

MEN AND GODS OF THE ANDES

I. THE BIOLOGICAL SHOCK OF CONQUEST

Until the end of the 15th century America had remained the "lost continent." Her inhabitants, neglected by all, lived removed from the other populations of the globe. The accidental arrival of a few Icelandic boats in Canada and the northeastern United States, or of occasional Asiatic junk boats on the California coast had had no influence on the culture or the physical type of the American Indian. And a real immigration from Polynesia is doubtful and has never been satisfactorily demonstrated.

Some new proof of the extended biological isolation of these populations has been offered by the study of their blood composition. Although most of them show Mongolian traits more or less markedly, almost the totality of South American Indians belong to the blood group O, and all are likewise Rh negative. The group A, largely represented in Asia, is found with certain frequency only in the northwest tribes of the continent.

The excellent research of Jacques Ruffié and his collaborators at the Hemotypology Center of Toulouse attributes this homogeneity to the loss of A and B genes under the influence of particular antibodies, for which certain environmental factors, as yet ill defined, are believed responsible. Among these would be certain vegetables found in the tropical areas of America. Thus one could explain the decrease of these A and B antibodies in some populations of very high or very cold regions such as the Tierra del Fuego.

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Whatever the accepted interpretation for explaining the absence of these two factors might be, the uniformity in blood composition of the South American Indians underlines the long separation of these populations and a biological evolution in isolation, far from any foreign influence.

The arrival of the Spaniards and Portuguese broke this isolation and was followed by a striking numerical decrease of the American Indians; in a few years certain areas, like the Island of Santo Domingo, were completely depopulated. This sudden disappearance, not to be observed in Africa for example, has long been attributed to the violence, the hard labor and the change of habits imposed by the conquerors.

Here however, biological factors intervene. These isolated populations were virtually unacquainted with contagious illnesses. They offered highly receptive virgin territory to all microbial and viral infections brought from other continents. The African example cannot serve as a comparison. For many eras Africa has been the theatre of migrations and considerable human mixing. The tribes of American Indians came from a relatively small number of migrants and they developed locally, protected from foreign contaminations. Thus we find among them the absence of most contagious illnesses that affected other continents where numerous peoples were continually mixing: smallpox, measles, bubonic plague, leprosy, tuberculosis and many others including the common cold. Syphilis, on the contrary, seems to have been endemic in the Andes (along with two similar forms found in the hot regions, yaws and carate) as well as other diseases common to the Americas—Leishmanioses and various types of typhus.

The absence of numerous contagious illnesses common in Europe created a total lack of resistance to them among the Indians; thus the great sensitivity of these new populations to illnesses that were often minor in the old culture. First introduced by the Europeans, certain forms like smallpox and measles spread among the Americans in the form of epidemics and decimated entire tribes. On the other hand, syphilis penetrated into Spain, and from there to Sicily, and ravaged the world.

The use of systematic violence and cruelty were always isolated facts in the Americas, highly emphasized by the clergy and civil

authorities who were aware of the seriousness of indigenous problems. And changes in habits certainly contributed to the aggravation of the biological imbalance. "This realm with all its vast provinces, from Payta to Potosi and to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, over a distance of 630 leagues, displays such a destruction of its towns and villages and is so devoid of inhabitants, that it seems to have been the victim of continuous wars and severe plagues..." wrote the Viceroy Duke de la Plata in 1681.

Sixty years later one of his successors, the Marquis of Castel Fuerte, returns to the same subject: "The causes of the decadence of the Indian population are varied... In both Americas, in many places, the early inhabitants have disappeared so completely that even their memory is gone in places like the islands of Cuba, Espagnole, Jamaica and others, and in the valleys of Runahuana, of Huarco and of Chilca (near Lima) which each used to have 3,000 heads of family. The province of Santa, which could be a kingdom, and many others, are today almost without inhabitants and many of their villages are deserted."

The tales of missionaries of the period abound in observations of this sort. After the first more or less easy contact with the Indians of a tribe, they then appear reluctant to follow instructions and "God, to punish them, sends a plague which decimates them:" the epidemic follows the steps of the civilized.

To our day entire tribes disappear under the same conditions in a few years, sometimes in a few weeks, victims especially of measles and bronchial pneumonia. A few examples will help to understand more fully this sensitivity of the Indians of the Americas.

In the second half of the last century, seal hunters, gold diggers, sheep raisers and missionaries settled in the Tierra del Fuego. They found there three great indigenous ethnic groups: the hunters Onas, of large stature, in the eastern plain; and to the south and west in the fjords and canals of the Tierra del Fuego were the small Yamanas and the Alakaloufs, fishermen and gatherers of sea products.

In 1830, according to Darwin and Captain Fitz Roy of the Beagle expedition, the Alakaloufs counted at least 400 canoes and three or four thousand people. In 1880, the contacts with the seal hunters reduced them to less than 2,000. In 1900 they

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were no more than 500 and today there are not even 50.

In 1880 there were between 3,500 and 4,000 Onas; in 1887 there were no more than 2,000; 350 in 1910 and 270 in 1909. Two grippe epidemics made the last organized groups of this tribe disappear and reduced them to about 30 individuals, almost all half breeds.

The extinction of the Yamanas was even more brutal. Before 1880 they numbered at least 3,000. When in 1884 Argentina sent three war vessels, with meagre crews, to take official possession of the region, there was only a small Anglican mission in Ushuaia, south of the Tierra del Fuego. The small crew remained for a few weeks; after their departure an epidemic of measles caused *half* of the Yamanas to disappear; 50 % of the survivors perished the following year. In 1886 they were no more than 400, about 100 in 1913, 73 in 1928 and just a few individuals today, confined to a small bay of the Beagle Canal, where this author saw them.

The Indians of the tropical countries are even more sensitive to these aggressions than those of the cold regions. Here are two current examples. At the beginning of this century five to six thousand Cayapos Indians lived, without relations with civilization, in the *campos*, the dry prairie regions between the rivers Araguaya and Xingu, in the north of Brazil. Some Dominicans from Toulouse began to convert them in 1903. They were protected from all harmful contacts, alcohol and tuberculosis, and had very little contact with the adventurers traversing the region. In 1916 several epidemics of measles and of bronchial pneumonia, labeled "grippe," had reduced them to about 500; in 1927 there were only 27 of them.

Civilized men have penetrated recently into the vast and very poor regions north of Matto Grosso where harvesters and small hunters known under the general name of Nambikwaras, lived as nomads. Their number was ten to twelve thousand in 1920. One of these tribes, the Sabanès, kept itself isolated until 1929. A first epidemic decimated the tribe when some individuals began to draw near the posts of the Brazilian Service for the Protection of Indians. In 1931 a group of 300 Sabanès came to camp near the post of Campos Novos and stayed there for two months, awaiting a convoy of food that had been promised to them. At the arrival of this convoy a terrible epidemic of bronchial

pneumonia broke out among them with devastating forms of lung edema. Almost all succumbed; the rare survivors fled, spreading the disease to the entire tribe which disappeared in a few months. Out of approximately 3,000 people there were only 21 Sabanès in 1939, and in order to survive they joined fugitives of another group, the Tagnanis, who were victims of a similar epidemic. Since then, the site where this tragedy took place is known by the Indians under the name of the "field of the sneeze or of the cold."

The natives realize the danger represented by contact with civilized men who are unsuspecting bearers of deadly germs; often, before approaching a foreign group, they ask from a distance if anyone is coughing.

These facts are not exclusive to the Americas. They are repeated each time a very isolated group comes into touch with a numerous and open population, whatever its cultural level may be. Even Darwin, upon his return from a journey around the world, though of course unable at that time to offer a complete explanation, observed with great intuition: "Wherever the European carries his steps death seems to persecute the natives. Let us consider for example, the two Americas, Polynesia, the Cape of Good Hope and Australia. Everywhere we observe the same result. It is not the white man alone, however, who plays this destructive role, the Polynesians of Malaysian extraction have also chased the natives of darker skin from certain parts of the archipelago of the East Indies... Wherever the natives and Europeans meet, they invariably produce fevers, dysenteries, and some other diseases that kill off great numbers of people."

Men of old civilizations which are the fruit of multiple contacts and exchanges all possess relative resistance to these microbial and viral attacks, against which the isolated native is without defense. The less numerous groups fall below the minimal vital number that permits them to survive, and they disappear more or less rapidly. The numerous ethnic groups overcome the crisis; after the high initial losses, the survivors have acquired a certain resistance and the group increases again.

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This was the situation in the Andes. After a severe crisis a population of several million inhabitants was able to resist the

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biological shock of conquest and slowly rebuild its strength. Certain authors estimate the loss of natives between 25 % and 60 % at the moment of this first contact. It is very difficult to give exact figures and one must be careful of excessive generalization. Some limited regions, such as certain isles of the Antilles, were entirely depopulated; others held out more successfully.

We are lacking concrete bases for any precise evaluation of the native population of the Andean region at the arrival of the Spanish. The statistics offered vary from one figure to double that figure and even more. Remaining within prudent limits, the total inhabitants of the Andes from Colombia to Chile in this period could be estimated between 5 and 6 million, of which 4 or 5 million are of the territories of Peru and Bolivia. Most modern authors accept this base. The figure of 8 million, calculated for the Vice-Royalty of Peru, following the census of the licentiate Pedro de la Gasca, seems above the actual fact. However, Louis Baudin, in the *Empire Socialiste des Incas*, adopts the figure of 10 to 12 million for the whole pre-Colombian Andean region. And Nathan Wechtel, in his recent work *La Vision des Vaincus*, also accepts the figure of 10 million.

It is even more difficult to appreciate the effects of the first contact with the Spanish. The information we have at hand for the Andes is later—for the second half of the century. Numerous and mortal epidemics hit this region from the time of the arrival of Pizarro and his men, and even before.

The first epidemic known in the Americas, a smallpox epidemic, began in 1517 in Santo Domingo and brought about the disappearance of all the native population. From there it passed to Mexico in 1520 through a Negro slave of Captain Porfirio Narvaez, and caused numerous victims (among others the king Cuitlahuatsin) debilitating the native forces and facilitating the conquest of Cortez. From Mexico it reached Colombia and Ecuador seven years before the arrival of Pizarro. At that time the Inca Huayna Capac was directing an expedition in the region of Quito. The oldest chroniclers, Colo, Santa Cruz Pachacutec, Cieza de León, Pedro Pizarro and Montesinos all speak of the enormous mortality caused by this epidemic which in the medical annals of Peru received the name "Huayna Capac." In two days the general died "with many of his cap-

tains, his whole face covered with black pustules (caracha)," wrote Santa Cruz Pachacutec.

An inquiry on the city of Cuenca ordered by one of the first Viceroys of Peru mentions "that there came in this period (of the great epidemic) a very great disease and plague and that an immense number of people died from an eruption that covered the whole body with a disgusting leprosy of which Señor Huayna Capac had died." Not only did the Inca succumb, but his favorite sons as well, the heir Nina Cuyuchic, and also a large number of his officers. From there the epidemic reached the south of Peru, ravaging populations everywhere. At Cuzco the two governors left by the Inca ruler, along with his uncle Apoc Yllaquita, his brother Auqui Topa Ynga, his sister Mama Coca and other lords of his relatives were victims, according to the report of Miguel Cabello Balboa.

The historian of Peruvian medicine, José Toribio Polo, counts thirty great epidemics in four centuries. In 1548, Cieza De León indicates that a "smallpox-like plague" killed 200,000 Indians, leading to the disappearance of half the population in certain places. Ten years later there was another epidemic of smallpox according to the chronicle of Montesinos. The last years of the century were marked by a series of epidemics of an apparently varied nature—smallpox, measles, bronchial pneumonia, perhaps gripe—which from 1585 to 1592 struck the entire Andean region from Colombia to Peru.

Numerous documents insist on the very high mortality rate among the native populations. In 1584, Fray Diego de Angulo, in a letter to the King of Spain on the subject of the lands taken from the Indians, wrote: "The difficulty comes from the lands that have become unoccupied through the death of the Indians, because where there were one thousand Indians, there now remain no more than one hundred and one imagines that many of them (these lands), left without heirs should belong to Your Majesty."

One of the witnesses cited in 1594 to the services inquiry of Fray Ambrosio Maldonado, provincial Vicar of Notre Dame de la Merci, insists on the charity of this missionary in taking care of the ill of Potosi during the general plague of smallpox that has caused so many victims. And in 1593, the Archbishop of Lima, Don Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo, registered the

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information for the *curaca* of Caravayo, four hours away from Lima, declaring that after the smallpox epidemic there were no more than 60 tax paying Indians, 9 reservists, 200 Indians of confession and 245 daughters and women.

In 1586, at the hospital of Santa Ana of Lima, for a period of two months about fifteen Indians died each day. Thousands of Indians disappeared in Quito and Potosi. From this period on, various censuses made in view of tax payments or for the recruitment of the *mita* of Potosi and of similar services permit us to follow the general lines of the variations of the Andean populations. In 1569 the Viceroy Toledo had only registered 1,077,650 Indians for Peru of whom 277,697 paid taxes. At the end of the 17th century what is today Bolivia and Peru claimed a decline of half their population, reduced to 1,500,000 souls (there had been 4 or 5 million before the arrival of the Spanish). After rising slightly at the beginning of the 18th century, this figure fell again to 1,200,000 following a new epidemic in 1720.

In 1751 the Viceroy Count de Superunda had the Director of Taxes, Don José de Orellana, prepare a survey of the native population by classes of age and sex in the archbishoprics of Lima and Chuquisaca and in their six dependent bishoprics, corresponding more or less to the territory of Peru and Bolivia. This work only indicates 612,780 Indians, but does not take into account the half breeds, who were already numerous, nor certainly of a certain number of intractables.

The census ordered in 1796 by the Viceroy Fray Don Francisco Gil de Taboada y Lemos included all the populations of the Andean regions from the Equator to Chile—Indians, half breeds, Spanish and others. The total only came to 3,500,000 inhabitants of which 1,800,000 for the Viceroyalty of Lima, 700,000 for the presidential province of Quito and 1,500,000 for the domains of the ancient Inca empire, now attached to the new Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires.

The seven intendances, corresponding approximately to today's Peru, report a total of 1,076,122 inhabitants of which 608,844 are Indians, 244,436 half breeds, 136,755 Spanish, 40,336 Negroes and 3,472 members of religious orders.

The recruitment of natives for the *mita* of Potosi shows a constant decline in population. But here other factors intervene:

the efforts of the clergy to avoid the sending of men to Potosi under various pretexts; the efforts of great property owners to preserve their labor force; the venality of the *corregidores* in charge of recruitment who let themselves be bought off; finally the flight of many Indians towards other cantons where, not being written in the local registers, they were considered foreigners, *forasteros*, and not subject to the *mita*. On several occasions the miners of Potosi asked the King of Spain that these *forasteros* be sent to Potosi; their requests were never heeded any more than their request to extend the service of the *mita* of Potosi to new provinces beyond the original seventeen.

In 1575, the Viceroy Toledo, in creating the *mita*, had set the *grosse*, the total annual number of Indians registered for Potosi, at 14,248; and had set the *ordinaire*, the number of individuals of each of the three groups who relieved each other, at 4,748. In 1633 under the Viceroy Count di Chicon, the *ordinaire* was only 4,115; it fell to 3,868 in 1696 and to 2,915 in 1756. In 1780 only 2,879 out of 3,326 conscripts presented themselves. In 1794 according to Cañete y Dominguez, Minister of the open court of Charcas, only 1,955 workers came.

From the end of the 18th century the indigenous population of the Andes increased regularly. The census of 1846 indicates for Bolivia alone 700,000 natives in round figures. In 1900 a new Bolivian census records 906,126 natives. The Annual Directory of Economics and Finances of Bolivia in 1929 records 1,620,051 natives and 917,339 half breeds; for every 1,000 inhabitants, 146 whites, 309 half breeds and 545 Indians.

In the census of 1950 the natives rose to 1,703,371 or 53.87 % of the total population of Bolivia. In 1930 the number of natives for all of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia together was calculated at 13,508,980 persons.

All these figures are very approximate and must be accepted with caution. In censuses and statistics it is impossible to separate the natives from a good number of half breeds. The losses caused by the biological shock upon contact with the Spanish and by the cultural changes are largely compensated. The rapid growth of the native population now creates new economic and social problems in the Andean countries.

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II. THE COLONIAL ERA

The considerable works carried out by the Spanish in South America and their behavior towards the natives have aroused, and still arouse, animated discussions between enthusiastic defenders and ardent adversaries. Despite the black legend, too widespread in Latin America, which attributes the precarious state of the Indians and all the present ills of this continent to Spain, the Spanish domination in the Andes was much more conservative than destructive and the balance sheet is clearly positive. A considerable population of several million inhabitants has survived in these regions to this day; the three principal languages, Aymara, Quichoua and Pouquina have motivated various studies; and a part of the customs of these peoples has been maintained.

The destruction of the Incan power, which did not recognize individual liberty, delivered these peoples from a heavy yoke and from many obligations. For example, the heavy agricultural tax on $\frac{2}{3}$ of the harvest levied by the Incas and their delegates—one third for the Inca and his family, one third for the Administration, and one third left to the peasants—was replaced by a moderate personal tax which varied according to the resources of each region.

The communities regained full possession of their lands and harvest under their traditional regime, which was recognized for the first time in an official fashion and incorporated in the Laws of the Indies. These communities preserved their internal autonomy and their freely chosen native leaders, *hilacatas* and *mandones*. Nonetheless they did not remain isolated. Continuing the politics of the Incas, Spain tried to gather the dispersed natives and to assemble communities in groups from 2 to 12—the *markas* created by the Incan administration—and gave these new units the laws of the Comune of Castille with the *cabildos*, *corregidores*, *alcaldes* and other officials elected each year.

The roads, the halting posts or *tambos*, and the bridges were improved, making communication and transportation more rapid. Agriculture was given new impetus. The old Spanish plow, without entirely replacing the hoe and the digging pole, and their derivatives, marked considerable progress in agricultural technique. Horses, donkeys and mules replaced in large part

transportation by either man or llama, whose loading capacity did not exceed 25 kilos. The cart made its appearance very late in the Andes. Oxen, sheep, goats and birds improved the conditions of peasant life. Wheat, barley and beans were added to the indigenous plants, some of which had a small yield, like the amaranthus and *maka*, which eventually disappeared.

The use of sheep's wool, less expensive than the very precious vicuna and alpaca, became common for the clothes of the poorer classes, and gave new impetus to artisan work. The pedal loom, imported from Spain and operated by hand, and the spinning wheel to spin wool gave birth to an industry at first in the *obrajes* (the official workshops) and soon in homes, in order to manufacture the *bayeta* and other fabrics in constant use in the Andes. The native horizontal loom continued to be used to weave blankets, capes, ponchos and other articles of clothing.

Iron replaced leather and bronze, putting in the hands of artisans and peasants tools of greater duration and at accessible prices. Stone cutting itself benefited from these new means and under the direction of Spanish missionaries and Spanish workers, the Indians perfected their techniques, constructing vast churches and cutting stone statues, figures of saints or façade ornaments.

Goldsmiths engaged in new activities. Circulation of money facilitated exchange and in part replaced barter. Little by little a small native population of artisans, of small business men, of workers and laborers, began.

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All this is not to praise without reservation the transformations brought by the Spanish to the life of the natives. This progress has a rather dark side with compulsory labor the *mita* in the silver mines of Potosi, in the mercury mines of Huancavelica, in the *obrajes*, in the various workshops, in the *tambos* (the halting places), or in working for the profit of the great landlords in service under the name of *vanaconas* on the great domains given as appanage to the main *conquistadores* at the beginning of the colony. The rule of these large landlords, the *encomiendas*, had been the source of great abuse, denounced many times by Las Casas, by the clergy and by the royal officers. An Augustinian

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monk, Father de la Calancha, even recorded in his diary (*Cronica moralizadora*), with much exaggeration, that each coin (peso) made in Potosi cost the life of 10 Indians in the mines.

However, the laws of the Indies (article 2, Chapter VI) maintained that the Indians could not be constrained to any form of slavery and forbade all compulsory and gratuitous personal service as contrary to the freedom they were to enjoy. This solemn declaration did not avoid the institution of the *mita* and the *vanacona* in the name of public service. "Personal service by the Indians *should* (our italics) be voluntary and not forced, in respect for their freedom," wrote the Viceroy Count de Superanda in 1751 in his *Memories of Residence*, to answer the criticism of these two institutions, but, he added "the public good has obliged us not to leave this job without which the Indians could not subsist to their free will, though many wise men have different sentiments regarding this matter..."

And he concludes "...since the Indians are naturally lazy, if one did not force them the Realm would be without the most necessary things..."

Article 12 of the same chapter VI of the *Recompilation of the Laws of the Indies* indicates the conditions that were to determine this compulsory labor and the retribution that was to be granted the Indians. Later on, to find an excuse in retrospect, the *mita* was made equal to military service which was also gratuitous and compulsory.

The regime of the *mita* maintained ardent defenders up until its abolition at the time of American independence. In 1791 a high officer of Potosi, the creole Pedro Vicente Cañete y Dominguez, sustained a violent polemic on this subject against the disciples of the encyclopedists some of whom, paradoxically, were originally from Spain. The *yanacona*, a personal service, was maintained in many of the great properties of Peru and Bolivia under various names and manners until the middle of this century, despite the laws ordering its suppression.

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In another domain, that of religion, the results were if not negative at least very mediocre, whether one's position be native or Christian, and they were not exempt from violence and errors whose consequences can still be felt.

At the beginning some attempts at syncretism were made in order to identify certain native beliefs—the creation of the world, the deluge, divine punishment, civilizing heroes—with biblical traditions and figures such as the apostle St. Thomas, to whom they attributed, (not without hidden political goals) the first evangelical mission in America.

Francisco de Avila, priest of Huarochiri and “visitor of the idolators” gave a curious example of syncretism. Speaking of a period of obscurity reported in the native traditions, he offered the supposition that it might have been the eclipse that followed the death of Christ.

However, the partisans of the hard line prevailed very soon over those of a softer approach and over the attempt at compromise. The civil and religious authorities tried to destroy all vestiges of the native cults. The “destroyers of idolatry” were without pity for all the practices fraught with diabolic superstitions and for their ministers who were considered dangerous sorcerers and servants of Satan. Even inoffensive customs that had no connection with their cults, like the skull deformation in infants, were severely forbidden.

The confession formulas in the native language, used by “priests of the Indians” contain numerous questions on empirical medicine and magic: “to know for example if the penitent has tried to remove the cause of the patient’s illness from his body by suction or if he himself has undergone this treatment.”

Cult objects, magical objects, little stone figures were all ferreted out and destroyed; the *huacas*, the sacred places, were desecrated. An enormous mass of precious evidence of native religious life disappeared, but much, carefully hidden, escaped the searches and some are still worshipped.

The holy places, visited in secret by the faithful, maintained their power. Modest chapels and Calvary scenes, which are so numerous in the Andean region, served to camouflage under a Christian cover holy places consecrated by tradition. Great Catholic sanctuaries, like the one at Copacabana, were raised on the site of old local religious centers and continued to attract crowds of the faithful.

The old divinities changed name and were baptized. The Pachamama, the Virgin-Earth, merges with the Virgin Mary, the lightning bolt with St. James, the Spanish Santiago, the god of

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the winds, with St. Andrew. Thus a rich pantheon, half pagan, half Christian was created, and the rites, the offerings and the sacrifices have not ceased even today.

Under the violent pressure of a petty clergy who with rare exceptions did not seek to penetrate the deepest meaning of the Indian tradition, the natives dissimulated. Little by little they forged a curious religion for themselves, only slightly Christian in its essence and in many of its rites, which became for them the only true Catholic religion. In our day the poor half-breed clergy of the Andean countryside closes its eyes and is not far itself from believing in certain of these practices. Foreign missionaries are shocked at first and certain of them end up wondering if in conscience they can continue to carry out their office among these baptized pagans.

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These somber aspects should not veil the totality of the civilizing action of Spain. It brought peace to these populations torn by internecine battles, torn by wars from tribe to tribe and village to village, and without defense in the face of the attacks of ambitious neighbors.

Numerous natives participated in the cultural and artistic development of the Andean countries. Directed by Spanish masters, they created a Hispano-American art, a hybrid art which gave an appearance to the churches of the Andes that was different from those of the same period in Spain.

Their influence was even felt in Spain. Statues of saints with natural hair and beards, so common now in the churches of the peninsula, seemed to have been unknown before the discovery of the New World. Their origin is apparently American, as André Malraux revealed some years ago visiting the cathedral of Cuzco.

The native artists decorated a multitude of churches, rich or poor, often with a splendor that is surprising in the miserable villages, because they received donations at the time from the kings of Spain or the great local landlords. These churches are numerous around the lake of Titicaca. And on great holidays old priests, with marked native features, still don very faded ornaments sent years ago by Charles V or Philip II. The 17th and 18th centuries were the golden age when this Hispano-

American religious art flourished in all its various manifestations—architecture, sculpture, painting.

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Some indigenists find great grievance with Spain for having stifled all germs of national sentiment in the soul of these populations. An imaginary grievance indeed!

In the Inca period all was reduced to blind obedience to the Inca and his delegates. The later rebellions were the work of ambitious native *caudillos*, irritated by the Spanish culture and moved by personal motives. Outside of a few rare souls who had received a good Hispanic education, the natives of the Andes did not know, and many still do not know anything beyond the horizon of their village or community. In Bolivia it was the Agricultural Reform of 1952 and its authors, the directors of the MNR (National Revolutionary Movement) who succeeded in breaking this isolation and the narrow circle in which these Andean populations lived, to have them finally enter into national life.

III. CURRENT PROBLEMS

The demographic thrust

At the beginning of this century the Bolivian high plateau had attained a satisfactory equilibrium based on strong birth control by high infant mortality. The population is essentially peasant. An investigation of the C.E.P.A.L. (Economic Commission for Latin America) in 1947 estimated the active part of the Bolivian population working in agriculture at 84.8 %; in round figures 1,000,000 people out of a total of 1,178,000 with an active occupation.

The cultivable land, limited by the special ecological conditions of high regions, does not permit a progressive extension of cultivation according to the growth of population. The traditional regime of exploitation of the native communities rested on a stable number of farmers. The ownership of the land was collective and each member, at the moment of forming a family,

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received not the property but the use of a part of the land equal to that of the other community members.

On the great landholdings a similar regime granted each head of a family the use of a piece of land sufficient for his needs in exchange for the work he performed on the lands of the owner.

To function properly these two systems required a fairly stable number of people to exploit, so as to assure a satisfying existence to each family. The crisis came around the fifth decade of this century. The growth of the population, though slow, broke the fragile framework of the ancient institutions.

In "Civilizations of the Andes" this problem is treated at length. Here it will suffice to mention that two or three boys in each family reach adulthood and each form a new family circle, forcing the division in two or three of a lot that used to belong to only one community member. Since the native peasantry has no other resource but the earth the situation became impossible. This was the reason for the agricultural reforms first in Bolivia then in Peru and Chile.

As it was implemented—by distributing the lands of the great landlords to the underprivileged peasants—the agricultural reform only pushed the problem aside, and the problem will emerge again, more severe and without solution, in a few years when the continual growth of the population will render the present division insufficient. Then there will no longer be lands available to distribute. The creation of agricultural cooperatives and the improvement of techniques and of the productivity of the land can delay the problem, they cannot resolve it. It is necessary, in fact urgent, to find other outlets for the excess population of the Andean highlands.

One solution seems logical. The low and tropical eastern region of Bolivia is practically empty—one inhabitant per 4 sq. kilometers. It seems easy therefore to divert the overflow of the peasantry of the highlands towards the tropical lands. The first attempts made by the Bolivian government, the Andean Action of the B.I.T. and by private persons did not give the expected results. Most of the displaced Andeans did not acclimate and returned home, often ill.

These failures were at first attributed to the brusque uprooting, to the change in habits and nourishment, to the climate and to the lack of prior psychological preparation of the emigrants.

All these factors count. The inhabitants of the Andes have always feared the tropical regions. The Incas had made some fruitless attempts to penetrate there and the recent war of the Chaco had left very harsh memories among the soldiers of the high plateau. But the root of the problem is biological in nature.

Biological problems - Man bound to the Andes

The Incas and the Spaniards of the colony were aware of the sensitivity of the Indians of the high regions to change of altitude; they attributed the disturbances they observed to the passage from a cold to a warm climate. Chroniclers like Miguel Cabello de Balboa and Juan de Matienzo, and certain judiciary information—such as that evoked in 1558 before the Protector of the Indians of Arequipa to avoid sending men of the mountain chain to the service of the *tambo* of the Sihuas in the hot region—insist on the harmful consequences of the change of environment for the Indians.

Next to these psychological factors, which certainly have their importance, biological factors especially come into play. It would take too long to dwell on all these factors here, and they have been the object of numerous studies on Peru and Bolivia. The Andean populations, especially the *Aymaras*, who for many centuries have been living constantly at approximately 4,000 meters, demonstrate a very marked adaptation to this very particular environment; this is translated in various physiological modifications, a particular morphology of the parent stock and important hematological and genetic variations. Whereas they are well suited to the severe conditions of the high regions, the Andeans have difficulty adjusting to life at a low altitude and are poorly defended against microbotic and virus attacks of the hot lands:

The *Aymaras* form a separate branch, the high plateau branch with a very strong morphological and biological specialization for this life at high altitudes, which creates serious problems for them in the case of displacement. To cite the energetic expression of Prof. Ruffié, "they are trapped in the Andes."

The ethnic group the *Quichouas*, who are very different from the *Aymaras* in their physical type and their culture, represent another specialized branch, the *andide* branch, distinct from the

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amazonides to which they are however akin. Their adaptation to Andean life, which is more recent and less complete than that of the *Aymaras*, permits them to better withstand the descent to the low regions.

The demographic growth which no longer permits the Andean populations to live in territories that are too poor on the one hand, and the biological problems that oppose their emigration toward other lands on the other, create extremely difficult conditions for the economic and social development of the inhabitants of the high regions of the Andes, who are consequently forced to seek new resources where they are, to cope with a growth that is still slow, but continuous.

Half breeds in the Andes

The problem of half breeds posed itself from the very first contact between the Spanish and the Indians of South America. At first encouraged, then tolerated and finally opposed, it has never ceased to play a social and now political role in the life of the Andes. A new class was formed which at first facilitated the relations with the natives and consolidated the work of conquest. The favorable attitude of Spanish authorities at the beginning was in keeping with motives that were often contradictory: sometimes humanitarian and religious, more often political and economic, or imposed by necessity.

At the beginning of the Spanish occupation the dearth of women was soon felt. As young men or men in their prime, being deprived for years of all feminine society, the conquerors of all ranks sought Indian women. The authorities closed their eyes and often favored unions which corresponded to a political line tending to establish bonds of affection with the principal natives so as to control them better and to pass on the legal rights to their succession to Spaniards.

Spain has always been very formalistic and highly attached to legal forms. Though they harshly squelched uprisings or the slightest aspiration for independence, the new masters of America tried to create legal rights for themselves by gaining the friendship of the conquered. Toward this objective the Kings of Spain had granted the important tribal princes the privileges of Spanish nobility and the honorary usage of Don before their first name.

By special concession the heads of the principal branches of the Incas received the right to use coats of arms with the attributes of the Crown of Spain, the towers of Castille and the lions, with a gold chain that the Incas received upon coming of age. Hence their title *Señor de la Cadena*.

The Spanish captains often took the women of the Inca family as concubines or legitimate wives. Some *conquistadores* of inferior category intermingled with women of the family of the important tribal princes. The Viceroy Toledo opened the college of Princes in Lima, reserved for the sons of the important native families.

The half breed children of the first generation had the right to the privileges of their fathers. Being legitimized or legally recognized, many of them received an excellent education and distinguished themselves in arms, letters or the clergy. Chroniclers like Garcilaso de la Vega, the Jesuit Blas Valera or Cristobal de Molina were half breeds. Alongside the monks of various orders, numerous half-breed lay priests were in this period holders of Indian parishes in the countryside and rendered great services thanks to their knowledge of *quichoua*, the tongue of their mothers.

At the time of the civil wars of Peru, from the second half of the 16th century the influx of soldiers and adventurers of all sorts and of Spanish of lower classes complicated the problem of the half breeds. Children were abandoned by their fathers or left without resources after their fathers' deaths and lived with their native mothers in deplorable material and moral conditions. There were rare cases in which these children were adopted by their Spanish relatives or friends and given some education.

The proliferation of this poor class of half breeds brought about measures of defense. A royal notification forbade the admission of the half breeds into religious orders. After the creation of the University of Lima in 1551, it was prohibited to admit half breeds, Negroes and mulattos. Despite the remonstrances of the Council of Lima in 1583 which supported a moving plea in favor of the half breeds, these prohibitions were maintained. The Spanish authorities needed to worry about the problems of the ever more numerous half breeds. Since they were often without property and therefore could not (except as lay brothers) enter the Orders—one of the rare professions

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that offered openings to the poor but educated youth—nor could they enter the University, the great majority of the half breeds received mediocre instruction or no instruction at all and found themselves reduced to doing manual labor. Those who were able to attend school could become public scribes, underlings for the government, or work in small commerce. In the country, since they were exempt from the *mita*, they settled generally in the villages. Aware of the more or less distant Spanish ancestry, frustrated in their efforts to attain a less precarious situation, the drama of the half breeds of Latin America thus began. They formed an uneasy group, mistrusted by the Indians, rejected by the whites, discontent and restless, and they often became aggressive, so unlike the habitual passivity of the Indians.

In 1736 the Viceroy Marquis de Castel Fuerte complained about the turbulence of the half breeds “who gave more trouble than advantage, did not respect some and did not like others, did not obey and did not pay taxes.”

Their number increased rapidly. In 1796 in Peru they were almost twice as numerous as the Spanish: 244,436 against 135,755. They began to assume importance in the life of the country. Next to the creoles they took a great part in the wars of independence which freed them of all constraint; they formed the mass of the insurgent army while the Indians, on the whole, remained faithful to the King of Spain.

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The racial problem in the Andean countries is not very marked at the present. There is no antagonism among the groups except in the countryside between the rural natives and the half breeds of the villages. The difference between the Indian and the half breed is not in the physical type, it is socio-cultural or economic-cultural. Though it is a phenomenon at first sight surprising for the biologist, but easily understood by the sociologist, it is possible for an individual to pass from the native class to that of the half breeds when his resources, his activity and his education raise him in society. A multimillionaire miner, a lawyer or politician of Indian extraction, are no longer natives but “slightly

mixed" half breeds or whites, and they succeed in marrying European women of high birth.

These very mobile limits and the practical difficulty of racial classification have caused the adoption of a division of population based on five socio-economic classes in the Peruvian censuses of recent years:

1. The very low native class of the countryside.
2. The low class, the *cholos* of the villages.
3. The middle class, formed especially by half breeds.
4. The upper class of rural landlords and businessmen.
5. The upper class of the cities.

The native is one who lives in poverty, cultivates the land, wears traditional clothes made at home and uses a native language as his primary or only language. Above him is the *cholo* who retains a part of native customs but is more solicitous. Having recently emerged from the native class, he has ill assimilated modern culture. In general he more or less knows how to read or write, he knows a little Spanish, but preserves *quichoua* or *aymara* as his principal language. He lives in villages or small towns, engages sometimes in agriculture as extra income, but the petty occupations, domestic crafts or small commerce where women have a large part, are reserved for him. The petty civil servants of the villages and of the police are recruited among this class. The situation of the *cholo* is often tragic. He is out of his class, without social status, he has left the native groups, which he rejects, and the half breeds reject him. He has lost all the traditional values in the social order; in the religious order he affects to no longer believe in "these Indian things" as one of my informants said with scorn. The abandonment of half pagan half Christian religious practices has made him totally *déclassé*. But this facade of indifference is very thin and often cracks.

The half breeds are above the *cholos* and now form the middle and most active class of the Andean countries. They tend to divide into two groups, those of the old generation and those of the new, who are perfectly adapted to modern life. The former, closer to their native roots, have entirely adopted European

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dress; they speak Spanish and often also a native language and they scorn the Indian. It is the class of teachers of the villages and of white collar workers. They have received a good primary education and often secondary as well. They are very proud of the position they have reached, always want to advance further, and their children go in great number to study at the University.

Those of the younger generations are completely adapted, except for their physiognomic traits, and differ in no way from European descendants. They occupy a great number of positions in the army, in the professions, the clergy, and in commerce and industry. They hold almost all the commercial means of the cities; others have land holdings going from 20 to 20,000 hectares.

The half breeds play a more and more important role in politics. For the past century they have displaced from almost all the jobs of management the descendants of old Spanish families who for the most part retain much diminished fortunes. They take the direction of all social and nationalist claims and are at the head of almost all the revolutions.

The independence of the South American countries was the work of the creoles, sons of Spaniards born in South America and put at a disadvantage by the Spanish arriving from the capital. Except for a few cases, the half breeds collaborated for independence in the lower ranks or as simple soldiers.

In the course of the 19th century the half breeds have little by little submerged the white elements, first by number and then by their dynamism. The first half of the 20th century was the epoch of the half breeds. In Bolivia, the transfer of the seat of the government of Sucre or Chuquisaca—the old traditional Spanish city, seat of the Audience of Charcas—to La Paz, the native city at the center of the Indian country on the high plateau, sealed the definitive political triumph of the half breeds.

IV. THE NATIVE ADVANCE

The native class, for its part, is in full ascent. Its high birth rate is not compensated by a sufficient European immigration as was the case in the lands of the Plata or in Chile. On the other hand, the play of cross breeding and the laws of heredity tend to affirm

the native phenotype more and more. On the high plateau, in the mountain chains the exterior signs of cross breeding are rare. This impression is confirmed by the analysis of the physical characteristics and the study of blood groups. The extreme rarity of the A factor and especially of B reveals only light traces of European blood, even in the regions like the surroundings of Lake Titicaca where the contacts with the Spanish were prolonged for four centuries. The return to the native type is undeniable. The same observation is valid from the cultural point of view. The natives are gathering consciousness of their numeric importance and their force. They want to be consulted and to take part in the active direction of their interests—the agrarian communities and the mining unions. Certain political leaders, and professionals as well—doctors and lawyers—refuse to be classed among the half bloods and reclaim their native ancestry.

At the time of the agrarian reform certain Bolivian communities wanted to discard the use of Spanish and of clothes and all other elements of non-Indian origin. The latest censuses underline the numerical advance of the natives. The 1966 census in Peru indicates that more than half the population of certain Andean provinces is native and does not speak Spanish. The Bolivian census of 1950 had given comparable figures.

Up to recent years the linguistic problem in the education of the natives presented only two alternatives, attempted successively in the Andean countries: education entirely in Spanish with the prohibition to instructors to use local languages (an unhappy solution for children who did not understand Spanish and who gained no advantage from their time in school) or else, the wiser solution, but rarely adopted, of the first two years in the native language with progressive instruction in Spanish so as to bring the children to following classes in Spanish in the third year. Most often the predominating idea was to impose Spanish as the sole language of the country to unify the population and destroy all traces of particularism.

Today a third way is emerging, even in the international conferences: the natives do not need to learn Spanish, it is the Spanish speaking Peruvians who need to learn *quichoua* and to respect the native culture, following a motion presented in 1971 at the Round Table on Andean linguistics, which met at the University of New York at Buffalo, and at the Conference of

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the T.E.S.O.L. (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). The rising native wave threatens to overthrow the half breeds sooner or later, just as they displaced the Spanish creoles a century before.

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It is important to know about this evolution to understand the reactions and the conduct of the men of the Andes. Their beliefs and their customs do not constitute a folklore more or less interesting to study; they are still the soul of the population.