THE ANDEAN CREATOR GOD

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The contemporary specialized literature relative to andean deities is not very numerous. On the other hand we have at our disposal a series of versions written by spaniards and indians between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; besides them we find other texts conserved by oral tradition, that have been collected especially in the last years 1). However it must be taken into consideration that not all the chronicles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are derived from original testimonies and their texts can be reduced to a few initial versions, gathered from direct conversations, that were later resumed or copied by other writers 2). It is through the study of the earlier chronicles (considering also the place where the author gathered his information) that we can achieve a representation of the oldest andean cosmogonic myth and of the creative deities prior to the organization of the Inca state in the fifteenth century. In the same sources we can find information that allows us to observe changes in the creative deities (and naturally in the origin myth) occurred at the same time that the state was formed. Finally, after 1532 when the process of european invasion and colonization started, we note a new modification of the myth of creation and of the deity, that presents itself roughly after the seventeenth century and lasts up to our days, in a new representation associated with messianic elements originated by the european presence. This last case can be seen in still extant oral versions that are in process of extinction.

In order to analyze the andean creative god, it is necessary to restrict


2) On this point see Aranibar, Wedin, Franklin Pease, El mito de origen cusqueño y la creación solar, Amaru, 8, Lima, 1968.
ourselves initially to Cuzco, the sacred city of the Incas, for the main information which we possess is referred to it.

If it is true that the versions gathered by the chroniclers are many, even among those related directly to Cuzco that of Betanzos captures our attention especially. He is the author of a *Summa y Narración de los Incas* (1551) that interests us because it allows us to establish, in accordance with the writings of Pedro Cieza de León (1550), Cristóbal de Molina (1575, although we know of the existence of a lost previous work) and Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa (1572), the initial version of the cosmogonic myth known in the area of Cuzco that was found by the europeans. It furthermore allows us to establish, in accordance with other sources, the modifications of the myth since the beginning of the Inca state. Also, the chronicles that have been mentioned appear to be the least contaminated (with european elements) of the writings of the time.

It is necessary to call attention to the fact that the versions of andean myths that we have in our possession are always of an only relative accuracy, for the spaniards that wrote them had serious difficulties — cultural and linguistic — in transcribing the oral versions existing at the moment of the european invasion. When those that prepared a written version were indians (as with Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala or Juan Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salmayhua for example) we note an extremely strong influence of the recent christian and european mentality, and a notorious "conversion psychology" that unites to the social pressure exerted by the conquistadores to produce in them a speedy if incomplete process of acculturation.

**The Creative God in Cuzco**

The oldest andean creative deity, that appears with different names in its ample area of diffusion is Wiraqocha, whose cult can be localized in the area that extends from the "altiplano" of Perú and Bolivia to the central regions of actual Perú, branching off to the north of Chile and Argentina and the south of Ecuador. To analyze this divinity it is necessary to restrict ourselves, as we have said, to Cuzco and refer to the

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