

INCA COSMOLOGY AND THE HUMAN BODY

by

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February, 1990

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

In the Inca Empire, the human body served as a symbol and mediator of cosmic structures and processes through its own structures and processes. The structures of the body with cosmological relevance included the duality of right and left and the integrated unity of the body as a whole, while the processes of the body included reproduction, illness and sensory perception. Inca myths and rituals both expressed and enacted this corporeal and cosmic order.

With the arrival of the Spanish, the Incas were confronted with a radically different image of the body and the cosmos. The clash between the Spanish and Inca orders was experienced by the Incas as a disordering of the human and cosmic bodies. While the Spanish Conquest destroyed the Inca empire and imposed a new culture on its former inhabitants, however, many of the principles which ordered and interrelated the body and the cosmos in Inca cosmology have survived in the Andes to the present day.

RESUME

Dans l'empire Inca, le corps humaine servait de symbole et de mediateur des structures et processus cosmiques à travers ses propres structures et processus. Les structures du corps, de pertinence cosmologique, incluent la dualité de la droite et de la gauche et l'intégrité du corps uni, pendant que les processus du corps incluent la reproduction, les maladies et la perception sensorielle.

Les mythes et les rites Incas ont tout deux exprimé et accomplit cet ordre corporel et cosmologique. Avec l'arrivée des Espagnols, les Incas furent confronter avec une image du corps et du cosmos qui été radicalement differente de la leurs. La contrariété entre les ordres espanols et Incas fût éprouver par les Incas comme un desorde des corps humaines et cosmiques.

Bien que la conquête espagnol detruisait l'empire Inca el lui imposait une culture nouvelle, plusieurs principes qui ont ordonner et étroitement lié le corps et le cosmos dans la cosmologie Inca, ont survécus dans les Andes jusqu'a ce jour.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was subsidized by doctoral fellowships from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Fonds pour la Formation de Chercheurs et l'Aide a la Recherche. I wish to express my gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Gregory Baum, for his support, and to Henrique Urbano for his assistance with my research on the Incas. My special thanks to David Howes, who shared with me his expertise on the anthropology of the body and the senses and provided me with an inexhaustible supply of encouragement and advice, and to my mother, who supported my work in so many ways.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Incas

The Incas began as one people among many in the highlands of the Central Andes. By the early sixteenth century, however, after a period of conquest of about four centuries, they had built up an empire extending over 4,300 kilometres along the Andes from present-day southern Colombia to northern Chile and Argentina, and encompassing a population of approximately ten million.

The Inca Empire, called Tahuantinsuyu (Four Quarters), was divided into four regions, each one of which was supervised by an imperial governor and a descending series of officials down to the level of the ayllu, a kin group holding land in common. At the head of the empire was the Inca (literally 'lord') who was held to be divine. Underneath him were the Incas in general (his blood relations), the Incas by privilege (the petty nobility), the imperial administrators and local leaders, and the common people.

The Inca ruled from the capital city of Cuzco (in present-day Peru), the administrative and cultural center of Tahuantinsuyu. The sons of local leaders from throughout the empire were sent to Cuzco to be schooled in Quechua - the official language of the empire - and Inca traditions and skills, including the use of the quipu, a mnemonic device based on knotted strings. The Incas had no writing, but kept extensive data, from traditions to statistics, stored on quipus.

The Inca state was based on agriculture, with herding of llamas and alpacas playing a secondary role. The principal crops were corn and potatoes. These were extensively cultivated through a well-planned system of terraces and irrigation canals. A portion of the harvest was kept each year in storehouses in case of necessity.

The Incas were able to control their vast territory in part by extending the deeply ingrained Andean practice of reciprocity of goods and services among individuals and communities throughout the empire. Each ayllu farmed a portion of its land for for the state and the state religion, as well as contributing men for tours of duty in the army and state projects, and women for distribution as wives or temple attendants. In return, the state provided a measure of peace and order, public works, protection against famine, and a religious system.

The worship of the Sun, the patron deity of Tahuantinsuyu, and of the Inca, reputedly the son of the Sun, was incumbent on the subject peoples of the empire. As long as they fulfilled their obligations with regard to the state cult, however, the Inca's subjects were free to retain their local beliefs. In turn, the Incas often incorporated elements of the cults of the peoples they conquered into their own religion. In fact, Inca religion, like Inca government, was developed from long-standing Andean traditions. As in the latter, the major foci of worship were the ancestors and aspects of the natural world - the Sun, Thunder, the Earth - and the major rituals were based on the agricultural cycle and the human life cycle.

The hierarchy of priests was ordered similarly to the administrative hierarchy, with a high priest (always a close male relative of the Inca) in Cuzco and a descending order of priests under him. The duties of these priests included caring for the temples, officiating ceremonies, divining, and hearing confessions. Women could also hold certain sacerdotal positions: the cult of the Moon, the female counterpart of the Sun, for example, was entirely officiated by women. As well, girls were chosen from throughout the empire to serve as cloistered "wives of the Sun".

In 1525 the half-brothers Huascar and Atahualpa, sons of the late Inca, began a bitter battle for control of the

empire. Atahualpa won the contest in 1532 and assumed the position of Inca. It was at this point that the Spaniard Francisco Pizarro entered Tahuantinsuyu with a force of about 180 troops and, through a ruse, captured the Inca. Atahualpa was tried and executed by the Spanish after they had already collected an enormous ransom in gold for his release. The Spanish then proceeded to take control of the empire, and in 1572 Inca resistance ended with the execution of the last pretender to the Inca throne.

Many hypotheses have been put forth to explain how such a small force was able to take over such a large and well-organized empire, including the superior technology of the Spanish, the devastated state of the empire after the civil war, the presence of dissatisfied Inca subjects who were only too ready to aid the Spanish to overthrow their oppressors, and the initial Andean perception of the Europeans as divine. The most important factor, however, was probably the inability of the body of Tahuantinsuyu to act on its own once its head, the Inca, was captured. The social structure which had worked so well to integrate the empire into a hierarchical whole, left the Inca's subjects unequipped to deal with the unpredictable audacity of the Spanish.

In The Last of the Incas, Edward Hyams and George

Ordish write:

The Incas were supremely and perhaps uniquely successful in creating a social and political state to a perfectly

comprehensible and quite simple pattern, a vast empire-wide dance-figure in which every man, woman and child had a place and knew just what steps and motions to perform in order to maintain the pattern and rhythm of the whole.... But when the Spaniards burst into Tahuantinsuyu they shattered this pattern, they scattered the dancers and broke up the figure. Millions of men and women who had existed only, so to speak, as parts of a great pattern, suddenly found themselves individuals; they did not know how to be individuals and the very nature of their land told them it was a futile thing to be in any case. The great dance had been their reality; they awoke into the nightmare of chaos; they live in it now; so do we.¹

The Thesis

The subject of this thesis is how cosmology and the human body were interrelated by the Incas,² and how the Spanish Conquest was perceived by them according to the symbolic system derived from this interrelationship. In the Andes the body served as a symbol and mediator of cosmic structures and processes through its own structures and processes. The structures of the body with cosmological relevance included the duality of male and female, right and left sides, upper and lower halves, and the integrated unity of the body as a whole. The processes of the body included

¹(London: Longmans, 1963), p. 249. Of course, for those subjects who were discontent with Inca rule, participation in this imperial "dance" was by no means voluntary.

²The term "Incas" will be used to refer to the ruling class of Tahuantinsuyu until the end of organized resistance in the late sixteenth century, and the term "Andeans" to refer to the people of the Central and Southern Andes in general, before and after the Conquest.

physiological functions such as reproduction and illness, and social functions such as speech and dance.

This division between 'physiological' and 'social' is, of course, to a certain extent artificial, for as Marcel Mauss observed in his landmark essay "Body Techniques," social conditioning extends to some of our most basic physiological functions, such as sleeping and eating.³ In fact, it could be asserted that all body processes which are accessible to mediation by culture, are so mediated.

In the last twenty years or so major works have been written on the sociology and anthropology of the body.⁴ Two of the most important and influential are Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology by Mary Douglas⁵ and The Body and Society by Bryan Turner.⁶ This thesis, however, does not deal specifically with the body as a functional symbol for

³in Sociology and Psychology Essays: 97-123, trans. B. Brewster (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979).

⁴i.e. John Blacking, ed., The Anthropology of the Body (London: Academic Press, 1977). A history of social scientific approaches to the body and a bibliography of works in the field is provided by J.M. Berthelot and M. Drulhe, eds. in "Les Sociologies et le Corps," Current Sociology 33:2 (Summer, 1985), pp. 1-200. Two articles worthy of mention are "Thinking Through the Body: An Essay on Understanding Metaphor," Michael Jackson, Social Analysis, 14 (December, 1983)pp. 127-149, and "The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology," Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Margaret Lock, Medical Anthropology Quarterly NS, 1:1 (March 1987)pp. 6-41.

⁵(New York: Pantheon, 1970).

⁶(Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984)

society, as does Douglas, nor with the socioeconomic regulation of bodies, as does Turner, but rather with the cosmological significance of the human body as expressed through Inca myth and ritual. (Nonetheless, it should be kept in mind that the cosmological system of the Incas was part and parcel of their socio-political system.)

The study presented here, therefore, deals primarily with the role of the body in Inca religion and, while it draws on the insights provided by work done on the body and on religion in the social sciences, it is undertaken within the field of religious studies. In this it is something of an anomaly. The study of the religions of non-literate peoples has traditionally fallen to anthropologists, while students of religion have concentrated on those religions with texts.⁷ In recent years many anthropologists have moved into the study of the religions of literate peoples, however, there has not been a corresponding movement by scholars of religion into the study of the traditions of oral peoples. In Native American Religious Action: A Performance Theory, Sam Gill writes:

I have been confounded by why students of religion have so willingly neglected the study of Native American religions and, more widely, the religions of non-literate, or as I now prefer to say, "exclusively oral" peoples the world over. The material for the study of the religion of these peoples is rich, extensive, and

⁷For a discussion and criticism of this schism see Brian Morris, Anthropological Studies of Religion: An Introductory Text, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

available. The important academic issues and problems to be dealt with are seemingly endless.... Yet despite the extensive records and current opportunities for study, despite the continuing important work of Americanist studies, despite the interest in Native American religious systems maintained by other fields of study, despite even the widespread popular interest in the area which brings students into the classroom, the interpretative study of Native American religions has been virtually ignored by the modern academic study of religion.⁸

It is my hope that the work I have undertaken here will not only contribute to the field of the anthropology of the body, but also help to extend the study of religions to encompass the religions of oral cultures.

A topic which is not usually treated in anthropologies of the body, but will receive special attention here, is that of sensory perception. Our knowledge of the world comes to us primarily through our senses, and the value we assign to our different senses has a profound influence on the way we understand the world. In The Presence of the Word Walter Ong goes so far as to say that "given sufficient knowledge of the sensorium exploited within a specific culture, one could probably define the culture as a whole in virtually all its aspects."⁹ That is, a society in which sight is stressed, such as our own, will tend to display a separation of subject and object, a concern with structuring the world into categories and an emphasis on surfaces and

⁸(Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), p. 5.

⁹(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 6.

outward appearance. An oral-aural culture, on the other hand, will give priority to events surrounding one, rather than objects in front of one; to bridging, rather than separating, interiors and exteriors, and to maintaining close social bonds.¹⁰

Ong holds that we would gain a truer understanding of other societies if we allowed that their understanding of the world might very well not fit into our visualist paradigm.¹¹ This point is eloquently illustrated by Steven Feld in "Sound as a Symbolic System: The Kaluli Drum," in which he describes how Papuan drums, which derive their essential meaning from their sounds for the people who use them, are reduced to a mere visual exhibit in Western museums.¹² Similarly, many Inca and Andean artefacts which were meant to be employed in dynamic and multi-sensory contexts are transformed into static objects of sight on entering our culture.¹³

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 111-138, passim.

¹¹"World as View and World as Event," American Anthropologist 71 (1969), p. 636.

¹²In Explorations in Ethnomusicology: Essays in Honor of D.P. McAllester, ed. C. Frisbie (Detroit: Detroit Monographs in Musicology, 9, 1986), p. 147.

¹³This process is often reversed when artefacts from our culture enter other sensory orders. In A Musical View of the Universe, for instance, Ellen Basso relates that her glasses were understood by a member of the "ear-minded" Kalapalo tribe of central Brazil, not in terms of their visual function, but in terms of the sound they made on being put on: "nnguuruk". (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1985).

The way to correct for our tendency to perceive other cultures through our own sensory model is to attempt to understand them through their sensory models. A start in this direction is evidenced in the work of many of the anthropologists of the 1950's and 60's.¹⁴ Claude Lévi-Strauss's analysis of the sensory codes in myths¹⁵, for example, could have provided a basis for proceeding to the analysis of the sensory codes of whole cultures. In its preoccupation with hermeneutics, however, contemporary anthropology has instead tended to increase the visual bias contained in our perception of other cultures.¹⁶

If religionists have concentrated on the study of sacred texts, many anthropologists have come to interpret culture itself as a "text". This trend can be traced to Clifford Geertz's work The Interpretation of Cultures, in which he describes culture as an "ensemble of texts... which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of

¹⁴David Howes, "The Shifting Sensorium: A Critique of the Textual Revolution in Anthropological Theory." Paper presented at the 12th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Zagreb, Yugoslavia, July 26, 1988.

¹⁵i.e. The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology: I, trans. J. and D. Weightman (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 147-163.

¹⁶Our extreme visualism can also lead us to distort our perception of our own culture by leading us to downplay the role other senses have had in our cultural development. See, for example, Alain Corbin, The Foul and the Fragrant: Odour and the French Social Imagination, trans. M. Kochan, R. Porter, and C. Prendergast (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 1988).

those to whom they properly belong."¹⁷ The drawback to such an approach, which can be very informative in many respects, is not only that it reduces the multi-sensory dimensions of a culture to a flat, visual surface, but that it turns dynamic, interactive events into static, passive texts, which need only be properly interpreted by the ethnographer to be understood.

There are a number of anthropologists who have criticized the dominance of the visual in contemporary anthropology and have argued for the development of an "anthropology of the senses".¹⁸ In "The Shifting Sensorium: A Critique of the Textual Revolution in Anthropological Theory" David Howes writes:

The ethnographer who allows his or her experience of some foreign culture to be mediated by the model of the text will have no difficulty in coming to think of the natives as enacting a particular "interpretation" of the world in their ritual and other activities. But it would be more accurate to regard them as sensing the world. What is involved in "sensing the world" is experiencing the cosmos through the mold of a particular sense ratio and at the same time making sense of that experience.¹⁹

¹⁷(New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 452.

¹⁸i.e. Howes, "The Shifting Sensorium" and "Controlling Textuality: A Call for a Return to the Senses" Anthropologica 90:1 (forthcoming); Anthony Seeger, Nature and Society in Central Brazil: The Suva Indians of Mato Grosso, (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1981); Paul Stoller, The Taste of Ethnographic Things: The Senses in Anthropology, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989).

¹⁹p. 9.

In their myths and rituals the Incas manifest a distinctive way of sensing the world which is intrinsic to their cosmology. On one level, in fact, the combat between the Spanish and the Incas was one of two different sensory orders. This is particularly evident in the struggle for supremacy between the Spanish and indigenous belief systems. An early seventeenth-century chronicle tells the story of an Andean caught between Christianity and his native religion. After the Andean has been converted to Christianity, his clan deity tries to reassert its dominance over his senses by blinding him with light and making his ears ring. The Andean, however, proclaims his faith in the new order and the native deity loses the battle for control.²⁰

Another Christian Andean of the same period makes it clear in a model prayer he composes for his fellow Andeans that Christianity is inseparable from a "Christian" sensory order:

May Jesus Christ be in my eyes and in my sight.
Cross.

May Jesus Christ be in my ears and in my hearing...
Cross.

May Jesus Christ be in my nose and in my olfaction.
Cross.

May Jesus Christ be in my mouth, on my tongue, in all my words, in what I eat and what I drink. Cross.²¹

²⁰George Urioste, ed., Hijos de Pariya Qaqa: la tradición oral de Waru Chiri [c1608] (Syracuse, New York: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, 1983), vol. 2, pp. 161-171.

²¹Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala. El Primer Nueva Corónica y buen gobierno [c1613], ed. J. Murra and R. Adorno (Mexico: Siglo Veintiuno, 1980), vol. 2, p. 781.

Formerly Inca myths and rituals attempted to order the sensorium of the Andeans. From the Conquest on the task was assumed by Spanish Catholicism.²²

The primary source for the material presented here is the large body of sixteenth and seventeenth century chronicles dealing with the Andean civilization. Naturally, these works are influenced by the world views and motives of their authors, nonetheless, they provide invaluable information on Inca traditions and institutions during a period when many of these were still extant and memories of the pre-Conquest era still fresh. The majority of these chronicles were written by Spaniards, many of whom were careful and dedicated Andean scholars; however, a few were written or related by native Andeans. Of particular importance among these last is the extensive illustrated chronicle produced by the Andean Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala which was only rediscovered in 1908.²³

²²Some interesting work has been done on the role of sensory perception in different religious traditions. For example:

David Shane Chidester, "Word and Light: Perception and Symbolic Forms in the Augustinian Tradition" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1981).

Diana Eck, Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India, (Chambersburg, Penn.: Anima Books, 1985, rev. 2d ed.).

C. Mackenzie Brown, "Purana as Scripture: From Sound to Image of the Holy Word in Hindu Tradition" History of Religions 26:1 (August, 1988): 68-86.

Margaret Miles, Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985).

²³El Primer Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno.

As Cuzco was the capital of the Inca empire, and as most of the information gathered by the chroniclers came from the Cuzco region, that will be the area focused on here, although data from other regions of the Andes will also be utilized when relevant. The period covered is basically from immediately prior to the Conquest until the end of Inca resistance in the late sixteenth century.

The end of Inca resistance, however, by no means signified the end of Andean culture. Despite the social and technological changes occasioned by the Conquest and the intense and oppressive campaign by the Catholic Church to extirpate the indigenous religion, the fundamentals of Andean culture and cosmology have continued to survive throughout the Andes, particularly in the more isolated regions, to the present day. This continuity of tradition makes it possible to use data gathered from contemporary Andean communities to shed light on pre-Conquest beliefs and practices and, at the same time, makes the subject of Inca and Andean culture a matter not only of historical interest, but of current concern.

The analysis which will be presented here is inserted within the contemporary movement in Andean studies to understand Inca and Andean culture through indigenous structures rather than through Western paradigms as it has

traditionally been.²⁴ Such a shift in perspective makes it possible to interpret the body of data on Inca myths and rituals in completely new ways and for a more authentically Andean world view to emerge.

There is a tendency among some contemporary Andean scholars, particularly those interested in "sifting" history from myth, however, to regard as "false" those Inca myths not compatible with assumed historical fact.²⁵ This thesis is not concerned with such dichotomies; it is not an attempt at historical reconstruction but rather an examination of ideology. Accordingly, it is not of primary importance, for instance, whether the literacy of the Spanish was a major factor in the Conquest, but that the Andeans perceived it as being so.²⁶

There are a number of excellent studies on contemporary Andean cosmology and ritual and these will be used to

²⁴This movement was inaugurated by R.T. Zuidema with his work The Ceque System of Cuzco (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964) which challenged the traditional Western linear ordering of the Inca dynastic succession.

²⁵For example, in Religion and Empire, Geoffrey Conrad and Arthur Demarest state that archaeology "belies" the claim of the Incas to have originated in the Titicaca Basin of the Southern Andes. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 95. On one level this is similar to saying that archaeology belies the claim of Christians to have originated in the Garden of Eden.

²⁶As in the Andean myth given by Alejandro Ortiz Rescaniere, "El mito de la escuela" in Ideología mesiánica del mundo andino, ed. J. Ossio (Lima: Colección Biblioteca de Antropología, 1972), pp. 238-243.

supplement the material found in the Conquest chronicles and link it to the present day. Of greatest relevance to the topic explored here is the award-winning research done by Joseph Bastien on theories of religion and the human body among the Qollahuaya Indians of the Bolivian Andes. Bastien's work makes plain the central role of the body in the cosmology of the Qollahuayas, who exercise their influence throughout the Central Andes as travelling medicine men.²⁷

Little extensive work has been done on the role of the senses in Andean culture; however, some recent studies in the field show an interest in the topic.²⁸ Of particular interest is Veronica Cereceda's thought-provoking analysis of Andean esthetics.²⁹ With regard to the Inca and colonial periods, R.T. Zuidema has examined the role of sensory

²⁷Mountain of the Condor: Metaphor and Ritual in an Andean Ayllu, (St. Paul, Minn.: West, 1978).

Healers of the Andes, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987).

²⁸i.e. Charlene and Ralph Bolton, "Rites of Retribution and Restoration in Canchis," Journal of Latin American Lore 2:1 (1976), pp. 97-114.

Douglas Sharon, Wizard of the Four Winds: A Shaman's Story (New York: Free Press, 1978).

Donald Joralemon, "The Role of Hallucinogenic Drugs and Sensory Stimuli in Peruvian Ritual Healing," Culture, Medicine and Pyschiatry, 8 (1984), pp. 399-430.

²⁹"Aproximaciones a una estética andina: de la belleza al tinku," in Tres reflexiones sobre el pensamiento andino, ed. J. Medina (La Paz: Hisbol, 1987), pp. 133-231.

perception in certain Inca rituals³⁰, and scholars such as Rolena Adorno³¹, Mercedes Lopez-Baralt³² and Regina Harrison³³ have looked at the sensory, and particularly visual, symbolism in the drawings and writings of the native Andean chroniclers. Finally, Billie Jean Isbell³⁴ and Lawrence Sullivan³⁵ have made comparative studies of the metaphorical role played by the senses in various South America cultures, including that of the Andes.

This thesis is meant to complement and expand on the work done by these authors by looking at what the corpus of Andean material has to say about the interplay of cosmology and the human body and exploring how this may be worked into

³⁰ i.e. "Masks in the Incaic Solstice and Equinoctial Rituals," in The Power of Symbols: Masks and Masquerade in the Americas: 149-156, ed. N.R. Crumrine and M. Halpin (Vancouver: University of British Colombia Press, 1983), pp. 149-156.

³¹ i.e. Guaman Poma: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).

³² "La persistencia de las estructuras simbólicas andinas en los dibujos de Guaman Poma de Ayala," Journal of Latin American Lore, 5:1 (1979), pp. 83-116.

³³ "Modes of Discourse: The Relación de Antigüedades deste Reyno del Pirú by Joan de Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua" in From Oral to Written Expression: Native Andean Chronicles of the Early Colonial Period, ed. R. Adorno (Syracuse, N.Y.: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, 1982), pp. 65-99.

³⁴ "The Metaphoric Process: 'From Culture to Nature and Back Again'," in Animal Myths and Metaphors in South America: 285-313, ed. G. Urton (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985).

³⁵ "Sound and Senses: Toward a Hermeneutics of Performance," History of Religions, 26:1 (1986), 1-33.

a general scheme. It does not by any means pretend to be an exhaustive or conclusive study of the subject. Its aim is rather, to present certain interpretations based on the available data and to suggest fruitful areas for further research - specifically among the peoples of the Andes, who undoubtedly have much more to offer in this regard than has hitherto been attended to, but also in any culture accessible to a similar analysis.

The use of the human body as a cosmological symbol is a world-wide phenomenon, as has been documented in a multitude of studies,³⁶ and a basic part of our own Western heritage.³⁷ An examination of the Incas' comprehensive and involved use of such symbolism can provide a model for understanding and comparing similar symbolic systems in other societies, as well as a counterpart to the symbolic ordering of the body in modern urban culture.

In The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other Tzvetan Todorov writes:

³⁶Alfredo López Austin, for example, has examined how the Nahua Indians of Mexico conceived of the human body. Although his work deals more with Nahua concepts of the constitution and functioning of the human body, and the social consequences of those concepts, than with the cosmological role of the body, it nonetheless provides an interesting comparison with the analysis of Inca cosmology and the body undertaken here. The Human Body and Ideology: Concepts of the Ancient Nahuas, 2 vols, trans. T. and M. Ortiz de Montellano (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988).

³⁷See, for instance, Leonard Barkan, Nature's Work of Art: The Human Body as Image of the World, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1975).

The discovery of America, or of the Americans, is certainly the most astonishing encounter of our history. We do not have the same sense of radical difference in the 'discovery' of other continents and of other peoples.³⁸

This thesis presents both an alternative to the Western world view in the cosmology of the American 'other', and a look at how that world view was perceived through the eyes of the people it conquered and marginalized.

³⁸trans. R. Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

II. COSMOLOGY

Equilibrium and Exchange

For the inhabitants of the austere Andean region to survive and prosper, they had to both maintain a careful equilibrium between themselves and their environment and establish a system of exchange among communities living at different altitudes with access to different resources.¹ This concern for equilibrium and exchange was also manifested in Andean cosmology, as elaborated in the myths and rituals of the Incas and in contemporary Andean religion. Billie Jean Isbell says of the Andeans of Chuschi Peru: "One of their principal concerns is to maintain equilibrium and order in a world in which dual forces are balanced against one another."² Enrique Oblitas Poblete writes that the Callahuaya (or Qollahuaya) Indians

¹John Murra discusses this system of exchange in "El 'control vertical' de un máximo de pisos ecológicos en la economía de las sociedades andinas" in Visita de la Provincia de León de Huánuco, Inigo Ortiz de Zúñiga, I, pp. 383-406 (Huánuco, Peru: Universidad Hermilio Valdizan, 1972).

²To Defend Ourselves: Ecology and Ritual in an Andean Village (Austin, Texas: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas Press, 1978), p. 203.

of the Bolivian Andes conceive of the universe as held in balance by the opposing forces of existence and non-existence (mana cajmanta caj), one which strives for the stability of matter and the other for its disintegration.³

These forces, which can alternately be seen as structure and fluidity, clarity and obscurity, fertilizing and fecund, should not be equated with good and evil, although they can be understood as such in certain contexts, for each is necessary to complement and counterbalance the other.⁴ A Bolivian miner expresses this in one instance as follows:

We think of the moon as the force that generates cold. If only the moon existed, we would all die, frozen by the cold. Well, if only the sun existed, and not the moon, who knows but what we would all die, burned to a crisp. And so there is this belief that these two worlds give us an equal temperature.⁵

³Cultura Callawaya (La Paz: Talleres Gráficos Bolivianos, 1963), p. 50.

⁴For example, in the Andean world view the left side is usually thought of as inauspicious and the right side auspicious, however, both sides are necessary for a complete body. Evil, in the Western sense, on the other hand, far from being a necessary element of wholeness, or "holiness," detracts from it.

⁵June Nash, We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us: Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 124.

Bernard Mishkin writes of a community in the Peruvian Andes:

Against 'frost,' bonfires are started in the fields. However, it should be noted that many Indians consider the bonfire (cconuy) as a means of engaging the 'frost' in physical combat and not of protecting the plants by raising the temperature in the vicinity.

"The Contemporary Quechua" in Handbook of South American Indians, vol. 2, ed. J.H. Steward, Bureau of American

A mere equilibrium of forces, however, results in a universe which is static. In order to integrate and animate the cosmos a system of exchange is needed. This combination of equilibrium and exchange is expressed by the Quechua word ayni, meaning balance and reciprocity. In the words of one Peruvian Andean, "the whole universe is ayni".⁶ A primary function of Andean religion is to set out the basic divisions of the cosmos, maintain them in harmony, and establish a means of exchange among them. In this endeavour the human body, through its structure and functions, serves both as a model of and for the cosmos, and as a mediator among cosmic forces.

Body Structures

The most basic expressions of Andean dualism - male/female, right/left, high/low, etc. - originate in the structure of the human body.⁷ The concern of Andeans for these bodily oppositions is witnessed in many of their terms

Ethnology Bulletin, 143 (New York: Cooper Square, 1946), p. 425.

⁶John Earls and Irene Silverblatt, "La realidad física y social en la cosmología andina," in Actes du XLIIe Congrès International des Americanistes, vol. 4 (Paris, 1976), p. 309.

⁷Ernst Cassirer writes: "It is eminently the differentiation of the parts of his own body that serves man as a basis for all other spatial specifications" The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, I: Language, trans. R. Mannheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 206.

for body parts. Santo Tomás's Spanish/Quechua dictionary of 1560, for example, gives separate words for the upper lip, cipri, and the lower lip, virpa, and for the upper ear, cotcolli, and the lower ear lluto.⁸

These antonymous expressions tend to be linked with each other as follows: male, right, high, external; and female, left, low, internal. The first set is generally associated with structure, clarity and fertilizing power, and the second with fluidity, obscurity and fecundity. These characteristics are extended to apply to virtually everything in the cosmos. The sun, for example, identified with structure, clarity and fertilizing energy, is traditionally male in Andean thought, while the moon, linked with fluidity, obscurity and fecundity, is female. In Andean drawings the sun is typically placed to the right and the moon to the left (from the perspective of the drawing, not the viewer).

These different contrasts are combined in the following passage, written by a Spaniard in 1585, describing the division of Collasuyu, the southern quarter of Tahuantinsuyu, into two moieties, Urcusuyu and Umasuyu.

[The Urcusuyus] dwell in the mountain highlands, called urcu, and the umasuyus on the flat lowlands beside

⁸Domingo de Santo Tomás, Lexicon o vocabulario de la lengua general del Perú (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1951).

Similar terms are noted in the modern Andes by Louisa Stark, "The Lexical Structure of Quechua Body Parts," Anthropological Linguistics, II (Jan. 1969): 5.

rivers and lakes, called uma in this language [Aymara]. Some say that urcusuyu means a vigorous and manly people because urcu denotes masculinity, and umasuyu, feminine and of less worth. The urcusuyas were always prouder and of better quality and the Inca placed them at his right hand in public places and they were more highly regarded than the umasuyus.⁹

Although male is usually understood as being superior to female, right superior to left, and so on, each is essential to the existence of the other. There can be no body without both right and left sides and no normal adult body is complete without a partner of the opposite sex. The term in Quechua for pairs, such as male and female, or eyes or hands, is yanantin ("helping together"), while chulla is the word for the single half of what should be paired, i.e. chulla Maui, one-eyed.¹⁰ Tristan Platt writes of the Macha Indians of Potosi, Bolivia:

It appears, then, that the human couple is conceived in the same terms as the symmetry of the body.... men and women ought to be yanantin - that is, they should

⁹Luís Capoche, "Relación general de la villa imperial de Potosí" [1585] in Relaciones histórico-literarias de la América meridional, ed. L. Hanke (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Espanoles, vol. 122, 1959), pp. 139-140.

¹⁰Diego de González Holguín, Vocabulario de la lengua general de todo el Perú [1608] (Lima: Imprenta Santa María, 1952).

All definitions of Quechua terms are from this work unless otherwise stated. As there is no standard orthography of Quechua, the spelling of Quechua words often varies from source to source.

partake of that perfect union achieved by the two halves of the human body.¹¹

This concept of the conjugal pair as a fundamental unit is expressed by the term karihuarmi, man-woman.¹² The human body, thus, in itself or paired in complementary opposites, is a basic symbol of wholeness and integrity in the Andes.

To avoid confusion or the appearance of contradictions, it must be stressed that all of these antonymous characteristics are relative to their context. Water, for example, which is generally conceptualized as female, can become male when it is seen as semen fertilizing the earth. The earth, in turn, also generally conceptualized as female, can become male when it represents structure as opposed to the fluidity of water. Even human bodies are not unequivocally one sex or another. The Incas, for instance, would send women's clothes to men they deemed to have failed in their masculine role.¹³ Male and female

¹¹"Mirrors and Maize: The Concept of Yanantin Among the Macha of Bolivia," in Anthropological History of Andean Politics, eds. J. Murra, N. Wachtel and J. Revel. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 245-246.

¹²Olivia Harris writes that while man and woman form an archetypal pair of complementary opposites in the Andes, older and younger brother form an archetypal pair of antagonistic similarity. "Complementarity and Conflict: An Andean View of Women and Men" in Sex and Age as Principles of Social Differentiation, ed. J.S. La Fontaine (London: Academic Press, 1978), p. 36. Many Andean myths and stories, in fact, deal with the struggle between two brothers.

¹³i.e. Joan de Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui, "Relación de antigüedades deste Reyno del Pirú" [1613] in Tres relaciones de antigüedades peruanas, ed. M. Jiménez de la Espada (Asunción, Paraguay: Editorial Guaraní, 1950), p. 268; Guaman

here are cultural constructs and not solely based on physical differences. Bodies acquire their identity in relation to other bodies. Furthermore, while a body, organic or otherwise, as a whole may be considered male or female, it can contain elements associated with the opposite sex. For instance, just as the male human body can have aspects which are associated with femaleness, i.e. the left side, so can the male sky have female elements, i.e. the moon.

The final type of bodily oppositions dealt with here is that of inversions: front/back and right-side up/upside down. In Andean thought the past is situated in front (ñauipa) and the future behind (quepa).¹⁴ (English parallels are the words "before," which means both "in front" and "earlier", and "after," which means spatially behind and temporally ahead.) González Holguín, in his dictionary of 1608, gives the verbs ñauparina - to go in front - and ñaupacchani - to be early-; and qqueparini - to go behind - and qquepachanan - to be late. The noun ñaupaquey means both predecessor and one who is in front. The future, thus, is not something that one can "walk ahead" into, but rather, something that one has to turn oneself around (tikraricuni)

Poma, vol. 1, p. 96.

¹⁴Chapter VI explores how the head of the body can also be understood as representing the past, and the feet the future.

to reach. The Andeans, in fact, called the cataclysmic event they considered to divide one age from the next pachacuti or pachaticra, reversal of time and space.¹⁵

The words for "upright" and "standing" are ticnuni and sayani. The former is related to the words ticci, zenith, and the latter to sayay, height and personal presence. The term sayak sonco (upright heart) means to be firm and constant. Uprightness is therefore symbolic of order and morality. The word for upside down is tiksu, which can also mean "disarranged" and "nadir". To be hung upside down was a common punishment for crime in the Inca empire.¹⁶ Invertedness, therefore, symbolizes disorder and immorality.

It is not only the oppositions of the body which are important in Andean culture, but also the "in between" parts of the body. On the most obvious level, for example, the trunk can be understood as mediating between the head and the lower body; the nose, between the eyes and the mouth. In Quechua, however, we also find terms for the space between the nose and the mouth, the area between the shoulder blades, the furrow between the chest and the

¹⁵Cassirer discusses the close relationship between spatial and temporal terms in many cultures in vol. 1, pp. 215-217.

¹⁶Martin de Murúa, Historia del origen y geneología real de los reyes Incas del Perú [1590] ed. C. Bayle (Madrid: Instituto Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo, 1946), p. 211.

stomach, etc.¹⁷ These areas serve both to divide and to mediate, and the fact that they have separate names demonstrates the importance of in-between spaces and dividing lines for the Andeans.¹⁸

The word for split in relation to body parts, huaca (based on huac - double, other or apart), is, in fact, the same as the word for a holy place or object. This may have to do with the concept of a sacred place as a crack or mediating space between the supernatural and the natural, or else as something which exists on both levels at once and thus is double. In any case, the use of huaca to mean dangerous in the term huaccap ñan, dangerous pass or place, indicates that this liminal zone between categories was a place of hazard for Andeans.

The structure of the human body, of course, is not static but changes throughout life and can be altered by external circumstances, such as disease or mutilation. Nor are all human bodies identical in structure. The Andeans had an ambivalent attitude towards physical abnormalities. On the one hand they were considered the manifestation of a moral defect, or at least, unpropitious. During the most

¹⁷Stark, pp. 5, 10-11.

¹⁸Gary Urton writes that in the Andes constellations are made up not only of stars, but also of the black spaces between stars. At the Crossroads of the Earth and the Sky: An Andean Cosmology. (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981).

important Inca rituals, for example, all persons with physical defects were sent out of the capital.¹⁹ On the other hand, abnormalities were sometimes considered a manifestation of the divine. This was particularly true of duplicated or divided body parts or bodies, i.e. huaca virpa - split lip, huaca runa - person with six fingers, huaca huachasca - twin.²⁰ The reason for this ambivalence is probably that these abnormalities were seen as both a deviation from the sanctified order and a revelation of the transforming power of the divine.²¹

¹⁹Bernabe Cobo, "Historia del Nuevo Mundo" [1653] in Obras del P. Bernabe Cobo, II, ed. F. Mateos (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol. 92, 1964), p. 194.

²⁰The sixteenth-century Andean, Pachacuti Yamqui, gives the definition of huaca in relation to the sacred shrine of Pachacamac on the Peruvian coast, as "a split, very ugly, or flat nose"! p. 271.

²¹The corporeal division, for instance, was often thought to have been effected by lightning, a potent transforming agent and carrier of divinity. Polo de Ondegardo, "Instrucción contra las ceremonias y ritos que usan los indios conforme al tiempo de su infidelidad" [1567] in Colección de libros y documentos referentes a la historia del Perú, ed. H.H. Urteaga and C.A. Romero (Lima: 1916), p. 198; Ana Maria Mariscotti de Gorlitz, "Los Curi y el Rayo," in Actes du XLIIe Congrès International des Americanistes, vol. 4, (Paris: 1976), pp. 365-376.

Body Functions

The structure of the body is inseparably linked to its functions. Joseph Bastien writes that the Qollahuaya Indians of Bolivia understand the body as a hydraulic system, circulating and distilling fluids and semi-fluids (water, air, blood and food). Illness is a disruption of this cycle, causing a gradual "drying up" (weakening, wasting away) of the body. Death is the permanent separation of the wet and dry elements of the body.²²

Wholeness (health) of the body is a process in which centripetal and centrifugal forces pull together and disperse fluids that provide emotions, thoughts, nutrients, and lubricants for the members of the body. Moreover, this process extends beyond the dualistic confines of inner and outer, in that fluids of the body are governed by similar dynamics within the environment.²³

Body fluids, like rivers, must be properly controlled so that they integrate the structure of the body without disintegrating it.

We do not know whether the Incas held similar notions of the body, however it's not unlikely, particularly considering that the Qollahuayas served as medical and religious advisors to the Incas. In González Holguín we

²²Healers of the Andes (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1987), pp. 46, 72.

²³Ibid., p. 69.

find the expression chaqueymamani - to dry up slowly with illness - which suggests a similar understanding of the role of body fluids in the Andes of the sixteenth century.

Bastien sees a parallel to the Qollahuaya concept of the body as a hydraulic system in the emphasis on the environmental circulation of water in Inca myths.²⁴

Certainly irrigation and the hydrologic cycle were of the utmost concern for the Incas.

The middle section of the body contains the organs which control the flow of fluids through the body, serving, therefore, not only as a mediator between top and bottom, but as a center of exchange. These central organs are indicated by the Quechua term sonco, which refers to both the heart and stomach. The sonco was held to be the seat of emotion and, together with the head, of thought.²⁵ As the center, the sonco both integrates the body into a whole and stands for the whole. The term sonco, in fact, could be used to mean "person", as in the expression huac sonco,

²⁴Ibid., p. 74.

²⁵Glynn Custred writes that "most of the contexts of sonco found in the colonial Quechua literature... indicate belief in a literal merger of mind, temperament and emotion with the corporal organs of the heart and the stomach." "Inca Concepts of Soul and Spirit" in Essays in Humanistic Anthropology: A Festschrift in Honor of David Birney, ed. B.T. Grindal and D.M. Warren (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979), p. 286.

("double heart"), "a duplicitous person".

In the talegas, rectangular woven bags, of the Aymara Indians of the Chilean Andes, we have a stylistic representation of the body. Each side of the bag has vertical stripes of different colours which are repeated so that the left half of the side mirrors the right half, with one odd stripe situated in the center. The bag is known as a "body," the stripes along the edge of each side, communicators with the outside world, are called "mouths," and the center stripe is called a "heart".²⁶

Veronica Cereceda states:

This heart is both the meeting place and the separating line of the two sides. It plays the ambivalent role of separator, creating two halves, and simultaneously it is the nexus, the common "territory".²⁷

With the presence of the integrating and separating center, Andean dualism becomes tripartite. The number three, in fact, repeatedly comes up in Andean myth and ritual: major Inca divinities such as the sun and thunder had three manifestations, Inca kin groups were related to each other in threes, and the cosmos itself was divided into

²⁶Veronica Cereceda, "The Semiology of Andean Textiles: The Talegas of Isluga" in Anthropological History of Andean Politics, ed. J. Murra, N. Wachtel, and J. Revel (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1986), pp. 159-161.

²⁷Ibid., p. 152.

three parts - the upper world, this world, and the lower world.

The second category of body functions covered here (leaving aside other kinds of body functions to be examined later in the thesis) is that of sensory perception. The importance of acute sensory perception for the Andeans is demonstrated by the following entries in González Holguín:

Ccazccaruna - One who uses all his senses sharply.

Ccazccaylla ccazcachini ccazccachini ricuyta, or ccazccactam ricuni. To see subtly. Uyariytam ccazccachini, or ccazccactam uyarini. To hear subtly. Mutquiyta. To smell [subtly]. Malliyta. To taste [subtly]. Llancayta. To touch [subtly]. Yuyayta unanchayta. To imagine, or understand subtly [suggesting that imagining and understanding were considered analogous to sensing]. ²⁸

Similarly, terms are listed for the loss of the different senses, for example, ccaymarayak, "one whose sense of taste is damaged and can't taste food."²⁹

Although all of the senses (including the organic and kinesthetic senses³⁰) had symbolic uses in Inca religion,

²⁸p. 63.

²⁹p. 65.

³⁰The Andeans believed that twitches, buzzing of the ears, etc. were omens of one thing or another. "When their eyelids or their lips tremble or their ears ring or any part of their body trembles or they stumble, they say they will see or hear something good or bad; good if its the right eye, ear or foot, bad if it's the left." Polo de Ondegardo, "Instrucción," p. 199.

those which were given the most attention in myths and rituals were sight and hearing. Inca prayers, for instance, often express a desire to see and hear the Creator and to be seen and heard, as in the following excerpt:

O Viracocha, Lord of the Universe,
 whether male,
 whether female....
 To you
 with my eyes which grow weak with desire
 to see you.
 Because by seeing you,
 knowing you,
 recognizing you,
 comprehending you,
 you will see me,
 you will know me.
 The sun, the moon,
 day,
 night,
 summer,
 winter,
 not in vain
 are they ordered.
 They go
 to their appointed place....
 Answer me,
 hear me,
 don't let me grow tired
 and die.³¹

Regina Harrison sees this prayer as displaying an Andean order of perception, with sight (while the highest of the senses) providing the most superficial form of knowledge and comprehension (hamuttay, which has connotations of

³¹Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 220. Translated from Quechua into Spanish by S.A. Lafone Quevedo in "El culto de Tonapa" in Pachacuti Yamqui, pp. 306-307.

reasoning and ordering) the most profound.³² Sight seems to be related to the apprehension of categories here (sun/moon, summer/winter etc.) and speech and hearing to the life force ("answer me, hear me, don't let me grow tired and die"). As well, there is the notion of a reciprocity of perceptual impressions: "by seeing you... you will see me," which is a further example of the importance of exchange on all levels for the Andeans.

Earlier we saw that the front of the body is associated with the past and the back with the future in Andean thought. The reason for this is apparently that the past is known and therefore visible - in front of one, and the future is what is unknown and therefore invisible - behind one.³³ The word for eye, ñaui, is, in fact, a synonym for "front". If sight is connected with the front of the body, is hearing connected with the back? This seems possible in view of the common Andean association of sound and darkness in rituals.³⁴ In support of this theory, González Holguín gives as the definition of qquepa both "trumpet" and "behind".

³²pp. 85-91.

³³A. Miracle and J. Yapita Moya, "Time and Space in Aymara" in The Aymara Language in its Social and Cultural Context, ed. M.J. Hardman (Gainesville, Fla.: University of Florida Press, 1981), p. 33.

³⁴i.e. Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 259; Polo de Ondegardo, "Instrucción," p. 197.

Sound can serve as a vehicle of transition in the Andes. Gary Urton writes of a contemporary Peruvian community:

The greatest amount of noise in the village occurs at dawn and at dusk: unnecessary noise, even that of animals, is not easily tolerated at any other time.... Noise marks the transition from day to night and from night to day, it is inappropriate at other times.³⁵

Here noise represents the disorder of the liminal period in between night and day and also serves to mediate between one stage and another. Sound played a similar role in Inca rituals of transformation (see pp. 132-133 below).³⁶

In its integrating and transforming capacity, sound can be compared to liquid. As with liquid in Andean thought, sound is exchanged between the body and the environment.³⁷ For example, in the Inca ritual of Citua, people would symbolically throw their misfortunes into the river while shouting, "Illnesses begone!"³⁸ This symbolic fluidity of

³⁵Crossroads, pp. 17-18.

³⁶Claude Lévi-Strauss has examined how sound is used in similar ways in the Amazon. From Honey to Ashes: Introduction to a Science of Mythology, trans. J. and D. Weightman (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 361-422.

³⁷For the Baniwa Indians of the Amazon, sound is the effluvium from the body passages of the first being. Sullivan, "Sound and Senses," pp. 18-19.

³⁸Cobo, pp. 217-218.

sound might therefore associate it with the fluidity of the future, while sight might be connected with the past because of the latter's relatively structured state. The past and present are what one knows and sees, the future can only be heard of through oracles.

If sight can be linked to structure, and hearing to fluidity, then the association can also be tentatively made of the former with masculinity and the latter with femininity. Ñauí, "eye," can mean "a sharp point" or a sprout,"³⁹ which have male connotations. Billie Jean Isbell reports that the inhabitants of Chuschi, Peru use the term "father eye" to refer to the springs which impregnate the earth.⁴⁰ The ear, in contrast, as a dark opening, has female connotations of obscurity and fecundity. The ear piercing ceremony of Inca youths served in part as a fertility rite.⁴¹ Sight was considered an act of force by

³⁹Santo Tomás.

⁴⁰"'Those Who Love Me': An Analysis of Andean Kinship and Reciprocity Within a Ritual Context" in Andean Kinship and Marriage, ed. R. Bolton and F. Mayer (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1977), p. 88.

As this reference makes evident, the eye has certain natural associations with fluidity, as well as with structure in the Andes. The eye can be said to symbolize the production of structure from fluidity. This symbolism occurs in similar contexts in Andean mythology, as in the Viracocha cosmogony in which the sun and moon arise out of a lake (see Ch. III).

⁴¹R.T. Zuidema, "Inka Dynasty and Irrigation: Another Look at Andean Concepts of History," in Anthropological History of Andean Politics, ed. J. Murra, N. Wachtel, and J. Revel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 193.

the Andeans. The expression huanuytan ccahuaccuni means to figuratively "kill with a look". Hearing was an act of submission: the verb "to hear" is uyarini and the verb "to obey," uyani.

The Andean writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries display a curious merging of sight and hearing in their language, as in the following examples: "what they say we can't see well,"⁴² "a great bloodbath was heard," and "raising his eyes to heaven in the language of that land."⁴³ Perhaps, although this is stretching the point, this represents the perceptual equivalent of karihuarmi (man-woman); sight-hearing, expressing a basic complementary unity of the contrasting senses.

⁴²Diego de Castro Titu Cusi Yupanqui, Ynstrucción del Ynga... [1570], ed. Luis Millones (Lima: Ediciones El Virrey, 1985), p. 26.

⁴³Pachacuti Yamqui, pp. 250, 213.

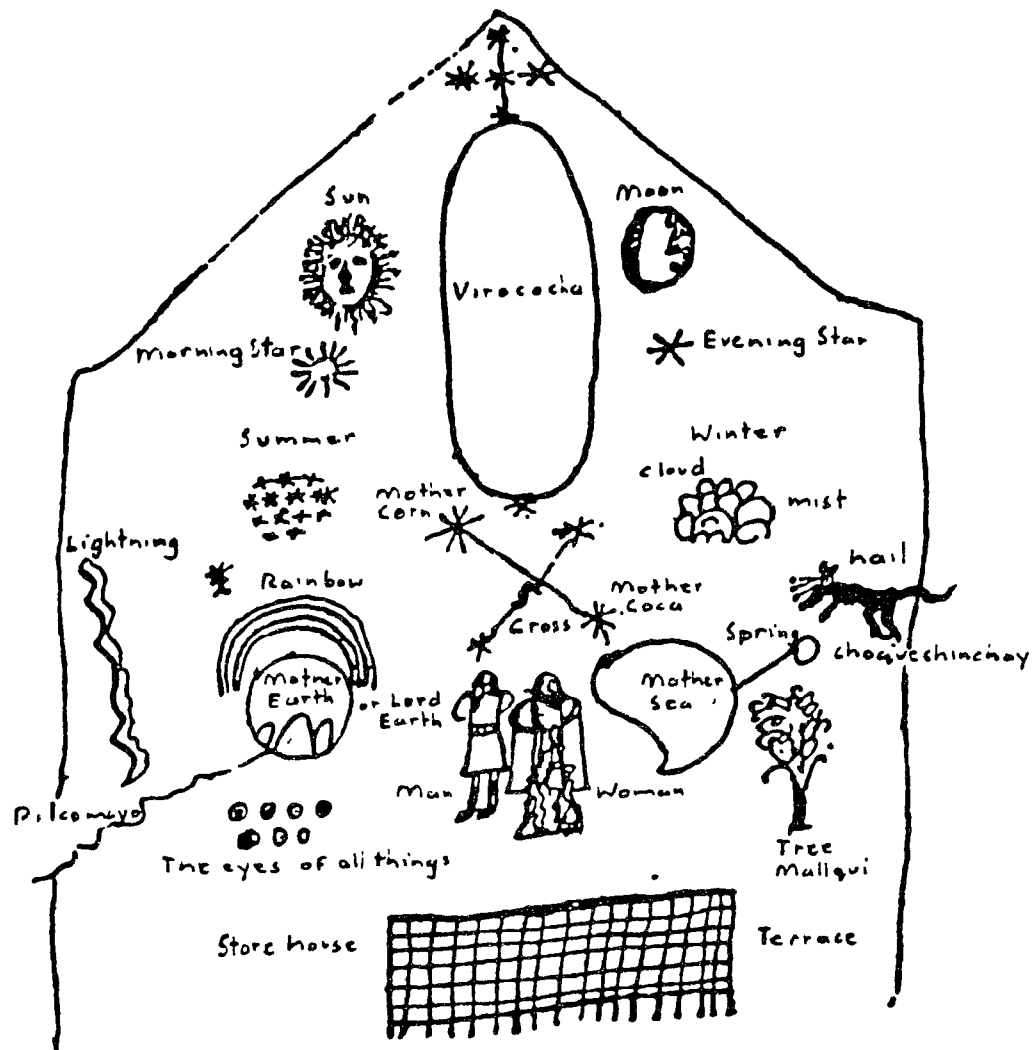


Figure 2. Pachacuti Yamqui's diagram with translations.

Pachacuti Yamqui's Diagram of Inca Cosmology

In his "Relacion" of 1613, the native Andean Joan de Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui⁴⁴ drew what he said represented the cosmological model inside Coricancha, the central Inca temple in Cuzco. Whether this model actually existed in Coricancha is not known; however, Pachacuti Yamqui's diagram (figs.1 and 2, pp. 39, 40) certainly embodies some basic concepts of Inca cosmology.⁴⁵

The man and woman standing in the middle constitute the focal point of the diagram, illustrating the centrality of humans to the cosmos and the essentiality of both sexes: a single human figure would not have adequately conveyed the dual nature of the cosmos. Aside from the two humans and the choquechinchay cat (a mythological feline, included here because of its supposed role in producing hail)⁴⁶ to the right, there are no other bodies depicted in the diagram. This draws attention to the unique place of the human body in the cosmic order.

⁴⁴Pachacuti Yamqui was the cacique or chief of a village to the south of Cuzco.

⁴⁵The diagram might exhibit a Christian influence, for example, in its church-like shape with the cross at the top.

⁴⁶In the present-day Andes this cat is known as ccoq. Mishkin describes it as casting hail from its eyes and ears and serving as a sponsor to sorcerers. p. 464.

The top part of the drawing contains celestial phenomena, at the bottom is a representation of a storehouse and agricultural terrace (collca pata), representative of the earth. The upright human figures in the middle act as mediators between the earth and the sky, an axis through which power can flow. The drawing's vertical center, which can perhaps be compared to the dividing line between the right and left halves of the body, is, in fact, taken up by symbols of conjunction: the human couple, the stellar crosses, the grid of the terrace, and the oval, which Pachacuti Yamqui identifies as Viracocha, Creator of the World.⁴⁷

In reference to the symbolic representation of Viracocha in the diagram, Pachacuti Yamqui writes, "whether it be male or female,"⁴⁸ a phrase which is also present in the Inca prayer excerpted earlier. If the human couple in the center represents the basic concept of karihuarmi in this world, Viracocha can be said to embody the ideal original integration of male and female.⁴⁹ The oval

⁴⁷This is written over the top of the original diagram but not reproduced in the figure presented here. Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 227, n. 2.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹This union of male and female was also expressed in hermaphrodite sculptures which were worshipped at various sites in Tahuantinsuyu. The Spanish destroyed one which was about five and a half metres high and represented a man and a woman joined at the back, the man facing the east and the woman the west. Pablo José de Arriaga, The Extirpation of Idolatry in Peru [1621], trans. and ed. L. Clark Keating

signifies Viracocha's transcendence of dichotomies and inscrutability. It represents unbroken oneness in contrast to the diversified and structured cosmos represented by the grid of the terrace at the opposite end of the diagram.

It is out of this original unity that the division of the cosmos proceeds: male elements on the left (pictorial right) and female elements on the right (pictorial left). The sun heads the male elements and the moon the female ones. R.T. Zuidema sees Pachacuti Yamqui's diagram as an example of Andean parallel descent, men descending from men and women from women, with the sun and moon at the top as the first parents.⁵⁰ In Moon, Sun and Witches Irene Silverblatt describes how Inca ideologies of gender parallelism placed the Inca at the head of male institutions under the patronage of the sun, and the Inca's consort, the Coya, at the head of female institutions under the patronage of the moon.⁵¹

The elements on the male diagram, on the whole, manifest light and dryness: the sun, the morning star ("grandfather"), lightning (associated with rain but

(Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), p. 79.

⁵⁰"The Inca Kinship System: A New Theoretical View" in Andean Kinship and Marriage, ed. R. Bolton and F. Mayer (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1977), p. 264.

⁵¹Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 54.

pictured without it here), the rainbow (which appears when the rain has stopped), and the earth. Pachacuti labels this last, "pachamama o camac pacha," "Mother Earth or Lord Earth," as though indicating that, although the earth is usually female, here, in relation to the opposing Mother Sea, it is male.⁵² The Pillcomayo river shown flowing out of the earth is probably included here because of mythological associations. Those elements on the female side are associated with obscurity and wetness: the moon, the evening star ("grandmother"), the cloud, fog, hail, the spring of water, and the sea.⁵³

The division between right and left, male and female, cannot be glossed as one between sacred and profane,⁵⁴ for all the elements on both sides of the drawing had religious significance for the Incas. The distinction is rather between kinds of sacredness. The items on the male side, i.e. lightning, transmitter of divine power; the rainbow, associated with the mediating role of the Inca; corn, the most sacred of foods; have a closer association

⁵²Another possible interpretation is that the earth as ground and interior is female, but as world, male. Billie Jean Isbell, To Defend Ourselves, p. 209.

⁵³Billie Jean Isbell sees symbols of state and power on the masculine side, and family and nurture on the feminine side. Ibid., p. 210.

⁵⁴As does Robert Hertz, for example, in his seminal paper "The Pre-eminence of the Right Hand: A Study in Religious Polarity" in Right and Left, ed. R. Needham (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), pp. 3-31.

with spirituality and the upper world; while those on the female side: the supernatural choquechinchay cat; the mallqui, ancestor tree; coca, used for divination; are more closely related to divination and the underworld.

The middle section contains all the symbols of culture in the diagram: the storehouse and terrace - ground of civilization; the clothed human couple - basis of society; domestic plants and animals symbolized by stars (the uppermost constellation represents llamas⁵⁵), and Viracocha, the original giver of culture. Culture for the Incas was therefore an integration of male and female forces.⁵⁶

The right/left pairing of opposites - sun/moon, earth/sea, etc. - in the drawing suggests that the "eyes of all things" and the mallqui tree, as the last items on either side, are meant to form a pair of complementary opposites.⁵⁷ It is difficult to determine exactly what the

⁵⁵R.T. Zuidema and Gary Urton, *La constelación de la Llama en los Andes peruanos*, Allpanchis, 9 (1976), pp. 59-119.

⁵⁶In "Complementarity and Conflict: An Andean View of Women and Men" Olivia Harris writes of the Laymi Indians of Bolivia:

It is the fruitful cooperation of woman and man as a unity that produces culture, and this is counterposed to an unmarried person as non-cultural; culture is based on duality and contrasted with what has remained single when it should be paired (p. 28).

⁵⁷An opposition which becomes more intelligible if one recalls that in Quechua "eye", ñau, could also mean "sprout". Another possible opposition is that of the "eyes of all things" on the left, and the destructive, hail-casting eyes of the choquechinchay cat on the right.

"eyes of all things" are meant to represent. They could symbolize either springs of water or stars.⁵⁸ In fact, it is not uncommon in the Andes for either springs or stars to be referred to as "eyes". Springs are regarded as places of origin for animals and humans in Andean thought, while stars are the prototypes of all terrestrial beings.⁵⁹ In either case one has the image of the "eyes of all things" as a repository of ideal forms.

González Holguín defines mallqui as a "seedling" or "fruit tree". Mallqui could also mean the body of an ancestor. In 1621 a Spanish priest wrote that, after their stone huacas, what the Andeans revered most highly was their mallquis, "the bones or mummies of their pagan ancestors".⁶⁰ In Andean thought, a tree could apparently stand for the human body. Pachacuti Yamqui gives two instances of this. He writes that the first Inca revered his parents in the form of two trees from which he ordered golden fruit be hung, saying that the future Incas would be as the fruit of these trees (fig. 6, p. 74). Further on he describes the case of a wounded Inca warrior who laments that he is going to die without having produced any fruit. His body is then

⁵⁸Henrique Urbano, Wiracocha y Avar: heroes y funciones en las sociedades andinas (Cusco, Peru: Centro " Bartolome de Las Casas," 1981), pp. XXXVIII - XXXIX.

⁵⁹Murua, ed. Bayle, pp. 285, 343.

⁶⁰Arriaga, p. 27.

buried in the trunk of a tree which produces fruit with healing powers.⁶¹

In Pachacuti Yamqui's diagram, therefore, the living humans in the center can perhaps be understood as divided into ideal form, the "eyes of all things," on the male side, and physical form, the mallqui, on the female. The "eyes of all things," as the original ideal forms, would then also represent the past, and the mallqui, as the fruit-bearing tree or procreator of forms, the future.

In any case, the fact that the "eyes" are apparently drawn as eyes, rather than stars or springs, along with the emphasis on light on the left side, certainly implies an association of sight with masculinity. There is nothing specifically indicative of hearing on the right side (unless one wishes to use one's imagination and take the earth for an eye and the sea for an ear), however, the darkness and fluidity of the female half, particularly when contrasted with the opposing symbols of light and sight, could allude to aurality.

Finally, while the diagram is a model of sacred reality, it is also that of an agricultural system and the relation of human beings to nature. The stars which indicate the times for sowing and harvesting, the alternating seasons, the cultivated earth, etc., are all

⁶¹pp. 217-218, 239.

essential features of agriculture. Of foremost importance in this system is the flow of water. Both sides of the diagram contain dynamic elements symbolic of meteorologic forces - the lightning which strikes the earth from the sky, the rainbow which originates in the ground, reaches the sky and touches the ground again, the choquechinchay cat which rises up with the mist and casts down hail - which connect the sky with the earth and make agriculture possible. Earls and Silverblatt write that it is this fundamental circulation of water, up from the earth and down from the sky, which unites the cosmological model in a total dynamic.⁶² Once again, therefore, as in the Qollahuaya concept of the body as a hydraulic system, we have the image of a structure animated and integrated into a whole by an exchange of fluids.

⁶²p. 319.

III. CREATION

The Viracocha Cosmogony

The natives of this land say that in the beginning, before the earth was created, there was someone called Viracocha. He created a dark world without sun, moon, nor stars, and because of this creation he was called Viracocha Pachayachachi, which means Creator of All Things. After he created the world he formed a race of disproportionately large, painted or sculpted giants to see if it would be good to make men that size. As they seemed much larger than himself, he said, "It is not good for people to be so large; they had better be my own size." Thus he created men in his likeness as they are now. And they lived in the darkness.

Viracocha ordered these people to live in peace and to know and serve him. He gave them a precept to follow, with the warning that if they did not, he would confound them. They kept this precept, which is not specified, for some time. However, the vices of pride and cupidity were born among them and they broke the precept of Viracocha Pachayachachi, and incurring his wrath, he confounded and cursed them.

Then some were turned into rocks and others into other forms. Some were swallowed by the earth and others by the sea, and over everything he sent a flood, which is called uno pachacuti, which means "water which overturned the earth". They say that it rained sixty days and sixty nights, and that all of creation was flooded. There only remained a few signs of those who had turned into stone to serve as a remembrance of the event and an example to posterity....

When Viracocha Pachayachachi destroyed the earth, he kept three men with him, one of whom was called Taguapaca, in order to serve him and help him create the new peoples which would be made in the second age after the flood. This was done in the following way.

After the flood was over and the earth dry, Viracocha decided to repopulate the earth, and in order to do it more perfectly, he decided to create luminaries which would give light. To do so he went with his servants to a great lake, which is in Collao, and in this lake there is an island called Titicaca... Viracocha went to this island and ordered the sun, moon and stars to emerge and go to the sky to give light to the world, and so it was done. It is said that he created the moon with more light than the sun, and that the sun, out of envy, threw a handful of ashes in the moon's face as they were about to rise to the sky so that it darkened to the colour which it has now....

Taguapaca disobeyed the commandments of Viracocha when the latter was giving some orders to his servants. Viracocha, angry at Taguapaca, ordered his other two servants to bind him head and foot and put him in a boat in the lake, and so it was done. As Taguapaca blasphemed against Viracocha for what he had done to him, and threatened to return and take revenge on him, he was carried away by the water which drained the lake, and he was not seen again for a long time. This done, Viracocha raised a solemn huaca in that place as a sign of what he had created and done there.

Leaving the island behind, [Viracocha] passed over the lake to the land, taking with him the two servants he had retained. He went to a place, now called Tiahuanaco in the province of Collasuyo, and in this place he sculpted and drew on some large stones all the nations he thought to create. This done, he ordered his two servants to commit to memory the names he told them of the peoples he had painted and of the valleys and provinces and places from where they would emerge, which were those of all the earth. He ordered each of them to take a different route and call the above-mentioned peoples and order them to come out, procreate and swell the earth.

The servants, obeying Viracocha's command, set themselves to the task. One went along the sierra of the coast by the Southern sea, and the other along the sierra of the awesome mountains we call the Andes, to the east of that sea. Along these sierras they walked, calling out: "Oh peoples and nations! Hear and obey the commandment of Ticci Viracocha Pachayachachic, who orders you to come out, multiply, and swell the earth!" And Viracocha himself did the same along the lands in between those of his two servants, naming all the nations and provinces he passed through. On hearing the calls, every place obeyed, and some people came out of lakes, others out of springs, valleys, caves, trees

caverns, rocks and mountains, and swelled the earth and multiplied into the nations which are in Peru today...

Another strange tale is also told. After Viracocha created all the peoples, he arrived at a place where a group of men created by him had gathered. This place is now called the town of Cacha. When Viracocha arrived there, the inhabitants found his dress and conduct strange. They murmured against him and plotted to kill him from a hill. As they took up arms for this purpose, their bad intentions were perceived by Viracocha. Kneeling on the plain and lifting his hands and face up to the sky, he caused fire to fall from above on the hill. The whole place was set on fire, the land and rocks burned like straw. As those bad men were afraid of that terrible fire, they came down from the mountain and threw themselves at Viracocha's feet, asking to be pardoned for their sin. Moved with compassion, Viracocha went and put out the fire with his staff....

Viracocha continued along his route, doing his works and instructing the people he had created. In this way he arrived at the district which is now Puerto Viejo and Manta on the equinoctial line, where he joined up with his servants. Desiring to leave the land of Peru, he gave a talk to those he had created, telling them of things to come. He said that there would come some people who would say they were Viracocha, their creator, and that they should not believe them, that in the times to come he would send them his messengers to protect and teach them. This said, he and his two servants went into the sea and walked over the water as though on land, without sinking. Because he walked over the water like foam he was called Viracocha, which means foam of the sea.

Some years after Viracocha left, it is said that Taguapaca, whom Viracocha had ordered thrown into Lake Titicaca in Collao, returned and started preaching along with others that he was Viracocha. However, although at first they held the people in sway, in the end they were recognized as false and scorned.

This is the ridiculous fable which these barbarians have about their creation, and they affirm and believe it as though they had actually seen it happen.¹

¹Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, "Historia Indica" [1572] in Obras de Garcilaso de la Vega, IV, ed. C. Sáenz de Santa María (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1965), pp. 207-210.

Creation and the Human Body

This cosmogony was recorded in Peru in 1572 by the Spanish soldier Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa. Similar versions of the same widespread cosmogony can be found in the writings of other chroniclers, Spanish and Andean, of the period.² In a few of its recorded versions, at least, this cosmogony displays a Christian influence. Some chroniclers, struck by the similarities between Christianity and Andean religion, were apt to think that an apostle had once proselytized in the region, and interpreted the Viracocha legend as a distorted memory of this apostolic visit.³ It is possible as well that some Andeans, influenced by Christianity, blended Christian elements into their own versions of the myth. Nonetheless, the cosmogony is one of the earliest existing myths of the Central and Southern Andes⁴ and contains fundamental data on Andean cosmology.

In this cosmogony we learn that the human body is modelled after that of Viracocha. The size of Viracocha's

²These versions, together with various versions of other Andean myths, including those dealing with the origin of the Incas, are gathered together by Henrique Urbano in his book Wiracocha y Ayar.

³Pachacuti Yamqui, for example, writes of Viracocha: "Might not this man be the glorious apostle Saint Thomas?" p. 211.

⁴Franklin Pease, El dios creador andino (Lima: Mosca Azul, 1973), pp. 14, 20.

body alone is the proper size for humans; the original sculpted giants must be discarded as disproportionate. With its perfect proportions, the human body could now be used as a measure of all other things. Inca measures, in fact, were based on parts of the human body. The smallest measure of length, for example, was based on a finger. The largest was based on the whole body and was the standard measurement of land. Measures of travelling distance were based on the pace, a standard walking length.⁵

Viracocha, as we learned in the previous chapter, was perhaps considered by the Incas to encompass within himself both male and female. This would explain how he is able to unilaterally create both sexes. Nonetheless, in the cosmogony, he has a male form. Pachacuti Yamqui, in his version of the myth, describes Viracocha as a bearded man of average height, getting on in years.⁶ In one of their temples the Incas had a statue of Viracocha which presented him as "a standing man, his right arm raised, like a person who was commanding."⁷

⁵John H. Rowe, "Inca Culture at the time of the Spanish Conquest" in Handbook of South American Indians, II: The Andean Civilizations, ed. J. Steward, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin, 143 (New York: Cooper Square, 1946), pp. 323-325.

⁶p. 210.

⁷Cristobal de Molina, "of Cuzco", "Fábulas y ritos de los Incas" [1574] in Las Crónicas de los Molinas, ed. F. Loayza (Lima: Los pequeños grandes libros de la historia americana, 1943), p. 20.

This indicates a privileging of the male body over the female, or, at least, a closer identification of the former with divine structuring power. Viracocha's maleness is consistent with his structuring and ordering role in the cosmogony. This association of masculinity with structuring power was manifested politically in the Inca empire where most of the positions of power were held by men.⁸ However, there is a strong suggestion in the cosmogony that femininity was not originally intended to be subordinate to masculinity. Viracocha creates the moon, the classic Andean symbol of femininity, with more light than the sun, the symbol of masculinity. The sun darkens the moon out of envy so as to be the brighter of the pair. Translated into social terms, this implies that Andeans, at least theoretically, considered women to be naturally more powerful than men but kept in an inferior position by male stratagems.

Be this as it may, if Viracocha can be thought of as encompassing and integrating all dichotomies within himself, it would be logical to suppose that his body, even when male, displays the same encompassing and integrating characteristics. This proves to be the case with the human copy of Viracocha's body which, as we have seen, contains and mediates the basic structures of the cosmos within itself.

⁸Silverblatt, Moon, Sun and Witches, p. 19.

It is because the human body is patterned after the body of the Creator of the cosmos, that it is able to serve as a model of the cosmos.

Although humans have the same form as Viracocha, they are apparently not of the same substance. Viracocha and his divinized assistants (who in other versions are his sons) can walk over the sea, humans are tied to the land. One account describes Viracocha as being extremely light (ligerísimo - very light and/or fast) and without joints.⁹ These qualities reflect Viracocha's spirituality, unbound by physical restrictions, and his essential indivisibility. Along these lines, another account says that the Incas believed that Viracocha was not born of woman and that he was unchanging and eternal.¹⁰ Viracocha's body, therefore could be said to represent an original ideal which is not subject to the processes and restrictions governing the human body.

If Viracocha's body is distinguished by its lightness, its ability to walk over the sea, human bodies are characterized by their heaviness, their bond to the earth. Viracocha gives humans life and form, the earth gives them their substance. (An Andean term for a human being is, in

⁹Cobo, p. 150.

¹⁰Molina "of Cuzco," p. 14.

fact, "animated earth".¹¹) Humans are created out of rock, and, when their animating force is removed from them, can return to rock, as happened to the first people who broke Viracocha's precept.

This material foundation of the human being, however, is not completely lifeless or devoid of sacrality, for in Andean thought the earth itself is sacred and "alive". One's material being, therefore, has a spiritual presence of its own which remains with the body after death. For this reason skeletons and mummies were objects of veneration and power for the Andeans. Certain rocks were also worshipped as humans who had reverted to their original substance but who still retained a personal presence. Rock constituted an "other" or double for the human body,¹² a reminder of the earth-bound and ephemeral nature of human life, but also a way for humans to be, within physical limits, unchanging and eternal.

The cosmogony tells us that different peoples are created to inhabit specific places. In the version of the cosmogony given by Bernabe Cobo it is made clear that the original stone models are buried in the earth at different

¹¹El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales de los Incas [1609], ed. A. Rosenblat (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1945), vol. 1, p. 79.

¹²Pierre Duviols, "Un symbolisme andin du double, la lithomorphose de l'ancêtre" in Actes du XLIIe Congrès International des Americanistes (Paris: 1976), pp. 359-364.

points, from where they later surface as human beings. The sites from which they emerged then became sacred shrines for their descendents.¹³ José de Arriaga writes of the Andeans in 1621:

They also venerate their pacarinas, or places of origin... This is one of the reasons why they resist the consolidation of their towns and like to live in such bad and difficult places. I have seen some of them where one can neither go up nor down except on foot; the reason they give for living there is that this is their pacarina.¹⁴

Arriaga also notes that this belief in separate places of origin was so entrenched among the Andeans that it was very difficult to convince them of the Christian belief that all peoples descended from a single couple.¹⁵ The Inca prohibition on travel within the empire without special permission¹⁶ drew on this Andean tradition in order to facilitate government and the maintenance of a balanced population.

¹³p. 151.

¹⁴p. 24.

¹⁵ibid. Ernst Cassirer notes in The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, II: Mythical Thought:

For mythical thinking the relation between what a thing "is" and the place in which it is situated is never purely external and accidental; the place is itself a part of the thing's being, and the place confers very specific inner ties upon the thing (p. 92).

¹⁶Hernando de Santillán, "Relación del origen, descendencia, política y gobierno de los Incas" [1563] in Crónicas peruanas de interés indígena, ed. F. Esteve Barba (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol. 209, 1968), p. 133.

Cobo's version of the cosmogony details as well that the various forms of dress of the different nations were painted on the stone models, thus becoming an integral part of human bodily existence.¹⁷ Andeans regarded their use of clothing as a mark of their identity and civilization. This attitude can still be found in the Andes of today. Joseph Bastien reports that the Qollahuayas of Bolivia contrast themselves with the "uncivilized" naked jungle Indians.¹⁸ In fact, a common term for foreigners in the Andes is galas, "naked" or "peeled ones".¹⁹

Prior to the Conquest, the basic form of apparel in the Andes was a breechcloth, tunic, cloak and headband for men, and a dress and shawl for women. The dress of each locality or nation, however, was distinct in its colouring and ornamentation. One of the reasons the inhabitants of the town of Cacha are so alienated by Viracocha is that his dress - described elsewhere as a white gown²⁰ - is different from theirs. This regional variation in dress was made into law by the Incas so that the place of origin of an

¹⁷p. 151.

¹⁸Mountain of the Condor, p. 97.

¹⁹i.e. Billie Jean Isbell, To Defend Ourselves, p. 71.

²⁰Sarmiento de Gamboa, p. 209.

individual, and hence kinship loyalties, could be instantly recognized by his appearance.²¹

It's likely that the designs woven into clothes contained condensed information on Andean cosmology, much as the present-day talegas, examined in the previous chapter, do.²² Compare, for example, the pattern Guman Poma places on the tunic of an Inca (fig.3, p. 72) with the drawing Pachacuti Yamqui gives of the cave openings through which the first Incas emerged (fig. 5, p. 74). Within this context of elaborated styles and patterns, Viracocha, appearing in a white gown, might have seemed a man without a history or a home. On a metaphorical level, however, Viracocha's white clothes (llumpacpacha, with connotations of pure and whole) signify his transcendence of structural categories.²³

²¹Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol 2., p. 106.

²²Gail Silverman-Proust examines the iconography of modern Andean textiles in "Weaving Technique and the Registration of Knowledge in the Cuzco Area of Peru," Journal of Latin American Lore 14:2 (1988): 207-241. R.T. Zuidema looks at how designs on certain Inca textiles may contain calendrical information in "The Inca Calendar" in Native American Astronomy, ed. A. F. Aveni (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), pp. 221-226.

²³Inca priests also dressed in white, affirming the association of white with sacrality. Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 257.

Cosmic Structures

Everything has its place and function in the complex, organized system instituted by Viracocha. That human cooperation in upholding this system is necessary is evidenced by the fact that humans are able to disobey the will of Viracocha and destabilize the cosmos. The three instances of violation of the divine plan which occur in the cosmogony all have drastic consequences. In the first two cases the transgressors are re-integrated into the land, either through earth or water, while in the last case fire devastates the land but the transgressors are saved through their repentance. Human conduct, therefore, affects the order of the universe, and the order of the universe shapes human conduct.

The cosmos created by Viracocha consists of two basic, separately-created parts: the earth and the sky. In between the two is the surface of the earth, inhabited by things - people, animals, plants - which emerge from beneath the earth to reach up to the sky. In Quechua these three levels are commonly referred to as Hanan Pacha - Upper World, Cay Pacha - This World, and Hurin or Ucu Pacha - Lower or Interior World. The body, as a model of and for the cosmos, reflects these divisions. The upper part of the body is associated with the structured Hanan Pacha; the middle

section, with its vital organs, with the integrating Cay Pacha; and the lower part with the fluid Hurin Pacha. From another perspective, Hanai Pacha could be understood as the environment outside the body, Cay Pacha as the surface of the body, mediating between exterior and interior, and Hurin or Ucu Pacha as the interior of the body. The word ucu, in fact, means "body" as well as "interior". When it is used to mean "interior," therefore, it carries the connotation of the interior of the body.

In the cosmogony, Viracocha acts as a mediating center between opposite halves. The episode where he kneels on the ground and looks up at the sky (a traditional Andean method for swearing an oath²⁴), causing fire to come down from above, is one example of this. Another occurs when, in order to call his creation out of the earth, he sends one of his assistants along the coast to his left, the other through the mountains to his right, and takes himself the middle path between them.²⁵ This mediating role is passed on to humans (and, in Inca cosmology, specifically the Inca), who function as representatives of Viracocha on a

²⁴i.e. Guaman Poma, vol. 3, p. 854.

²⁵Henrique Urbano holds that there are in fact several "Viracochas" acting in the cosmogony - the principal one and his assistants - each of whom has different mythical functions to perform. Wiracocha y Ayar, pp. xvi-xxxvi. This "separation" of Viracocha into distinct but correlated figures manifests the structures of the cosmos which is similarly divided into distinct but correlated parts.

more restricted level, as is indicated by Pachacuti Yamqui's diagram of Inca cosmology (figs. 1 and 2, pp. 39, 40) in which the human couple is placed under Viracocha and in the center of the cosmos.

In his work Guaman Poma includes an illustration of the act of Creation according to Christianity which is actually quite Andean in its conceptualization (fig. 4, p. 73). The Creator is shown standing on the earth with his head in the sky, placing the sun with his right hand and the moon with his left. This illustration, as well as depicting the body as a model of the cosmos, reminds us that Creation takes place through the medium of the body of the Creator, giving the human body, modelled on that of the Creator, a dual role as both created and creator, subject to and manipulator of the cosmic forces.

The periods of creation outlined in the cosmogony fall within the Andean tradition of dividing time into ages or worlds. According to this tradition, in the middle, and particularly the end, of each age a period of upheaval, known as a pachacuti, world reversal, takes place. The pachacuti is a mediating period of sacred and highly dangerous fluidity during which humans emerge from the natural world and can also return to it, as occurs in the uno pachacuti, world reversal by water, in the cosmogony.

On a microcosmic level a pachacuti can take place within the body of an individual, for example, when a person

is struck by lightning, an agent of divinity. Douglas Sharon writes of this in his study of contemporary Andean ritual that, "the first charge is believed to kill [the person struck by lightning], the second reduces his body to small pieces and the third reassembles his body."²⁶ On a macrocosmic level the pachacuti takes place within the body of the cosmos. This is manifested in a myth recorded in the seventeenth century in Huarochiri, Peru which describes how the world is "turned around" when the divine body (here called Pacha Kuyuchiq, "World Mover") turns around.

They say that when [Pacha Kuyuchiq] is angry, the earth moves, and also when he turns his face.... If he were ever to turn his whole body around, the world would end.²⁷

Creation and Perception

The stages of Creation can be compared to those of gestation. The darkness of the first world is the darkness of the womb, the destruction of the first people is the expulsion from the womb, the flood is the fluidity of birth, and the emergence of the new humans from the earth is the emergence of the child into the light of the outside world. Humans are formed by Viracocha through touch, animated through sound, and then brought out into the light, thereby

²⁶p. 77.

²⁷Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 1, p. 177.

experiencing the sensations of touch, hearing and sight in the same order as the Andeans very likely conceived of an infant as doing.

While taste and smell are not mentioned in the cosmogony, touch, hearing and sight are emphasized, indicating the importance of these senses for creation. Touch, hearing and sight are intimately related in the myth. The human prototypes are sculpted, painted, then named, in other words, given a tactile, visual and aural identity. Viracocha causes fire to fall from above by kneeling on the earth and looking up at the sky, i.e. by being in sensory contact with both halves of the cosmos. Pachacuti Yamqui states that the oral teachings of Viracocha were embodied in the staff he handed on to his followers,²⁸ a merging of touch and hearing. He describes Viracocha's burning of the mountain as a "terrifying miracle, never before heard in the world,"²⁹ interrelating a visual manifestation with oral tradition.

Of these three senses, hearing plays the most important role in the cosmogony. Human beings are called into life and purpose by the divine word. An Inca prayer recorded by Molina of Cuzco in 1574 says "Oh, Viracocha who... said let this be a man and let this be a woman, and by so saying

²⁸p. 211.

²⁹p. 212.

made, formed and gave them being,"³⁰ indicating the creative primacy and potency of the word of Viracocha. More than anything else, Viracocha is the one who speaks. Pedro de Cieza de Leon writes in his version of the cosmogony that Viracocha "spoke to [his created peoples] lovingly and gently, admonishing them to be good and not harm each other, but rather love each other."³¹ Molina of Cuzco describes how Viracocha named all the plants and animals and instructed the people in their uses.³² Pachacuti Yamqui says that Viracocha "spoke all languages better than the natives" and has a huaca refer to the Creator as a "chatterbox".³³

Viracocha's words are meaning coupled with the dynamic force of sound. Cobo writes that "with his word alone [Viracocha] made the corn and vegetables grow,"³⁴ In the Huarochiri myth the words of the Creator (Pacha Camac,

³⁰p. 38. In an analysis of a similar prayer Regina Harrison writes:

Viracocha's act of pronouncing the various vowel and consonant phonemes not only creates the things which will populate the world but also represents a more significant act, "camay" - animating or breathing a spirit into an object (p. 83).

³¹El señorío de los Incas [1550], ed. M. Ballesteros, (Madrid: Historia 16, 1985) p. 36.

³²pp. 13-14.

³³p. 215.

³⁴p. 150.

"Animator of the World") are so powerful that they can shatter the whole cosmic order:

"I am the one who shakes you [the Inca] and the whole world. I haven't spoken because I would not only exterminate your enemies, but I might destroy all of you and the whole world at the same time. That is why I have remained in silence."³⁵

Perhaps this is the response to the ardent desire expressed in many Inca prayers to be spoken to by the Creator.

When the Creator speaks, the world responds. As representatives of the Creator, humans participate in the creative power of speech. We are told in the cosmogony recorded by Cobo that Viracocha "gave each nation the language they are to speak and the songs they are to sing."³⁶ In this way humans are granted the gift of language and the ability to enter into dialogue with each other and their creator. In Inca cosmology, it is the Inca who, like Viracocha, is endowed with the ability to animate and order the world with his voice. This belief survives in modern Andean traditions in which the Inca is the one who moves rocks with his voice and makes mountains speak.³⁷

³⁵Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 2, p. 181.

³⁶p. 151.

³⁷i.e. Catherine Allen Wagner, "Coca, Chicha and Trago: Private and Communal Rituals in a Quechua Community" (Ph. D. Dissertation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1978), p. 47, and Nathan Wachtel, The Vision of the Vanquished, B. and S. Reynolds, trans. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1977), p. 40.

The Incas own name for their language, Quechua, was Runa Simi, "Man's Mouth," which reminds us that the words which order the world are imbued with the physical presence of the speaker, they are carried in sound which originates inside the body and travels outward. To speak is to give birth, to create, and to make a commitment of participation. The actions of inhaling and exhaling, can be compared to the actions of hearing and speaking; the exchange of essence and power with the outside world. Conversely, death is silence. The name given by the Andeans to the place of the dead was upamarca, land of deaf-mutes.

The first order given to the humans called out of the earth in the cosmogony is to "hear and obey" the commandment of Viracocha. The transgressions listed result from the refusal to hear and obey Viracocha's word. Pachacuti Yamqui writes that "the Indians of that time used to laugh at [Viracocha], saying, what a talkative man, and although he always preached to them they didn't listen."³⁸

This refusal to hear can be likened to a refusal to be fertilized and to enter into a productive state of culture. By denying Viracocha's word, humans remain in a barren, uncivilized condition. This condition is denoted in Quechua by the word purum, which means savage, unconquered, barren

³⁸p. 211.

and virgin. The term purum soncoyoc (savage heart) expresses the state of those who refuse to attend to the divine word. According to González Holguín it means: "He who doesn't try nor wish to know good things about his salvation... nor lets himself be cultivated nor helped to produce fruit." ³⁹ Refusing to hear, nonetheless, is the correct response to inauthentic words. In the cosmogony Viracocha warns his people that false Viracochas will appear among them and that they should not believe what they say.

The first period of the world, generally referred to as one of darkness, is called Purun Pacha, "savage world," by Pachacuti Yamqui. He describes this period as plagued by hapiñuños, evil beings with long grasping breasts, and characterized by constant warfare.⁴⁰ Purun Pacha, with its associations with virginity, its darkness, its chaos and its long-breasted hapiñuños, has feminine connotations. The second period, in contrast, is one of light, cultivation and order; masculine characteristics. Pachacuti Yamqui tells us that by this period the hapiñuños have been banished, crying out "we are defeated," and describes how Viracocha angrily destroys an idol in female form.⁴¹ (Significantly, Viracocha uses water, a female element, to punish the first

³⁹p. 297.

⁴⁰p. 211.

⁴¹Ibid.,

humans, and fire, a male element, to punish those of the second creation in the cosmogony.) The chaos of the first age was symbolically due to its excessive femaleness. When the male sky is created to counterbalance the female earth this problem is resolved.

To a certain extent Viracocha, who creates the sun and the moon in order to achieve a more perfect world, is associated with light, and therefore with vision, as well as with sound and hearing. Pachacuti Yamqui, perhaps influenced by Christian theology, refers to Viracocha as the "true Sun," while the modern scholar, R.T. Zuidema, writes that the route Viracocha takes reflects the path of the sun across the sky.⁴²

It is only after light, and thereby sight, have been created by Viracocha that the world is structured. In Andean tradition, for example, stones were able to move in the first dark age, but with the creation of the sun they became fixed in their place.⁴³ Cobo writes that Viracocha's primary task was "ordering and arranging all of creation, putting each thing in its proper place."⁴⁴ Sight must

⁴²The Ceque System of Cuzco, p. 169.

⁴³Urioste, Waru Chiri, p. 19; R.T. Zuidema, "Shafttombs and the Inca Empire," Journal of the Steward Anthropological Society, vol. 9, p. 151.

⁴⁴p. 150.

likewise fix objects in their place, detain them in space, in order to perceive them well.

However, while light and sight may allow for a more structured cosmos than sound and hearing, there is no doubt that the former are dependent on the latter in Andean cosmology. In the cosmogony humans must first hear before they are able to see. According to Cieza, Viracocha cured the blind with his word alone, thereby giving them sight through their faculty of hearing.⁴⁵ The sun and the moon arise from Lake Titicaca at Viracocha's command. Conversely, in the Huarochiri myth, the Creator, Pacha Camac, tells the "light of the sun," the Inca, that he can destroy him with his word alone.⁴⁶

If Viracocha's structuring role and creation of light associate him with sight, his fluid qualities associate him with the fluidity of sound. Viracocha's journey down to the sea, over which he disappears, is like that of a river, flowing down to the sea. In some myths Viracocha is also said to have arisen out of water.⁴⁷ His name, Viracocha, can be interpreted to mean "sea foam" (Gary Urton, in his analysis of the myth, takes this to signify, "the synthesis

⁴⁵El señorío de los Incas, p. 36.

⁴⁶Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 2, p. 181.

⁴⁷j.e. Juan de Betanzos, "Suma y narración de los Incas" [1551] in Crónicas peruanas de interés indígena, ed. F. Esteve Barba, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol. 209 (Madrid: 1968), p. 9.

of opposing motions."⁴⁸) Viracocha's very movement, light and smooth (without joints), is fluid-like. This fluidity is in keeping with the orality which characterizes Viracocha.

Finally, the cosmogony itself was communicated orally by the Andeans. For literate peoples, accustomed to sacred traditions existing in definitive textual versions, the variations and contradictions among the various cosmogonies might seem like evidence of their unreliability. For the Andeans, however, the fluidity of the myth testified to its dynamism and life, and to the continued creative activity of the sacred word in the world.

⁴⁸Crossroads, p. 204.

EL QVARTO INGA MAYTACADAC



Figure 3. The Inca Mayta Capac.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 78.)

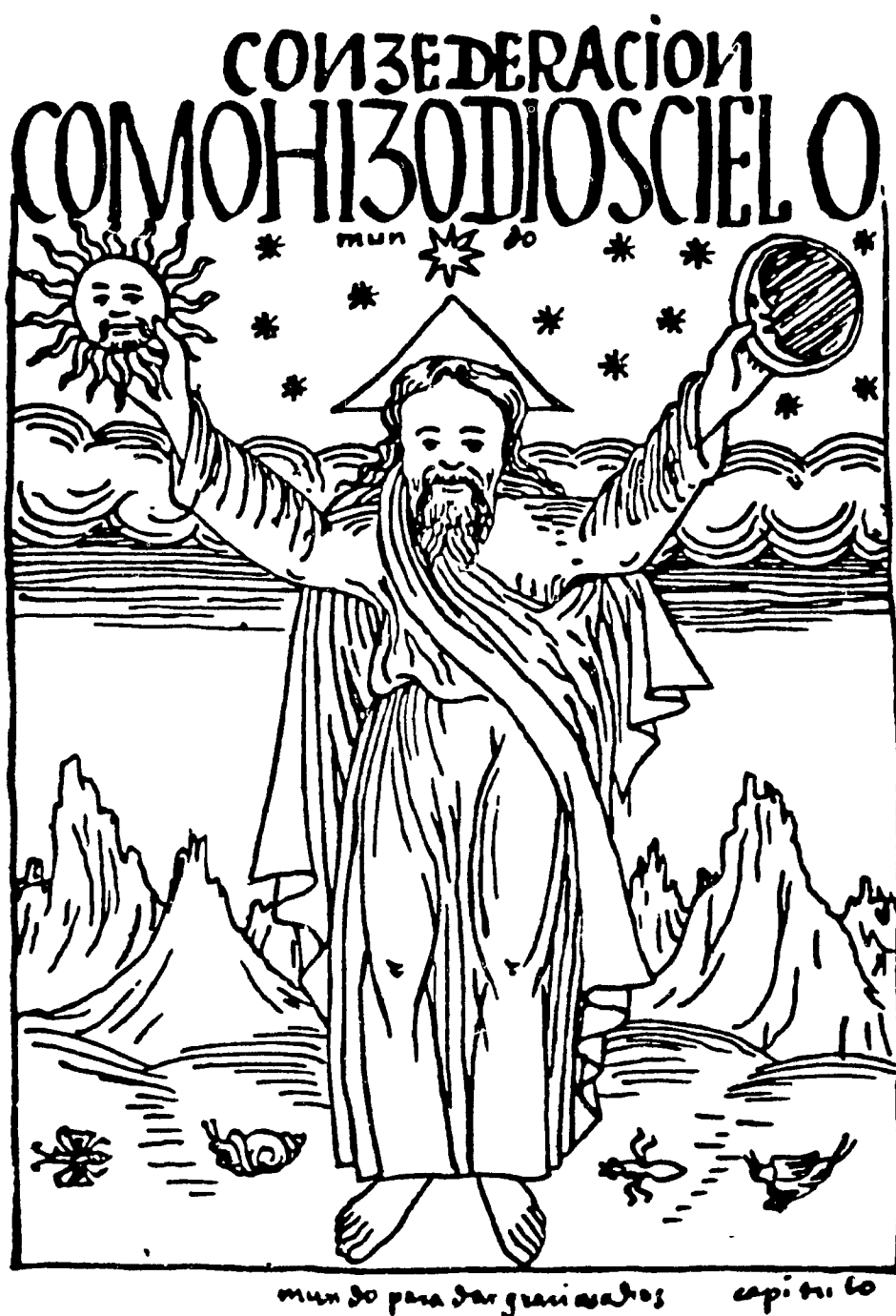


Figure 4. The Act of Creation.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 3, p. 853.)

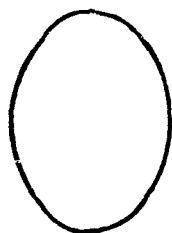


Figure 5. The Creator. (From Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 217)

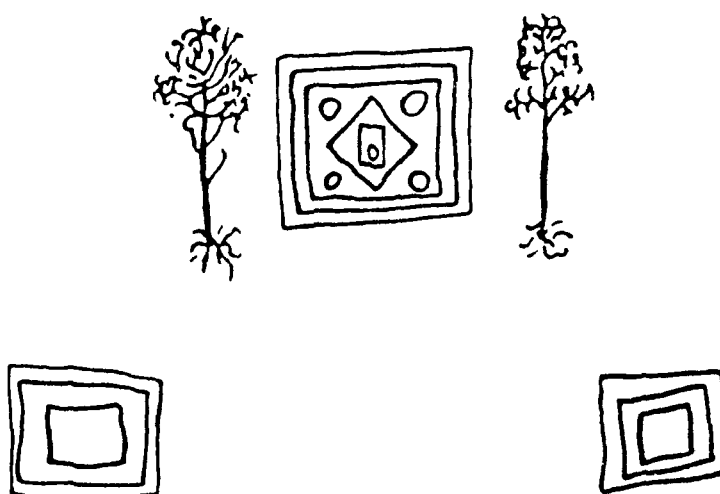


Figure 6. The three windows from which the first Incas and their kin emerged and the two trees symbolizing Manco Capac's parents. (From Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 217)

IV. MYTHS OF THE INCAS

The Origin of the Incas

In the old times people lived like wild beasts, without religion or laws, houses or towns, without cultivating the earth or wearing clothes and without having separate wives. Our father the sun, seeing people in this state, took pity on them. He sent a son and a daughter of his and the moon, called Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo Huaco, to teach the people to worship our father the sun, and to give them laws to live by so that they might live in houses and towns, and cultivate the earth and raise animals like rational and civilized men.

The sun placed his two children in Lake Titicaca and gave them a golden staff, bidding them to set up their court at the site where it would sink into the ground at one thrust. Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo Huaco left the lake and walked north. They spent the night in a dwelling which the Inca Manco Capac called Pacarec Tampu, House of the Dawn, because he left it as the sun rose. When they reached Huanacauri hill in the valley of Cuzco the staff sank in the ground with a single thrust, disappearing into the earth, whereupon they determined to establish their dwelling in the valley.

Manco Capac then went north and Mama Ocllo Huaco south, telling the people they met of their divine mission and calling them out of the wilderness. The people recognized them as children of the sun by their clothes, their pierced ears, their words and their faces, and followed them back to the valley. There they founded the city of Cuzco. Those people convoked by Manco Capac formed Hanan or Upper Cuzco, and those convoked by Mama Ocllo Huaco formed Hurin or Lower Cuzco. Manco Capac ordered that the upper half should have precedence over the lower half, as elder brothers over younger brothers, or right and left arms, as the former were gathered by a man and the latter by a woman. The same division was made in all the towns, large and small, of the empire.

The Inca Manco Capac taught the men agriculture and how to build irrigation canals and the Coya (Queen) Mama Ocllo Huaco taught the women how to spin and weave and make clothes and all other domestic duties. In short, everything pertaining to human life was taught them, with the Inca serving as the teacher of the men and the Coya as the teacher of the women.¹

El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, the half-Inca, half-Spanish chronicler, recorded the myth condensed here in 1609. In it we learn that prior to the arrival of the Incas, the people lived in a state of savagery, virtually indistinguishable from nature. The Incas come from the sky, and therefore from structure, to bring the peoples of the earth out of the chaos of their natural condition into a state of divinely sanctioned order. To do so, they must teach the people to conduct themselves correctly both with respect to their bodies and to nature; specifically, to practice agriculture, to live in towns (i.e. to have a settled communal existence), to wear clothes and to regulate their sexuality. A civilized person is thus one who transcends earth and nature and participates in the structure of the sky. A savage is one who is identified with the earth and nature and therefore unable to interact with both levels of the cosmos or serve as a mediator between them.

¹Condensed from Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 1, pp. 40-44.

The golden staff given to Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo Huaco symbolizes the divine power of the sky which fertilizes the earth at a receptive point. The staff sinks into Huanacauri hill connecting the three levels of the cosmos and establishing Cuzco as a chosen site of communication between the sky and the earth. The axis mundi which is thereby established is composed of three axes - the golden staff of the sky, the mountain of the earth, and the body of the Inca - joined into one. This union is accomplished through the medium of the Inca who is thenceforth the pre-eminent mediator of cosmic exchange and order.

José Arguedas has recorded a modern legend which displays similarities with this myth. The wachok ("fornicators"), who belong to an age before that of the savages, enter into the heart of the mountain through its veins of water to find the water's source. In order to do so they wear golden drums on their heads and golden and silver clothes. When they come out they give the people fertile lands.² This legend would seem to refer to the sexual union of the sky - represented by the gold and silver clothes - with the earth, accomplished through the medium of the bodies of the mythical wachok. The result of this

²Yawar Fiesta, trans. F. Horning Barraclough (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1985), pp. 164-165.

mediated union is fertility, a dynamic and productive cosmos.

In the myth of the origin of the Incas we see the marked male/female dualism characteristic of Andean culture. Manco Capac teaches the men agriculture, and Mama Ocllo Huaco teaches the women domestic duties. Those people gathered by Manco Capac form the dominant Hanan Cuzco, associated with male, sky and structure, while those gathered by Mama Ocllo Huaco form the subordinate Hurin Cuzco, associated with female, earth and fluidity.

Other versions of the myth allow women a more aggressive role than that generally allotted them in the Inca cosmological-political structure. Sarmiento de Gamboa, for example, describes "Mama Guaco," Manco Capac's sister, as extremely strong and fierce. She throws the golden staff which fixes in the ground at Cuzco, thereby assuming the role of cosmic integrator.³ This association of femininity with force would seem to be more in keeping with popular Andean tradition, in which the female earth plays a dominant role, than with Inca cosmology, in which femininity is linked with conquered elements and peoples.

As well as being associated with male and female, Upper and Lower Cuzco are compared to an elder brother and a younger brother by Garcilaso de la Vega. While the

³p. 217.

male/female division of the city is an expression of complementary opposition, the elder brother/younger brother division provides a model for antagonistic similarity, indicating that the two halves may sometimes vie with each other for power. A ritual battle, in fact, took place annually between the two moieties of the city.⁴ However the analogy of Cuzco to the right and left sides of a body emphasizes that Cuzco, and all other communities participating in its structure, is fundamentally one.

In Garcilaso's myth the Incas have three symbolic birth places: the sky (they are born of the sun and the moon), water (they emerge from Lake Titicaca), and the earth (they come out of the dwelling Pacarec Tampu). This enables them to represent and integrate all three basic elements.

Other, perhaps earlier, versions of the myth stress the relation of the Incas to the earth. Pachacuti Yamqui, for instance gives the Incas human parents, represented in symbolic form as two trees (fig. 6, p. 74)⁵ Sarmiento de Gamboa, relating a popular version of the myth, names Pacaritambo (Pacarec Tampu) as the birthplace of the Incas. He describes it as three windows in the side of a hill. The

⁴Molina of Cuzco, p. 61. A ritual battle known as a tincuy (encounter) regularly takes place between the two moieties of many modern Andean communities. In "Complementarity and Conflict" Olivia Harris writes that the principle of the tincuy is that "like fights like," p. 36.

⁵214-217.

Incas: four brothers - Manco Capac, Ayar Auca, Ayar Cache and Ayar Ucho - and their sisters-wives, emerge from the middle window. They decide to conquer the land but Ayar Cache threatens the enterprise with his violent and disorderly conduct. After an argument, Manco Capac sends Ayar Cache back to Pacaritambo to fetch something and has him walled in. When the remaining Incas reach Huanacauri hill, Ayar Ucho turns into a stone huaca on the top. He tells his brothers and sisters to remember him in all their ceremonies, particularly that of huarochico, the puberty rite of boys. Ayar Auca then turns into a stone post of possession in the valley below, in between two rivers, on the future site of the Inca temple, Coricancha. Manco Capac and Mama Guaco then go on to conquer the surrounding peoples and found Cuzco.⁶

This version of the myth exhibits the fluidity between body and land characteristic of the pachacuti, the destructured intermediate period between ages. The Incas emerge from the earth and three of them return to the earth. Ayar Cache, associated with chaos, is assimilated into the chaotic lower world.⁷ Ayar Ucho, associated with sacred

⁶pp. 213-219.

⁷By travelling back southward to Pacaritambo, Ayar Cache takes the route of anti-structure back to the center of origin. Similarly, when Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo Huaco convoke the people from the wilderness in Garcilaso's myth, the former travels ahead (north), toward male structure, and the latter back (south), towards female fluidity.

structure, is transformed into a huaca on top of a hill, representing thus the structure of the upper world.

Finally, Ayar Auca becomes a stone post of possession on the site of the Inca temple in the valley, symbolizing the worldly order of the Incas and the mediating role of this world. Auca can mean "adversary," implying as well, therefore, the need to maintain the upper and lower worlds distinct and to protect the structure of the center from the chaotic forces outside.

The centrality of the Inca order in the cosmos is indicated at the start of the myth when the Incas emerge from the middle of the three windows of Pacaritambo. Garcilaso de la Vega, elsewhere in his book, relates that the Incas had this middle window decorated with gold and precious stones. He then goes on to give the meaning of Cuzco as "navel," thus reaffirming Inca centrality with a bodily metaphor.⁸

The myths of the origins of the Incas show parallels with the Viracocha cosmogony, and can perhaps be viewed as variations on this myth. In Garcilaso's myth the Incas appear at Lake Titicaca (the center of origin), as does Viracocha, and take the same route northward as he does. The pre-Inca age of savagery in the myth corresponds to the initial period of darkness in the cosmogony. The Incas are

⁸Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 46.

sent by the sun to call the people out of the wilderness into civilization. Viracocha creates the sun and then calls people out of the earth and teaches them how to live. Like Viracocha, the Incas serve as models for their subjects.⁹

Viracocha's three helpers are similar to Manco Capac's three brothers in Sarmiento's myth. Taguapaca, the helper who disobeys the orders of Viracocha and thereby embodies anti-structure, is sent back into the fluidity of the earth, as is Ayar Cache, the brother who disobeys Manco Capac. Both Viracocha and the Incas carry staves which help them order and animate the world. Pachacuti Yamqui, in fact, states that the staff of the Incas was that left behind by Viracocha. It is with this staff, according to Pachacuti Yamqui, that Manco Capac is able to prevent himself from being turned into stone by a huaca.¹⁰ (A staff, called tupa yauri, royal sceptre, in fact formed an essential part of the royal insignia of the Incas.)

While the Incas have a similar structuring role as Viracocha, nevertheless they are part of the created world and partake of its nature. Viracocha contains both male and female within himself, and thus needs no partner (Molina of Cuzco explicitly states that Viracocha did not have a

⁹José María Arguedas writes that "Inca" signifies the original model of every being, as well as "ruler". "Taki Parwa y la poesía quechua de la república" Letras Peruanas, vol. 5, no. 12 (1955), p. 74.

¹⁰p. 215.

wife.¹¹⁾ The closest the Incas, as participants in the dualistic cosmos, can come to this ideal, is to form a male-female pair in which they are united both by marriage and by blood (brother-sister).¹²

As Viracocha ultimately transcends worldly dualism and structures, the inhabitants of the earth find him alien and turn against him. As the Incas, however, manifest the highest order of worldly dualism and structure, the peoples of the earth, according to Garcilaso, recognize them as children of the sun, the pre-eminent symbol of structure, and follow them. This distinction is expressed in part by the different clothes worn by Viracocha and the Incas which contribute to the rejection of the former and the acceptance of the latter. Whereas Viracocha wears a white gown, placing him outside worldly categories, the gowns of the Incas, according to Cieza de León, are richly decorated,¹³ placing them at the head of worldly categories.

This distinction is perhaps further manifested by the contrast between the plain oval (integrity) which represents the Creator and the elaborate rectangles (diversity) which represent the created Incas (figs. 5 and 6, p. 74) in

¹¹p. 35.

¹²Pachacuti Yamqui relates that a brother and sister of Manco Capac are turned into stone for committing incest. Manco Capac escapes this punishment because he carries Viracocha's staff and thus participates in his power.

¹³El señorío de los Incas, p. 42.

Pachacuti Yamqui's version of the myth. Finally, while Viracocha disappears over the sea and leaves behind the structured world, the Incas remain in Cuzco, the earthly center and model of structure, to serve as mediators of power and order.

The Reversal of the World

The traditional sequence of Inca rulers from Manco Capac to the Conquest, with possible dates of reign for the later rulers, is as follows:

Manco Capac	
Sinchi Roca	
Lloque Yupanqui	
Mayta Capac	
Capac Yupanqui	
Inca Roca	
Yahuar Huacac	
Viracocha Inca	
Pachacuti	(1438-1471)
Tupac Inca	(1471-1493)
Huayna Capac	(1493-1529)
Huascar	(1525-1532)
Atahualpa	(1532-1533) ¹⁴

¹⁴From Conrad and Demarest, p. 98. This list is intended to serve solely as a guide to the reader and not to place Inca mythology within a historical framework.

It was with the ninth Inca, Pachacuti, that the area controlled by the Incas began to reach imperial proportions according to Inca tradition. The new era was inaugurated by Pachacuti's victory over the rebellious Chancas (a central Andean people), who were on the verge of capturing Cuzco and overthrowing the Inca state. The traditions dealing with this crucial event are not as markedly mythological in character as the previous myths we have examined, however, they manifest a symbolic structure consistent with that of the earlier myths.

Following is an abbreviation of the tradition of the battle against the Chancas as recorded by Juan de Betanzos in 1551.

Viracocha Inca received his name after having been spoken to by Viracocha one night. During his reign, Cuzco was threatened by the neighbouring Chancas. Viracocha Inca, finding his forces outnumbered by those of the Chancas, retired to a nearby mountain with his son and heir, Inca Urco, and the inhabitants of Cuzco. The youngest of Viracocha Inca's sons, Yupanqui (later called Pachacuti), stayed behind in the city with three companions.

Yupanqui sent a message to his father saying that Cuzco should be defended. His father responded that he was a man who spoke with God and that God had told him that he could not resist the Chanca forces. In a state of desolation, Yupanqui went outside the city and prayed to Viracocha, the Creator, for help. While he was sleeping, Viracocha appeared to him in the form of a man and told him he would send troops to help him attain victory.

The day of the battle with the Chancas a great number of unknown people appeared, and with their aid and that of his companions and supporters, Yupanqui was able to defeat the Chancas. After the battle these unknown people sent by Viracocha disappeared. Despite

this victory, Viracocha Inca refused to recognize Yupanqui as his heir.

Yupanqui, now in command of Cuzco, examined the city and found it to be built on swampy ground with small, poor houses distributed at random. The first thing he did was build a temple to the one he had seen in the vision before the battle. Yupanqui had called the figure in the vision Viracocha, but now he reasoned that, as he had never actually been told his name, and as the vision had shone so brightly that he seemed to see its light before him all day, the figure must, in fact, have been the sun. He therefore dedicated the temple to the sun and established the rites which would be celebrated in honour of the sun. As the vision had addressed Yupanqui as "son," the people thereafter referred to Yupanqui as the "son of the sun".

Yupanqui ordered that the land should be divided up among the inhabitants of the area, with the boundaries between one property and the next clearly delineated. He had food and clothes stored in great quantities in the city for times of need. He rebuilt the irrigation canals and fortified the banks of the two rivers running through Cuzco which regularly flooded the city. He arranged for people from neighbouring communities to intermarry so that they would live together in peace and friendship. He divided the year into months and set up posts to serve as sun dials so that time could be measured.

Yupanqui made a model in earth of the new Cuzco he wanted to build. He then demolished the city and rebuilt it according to his plan. That part of the city below the temple of the sun, he called Hurin Cuzco, and decreed that his allies and Incas of mixed blood should live there, while pure-blooded Incas should occupy that part of the city above the temple of the sun, which he called Hanan Cuzco. The whole city together he named "Lion's body," saying that the inhabitants were the lion's members and that he was its head.

The citizens of Cuzco then decided that Yupanqui should be officially inaugurated as the Inca. When they went to discuss it with him, they found him drawing pictures of bridges and roads. As this was foreign to their understanding, they asked Yupanqui what he was drawing. He, in turn, inquired of them what they had come to ask him. On learning of their mission, Yupanqui refused to be inaugurated as Inca without the approval of his father.

Viracocha Inca came to Cuzco at the request of its citizens, and Yupanqui met him and addressed him as his

lord and father. On seeing how well-ordered the city was, and the great esteem in which Yupanqui was held by everyone, Viracocha Inca said to his son, "You are truly the son of the sun." He then took the royal fringe off his head and placed it on his son's, renaming him "Pachacuti", "World Reverser".

Pachacuti then ordered Viracocha Inca to drink chicha (corn beer) out of a dirty cup, telling his father that as he had acted as a woman, he was one, and that he should only drink out of dirty cups. Viracocha Inca, prostrate before Pachacuti, responded, "My cruel father! I know my sin." After that Pachacuti treated Viracocha Inca with all honours. When the festivities were over Viracocha Inca left Cuzco once again and Pachacuti went on to conquer many peoples and subject them to the dominion of Cuzco.¹⁵

This tradition has parallels with both the Viracocha cosmogony and the myth of the origin of the Incas. Viracocha Inca (the title "Inca" could come either before or after a name) has obvious associations with Viracocha. Betanzos says that Viracocha Inca received his name after having been spoken to by the god. The chronicler Cieza de León says that the Inca is called Viracocha because he comes from foreign parts and has a foreign style of dress and appearance, as did the Creator.¹⁶ He describes how Viracocha Inca set a rebellious town on fire, as did Viracocha, and has him returning from a visit to the Lake Titicaca region prior to the battle with the Chancas, thus

¹⁵Condensed from pp. 15-56.

¹⁶iEl señorío de los Incas, p. 124.

making him travel the same route as Viracocha.¹⁷ Viracocha Inca's abandonment of Cuzco can be compared to Viracocha's abandonment of the created world.

Cuzco, which represents the world in miniature, thus abandoned, is on the point of succumbing to the forces of chaos. This is the unstructured intermediate period between ages which we find between the age of darkness and the age of light in the cosmogony and between the age of savagery and the age of the Incas in the myth of the origin of the Incas. The behaviour attributed to Inca Urco, Viracocha Inca's heir, before the battle with the Chancas by Cieza de León associates him with chaos and fluidity. He doesn't build houses, he has affairs with married women, he drinks to excess and vomits and urinates without shame in the open.¹⁸ According to Betanzos, when Yupanqui (hereafter referred to as Pachacuti) examines the city he finds it in a state of disorder, built on swampy ground, subject to floods (uncontrolled fluidity) and with poorly-built houses distributed at random (chaos). Inca tradition had it that the unknown warriors sent to assist the Inca prince were stones which changed into people for the battle and then back into stones again,¹⁹ a manifestation of the fluidity

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 127, 136.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 137-138.

¹⁹i.e. Pachacuti Yamqui, p.238.

between land and body characteristic of the period between ages. The event which makes it possible for order to be restored is the defeat of the Chancas, who represent the forces of chaos.

With the defeat of "savagery," Pachacuti becomes the new Manco Capac, the founder of the Inca order. Thus, like Manco Capac, he takes on the title of "son of the sun". Sarmiento de Gamboa mentions that Pachacuti visited and entered inside the shrine of Pacaritambo through which the first Incas had emerged,²⁰ a further indication of Pachacuti's identification with Manco Capac. Manco Capac and Pachacuti were the two fundamental figures of Inca imperial tradition. All Inca laws were apparently attributed to one or the other.²¹ When a rebel Inca leader was inaugurated as Inca after the Conquest, he took the name Manco Capac Pachacuti Yupanqui,²² hoping, no doubt, to associate himself with the world-reversing power of these culture heroes.

As the myth of the origin of the Incas, on a more restricted scale, mirrors the Viracocha cosmogony, so does that of the battle with the Chancas reflect both of these traditions. Pachacuti Yamqui writes that Pachacuti is able

²⁰p. 236.

²¹Murúa, ed. Ballesteros, p. 88.

²²Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 7.

to turn the situation around in his favour during the battle when he takes up the staff which was originally Viracocha's and then Manco Capac's.²³ Pachacuti's three companions are reminiscent of Viracocha's three assistants and Manco Capac's three brothers. In the Viracocha cosmogony the age of darkness is followed by the age of light after Viracocha creates the sun. In the myth of the origin of the Incas, the age of savagery is transformed into an age of culture when the Incas are sent to earth by the sun. Pachacuti is able to defeat the forces of chaos after he has a vision of what he decides is the sun, and he inaugurates the new period of order by building a temple to the sun. Just as fluidity, therefore, indicates a breakdown of categories, light signals the establishment of order.

When Pachacuti makes a model in earth of the new Cuzco, he is repeating not only Manco Capac's original creation of the city, but also Viracocha's modelling of humans out of stone. This analogy is made clearer when Pachacuti uses the metaphor of a lion's body (discussed in ch. VI) to refer to the city. Whereas Viracocha creates the human body, therefore, Pachacuti creates the social body. Pachacuti is associated with the upper half of this body (Hanan Cuzco) and with the temple of the sun which mediates between the two halves.

²³p. 238.

Molina of Cuzco reports that Pachacuti had a vision of the sun as a man with a lion's head between his legs, another lion over his shoulder, and a serpent running up his back.²⁴ If this divine figure can be taken to represent the cosmic body, the two lions would symbolize the separate structures of earth and sky, and the serpent the integrating axis which connects the two halves of the cosmos, as does the Inca. Sarmiento de Gamboa, in fact, mentions that the lightning deity gave Pachacuti a two-headed serpent as a talisman,²⁵ which emphasizes again Pachacuti's ability to communicate with both halves of the cosmos.

For Pachacuti and Manco Capac, Cuzco serves as a dualistic microcosmos through which humans are structured, just as humans were originally structured by Viracocha after the creation of the dualistic cosmos. Pachacuti, however, takes his structuring activity further than either Manco Capac or Viracocha. He creates storehouses of food and clothes, thus bringing agriculture to its cultural apex, as depicted in Pachacuti Yamqui's diagram of Inca cosmology (figs. 1 and 2) in which the grid at the bottom represents both an agricultural terrace and a storehouse. He intermarries people from different communities so that their communities will live in harmony, thereby applying the

²⁴p. 20. This vision of the sun appears to Pachacuti in a well, another example of structure arising from fluidity.

²⁵p. 237.

complementary principle of karihuarmi, man-woman, to social bodies.

Bernabe Cobo writes of Pachacuti, "nothing was overlooked by him in which he did not impose all good order and harmony."²⁶ This emphasis on structuring is graphically evidenced by Pachacuti's division of the land into separate properties with clearly marked boundaries. Pachacuti's rebuilding of irrigation canals and fortification of river banks manifests his desire to keep categories integrated, but not "flooded" or confused. By dividing the year into months and creating a system to measure time, Pachacuti structures time as well as space, thus establishing a total order.

While Pachacuti can be seen as repeating and continuing Viracocha's activities, he can also be seen as opposing and supplanting Viracocha. Pachacuti takes over Cuzco, the microcosmos, after it has been abandoned by Viracocha Inca (who symbolizes the Creator). The vision which Pachacuti at first attributes to Viracocha the Creator, he later attributes to the sun, perhaps to distinguish himself from his father who communicates with Viracocha.²⁷ Viracocha Inca is brought back to Cuzco, the created world, to

²⁶p. 78.

²⁷Molina of Cuzco reports that Pachacuti saw the vision of the sun while going to see his father (p. 20). This indicates that the sun has supplanted Viracocha Inca as Pachacuti's father.

recognize Pachacuti's superior structuring power as "son of the sun," and to confer on him the name of "Pachacuti", "the one who reverses the world".

Pachacuti forces his prostrate father to drink dirty chicha and calls him a woman, associating him thus with the lower world, disorder, fluidity and femininity. Pachacuti, in contrast, is associated with the upper world, structure and masculinity. When Viracocha Inca entered the city, Pachacuti addressed him as "father," now Viracocha Inca addresses Pachacuti as "father". With the reversal of order the son becomes the father of the father and the created Sun takes primacy over the Creator.

Sarmiento de Gamboa mentions that Pachacuti placed a figure of Viracocha to the right of the image of the sun in the temple, and a figure of Illapa, thunder-lightning, to the left, adding that Pachacuti took the statue of Illapa to be his huaque, symbolic brother.²⁸ These three divinities can be said to form a triumvirate in Inca religion. In his analysis of Inca mythology Zuidema finds Viracocha to be associated with the rainy season, night, and fertility, Illapa with war and liminal periods, and the Sun with the

²⁸p. 237. Illapa was personified by the Incas as a man in the sky. Polo de Ondegardo, "Errores y supersticiones," p. 6.

dry season, day and political administration²⁹ During the liminal period of the battle with the Chancas, accordingly, Pachacuti can be identified with his "brother" lightning, the deity of transition, but in the period of reconstruction afterwards he becomes identified with his "father" the sun, the deity of structure.

Some chronicles show an attempt to overcome the opposition between Viracocha/ Viracocha Inca and the Sun/ Pachacuti. Pachacuti Yamqui does this by identifying Viracocha as the "true Sun," of which the worldly sun is only a representative.³⁰ Garcilaso de la Vega attributes the victory over the Chancas to Viracocha Inca,³¹ which may reflect the interests of factions within Inca society with closer ties to Viracocha Inca than to Pachacuti, or simply a desire to give Viracocha Inca a more respectable role in the proceedings in keeping with his sacred associations.

Garcilaso de la Vega describes Viracocha Inca as having a vision of a man holding an animal on a leash who tells him he comes from his father the sun and promises him divine aid in his endeavours on behalf of the empire.³² The animal

²⁹"Myth and History in Ancient Peru" in The Logic of Culture: Advances in Structural Theory and Methods, I. Rossi and contributors, (London: Tavistock, 1982), p. 157.

³⁰p. 228.

³¹Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 263.

³²Ibid., vol. 1, p. 218.

held on a leash by the divine figure can be seen as symbolic of the barbaric nations the Inca is to subjugate and civilize. A few of the nations subjugated by the Incas, however, were considered to be too closely allied to the earth to be fully civilized. Garcilaso writes of a group of these conquered by Pachacuti's son, Tupac:

They lived like wild beasts scattered about the countryside, which made it more difficult to instruct them and bring them into a state of civilization than to simply conquer them. [The Incas] taught them to make clothes and foot wear and to cultivate the earth by making irrigation canals and terraces... but the Incas did not build temples for the sun nor houses for the chosen virgins because of the unfitness and vileness of the people.³³

The fate of those subjects who refused Inca rule and civilization or, in other words, refused to realize their full human potential through participation in the Inca order, was to be cut off from the sacred structure of the sky and integrated into the chaotic earth. In this regard, Garcilaso notes that the captives of the battle with the Chancas were warned to either be good vassals or be "swallowed up alive" by the earth.³⁴

The Inca ideological program, therefore, was to transform chaotic, "savage" bodies into structured, "civilized" bodies. This program was part of the cosmological cycle, evidenced in the cosmogony and in the

³³Ibid., vol. 2, p. 168.

³⁴Ibid., vol. 1, p. 265.

myths presented here, in which chaos is structured, then degenerates into chaos again, and is restructured.

In the myth of the battle with the Chancas, Cuzco, originally structured by Manco Capac, has fallen prey to the powers of chaos, symbolized by the "savage" Chancas. The reigning Inca has effectively deposed himself by abandoning the city. The Inca who is the heir to the throne, Urco, and who should serve as a symbol of structure (urco, in fact, means "male," and is therefore associated with structure), embodies the structural decay of the state by his dissolute behaviour. Pachacuti reverses the situation by defeating the Chancas and supplanting the reigning Inca and his heir. Sarmiento de Gamboa states, in fact, that Pachacuti kills Inca Urco after knocking him into a river.³⁵ Pachacuti thus physically unites Urco with the fluidity he symbolized and integrates him into the earth (as did Viracocha with Taguapaca and Manco Capac with Ayar Cache).

Pachacuti is then able to restructure Cuzco, fortifying river banks, marking boundaries, reaffirming the division of the city into two halves and establishing a mediating center, etc. With its structured fluidity and complementary dualism, Cuzco can now serve as an ideal both for the empire and for the human body.

³⁵p. 238.

The Inca Sensory Order

The myths of the Incas contain few references to the chemical senses: taste and smell.³⁶ One notable exception is found in the myth of the origin of the Incas where the names of two of Manco Capac's brothers, Cache and Ucho, refer respectively to salt and red pepper, the two most important Andean condiments. (The meaning of the word "Ayar," which precedes the names of Manco Capac's brothers, is not known.)

Garcilaso de la Vega writes of the allegorical use of the names of these condiments that "by salt... the Andeans understand the Inca's teaching on the natural life and by pepper the pleasure it gave them."³⁷ This creates an interesting dichotomy between teaching and pleasure which is difficult to reconcile, however, with Cache's (salt's) associations with the chaotic underworld and Ucho's (pepper's) association with the structured upper world.

It appears probable that salt is connected with the under world (Cache is sealed in a cave) in the myth in part

³⁶In Sarmiento de Gamboa's version of the myth of the origin of the Incas, the Incas smell the earth they turn up with their staff as they go along until they reach the fertile valley of Cuzco (p. 217). This use of smell to test the richness of the soil, however, would not seem to have any symbolic associations.

³⁷Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 47.

because it is found on or under the ground, and pepper with the upper world (Ucho becomes a huaca on a hill) because it grows above the ground. Interestingly, one possible interpretation of Manco (the Inca's second name "Capac" means "noble") is a kind of cereal,³⁸ which then suggests the image of a neutral food in between the opposites of salt and pepper.

According to modern Peruvian Andean tradition the inhabitants of the first age of the world did not use salt nor pepper.³⁹ If the Incas held the same belief, which seems quite possible, then the appearance of Cache and Ucho in the myth of the origin of the Incas would have represented the introduction of these two condiments into the world. The use of salt and pepper would consequently form an important part of the "culture" the Incas impart to their subjects in the myth.

It was not only the use of salt and pepper which was culturally important to the Incas, however, but also the abstention from their use at certain times. Abstaining from salt and pepper, in fact, was the primary element of the ritual fasts which were an essential prelude to most Inca ceremonies (see p. 148 below). This ritual abstention is

³⁸Urbano, Wiracocha y Ayar, p. XLIX.

³⁹Catherine Allen, "Patterned Time: The Mythic History of a Peruvian Community," Journal of Latin American Lore 10:2 (1984), p. 155.

perhaps symbolized in the myth by the walling up of salt in the cave, and the petrification of pepper.

Lévi-Strauss has convincingly shown that for many peoples of the Amazonian region cooking represents a transformation from nature to culture,⁴⁰ and the same may hold true, to a certain extent, for the Andeans. The inhabitants of the Sibundoy Valley in the Colombian Andes, for instance, in a creation myth which has similarities with the Viracocha cosmogony, describe the first age of the world as characterized by darkness, the second age by light, the third age by raw food, and the fourth by cooking.⁴¹ For the Incas, it would appear to have been the use and control of condiments which was one of the characteristics of civilization.

Touch plays a greater role in Inca mythology than either taste or smell. The most prominent use of touch in Inca myths is to accomplish or prevent a transformation: Ayar Ucho turns to stone after being touched by a stone huaca,⁴² Pachacuti models the new Cuzco in clay before having it built, Viracocha Inca passes on the kingship to

⁴⁰The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology: I, trans. J. and D. Weightman (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

⁴¹John Holmes McDowell, Sayings of the Ancestors: The Spiritual Life of the Sibundoy Indians (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1989).

⁴²Sarmiento de Gamboa, p. 216.

Pachacuti by placing the royal fringe on his head, etc. On the other hand, Viracocha uses his staff to put out the fire which threatens to destroy the world and Manco Capac hits a huaca with his staff to prevent himself from being turned into stone.⁴³ This emphasizes the power of touch to either join or separate, attract or repel.

As in the creation myth, in the myths of the Incas touch is often intimately related to hearing and sight, thereby linking its particular power to accomplish or prevent a transformation to these senses. The sacred staff which appears in the different myths, provides a good example of this sensory overlapping.

In the previous chapter we learned that Viracocha's staff contained his teachings and thus represented a fusion of touch and sound. According to one chronicle, when Manco Capac uses this staff to strike a huaca which has captured his brother and sister, the huaca responds: "If you hadn't brought that staff which that old chatterbox [Viracocha] left you.... I would have dealt with you according to my will too."⁴⁴ On being hit by the staff, the huaca is addressed by Viracocha's word, which is embodied in the staff, and is thereby obliged to respond. Later in the work, when the Chancas are attacking Cuzco, Pachacuti hears

⁴³Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 215.

⁴⁴Ibid.

a voice from the sky telling him to take the staff from the temple. With the staff, and the divine words contained in it, he is able to not only "animate his soldiers and captains so they will fight," but to animate rocks so that they will become soldiers.⁴⁵

The power of light and sight is merged into the staff in the myth of the origin of the Incas, in which the staff symbolizes a ray of sun. Pachacuti Yamqui states that the staff containing Viracocha's teachings turned into gold, the metal of the sun, on the birth of Manco Capac.⁴⁶ This suggests an evolution from touch to hearing to sight, such as occurs in the cosmogony in which humans are molded by touch, animated by sound, then brought into the light.

The Incas are strongly identified with light in their myths. The foremost example of this, of course, is the Incas' reputed descent from the sun. One myth goes so far as to state that Manco Capac was engendered by a ray of light entering a window,⁴⁷ thereby substituting light for touch as the medium of procreation. The Incas' emergence from Pacaritambo, "House of the Dawn," as the sun rises

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 238.

⁴⁶pp. 213-214.

⁴⁷Cristóbal de Vaca, "Discurso sobre la descendencia y gobierno de los Incas" [1542] in Colección de libros y documentos referentes a la historia del Perú, ser.2, vol. 3 (Lima :1929), p. 7.

symbolically equates their birth with the birth of the sun.⁴⁸

The sun was a very useful patron god for the Incas as it could be perceived, and therefore worshipped, from anywhere in the empire. However, as the sun revealed himself primarily through light, it was essential to the Incas that the sense of sight be properly valued by their subjects. When the Incas bade their subjects to turn from the worship of the lowly creatures of the earth to that of the sun,⁴⁹ they were also asking for a change from sacred models which were accesible to all the senses, to a sacred model which was principally accessible only through sight.⁵⁰

The battle between the traditional ear-minded Andean culture and the eye-minded culture of the Incas is portrayed in the following Inca myth:

The Inca Capac Yupanqui wanted to see how the huacas spoke with their followers. The ministers of a huaca took him into a dark hut and called on their huaca to speak to them. The spirit of the huaca entered with the sound of the wind, leaving everyone chilled and afraid. The Inca then ordered that the door and windows be opened so that he could see the huaca. When the door was opened the huaca hid his face. The Inca asked him why, if he was so powerful, was he afraid to raise his eyes? The figure, which was of frightening size, very

⁴⁸ The sun, in fact, was believed to travel underneath the earth at night. Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 114. The Incas emerge from the earth at dawn, as the sun does.

⁴⁹Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 64.

⁵⁰The light of the sun is given far more import in Inca mythology than its heat.

ugly, with thick, curly hair and a foul odour, shouted like thunder and rushed out.⁵¹

Here the Inca, through the power of sight, defeats the local huaca, who communicates through sound and who is evidently a thunder deity. Light reveals the huaca, who was previously believed worthy of worship, to in fact be repulsive: ugly, disproportionate and foul-smelling. The value of light and sight is thus made evident.⁵²

The association of the Incas with light and sight is brought to the fore in the myth of the battle with the Chancas. Here, Viracocha Inca represents the old, ear-minded order, and Pachacuti, the new, eye-minded one. Whereas Viracocha Inca only hears the voice of Viracocha in the myth, Pachacuti has a resplendent vision of the sun. The figure of the sun which Pachacuti sees in Molina of Cuzco's version of the myth leaves him a crystal mirror in which he is able to see everything he chooses.⁵³ This is in striking contrast to the traditional ability of the Andean diviner to speak with everything he chooses.⁵⁴

⁵¹Condensed from Pachacuti Yamqui, pp. 229-230.

⁵²The assertion that the voice of the Creator can destroy the "light of the sun," the Inca, contained in the Huarochiri myth (see p. 66 above), may represent a local response to this.

⁵³p. 21.

⁵⁴Andean holy objects and places were and are oracles which communicate with their followers through speech.

Pachacuti's emphasis on vision and on visual representations is presented in the myth as something new for his subjects. When the leading citizens of Cuzco come to talk with him and see him drawing pictures of bridges and roads, they find this reduction of the world to a flat, visual representation "foreign to their understanding".⁵⁵ Pachacuti's structuring ability allies him with the power of light. When his father returns to Cuzco and sees how well-ordered the city has become, he declares to Pachacuti: "You are truly the son of the sun".⁵⁶

The Incas, however, did not wish to negate the power of sound and hearing, but rather to control it. After Capac Yupanqui defeated the huaca through the power of his sight, the Incas were said to have invoked the huacas of their empire to speak on behalf "of the one with strong eyes."⁵⁷ Sight now controlled speech. Significantly, the Inca officials in charge of ensuring that Inca laws were followed in all parts of the empire were known as tucuy ricuy "those who see all."⁵⁸

⁵⁵Betanzos, p. 50.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 52.

⁵⁷Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 230.

⁵⁸That the Incas recognized that sight and light have their limits, however, is evidenced by the reflection attributed to Pachacuti that the sun, which is so easily blocked by a cloud, cannot be the all-powerful Creator. Cobo, pp. 78-79.

As Pachacuti structured fluidity, so he structured sound. In one myth concerning a previous Pachacuti figure, sound and fluidity are intimately connected. In this myth a giant dressed in red threatens to cause a flood by blowing on his trumpet.⁵⁹ Pachacuti is able not only to prevent the giant (who is associated with the chaos of the first age) from flooding the earth, but also to enter into a harmonious relationship with him,⁶⁰ and therefore with sound and fluidity.

The disorder of sound, again, characterizes the liminal "fluid" period of the battle with the Chancas. Cieza de León makes particular mention of the confusion of noise at this time. He writes that Pachacuti and the leader of the Chancas met before the battle but that "they didn't gain anything from seeing each other because they got worked up with words... and made a great noise, for here men are great show-offs when they fight and their bark is feared more than their bite."⁶¹

After the battle, however, Pachacuti is able to control sound as he controls fluidity and make use of its integrating and fertilizing power. Whereas before his victory the inhabitants of Cuzco spoke in discord, now they

⁵⁹The trumpets used by the Incas were often conch shells which were associated with water.

⁶⁰Murúa, ed. Bayle, pp. 105-106.

⁶¹El señorío de los Incas, p. 140.

"all say to him in one voice, 'You are the son of the sun'".⁶² Similarly, the Incas controlled the discord of the many different languages spoken by their millions of subjects by making Quechua the official language of the empire.

Therefore, although the Incas placed a particular religious emphasis on sight, as they did on the sun; sound, like water, was still the subject of a great deal of symbolic attention. The Incas, in fact, were ultimately so steeped in the oral culture of the Andes, that they communicated ritually even with the sun, the pre-eminent symbol of sight, through sound. Garcilaso de la Vega, for example, writes that, after the victory over the Chancas, a messenger was sent to the temple of the sun "to tell [the sun] of the victory which had been obtained through his favour and aid, as though he wouldn't have seen it."⁶³

⁶²Betanzos, pp. 51-52.

⁶³Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 265.

V. RITUALS AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE INCAS

Conquest, Exchange and the Body

The major rituals of the Incas dealt with war, agriculture and lifecycle passages. Each of these shall be treated here in turn. The expansionist drive of the Inca state meant that warfare was a standard part of the lives of the Incas and their subjects. All ordinary adult men were subject to military service and, prowess on the battlefield being richly rewarded, military service was one of the few means by which an ordinary Inca subject could improve his lot in life.

War rituals were primarily concerned with fortifying the powers of the Inca's forces and diminishing those of the enemy. In one pre-war ritual, for instance, a llama was kept without food in the hope that the hearts of the Inca's enemies would be as weak as that of the llama.¹ In an important post-war ritual, the Inca would walk over the

¹Polo de Ondegardo, "Los errores y supersticiones de los Incas, sacadas del tratado y averiguación que hizo el Licenciado Polo" [1559] in Colección de libros y documentos referentes a la historia del Perú, ser. 1, vol. 3, ed. H.H. Urteaga and C. A. Romero (Lima: 1916), p. 38.

prone bodies of his defeated enemies proclaiming, "I step on my enemies". So crucial was this rite of "stepping on the enemy" to the structure of power in Tahuantinsuyu, that, after the battle with the Chancas, Inca Viracocha and his son Pachacuti had a prolonged dispute over who would step on the Chanca prisoners. Inca Viracocha wanted his chosen heir, Inca Urco, to perform the ritual, but Pachacuti declared that he had not conquered the Chancas "to have them stepped on by women like Inca Urco and his brothers".²

It was essential that the person who performed this rite strongly exemplify maleness because the Incas associated their forces with dominant masculinity and those of the conquered enemy with subordinate femininity. A similar rite to that of "stepping on the enemy" occurred when Inca Viracocha lay down at Pachacuti's feet and acknowledged Pachacuti as the new Inca. At that time Pachacuti explicitly called his father a woman for failing to defend Cuzco.³

War, with few exceptions, was an exclusively male enterprise and an expression of male power. The name of a popular weapon of the Southern Andeans, the ayllu. three stones tied to cords, in fact, could also mean the male

²Betanzos, p. 23.

³Ibid., p. 52.

genitals (as well as a kin group).⁴ To lose in war was to be symbolically castrated. This is possibly why the Incas made their prisoners wear long dresses - women's garb - when they were paraded through Cuzco as part of the conquest ceremonies.⁵ Conversely, the Inca's troops could not touch women's clothes or possessions in times of war and women could not touch instruments of battle, no doubt to prevent any debilitation of the army's masculine power through feminine contact.⁶

The male/female dualism of conquerors and conquered was reinforced by the appropriation of captured women as wives by the Incas. Irene Silverblatt writes:

The male/female opposition upon which the [Inca] conquest hierarchy rested was used to indicate a symbolic relationship between a group of conquerors and those who were conquered. Further, the relation between these categories was expressed via terms of marriage alliance: male conquerors wedded conquered women, and an intermediary status between the two was conceptualized as the product of their union.⁷

The ritual of "stepping on the enemy" confirmed this hierarchy by asserting the dominance of the Inca social body

⁴Zuidema, The Ceque System, pp. 72-73.

⁵Sarmiento, p. 238.

⁶Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 355.

⁷Moon, Sun and Witches, p. 86.

over that of opposing groups and associating the prone bodies of the enemy with the female qualities of submission, lowness, and earth.

Agriculture, like war, was idealized by the Incas as a specifically male task. In Inca agriculture it was the earth which was portrayed as the conquered and submissive feminine "other". The way the Incas "civilized" "savage" "female" outsiders by incorporating them into the Inca order was similar to the way they "civilized" the "savage" "female" earth through agriculture.

The agricultural ritual analogous to "stepping on the enemy" was the hailli, a ritual breaking of the earth with a foot plow accompanied by song (fig. 7, p. 152). Garcilaso de la Vega brings out the intrinsic connection between this seemingly simple agricultural rite and Inca rule:

The songs [the Incas] sang in praise of the sun and their kings were all based on the meaning of the word hailli, which... means triumph over the earth which they ploughed and disembowelled so that it should give fruit.⁸

Sex and marriage were also understood to a certain extent by the Incas as the conquest and civilization of

⁸Comentarios reales, v. 1, p. 228. In modern Andean tradition this conception of agriculture as intrusive persists. Many Andeans, for instance, will not work the earth on certain days when she is thought to be particularly sensitive, or "alive". Bernabe Condori and Rosalind Gow, Kay Pacha (Cusco, Peru: Centro de estudios rurales "Bartolome de Las Casas," 1982), p. 5.

"savage" female bodies.⁹ The word purum could mean an unconquered enemy, uncultivated land, or a virgin woman. Sex and marriage, however, while on the one hand considered fundamental to civilization, on the other hand were seen as a corruption of an original pure state. Virginity in both women and men, although not generally prized by the Andeans,¹⁰ could serve to symbolize purity and wholeness within a sacred context.

The Incas created an institution of lifetime virgins called acllas, chosen women.¹¹ These women were selected at an early age for their beauty from throughout the empire. After a period of training some were taken or distributed as

⁹This attitude towards women was, of course, not unique to the Incas. Bryan Turner writes:

One feminist account of the universality of patriarchy as a system of power relations of men over women is that, because of their reproductive role in human societies, women are associated with nature rather than culture and hence have a pre-social or sub-social status (p. 115).

¹⁰Polo de Ondegardo writes that the Andeans did not think that sexual relations between a single man and woman were a sin. "Instrucción," p. 203.

¹¹The yanacona ("blacks"), male servants of the Incas, possibly formed the male counterpart of the acllas. They were selected for their superior physiques from among the sons of the curaca chiefs of Tahuantinsuyu. Once they entered the service of the Incas they came under the direct authority of the Inca and were no longer subject to their local regulations. Pachacuti Yamqui implies that the yanacona were kept celibate in their youth (p. 224). As adults, however, they were apparently allowed to marry, and, in fact, the Inca often presented them with acllas who were not intended for religious service, for wives. Zuidema, The Ceque System of Cuzco, p. 225.

wives by the Inca, and the rest were cloistered in special houses next to temples of the sun in order to serve the Inca deities. These acllas were told that if they lost their virginity their bodies would rot and, in fact, were punished by death if they had sexual relations.¹²

Silverblatt writes that this control by the Incas of female sexuality "served to exemplify control over all aspects of social reproduction."¹³ The institution of the acllas also had the cosmological purpose of helping to bind the powers of the male s' to the female earth by offering women, symbolic of the earth, to the sun. As sacred offerings, the acllas had to be whole and flawless, anything else would be an offense to the gods. Virginity therefore, could signify sacrality rather than savagery when it supported the cosmological and imperial order of the Incas.

The conquest of the "other", whether people, land or women, was paired with the establishment of a system of exchange with the other. The Incas, for instance, while imposing their own deities and rites on their subjects, brought the most important huacas of the peoples they conquered to Cuzco where they were housed in a temple and

¹²Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 387., Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 1, 184-192. Some chroniclers suggest that the Inca had sexual access to all the acllas; i.e. Cobo, p. 232. If so, it could only be as the incarnation of the sun, the deity to which the acllas were mated.

¹³Moon, Sun and Witches, p. 107.

served by attendants from their communities of origin.¹⁴ Many agricultural rituals consisted of offerings to the earth in return for allowing herself to be "conquered" through agriculture. Wedding rituals expressed the reciprocity involved in marriage. In one ritual related by Bernabe Cobo, the groom would give the bride a sandal and receive from her a headband, shirt and chest plate.¹⁵

The most fundamental Andean ritual of exchange, and a standard formality of all social occasions, was that of offering a cup of chicha to someone and drinking another cup oneself. This not only was a gesture of hospitality but also served to integrate separate bodies through a sharing of fluids. On the simplest level this ritual would take place between individuals during a social visit. On a more complex level it would seal an alliance between two social bodies, as when an Inca drank with the leader of a conquered people; or between human and sacred bodies: the sun, the earth, rivers, and all important huacas were ritually offered chicha in this manner.¹⁶

The drinking ritual affirmed the mutual, and not necessarily equal, obligations of the participants. For example, one would offer the cup of chicha with one's left

¹⁴Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 269. Anonymous, "Relación de las costumbres antiguas," p. 158.

¹⁵Cobo, p. 248.

¹⁶Betanzos, p. 55.

hand to an inferior, and with one's right hand to an equal or superior.¹⁷ Other ritual expressions of exchange also contained explicit references to the power structure which underlay them. The foreign huacas housed in Cuzco were kept chained by the foot in order to ensure their subjugation to the Inca and that of their communities of origin.¹⁸ Guaman Poma reports that in the midst of festivities giving thanks for the harvest, the Incas would sing songs threatening to uproot the corn if it didn't produce well.¹⁹ The exchange of clothes between bride and groom expressed not only the sexual division of labour - men customarily made footwear in the Andes, and women, clothes - but also the marital hierarchy. By giving his wife a sandal, the husband established his relationship to her as one of high to low, and by presenting her husband with garments for the upper body, the wife, in turn, confirmed her relationship to him as one of low to high. While conquest was paired with

¹⁷Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 2, p. 53.

¹⁸Anonymous, p. 158. Cobo writes of these foreign huacas kept in Cuzco:

When a province rebelled, [the Incas] ordered its native gods and protectors to be taken out in public and ignominiously whipped every day until the said province was reduced to submission. Once it was so reduced [the huacas] former places were restored to them and they were honoured with sacrifices... It is said that most of the rebels surrendered simply on hearing that their idols were being publicly humiliated (p. 145).

¹⁹vol. 1, p. 219.

institutions of exchange and integration, therefore, these institutions often continued to express the structures of domination the Incas desired to establish through conquest.

Rites of Passage

Marriage exemplified the Andean cosmological ideal of karihuarmi, man-woman, the union of complementary forces. The basic Inca marriage ceremony was quite simple: the couple would have their hands united by the Inca or else by his local representative. This signified that from then on the couple should function as one, as karihuarmi. This marriage ceremony, which was followed by local rituals, took place once a year, at which time all marriageable men and women were paired off, with more or less degree of consent on their part.²⁰ It was important that the husband and wife be of equal status and condition, so much so that the blind would be married to the blind, the lame to the lame, and so on.²¹ This ensured that the marital relationship would be balanced and social boundaries not be transgressed.

Marriage was an obligation for all adults, excepting those who were physically unfit or who were sworn to celibacy for religious reasons, and necessary for full

²⁰Cobo, pp. 247-250. Murúa, ed. Bayle, 244-245.

²¹Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 177.

participation in adult life.²² The sexual division of labour, in fact, made life a hardship for any adult without a spouse. While premarital sex was usually tolerated and trial marriages common in some areas, adultery was a serious crime under Inca law for it threatened the cohesion of the marital unit.²³ The Inca had as many secondary wives as he pleased, or as were useful to cement alliances, and could reward his subjects by giving them extra wives, however, monogamy was the usual rule. Even when there were secondary wives, there was always only one principal wife. Women never had more than one husband as this would have upset the balance of male/female power.

Masturbation and homosexuality were also crimes/sins under Inca law²⁴, largely, no doubt, because they "wasted seed", but also because they subverted the ideal of karihuarmi. Homosexuality was particularly abhorred by the

²²Olivia Harris writes of the Laymis, a modern community of Bolivian Aymara:

It is considered extremely unfortunate to die without having been married, and the corpse has to be interred with a symbolic companion for the after-life: a hen for a man and a cock for a woman. Unmarried people are thought to have a far harder journey to the land of the dead. They can travel only at night....The road unmarried souls must go is over thorn bushes, while those of married people travel on paths, and by day.

"Complementarity and Conflict," p. 28.

²³i.e. Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 354.

²⁴Ibid., Cieza de León, El señorío de los Incas, pp. 93-94.

Incas and punished with death, possibly because, by presenting the union of like forces as a model, it threatened the order and integration of the dualistically structured cosmos.

Incest was permitted only to the Inca who was supposed to take one of his full sisters as his Coya, queen. This was in order to maintain the sacred bloodline pure and to most closely approximate the ideal of karihuarmi. As the Inca was identified with the sun, the Coya was identified with the moon and the earth; together they embodied the cosmos.

The Inca's wedding was the occasion for elaborate festivities and sacrifices. Pachacuti Yamqui says that for the wedding of the eleventh Inca, Huayna Capac, the houses of Cuzco were covered with beautiful feathers and the streets scattered with gold. Huayna Capac and his sister-bride were carried on litters in separate processions throughout the city. They entered the temple through separate doors and once inside the high priest presented them with gifts representative of their new state and joined their hands. Afterward the couple were taken to the central plaza where the priest said a prayer over them, concluding the marriage ceremony.²⁵

²⁵pp. 257-259. See also Murúa, ed. Bayle, pp. 235-236.

The coronation of the Inca, which basically consisted of his receiving the royal insignia and swearing to fulfill his imperial duties, coincided with his wedding. For the Inca, the full adult duties which came with marriage consisted of assuming the leadership of the empire, and, conversely, the Inca could not represent the empire without exemplifying the ideal of karihuarmi.

The birth of a son and potential heir to the royal couple was another occasion for public festivities. Apparently, the birth of a royal son constituted a liminal period during which anomalies were tolerated and even expected. Pachacuti Yamqui reports, for instance, that in the celebration following the birth of one of Inca Pachacuti's sons, luminescent stones and a spotted animal associated with hermaphrodites were brought into Cuzco. As well, the Inca gathered all the dwarves and hunchbacks together to make clothes for his son. On the birth of Huayna Capac, all the "men and women who worship two gods," or sorcerors, who were sentenced to death were pardoned.²⁶ This emphasis on anomalies was probably because the birth of a potential heir (among the Incas any son begotten with the Coya was a potential heir, not simply the eldest) created the anomaly of the co-existence of the present and future Incas.

²⁶pp. 242-243, 247.

Few birth rituals are mentioned in the chronicles for ordinary subjects of the Inca. Women would pray to the moon for a safe delivery and men were expected to fast while their wives were giving birth. On the fourth day after the birth, relatives would be invited to eat and drink and see the baby in a ceremony called Ayascay. When the birth was an unusual one, such as of twins, and therefore regarded as a deviation from the normal order, the parents were required to take the ritual precaution of fasting and abstaining from sexual relations for a prescribed period.²⁷

When the child was weaned, the Rutuchico, hair-cutting ceremony was performed. At this ceremony the child's relatives would each cut a lock of hair from the child's head and in return offer the child a gift. In the case of a child of the Inca, these gifts would be very fine; an ordinary child received corn, wool and like goods. The hair thus cut would become a sacred relic. The cutting of the child's hair by relatives in exchange for gifts signified the break the child made from its mother when it was weaned and its integration into the community. At the Rutuchico ceremony children were also given names, another sign of their new status, which they retained until puberty.²⁸

²⁷Molina of Cuzco, p. 67; Cobo, pp. 245-246.

²⁸Molina, p. 67; Cobo, p. 246.

Perhaps the most important Inca rite of passage (aside from death, which will be dealt with in the next chapter) was the male puberty rite, called Huarochoico, breechcloth ceremony, which took place when boys were about fourteen. In preparation for this ceremony, which was held every year and lasted about a month, Inca boys would fast, have their hair cut, and spend a night on Huanacauri hill beside the huaca of Ayar Ucho, reliving the sojourn of the first Incas. During the ceremonies the boys would prove their readiness for manhood by participating in rigorous exercises which were interspersed with lectures given by their Inca elders. As the culmination of the rite the boys would have their ears pierced - Inca men wore large gold ear ornaments -and receive breechcloths.²⁹ The length of time and the number of rituals devoted to the male puberty rite indicate the importance the Incas gave to inculcating the new generation of leaders with Inca values.

The puberty rite for girls, Quicuchico, was of much less importance. A girl would fast for three days in her house from the day she started to menstruate. On the fourth day she would have her hair cut, be dressed in new clothes and participate in a feast with her relatives who would lecture her on her adult duties.³⁰ During the puberty rites

²⁹Molina, pp. 48-60; Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 2, pp. 55-62.

³⁰Molina of Cuzco, p. 64; Cobo, p. 247.

both boys and girls received the names they would keep for the rest of their lives (except in the case of the heir to the throne, who would often take a new name on becoming the Inca).³¹

The puberty rites had the purpose of marking the passage to adult status in the community. The new name signified the new physical and social identity of the youth, just as the giving of the first name when the child was weaned signified its separate identity from its mother. This new identity was confirmed by the shorn heads of the youths and their change to adult dress. Full adulthood, however, came only with marriage.

Aside from these life-cycle rites of passage, the Incas classed their subjects by age, assigning different tasks to different age groups (fig. 8, p. 153). Even very young children were expected to help their parents and the very old to do whatever chores still lay within their capabilities and serve as advisors.³² Throughout life, therefore, changes in one's bodily state were directly correlated to changes in one's social state and responsibilities.

³¹Titu Cusi Yupanqui writes that the ear-piercing ceremony is "the most important ceremony we make in the whole year because then we are given names, new names from what we had before" (p. 18).

³²Guaman Poma describes and illustrates the different Inca age classes in his work, vol. 1, pp. 168-209.

Common to all rites of passages, and all important rituals, were sacrifices and offerings to the deities and huacas. The Incas usually used domestic animals in their sacrifices, however, on occasions of great importance humans would be sacrificed as well. This sacrifice was called capacocha, "royal sin" or "royal transaction".³³ The victims to be sacrificed were exacted as tribute by the Incas from the four quarters of Tahuantinsuyu. They were customarily strangled, drowned or buried alive, as it was important that their bodies remain intact in order to embody the Andean ideal of wholeness/holiness.³⁴ The following description of this ceremony was recorded in 1621:

It was customary in gentile times to celebrate the feast of the capacocha every four years, choosing four youths from ten to twelve years old, perfect in beauty, without blemish nor wrinkle.... These four acllas, which means chosen ones, were taken to Cuzco from the four parts of Peru... and it was a sight to see how the people came out to receive them along the way carrying their huacas in procession. The capacocha arrived at Cuzco accompanied by the principal huacas of their land and by caciques [chiefs] and Indians They entered the plaza where the Inca was seated on his seat of gold together with the statues of the Sun, Lightning and Thunder, and the embalmed Incas and the priests who displayed them. They went around the plaza twice paying homage to the statues and the Inca, who greeted them with a joyful countenance. When they arrived at his side he spoke to the Sun in obscure terms, asking the Sun, according to tradition, to take these chosen ones into his service. The Inca toasted the Sun with a chicha made for this occasion many years before, which the coya, accompanied by pallas, [noblewomen] brought in

³³Capac means "royal", hucha ("ocha") means either "sin," "transaction," or "petition". González Holguín, pp. 134, 199.

³⁴Molina of Cuzco, pp. 69-70, 75-77. Betanzos, p. 32.

two drinking vessels of gold. The [vessel of] chicha which was offered to the Sun came back empty by order of the devil to attract faith in the cult of the Sun in the whole kingdom. The Inca then rubbed his whole body with these youths [machachos, presumably a misspelling of muchachos, youths]... When the feast was over, the capacochas who were meant for Cuzco were taken to the huaca of Huanacauri or to the house of the Sun, put to sleep, lowered into a vault... and walled in alive. The others were sent back to their lands to have the same done to them there by order of the Inca, who rewarded their fathers by making them governors, and decreed that there be priests to attend to [the capacocha] and to the rites which were celebrated in its honour every year, as the capacocha served as the guardian and custodian of the whole province.³⁵

The bodies of these capacochas substituted for those of the Inca and the empire, as was graphically demonstrated by the Inca's rubbing his body against those of the youths to be sacrificed, and thereby symbolically transferring his body to theirs. The Inca and the empire consequently atoned by proxy for whatever sins they might have accumulated over the past four years. Similarly, a man who was seriously ill could reportedly offer the life of one of his children to the deities in exchange for his own life³⁶, and an individual would symbolically offer all of his or her body

³⁵Rodrigo Hernández Príncipe, "Visitas de Rodrigo Hernández Príncipe," in Cultura andina y represión, P. Duviols, ed. (Cuzco: Centro de Estudios Rurales "Bartolomé de Las Casas", 1986), pp. 472-473. The meaning of this ritual is examined by Pierre Duviols in "La Capacocha" Allpanchis, IX (1976), pp. 11-54.

³⁶Cobo, p. 228.

to a huaca by offering a part, commonly hair or nail cuttings.³⁷

The blood of selected sacrificial offerings was used to paint a line from ear to ear on huacas and participants in major Inca rites of passage. This ritual, which was significant enough to merit a name of its own, pirac, enabled the participants to physically share in the sacrifice and also to personally manifest blood, the pre-eminent symbol of passage. The horizontal line across the face's natural vertical axis served to order the face into four quarters and thus replicate the quadripartition of Cuzco and the empire.³⁸

Thérèse Bouysse-Cassagne writes of a similar ritual carried out among the modern Aymara:

[The horizontal line] unites the two symmetrical halves [of the face] across the axis of the nose: their convergence (taypi) establishes a new facial geometry; if at first there were only two halves (right and left), we now have four tawantin sectors (right above, left above, right below, left below), a symbolic quadripartition that can be related to the layout of the village. A mutual confirmation is achieved as it were, between the body of the child and the body politic.³⁹

The new high/low division created by this horizontal line can be further interpreted as involving the superimposition of a duality based on cultural values on the duality found

³⁷Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 236.

³⁸Molina of Cuzco, p. 73; Betanzos, p. 32.

³⁹"Aymara Concepts of Space," p. 214.

in nature. The participants in this ritual, therefore, are both consecrated by being identified with a sacred offering and incorporated into the social order.⁴⁰

Priests and Huacas

Inca rituals were officiated by priests. The Incas maintained a large and elaborately structured priesthood, with different kinds of priests specializing in different functions, for example, in divination or in hearing confessions (discussed in the next chapter). The high priest, called Villac Umu, "the priest who tells", held a great deal of power and was always a close male relative of the Inca. While the Villac Umu was apparently elected to office by the Inca nobility, other priests might inherit their positions or else be considered destined for religious life by virtue of manifesting some physical abnormality, for example, having been born a twin, or of having had an encounter with the sacred, for example, having been struck by lightning. Inca priests were usually men, but it was

⁴⁰In Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo Mary Douglas writes that "certain cultural themes are expressed by rites of bodily manipulation....the rituals work upon the body politic through the symbolic medium of the physical body" (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 122. Terence Turner specifically discusses how body decoration can be a means of imprinting social categories in "The Social Skin" in Not Work Alone: A Cross-Cultural View of Activities Superfluous to Survival, ed. J. Chertfas and R. Lewin (Beverly Hills, Ca.: Sage, 1980), pp. 112-140.

possible for women to perform similar functions at the local level, or within those cults dedicated to female deities, such as the moon.⁴¹

Aside from those priests supported by the Incas, there were many local diviners and ministers of huacas throughout the empire. These were tolerated by the Incas as long as they accepted the Inca superstructure and did not use their knowledge to harm others (many sorcerors, for instance, were experts in the use of poisons).

Priests were commonly required by their office to engage in long periods of fasting and abstention from sexual relations. There were some, however, who particularly dedicated themselves to practices of austerity (fig. 9, p. 154). Murúa writes in his chronicle:

The Incas had some physicians or philosopher diviners who were called Guacacue. These went naked in the most isolated and gloomy regions... and walking alone in these uninhabited places, they gave themselves to divination and philosophy without rest. From sunrise to sunset they constantly stared at the sun, no matter how bright it was, without moving their eyes, and they said that in that bright shining wheel they saw great secrets. They spent all day on foot on burning sands without feeling pain and they also patiently bore the cold and snow. They lived a very pure and simple life, procuring no luxuries, desiring nothing but what reason and nature demanded; [surviving] only on what the earth produced without being mistreated by tools.⁴²

⁴¹Cobo, pp. 224-225; Arriaga, pp. 32-41; Anonymous, pp. 161-169. This last writer, a Spanish priest, gives a lengthy and highly interesting account of the religious organization of the Incas. Unfortunately, his description is too penetrated with Christian concepts to be very reliable.

⁴²Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 156.

Such persons constituted a third class within the savage/civilized Inca social dichotomy. They had characteristics in common with the savages - they didn't wear clothes, they didn't live in towns and they didn't practice agriculture - however, their purpose in this was not to participate in the chaos and sensuality of the earth but to detach themselves from it. One of the purported abilities of such diviners, in fact, was to sever the yoke of the body to the land, fly through the air, and witness what was happening in far away places.⁴³

Another chronicler speaks of a similar group of diviners who "slept on the ground, ate roots, drank cold water, disciplined themselves with knotted cords" and spent their time contemplating the sun, moon and stars.⁴⁴ He writes that when these diviners passed through a town, "all the people followed behind them, for they were held to be holy and [the diviners]... prayed in public for the Inca and his people."⁴⁵

Such diviners, and to a certain extent all priests, were, like the cloistered acllas, outside the normal social order - the diviners did not conquer in the traditional male way and the acllas were not conquered in the traditional

⁴³Polo de Ondegardo, "Errores y supersticiones," p. 29.

⁴⁴Anonymous, p. 169.

⁴⁵Ibid.

female way. By serving as conduits of the sacred, however, and helping to maintain the Inca at the center of an integrated cosmos, they, like the chosen women, served to uphold the social order.

Huacas, requiring the services of a vast number of priests, also manifested a split nature, existing on both the material and sacred levels at once. Huacas were conceptualized as bodies - and, in fact, some actually were mummified bodies - which had to be ritually "fed" in order for them to use their powers in support of, rather than against, the state. Molina of Cuzco comments that "the reason why all the huacas... had to take part in the sacrifices was so that... none should become angry at not receiving a sacrifice and punish the Inca."⁴⁶

The larger and more complex the empire became, the greater was the danger of its falling prey to the forces of chaos, and therefore the greater the need to associate the state with the forces of sacred structure (and also of masculinity). By the time of the Spanish Conquest, the number of huacas requiring ritual care in and around Cuzco was immense. About four hundred of them - stones, springs, tombs, etc. - were located along imaginary lines, called ceques, radiating out from the temple of the sun. The care of the huacas along these ceques was assigned to different

⁴⁶pp. 71-72.

Inca panacas, kin groups, and the ceques themselves probably served as a system to regulate social relations among the panacas, thus allying sacred structure with social structure.⁴⁷

Some of the huacas along the ceques were related to water, and the ceques might also have served to ritually direct the flow of water in and out of Cuzco (as in the Citua rite discussed in the next chapter). In fact, the ceque system was complemented by an underground system of canals which carried chicha offered to the huacas to the different temples of Cuzco.⁴⁸ This dual function of ceques, to separate into categories and to channel fluidity, perhaps explains why the word ceque, according to González Holguín, means both "borderline" and "watery chicha".⁴⁹ Here then, we find the creation of land boundaries and irrigation canals attributed by tradition to Inca Pachacuti, replicated on a ritual plane. Sacred bodies, the body politic and the body of the land, are seen to be structured and integrated by similar and interrelated systems which, in turn, correspond to the model of structure and integration provided by the cosmic body.

⁴⁷Cobo, pp. 167-186. Zuidema discusses the relationship between the ceques and the Inca social organization in The Ceque System of Cuzco.

⁴⁸Cobo, p. 164.

⁴⁹p. 81.

Sight and Hearing

The ceque system of Cuzco was also a system of sight lines. R.T. Zuidema describes how this system worked on one ceque along which he was able to locate many huacas by using information found in the chronicles.

The seventh huaca [of the ceque], on the horizon from Cuzco was used for astronomical observation. The first six huacas lie under the sight line extending from the temple of the sun to this point. By way of the next three huacas, the ceque then passes over the nearby hills. From the ninth huaca on, there is again a sight line to the last (thirteenth) huaca in the new valley.⁵⁰

According to Zuidema, the ceques always ended just beyond the immediate horizon of Cuzco.⁵¹ He finds the horizon also stressed in the Inca ritual of painting a line of blood across the face, during which, according to one chronicler, a line of blood was also painted on the temple of the sun.⁵² Zuidema comments.

Actually, we know that such a line existed at the height of the windows on the inside of the rooms of the temple in Cuzco, and that it was made not of blood, but of gold. The windows were used for observing sunrise or sunset at specific days of the year. I suggest, therefore, that painting blood from ear to ear was intended to stress the eyes; making the eyes dominate,

⁵⁰"Inka Dynasty and Irrigation," p. 187. Cobo describes certain huacas along the ceques as being spots where one first catches or loses sight of a sacred place, i.e. the ninth huaca on one ceque "was the place where those who were going to Chinchasuyu lost sight of Cuzco," p. 174.

⁵¹"Inka Dynasty and Irrigation," p. 189.

⁵²Betanzos, p. 32.

through their sight, the area towards the horizon where the sun rises and sets.⁵³

The ceques, as sight lines, may have similarly served to dominate the huacas situated along them through sight, as Inca Capac Yupanqui is credited with doing in the myth discussed in the previous chapter, and to sanctify and structure that area of Cuzco between sunrise and sunset, protecting it from the forces of darkness beyond. Astronomical sight lines, some of which coincided with ceques, in turn, made it possible not only to structure time and coordinate rituals with the movements of the heavenly bodies, but also to direct sacred power from the sky to the earth along the line of vision.

For the Incas, looking at the sky, and thereby transmitting personal power upwards, invited a corresponding transmission of power downwards. This occurs, for example, in the cosmogony when Viracocha causes fire to fall from above by looking up at the sky. After the Conquest, a group of Inca rebels tortured a Spanish priest who was accused of poisoning their leader and then buried him upside down so he could not look at the sky. Murúa explains in his chronicle:

The barbarians thought that if they buried him head up God would hear him and take him out of the hole, and

⁵³"Masks in the Incaic Solstice and Equinoctial Rituals" in The Power of Symbols: Masks and Masquerade in the Americas, ed. N. Ross Crumrine and M. Halpin (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983), p.151.

so they buried him head down so that he would be unable to lift his eyes up to the sky and call God.⁵⁴

For Murúa, such logic was no logic at all. He proclaims the Indians "blind men, without reason nor understanding."⁵⁵

For the Incas, with their emphasis on reciprocity, it made perfect sense. In the words of Pachacuti Yamqui's prayer to the Creator, "By seeing you... you will see me."⁵⁶

Looking at the sacred, however, could be a dangerously overwhelming experience (possibly because sight grasps the whole of the object seen at once, rather than progressively, as hearing, for example, does with the sound an object emits). An ordinary subject would not dare to look at a capacocha sacrificial procession, for example, or at the face of the Inca.⁵⁷ Even priests, when ministering to

⁵⁴Murúa, ed. Ballesteros, pp. 239-240. For similar reasons, defeated enemy troops were also not allowed to look up at the sky. The inference is made here that eye contact with the sky is an important prerequisite for communication with the deities who reside in the sky. Ibid., p. 116.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 240.

⁵⁶p. 220.

⁵⁷ Pedro Pizarro, for example, writes that "a very fine thin mantle through which one could see was held up by two women before [Inca Atahualpa], and they covered him up with it so that no one should see him, for it is the custom of some of these lords not to be seen save rarely by their vassals." Relation of the Discovery and Conquest of the Kingdoms of Peru [1571], ed. and trans. P. A. Means (New York: Cortes Society, 1921), vol. 1, p. 175.

huacas would customarily keep their eyes downcast.⁵⁸ This vulnerability of sight made the Incas' reputed domination of the huacas by sight truly a feat of exceptional power.

The ceque system can also be compared to a quipu, the Inca device for recording data.⁵⁹ The quipu consisted of a main cord from which threads with knots representing data were hung (see the example in fig. 9, p. 154). In the ceque system, the ceques were like the spread-out threads of the quipu, and the huacas like the knots. As did the quipu, the ceques visually structured sound, for the huacas were oracles which communicated through speech. This structuring of sound was similar to the ceques' structuring of fluidity.

In Inca ritual, as in Inca myth, fluidity and sound were often related. When the ritual involved extraordinary fluidity, either actual or metaphorical, an extraordinary outburst of sound would accompany it. In the Inca rain ritual, for example, rain would be invoked by public weeping in which even dogs and llamas were made to participate.⁶⁰ An outburst of sound was also an essential part of major

⁵⁸ Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 117, Arriaga, p. 51, Betanzos p. 32. In the present-day Andes it is still believed dangerous to look at sacred beings. Tschopik, p. 191.

⁵⁹ Rowe, "Inca Culture," p. 300.

⁶⁰ Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 229.

Inca rites of passage, such as death, and of warfare.⁶¹ Sound here not only represented fluidity and liminality, it served to create a state of fluidity necessary for the transition from one category to another, from that of drought to rain, from peace to war, from life to death.

The piercing of ears which took place during the male puberty rite was also associated with sound and fluidity.⁶² This rite was the male counterpart to first menstruation and thus an inauguration of fertility. However, the fact that the organ made to bleed was not the penis but the ear suggests that men were supposed to control their sexuality by listening to and obeying oral tradition. Piercing the ears, then, can be understood as both inaugurating male fertility and opening up the ear to be fertilized by sound, in particular, the oral communications of the sacred.

Andean men commonly wore ear ornaments.⁶³ The Incas'

⁶¹Pizarro writes, for instance, that when the Incas laid siege to the city of Cuzco after the Spanish had captured it: "There was much din on account of the loud cries and alarums which they gave and the trumpets and flutes which they sounded, so that it seemed as if the very earth trembled" (vol. 2, p. 306).

⁶²Zuidema writes:

At the end of their initiation ceremonies the noble youths went out to a chacra, a cultivated field, near a lake, to have their ears pierced. Clearly the act was intended to inaugurate their 'fertility,' and closeness to water was a necessary prerequisite.

"Inka Dynasty and Irrigation," p. 193.

⁶³In the early Andean period nose and lip ornaments, as well as ear ornaments were common in the Andes, however, by the time of the Incas, only ear ornaments were used. Wendell C. Bennet, "The Andean Highlands" in Handbook of South

large gold ear ornaments, however, were exclusive to them and can be regarded as signalling their privileged access to sacred aural information.⁶⁴ The Incas were the ones with the ability to make the huacas speak, and to hear what they said.⁶⁵ One Inca myth, recorded by Cieza de León and abbreviated below, intimately relates the ear-piercing rite with both sound and fluidity.

When Inca Roca (the sixth Inca) had his ears pierced, one of them hurt so much that he went to a hill nearby Cuzco seeking relief. While on the hill he prayed to the Inca deities for help in providing Cuzco with a river, for at that time the city had none. As he was praying he heard a clap of thunder so loud that he lay down with fright, putting his left ear, from which blood was gushing, to the ground. Suddenly, the Inca heard the noise of running water under the earth. He ordered the spot dug up until a spring was found and then had a canal built to carry the water to Cuzco.⁶⁶

The Inca's body would seem here to be a metaphor for the land. His earache is equivalent to the lack of water suffered by Cuzco. Therefore, when he goes to the hill he

American Indians:II, The Andean Civilizations, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 143 (New York: Cooper Square, 1963), p. 31.

⁶⁴Anthony Seeger examines the relationship between body ornamentation and sensory orders among the Suyá and other Amazonian tribes in "The Meaning of Body Ornaments: A Suyá Example" Ethnology 14 (1975), pp. 211-24.

⁶⁵Guaman Poma says that Tupac Inca was called Viracocha for his ability to speak with the huacas. His power of speech thereby allied him with the supreme mediator of sound (vol. 1, p. 234). According to Hernando de Santillán, Tupac Inca was also said to have spoken while still in the womb (p. 111).

⁶⁶El señorfo de los Incas, pp. 118-119.

prays not for relief for his ear, but for a river. The blood flowing from his ear corresponds to the river flowing underground.

On another level, the Inca's earache can be understood as being caused by a lack of sacred oral communication, symbolic fluidity. This metaphorical "drought" is relieved by the thunderclap which comes in response to Inca Roca's prayer. With his newly pierced ears, Inca Roca hears both the sacred thunderclap - signalling the presence of water - and the water running underground. The conclusion is that Cuzco is provided with an irrigation canal and the Inca establishes a channel of oral communication between himself and the deities.⁶⁷

Inca rituals were usually rich in both auditory and visual phenomena. Music and recitations were essential parts of most rituals, as was a colourful display of costume and ornamentation.⁶⁸ The uniting of the auditory and the visual was fundamental to Inca ritual. One example of such a union was the use of runa tinya, human drums made out of

⁶⁷Guaman Poma describes Inca Roca a "great talker" and one who "spoke with thunder" (vol. 1, p. 83).

⁶⁸The Incas had an elaborate colour vocabulary and undoubtedly the colours used in their rituals and institutions had symbolic value. Pachacuti Yamqui, for instance, says that the highest order of acllas were called yuracaclla, white acllas, while a middle-ranking order was called pacoaclla, red acllas, and the lowest order, yanaaclla, black acllas (p. 224). However, while the colours used in different instances by the Incas were recorded by the chroniclers, unfortunately, their meanings were not.

the bodies of traitors. The whole corpse would be preserved in its native costume, but the belly would be made into a drum which would be played with the corpse's own hand.⁶⁹ It was not enough for the traitor's body simply to be displayed, it had to be heard as well. Whereas before the traitor spoke against the Inca, now he was made to "speak" in support of the Inca.

The ritual union of sight and hearing is best exemplified by a harvest thanksgiving ceremony in which the Incas would go before dawn to a plain to the east of Cuzco. As the sun began to rise they would start to sing in chorus, with the Inca leading. The higher the sun rose, the louder they sang. When the sun set they sang more and more softly, stopping when it disappeared from sight.⁷⁰

To have merely observed the sun rising and setting would not have been ritually complete for the Incas, they had to add an auditory dimension to light in order to assimilate it into the oral structures of their culture. In

⁶⁹Guaman Poma, vol. 1, pp. 143, 287, 308. Guaman Poma quotes the Incas as saying, "We will drink from our enemy's skull, we will wear his teeth as necklaces, we will play his bones as flutes, his hide as a drum, and thus we will dance." p. 287. The bodies of enemies here provide the ritual elements for a dance, a supreme symbolic incorporation of rebellious bodies into the Inca order, the "empire-wide dance-figure" described by Hyams and Ordish in The Last of the Incas, p. 249.

⁷⁰Cristobal Molina "el Almagrista" "Relación de muchas cosas acaescidas en el Perú" [1572] in Crónicas peruanas de interés indígena, ed. F. Esteve Barba. Biblioteca de Autores Españoles (Madrid: 1968) p. 82.

consideration of this, perhaps the line of blood painted across the face in certain rites of passage also had the symbolic purpose of uniting the eyes with the ears and consequently, the seen with the heard.

Taste, Smell and Touch

The emphasis the Incas placed on sight and hearing in their cosmology and rituals did not preclude the involvement of the other senses. Even the most visualist of Inca practices, observing the stars, was intimately related to the sensory perceptions produced by the different activities, songs, foods, etc., corresponding to the different seasons. In his book on Andean astronomy Gary Urton writes:

It is important to note that the divisions and passage of time are related to different crops and activities, and that these in turn are related to the different senses. Since the astronomical reckoning of time depends primarily on vision, the above material suggests that the total perception of time and space will involve the union of all sensual perceptions of change in the environment.⁷¹

Inca rituals commonly engaged all of the senses. The participants in the huarochico, male puberty rite, for example, had their senses engaged by, among other things, clothes of different colours and designs, songs and dances, the burning of sacrifices and the drinking of chicha. Most,

⁷¹At the Crossroads of the Earth and the Sky, p. 32.

if not all, of these sensory phenomena probably had symbolic meaning. Garcilaso de la Vega, for instance, writes of the wreaths of flowers placed on the heads of the Inca youths at the conclusion of this ceremony: "the beautiful and fragrant flowers were said to signify [the Inca's] clemency, compassion and mildness."⁷²

Food and drink were integral to many Inca rituals, not only as part of the post-ritual celebrations, but within the rituals themselves. The most obvious example of this is the ritual drinking of chicha in order to confirm a relationship of reciprocity. Another example is the ritual eating of yahuar sanco, balls of corn mixed with the blood of sacrificed llamas, following the swearing of an oath of allegiance to the Inca.⁷³ In such ceremonial use of food, the incorporation of the ritual substance and the concepts associated with it into the body would seem to be more important than the food's flavour.

For the Andeans, to eat something was, to a certain extent, to become one with it. For this reason, for instance, a person who wanted to cross a river safely would drink some of the river's water.⁷⁴ Speaking certain words was thought to have a similar effect. Garcilaso writes that

⁷²Comentarios reales, vol.2, p. 62.

⁷³For example, in the rite of Citua, Cobo, pp. 218-219.

⁷⁴Polo de Ondegardo, "Instrucción," p. 190.

women would never say the word for making sandals because to do so would be to make themselves into men, as making sandals was men's work. For similar reasons, men would never say the word for weaving, the principal occupation of women.⁷⁵ In both the oral functions of eating and speaking, therefore, the sign (food or words) was identified with the thing signified, and considered capable of producing a transformation in the person who ingested or uttered it.

Flavours, however, also had a metaphorical significance. The words for sweet, misqui and ñucñu, had connotations of mild, good and pleasant, while the word for bitter, hayak, also meant harsh and unpleasant.⁷⁶ In certain contexts, however, bitterness could mean excellence as well. The expression hayaqquentarimani, to speak bitterly, for instance, meant "to speak admirably". González Holguín comments on this, "you would think it would mean the opposite because hayaqquen means gall or bitterness, but that's how they speak."⁷⁷ This might be because the Andeans considered bitterness to produce an

⁷⁵Comentarios reales, vol.2, pp. 58-59.

⁷⁶Mizquisonco, "sweet heart," for example, meant a kind person and hayaksimi, "bitter mouth", a person who spoke harsh words. González Holguín, pp. 156, 263.

⁷⁷p. 156.

awareness of categories and distinctions necessary for a true understanding of reality.⁷⁸

The other two Quechua terms which could be employed in a similar way to hayak were huanuy, "deadly", and millay, "disgusting". González Holguín writes that these were used as adjectives to mean entirely and perfectly.⁷⁹ This suggests that a bitter taste, death, and a disgusting sensation were all thought to produce such a sharp break in the continuity of existence as to have a suprarreal quality of absoluteness. How and if flavours such as bitterness were actively employed in Inca ritual, however, is impossible to determine.⁸⁰

The chronicles have little more to say about the role of odour in Inca ritual than they have about that of flavour. The large number of words in Quechua relating to odour, however, indicates that the Incas were not inattentive to the sense of smell. González Holguín lists

⁷⁸As well, when one experiences a strongly bitter taste, all one's attention is, momentarily at least, focused on the sensation. An excellent speaker would also elicit a response of intense focused attention, and thus could be said to speak "bitterly".

⁷⁹p. 180. Huanuy or millay hayak, "deadly" or "disgustingly bitter", for instance, were used to mean extremely bitter, while huanuy yachak, "deadly wise", meant extremely wise. Ibid.

⁸⁰Charlene and Ralph Bolton have noted that in modern Andean rituals sweet flavours are used to attract and bitter flavours to repel, pp. 107-111. In Inca ritual, flavours could presumably have been used in similar, and probably more complex, ways.

over thirty verbs in his dictionary dealing with the production and perception of odours, many in relation to the burning of incense.⁸¹ Inca sacrifices were always burnt on scented wood in order to make them more pleasing to the deities, and huacas were customarily perfumed with incense.⁸² Foul odours were used by the Incas in order to repel. The priest who was buried upside down by the Inca rebels was made to smell a foul incense which "took his breath away and left him speechless."⁸³ When the Spanish wanted to violate one of the Inca's sisters she put foul-smelling things on her body in order to repel them⁸⁴ We can suppose that odour symbolism followed that of flavours, with the major difference being that odours have an ability to travel which flavours do not, and thus were particularly suitable as a medium of communication in ritual.

The other main ritual purpose of odours and flavours was to offer the essences of food and sacrifices to the

⁸¹See, for example, the list of odour terms on pp. 41-42.

⁸²Murúa, ed. Bayle, p. 117, 267; Anonymous, p. 155.

⁸³Murúa, ed. Ballesteros, p. 238.

⁸⁴Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 29. The most repugnant odour for the Andeans was that of rottenness. To call someone rotten-smelling was one of the worst insults an Andean could profer. The inhabitants of Collasuyu, for example, were called "stinking" (asnay) by the Incas because they were very rebellious. Molina, *el Almagrista*, p.75. This probably has to do with the association of putrefaction with disease, death and dissolution, and, by extension, with anti-culture and savagery.

deities. J. Bejar Núñez del Prado writes of this practice in the modern Andean context:

In the cult of the dead, visiting spirits consume not the material aspects of foods, but their samiy, which is conceived of as a combination of the flavour, aroma and nutritive value of the food.⁸⁵

This suggests that flavour and odour have the same relationship to the material aspect of food as the human spirit has to the human body.

According to Murúa, the acllas were supposed to live on odours alone.

[The acllas] have no need of food, they live only on the odour of a certain wild fruit, and when they are travelling away from their house, they take some of this fruit with them in order to sustain themselves with its odour. If they were ever to smell a bad odour, it was certain that they would die without remedy.⁸⁶

This myth was undoubtedly intended to emphasize the spirituality and exquisite sensitivity of the acllas.⁸⁷

Significantly, the odour the acllas are said to live on comes from a wild fruit, associating the acllas with the unconquered earth and putting them again on a similar plane

⁸⁵"El mundo sobrenatural de los Quechuas del Sur del Peru," Allpanchis, n. 2, 1970, p. 114. See also Oblitas Poblete, pp. 44-45.

⁸⁶ed. Bayle, pp. 262-263.

⁸⁷The "bad odours" which would be fatal to the acllas may implicitly refer to the odours of sexual intercourse which many South American native peoples consider to endanger one's physical integrity, i.e. the Bororo of Central Brazil described by Jon Christopher Crocker in Vital Souls: Bororo Cosmology, Natural Symbolism, and Shamanism. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), pp. 159-160.

to the diviners who lived off the uncultivated products of the earth.⁸⁸

The acllas, like the diviners, maintained their sprituality in great part by remaining chaste or, in other words, restricting their sense of touch. Of all the senses, touch was the one considered most able to break down the barriers between categories, and therefore the one which had to be most rigorously controlled. Everything which the Inca touched, in particular his garments, for instance, was kept in chests and burned every year so that no one else could touch them and thereby transgress the barriers which separated the Inca from his subjects.⁸⁹

The Incas were accustomed to have their sense of touch blunted from birth. According to Garcilaso de la Vega, babies were washed in cold water, exposed to the night air, and kept swaddled in cradles until they were three months old (fig. 11, p. 156). Mothers never held their children in their arms or laps, not even while breast-feeding, because they believed such pampering would make them cry babies.⁹⁰

⁸⁸Although, on one level the acllas were associated with the pre-cultural earth, on another they were the guardians of Inca esthetic values. The acllas were chosen for their exceptional beauty, they wove the finest cloth in the empire, prepared the finest chicha and foods, and had the finest singing voices. For a description of the acllas' excellencies see, for example, the anonymous chronicler, pp. 171-173 and Guaman Poma, vol. 1, pp. 274-275.

⁸⁹Pizarro, vol. 1, p. 225

⁹⁰Comentarios reales, vol.1, 200-201.

Boys in training for the Huarocho rite were similarly hardened by being made to sleep on the ground, suffer pain without flinching, and take part in other exercises designed to prepare them for the rigours of military life.⁹¹

Touch, therefore, was apparently not accorded a very high value in Inca culture. Instances of the proscription of touch, in fact, would appear to be as common as instances of its elaboration. Nonetheless, despite the many controls on touch, the Incas demonstrate an appreciation of this sense and its symbolic uses in such things as the weaving of extremely soft cloths,⁹² the manipulation of the quipu, and the tactile dimensions of ritual.

Touch was engaged by Inca rituals in various ways. In the Huarocho rite, the Inca elders would whip the initiates as they lectured them on their responsibilities,⁹³ possibly in the belief that the elders' words would thereby physically penetrate the boys' bodies, just as the oath of allegiance to the Inca was physically incorporated through

⁹¹Ibid., vol.2, pp. 58-59.

⁹²The clothing of the Incas was soft, while that of their subjects was rough. Pizarro, vol. 1, pp. 222-223. The Incas apparently expressed the class distinction between themselves and their subjects through as many sensory channels as possible.

⁹³Molina of Cuzco, p. 51.

the eating of yahuar sancu.⁹⁴ Dance, an essential part of all Inca ceremonies, engaged both touch and the kinesthetic sense, along with sight and hearing. The Incas had a number of ritual dances which were danced in groups following a rhythmic pattern. Molina of Cuzco describes an Inca dance called yavayra in which the men would hold one end of a long rope made of black, white, red and yellow wool, and the women the other. Following the leader, the dancers would dance through the streets of Cuzco paying homage to the huacas and the Inca. At the end of the dance the rope would be left coiled on the ground of the plaza like a snake.⁹⁵

This dance followed a ritual battle between Hanan and Hurin Cuzco and can therefore be interpreted as a ritual reintegration of the two moieties of the city. The antagonistic duality of the battle became complementary duality in the dance in which men and women, while at opposite ends, were united by holding the same rope and following the same steps. The four basic colours entrained in the rope, in turn, represented the principle of integrated quadripartition. The rope also stood for a snake, an Inca symbol of divine fluidity, and the weaving of the

⁹⁴This synesthetic merging of touch and hearing is reminiscent of the merging of these two modalities in Viracocha's staff. Billie Jean Isbell writes that synesthesia is used in South American indigenous rituals to help individuals accomplish the transition from one social stage to another. "The Metaphoric Process," p. 305.

⁹⁵pp. 62-63.

rope-snake through the streets of Cuzco helped accomplish the fluid integration of the city.

Other Inca dances served similar purposes; to enact cosmological and imperial principles, establish communion with the sacred, affirm the social order, and help to effect the passage from one state to another. Dance, perhaps because of the continuous movement of the dancers as opposed to the stillness of death, was identified with life itself. Guaman Poma writes that in order to counteract omens prognosticating death, the Incas would hold night-long dances:

They say that [the omen] is a very bad sign and that they are going to die and be finished, and so as not to die they dance all night.⁹⁶

The body here is no longer a static axis through which divine power flows, but divine power itself, animating the cosmos as it courses through it.

The Senses Controlled

Inca rites of passage were customarily preceded by a short period of sensory deprivation, usually consisting of abstaining from condiments, tasty foods and sex. In the case of a person filling a religious office, the deprivation could be quite rigorous. Arriaga writes on this subject:

⁹⁶vol. 1, p. 256.

A person about to assume one of the [priestly] offices has to fast for a month, or, in some places a year, eating neither salt nor pepper nor sleeping with his wife, nor washing nor combing his hair. In some localities they are forbidden to touch the body with their hands.⁹⁷

This asceticism can be seen as a form of ritual exchange: one deprived oneself of certain things in order to receive other desired things - divine powers or a good harvest, for instance. Significantly, the deprivation was principally one of sensory pleasure, with the senses particularly affected being those apparently considered the most productive of sensory pleasure - touch and taste. Fasting for the Andeans, for example, consisted not of abstaining from food but of abstaining from flavour. This deprivation of sensory pleasure would leave the body receptive to the sensory expressions of ritual and of the sacred.⁹⁸ It may also have served to protect those persons whose bodily boundaries would be abnormally weak due to their liminal position in between categories from being

⁹⁷p. 37.

⁹⁸The Desana Indians, interestingly, abstain from condiments and sex for several days before ritually ingesting hallucinogens in order to have bright and pleasant visions. Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, Beyond the Milky Way: Hallucinatory Imagery of the Tukano Indians (Los Angeles: University of California, Latin American Center, 1978), p. 11.

"disintegrated" by dangerously strong and intrusive physical sensations.⁹⁹

Those Andeans who engaged in the most extreme practices of asceticism were the diviners who lived alone in the wilderness, slept on the ground and ate roots. In the case of diviners, the blunting of the proximity senses may have been intended to increase the sensitivity of sight and hearing, the primary media of divine revelation. Murúa, for example, mentions that the ascetic "philosopher diviners" gained their knowledge from staring at the sun all day long.¹⁰⁰ Other diviners, who were in charge of the huacas inside the temples, went so far as to blind themselves in order to privilege their sense of hearing and attend to the oral communications of the huacas.¹⁰¹

As in Inca myth, therefore, in Inca ritual sight and hearing were stressed above the other senses. However, while Inca myths commonly made no mention of taste and smell, and little mention of touch, in Inca ritual these

⁹⁹Among the Bororo of Central Brazil new parents (a very liminal position in Bororo culture) may not engage in sex, eat strong-tasting foods or scratch themselves because all of these actions would have a debilitating or aging effect on them. Crocker, pp. 56-59.

¹⁰⁰ed. Bayle, p. 156. The anonymous chronicler also states that these ascetic diviners spent their time contemplating the luminaries (p. 169).

¹⁰¹ibid., p. 257. This suggests the existence of a certain dichotomy between Inca cult of the sun, which privileged sight, and the traditional Andean cult of the huacas, which privileged hearing.

proximity senses were all actively engaged, with a tentative order of their ritual importance being: smell, taste and touch. Perhaps this is because, as mentioned earlier, in Inca ritual it was considered necessary to involve all of the senses in order for the ceremony to be completely effective.

Edmund Leach writes that since, when we experience the world, "we are aware of a single total experience... it must be because the coding of the various sensory signal systems can be consistent so that hearing and sight and smell and taste and touch etc., seem all to be giving the same message." ¹⁰² Rather than all giving the same message, however, the senses in Inca ritual would seem to give complementary messages, according to what the Incas understood the particular characteristics of each sense to be; thus sight would be used to structure, hearing to integrate or transform, and so on.

In this regard it is important to note that while the Incas made ritual use of coca and tobacco, they apparently made little use of hallucinogens, although these were known and available to them.¹⁰³ One prominent characteristic of the hallucinogenic plant drugs (i.e. ayahuasca -

¹⁰² Claude Lévi-Strauss (New York: Penguin, 1970), pp. 103-104.

¹⁰³ Marlene Dobkin de Rios, Hallucinogens: Cross-Cultural Perspectives (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), ch. 10, "The Inca of Peru," pp. 149-159.

Banisereriopsis caapi - and San Pedro cactus - Trichocereus pachanoi) of the region is that sensations pertaining to different modalities are perceived as intermingling; odours are experienced as colours, sounds as tastes and so on.¹⁰⁴

For the Incas, with their emphasis on structure, this sensory confusion was undoubtedly unacceptable, and perhaps dangerously suggestive of a similar breakdown of social categories. While the Incas considered it necessary to stimulate and interrelate the senses in ritual, this had to be done in ways they were able to control.

¹⁰⁴For examples of this see Sharon, pp. 115-117; Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, "Brain and Mind in Desana Shamanism," Journal of Latin American Lore, 4:2 (1981): 90-91; F. Bruce Lamb, Wizard of the Upper Amazon: The Story of Manuel Córdova-Rios (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975), pp. 90-91.

TRAVAXA HAILLI'CHACRAIAPVIC^{vi}



Figure 7. The Hailli Ritual. (From Guaman Poma, vol. 3, p. 1050.)

SESTA CALLE CORO-TASQUE



Figure 8. Coro Tasque (Girls with Cropped Hair),
the age class for girls from twelve to eighteen.
(From Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 200.)



Figure 9. A barefoot Inca "Astrologer-Poet," holding a quipu in one hand. (From Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 829.)

CAPITULO DE LOS IDOLOS VACA BILLCA INCA



Figure 10. Tupac Inca talking with the huacas.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 235.)

DEZIMOCALLE QVIRAVPICAC

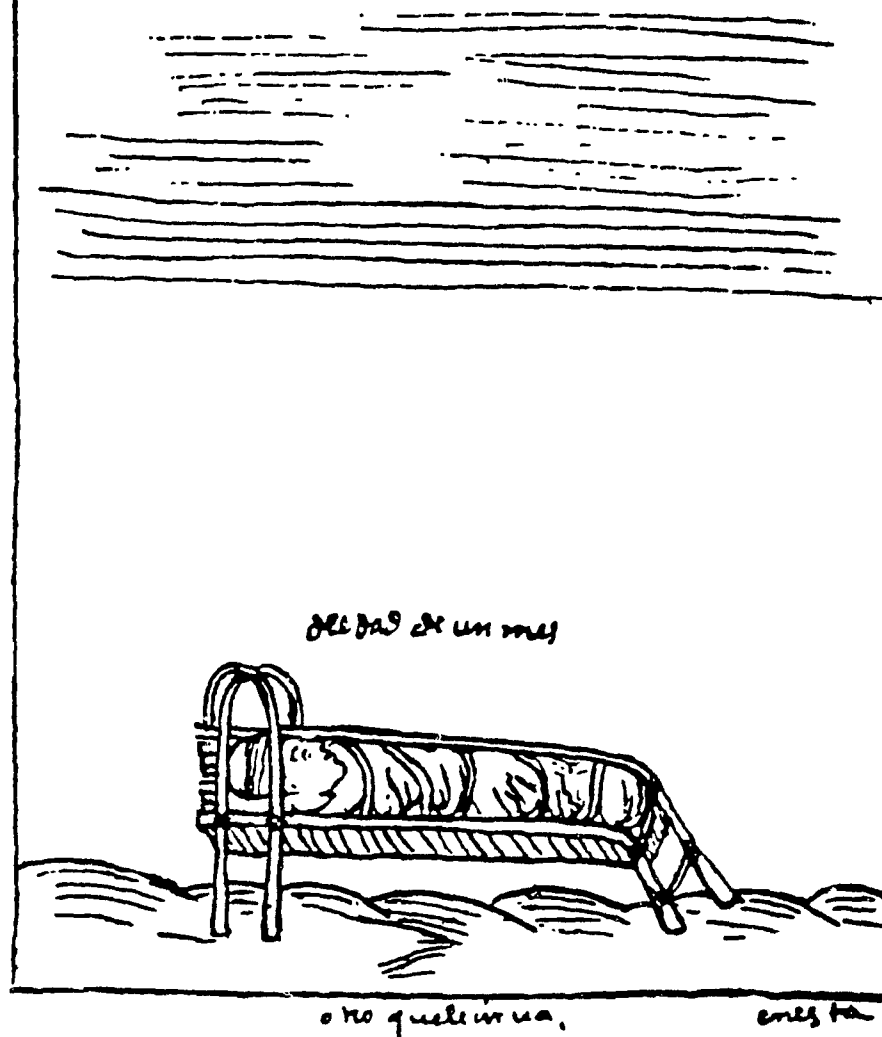


Figure 11. A swaddled Inca baby in its cradle.
(From Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 188.)

VI. ILLNESS AND DEATH

Illness

The Incas conceived of illness as a harmful presence within the body, often deliberately put there by someone else through sorcery. Inca curers, called in general hampiyok, used various methods for removing a disease from a patient's body. One of the most effective was herbal infusions, of which the hampiyok had an extensive knowledge. Other methods included sucking the disease out of a patient, bloodletting, and leaving the patient's clothes by the roadside so that the illness would be carried away by whoever came by and picked the clothes up.¹

According to the Incas, illness was often caused by hucha, sin, an element which disrupted the unity of the whole. As the Incas identified the moral constitution of a person with that person's physical constitution, it was natural that a moral flaw should be thought to produce a corresponding physical defect. The moral flaw itself was

¹Garcilaso de la Vega discusses Inca medicine and the value of Inca herbal remedies in Comentarios reales, vol. 1, pp. 115-118.

either structural, and usually innate, or non-structural and produced by a breach of law, such as adultery or theft, or, most commonly, failing to observe a religious requirement. Structural hucha, which manifested itself in physical deformities, could not be removed. Non-structural hucha, which caused illness and misfortune, could be removed through confession, penance and ritual cleansing.

Inca subjects were expected to confess all their sins to confessors called ychuri. There would usually be one ychuri attached to an ayllu or community. Confessions were made a few times a year during festivals, or when a person suffered some misfortune, such as illness, considered to have been produced by sin. Polo de Ondegardo writes:

It was held to be very sinful to hide any sin in the confession, and the ychuri or confessors check by casting lots or looking at the entrails of an animal if some sin is being hidden from them. They punish [the person who has hidden a sin] by hitting him on the back with certain stones until he tells everything, and then they give him a penance and make a sacrifice.²

Only external acts required confession, however, and not thoughts.³

One method an ychuri used to determine if a confession was complete was by dividing a handful of straw into two parts and then counting the straws on each side to see if the piles were even. If they were, the confession was held

²"Errores y supersticiones," pp. 12-13.

³Ibid, p. 13.

to be good, if not, it meant that there were still sins left unconfessed. The name ychuri was derived from the name of this straw, ychu, and means "one who picks up straw".⁴ On confessing, a person would spit into this straw.⁵ The sin which was thereby expelled might be thought of as a corrupting fluid within the body.

After confession an offering would be made to the sacred beings offended by the hucha and a penance imposed on the guilty party. The most common penances were to abstain from salt, pepper and sex for a period, or to be whipped. This last was supposed to be done by a hunchback or a person with some other congenital deformity.⁶ The reason for this was perhaps to stress the innate "monstrosity" of sin.

As a conclusion to the confession, the hucha would be washed away by a ritual bath in a stream, preferably the juncture of two streams to better disperse the sins. These baths were called opacuna,⁷ which means "deaf or dumb ones", referring possibly to the metaphorical "speechlessness" of those who have had their confessions "carried away" by the water.

⁴Arriaga, p. 48.

⁵Cobo, p. 234.

⁶Polo de Ondegardo, "Errores y supersticiones," pp. 14-15.

⁷Ibid., p. 14.

The Inca confessed directly to the Sun. As he washed his sins away in the river he would say, "I have told my sins to the sun, you, river, take them to the sea where they will nevermore appear."⁸ When the Inca was sick, all of his subjects confessed⁹, a practice which confirms that an identification was made of the body of the Inca with the body politic. The health of the Inca, representing as it did, the health of the empire, was of the highest importance for the Incas and the subject of many rituals. Many of the huacas situated on the ceques, for instance, had as their primary purpose the conservation of the Inca's health.¹⁰

The health of the social body of the Incas was directly safeguarded by an annual purificatory rite called Citua. This rite was held in Cuzco before the start of the rainy season, a time when Andeans were particularly susceptible to disease. All foreigners and persons with physical defects had to leave the city as a necessary prelude to the purification of Cuzco. For the performance of the rite four groups of Inca warriors would gather in the plaza, each group facing a different direction. At the appearance of the new moon, Inca priests would leave the temple of Coricancha calling out, "Illnesses, disasters and

⁸Ibid., p. 13.

⁹Ibid. p. 13.

¹⁰For example, the huacas called Sonconancay and Intillapa on the Chinchasuyu quarter of the ceques. Cobo, p. 170.

misfortunes, leave this land!". On hearing their voices the groups of warriors would start running, each group in the direction it faced, and shouting out, "Evil begone!" These warriors would be replaced by others along the way who would continue running until they reached certain rivers where they washed the evil from their bodies. It was believed that the evil was then taken away by the rivers to the sea.¹¹

As part of this ceremony, all the inhabitants of Cuzco would bathe, each clan in springs or rivers located along its own cegue. After this they would rub their faces, doorways and storehouses with ground corn and then throw the corn into springs in a ritual designed to protect them from disease. Even the Inca mummies would be bathed and rubbed with corn in this manner.¹²

In the festivities which followed, a special dance took place in which the dancers wore long red gowns and played panpipes (antara). When the people who had been sent out from Cuzco before Citua were allowed back in after the rite they were given yahuar sancu, corn mixed with the blood of

¹¹Cobo, pp. 217-218. The participants in this rite also carried burning torches which they threw into streams. Garcilaso de la Vega writes that "if on a following day an Indian, whatever his age, came across one of these torches in a stream, he fled from it as though from fire, so that the evil which had been banished with it might not be passed on to him." Vol. 2, p. 100.

¹²Cobo, pp. 217-218.

sacrificed animals, to eat "as a sign of their confederation with the Inca".¹³ Once this sacred food was in their bodies it was believed that it would reveal any crimes committed by them against the Inca.¹⁴

Citua was intended to purify the body of Cuzco as a whole and the individual bodies of its inhabitants. The warriors ran in the four directions of the empire in order to cleanse all four quarters of the city and disperse the illness in all directions. As in confession, the evil was expelled both orally and by water. The fluidity of both sound and water were necessary to effectively cleanse the body.

The dance mentioned as particular to Citua was likely a symbolic reenactment of the rite. The long red gowns worn by the dancers are reminiscent of the red gown worn by the giant in Inca legend who threatens to cause a flood by blowing his trumpet (see Ch.IV: 91-92) and probably symbolize fluidity and transition. There may well be a connotation of menstruation as well here. Citua took place in the month of Coya Raymi, Festival of the Queen, which was dedicated to the moon and to women and therefore associated with feminine cycles. Bastien writes of the modern Quollahuayas:

¹³Ibid., pp. 218-219.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 219.

Because of menstruation, it is said, women are better able than men to get rid of bad things. The flow of blood cleanses a women of misfortune, such as infertility, and prepares her for conception."¹⁵

The red-gowned dancers would act out this cleansing flow of blood from the body. At the same time, the panpipes played by the dancers added the necessary auditory component to the fluidity expressed by the red gowns and the dance.

The illnesses the Incas sought to be rid of included both physical and social disorders. In fact, the sins; adultery, theft, murder, etc. which were believed to cause physical illness in the body of the individual who committed them, usually caused a corresponding "illness" in the social and cosmic body. Silverblatt writes:

In the Andes, notions of illness and well-being were intrinsically tied to a normative structure in which the maintenance of balance between social, natural, and supernatural forces was a predominant ideal. The explicit expression of this ideal is found in the term ayni, which means both balance and reciprocity....

The Andeans conceptualized disease as an imbalance, as a breakdown in the cultural norms regulating the ayni ideal of universal equilibrium.¹⁶

¹⁵Healers of the Andes, p. 42.

¹⁶"The Evolution of Witchcraft and the Meaning of Healing in Colonial Andean Society," Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 7 (1983): 418. This holds true in the modern Andes as well; see, for example, Bastien, Mountain of the Condor, p. 129. Crocker writes in Vital Souls:

Illness and death are understood in many "primitive" societies through symbolic systems which show parallels between human suffering, social pathology, and cosmic laws. Disruptions in the moral order of society threaten the organic well-being of its members and destroy the equilibrium of the natural universe... Effective diagnosis and treatment of disease thus require a reestablishment of that single moral universe, through a cleansing of the pollutions brought about by the transgression of

The festival of Citua, intended as it was to rid Cuzco of social as well as physical illness, was therefore one of exemplary social behaviour for the Incas. Accordingly:

They didn't reprove each other during that time, nor speak angry words, nor ask for debts to be paid, because they believed that if they were angry or quarrelsome on that day, they would be that way the whole year.¹⁷

Citua can be regarded as ritually returning Cuzco, and by extension the empire, to its original pristine, ideal state. For this reason all foreigners and persons with physical defects had to leave the city before the rite was performed and had to be ritually reincorporated into the Inca order when they were allowed back in, by eating the yahuar sanco, symbol of Inca holiness. The reason why Citua was performed before the start of the rains may have been not only that the rainy season was a time of sickness, but also that it was necessary to fortify bodily and social structures lest they be "dissolved" by the excessive fluidity.

In the rite of Citua, as in confession, water was used to carry illness away. Water, however, was also thought to have the ability to carry away strength. The spring in which the Inca bathed, for instance, had to be ritually placated so that it would not rob the Inca of his

categorical imperatives (p. 21).

¹⁷Cobo, p. 218.

vitality.¹⁸ Bastien writes about this belief among the Qollahuayas:

Juan Wilka, a Kaatan curer, said that Elsa Yanahuaya's blood was weak because a landslide had taken it and replaced it with water. Landslides, floods and turbulent streams wash the land away; and water, instead of blood, flowing through the body is associated with the loss of land - as well as with death.¹⁹

Citua can be understood as an attempt both to rid Cuzco of disease and to control water's power of dissolution by carrying excessive fluidity away to the sea.

The loss of vitality caused by bathing in springs, known as pucyo oncuy, "spring sickness" is one of the illnesses Guaman Poma says the Incas sought to rid themselves of at Citua. The other illnesses mentioned by him as being expelled in Citua are taqui oncoc, "dancing sickness"; sara oncuy, "corn sickness"; pacha panta, "horizon sickness"; chirapa uncuy, "rain with sun sickness"; pacha maca, "grasp of the earth"; acapana, "red clouds"; and ayapcha oncoycona, "cadaver sicknesses".²⁰

What these sicknesses all appear to have in common is that they are caused by an anomaly or liminal situation of one kind or another: water bubbling out of the earth; corn which causes illness instead of health; the horizon in which earth and sky meet; rain with sun; being clutched or struck

¹⁸Ibid., p. 172.

¹⁹Mountain of the Condor, pp. 45-46

²⁰vol. 1, p. 227.

by the earth; the red clouds of dawn or dusk, and cadavers, the living dead. Like hucha, these conditions transgress categorical boundaries and thus were thought dangerous to one's bodily integrity. When the Incas drove out illnesses from Cuzco in Citua, therefore, they were also ridding their body politic of ambiguities and reaffirming its structural divisions.

Death

Although the word "deadly", huanuy, was used as an adjective by the Incas to mean entirely and perfectly, death, in fact, did not signify the absolute end of human existence in Inca cosmology. In his article "Sickness and Death in PreConquest Andean Cosmology" George Urioste writes:

Preconquest Andeans thought of death not as the end of life but as a new stage in the process of becoming. The Quechua word for dead people is wanuq which means those who are dying, or those in the process of death. However, dead animals are said to be wanusqa, or having been affected by death as a permanent attribute. The active character of the human dead explains why they are considered full participants in the social structure of living Andeans.²¹

The rituals which marked death among the Incas and their subjects had points in common with those of other Inca rites of passage. When the deceased was a man, his female relatives, and particularly his wife, would cut their hair

²¹p.15.

to indicate their altered social status. So closely identified was this act with death that Guaman Poma writes that if a woman dreamt her hair was cut it meant she was going to become a widow.²² The relatives of the deceased also marked the event by wearing black. As in other rites of passage, the cutting of hair and change of apparel were a visual manifestation of the altered status of the bereaved and a physical assumption of the new status.

Dance and an outpouring of sound - weeping, singing, playing instruments - were essential to the mourning rites. They served both to express grief and to help accomplish the transition from one stage in the life cycle to the next. The reciting of major events from the deceased's life was a particularly important means of accomplishing this transition.

[The mourners] went out every day and danced to drums and flutes and sang in sad tones. They went around all those places which the deceased used to frequent while alive, telling through their songs all the things that had happened to him in his life.²³

This not only took the hearers step by step through the stages of the deceased's life, but also the deceased, who might otherwise not be able to make the transition from life to death. Bastien gives an instance of a rite similar to that described above among the Quollahuayas.

²²vol. 1, p. 256.

²³Cobo, p. 274.

As Guillermo [who is dying] named the places which he had plowed, planted, and harvested since he was four years old, everyone relaxed and mentally made the journey with him through the lower and rotative fields. They were happy...to know that Guillermo was associated with so many places. By cultivating these places, Guillermo had become a part of the mountain, which would remain forever.²⁴

The Incas believed in an afterlife, however there are conflicting accounts as to what this consisted of. One chronicle reports that those who had been good during their lives were believed to live a life of ease under the earth when they died, while those who had committed crimes were condemned to burn in the sky.²⁵ According to another account, however, nobles and virtuous individuals went to live in the sky after death while sinners were condemned to suffer cold and hunger in the interior of the earth.²⁶

These seemingly contradictory versions of the afterlife perhaps reflect a difference between pre-Inca and Inca traditions. Before the rise of the Incas, Andeans likely placed more cultural emphasis on the earth than the sky. The Incas, claiming the sun as their ancestor, reversed this tradition and made the sky superior to the earth. In the modern Andes the earth seems to have regained its former value.

Missionaries...taught the Indians that baptism is a rite of passage during which the baby passes from being an heir to limbo to being an heir to heaven..... Most

²⁴Mountain of the Condor, p. 173.

²⁵Santillán, pp. 112-113

²⁶Cobo, p. 154.

Andeans don't want to fly in heaven, which they experience as wind, sun, rain, and clouds. Where would they farm and herd in heaven? They want to remain on the mountain when they die.²⁷

What all Andeans were agreed on was the necessity of maintaining a reciprocal relationship between the living and the dead, whereby each contributed to the well-being of the other and the stability of the cosmos. The contribution made by the dead was to use their power as huacas to safeguard their descendents. The living, for their part, provided the dead with worship and offerings.

As the dead were presumed to have needs similar to those of the living, the most important offering made to the them was that of food and drink. Arriaga writes that the relatives of a dead person "pour chicha discreetly into the tomb so that the dead [person] may drink, and they make a show of doing him honor, placing cooked meals and roasts upon the grave for him to eat."²⁸

New clothes and utensils were also buried with the dead for their use, and in the case of the Incas, favoured wives and servants would be ritually killed to accompany their lord in the afterlife.²⁹ The period of mourning lasted up

²⁷Bastien, Mountain of the Condor, p. 96.

²⁸p. 56.

²⁹Cobo, pp. 274-275. In the modern Andes, a domestic animal, such as a dog, is sometimes killed and buried with a deceased person to act as his or her companion in the afterlife. Juan B. Ambrosetti, Supersticiones y leyendas: región misionera, valles calchaquíes, las pampas, (Buenos Aires: Pingüino, 1947), p. 97; Harry Tschopik Jr., "The Aymara

to a year, depending on the rank of the deceased. Offerings to the dead were made not only during this period, however, but at regular periods thereafter.

Guaman Poma states that among the Incas the feast of the dead took place in the month called Aya Marcay Quillay, (month for carrying the dead), equivalent to November (fig. 12, p. 184).

In this month they take the dead out of their vaults, called pucullo, and they give them food and drink and dress them in fine clothes and put feathers on their heads and sing and dance with them. They put them on litters and carry them from house to house through the streets and the plaza. Afterwards they put them back in their pucullos, giving them their food, with dishes of silver and gold for the nobles and clay for the poor.³⁰

Guaman Poma adds that this was also the month in which lifecycle rites in general were celebrated. This suggests that it was thought to be the most conducive period for effecting transfers from one category to another. The fluid nature of this month, which, in fact, fell in the rainy season, was perhaps why, according to Guaman Poma, it was also the time when the Incas exacted tribute, including virgins, from their subjects and distributed goods and wives among them.³¹

of Chucuito, Peru" in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 44 (1951): 217.

³⁰vol. 1, p. 231.

³¹Ibid. In the modern Andes the feast with the dead also occupies a liminal space in between categories. Bastien writes:

The Feast with the Dead is an annual rite of passage from the dry to wet season and from the activity of the dead

Exactly how the Andeans conceived of the dead is difficult to determine. Apart from the corpse itself, a dead person was apparently considered to have a spiritual body which would partake of the essences of food and drink offered it and even leave footprints behind in the ashes or corn meal scattered by relatives around its former home. This spirit was thought to wander about for a period after death and then retire to its permanent home, whether in the sky or in the earth.³²

In a tradition that may well be indicative of pre-Conquest beliefs, the Andeans of present-day Cuzco distinguish three souls in the person: the kurag (great) soul, the chaupi (middle) soul, and the sull'qa (little) soul. These souls separate at death as follows: the kurag goes to the mountain peaks, the sull'qa transmigrates to

to that of the living. The dry season connotes resting, and the wet season, growth. Between this pivotal point within the Andean year, the dead visit the living, and then they are sent on another year's journey with their share of the harvest. Mountain of the Condor, p. 178
 Among modern Andeans this feast is held on November 2nd, the Catholic All Soul's Day, an overlapping of Andean and Catholic ritual which began soon after the Conquest. Arriaga, p. 56.

³²Arriaga, p. 55 and Pachacuti Yamqui, pp. 243-244.
 Tschopik reports of the modern Aymara:
 The soul in every way resembles the body and duplicates the actions of the living. Indeed, so great is the resemblance that informant 39 was led to observe:
 "Unless you know a man is dead, it is sometimes difficult to say whether you have seen him or whether it was his soul you saw." p. 211.

another living body, and the chaupi remains with the corpse.³³

According to Glynn Custred, who has examined different Inca terms in relation to the Western concept of soul, sonco, the heart and the stomach, was a kind of "body soul," denoting a person's character, consciousness and intellect. Yuya - reason, memory, imagination - corresponded more specifically to the concept of "mind". Samay, breath or inspiration, was a "breath soul" providing life and linking a person with the spiritual aspects of the physical environment, while the term nuna apparently referred to a person's spirit, or "free soul".³⁴

While we do not know exactly what the Inca concept of "soul" was, we do know that the Incas believed that the corpse retained an existence of its own and continued to affect and be affected by the actions of its descendants. For this reason, for example, the post-Conquest Inca, Manco Inca, when dying, beseeched his son not to "make his bones suffer" by mistreating family members.³⁵

³³Henrique-Osvaldo Urbano, "Dios Yaya, Dios Churi y Dios Espíritu: Modelos trinitarios y arqueología mental en los Andes," Journal of Latin American Lore, 6:1 (1980), p. 124.

³⁴"Inca Concepts of Soul and Spirit" in Essays in Humanistic Anthropology, B.T. Grindal, D.M. Warren, eds. (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979), pp. 277-302.

³⁵Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 31. This belief made the Inca use of the bodies and bones of enemies as drums and flutes (see ch. V, note 68) more than simply symbolic.

If the living could harm the dead, the dead could also harm the living, causing them misfortune and disease. This would occur when some aspect of ancestor worship was neglected, but also spontaneously through contact with a corpse or its emanations. This last is referred to by Guaman Poma as ayapcha oncoycona, cadaver sicknesses,³⁶ and is generally known in the modern Andes as machu wayra, ancestor wind. It is believed to cause a variety of sicknesses, but principally one which starts off as a rash, then enters the bones and destroys the whole body.³⁷ Contact with a corpse would therefore seem to produce a process of decay similar to that experienced by the corpse.

Andeans protected themselves against this contagion as they did against illnesses in general, through ritual cleansing in a river. Arriaga writes that:

The clan comes together with the relatives ten days after a death occurs to accompany the nearest relative to a spring or flowing stream that has been agreed upon. There they duck him three times and wash all the dead person's clothes.³⁸

A modern account from the province of Tucumán in the Argentine Andes describes a similar ceremony occurring nine days after a death.

Everyone goes to the nearest stream or river taking the

³⁶Vol. 1, p. 227.

³⁷Jorge A. Lira, Medicina andina: Farmacopea y ritual, (Cuzco, Peru: Centro de Estudios Rurales Andinos "Bartolomé de Las Casas", 1985), p. 86.

³⁸p. 55.

saddled horse, dog, and all of the possessions of the deceased with them.... Once there, the friends of the widow wash and bathe her, and when her hair has been well washed, they comb it. When this operation is over they go on to carefully wash all of the possessions.³⁹

The disintegration and transformation of the corpse placed it in a state of fluidity and allied it with other sources of fluidity. In Tahuantinsuyu, the tombs and bodies of the dead were apparently often associated with the flow of water for irrigation.⁴⁰ This association with fluidity could also be symbolic in nature. The Quollahuayas, for example, believe that corpses decay until only the bones are left and then swim up as miniature bodies through underground rivers to a lake on the top of the mountain where they are reborn.⁴¹

The flesh of a corpse is conceptualized as wet and "chaotic" (except in the case of mummies) in Andean thought, while the bones are considered to be dry and "structured".⁴² In the modern province of Cuzco, the soul (alma) of a bad person is thought to be tied to the rotting flesh of its corpse and condemned to wander about causing harm to the living, while the soul of a good person resides in the dry

³⁹Ambrosetti, p. 97.

⁴⁰R. T. Zuidema, "Shafittombs and the Inca Empire," Journal of the Steward Anthropological Society, 9: 133-178.

⁴¹Bastien, Mountain of the Condor, p. 86.

⁴²Mishkin. For data on this from the Bolivian Andes see Oblitas Poblete, pp 32-33 and Bastien, Healers of the Andes, p. 72.

bones of the corpse and exerts a beneficial influence.⁴³ While a Catholic influence is evident here, the dichotomy posited between the wet flesh and the dry bones of the corpse is most likely derived from pre-Columbian theories of the body.⁴⁴

The Underworld, Ucu Pacha, was the metaphorical location of the dark, fluid future in Andean cosmology. The dead, through their connection with Ucu Pacha, also participated in the future, which made them particularly useful as oracles to the Andeans. (In the Andes, as has been noted, time was thought to be cyclical, and thus the past was believed to return again, with variations, in the future.) The use of the word mallqui, "seed" or "young plant", to refer to the body of an ancestor (see the mallqui-tree in fig 1, p. 39) conveys the concept of the ancestor's involvement with the future. Like seeds and plants, the bodies of ancestors mediated between the world underground and the world aboveground. This mediating role is perhaps one reason why in the Cuzco region the soul which

⁴³Catherine Allen, "Body and Soul in Quechua Thought," Journal of Latin American Lore 8:2 (1982): 184-187. Mishkin writes that the Andeans of Kauri, Peru believe that a body is composed of "wet" flesh, a "soul" which resides in the bones, and a "spirit" which goes to heaven after death (p. 465).

⁴⁴Arriaga mentions that he asked a "soul-eating" Andean sorcerer what a soul tasted like and was told that it was like "dried beef" (p. 39). This would seem to associate the "soul" with dryness, however it is impossible to tell exactly what Andean entity corresponded to the Catholic concept of "soul".

remains with the body after death is called the "middle" soul.

The authority of the mallquis was such that an ayllu or community could find itself in the power of another people if the latter gained possession of the body of its founding ancestor.⁴⁵ Most of the local huacas the Incas brought to Cuzco from the regions they conquered likely formed part of the ancestor cults of their native communities. By taking control of his subjects' ancestors, the Inca could establish himself as the symbolic father of his people.

Removing mallquis from their places of origin, however, disturbed their relationship with their land, for after death the body remained clearly allied to the land from which it had come and out of which, according to Andean cosmology, it was made. Modern Andeans believe it is necessary to be buried in one's homeland in order to preserve one's ties to one's land and community.⁴⁶ The same belief may well have been what prompted the Incas to bury their favorite wives with land brought from their native communities.⁴⁷ The wife's homeland would also

⁴⁵Conrad and Demarest, p. 105.

⁴⁶Bastien, Mountain of the Condor, p. 172.

⁴⁷Polo de Ondegardo, "Relación de los fundamentos acerca del notable daño que resulta de no guardar a los indios sus fueros " [1567] in Colección de libros y documentos referentes a la historia del Perú, ser. 1, vol. 3, ed. H.H. Urteaga and C. A. Romero (Lima: 1916), p. 111.

thereby be honored by its association with the sacred Inca capital.

A similar honour which the Incas conferred on their subjects was to send a capacocha, human offering, who had been brought to Cuzco to be sacrificed to the sun, back home to be sacrificed there and serve as his or her community's guardian huaca. One early seventeenth-century account relates the story of a capacocha, named Tanta Carhua, who was sent to Cuzco as a sacrifice by her father. After her purifying and sanctifying stay in the Inca capital, Tanta Carhua was sent back to her village to be sacrificed there. On arriving home the girl proclaimed, "Finish with me now, for I had festivities enough celebrated for me in Cuzco". She was then buried alive on a high mountain and transformed into the guardian huaca of her people.⁴⁸

Those persons who lived too far away to visit Tanta Carhua's shrine, adored her from hills nearby from which they could see the mountain where she was buried.⁴⁹ Indeed, the dead were so closely associated with the places where they were buried in the Andes that often worship of one automatically entailed worship of the other. In the

⁴⁸"Visitas de Rodrigo Hernández Príncipe," in Cultura andina y represión: procesos y visitas de idolatrías y hechicerías Cajatambo, siglo XVII, ed. P. Duviols, (Cuzco, Peru: Centro de Estudios Rurales "Bartolomé de Las Casas", 1986), pp. 471-474.

⁴⁹Ibid.

case of Tanta Carhua, her cult was undoubtedly linked with that of the high mountain where she was interred, and probably to an important irrigation canal nearby as well.⁵⁰

The location and manner of the tombs in which the dead were placed were as important to the Andeans as the rites with which they were buried. When European burial practices were introduced after the Conquest, Andeans would consistently disinter their dead and reinter them according to traditional practice. Arriaga writes of this:

Their greatest abuse is to disinter the dead and remove their bodies to their machays, or burial places of their ancestors in the fields.... On being asked why they do this they say that this is cuyaspa, for the love they bear them. They say that the dead lying in the church are in great torment and bound to the earth, whereas in the fields, because they are in the open air and not buried, they have more rest. A few days before we reached a certain town, an influential Indian and his wife had taken the bodies of their two children away from the church. To accomplish their purpose they buried them one after another in a sort of crypt made of stone slabs, and they carried them into their house and kept them there two days, celebrating a great festival, dressing them in new clothes and carrying them around town in a procession. And they invited their relatives to drink at the festival. After that they returned to the church. We made them dig the bodies up again and, after destroying their crypt, we made them throw earth upon them. It is to be observed how

⁵⁰Zuidema, "Shafttombs and the Inca Empire," pp. 148-152. After the Conquest, Tanta Carhua's body was found in its underground vault by a Spanish priest searching out idolatries:

She was seated according to the gentile custom with adornments of small pots and jars and showy broaches of silver which the Inca had given her as gifts. She was already decomposed, and consequently, the fine clothes in which she had been dressed when she came to this place were so deteriorated as to be indistinguishable.

"Visitas de Rodrigo Hernández Príncipe," p. 473

important it is for us never to consent to their burying bodies in crypts.⁵¹

Andean tombs were basically of two kinds, shafttombs and chullpas. The first were stone vaults under the earth and the second were towers with small entrances facing east. Zuidema speculates that the Incas may have given a cosmological significance to the distribution of different kinds of tombs in the Andes:

Archaeologically, chullpas are found to the east of Cuzco.... Shafttombs are found to the west of Cuzco.... These data induce me to advance the hypothesis that the Incas were aware of this geographical difference and made a cosmological use of it in their own socio-religious system: correlating chullpas to sunrise; mummies, used in procession, to their own capital in the center of the empire and to the Sun in zenith; and shafttombs to sunset and the underworld.⁵²

If so, the aboveground chullpas were probably also regarded as male in nature, and the underground shafttombs as female, while the royal mummies of Cuzco would provide a mediating center between the two opposites.

The mummies of the Incas were the most important mallquis in Tahuantinsuyu. As the Inca was divine, and as he represented the empire, it was important that when he died his body be properly cared for and not allowed to

⁵¹pp. 56-57. A similar distrust of church cemeteries exists among modern Andeans. Tschopik reports an Aymara woman as saying:

The dead should be buried where roads cross.... There will be a time when they will all live again, and it is better to bury them by the roads. I don't think that those in the cemeteries will ever live again. p. 217.

⁵²"Shafttombs and the Inca Empire," p. 154.

decay. As well, the Incas possibly believed that the bodies of the dead would be ressurected one day.⁵³ For these reasons the corpses of the Incas were skillfully embalmed so that they were able to last for centuries.

These mummies were usually kept wrapped in layers of cloths with their faces covered. Garcilaso de la Vega, however, had a chance to see five of these royal mummies, three male and two female, without their customary wrappings, in 1559 when they had been appropriated by the Spanish. He writes:

The bodies were so well preserved that they lacked neither hair, eyebrows nor eyelashes. They were wearing clothes as they would in life, with llaautos [headbands] on their heads, but no other royal insignia. They were seated in the Indian fashion and had their hands crossed on their chests, the right over the left, and their eyes cast downwards.⁵⁴

The perfect preservation of the Inca mummies, which were drained of body fluids, as opposed to the putrefaction of ordinary, untreated corpses served to exemplify the

⁵³The anonymous chronicler gives as the primary reason for the Inca custom of preserving the bodies of the dead, the Inca belief that "the spirits would return to their bodies after a certain time and resuscitate them and this could not occur unless the bodies were kept uncorrupted, with nothing missing, at least of their bones, since the flesh might disintegrate." pp. 159-160.

⁵⁴vol. 1, pp. 286-287. The Inca mummies appropriated by the Spanish were taken to the Hospital de Españoles de San Andrés in Lima where they were exhibited for some time and then buried somewhere on the grounds of the hospital. José de la Riva-Agüero, Obras Completas de José de la Riva-Agüero, vol. 5 (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1966) p. 397.

structure and permanence of the Inca state (and also the mummies' association with the sun and the dry, structured upper world).⁵⁵ As well, the dry, stable condition of the mummies made them relatively safe for living humans to be in contact with.⁵⁶

Each mummy was accompanied by its huaque, brother or double, which was a statue chosen in life by the Inca to represent him. A huaque might or might not resemble its Inca "brother" and was made of gold, stone or some other material. Each huaque had its own estate and retinue and was treated with the same reverence as its human counterpart. The huaques continued to be maintained and revered after the death of their "brothers" in the same way as the mummies of the latter were. The practice of taking a huaque was not peculiar to the Incas but was relatively common among the Andeans.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Mummification was already a time-honoured and widespread practice in the Andes by the rise of the Incas. James M. Vreeland Jr. and Aidan Cockburn, "Mummies of Peru" in Mummies, Disease, and Ancient Cultures, Aidan and Eve Cockburn, eds, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 135-174. As they did with so many other Andean customs, the Incas developed this practice into one of particular significance in their imperial and cosmological order.

⁵⁶Another benefit of mummification is that the mummies would not smell rotten (Cobo, p. 163) as ordinary corpses would, an important consideration in a society in which the smell of rotteness was equated with chaos and savagery. See ch. V, n. 83.

⁵⁷Cobo, p. 162. Pierre Duviols discusses the role of the huaque in the Andes in "Un Symbolisme Andin du Double: La Lithomorphose de l'Ancêtre," Actes du XLIIe Congrès International des Americanistes, Vol. IV (Paris, 1976), pp.

In Inca and Andean mythology there are a great many instances of humans who were turned into stone. Manco Capac's brother, who became the stone huaca on the top of Huanacauri hill (see p. 182), is one well-known example of this. Another is that of Manco Capac himself, who was said to have turned to stone at death, for which reason he had no mummy.⁵⁸ The reasoning behind the huaque, which literally means one half of a pair, would seem to be that not only could an organic body and inorganic stone be fused into one, they could also be maintained separate as two halves of a fundamental pair. The inorganic huaque would thus complement the organic body of its double, providing the permanence and stability which the latter lacked.

The cult of the royal mummies was apparently instituted in its full form by Inca Pachacuti at the time when Tahuantinsuyu was assuming imperial proportions. He is said to have disinterred the bodies of the previous Incas, adorned them with gold, and arranged for festivities to be held with representations of the life of each one.⁵⁹ Pachacuti evidently recognized the value of the bodies of his royal predecessors as imperial symbols.

359-364.

⁵⁸Cobo, p. 67.

⁵⁹Sarmiento de Gamboa, p. 236.

There is some confusion in the chronicles as to where the mummies of the Incas were ordinarily kept. Garcilaso de la Vega writes that they were kept in the temple of the Sun, Coricancha; the male mummies with the image of the sun and the female ones with that of the moon.⁶⁰ Other accounts place each mummy in its own palace, and indeed, the mummies were discovered by the conquistadors in different places in and around Cuzco.⁶¹ Cobo reconciles this difference by saying that at first the mummies were all kept in the temple of the Sun, but later, each one was taken charge of by its descendants and only brought to the temple on special occasions.⁶²

The Inca retained all of his land and property after death and these were placed in the care of his panaca, consisting of all his descendants in the male line except for his successor, which maintained them on behalf of his mummy.⁶³ The possession of the body of its imperial ancestor endowed a panaca with not only a generous living

⁶⁰Comentarios reales, vol. 1, pp. 173-174.

⁶¹Cobo names the place where each Inca mummy was found at the end of his account of that Inca's life. pp. 64-94.

⁶²*Ibid.*, p.164.

⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 66. This appears to have been the practice as well in the Chimu empire, a pre-Inca kingdom on the North coast of Peru, however it was probably not carried out there to the extent that it was in the Inca empire. Conrad and Demarest, pp. 91-94.

derived from the Inca's property,⁶⁴ but also a significant amount of power, for the mummies were often consulted through their attendants on matters of imperial importance.

Huayna Capac, the eleventh Inca, for instance, asked the mummy of his father, Tupac Inca Yupanqui, for permission to marry one of his (Huayna Capac's) sisters who would not agree to the match. The mummy refused to respond and instead there were ominous omens in the sky, so Huayna Capac was obliged to abandon the idea and marry another sister.⁶⁵ Huascar, the son of Huayna Capac, also asked the mummy of Tupac Inca Yupanqui for permission to marry, however, in this case "the persons who represented the body... consented in its name."⁶⁶

⁶⁴Pizarro writes of the caretakers of the Inca mummies: Whenever they wished to eat, to drink, they said that the dead ones wished to do that same thing. If they wished to go and divert themselves in the houses of other dead folk, they said the same, for it was customary for the dead to visit one another (vol. 1, p. 203).

⁶⁵Pachacuti Yamqui, who relates this account, adds that to punish his sister for not marrying him, Huayna Capac gave her to an ugly, old, coca-addicted curaca (chieftain). However, she chose instead to become an aclla, indicating that Inca women had at least some power of self-determination. pp. 259-260.

⁶⁶Murúa, ed. Ballesteros, p. 122. Huascar is also said to have married his mother to his father's body in order to ensure his own legitimacy. Pachacuti Yamqui, p. 266.

As repositories of authority and tradition, the royal mummies represented the sun and structure.⁶⁷ As sacred mediators however, they were more closely associated with rain and fluidity. The use of the term yllapa, thunder and lightning, to refer to the Inca dead brings out the mummies' role as mediators of the divine and their association with rain. This connection with rain is further brought out by a drawing by Guaman Poma in which a skull labelled yllapa is positioned above a rain-like stream of chicha being poured into a jar (fig. 13, p. 190). The mummy of Inca Roca, who reputedly provided Cuzco with its water supply,⁶⁸ was apparently thought to have a special ability to attract rain. Cobo relates that "whenever there was a need of water for the crops, [Inca Roca's mummy] was carried out in procession through the fields and highlands, and this was believed to be in large measure responsible for bringing rain."⁶⁹

⁶⁷Cobo writes that the ashes of the hearts of the dead Incas were kept in the abdomen of a statue of the Sun in Coricancha (p. 157). As the heart stood for the person in Andean thought, this would effectively identify the dead Incas with the Sun.

⁶⁸Sarmiento de Gamboa, pp. 223-224

⁶⁹p. 73. In the present-day Cuzco region, leaving a corpse exposed on the ground is supposed to prevent rain from falling. Lira, Medicina andina, p. 85; Tschopik, p. 214. The corpse here is perhaps thought to "scare" the rain away, however there is also the possibility that the presence of the dead in the world of the living is thought to create a certain sterility (lifelessness), exemplified by drought, in the latter. Tschopik, in fact, writes that the return of the dead on the day of the dead is said to prevent rain among the

The Inca mummies, like other mallquis, served as sources of information about the future. Cieza de León writes that once a year the Incas gathered all the mummies and sacred statues together in the plaza of Cuzco and asked them one by one through their attendants about the events of the coming year; principally how the crops, the Inca and the empire would fare: "And if the Incas did not do this every year, they went about fearful and uneasy and didn't hold their lives safe."⁷⁰ By serving as conduits between the future and the present, the mummies helped to channel the fluidity of the future and render it manageable.

On all important occasions the mummies were brought out from their palaces to the plaza of Cuzco.

In front of the dead they lit a fire of a certain kind of wood which had been carved and cut very evenly. In it they burned the food which had been placed for the dead bodies to eat.... They also had some large cups like pitchers, called vilques, made of gold and silver, in front of the dead and in these they poured the chicha which they offered to the dead after first showing it to them. The dead would toast each other, and toast the living, and vice versa through their ministers who acted on their behalves. When these vilques were full, they were emptied into a round stone kept as an idol in the middle of the plaza. Around the stone there was a small cistern through which the chicha ran down along certain drains and hidden pipes.⁷¹

modern Aymara. p. 214

⁷⁰El señorío de los Incas, p. 104.

⁷¹Cobo, p. 164.

On lesser occasions, similar rituals were performed with the mummies' huaques.

It can be seen here that important Inca ceremonies required that the ideals of equilibrium and exchange be reasserted among the dead and also between the dead and the living, and the dead and the different levels of the cosmos. The dead engaged in reciprocal toasts with each other and with the living, while the food which was burnt for the dead travelled upwards to the dry upper world and the drink which was offered them travelled downwards to the fluid underworld. Categories, thereby, were carefully maintained separate, but also carefully integrated.

These rites practiced by the Incas were based on long-standing Andean tradition. Where the Incas differed from general practice was in the elaboration of the cult of the dead to imperial proportions. The greater the Inca empire became, the more important it was that the bodies of the Incas, which symbolized the empire, should reflect that greatness. The consequence of this, however, was that a large amount of the empire's resources ended up being used for the cult of the dead, and that therefore each Inca had to start anew in collecting land and property for his personal

use and post-mortem cult.⁷² This helped foster a constant drive to conquer new lands which would eventually render Tahuantinsuyu too large to be efficiently administered.

Conrad and Demarest write:

Even as it was driving Tawantinsuyu to its zenith, the cult of the royal mummies was constantly undercutting what it built. By denying the living emperor the land and labor controlled by his predecessors, the property rights of the dead forced Inca rulers to adopt a policy of continuous territorial growth. In creating unrelenting pressures for new conquests split inheritance would prove to be the fatal flaw in the Inca state. The aggressive military drive provided by the Incas' ideological system was initially successful in the competitive Andean world. However, the long-term consequences of the imperial ancestor cult were severe military, administrative, and economic stresses that would eventually destroy Tahuantinsuyu.⁷³

⁷²According to Pizarro, Huascar, who lost the empire to his half-brother Atahualpa just before the arrival of the Spanish, declared that the dead should be buried and have their riches taken away because they had all that was best in the kingdom (vol. 1, pp. 205-206).

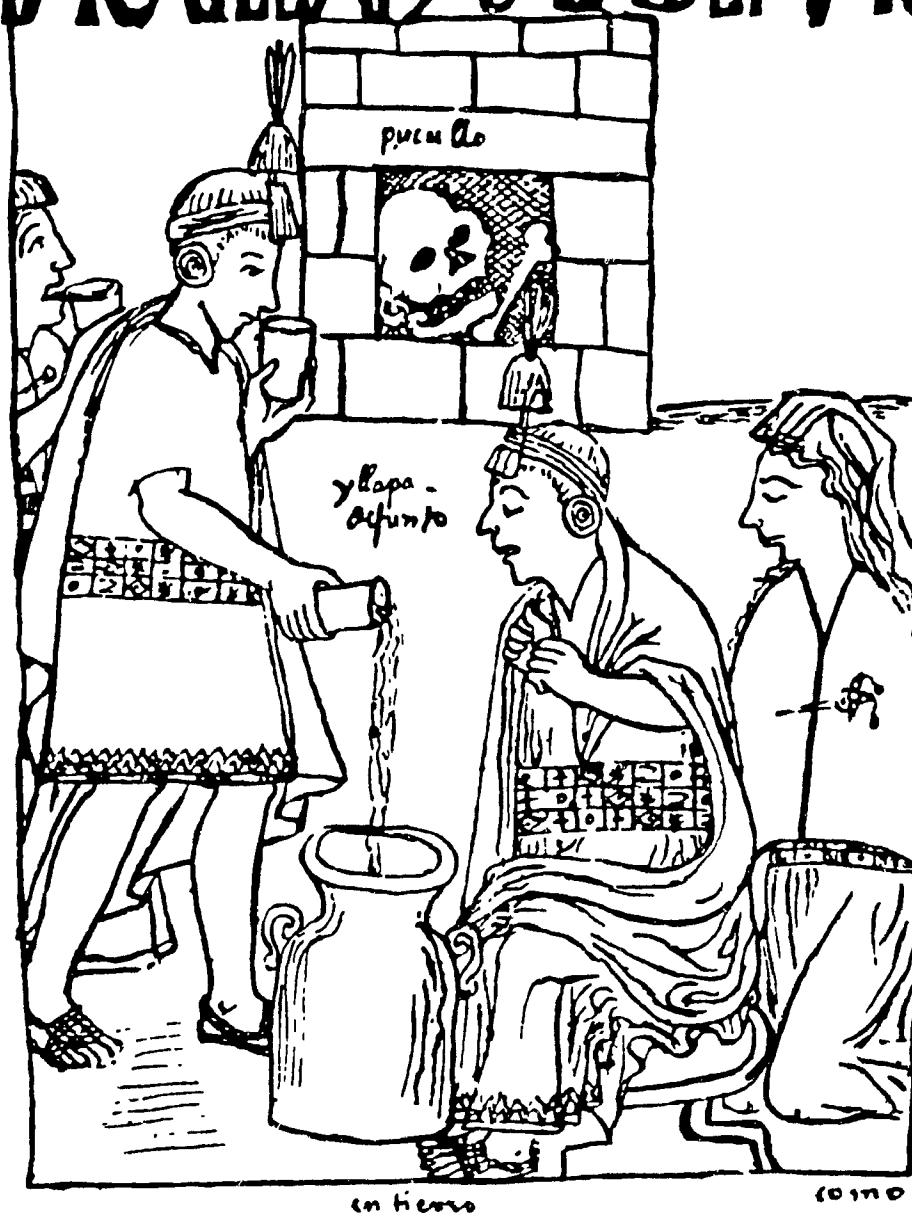
⁷³p. 126.



Figure 12. The month for carrying the dead.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 230.)

CAPITULO PRIMERO EL TIEMPO DEL INCA VICALLAPA ALA DEFUNTO



en tierra

(0170)

Figure 13. The funeral of the Inca.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 262.)

VII. THE METAPHORICAL BODY

The Imperial Body

We know that the Incas made extensive use of structural divisions to order their world. In "Myth and History in Ancient Peru," Zuidema writes:

The first classification found in Inca culture is the distinction between the denominators saya, "upright," and suyu. Saya refers to hierarchical divisions within political units and to the cultivated lands within a town or village; suyu refers to the divisions of land outside town and to the cyclical service... of subject groups to the political center....

The second binary classification uses the terms Hanan, "upper," and Hurin, "lower," to distinguish any two social or other categories which are considered to be related to each other as, respectively, "higher" or "major" and "lower" or "minor".¹

While useful for establishing categories, however, purely structural divisions provide no reasons why, for example, two halves of a community should exchange goods and services with each other. For this, structural categories have to be

¹In The Logic of Culture: Advances in Structural Theory and Methods, I. Rossi and Contributors, (London: Tavistock, 1982), p. 151.

related to a dynamic system, of which the most natural and basic model is the body.²

The fundamental divisions of Inca culture - right/left, high/low, external/internal, male/female - had their origin in the human body, as was discussed in chapter II. Body parts, and the body as a whole, also provided organizing symbols for the Incas. Garcilaso de la Vega, for example, compares Hanan and Hurin Cuzco to the right and left arms of a body.³ Each of these halves, in turn, was divided into five panacas, which could be thought of as five fingers.⁴ The empire itself was divided into Hanan and Hurin halves, which likely also carried the metaphorical connotation of

²In The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, vol. 2, Ernst Cassirer writes: "Whenever [myth] finds an organically articulated whole which it tries to understand by its methods of thought, it tends to see this whole in the image and organization of the human body" (p. 90). Mary Douglas also speaks of the body as a model which is "better able to reflect complex social forms than door posts and lintels." Purity and Danger, p. 114.

³Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 43.

⁴That a relationship existed between the number of panacas in each half of Cuzco and the number of fingers on a hand is not explicitly stated in the chronicles, but seems a likely reason for the arbitrary division of each moiety into five parts. Zuidema writes of the prevalence of quinqupartition among the Incas: "It can only be assumed that the decimal system of counting in the Peruvian languages, and the number of fingers on a hand, influenced this use of the number five." The Ceque System of Cuzco, p. 214.

halves of a body,⁵ while the four quarters of Tahuantinsuyu would correspond to the four quarters of the body.

These four quarters of the empire, in turn, appear to have been symbolically embodied by the Incas in the pirani ritual, discussed in chapter V, in which the faces of the participants were divided into four quarters by a line of blood painted from ear to ear. R.T. Zuidema finds a similar symbolism occurring in another ritual in which people painted their noses yellow and their faces red in order to communicate with the sun. He writes:

The nose in this case symbolized a gnomon, measuring the passage of the sun through its zenith, and... as such it was an axis mundi. In Cuzco, a tall round building, the Suntur huasi, served that purpose. The eyes of the painted face symbolized the two ritual places on opposite sides of the gnomon. They were used, together with the gnomon, for defining sunrise and sunset positions in relation to the zenith passage of the sun at noon. Two such ritual places in Cuzco, the Ushnus, were also used as basins leading to the Underworld for libations to the Sun and to the ancestors. We can conclude then, that whereas the colour yellow is referring to the sun, the eyes with the blood should be conceived as entrances to the Underworld.⁶

In rituals such as these the participants, through metaphor, incorporated the ideal structures of their culture into their own persons.

⁵Interestingly, the Incas seem to have associated the lower, or Southern half of their empire with fluidity - Lake Titicaca, the mythological birthplace of humanity, was situated there, for example - and the upper, or Northern half with structure - Huayna Capac built his new capital city in Quito. Such associations would be consistent with those attached to the upper and lower halves of the human body.

⁶"Masks," p. 151.

The pre-eminent metaphor for the body of the empire was the body of the Inca. We have seen in chapter VI how the health of the Inca was intrinsically linked with the health of the empire, so much so that when the Inca was ill his subjects would perform the necessary health-restoring rites of confession and penance. The myth describing how Inca Roca found a source of water (see p. 135 above), in turn, depicts a metaphorical relationship between the body of the Inca and the land. The Inca's earache is equivalent to the drought suffered by Cuzco, and the blood flowing from his ear corresponds to the underground river he discovers.

While the Inca represented the whole of the empire, at the same time he symbolized its apex - head - and its center - heart. The position of the Inca as the head of the social body is brought out most clearly in the following passage from Betanzos:

[Inca Pachacuti] named the whole of [Cuzco] "Lion's body," saying that its neighbours and inhabitants were like the members of the body and that he was its head.⁷

Murúa writes that the Inca was carried on his litter by four lords who represented the four quarters of the empire.⁸ The body of each lord here evidently represented

⁷p. 50.

⁸ed. Bayle, p. 164. Other chroniclers (Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 304; Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 2, p. 13) write that persons from a particular locality were trained to carry the Inca's litter. The practice described by Murúa was therefore likely one of ritual, rather than everyday, use.

those of the inhabitants of his particular quarter of the empire, while that of the Inca, carried above and in the center, represented the dominant Inca social body. Murúa states, in fact, that this practice was intended to keep the inhabitants of the four quarters subordinate to the Incas.⁹

The Inca's pivotal position is set forth in the myth of the origin of the Incas in which Manco Capac thrusts the staff of the sun into the ground, uniting the sky and the earth and establishing himself as an axis mundi. The Inca and his wife, the Coya, as the founders of civilization, become the models for all humanity. In support of this, José María Arguedas writes that "Inca" in Quechua not only means "ruler," but also the original model for every human being.¹⁰

Similarly, those in the service of the Inca, and the inhabitants of Cuzco in general, were expected to serve as models in their various capacities. Garcilaso de la Vega writes in this regard:

The attendants in the service of the royal house... did not undertake their functions as individuals. Certain villages, rather, undertook to supply persons for each office.... Carelessness or negligence on the part of any one of these servants was held against the whole village, and for the fault of the individual all

⁹p. 164.

¹⁰"Taki Parwa y la poesía quechua de la república," Letras Peruanas, 6: 12 (1955): 74.

the inhabitants were punished more or less severely, according to the crime.¹¹

Cuzco as a Body

As the Inca represented both the whole of the empire and its center, so did Cuzco. As was the empire, Cuzco was divided into four parts by four principal streets which met in the central square. Outside the city, these streets became the four highways of the empire. The correspondence between Cuzco and Tahuantinsuyu is made explicit by Garcilaso de la Vega in a chapter entitled "The City Contained the Description of the Whole Empire":

Manco Capac ordered that the savages he had subjugated should settle [in Cuzco] according to the places they came from: those from the east to the east and those from the west to the west, and so on. The chiefs... built their houses according to the locations of their provinces, if [a chief's province] was to the right of his neighbour's he built his house to the right, if it was to the left, then to the left, and if it was behind, then behind. This was undertaken in so orderly a fashion that whoever looked carefully at those neighbourhoods and the houses of the many and diverse peoples who inhabited them, would see the whole of the empire at once, as though in a mirror or in a cosmographic drawing.¹²

While this description is probably more ideal than factual, the quadripartition of Cuzco did indeed parallel that of the empire, with each quarter of the city corresponding to a quarter of Tahuantinsuyu. Through controlling this

¹¹Comentarios reales, vol. 2, p. 13.

¹²Ibid., p. 106.

microcosmos, the Incas hoped to control the macrocosmos and establish an ordered and integrated world.

As the center of Tahuantinsuyu, Cuzco provided a fixed point of orientation around which an ordered world could be established. References to Cuzco as the heart and head of Tahuantinsuyu abound in the chronicles. As "heart" and "head" were common synonyms in Spanish for a capital city, most of these references could simply be regarded as reflecting Spanish usage. Fernando de Montesinos, however, gives two instances where these terms appear to occur within an indigenous context. He writes:

As Inti Capac decided that the king should be like the heart, in the middle of his kingdom, he ordered that the royal court should be in Cuzco, as it was in the middle [of the kingdom].¹³

Later, he has Inca Roca refer to Cuzco as the "head" of the empire.¹⁴ Guaman Poma also consistently refers to Cuzco as the head of the kingdom. When describing the four quarters of Tahuantinsuyu he states that Chinchaysuyo is on the right hand, Collasuyo on the left hand, and Cuzco is the head in the center (fig. 14, p. 222).¹⁵

It seems very probable, in fact, considering the extensive symbolic use the Incas made of the body, that they would use body metaphors to refer to their empire. Body

¹³p. 37.

¹⁴p. 77.

¹⁵vol. 3, p. 913.

metaphors, such as "heart" and "head", however, can be used in a merely figurative sense, without any direct connection to the actual functioning of the body, such as in the English expression "the heart of the matter". The Incas, however, who were inclined to make very direct correspondances, likely used body metaphors as concrete symbols rather than simply figures of speech. The Inca understanding of metaphor would thus be similar to that described by Mark Johnson in The Body in the Mind:

A metaphor is not merely a linguistic expression (a form of words) used for artistic or rhetorical purposes; instead, it is a process of human understanding by which we achieve meaningful experience that we can make sense of. A metaphor, in this "experiential" sense, is a process by which we understand and structure one domain of experience in terms of a domain of a different kind.¹⁶

Garcilaso de la Vega writes that the meaning of Cuzco for the Incas was "navel of the land," and that "navel was a fitting name for it, because Peru is long and thin like a human body, and [Cuzco] is almost in the middle."¹⁷ The meaning of the term "navel" would fall within that of "heart" for the Incas, for in Quechua the word for heart,

¹⁶:The Bodily Basis for Meaning, Imagination, and Reason (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

¹⁷Comentarios reales, vol.1, p. 89. Modern Andeans also think of Cuzco as a navel. Abraham Valencia Espinoza, "Inka Qollari dramatizado" in Ideología mesiánica del mundo andino, ed. J. Ossio A. (Lima: Colección Biblioteca de Antropología, 1973), p. 291. The exact etymology of the word "Cuzco," however, is uncertain. Raúl Porras Barrenechea, "Prólogo" in Antología del Cuzco, ed. R. Porras Barrenechea (Lima: Librería Internacional del Perú, 1961), pp. xvii-xviii.

sonco, could also include the stomach. As navel, Cuzco was in the center both of the vertical body of the cosmos and the horizontal body of the land. It provided an umbilical cord between heaven and earth and it concentrated and radiated power and meaning throughout Tahuantinsuyu.

If Cuzco was the heart of the body of Tahuantinsuyu, then the heart of Cuzco was the central square and Coricancha, the temple of the Sun. Betanzos, in fact, makes the temple of the Sun the dividing mark between upper and lower Cuzco.¹⁸ Within the world at large, Tahuantinsuyu was sacred and what lay outside, profane, within Tahuantinsuyu, Cuzco was sacred and the rest of the empire profane, within Cuzco, the temple was sacred and the rest of the city profane.

As the innermost heart of the empire and the cosmos, Coricancha stood for both the empire and the cosmos, just as in Quechua the heart of a person can metaphorically stand for the whole person. The temple, in fact, is described as containing within itself models in gold and silver of all the important elements of Inca life,¹⁹ as well as a diagram of the cosmos with a human couple at the center (fig.1, p. 39). Thus, Coricancha safeguarded the integrity of the bodies of the empire and the cosmos.

¹⁸p. 48.

¹⁹Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 2, pp. 7-12.

For public ceremonies, the square, Aucaypata, in which the four roads of the empire met, became the heart of Tahuantinsuyu. There the Inca mummies and huacas were gathered and there the divinations and sacrifices which protected and sustained the Four Quarters were made.²⁰ The central position of the square is particularly well illustrated by the capacocha rite in which the Inca would sit in the middle of the square surrounded by huacas, while human sacrificial victims gathered from the four quarters of the empire circled twice around the plaza in an act of homage (see pp. 121-122 above). Some of these victims would then be sent home to be sacrificed there, thus carrying sacred energy from the center to the four quarters of Tahuantinsuyu. In his article on this ritual, Pierre Duviols writes:

The trajectory of sacred blood from the Heart (Cusco) through the circulatory system... gave life to the head and the brain (the Inca) at the same time as it irrigated and dyed one colour the whole body of the national territory.²¹

We have seen already how close the correspondence was between Cuzco and the person of the Inca. Cuzco, in fact, was the Inca's court, so that, in a very real sense, wherever the Inca was, Cuzco was. When the tenth Inca, Tupac, was involved in a lengthy war far from the capital,

²⁰Cobo, p. 172.

²¹"La Capacocha," p. 24.

he had a replica of Cuzco built in which to dwell which he named New Cuzco.²² Huayna Capac, the eleventh Inca, remodelled the city of Quito, where he lived for an extended period, after Cuzco.²³

In consideration of the close relationship between the Inca and the capital, Inca Pachacuti's description of himself and his court as forming the body of a lion (puma, the New World "lion"), logically also applied to the city of Cuzco itself. In fact, this lion metaphor is used by Pachacuti after he has finished redesigning Cuzco according to the clay model he made of the city.²⁴ As discussed in Chapter IV, this act of recreating Cuzco, coming, as it does, at the opening of a new age for the Incas, repeats the original act of Creation. Whereas Viracocha modelled human bodies out of clay and then named them, Pachacuti models the social body out of clay and then renames it. That Pachacuti is taking over the role of the Creator is confirmed by his displacement of Viracocha Inca, who symbolizes the Creator, in the tradition concerning his rise to Incaship.

The correspondance between the social and physical bodies of Cuzco is made clear by Pachacuti's restructuration

²²Cieza de León, El señorío de los Incas, pp. 172-173.

²³Montesinos, p. 107

²⁴Significantly, it is immediately after Pachacuti has assembled Cuzco as a body that he is asked to be Inca. Betanzos, p. 50.

of the city. He assigns that part of the city above the temple of the Sun, Hanan Cuzco, to pure-blooded Incas, and that part below the temple of the Sun, Hurin Cuzco, to Incas of mixed blood. The very end of Hurin Cuzco, where the two rivers running through the city meet, he is said to have called Pumachupan, "Puma's tail".²⁵

Sarmiento de Gamboa, in his history of the Incas, writes that Pachacuti's son, Tupac,

remembered that his father Pachacuti had called the city of Cuzco the lion city and that the tail was where the two rivers which ran through the city met, and that [Pachacuti] had said that the body was the plaza and the surrounding settlements, but that the head was missing, however, one of his sons would put it on.²⁶

The "head" given to the city by Tupac turns out to be a fortress, known as Sacsayhuaman (Royal Eagle), situated on the hill at the upper end of Cuzco.

Zuidema, in his analysis of this tradition, believes that Sarmiento simply took the lion's body passage from Betanzos' earlier work and rewrote it for his history.

The fanciful nature of Sarmiento's reinterpretation is clear. He wants us to think that Pachacuti Inca had a city without a head, and that Pachacuti Inca himself was not the "head" at all. Worse, Sarmiento adds a head, the fortress of Sacsayhuaman, the name of which means Royal Eagle (González Holguín). Thus, we have a puma's body with an eagle's head.²⁷

²⁵Betanzos, p. 48.

²⁶p. 258

²⁷"The Lion in the City: Royal Symbols of Transition in Cuzco," Journal of Latin American Lore 9:1 (1983): 89.

The fact that the description of Cuzco as a city without a head given by Sarmiento appears discordant with the tradition presented by Betanzos in which Pachacuti describes himself as the head of Cuzco suggests, however, that Sarmiento's material may originate from another source than Betanzos', perhaps one which wished to accord Tupac a more prominent role in Inca tradition. It is also possible that, as Tupac is referring here to the physical rather than the social body of Cuzco, the former might be thought to lack a head while the latter did not.

There is no reason why the fortress of Sacsayhuaman could not have been thought of as an eagle within one context, and a puma's head within another, just as water could symbolize female fluidity in one context, and male fertilizing power in another. As well, the practice of creating mythical beasts out of elements taken from different animals was not unknown to the Incas. Pachacuti Yamqui, for example, describes an enormous snake with teeth, ears and a beard which was said to have appeared at the birth of one of Inca Pachacuti's sons.²⁸

We know that the Incas called the lower end of Cuzco, where the two rivers met, "puma's tail". It would therefore be quite natural for them to think of the hill and fortress at the other end of their city as the puma's head. Why,

²⁸p. 240.

however, would the body of a puma be chosen as the metaphor for Cuzco rather than the human body? The reasons for this lie in the symbolic meaning of the puma for the Incas.

The puma represented a sacred double for the human body in Inca ritual. Cieza de León writes that Inca Pachacuti made his declaration of war against the Chancas "with a lion skin over his head so that it would be understood that he was going to be as strong as that animal is."²⁹ Molina of Cuzco says that an image of the Sun appeared to Pachacuti, prior to the war with the Chancas, as a man with a puma over his shoulders, another between his legs, and a snake running up his back (another instance of different animals combined in one body).³⁰ In the Huarochoico rite, the Inca elders greeted the newly initiated boys dressed in puma skins, thus revealing their sacred other identity at the moment of the boys' entrance into adult society.³¹

We can see from these instances that the puma was ritually employed by the Incas as an "other" for the human body at important times of transition, such as before the war with the Chancas and in the male initiation rite. Zuidema deduces from this data that the Incas associated the

²⁹El señorío de los Incas, p. 139. Guaman Poma writes that Pachacuti had "lion's eyes," vol. 1, p. 89.

³⁰pp. 20-21.

³¹Ibid., p. 58.

puma with transition and transformation.³² Although certainly used at times of transition, the puma would seem more specifically to have the role of affirming Inca identity and power in liminal situations. This may be why a puma's body was kept in a shrine in a mountain pass which marked the place where one lost sight of Cuzco,³³ and why, according to Garcilaso de la Vega, pumas were kept at the lower end of Cuzco, "puma's tail".³⁴ The puma's highland habitat and plain-coloured coat would make it a symbol of the order of the center, particularly in comparison to the variegated jaguar which lived in the lowlands and was associated with the disorder of the periphery.³⁵ Enclosing all of Cuzco within a puma's body would serve to sanctify

³²"The Lion in the City," pp. 40.

³³Cobo, p. 177.

³⁴Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 105.

³⁵In a modern Andean folktale from Southern Peru a corpse is reanimated by a speckled cat entering his head, a yellow cat, his heart, and a white cat, his feet. Ralph Bolton "Nine Quechua-Qolla Narratives: Peruvian Folktale Texts," Anthropos, 75 (1980): 150-151. In one of Guaman Poma's illustrations (fig. 23, p. 267) depicting a poor Andean surrounded by wild beasts symbolizing colonial administrators, a speckled jaguar is at the Andean's head, a tawny puma at his chest, and a plain-coated cat at his feet (the speckled jaguar is opposed by a speckled dragon attacking the Andean on his other side, the tawny puma by a tawny fox and the plain-coloured cat by a plain-coloured mouse), vol. 2, p. 655. For an analysis of the opposition between pumas and jaguars in Inca culture see Zuidema, "The Lion in the City," pp. 81-88.

the whole city and protect it from the forces of chaos outside.³⁶

The puma's tawny coat, together with its dominance over other highland animals, would have also made the puma a natural symbol for the sun. In the image of the sun seen by Pachacuti, two lions, in fact, envelop the body of the sun. The city of Cuzco, with its ceques radiating out in all directions and its gold-layered buildings, also represented the sun, occupying the same central position on earth as the sun at its zenith did in the sky (see fig. 15, p. 223).

While the metaphorical representation of Cuzco as a puma may have served to strengthen the city's association with the sun, it also strengthened its association with the earth, for the puma is a creature of the earth. The choice of the puma as a metaphor for Cuzco may otherwise have arisen quite naturally from the likeness of the tawny hills of Cuzco in the winter to the body of a puma. In the modern region of Cuzco, the puma is believed to have the ability to communicate with the Earth.³⁷ Modern tradition also

³⁶Guaman Poma, interestingly, places the city of Hell inside the open jaws of what is either a jaguar or puma in one of his drawings (vol. 3, p. 883). In the modern Peruvian community of Sonqo the Incas are believed to live in a city guarded by lions in the jungle. Wagner, "Coca, Chicha and Trago," p. 80.

³⁷Gary Urton, "Animal Metaphors and the Life Cycle in an Andean Community," in Animal Myths and Metaphors in South America, ed. G. Urton (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985), p. 255.

attributes the Inca with the power to talk with the Earth.³⁸ The puma can therefore be said to be like the Inca in its extraordinary powers of communicating and hearing. This association would also seem to have been made in Inca times, as the puma skins used in the huarochico rite (in which Inca boys had their ears pierced) wore golden ear ornaments, emphasizing their power of hearing, just as the Incas themselves did.³⁹ Representing Cuzco as a puma would thus enhance the city's ability to communicate with other cosmic levels, by assigning to it the puma's keen sense of hearing and its power to speak with the earth.

With regard to this latter quality, the Incas worshipped a large quinoa root from which they held Cuzco had sprung, and which they believed continued to sustain the city.⁴⁰ This root would provide Cuzco with a direct conduit to the under world, while the city itself, as a "tree", reached up into the upper world. The growth of this metaphorical tree would be the direct result of the supernatural fertilization of the earth which occurred when the golden staff of the sun was plunged into the ground at the future site of Cuzco.

³⁸i.e. in Alejandro Ortiz Rescaniere "El mito de la escuela" in Ideología mesiánica del mundo andino, ed. J. Ossio A. (Lima: Colección Biblioteca de Anthropología, 1973), p. 241.

³⁹Molina, p. 58.

⁴⁰Cobo, p. 172.

This understanding of Cuzco as a plant would not contradict the body metaphor, as plants and bodies were often associated by the Incas (see p. 46 above).

One myth from the Huarochiri region, in fact, describes humans as having originated from the quinoa plant.⁴¹

The most common instance of an association between plants and bodies is that which occurs in the use of the term mallqui, which can mean both ancestor and young plant. Significantly, in the modern Cuzco region, pumas are sometimes referred to as "ancestral co-parents" (machu compadre and paya comadre).⁴² As the origin of civilization for the Incas, Cuzco would also have had the role of an ancestral co-parent, helping to guide the future of the empire, while as a human city, a puma and a tree, it would have possessed the combined vitality of all the living things on earth.

In his article "What Kind of Settlement was Inca Cuzco," J. H. Rowe states that Cuzco was actually laid out in the form of a body of a puma as seen from the side (fig. 17, p. 225), with its outline described by streets, buildings and geographical features.⁴³ This argument is also taken up by an urban study of the Inca city published

⁴¹Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 2, p. 185.

⁴²Urton, "Animal Metaphors," p. 255.

⁴³Nawpa Pacha, 5 (1967), 59-76.

in 1980, which holds that the Incas planned to incorporate future expansion of the city into the puma's body by changing the outline of the puma so that it would appear to be crouching.⁴⁴

Zuidema, however, considers that the passages from Betanzos and Sarmiento in which the lion's body metaphor is applied to Cuzco, and on which Rowe and others largely found their case for Cuzco having the form of a puma, are too heavily influenced by European concepts of the body politic and the mystical body of Christ to be reliable.⁴⁵ It is possible that the accounts describing Cuzco as a puma are influenced by such concepts. Nonetheless, that the Spanish chroniclers may have understood the body metaphor used in the Andes in terms of their own cultural background does not prevent the metaphor from being authentically Andean in origin.

Body/land metaphors, in fact, are not uncommon in the indigenous cultures of South America. The Nazca Indians, who flourished on the south coast of Peru before the Incas, traced gigantic figures of animals, which are only visible in their totality from the air, on the sands of the desert, for unknown purposes. The present-day little acculturated

⁴⁴Santiago Agurto Calco, Cusco: La traza urbana de la ciudad inca, (Cuzco: Unesco, Instituto Nacional de Cultura del Perú, Proyecto Per-71/539, 1980), pp. 112, 138.

⁴⁵"The Lion in the City," p. 68.

Kogi Indians of northern Colombia use the human body as a metaphor for the land, assigning different locations to different body parts.⁴⁶

In any case, the internal structure of Inca tradition shows that Pachacuti's creation of Cuzco is a repetition of the original act of Creation, making it logical that Cuzco, which takes the place of human bodies in this second Creation, would have the symbolic meaning of a body. Finally, the fact that the Incas believed that Cuzco had sprung from a root, demonstrates that the city was conceived of as an organic body and not simply an ensemble of structural oppositions.

Modern Andeans continue to order and understand their society through the use of body metaphors. In the Chilean Andes, the striped woven bag called a talega symbolizes both a body, with left and right sides and a heart in the center, and the community, with upper and lower moieties and a meeting-place in the center.⁴⁷ The village of Chucuito in the Bolivian Andes is divided into an upper half and a lower half. The inhabitants of the upper half were traditionally

⁴⁶Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, "The Loom of Life: A Kogi Principle of Integration," Journal of Latin American Lore, 4:1 (1978): 11. Many cultures of the world use the body as a metaphor for the land. One particularly interesting example of this is furnished by the Dogon of the Western Sudan as presented in Marcel Griaule's book Conversations with Ogotemmeli (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 94-97.

⁴⁷Cereceda, "Semiology," p. 165.

hatmakers and those of the lower half, shoemakers, suggesting an association of the former with the head of a body and the latter with the feet.⁴⁸ In the town of Jesús de Machaca in Bolivia, the metaphor of a puma is used to structure and integrate the community's land.⁴⁹

Such metaphors are so firmly rooted in Andean culture that it is unlikely that they are solely the result of the influence of Western political and religious models. While Cuzco may not have actually been designed in the form of a body, therefore, it is safe to conclude that the metaphor of the body was applied to it by the Incas and used to convey a complex series of concepts including centrality and wholeness, symmetry and hierarchy, animation and exchange.

The Cosmic Body

A myth from the central coast of Peru, recorded in the seventeenth century, tells how Pachacamac ("Animator of the World") killed his half-brother and then scattered the pieces of his body over the land in order to create food.

⁴⁸Tschopik, p. 152.

⁴⁹Javier Albo, "Dinámica en estructura inter-comunitaria de Jesús de Machaca," América Indígena, v. XXXII (1972): 788-790.

From the teeth corn grew, from the bones grew all tubers, and from the flesh grew all other vegetables and fruits.⁵⁰

Understanding the land in terms of a body which provides one with food (and which, in turn, has to be fed through ritual) is a common practice in the Andes. The most extensive examination of the phenomenon has been undertaken by Joseph Bastien in a community of Quollahuaya Indians on Mount Kaata, in midwestern Bolivia.

The Quollahuayas studied by Bastien understand the mountain on which they live in terms of a body: the peak is the head, the central slopes are the heart and stomach, and the lower slopes, the legs. This metaphor is also applied to the three villages on the mountain: the upper village, Apacheta, corresponds to the head of the mountain body, the middle village, Kaata, corresponds to the heart, and the lower village, Niñokorin, corresponds to the legs (fig. 18 p. 226). All three villages participate together in major rituals, each village contributing products characteristic of its particular altitude. It is the special task of the ritualists living in the heart, Kaata, however, to circulate energy throughout the whole of the mountain body by making ritual offerings to the mountain. In the words of one of

⁵⁰Antonio de la Calancha, Crónica moralizado del orden de San Agustín en el Perú con sucesos ejemplares en esta monarquía [1639] (Barcelona).

these ritualists: "The mountain is like us, and we're like it.... If we don't feed the mountain, it won't feed us."⁵¹

The three communities on Mount Kaata are united not only through intermarriage and the exchange of goods and services, but through belonging to one body. This sense of collective wholeness has led to centuries of legal battles to prevent outsiders from incorporating land which the Quollahuayas consider belong to the body of Mount Kaata. In the late eighteenth century, an eighty-year-old inhabitant of Mount Kaata, protesting the appropriation of Nifokorin by Spaniards, testified to a representative of the Spanish Crown that Nifokorin belonged to Mount Kaata "because it is the leg of its body."⁵² The mountain/body metaphor has enabled the inhabitants of Mount Kaata to maintain their identity and solidarity, despite the pressures of external forces, to the present day.⁵³

While one particular mountain or area of land may be thought of as a body by the Andeans, on a larger scale, the earth itself forms one body, called Pachamama, "Mother Earth," represented by the Incas as a woman. According to one modern Peruvian Andean:

⁵¹Mountain of the Condor, p. xix.

⁵²Ibid., p. 29.

⁵³This mountain/body metaphor is explored by Joseph Bastien in his books Mountain of the Condor and Healers of the Andes.

Peru begins in Lake Titicaca, which is the sex of our Mother Earth, and ends in Quito, which is her forehead. They say that Lima is her mouth and Cuzco her beating heart. Her veins are the rivers. But Pachamama extends much further. Her right hand is Spain, perhaps.⁵⁴

An inhabitant of the town of Pinchimuri in Peru, says of Pachamama:

We live and work on her. She nurses us and raises us like our mother.... She has bones and blood. She has hair too. The grass is her hair. Her blood is in the ground. She always bleeds when she is ploughed.... We give her seeds and she gives birth.... We give offerings to Pachamama for our produce and for our animals, so that the animals don't become sick and so that the harvest will be good.⁵⁵

As discussed in chapter V, the Incas also understood the earth to be a female body, which was violated through agriculture in order to produce crops, but which also had to be "fed" through ritual offerings and placated by worship. Guaman Poma reports, for example, that sorcerers sleeping in caves, which represent the mouth of the earth in the Andes, would say, "Mother cave, don't eat me," and then feed the cave with corn and coca.⁵⁶ The Incas interpreted movements of the body of the earth as signs, just as they did with the twitchings and tremblings of the human body (see ch. II, n. 38). Murúa writes:

When the earth trembles, they throw water on her, saying that the huacas are thirsty and want to drink... [They

⁵⁴Ortiz Rescaniere, p. 239. Lima" is a corruption of the Quechua word rimac, which means "speaker".

⁵⁵Condori and Gow, pp. 10-12.

⁵⁶vol. 1, p. 249.

say that the Creator] is angry and that he wants to reverse the world, making the high, low, which [event] is called Pachacuti.⁵⁷

The most telling evidence of the metaphorical relationship between the body and the land is found in the language of the Incas itself, Quechua. González Holguín, in his dictionary, for example, states that uma means both head and mountain peak and that cencca means both nose and mountain ridge.⁵⁸ In her article, "The Lexical Structure of Quechua Body Parts" Louisa Stark finds that kunka, "neck," can mean "a small mountain chasm;" ñawi, "eye," "a spring;" rixra, "shoulder," "a mountain shoulder;" muqu, "knee," "a hill;" wixsa, "stomach," "a small hill;" and siki, "buttocks," "a foothill".⁵⁹

In complementary opposition to the female body of the earth, the sky represented a male body, although this latter metaphor was not as elaborated as the former in Andean cosmology. The symbol of the male sky was the sun, which the Incas represented as a man. However, just as there could be many metaphorical bodies within the body of the earth, the sky also contained many metaphorical bodies. The Incas, in fact, believed that just as the sun and the moon served as the celestial models for humans, different stars

⁵⁷p. 305.

⁵⁸pp. 61, 355.

⁵⁹pp. 8-9.

represented and watched over different animals.⁶⁰ The Incas united the bodies of Tahuantinsuyu and Cuzco with the celestial bodies by alligning their sacred edifices with the movements of the spheres.

As the representative of the social body, which lay in between the earth and the sky, the Inca had the task of maintaining the three levels of the cosmos integrated. This task was begun by the Creator, Viracocha, and then taken over by the first Inca, Manco Capac, when he thrust the staff of the sun into the earth. We have already discussed in previous chapters some of the rituals employed by the Incas to integrate the cosmos. Three Inca institutions which were used to this effect were the temple of the sun, the palace of the Inca, and the house of the chosen women. The first represented the body of the sky, Hanan Pacha, the second the body of the human world, Cay Pacha, and the third the body of the earth, Hurin Pacha. These three buildings were erected together in all the principal regions of the empire.

By creating an institution of virgin women (symbolizing the virgin earth) in order to serve the sun through its temple,⁶¹ the Inca established himself as the mediator

⁶⁰Polo de Ondegardo, "Errores y supersticiones," pp. 3-5.

⁶¹ Pizarro writes that more than two hundred women slept in the temple of the sun, "and they pretended... that the Sun had connexion with them" (vol. 1, pp. 255-256).

between the lower and upper worlds and the medium of cosmic order. He thus continued the original mythical act in which Manco Capac ritually united the sun with the earth and ordered the cosmos, making the human world possible. Through these institutions, which were interdependent, therefore, the Incas kept the three levels of the cosmos separate but interrelated. Each of these institutions, like its corresponding cosmic level, was a world and a body in its own right: together they formed the cosmos.⁶²

It is not possible to ascertain to what extent the Incas applied the body metaphor to the cosmos as the existing relevant data is suggestive rather than conclusive. The tripartite division of the cosmos certainly corresponds to the tripartite division of the body in Inca cosmology. Hanan Pacha is associated with structure, as is the upper body, Cay Pacha is associated with integration, as is the

⁶²W.H. Isbell has made a similar analysis of the buildings surrounding the Aucaypata square of Cuzco. He concludes that the houses of learning on the right side of the square were associated with masculinity, the house of chosen women and the palace called Amarucancha, "Enclosure of Serpents," on the left side were associated with femininity, and the buildings dedicated to Viracocha at the apex, with bisexuality. (There were no buildings on the south side of the plaza.) "Cosmological Order Expressed in Prehistoric Ceremonial Centers," Actes du XLIIe Congrès International des Americanistes, (Paris: 1976), p. 275.

This analysis can also be applied to the three institutions discussed here: the temple of the sun is male, the house of the chosen women is female, and the Inca is a submissive female in relation to the former and a dominant male in relation to the latter.

heart, and Hurin Pacha is associated with fluidity, as is the lower body.

Some of the evidence for the human body as a model of and for the cosmos in Inca cosmology has been presented in the analysis of the Inca cosmogony in chapter III. Guaman Poma's drawing of the Creator with his feet on the ground and his head in the sky (fig. 4, p. 73) illustrates this model nicely. Garcilaso de la Vega compares the cosmos to a body in his explanation of the meaning of the name "Pachacamac": "Pachacamac means he who gives life [ánima, "spirit"] to the universe, and in its original full signification it means he who does with the universe what the spirit does with the body."⁶³ This fits in with the cosmogony in which Viracocha animates the material world with his voice, and therefore with his breath and spirit.

The body/cosmos model would appear to have been temporal as well as spatial.⁶⁴ The word pacha, in fact, used in the names of deities such as "Pachacamac" and "Pachamama," refers to time as well as space.⁶⁵ Bastien

⁶³Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 66.

⁶⁴Zuidema finds, for example, that the names given by Guaman Poma for the five age classes of acllas correspond to the names of the five fingers. These classes were both spatial - the acllas in each class were kept physically separate from the others - and temporal - the acllas passed from one class to another as they grew older. The Ceque System of Cuzco, pp. 217-218.

⁶⁵González Holguín, p. 268.

writes that in the Andean community he studied, the head of the mountain is associated with birth and the foot of the mountain with death.

Animals and people originate and return to the head of the mountain. It is the place of origin and return, like the human head which is the point of entry and exit for the inner self. The dead travel by underground waterways to the mountain's head (uma pacha) from which they can arise to the land of the living. The living emerge from the eyes of the mountain, journey across its head, chest, trunk, and legs, and die in the lowlands.⁶⁶

We find the term uma pacha, "head of space/time" also used in the early seventeenth-century Quechua manuscript of the Huarochiri province, in which human sacrificial victims are described as being hung together with offerings of corn and other goods so that they will return to the Uma Pacha, the point of origin.⁶⁷

The head was thus associated with the past (although Western terms such as "past" and "future" only apply roughly here) in the Andes; going to the head of space/time was equivalent to returning to the original structure. By contrast, the feet were associated with the future and with the chaos of the unknown. In the modern Andean belief recorded by Bastien, the dead become fluid at the foot of the mountain, and are restructured and reborn at the head in a cyclical fashion.⁶⁸ The trunk of the body corresponds to

⁶⁶Mountain of the Condor, p. 47.

⁶⁷Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 2, p. 195.

⁶⁸Mountain of the Condor, p. 86.

the living and to the present, and mediates between the feet and head (the past and the future).

In the cosmos, the head corresponds to the upper world, the place of original ideal forms represented by the heavenly bodies, and the feet correspond to the lower world, the place of transition. The feet (future) move the cosmic body while the head (past) remains still. The right/left alternation of walking is suggested by the alternation of day (associated with the right) and night (associated with the left) and the dry (associated with the right) and wet (associated with the left) seasons. This alternation is seen in the Inca prayer to Viracocha cited in chapter II (pp. 32-33) which says "Day, Night, Summer, Winter... they go to their appointed place." Viracocha sets the body of the cosmos into motion, without his continued input it would, in the words of the prayer, "grow tired and die".

As was mentioned in chapter II (pp. 35-37), the Incas also associated the front of the body with the past and with clarity, and the back with the future and with darkness.⁶⁹ The ordinary passage of time, which was but a repetition of known patterns, could be represented by the metaphor of walking. A truly revolutionary event, a pachacuti,

⁶⁹Still another association could be made of the outside of the body with structure, clarity and the past, and the inside of the body with fluidity, darkness and the future. This would explain why the Incas would examine the entrails of animals in order to learn of the future and the unknown. Polo de Ondegardo, "Instrucción," pp. 196-197.

"reversal of space/time," however, could only be represented by the metaphor of the body turning around and facing the opposite direction (or, on the north/south axis, by being stood on its head). When this occurred the structures of the past would become submerged in the fluidity of the future and the world would be restructured according to new principles. This is why the Andeans of Huarochiri said of the deity known as Pacha Kuyuchiq, "World Mover": "When he turns his face [the earth] moves as well.... If he were ever to turn his whole body, the world would end."⁷⁰

⁷⁰Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 2, p. 177.

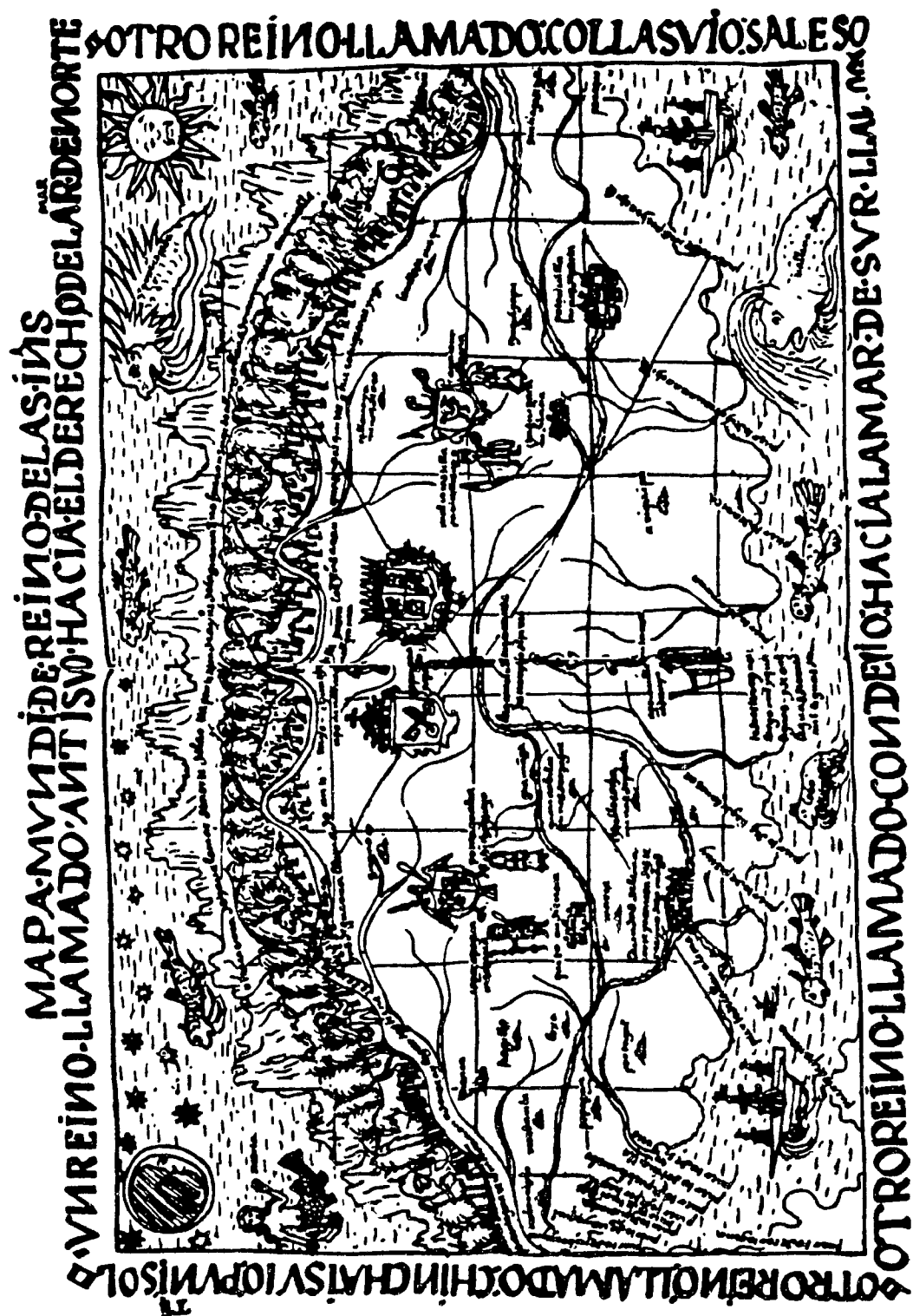


Figure 14. Tahuantinsuyu, "The Four Quarters."

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 3, pp. 914-915.)

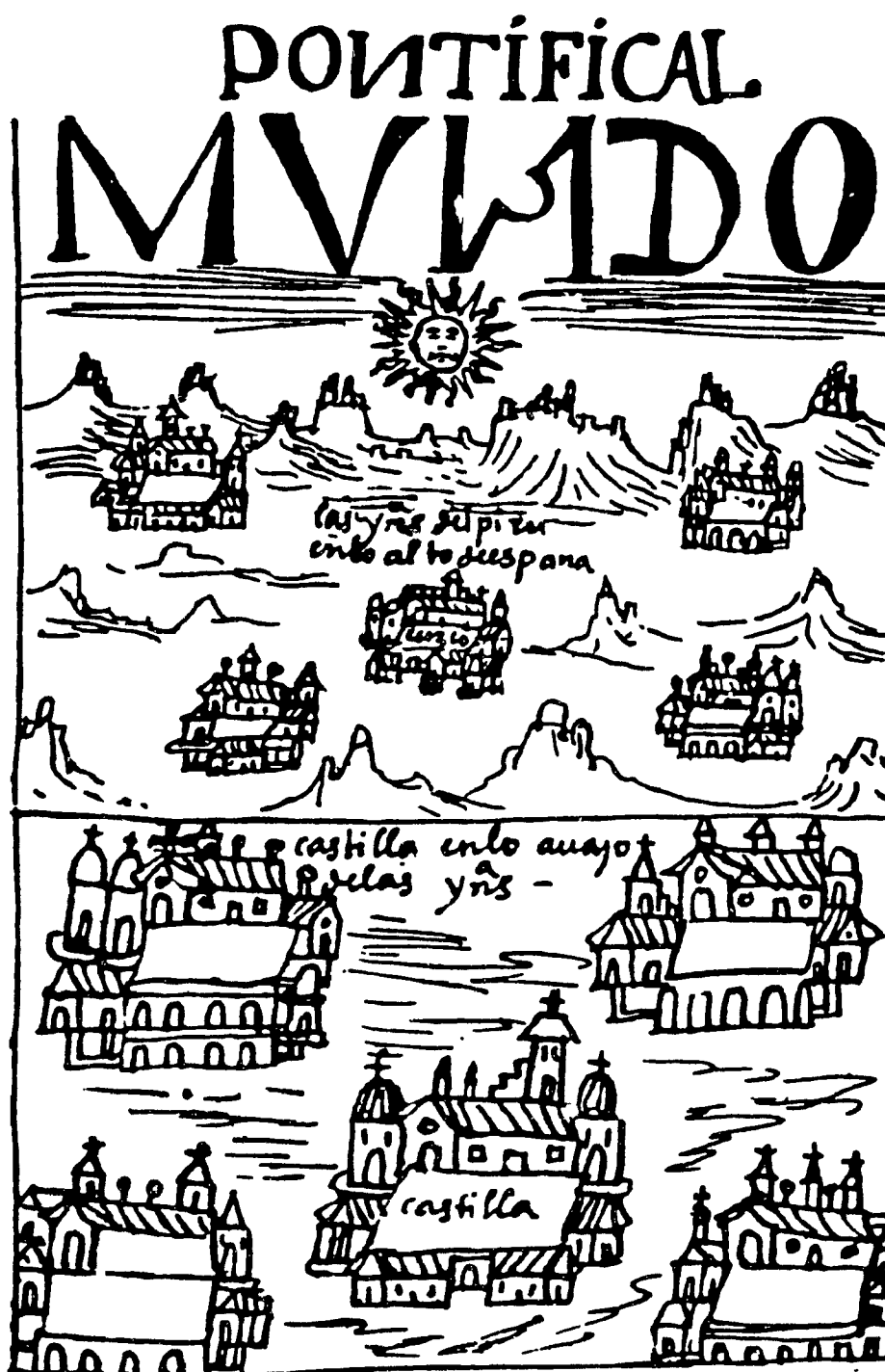


Figure 15. "The Pontifical World": above, the four quarters of Tahuantinsuyo with Cuzco in the center; below, the four quarters of Spain with Castille in the center. (From Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 34.)

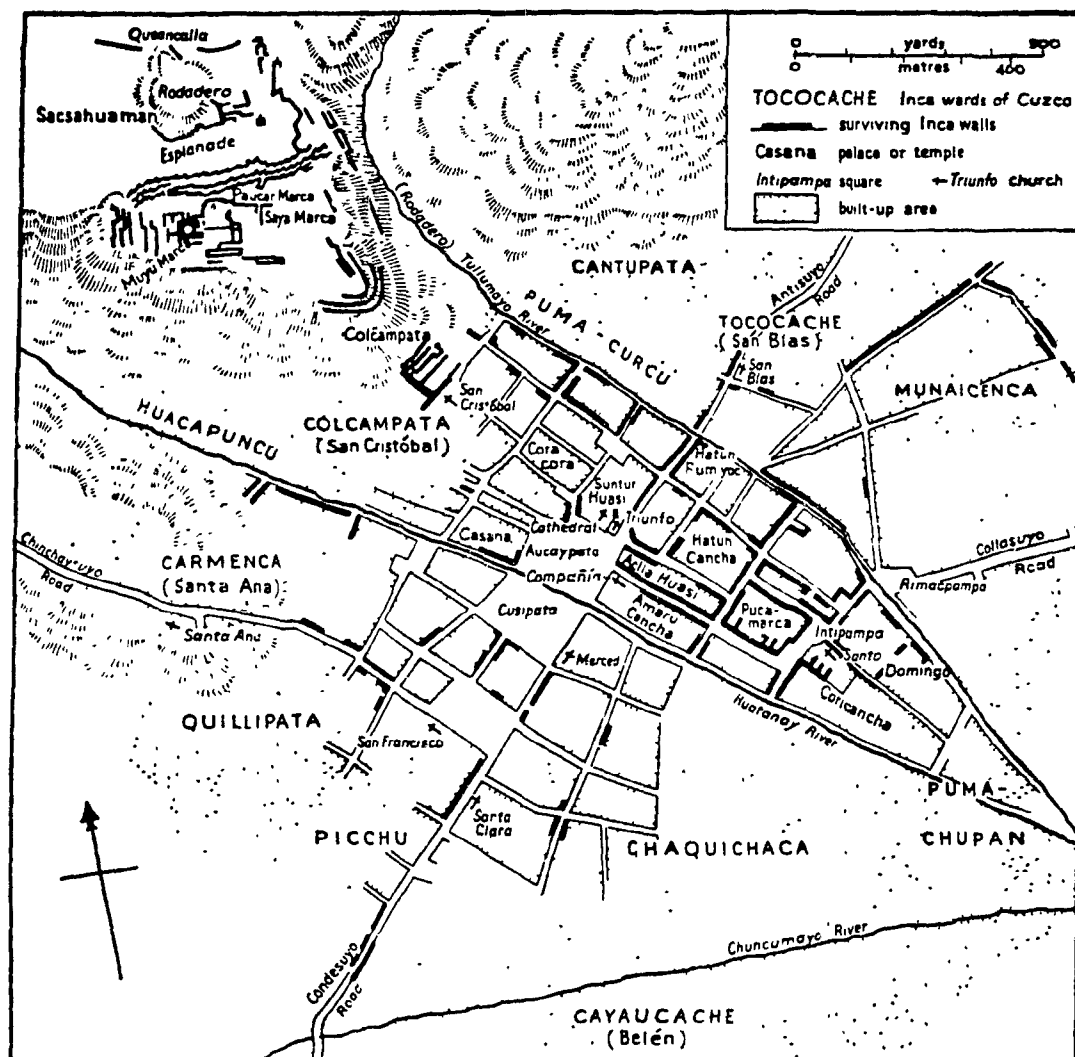


Figure 16. Cuzco at the time of the Conquest.

(From Hemming, p. 12.)



Figure 17. Cuzco as a puma.

(From Rowe, 1967: plate 34.)

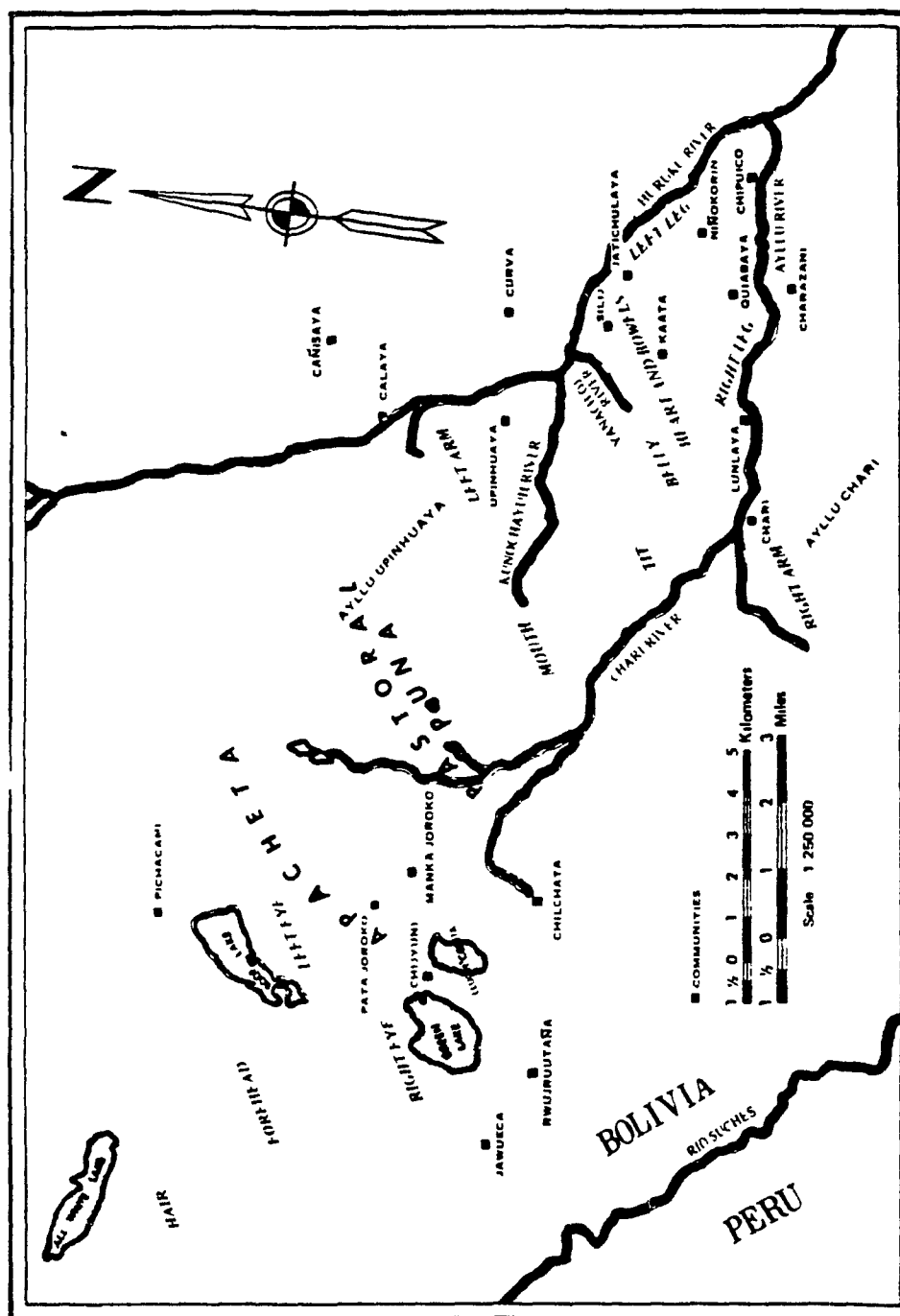


Figure 18. The body/land metaphor of the Quollahuayas of Kaata, Bolivia. (From Bastien, 1978: p. 44.)

VIII. THE DISORDERED BODY

The Break-Up of the Body

By the time of the eleventh Inca, Huayna Capac, Tahuantinsuyu had grown so large - extending from present-day southern Colombia to Chile - and so heterogenous as to be virtually impossible to govern efficiently. Huayna Capac, exacerbated this situation, by residing chiefly in the city of Quito in the northern end of the empire, instead of in Cuzco, the capital. This division of power between Quito and Cuzco gave Tahuantinsuyu, in the words Cieza de León attributes to Inca Tupac, two "heads".¹

When Huayna Capac died around 1528, his body was embalmed and carried back to Cuzco to be honoured in the traditional manner. His heart however, remained in Quito.² This separation of the Inca's body between the two centers

¹El señorío de los Incas, p. 165.

²Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol 2, p. 250.

of the empire foreshadowed the separation of the empire itself.

Apparently in line with Huayna Capac's wishes, Huascar, one of Huayna Capac's sons by the Coya, assumed the leadership of Cuzco and its dominions, while Atahualpa, one of his sons by another wife, took control of Quito and its surrounding territory. The two half-brothers shortly went to war with each other for control of the whole empire. After a devastating battle Atahualpa emerged victorious. It was while he was preparing to officially assume the Incaship of all of Tahuantinsuyu, that he came into contact with Francisco Pizarro and his band of soldiers in 1532.

The crucial encounter between the Inca and the Spanish took place in an enclosed square in the town of Cajamarca to the north of Cuzco. The priest accompanying the Spanish expedition gave Atahualpa a brief summary of Christian doctrine, denounced Inca religion as invented by the Devil, and demanded that the Inca become a vassal of the Holy Roman Emperor. While giving this address the priest held a book, either a Bible or a breviary, in one hand.

Atahualpa, deeply offended by this speech, which was received by him in a garbled form through an interpreter, demanded of the priest by what authority he made these

claims. The friar held the book up to him. Atahualpa examined it, but as it said nothing to him he dropped it to the ground. This "sacrilege" was the excuse the Spanish needed to attack Atahualpa's retainers and take the Inca prisoner.

Atahualpa, aware of the conquistadors' desire for gold and silver, offered to fill a large chamber with gold and another with silver in return for his freedom. Once this ransom was paid, the highly legalistic Spanish realized that their grounds for continuing to hold the Inca were shaky. They therefore accused him of a series of crimes, held a trial for him and condemned him to death. Before his execution, Atahualpa allowed himself to be baptised in order to attain the privilege of being garrotted rather than burned at the stake. The Inca was probably primarily concerned here with his corpse being preserved so that it might be able to take part in the afterlife, according to Andean religion.

Significantly, although Atahualpa was garrotted, he is remembered in Andean tradition as having had his head cut off by the Spanish (see, for example, fig. 19, p. 263). This imagined dismemberment of the Inca's body mirrored the dismemberment of the imperial body which occurred with the execution of the Inca, for the strictly vertical nature of the Inca hierarchy, with all power flowing from the Inca

downwards, made the loss of the Inca symbolically analogous to a decapitation.³

In 1534, half a year after Atahualpa's execution, Manco, a half-brother of the late Inca, was installed as Inca by Pizarro, so that the Spanish might rule the empire through him. Manco was subjected to repeated humiliations by the conquistadors, who went so far as to sleep with his wives and urinate on him.⁴ According to one of his sons, Titu Cusi Yupanqui, the Inca said to his tormentors:

You have acted not as the Christians and sons of Viracocha you said you were, but as servants of Supay [the Devil], in whose footsteps you follow, doing evil to those who do you good.⁵

Finally, in 1536, the Inca escaped from his captors and led a revolt against them. The first thing Manco did was attempt to recapture Cuzco, however, against incredible odds, the Spanish were able to retain the city. Manco then retreated to the mountain retreat of Vilcabamba, not far from Cuzco, where he established his headquarters. From there he conducted raids into Spanish-held territory until 1545 when he was murdered by a group of Spanish outcasts who had sought refuge with him.

³The hierarchically-oriented Andeans noted in amazement that the Spanish "all seemed like brothers in their way of dressing and speaking with each other." Guaman Poma, vol. 2, 354.

⁴Molina "El Almagrista", p. 87.

⁵Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 17.

After a brief and abortive reign by a young son of Manco's, the leadership of the Incas passed over to another of his sons, Titu Cusi Yupanqui. Titu Cusi continued to uphold Inca independence from Spain, while maintaining intercourse with the Spanish and even allowing himself to be indoctrinated by Augustinian missionaries. In 1571, still resisting Spanish rule, Titu Cusi Yupanqui died of pneumonia.

Yet another of Manco's sons, Tupac Amaru, succeeded Titu Cusi as Inca, and hostilities against the Spanish were renewed. At this point, weary of attempts at negotiations, the viceroy Francisco de Toledo sent out an army against Tupac Amaru and his followers. After a bitter battle, the Inca rebels were defeated and Tupac Amaru was captured and brought to Cuzco where he was publicly beheaded by the Spanish in 1572. With this execution, which must have appeared as a conclusive confirmation of the original execution of Atahualpa and the overthrow of Inca rule, the last remnant of the Inca empire was destroyed.⁶

The break-up of the empire was accompanied by a drastic decline in the population of the region due to the harsh treatment and heavy tributes meted out to the Andeans by the Spanish, and the devastation caused among them by epidemics

⁶A comprehensive history of the Incas in the post-Conquest period is provided by Philip A. Means in Fall of the Inca Empire and the Spanish Rule in Peru: 1530-1780 (New York: Gordian Press, 1964).

introduced by the foreigners.⁷ At the same time, the destruction which the Andeans experienced in the social body and in their own bodies was enacted on a sacred level by the systematic destruction on the part of the Spanish Church of the holy bodies of Andean religion, the huacas.

It had been part of the Incas' plan of conquest to appropriate the major huacas of the peoples they subordinated. The former were taken good care of by the Incas so long as the latter remained good subjects. No such arrangement was possible with the Spanish, however, who simply and relentlessly destroyed anything connected with the indigenous cult.

Church-appointed missionaries, called "visitors," travelled from village to village cajoling and ordering the inhabitants to surrender all their huacas to them. Once the huacas of a village had been gathered, they were quickly disposed of. In the words of one of these visitors, Father Arriaga: "everything that is inflammable is burned at once and the rest is broken into pieces."⁸ Often, however, even this drastic procedure was not enough. Father Arriaga writes:

Many years ago... a Dominican friar ... travelled through the province burning and removing huacas, and in some places we have found the Indians worshipping either the name of the burned huaca or the parts of the huaca

⁷Wachtel, pp. 86-90.

⁸Arriaga, p. 19.

that would not burn. Therefore, great care must be taken to see that what is left over after burning is cast out where it cannot be seen.⁹

The Inca mummies, among the holiest huacas of the realm, were kept hidden from the conquistadors by their guardians who continued to attend to them according to Inca ritual. The Spanish, however, indefatigably searched the mummies out and took them away, either burning them or displaying them for a time for the curiosity of their countrymen and then burying them in unknown sites. Cobo describes in a few telling sentences the search for and discovery of Inca Viracocha's mummy:

Gonzalo Pizarro (Francisco Pizarro's brother) looked for it for a long time because a great treasure was reputed to be buried with it, and in order to find it he burned a few Indians, men and women. At last he found it along with a great amount of its estate which was given to him by [the mummy's guardians]. Pizarro had the mummy burned, however the Indians of its ayllu [kin group] gathered the ashes and placed them together with a certain mixture in a small stone jar next to [Viracocha's huaque] which, as it was of stone, was left alone by Gonzalo Pizarro and his men who took no notice of it.¹⁰

⁹p. 25. Arriaga adds that the Indians must not know the whereabouts of the remains of their huacas:

It is well known, for instance, that the Indians of Huaylas, although a long way away, worshipped on a bridge in Lima because some huacas that Francisco Cano had taken away from them had been thrown into the river there (p.26).

¹⁰p. 77.

When the Spanish learned of this "idolatry," however, even the ashes of Viracocha's mummy were sought out and taken away.¹¹

The Incas themselves did not fare much better than the mummies of their ancestors. Many of them were killed fighting against the Spanish, others died from the epidemics which ravaged the country at that time. A contingent of the most noble Incas was exiled by the Spanish to Lima where a great number died from grief and the change of climate.¹² Those Incas who had embraced Christianity and the Spanish way of life ended up being assimilated into Spanish society through marriage. The others eventually merged into the Andean population.

In 1780 Jose Condorcanqui "Tupac Amaru", the great-great grandson of the last Inca, Tupac Amaru, led a general native uprising against the Spanish oppressors, which many of his followers undoubtedly believed would result in a restoration of Inca rule.¹³ After a series of battles, Tupac Amaru II was captured in 1781 and sentenced to be drawn and quartered in Cuzco. After the execution his trunk was burned and his limbs and head were exhibited separately

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Garcilaso de la Vega, Historia general del Perú, [1617] ed. A. Rosenblat (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1944), vol. 3, p. 246.

¹³This was the most important of a series of native revolts which occurred in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the Andes.

in different Andean towns. (Again the Spanish, with their method of execution, were tapping into a deep reservoir of Andean body symbolism.)

The revolt resulted in the enactment by the Spanish of a set of laws designed to abolish the memory of the Incas among the natives and forbidding even the appellation of the Indians by the term "Incas".¹⁴ In the decades after this revolt, opposition to Spanish imperial rule grew among persons of Spanish descent born in America and led to the war of independence from Spain, the establishment of republics in the former Spanish territories, and the modern Andean era.

The Reversed Body

On the one hand, the devastation caused by the Spanish Conquest was experienced by the Incas as a literal and metaphorical breaking up of the human body. On the other hand, however, the reversed order introduced by the Conquest was manifested by the literal and metaphorical reversed position of the human body in the Andes.

Whereas the Incas had previously identified themselves with dominant masculinity and their subject peoples with subordinate femininity, with the Conquest they found

¹⁴Lillian Fisher, The Last Inca Revolt: 1780-1783 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), pp. 223-224.

themselves in the latter position, while the Spanish occupied the former. The Incas, in fact, identified the swords of the Spanish with their penises,¹⁵ indicating that they experienced their defeat at the hands of the Spanish as a symbolic sexual violation.

The Spaniards' actual violation of Andean women, many of whom were forced to serve as their concubines, did play an important role in the destruction of Andean society by breaking down its traditional structures and its ethnic integrity.¹⁶ The conquistadors' violation of the acllas struck at the heart of the Incas' sacred order by disrupting the system of cosmic integration and exchange whereby the inviolate acllas were offered to the Sun through the medium of the Inca in return for divine favour.

The Incas, who had expressed their domination over the peoples they conquered through the ritual of "stepping on the enemy," were now "stepped" on themselves by the Spanish. This occurred not only in the reversed social order but also in the very architecture of the former empire, for Spanish edifices were constructed on the razed foundations of Inca buildings. In Cuzco, notably, a cathedral was built on the site of the temple of Viracocha, a church on the site of the

¹⁵Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 354,

¹⁶According to Guaman Poma this miscegenation was the worst threat to Andean culture, vol. 3, pp. 909-910.

temple of the Sun, and a convent on the site of the house of the acllas.

The Andeans' experience of Spanish rule as a "stepping on" of their bodies is graphically illustrated by Guaman Poma in drawings in which he shows a Spaniard placing his foot on the head of a prone Indian (fig. 20, p. 264). For the Spanish, the act of stepping on an Indian was probably only one way among many of dominating and humiliating the Andeans. For the Incas and their subjects, it was the ultimate sign of conquest.

Another reversal of the body which occurred at this time, is that the upright human body, which had served as a symbol of cosmic order in the Andes, was turned on its head to serve as a symbol of cosmic disorder. In Quechua the term for "upright," ticnu, refers both to the standing human body and to the sun at its zenith, while that for "upside-down," tiksu, refers both to an upside-down body and to the sun at its nadir. The same expression used for a reversed body, therefore, also conveys the idea of a reversed cosmos.

In the writings of Guaman Poma we repeatedly find the Spanish term mundo al revés, "reversed world"¹⁷ used to

¹⁷The concept of an "upside-down world" in which everything functioned in reverse to the ordinary world was a commonplace in Europe of the time. See, for example, David Kunzle, "World Upside Down: The Iconography of a European Broadsheet Type" in The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society, ed. Barbara Babcock (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 39-94. Guaman Poma's use of this concept does not necessarily reflect a European influence, however, as the notion of a "world reversal" was fundamental

express the disorder of post-Conquest society in which Spaniards who came from the lowest ranks in their own society, assumed positions of leadership in the Andes, and Andeans, who were mere workers in Inca times, were appointed chiefs.¹⁸

This reversal of order extended even to the family. Guaman Poma describes children in the post-Conquest Andes as dominating, instead of obeying, their parents, which situation he illustrates in a drawing of a son stepping on his prone father (fig. 21, p. 265).¹⁹ It is enlightening to recall that this image of a son standing over his prone father occurred in Inca mythology the last time that the world was "reversed," when Pachacuti took over the rule of the empire from his father, Inca Viracocha.

One of the rites of transmission of power in the Inca empire was for the heir to the throne to kiss the feet of the reigning Inca.²⁰ Pachacuti reversed this by having the reigning Inca, Viracocha, kiss his feet. The Spanish went much further in that they took power by cutting off the head of the Inca. This represented a break with tradition and a reversal of order much more serious than that occasioned by

to Andean cosmology.

¹⁸e.g. vol. 2, pp. 502, 711.

¹⁹vol. 2, pp. 820-821.

²⁰Murua, ed. Ballesteros, p. 78.

Pachacuti. What made the matter worse still was that the Spanish, unlike Pachacuti, were not even in the same social class as the Inca.

Guaman Poma draws on the Christian metaphor of Christ as the head of the body of the Church²¹ to explain to the Spanish why Francisco Toledo, who was a mere viceroy, or subordinate member of the body, had no right to sentence to death the Inca Tupac Amaru, who was the "king of Peru," and therefore the head of the body:

Consider that in your body, the feet cannot rule the head, the hands cannot rule the head, and even the heart, though it may be more important, is not worth anything without the head. Likewise, without God, the Christian is worth nothing.... and without the king, the body is worth nothing. And therefore, whoever is the head is the king and none other.

In the upside-down world of the post-Conquest, however, the "king" was executed by a "commoner", and the "feet" did rule the "head". Many Andeans experienced this reversal of order in their own bodies, for as a punishment, the Spanish would commonly hang Andeans up by their feet.²² In Inca times this was the punishment meted out to those who seriously disrupted the social order, such as adulterers and thieves (or people who disobeyed their parents).²³ The

²¹Eph. 4: 11-16.

²²Duviols, Cultura andina y represión, pp. 257, 314. For a depiction of this punishment, see Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 488.

²³Murúa. ed. Bayle. p. 353.

Andeans who were hung upside down by the Spanish (and those who saw and identified with them) consequently, although they may have been completely law-abiding according to Inca customs, felt themselves associated with the worst elements of social disorder.

In the post-Conquest world established by the Spanish, therefore, the Incas went from representing the forces of order, to representing those of chaos, and from being associated with the sky and the upper world, to being associated with the earth and the lower world. From the Andean perspective, the Spanish divinities, God, Jesus Christ and the saints, played a fundamental part in this overthrow by replacing the Inca divinities as the lords of the upper world. The Incas, who had relied on divine favour from above for the support of their reign, now found themselves chastised from above by foreign gods.

In one telling passage, Guaman Poma describes how the Spanish patron saint, Santiago (Saint James), defeated Manco's attempt to recapture Cuzco from the Spanish:

Lord Santiago came down with a clap of thunder. Like a bolt of lightning he fell from the sky to the Inca's fortress.... And when he fell to earth the Indians were frightened and they said that yllapa, thunder and lightning, had fallen from the sky, caccha [thunderclap] of the Christians, in favour of the Christians. They say he came on a white horse... with great death and destruction for the Indians, and he destroyed the ring of Indians that Manco Inca had placed around the Spanish.²⁴

²⁴vol. 2, p. 377.

The accompanying illustration depicts Santiago with his foot on the fallen Inca's head in the ritual pose of "stepping on the enemy" (fig. 22, p. 266). Thus the Incas were displaced from the sky and relegated to the low, subordinate position of the conquered.

This turning of the world on its head was, in Andean terms, a pachacuti or pachaticra (translated by Guaman Poma as "that which places the world head down"²⁵). In the pachacuti, as it is described in Andean myth, a confrontation between nature and culture characteristically takes place. This was true, as well, of the period of the Conquest.

From the point of view of the Spanish victors, of course (as from the point of view of the Inca victors on previous occasions), the side of the conquerors represented culture, and that of their native opposition, the savage forces of nature. Initially the Andeans considered the Spanish to be divine and associated them with Viracocha, in part because of their seemingly supernatural powers and in part because they were white and bearded, as Viracocha was reputed to be, and they came from the sea, over which

²⁵vol. 1, p. 74.

Viracocha was said to have disappeared.²⁶ However, as the Andeans grew more and more disillusioned with the Spanish, many came to think that the conquistadors embodied savagery in contrast to their own state of culture.

The inhumanity of the conquistadors was felt so deeply by the Andeans that they symbolically equated the Spanish with wild animals. Garcilaso de la Vega, for example, describes the Andeans, after having heard how a cross protected a Spaniard from an attack by a jaguar, as appealing to the cross to protect them from the wild animals which they perceived the Spanish to be.²⁷ Guaman Poma actually depicts the Spanish and their native underlings as wild animals feeding on the Andeans (fig. 23, p. 267).²⁸

These images of animals preying on humans are reminiscent of the reversed order of the first chaotic sunless age in Andean mythology when a kind of "anti-culture" prevailed in which animals were said to feed on

²⁶Guaman Poma describe Viracocha's namesake, Viracocha Inca, as white and bearded (vol. 1, p. 87). The Spanish, as the "sons of Viracocha," (Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 17), may well have been seen by the Incas as reversing the overthrow of Viracocha occasioned by Inca Pachacuti, the "son of the sun".

²⁷Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 86 and Historia general del Perú, vol. 1, p. 42.

²⁸ The conception of the Spanish as "wild" was originally established in the minds of the Andeans by the very appearance of the conquistadors, dressed as they were in armour and mounted on terrifying beasts.

humans.²⁹ The metaphorical inversion of the world which occurred with the Conquest, in fact, could be understood not only as a reversal of position, of high and low, but also of time, as expressed by the Andean concept of the pachacuti, which literally means "space/time reversal." From this perspective, the death of the Inca, symbolically the sun, and the irrationality of the Spanish rule which followed, returned the world to the first age of darkness and anti-culture.³⁰

Sensory Disorder

The anti-culture of post-Conquest society was manifested to the Andeans not only in the reversed social order, but also in the reversed sensory order. The uncontrolled sensuality of the Spanish occasioned both fear and ridicule on the part of the Andeans.³¹ At times, however, the Spanish appeared to suffer from a complete

²⁹Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 1, pp. 19, 37. The corpses of criminals, who embodied anti-culture, were left to be eaten by wild animals in the Inca empire (i.e. Guaman Poma, vol. 1, p. 163).

³⁰Modern Andeans, in fact, remember the Conquest as a time when a plague came blowing a conch shell trumpet (reminiscent of the giant in Inca mythology who threatens to flood the world by blowing on a trumpet) and introduced a period of chaos characterized by bodily disorder during which parents ate their children and guinea pigs (raised for food) fed on corpses. The modern Andeans are said to be descended from survivors from that time. Allen, "Patterned Time," p. 156.

³¹Titu Cusi Yupanqui, pp. 17-18.

perversion of the sensorium: all they could see, hear, touch, taste or smell was gold and silver. Guaman Poma writes of the conquistadors:

They were like desperate men, stupified, crazy, senseless with their greed for gold and silver. Sometimes they did not eat with the thought of gold and silver. Sometimes they had a big fiesta, imagining everything they held in their hands was gold and silver.... Their desire for gold and silver was such that they didn't fear death. With their greed for gold and silver, they go to hell.³²

The Andeans at first believed that the Spanish actually ate gold, as this was the only reason they could think of for their insatiable desire for it (fig. 24, p. 268). (The Spaniards' head-to-toe armour probably aided this impression by suggesting that the Spanish were "men of metal".) In Andean cosmology gold emanated from the sun and represented timeless, ideal structure.³³ As such it was used for the creation of sacred models.³⁴ That the Spanish should apparently use gold for food and thus transform structure

³²vol. 2, p.347. Columbus, in fact, was so obsessed with discovering gold that he interpreted almost every characteristic - the beauty of the land, the warmth of the climate, etc. - of the New World as a sign of its presence. Todorov, pp. 20-21.

³³Molina, "el Almagrista" writes that the Incas thought gold was the tears of the sun. He also mentions that when a particularly large nugget of gold was found it was placed in a shrine for it was believed that it would attract other gold to it (p. 76).

³⁴Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 2, pp. 7-12.

into process, signified a complete inversion of order for the Andeans.

The sensory "disorder" displayed by the Spanish which made the greatest impression on the Andeans, however, was writing.³⁵ Although sixteenth-century Spain still retained many characteristics reminiscent of an oral culture, it was a society penetrated by the effects of writing. The Spanish had a heavy, and almost obsessive, reliance on written documents and texts. In The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America Lewis Hanke writes: "Spaniards were so accustomed to certifying every action they took that notaries were as indispensable to their expeditions as friars and gunpowder."³⁶

The closest equivalent the Incas had had to writing was the quipu, knotted strings on a cord, which served as a mnemonic device (fig. 9, p. 154).³⁷ The quipu however, was a much more sensual medium than writing, engaging, as it

³⁵There is an abundant literature on the effects of literacy on consciousness, i.e., Walter Ong, Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word (London: Methuen, 1982); My intention here is not to enter that debate, but simply look at the Andean perception of writing and to situate this within the larger context of the clash between sensory orders. See also, Constance Classen "Literacy as Anti-Culture: The Andean Experience of the Written Word," History of Religions (forthcoming).

³⁶(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), p. 6.

³⁷The Incas apparently also kept pictorial records. Polo de Ondegardo, "Relacion," p. 57; Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 84.

did, touch and rhythm³⁸ in the tying of the knots, and involving a wide range of colours and patterns (as well as being impregnated by the odour of its creator). As well, the quipu was not flat and linear as writing was. In Code of the Quipu Marcia and Robert Ascher write:

The quipumaker's strings present no surface at all.... A group of strings occupy a space that has no definite orientation; as the quipumaker connected strings to each other, the space became defined by the points where the strings were attached.... The relative positions of the strings were set by their points of attachment, and it is the relative position, along with the colors and knots, that render the recording meaningful. Essentially then the quipumaker had to have the ability to conceive and execute a recording in three dimensions with color.³⁹

If a relationship can be made between one's media of communication and one's world view, as many have postulated⁴⁰, the Spanish could therefore be said to have had a visual, surface-oriented and linear world view, as opposed to the multidimensional and multisensory world view of the Incas.

What made writing so radically novel for the Incas and their subjects, however, was its disembodied nature. Unlike writing, the quipu did not serve as a substitute for speech,

³⁸Writing, of course, also engages touch, but less directly, as the pen intervenes between the hand and the paper.

³⁹: A Study in Media, Mathematics and Culture (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), p.62.

⁴⁰i.e. Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extension of Man (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964); Ong, The Presence of the Word.

as the data contained in it still had to be orally transmitted from one person to another. With writing, knowledge was no longer contained within human bodies but existed separately from them.

Soon after the arrival of the Spanish in the Inca empire, tales spread among the Andeans of how the strangers "spoke in some white cloths, as one person would speak to another."⁴¹ In this description of writing, we find a suggestion of the isolation and alienation produced by literacy: people no longer speak directly to one another, but rather, "speak in white cloths."

This "speaking in white cloths," was so extraordinary for the Andeans that it was at first thought to be a supernatural endowment of the Spanish related to their purported abilities to eat gold and go without sleep.⁴² One of the reasons the Andeans thought of the Spanish as "Viracochas," was because they were able to "name some of us by our names without anyone having told them to them, simply by looking at a cloth in front of them."⁴³ The Spanish were thus seen to be endowed with Viracocha's sacred naming power.

⁴¹Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 2.

⁴²Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 353.

⁴³Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 4.

According to tradition, Inca Atahualpa threw down the book which the Spanish priest offered him in their initial encounter after he held it up to his ear and found that it said nothing to him.⁴⁴ While held captive by the Spanish, the Inca desired to penetrate the enigma of writing.

Seeing the Spaniards read and write, he thought these abilities were innate among them. In order to verify this he asked one of his Spanish guards to write the name of his God on Atahualpa's thumb-nail. The soldier did so. When another Spaniard came in Atahualpa asked him, "What does it say here?" The Spaniard told him, and three or four others gave the same reply. Soon afterwards, Don Francisco Pizarro came in... and Atahualpa asked him what the letters meant. Don Francisco Pizarro could not tell him because he did not know how to read. The Inca then realized that reading was not a natural ability, but an acquired accomplishment.⁴⁵

(Significantly, Atahualpa had the writing done on his thumb, as though trying to embody the disembodied word.)

While the educated Inca elite may have recognized writing as an acquired accomplishment, and perhaps would even have made a voluntary transition from orality to literacy under more positive conditions, for the majority of Andeans writing remained a sorcerous power of the Spanish conquerors. A story was developed, in fact, that the Andeans themselves had once had writing, but that the Inca

⁴⁴Murúa, ed. Ballesteros, p. 176.

⁴⁵Garcilaso de la Vega, Historia general del Perú, vol. 1, pp. 98-99.

had forbidden its use after Viracocha said that writing caused plagues and great damage.⁴⁶

The Andeans evidently associated writing with the devastation wreaked on their world by the Spanish. Atahualpa's inability to understand writing when first confronted with it, in fact, appeared to be the cause for the overthrow of the empire, for the Conquest began when Atahualpa rejected the book which the Spanish priest gave him.

Writing, in fact, played an important part in the Spanish campaign to incorporate the Andeans into the Spanish order. A seventeenth-century description of how "visitors" (inspectors working for the church) are to examine Andeans on their idolatrous beliefs, states, for example:

When the mass has been concluded, the visitor will install himself in the church with a table before him and a crucifix or cross on top of it. He will be provided with a blank book for the occasion... giving it this title: "Accusations of the Indians of Such and Such a Town, on such and such a day, month, year." And having a tax list of the town before him, he will call each one by name.... He will question each person briefly: Have you worshipped a huaca? And he will write down what he says. Have you had any dealings with a sorcerer? Have you confessed to him?⁴⁷

"Everything that is found out, by whatever means," says the author, "should be written down clearly," stipulating that "if there are any Indians who are literate, each one

⁴⁶Montesinos, p. 57.

⁴⁷Arriaga, p. 126.

should bring what he knows in writing."⁴⁸ This, of course, was the prelude to the purging of all indigenous beliefs. One can well imagine the trauma which must have been produced in the native consciousness by this use of writing to abolish what the Andeans held sacred.

Lévi-Strauss states in Tristes Tropiques that "the primary function of writing is to facilitate the enslavement of human beings," and that "the struggle against illiteracy is indistinguishable, at times, from the increased powers exerted over the individual by the central authority."⁴⁹ However, while writing can be used by the dominant group in a society to establish an order which oppresses the majority, it can also be used by the oppressed to develop and communicate an alternate order.

The Spanish were well aware of this potential liberating power of literacy. In the early seventeenth century in Peru, one Spanish priest was asked why he had not established a school for the native peoples under his care. His reply was that "Indians did not need to read or write, since such knowledge would be no use to them except to criticize their priests."⁵⁰

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 123-124.

⁴⁹trans. J. Russell (New York: Atheneum, 1967), p. 292.

⁵⁰Arriaga, p. 66.

Andean Reactions

One Indian who did use his knowledge of writing to criticize the Spanish was Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, whose monumental work has furnished so much material for this thesis.⁵¹ The only way to prevent the Spanish from corrupting the Indians, in Guaman Poma's view, was to keep them completely separate from the native population. In fact, he created a new metaphorical imperial body, with the Holy Roman Emperor as the head, the "Christian king" on the right hand and the "king of the Indies" on the left.⁵²

Guaman Poma wrote his work in the hope that the Holy Roman Emperor would read it and be so moved by it as to implement his ideas. In fact, his written pleas were no more attended to by the authorities than the vocal pleas of his compatriots. What is noteworthy for our present topic, however, is that Guaman Poma adopted the Western view that writing expresses a more authoritative and enduring truth than speech.

The following passage from Guaman Poma's work demonstrates his understanding of the supremacy of the

⁵¹Guaman Poma's use of writing and illustrations to denounce Spanish oppression is explored by Rolena Adorno in Guaman Poma: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).

⁵²vol. 3, p. 889.

written over the oral (and of the eye over the ear) in Spanish culture, and of the untrustworthiness of the word of the Spanish.⁵³

Justice must never be done by word, but by letter.... And if it is by word, don't listen to it and ask for it to be written. And in this way his Majesty will see [my underlining] and will provide.⁵⁴

Nonetheless, Guaman Poma's work, although written, is heavily influenced by the structures of orality. He presents his arguments in defense of the Andeans in the form of an imagined dialogue between the Holy Roman Emperor and himself, and even goes so far as to draw a picture of himself personally presenting his book to the Emperor (fig. 25, p. 269). Guaman Poma still conceived of knowledge as communicated through immediate active involvement, rather

⁵³The failure of the Spanish to keep their word is stressed in Titu Cusi Yupanqui's memorial. He relates that his father, Manco Inca, said to him on his deathbed: "Don't allow [the Spanish] to enter your land, however much they ply you with words, for their honeyed words deceived me and they will do the same to you if you believe them" (p. 31).

⁵⁴vol. 2, p. 656. The Andeans soon became caught up in the fetishistic Spanish legal system, expending their time and money in lengthy lawsuits, often over the ownership of land. George Kubler writes: "Litigation exercised a fascination over the Indians; it was regarded as a talisman, and to the possessor it made little difference whether the paper resolved the litigation for or against his interests." "The Quechua in the Colonial World" in Handbook of South American Indians, Vol. II: The Andean Civilizations, ed. J. Steward, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin, 143 (New York: Cooper Square, 1946), p. 379. Tschopik reports that among the modern Andeans of Chucuito, Bolivia, litigation has largely replaced sorcery as a way of seeking retribution (pp. 170, 181).

than through a process of detached observation and reflection.

The conflict between orality and literacy in the Andes was also a conflict between religions, that of the Andeans being centered on oral dialogue with the sacred and that of the Spanish having its center in a sacred text, the Bible. Guaman Poma, a devout Christian, believed that literacy and Christianity were so intrinsically linked that the former was an essential requirement for the latter: "In this kingdom Indians, men and women, boys and girls, should know the language of Castille, to read and write like Spanish men and women" for "whoever does not know how to [read and write] cannot be a Christian."⁵⁵

Those Andeans who resisted such indoctrination defiantly proclaimed that "there [was] as much reason to believe their own ancestors and quipus and traditions as there [was] to believe the ancestors and writings of the Christians."⁵⁶ Manco, leader of the rebel Incas, urged his followers to reject the "false religion" of the Spanish and return to their huacas, saying, "[The Christian God] is only a painted cloth.... the huacas speak to us."⁵⁷ In this proclamation we find a rejection not only of the religion of

⁵⁵vol. 2, p. 729.

⁵⁶Polo de Ondegardo, "Instrucción," p. 202.

⁵⁷Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 26.

the Spanish, but also of their visual, surface-oriented culture.

The Spanish Conquest, nonetheless, profoundly disrupted the oral communication which animated the Andean cosmos. While Atahualpa was in prison he sent his (Inca) priests to consult with the foremost huacas of the land as to the future of the empire. Despite all of the priests' entreaties, however, the oracles remained "deaf and dumb".⁵⁸ At first this was thought to be a temporary and local condition, but then it was discovered to be general. Garcilaso de la Vega writes:

The [huacas] lost their power of public speech and could only speak in secret with great wizards, and even then hardly at all.... This occasioned a universal fear and astonishment among the Indians who did not know the reason for the silence of their oracles, although they did not fail to suspect that it was due to the arrival of the newcomers in their land. They consequently feared and respected the Spanish more day by day as a people so powerful that they left their oracles without the power of speech.⁵⁹

After the Conquest, therefore, the Andeans experienced a certain "deafness and dumbness" in their own cosmological order, while, according to the Spanish order, their idolatry

⁵⁸Garcilaso de la Vega, Historia general del Perú, vol. 1, p. 83.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 83-84.

and lack of writing made them "blind".⁶⁰ Some Andeans experienced this sensory confusion which accompanied the clash between the two orders physically in their own persons. The turn of the seventeenth century Huarochiri manuscript tells the story of an Andean Christian convert, Cristobal Choque Cassa, whose local huaca attempted to reclaim his allegiance through an attack on his senses. The huaca repeatedly blinded Choque Cassa with bright light and made his ears buzz, however the Andean was able to keep it at bay by proclaiming his faith in Christianity.⁶¹

Cieza de León describes a similar case occurring in 1549 in which an Andean chief, Tamaracunga, was tormented by "demons" who tried to prevent his conversion to Christianity.⁶² These demons whistled and shouted at Tamaracunga and attempted to throw him off cliffs. The chief covered his face and body with blankets so as to hide from the demons, however they still managed to fill his mouth with mud. The demons told Tamaracunga that they did this to stop him from becoming a Christian.

⁶⁰Molina of Cuzco attributes the "blindness" of Andean beliefs in great part to the Andeans' lack of writing (p.17). Guaman Poma describes his ancestors as being "completely mistaken and blind" because they didn't know how to read and write (vol. 1, p. 49).

⁶¹Urioste, Waru Chiri, vol. 2, pp. 161-172.

⁶²La crónica del Perú, M. Ballesteros, ed., (Madrid: Historia 16, 1984), pp. 393-396.

As Tamaracunga entered the church in order to be baptized, the demons appeared to him standing upside down, with their heads down and their feet in the air. Then:

The demons... took him and held him in the air the way they were, head down and feet up. The Christians, saying loudly: "Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, be with us," and crossing themselves, grabbed the Indian and put a stole [a vestment worn by priests] on him and sprinkled him with holy water. Still howls and whistles were heard inside the church... and [the demons] went to [Tamaracunga] and threw away the hat he had been covering his eyes with so as not to see them, and spit putrid, stinking saliva in his face.⁶³

When the mass was held the demons were finally silenced and Tamaracunga was able to be baptized.

Here, the "demonic" conquered Andean order is presented as inverted in contrast with the "holy" conquering Christian order. The upside-down position of the demons is contrasted with the right-side-up position of the Christians, the howls and whistles of the former with the prayers of the latter, and the demons' putrid saliva, with holy water. The equilibrium of the old world has become disequilibrium in the new, and the sensory order of the old world has become sensory disorder.⁶⁴

⁶³Ibid., p. 396.

⁶⁴A similar inversion of order was apparently sometimes used by the Andeans to mark someone as an outcast. Guaman Poma remarks, for instance, that the soldiers of the victorious Atahualpa gave his defeated half-brother Huascar rotten potatoes for food, urine for chicha, bitter weeds for coca leaves, a stone dressed like a woman for a woman, etc. (vol. 2, p. 360). This was probably the sensory equivalent of being hung upside down.

Tamaracunga, having adopted the perspective of the conquerors, senses that his native world view is inverted and that to remain in it would be equivalent to being held upside down. The "demons"' attempt to retain him in the old sacred and sensory order, therefore, fails; however the violent clash Tamaracunga experiences between the old and new beliefs demonstrates that the transition from one to the other was truly revolutionary.

Perhaps in order to prevent any reversion to the indigenous sensory and cosmological order, Guaman Poma proposed an ideal Christian sensory order in a model prayer he wrote for his fellow Andeans:

May Jesus Christ be in my eyes and in my sight.
Cross.

May Jesus Christ be in my ears and in my hearing...
Cross.

May Jesus Christ be in my nose and in my olfaction.
Cross.

May Jesus Christ be in my mouth, in my tongue,
in all my words, in what I eat and in what I drink.
Cross.

May Jesus Christ be in my heart, in my soul, in all
my thoughts and in all my deeds.
Cross.⁶⁵

Those Andeans who converted to Christianity soon discovered, however, that this was not enough to assimilate them into the Spanish order, for there was what appeared at times an almost complete disjunction between Christian ideals and Spanish practice. Guaman Poma sadly concludes:

The Indians of old were much more Christian. Even though they were infidels they kept God's commandments

⁶⁵vol. 2, p. 781.

and undertook good works of charity. Aside from their idolatries they were Christian. In these times [the commandments] are not kept, although they should be kept more since reading and writing are known and the Gospels and the laws of God are taught.⁶⁶

Many Andeans rejected Christianity and the Spanish order outright. In the 1560's a millenarian movement arose among the native peoples of the Andes, beginning in central Peru, quite possibly in the rebel Inca stronghold of Vilcabamba, and extending to Lima and La Paz. Andean preachers proclaimed that, when the Spanish arrived, the Christian god had conquered the huacas, but that now the world was going to turn around and the Christian god would be defeated and the sea would rise up and drown the Spanish and flood their cities.⁶⁷ What these preachers were predicting was, of course, another pachacuti, and specifically, an uno pachacuti, world reversal by water, such as that which had marked the end of the first age of darkness and chaos in the Andean cosmogony.

The huacas were said to be hungry from the lack of ritual offerings, and to have left their rocks and other dwelling places and entered into human bodies - an example of the fluidity between land and body characteristic of the period of the pachacuti. Those persons who were possessed by huacas not only spoke for them, but also danced and had

⁶⁶vol. 2, p. 804.

⁶⁷Molina of Cuzco, p. 79.

fits, for which reason the movement was known as Taqui Oncoy, "Dancing Sickness". Molina of Cuzco writes:

There were many Indians who trembled and rolled on the ground, others threw stones like people possessed by the devil and made faces. When they were resting people came up to them and asked them what they had and what they felt, and they responded that such and such a huaca had entered into their bodies.... The whole town would hold a fiesta for two or three days, dancing and drinking, invoking the huaca which the person was said to have in his body and staying up all night.⁶⁸

The continuous dancing which characterized the Taqui Oncoy movement was an important element in Inca rituals designed to ward off omens of death. Guaman Poma writes that, when faced with such an omen, the Incas danced all night "so as not to die".⁶⁹ The followers of Taqui Oncoy danced in order to keep the huacas and their old way of life alive.

Rumours spread among the Andeans that the Spanish needed the fat of Indians to cure a certain disease. Thus it was no longer only gold and silver the Spanish required to satisfy their aberrant physical needs, it was the bodies of the Andeans themselves (reinforcing the Andean association of the Spaniards with wild beasts). The huacas, however, were reportedly going to put worms in the hearts of

⁶⁸pp. 80-81.

⁶⁹vol. 1, p. 256.

the Spanish, their animals and their Andean followers which would cause them to decay.⁷⁰

In order to save themselves from the coming destruction, the Andeans had to renounce all things Spanish, including Spanish religion, Spanish clothes, Spanish food, and Spanish names, and return to the practices of their indigenous religion. Those Andeans who did not return to their ancestral beliefs would die and be forced to wander upside down with their feet in the air, or else be turned into animals.⁷¹ In other words, those Andeans who refused to help set the world right again, would be condemned to an inverted existence. That Christianity was influencing Andean religion even as it was being rejected, however, is revealed by the fact that the three leaders of the Taqui Oncoy movement took the Christian names of Juan, Santa María and María Magdalena.⁷²

The Taqui Oncoy movement was harshly suppressed by the Spanish, and the capture of the Inca holdout of Vilcabamba and the execution of the Inca Tupac Amaru in 1572 dealt it a

⁷⁰Molina of Cuzco, p. 80.

⁷¹General Archive of the Indies, Audiencia Lima, legajo 316, 1571 notebook, fos. 32r-33r, evidence of Gerónimo Martín, cited by Wachtel, p. 267, n. 76.

⁷²Wachtel, p. 181. The Taqui Oncoy movement has much in common with other millenarian movements around the world. See, for example, Sylvia Thrupp, ed. Millenial Dreams in Action: Studies in Revolutionary Religious Movements (New York: Schocken Books, 1970).

final blow. As Molina of Cuzco, who was one of the priests accompanying Tupac Amaru at his execution, put it:

Our Lord, in his compassion, chose to enlighten those miserable souls; and those which are left have realized the absurdity of what had been preached to them and what they believed, on seeing the Inca dead and Vilcabamba (full) of Christians. and nothing having happened of what they thought, but rather the contrary.⁷³

Christianity continued to be resisted by many Andeans after this time, however this resistance no longer took the form of an organized religious movement. The execution of the last Inca decisively marked the division between the old, pre-Conquest way of life, and the new, of which the Spanish and Christianity were an inevitable part.

The city of Cuzco was filled to overflowing with Spaniards and natives on the occasion of the execution of Tupac Amaru. Garcilaso de la Vega writes:

When the Indians saw their Inca so near death they raised up such a cry of grief and pain that nothing else could be heard. The priests who were speaking with the Inca asked him to order the Indians to be silent. The Inca raised his right arm with his hand open, brought it up to his ear, then slowly lowered it to his right thigh. The Indians, understanding that they were being bade to be silent, ceased their shouting and crying and became so quiet that it seemed as if there were not a living soul in the whole city.⁷⁴

⁷³p. 82.

⁷⁴ Historia general del Perú, vol. 3, pp. 249-250. See also Murúa, ed. Ballesteros, p. 271 and Baltasar de Ocampo, "Descripción y sucesos históricos de la provincia de Vilcabamba" in Colección de libros y documentos referentes a la historia del Perú, ser. 2A, vols. 4-7 (Lima: 1911), pp. 172-173.

At a sign from its conquered Inca, the Andean world was silenced to make way for the word of the Spanish world.

After the execution, the Inca's head was impaled on a staff in the plaza. A Spaniard recalls:

Each day it grew more beautiful... At night the Indians would come to worship the head of their Inca, until one morning a certain Juan Sierra Sirujano looked out his window and saw the idolatry the Indians were committing. He passed on the information to [the viceroy] Francisco de Toledo, who ordered that head be taken down and buried with the body... And so this undesirable adoration by the Indians of [their Inca's] head ceased.⁷⁵

The break-up of the Inca body, in its actual, metaphorical and sacred aspects, appeared complete. Nonetheless, despite the death of the last Inca and of the Inca state, and despite the disorder created in the indigenous culture by the Conquest and its effects, the basic cosmological concepts which were expressed by the Incas through the symbolic structuring of the human body would continue to survive in the Andes to the present day.

⁷⁵Ocampo, p. 175.

CONQUISTA CORTALE LACAVESA A ATAGVALPA INGA VMATA CVCHV



Figure 19. The beheading of Atahualpa.
(From Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 362.)

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Figure 20. A Spaniard stepping on an Andean.
(From Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 510.)



Figure 21. A son stepping on his father.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 820.)



Figure 22. Santiago (St. James) stepping on the Inca.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 376.)



Figure 23. An Andean preyed on by the "wild beasts" of post-Conquest society.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 655.)



Figure 24. The Inca and a Spaniard:

"Do you eat gold?" "Yes, we eat gold."

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 2, p. 343.)

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Figure 25. Guaman Poma presenting his book to the Holy Roman Emperor.

(From Guaman Poma, vol. 3, p. 897.)

IX. CONCLUSION

Inca Cosmology and the Human Body

In Inca cosmology the structures and processes which governed the human body were also the basic organizing principles of the cosmos. The importance of the human body in Inca cosmology is evidenced both by the central position of the human couple in Pachacuti Yamqui's depiction of the Inca cosmos (figs. 1 and 2, pp. 39, 40) and in the central role allotted to the creation of humans in the Inca cosmogony. Human bodies, both created by and modelled after the body of Viracocha, the Creator, have a dual role as both created and creator, models of and for the cosmos.

The Incas saw not only the elementary structures and processes of the body replicated in the cosmos, but the whole of the body. The body was such a compelling and basic symbol for the Incas, in fact, that they related to entities as diverse and as apparently unlike bodies as lightning, stones, and towns, as bodies. The earth was a body which gave birth to the people, animals and plants which lived on her. The sun was a body which fathered the

Incas, and which the Incas, in the words of Garcilaso de la Vega, "treated as corporeally as though he were a man like them".¹ The huacas were bodies which not only were given food and drink by the Incas, but also whipped when their peoples of origin rebelled.² When the Incas observed the stars, it was not only to revere them or to structure space and time, but also to establish a body-to-body, subject-to-subject relationship with them. Space and time themselves were apparently organized similarly to bodies. The upper world and the past corresponded to the head and the front of the body; the lower world and the future, to the lower body and the back; and the middle, present world to the middle of the body. The Incas, indeed, related to the cosmos through an overlapping series of bodies beginning with the body of the individual.

The body, for the Incas, expressed a person's spiritual, as well as physical, nature. Virtue was often thought to manifest itself in physical beauty, and sin in physical disorders. Illness, consequently, as a manifestation of a moral flaw, required spiritual as well as medical treatment. Physical abnormalities which were innate, such as a hare lip, however, were considered to be caused by the direct intervention of the deities and

¹Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 265.

²Cobo, p. 145.

manifested sacrality as well as sin. Sin which was not innate was corrected through a process of confession, penance, offerings to the deities and ritual cleansing in a stream. This process rectified the disorder the sin had caused within the body of the individual and within the social and cosmic body.

The human body was believed to be permeated with the presence and power of its owner. Parts of the body, such as hair and nail clippings, retained this presence and power, and also the ability to affect the rest of the body, when separated from the whole. Even after death the body retained a life of its own and was able to affect and be affected by events. This is why, for instance, Inca Manco beseeched his son, Titu Cusi Yupanqui, not to give pain to his bones after he died.³ What the body lost in dynamic force after death, it gained in sacred force, so that the ritual care of the dead was essential to the well-being of the cosmos.

In Inca cosmology human bodies had an especially close relationship to the land. They were created from earth, lived on the earth, and returned to the earth at death. People were part of the land on which they were born and spent their lives, and death only served to strengthen this association. During the cataclysmic period of the

³Titu Cusi Yupanqui, p. 31.

pachacuti this intrinsic relationship between body and land was particularly evident, for stones could turn into humans, as during the battle with the Chancas, or humans into stone, as at the end of the first age.

The Incas, however, emphasized that civilization was dependent on the ability to transcend the earth and participate in the structure of the sky. Savages were those people who lacked proper control of their bodies, who did not wear clothes, did not regulate their sexuality, etc., and thus were identified with the chaotic sensuality of the earth.⁴ By claiming descent from the sun, and thereby associating themselves with the sky, the Incas gave themselves a "natural" right to dominate over the peoples of the earth, as the sky did over the earth in Andean cosmology.

The Inca domination of the earth and of its inhabitants was similar to their domination of women. According to Inca cosmology, all three - the earth, the peoples of the earth, and women - needed to be conquered, integrated into the structures of civilization, and rendered productive. All three were identified as female in Inca cosmology: the earth in relation to the male sky, the peoples of the earth in relation to the male Inca

⁴Mary Douglas writes in Natural Symbols that "bodily control will be appropriate where formality is valued, and most appropriate where the valuing of culture above nature is most emphasized" (p. 71).

rulers, and women in relation to men. As females, they were associated with the forces of chaos in contrast to the structuring power which was associated with masculinity.

The separation of entities into female or male bodies with distinct qualities and roles was characteristic of Inca cosmology. The interaction of bodies in the Inca cosmos, therefore, was very definitely the interaction of male and female bodies. The ideal for this interaction was the complementary union of both sexes, expressed in the term karihuarmi, "man-woman". In such a union the dualistic forces of male and female, which were also the basic forces of the cosmos, were both balanced and integrated to produce a stable but dynamic world.

The Incas believed, however, that the male force of structure was in constant danger of being overwhelmed by the female force of chaos, and, for this reason, emphasized the domination of the former over the latter. It is probable that the larger their empire became, and the more prone to disruption, the more weight the Incas gave to male structuring power.

The Incas were associated with the upper half of the cosmos and also with the middle level. In the myth of the origin of the Incas, the first Incas integrated the male sky and the female earth by thrusting the staff of the sun into the ground. This original integration was continued by the Incas through agriculture, through the establishment

of Cuzco as a mediating center, and through the creation of an institution of virgin women, which represented the earth and served the sun through his temple.

Whereas the creation of the human body was attributed to Viracocha, the Incas credited themselves with the creation of the social body. In the myth of the origin of the Incas, the "savage" pre-Inca inhabitants of the earth are described as living "in pairs and in threes, however they happened to come together in the caves and crevices and caverns of the earth".⁵ The first Incas create the first social body by organizing these unstructured people into the city of Cuzco with its basic upper and lower halves.

The threatened destruction of the Inca social body by the rebellious Chancas and the consequent emptying of Cuzco of inhabitants in the myth of the battle of the Chancas, required that the social body be recreated and structured more thoroughly than previously. This task fell to the conqueror of the Chancas, Pachacuti, the young son of Inca Viracocha. Pachacuti accomplished this by reaffirming both the divisions and the unity of the social body of Cuzco and establishing himself as its head.

According to Inca tradition, Pachacuti also structured the relation of the social body to the rest of the cosmos

⁵Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, p. 40.

by ordering space and time and establishing the series of rituals which ensured the flow of divine power through the Inca state. To a certain extent, Pachacuti's supplanting of Inca Viracocha as the head of the social body was paralleled by the supplanting of Viracocha the Creator by the Sun as the head of the cosmic body, for Pachacuti was credited with giving the latter precedence over the former in Inca religion. This restructuring of both the social and cosmic bodies was experienced by the Incas as a pachacuti, a reversal of the world, as is evidenced by Pachacuti's name.

The Incas believed the social body to be subject to disorders similarly to the body of the individual. In order to maintain its structure, therefore, the social body, like the individual body, had to be regularly cleansed of all corrupting elements. Such a purification was carried out annually in Cuzco by the Incas in the Citua rite. During this rite all persons with physical defects and all foreigners, thought to embody disorder, were sent out of the city, all social conflicts were suspended, and a mass washing of sins took place.

The social body of Cuzco was interrelated with the physical body of the city. The divisions which Pachacuti created in the social body of the city, he also created in its physical body, and the association he was reported to have made between the social body of Cuzco and the body of

a puma apparently also applied to the city's physical body.

While a body in its own right, Cuzco was evidently considered by the Incas to be the head or center, depending on the context, of the body of the empire. Such a metaphor would provide a natural explanation for Cuzco's role in directing the affairs of Tahuantinsuyu and in concentrating and distributing the empire's sacred, social and natural resources. At the same time the basic structures which ordered Cuzco, its division into two halves and four quarters, were extended to Tahuantinsuyu as a whole, so that the body of the empire was modelled after that of its capital.

The Inca was, of course, the preeminent symbol of Cuzco and the empire, and his body represented both the social and physical bodies of his state. As an example of the former representation, it was believed that the sins of his subjects could make the Inca ill. As an example of the latter, in the myth describing Inca Roca's discovery of a source of water for Cuzco, the Inca's earache is symbolically equated with the drought suffered by Cuzco.

The Inca and his consort, the Coya, represented respectively the basic male and female forces of the cosmos. The Inca and the Coya, in fact, embodied the ideal of karihuarmi more closely than any other couple in the empire, as they were brother and sister and therefore related both by marriage and by blood. Within this

partnership the Inca symbolized the sun, at the head of all the male elements of the cosmos, and the Coya the moon, at the head of all the female elements of the cosmos.

After death, the bodies of the Incas remained important imperial symbols. As such, they could not be allowed to decay and were therefore mummified, providing them with the stability and structure necessary to represent the Inca order. In general, the Inca mummies fulfilled the same role as other mallquis except on an imperial scale. The mummies channelled sacred power, provided information about the future, represented and safeguarded their descendants, and served as embodiments of Inca tradition. The importance given to the bodies of their ancestors by the Incas, uniquely illustrates the central role of the human body in Inca cosmology.

The various bodies of society and the cosmos were interrelated by the Incas through a series of rituals, the most basic and universal of these was the offering and partaking of a cup of chicha. This ritual was carried out between individuals, between representatives of social groups, between the living and the dead, and between humans and deities. It served to integrate separate bodies through a sharing of fluids and affirm the mutual obligations of the participants.

Inca ritual symbolism also made use of the body in motion to express the cosmic order. Dance provided a

fundamental metaphor for the harmonious interaction of social and cosmic bodies. After the Spanish Conquest, dance became a means of expressing social and cosmic disharmony in the Taqui Oncoy, "Dancing Sickness," nativist movement.

Some Inca rituals were specifically meant to impress the Inca order on the bodies of individuals. During the male puberty rite, for example, boys were whipped as they were lectured on their duties. After the Citua rite, the foreigners admitted back into Cuzco were made to eat a sacred preparation which would physically ensure their allegiance to the Inca. The corpses of traitors were made into musical instruments and put to use in support of the Inca order which they had rebelled against. The bodies of the Incas and their subjects were thus not only inserted within the structure of the Inca state, they manifested that structure within themselves, just as the human body manifested the basic structures of the cosmos.

The Inca ordering of the body included the ordering of the sensorium. The system of reciprocity which was fundamental to Inca cosmology was expressed on a sensory level as an interchange of perceptions. In the Inca prayer cited by Pachacuti Yamqui, for example, the supplicant says to Viracocha "By seeing you... you will see me".⁶

⁶p. 220.

The Inca cosmos was a sentient cosmos in which humans were constantly both perceiving and being perceived by others, the sun, the earth, the stars, etc. In this sensory exchange, the relative position and mutual obligations of the participants were asserted.

The sense which had the greatest importance in this regard for the Incas, was hearing. In Inca cosmology sound played a similar role to fluidity, serving to animate and integrate the cosmos. The association between sound and water is brought out in many Inca myths. In one, for example, a giant threatens to flood the world by blowing on a trumpet. In another, the four quarters of Tahuantinsuyu are represented by four springs which sing in harmony.⁷ Sound was also associated with metaphorical fluidity, such as the period of transition from one social category to another. Music accompanied all rites of passage, helping, through its fluid nature, to accomplish the transition from one stage to the next.

Inca religion was dominated by orality. In the cosmogony, humans were called out of the earth into life by the voice of Viracocha and given the ability to enter into dialogue with each other and with the divine. Huacas, from rocks to mummies, were oracles which spoke with their worshippers. The whole cosmos was animated by a constant

⁷Murúa, ed. Bayle, pp.105-106, 423-426

oral interchange. This emphasis on orality is still evident in modern Andean folktales, in which animals have conversations with humans, the earth tells people how they should act towards her, the sun speaks when it rises, and so on.⁸

While sound was essential for maintaining a dynamic and integrated cosmos, like fluidity, it had to be structured and controlled to prevent it from abolishing categories (as when the giant threatened to flood the world by blowing his trumpet). The Incas accomplished this in part by stressing the dominance of their sight over the orality of the huacas. Pachacuti Yamqui writes that the Incas used their power of sight to oblige all the huacas of the empire to obey them.⁹ Many of the Inca huacas were situated along sight lines, ceques, which may have been another way in which the Incas structured the orality of the huacas through sight. Oral traditions, in the same vein, were partially structured by sight by being recorded in the multi-coloured knots of the quipu.

Sight was primarily a structuring sense in Inca cosmology, in accordance with its association with the sun and the structured upper world. As such, it was used to establish categories, for example through land boundaries

⁸Condori and Gow.

⁹p. 230.

and distinctions in dress and hairstyles. This structuring power of sight was utilized by the Incas to help order their empire. The Incas' identification with the sun gave sight and light particular importance for them. Sight was a means of receiving power from the upper world - certain Inca diviners gained their knowledge through staring at the sun -and also a means of worshipping the upper world - an Inca prayer recorded by Pachacuti Yamqui states "I adore you ten times with eyes that blink".¹⁰

To a certain extent sight and hearing opposed each other in Inca cosmology. In contrast to those diviners who gained their knowledge by staring at the sun, were those who blinded themselves in order to better hear the proclamations of the huacas. Sight was associated with the structured, visible past which lay in front of one, and hearing with the obscure, fluid future which lay behind one. This opposition, however, usually functioned in a complementary fashion, similarly to masculinity and femininity, with which sight and hearing may be associated, in Inca cosmology.

The complementary unity of sight and hearing was expressed, for example, in the Incas' use of only one term, illapa, to refer to both lightning and thunder. Garcilaso

¹⁰p. 320.

de la Vega writes that "when [the Incas] said 'did you see the illapa?' they meant lightning, when they said 'did you hear the illapa?' they meant thunder."¹¹ The two senses, in fact, were often so closely interrelated in Inca cosmology that the functions of one merged into those of the other.

Touch, taste and smell were given less symbolic value than sight and hearing in Inca cosmology. Touch was employed to imprint socio-cosmological structures on the body. This occurred, for instance, in the initial molding of human bodies by Viracocha in Inca mythology, and when the Inca stepped on his conquered enemies or Inca youths had their ears pierced in Inca ritual. Touch also had the power to integrate or transform structures, as occurred in Inca mythology when the staff of the sun penetrated the earth, and in Inca ritual when women were forbidden to corrupt the male integrity of instruments of war before a battle by touching them.

Perhaps because its transforming power was thought too disruptive of structures, and perhaps because it was considered too "lowly" a sense to merit much symbolic elaboration,¹² touch generally played more of a supporting than central role in Inca ritual (except in the case of

¹¹Comentarios reales, vol. 1, p. 174.

¹²The indiscriminate use of touch was one of the traits the Incas assigned to "savages".

dance, in which it formed part of a total kinesthetic experience). Huacas, for example, were seen, listened to, enveloped in odours, but not, apparently, ritually touched. The Incas, in fact, would seem to have deliberately blunted their sense of touch from the time of birth by inculcating an indifference to tactile sensations.

While touch apparently played a greater role than smell and taste in Inca mythology, in practice, more symbolic use would seem to have been made of the latter. It is difficult, however, to ascertain the symbolic role ascribed to smell and taste in Inca cosmology as there is little data on the subject. Although odours and flavours are hardly referred to in Inca myths, it is possible that they formed an important part of the ritual contexts in which these myths were told. One might assume that smell and taste were not singled out for any special attention in Inca religion but rather experienced as part of a total ritual complex. There is evidence to suggest, however, that odours and flavours were given specific symbolic meanings by the Incas.

The sheer number of Quechua terms relating to odour in González Holguín's dictionary of 1608, indicates that smell played a significant role in Inca culture. The most important use of odour in Inca ritual was as a means of rendering offerings to the deities through burnt sacrifices or incense. Certain deities (particularly those of the

upper world who were physically inaccessible) might well have been thought, like the acllas in Inca legend, to live on odours.

The significance accorded to taste in Inca religion is evidenced by the fact that fasting, an essential prelude to most important Inca rituals, basically consisted of abstaining from salt and pepper. This deprivation of flavour before rituals was contrasted with the abundance of flavour present in the feasting which followed rituals. As in Inca mythology salt and pepper (personified as Incas) appear with the birth of the Incas and are associated with Inca order, this pre-ritual fasting followed by post-ritual feasting was perhaps a symbolic reenactment of the original mythological transition from nature to culture.

Inca ritual characteristically engaged all of the senses through the essential ritual elements of music, dance, feasting, pageantry and burnt offerings. Sensory perceptions were often combined in ritual so as to reinforce and complement each other, as for example, in the ceremony in which the rising and setting of the sun was accompanied by singing. This interplay of perceptions both provided the participants with a complete and fulfilling experience and served to order their senses in accordance with Inca social and cosmological ideals.

In the Inca hierarchy of the senses, sight apparently held first place, and hearing second, followed,

tentatively, by smell, taste and touch.¹³ It seems quite possible that the Incas, with their emphasis on spatial hierarchy, would have been influenced in this ranking by the position of the sensory organs on the body: the eyes at the top, followed by the ears, then the nose and the mouth. Touch might either have been associated with the hands or with the whole body in general.

The human face itself, might have been thought of as a miniature model of the cosmos.¹⁴ In this case, the eyes (sight) would have been associated with the luminaries of the structured upper world (the Incas, in fact, likened stars to eyes and pupils to birds¹⁵), the nose (smell) with the axis mundi of the mediating middle world, and the mouth (taste, speech) with the opening to the fluid underworld. If the Incas understood odours as travelling up to the brain, and flavours as travelling down to the stomach, this could have served in part as a model for ritually offering odours to the upper world, and foods to the underworld. The ears (hearing), situated on the sides of the head,

¹³This is the order, minus touch, which Guaman Poma follows in his prayer for a Christian sensory order.

¹⁴It might even be possible to interpret the Inca diagram of the cosmos (figs. 1 and 2, pp. 39, 40) as a face if one sees the sun and moon as eyes, Viracocha as a nose (breathing life into the cosmos?), and the grid of cultivated earth at the bottom as a mouth. This "face" actually resembles the face of the sun in the diagram.

¹⁵ppichiu, González Holguín, p. 284.

would be at once mediators between upper and lower and between front and back.¹⁶ The structure of the *comos*, therefore, might well have been understood as structuring the senses as well as the human body in Inca cosmology.

With the arrival of the Spanish, the Incas were confronted with a radically different image of the cosmos and the human body. Those elements of Christianity which the Spanish missionaries found the hardest to convince the Andeans of, were those which were most disruptive of the indigenous structures which integrated human bodies into the cosmos, i.e.: that humans were all descended from one couple rather than from the earth of their homeland, and that the bodies of the dead were completely inanimate and had no role to play in the world of the living.

In the process of imposing their own order on the Andeans, the Spanish caused a mass disruption and destruction of Andean bodies: the body of the cosmos, the body of the Inca, the social body, the bodies of huacas, and the bodies of individual Andeans. The disorder produced by the Spanish Conquest in actual and metaphorical Andean bodies was experienced by the Andeans through the symbols of the dismembered body, the body stepped on by

¹⁶Significantly, while the ears might ordinarily attract less attention than the other organs of the face, the Incas highlighted them by keeping their hair short and wearing large gold ear ornaments. This drew attention to the Incas' privileged access to the sacred orality which animated the cosmos in Andean culture.

another body, and the inverted body, in which the high was made low and the low, high.

According to the traditional Andean cosmological order, the new order introduced by the Spanish was inverted. According to the conquistadors, however, it was the indigenous sacred order which was inverted and the work of the "devil".¹⁷ Adding to the confusion experienced by the Andeans who found themselves caught between the two world views, were the blatant discrepancies between Christian theory and the practice of many Christians. These discrepancies led some Andeans to reply to the Spanish priests who told them that converting to Christianity would enable them to go to Heaven, that they didn't want to go to Heaven if the Spanish were there.¹⁸

The "senselessness" of the cultural chaos which followed the Conquest was experienced literally by the Andeans in the form of various sensory disorders. Some Andeans who attempted to convert to Christianity, for

¹⁷One Spanish chronicler, for instance, remarks on the Andeans' devotion to their religion:

What care the Devil takes that... idolatrous priests should be unceasing in the worship and attendance night and day of idols and superstitions and lies and when they convert to the Catholic faith, he makes them so lukewarm that they hardly remember God once a week.

Anonymous, p. 169.

¹⁸Rodrigo de Loaysa, "Memorial de las cosas del Perú tocantes a los indios" in Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España, vol. XCIV (Madrid: 1889), pp. 586-590. Cited by Means, p. 180.

example, found their senses assailed by the huacas of their own religion. The Spanish themselves, far from being models of sensory order, appeared to suffer from all manner of sensory perversions, such as eating gold and silver. Perhaps the most notable instance of sensory disorder created by the Conquest occurred in the confrontation between Andean orality and Spanish literacy: the silencing of their traditional channels of sacred orality by the Spanish rendered the Andeans metaphorically deaf, while their lack of writing and consequent inability to understand the Spanish sacred scriptures, rendered them metaphorically blind.¹⁹

The totality of the disorder produced by the Spanish Conquest was experienced by the Andeans as an inversion of the cosmos, a pachacuti, in which not only space was reversed, but also time. With the reversal of position of the cosmic body, the future - the arrival of the Spanish - which had previously lain behind the body and only been

¹⁹This confrontation between indigenous orality and European visualism also occurred in North America. Consider, for example, the following statement made in 1855 by an Indian chief involved in treaty negotiations with the American government:

Us Indians are blind the reason we do not see the earth well, the Lawyer sees clear.... I wonder if this ground has anything to say: I wonder if the ground is listening to what is said.... The Earth says that God tells me to take care of the Indians...

Sam Gill, Mother Earth: An American Story (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

The chief is unable to "see" the earth, the way the literate lawyer can, but he can "hear" the earth.

heard of through oracles, became the present and (associated as the Conquest period was with the first age) the past, which lay visibly in front of the body. The Inca present and past, which had once been seen in front of the body, in contrast, soon after the Conquest, became a time which was only heard of and perhaps might return in the future behind the body. The Andeans who participated in the Taqui Oncoy movement hoped to reverse the cosmos once again through another pachacuti which would exterminate the Spanish. The flooding of the Spanish and their cities by the sea which the Andeans believed would take place at this time, in fact, can be thought of as a ritual cleansing of the cosmic body, just as the Inca social body was ritually cleansed by water during Citua, and the body of the individual after confession.

The Taqui Oncoy movement ended not with the righting of the cosmic body but with the break-up of the body of the last Inca. Nonetheless, the fact that the very disorder which was destroying Andean structures could be expressed by the Andeans through traditional symbols such as that of the inverted body, demonstrates that Inca and Andean cosmology had the resilience to withstand and encompass to some extent even the devastation caused by the Spanish Conquest and the destruction of the Inca empire.

One of the great strengths of Inca cosmology was undoubtedly the coherence and comprehensiveness of its

principles which were applicable on both microcosmic and macrocosmic scales. Thus the union of a man and a woman in marriage, for example, was duplicated on a large scale by the union of the male sky and the female earth, and governed by similar fundamental structures and processes. It is the logical consistency of Inca cosmology which has made it possible for this thesis to not only examine the microcosmic role of the human body in Inca myth and ritual but also extrapolate from that and other relevant data the macrocosmic significance of the human body in Inca thought.

While Inca cosmology was comprehensive, however, it was not rigid. Metaphors, consequently, were applied relatively rather than absolutely. Thus the Inca could be at once the son of the Sun in one context, and the son of his Inca father in another. Likewise, the period of the Spanish Conquest could be associated with the first age in Inca mythology without having to be considered its exact replica. It is impossible to ascertain, in fact, to what extent many metaphors were applied by the Incas. Certain metaphors, such as that of Cuzco as a puma's body, may have been brought out on critical occasions, when there was a particular need for their structuring power, and remained latent the rest of the time.²⁰ Others, such as that of the

²⁰Michael Jackson writes in "Thinking Through the Body: An Essay on Understanding Metaphor":

Metaphors which are ordinarily quiescent...[can be] activated on... critical occasions to mediate changes in people's bodies and experience, as well as alter their

body as a model of the cosmos, may well have been implied through analogy rather than explicitly stated.

The correspondence between the structures and processes of the body and those of the cosmos in Inca cosmology made the universal comprehensible by relating it to corporeal experience, and corporeal experience comprehensible by relating it to the universal. The Inca order itself was both exterralized, impressed upon the cosmos, and internalized, impressed upon individuals, by the Incas through the corporeal and sensory dimensions of ritual.

All orders, nonetheless, from that of the cosmos to that of the body, were recognized as inevitably subject to disintegration by Inca cosmology. The Incas' attempt to preserve the bodies of their ancestors from the dissolution which naturally befell human bodies can be seen as symbolic of their desire to prevent their empire from succumbing to the dissolution which naturally befell social and cosmic bodies. It cannot have been unforeseen by the Incas, however, that even their world would eventually come to an end and be replaced by another, in accordance with the universal cycles of their own cosmology.²¹ Thus, in a

relationships with one another and the world (p. 134).

²¹In fact, the Incas are said to have received omens forecasting the fall of their empire. Garcilaso de la Vega, Comentarios reales, vol. 2, p. 249.

paradoxical fashion, the destruction of the Inca empire can be seen as an affirmation of the basic structures of Inca cosmology.

The Andean Body Today

Throughout this thesis we have examined some of the ways in which Inca beliefs and practices concerning the body continue to be evidenced in the present-day Andes. In closing, let us look briefly at a few of the ways in which attitudes towards the body and the cosmos in the traditional Andean culture of today manifest the effects of the Spanish Conquest.

The Conquest itself is relived annually in various locations in the Andes in "Conquest Plays". The dominant theme in these dramas is that of the disjunction between the Andean and Spanish cultures, and, in particular, between orality and literacy. In one version the Spanish only move their lips when they speak, making no sound. They hand Inca Atahualpa a written letter which he raises to his ear, trying to listen to its contents. When he is unable to hear anything, he passes the letter around among his followers. No one can understand the mute message on this "maize leaf". One proclaims:

Seen from this side, it is like a swarm of ants. I look at it another way and I seem to see the tracks that birds leave on the muddy banks of the river. Looking at it again, I see stags, upside down and their feet in the air. And if one looks at it this way round, it is like

a herd of llamas lowering their heads, with antlers like stags. Who on earth could understand that? No, no, my lord, I cannot possibly guess at its meaning.²²

When the Spanish priest hands Atahualpa a Bible, the process is repeated. Atahualpa, unable to comprehend the new media of communication, is beheaded by the Spanish and the world is shattered.²³

The modern Andean world is still primarily an oral one, mediated by oral structures. Nonetheless many Andeans consider their world to be silent and still in comparison to that of the Incas which was animated by sound. In one Peruvian community this was expressed as follows:

The Incas could talk directly to the Earth and Mountains and... herd gigantic boulders into fortresses.... Now that the Incas are gone, people have to move the rocks themselves and can communicate with the Earth and the Mountains only indirectly, through the medium of coca.²⁴

A member of another Peruvian community comments:

The people of old used to help Ausangate [a mountain deity] quite a bit. They respected him very much. In those days they didn't go to mass and they weren't baptized. They simply spoke with Ausangate.²⁵

The transition from orality to literacy, from integration into the cosmic order to isolation, and from Inca religion to Catholicism, is movingly described in an

²²"Tragedia del fin de Atahualpa," quoted by Wachtel, p. 39.

²³Ibid., p. 40.

²⁴Wagner, "Coca, Chicha and Trago," p. 47.

²⁵Condori and Gow, p. 56.

account given by another contemporary Peruvian Andean. In traditional Andean fashion, the forces interacting in this myth are embodied and personified.

God had two sons: the Inca and Jesus Christ. The Inca said to us "Speak" and we learned to speak. From that time on we teach our children to speak.... The Inca built a tunnel in Cuzco through which he visited our Mother Earth. He conversed with her and took her gifts and asked her for favours for us. The Inca married Mother Earth. He had two children....

When they were born it made Jesus Christ very angry and unhappy.... The moon took pity on him. "I can help you," she said and sent him a paper with writing. Jesus thought: "This will certainly frighten the Inca." He showed him the paper in a dark field. The Inca was frightened because he didn't understand the writing.... He ran far away.... He slowly died of hunger.

When the Inca could no longer do anything, Jesus Christ struck Mother Earth and slit her throat. Then he had churches built....

Naupa Machu [a survivor from the first age of savagery] was very happy to learn that the Inca was dead, for while he was alive he had had to remain hidden.

Naupa Machu lived in a mountain called School. He was delighting in the blows Mother Earth had received when the two sons of the Inca passed by, looking for their father and mother. Naupa Machu said to them: "Come, I'm going to tell you where the Inca and Mother Earth are." The children happily went to school. Naupa Machu wanted to eat them. He said: "Mother Earth no longer loves the Inca. The Inca has become friends with Jesus Christ and now they live together like two little brothers. Look at the writing, it says so here." The children were very afraid and ran away.

Since then all children have to go to school, and like the sons of Mother Earth, almost all of them don't like it and run away.

Where are the two sons of the Inca? They say that when the elder is grown up he will return.... They say it's the children who have to find him.... But if we don't find him he might die of hunger like his father. Will he die of hunger?²⁶

²⁶Alejandro Ortiz Rescaniere, "El mito de la escuela" in *Ideología mesiánica del mundo andino*, ed. J. M. Ossio A., Colección Biblioteca de Antropología (Lima: Ignacio Prado Pastor, 1973), pp. 238-250.

The Inca and Jesus Christ are able to interact with each other in this myth because they embody archetypes, the Inca that of Andean sacred structure, and Jesus Christ that of Western sacred structure. Both are seen as sons of God, mediators of the Divine, but in mutually exclusive ways.

The Inca animates and integrates the cosmos through speech, he speaks with the people and with the Earth. The relationship between the Inca - Andean sacred structure - and the Earth is one of reciprocity: he brings her presents and she grants him favours. Their marriage is a sign of the permanence and stability of this union, and their two sons, proof of its dynamic power and cohesion. These two sons represent Andean culture, with its integration of the upper and lower halves of the cosmos.

Jesus Christ is upset at the birth of the Incas' sons because he realizes that there is no place for him in this structure. The moon, symbol of sorcery, provides him with the means to silence the oral intercourse which binds and vitalizes the union of the Inca with the Earth: writing. The Inca flees the writing because it represents a way of life which is incomprehensible to him. He dies of hunger - the lack of ritual offerings and worship.

Polo de Ondegardo lists as a common Andean "error against the Catholic faith" the belief that "Jesus Christ Our Lord and the devil [the Andean deities?] can both be worshipped because they have now reconciled and become as brothers. "Instrucción," p. 202.

The cosmos is then plunged into a state of disorder in which Western sacred structure can devitalize the Earth and impose itself on her, and Ñaupá Machu, the personification of the chaos previously kept at bay by Andean sacred structure, is free to act. Ñaupá Machu resides within the school, which thus becomes the abode of chaos. He lures the two children - Andean culture - into the school with the promise of informing them of their parents, their past.

Once inside, however, the children find the forces of chaos overwhelming. Ñaupá Machu wants to eat them, to absorb them into himself. He tells the offspring of the Inca and the Earth that there is no longer any possible conjunction between the physical world and Andean sacred structure, and that the latter has been reconciled with Western sacred structure. This is ratified by writing. Andean culture (the Inca's children), however, rejects the world view put forth by anti-culture and writing, and rejects the educational system of the West which promotes it.

For this reason, according to the myth, the children of the Andes dislike school, they sense that it tries to indoctrinate them with a hostile world view, and they escape from it. The myth ends with the provision that it is only if Andean culture grows strong and is sought out by the children that it can survive. Andean culture has been

silenced, but not destroyed. It remains latent, awaiting the time of its return.

This myth, like the Conquest plays, presents the post-Conquest world as one of bodily and sensory disorder for the Andeans. The integration of bodies through sound produced by Inca religion is contrasted with the disjunction of bodies through sight produced by Christianity. The myth declares that it is impossible for Christianity to exist in harmony with Andean cosmology (at one point the narrator says: "We have broken up with Mother Earth. Now Jesus protects us"²⁷). For Jesus Christ to triumph, the Inca and the Earth must die. In fact, however, Christian and Andean sacred bodies and structures have inevitably become integrated to a certain degree through centuries of co-existence in the Andes.

In the present-day Andes, the Virgin Mary, who is sometimes thought of as both the mother of Christ and the wife of God, is commonly associated with Pachamama, the earth. God, in turn, tends to be associated with the sky, and particularly the sun. Christ is sometimes identified with God and the sky, and sometimes thought of as God on earth.²⁸ In this, Christ resembles the Inca who was

²⁷Ibid., p. 241.

²⁸i.e. Tschopik, pp. 190, 192, 197, 206, 208. God and the sky are usually thought of as too remote to take much interest in human affairs. In the words of one Andean: "[Father God] sends the rain. He doesn't care. He's sitting up there on top of the clouds, nice and warm, while we're down here

associated both with the upper world and with the middle mediating world. Thus, although Christianity has undoubtedly introduced new elements into Andean thought, the cosmos continues to be ordered through the interrelationship of sacred bodies as before the Conquest.

Humans are integrated into this order and into the social order through baptism. The Quollahuayas of Bolivia, for instance, think of baptism as a rite of passage from savagery to civilization, represented by the salt and baptismal dress used in the ceremony.²⁹ Unbaptized babies are believed by Andeans to cause hail which damages the crops.³⁰ Baptism, therefore, is necessary both for bodily order and cosmic order.

The presence of Christian and other Western elements in modern Andean culture does not change the fact, however, that since the Conquest the Andeans have been marginalized from the dominant social order. The pachacuti which took place at that time, according to Andean cosmology, and displaced the Incas from the sky to the earth, continues to be experienced by the Andeans. Many Andeans, particularly

freezing." Wagner, "Coca, Chicha and Trago," p. 58.

²⁹Bastien, Mountain of the Condor, p. 97.

³⁰Ibid., p. 96; Mishkin, p. 464.

those of the Cuzco region, in fact, believe that the Incas now live under the earth or in the jungle.³¹

While the underworld and the jungle represent places of exile, they are also symbolic of the dark, fluid future. The Incas' presence there, consequently, indicates not only their exclusion from contemporary civilization, but also their potential for returning to power in the future. The expectation, indeed, exists among the Andeans that the Incas will return in another pachacuti, drive away the Spanish (mostly mestizos now), and establish an age of plenty and social harmony.³²

In the tripartite division of time made by some Andeans this new age is the last of three ages, known as God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit (Dios Yaya, Dios Churi, Dios Espiritu). The first age of God the Father is said to have been characterized by savagery. The second, present age of God the Son is characterized by civilization. In the third age of God the Spirit:

We will all have wings and we will eat only fruit that grows on the bushes of the hills. Then the good will be sifted from the bad and only the good will remain, those who have followed what God has said. When the age of God the Spirit comes the Incas will come out of where they have been living in hiding in [the jungle].... A house of glory [gloria huasi] is being prepared for us

³¹Urbano, "Dios Yaya, Dios Churi y Dios Espiritu," p.121. In this regard, June Nash writes that the Andean miners of Bolivia postulate a dichotomy between the post-Conquest Christian deities and the pre-Conquest Andean ones, with the latter operating above-ground and the latter below (p. 7).

³²Wagner, "Coca, Chicha and Trago," pp. 80-81.

in the upper world [hanan pacha], that's where we'll go. Or - who knows - if we haven't been good we'll go to the underworld [ucu pacha].³³

Henrique Urbano writes that this belief in a third age with distinct characteristics is evidence that the Andeans no longer think of the future as a return to the past and that, as a result of the influence of Christianity, time for them has become linear and progressive, rather than cyclical.³⁴ Each age, however, is thought to be preceded by a cataclysm in the traditional Andean fashion, rather than evolving in a progressive, linear manner from the preceding one.³⁵ Andean cosmology, as well, apparently did not hold the future to be exactly similar to the past, but rather metaphorically similar. Thus, the coming of the Incas could be compared to and identified with the creation of the sun by Viracocha because the Incas symbolized the sun and brought light, in the metaphorical form of civilization, to the earth.

In the third age of God the Spirit we also find metaphorical similarities with previous ages in Andean

³³Ibid., pp. 111-112. This tripartite division of time is reminiscent of that made by the twelfth-century Calabrian abbot, Joachim of Flora. He also divided history into three ages, one of the Father, one of the Son, and one of the Holy Spirit (which he believed would begin in the year 1260).

³⁴Ibid., pp. 120-121, 125. Urbano also notes the apparent relationship between these three ages and the three levels of the cosmos in Andean cosmology (p. 121-122).

³⁵Ibid., p. 115.

mythology, mingled with new elements introduced by Christianity. The belief that people will live on wild fruit in the third age is reminiscent of the pre-agricultural state of the "savages" of the first world in Andean mythology (and of the Inca diviners who lived on wild fruits and spent their time worshipping the sky).³⁶ The belief that the good will be sifted from the bad and the bad sent to the interior of the earth (ucu pacha), while apparently reflecting Christian beliefs, is also in line with traditional Andean cosmology which holds that, after a pachacuti, those who cannot identify themselves with the new order and obey the divine word, are integrated into the earth. Finally, the expectation that in this reversal of order the Incas will leave the under world and return to the upper world indicates that the Andean understanding of time is still cyclical to some extent, rather than strictly linear, although it has certainly been modified by the influence of Christian concepts of history.³⁷

³⁶Guaman Poma describes the first Andeans as dressing in leaves and dedicating themselves to the worship of God. It is only after they begin to work the earth that they lose their faith in God (vol. 1, p. 41). This is apparently in accordance with an Andean tradition that agriculture, while necessary for civilization, is somehow a profanation.

³⁷To determine the extent of this modification it would be necessary to know if the Andeans consider this third age to be the end of time, or if other ages are thought to possibly follow it.

The presence of the Incas as mythological figures in modern Andean culture is also found in legends concerning Inkarrí, a culture hero whose name is composed of the words "Inca" and "rey" (king)³⁸ and who orders the world as the Inca is remembered as doing.³⁹ David and Rosalind Gow have examined how the figure of Inkarrí serves not only as an expression of modern Andean mythological thought, but also as an active symbol of social justice and a model for Andean leadership in contemporary Andean culture.⁴⁰

Emiliano Huamantla, a twentieth-century Indian leader of Cuzco, for example, is remembered by Andeans as working towards the creation of a new Tahuantinsuyu "in which even the bitter black hearts of the mistis [mestizos] would be sweetened and we would all share a single, clean heart as in the time of our Inca forefathers."⁴¹ In order to attain this new society, social solidarity is necessary:

³⁸In this amalgamation of the Quechua "Inca" and the Spanish "rey," we see again the influence of Western culture even on the most traditional elements of modern Andean culture.

³⁹Many of these legends are collected in Ideología mesianica del mundo andino, ed. J. Ossio A.

⁴⁰David Gow, "The Roles of Christ and Inkarrí in Andean Religion," Journal of Latin American Lore 6:2 (1980), pp. 279-298; Rosalind Gow, "Inkarrí and Revolutionary Leadership in the Southern Andes," Journal of Latin American Lore 8:2 (1982), pp. 197-223.

⁴¹Rosalind Gow, p. 212.

"He always said that we should walk as a single body, as a single man." ⁴²

Certain legends concerning Inkarrí, however, describe the ruler's body as sundered and powerless to act until it is reconstituted. Excerpts from three such legends are presented below:

They say that only the head of Inkarrí exists. It's growing downwards, they say it's growing down to its feet. Then Inkarrí will come back, when his body is complete. He hasn't come back yet.⁴³

They say he's in Cuzco now. We don't know who could have taken him to Cuzco. They say they took his head, only his head. And they say his hair is growing, his body is growing underneath. When it has reconstituted itself, perhaps it will be the Day of Judgement.... We don't know who killed him. Maybe the Spaniard killed him and took his head to Cuzco. That's why the birds on the coast sing "The King is in Cuzco." "Go to Cuzco," they're singing.⁴⁴

It was God (the Catholic one) who ordered the troops of the king-state to capture and decapitate Inkarrí.... The head of Inkarrí is in the Palace [of government] in Lima and it's still alive. But it has no power because it's separated from its body.... If the head of the god is freed and reintegrates with its body, it can once again confront the Catholic god and do battle with him. But if he is unable to reconstitute himself and recover his supernatural power, perhaps we will all die.⁴⁵

⁴²Ibid., p. 211.

⁴³José María Arguedas, Formación de una cultura nacional indoamericana (Mexico: Siglo Veintiuno, 1975), p. 40.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 41.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 178.

Here the very life of the Andeans is presented as dependent on the reconstitution of the body of Inkarrí. In keeping with the structures of Andean cosmology, Inkarrí's body could be interpreted as symbolizing the body of the cosmos. The head which is kept captive by the Spanish, in this case, would represent the upper world. The body which must grow and be united with the head if cosmic order is to be restored, would represent the earth, and the Andean peoples themselves.

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