard for Royal decrees from the Crown in Spain in the Americas. The indigenous perspective and their relationship to the contempt for authority and pigmentocracy is analyzed in depth in another publication by our working group.

Taking into account all previous information, it can be said that the proposed hypothesis, which states that *the contempt of the Spanish in America for the authority of the Spanish Crown is a primary causal factor of political instability in Argentina*, was factually demonstrated.

6. Conclusions

This publication, has presented, through the factual analysis of historical, psychological and sociological sources, the origin of *The contempt of the Spanish in America for the authority of the Spanish Crown is a primary causal factor of political instability in Argentina*. Basically,

this particular contempt for authority originates from the absence of significant punishments for non-compliance with laws and regulations. This explanation allows us to understand how the toxic social behaviors of the inhabitants of the Argentine Republic originated.

To establish full causality, it is necessary to demonstrate the proposed hypothesis using statistical methods, in addition to the factual demonstration presented. This involves quantitatively studying non-compliance with laws and regulations, which exceeds the scope of this work.

7. Suggestions for Politicians

Historical information can help understand the toxic social behaviors of Argentinians. In particular, the habit of breaking laws due to the lack of punishments must take into account its specific historical origin. The underlying problem is cultural, not legal, so the solutions should first aim to change customs and habits, instead of creating punitive laws that will not be followed.

8. Limitations of the Work

Throughout, an effort was made to avoid ideological polarization or bias in the collection and analysis of historical information, but there may be some cultural bias in our interpretation of the accumulated data.

In our analysis, we did not consider the positive aspects of the Spanish conquest and colonization, such as the introduction of new plant species, new technologies, or the influence on architecture and the arts in general. This is because our focus was on understanding the origin of toxic social behaviors, rather than analyzing all the influences of Spain in the Americas.

Additionally, our analysis is also limited by pigmentocracy, which blurs the ethical and ethnic boundaries, making it difficult to define who breaks the laws.

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Supplementary material

All material is either [here](#) or in the QR code below:

S1 Time delay: Typical letters and documents showing the delays of communications between America and Spain.

S2 Colonial Burocracy: The complex and centralized colonial bureaucracy generated contempt for the authority.



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