

ROYAL
COMMENTARIES
OF THE INCAS

And General History of Peru

PART ONE

by Garcilaso de la Vega, El Inca



Translated with an Introduction by

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FOREWORD BY ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

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FOREWORD

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In making this translation of Garcilaso de la Vega's *Commentaries*, Mr. Harold Livermore has done a valuable service for the English-reading public. This book is one of the prime sources of our knowledge of the pre-Columbian civilization of the Andean World. Some acquaintance with this civilization is indispensable for an understanding of world history. Furthermore, Garcilaso is a particularly illuminating witness to the character of this Andean civilization that the Spanish *conquistadores* had destroyed in the generation immediately preceding Garcilaso's own. The other chroniclers of Andean history in the Spanish language were European in descent on both sides. The New World civilization that they were describing was alien to them, however actively it may have aroused their curiosity, and however successful they may have been in entering into the spirit of it by an act of historical imagination. Garcilaso spent most of his adult life on the Old World side of the Atlantic, but, in writing about the empire of the Incas, he enjoyed one singular personal advantage. His mother was an Inca princess, and the Andean World, as well as the Western World, was thus part of his personal heritage. Each of these points is worth considering.

The corpus of writing in Spanish on the Andean civilization is notable in several ways. The sheer size of it is impressive, and most of these works were written before the conquerors had completed the destruction of the pre-Columbian society and culture upon which they had made their shattering impact. For several generations enough of the pre-Columbian Andean tradition remained alive to enable even some of the latest of the Spanish chroniclers to make valuable contributions to our knowledge of its history.

One of the strange features of the pre-Columbian civilizations' tragic encounter with the conquerors from the Old World was the ambivalence of the conquerors' attitudes towards these other worlds. The conquerors made a barbarous use of their overwhelmingly superior material power. They shattered the pre-Columbian civilizations—and this so thoroughly

scant attention. If I had listened more closely, I would now be able to set down many other remarkable things very needful to this history. I will relate those that have stayed in my memory and regret those I have lost. The Reverend Father José de Acosta also touches on this story of the discovery of the New World and regrets not being able to give it in full, for his Paternity also wanted a part of this narrative, like some modern authors, since the old conquistadors had already disappeared when he visited those parts. In his Book I, ch. xix, he says:

Having shown that there is no ground for thinking that the earliest dwellers in the Indies reached them by deliberately sailing there, it follows that if they went by sea it would have been by chance and under stress of weather that they got to the Indies, and this, despite the immensity of the Ocean Sea, is not incredible. For this happened in the discovery of our own times, when that seaman whose name is still unknown (so that so great a venture shall not be attributed to any other than God), having reached the New World by reason of a terrible and persistent storm, repaid the generous hospitality of Christopher Columbus by imparting the great news to him. Thus it was rendered possible,

etc. This, word for word, is from Padre Acosta, who is thus seen to have found our story in Peru, if not in full, at least in its essentials. This was the origin and first beginning of the discovery of the New World, and the honor of it belongs to the little town of Huelva, which may boast of having produced a son whose narrative inspired such faith in Christopher Columbus that he persisted in his quest and promised things never seen or heard, but like a wise man keeping the secret of them, though he did describe them in confidence to certain persons who enjoyed great authority with the Catholic monarchs and who helped him to press his undertaking through. But if it had not been for the news that Alonso Sánchez de Huelva gave him he could not have promised so much and so exactly what he did promise merely out of his own imagination as a cosmographer, nor have seen the undertaking of the discovery through so rapidly, for the same author tells us that Columbus took only sixty-eight days on the voyage to the island of Guanatanico, including a few days at Gomera to take in supplies. If he had not known from Alonso Sánchez's narrative what direction to take in so vast a sea, it would almost have been a miracle to have arrived there in so little time.

CHAPTER IV

The derivation of the name Peru.

AS WE HAVE to deal with Peru, we may properly say here how this name was derived, since the Indians do not have it in their language. In 1513 Vasco Núñez de Balboa, a gentleman born at Jerez de Badajoz, discovered the Southern Sea, and was the first Spaniard to set eyes upon it. He was granted by the Catholic monarchs the title of *adelantado* of this sea with the right to conquer and govern any kingdoms he might discover on its shores, and in the few years he had to live after receiving this honor—until his own father-in-law, Governor Pedro Arias de Ávila, instead of rewarding him with the many favors his deeds had merited, had him beheaded—this knight strove to discover and know what was the land running from Panama southwards and what it was called. For this purpose he had three or four ships built, which he sent one by one at various seasons of the year to reconnoiter that coast while he made the necessary preparations for its discovery and conquest. These ships made as many investigations as they could and returned with reports of many lands on those shores.

One ship went further than the rest and passed the equinoctial line southwards; and not far beyond it, while hugging the shore—which was the method of navigation then employed on this voyage—sighted an Indian fishing at the mouth of one of the numerous rivers that flow from that land into the sea. The Spaniards on the ship landed four of their number who were good swimmers and runners as quickly as possible some distance from where the Indian was, so that he should not escape by land or water. Having taken this precaution, they passed before the Indian in the ship so that he fixed his gaze on it, unmindful of the trap that had been prepared for him. Seeing on the sea so strange a sight as a ship with all sail set, something never before seen on that shore, he was lost in amazement and stood astonished and bewildered, wondering what the thing he beheld on the sea before him could be. He was so distracted and absorbed in this thought that those who were to capture him had seized him before he perceived their approach, and so they took him on board with general rejoicings and celebrations.

Having petted him to help him overcome his fear at the sight of their beards and unaccustomed clothes, the Spaniards asked him by signs and words what land it was and what it was called. The Indian understood that they were asking him something from the gestures and grimaces they were making with hands and face, as if they were addressing a dumb man, but he did not understand what they were asking, so he told them what he thought they wanted to know. Thus fearing they might do him harm, he quickly replied by giving his own name, saying, "*Berú*," and adding another, "*pelú*." He meant: "If you're asking my name, I'm called *Berú*, and if you're asking where I was, I was in the river." The word *pelú* is a noun in the language of that province and means "a river" in general, as we shall see from a reliable author. To a like question the Indian in our history of Florida answered by giving the name of his master saying, "*Breços*" and "*Bredos*" (Book VI, ch. xv, where I inserted this passage referring to that incident: I now remove it to put it in its proper place). The Christians understood what they wanted to understand, supposing the Indian had understood them and had replied as pat as if they had been conversing in Spanish; and from that time, which was 1515 or 1516, they called that rich and great empire *Peru*, corrupting both words, as the Spaniards corrupt almost all the words they take from the Indian language of that land. Thus if they took the Indian's name, *Berú*, they altered the *B* to a *P*, and if they took the word *pelú*, "a river," they altered the *l* to an *r*, and in one way or another they turned it into *Peru*. Others, more modern, and priding themselves on their refinement, alter two letters and write *Pirú* in their histories. The older historians such as Pedro de Cieza de León and the treasurer Agustín de Zárate, and Francisco López de Gómara, and Diego Fernández de Palencia, and also the Reverend Father Jerónimo Román, though more modern, all write *Peru* and not *Pirú*. And as the place where this happened chanced to be in the confines of the land the Inca kings had conquered and subjected to their rule, they called everything from there onwards *Peru*, that is from the district of Quito to the Charcas, or the main part over which they reigned. The region is over seven hundred leagues in length, though their empire reached as far as Chile, which is five hundred leagues beyond and is another most rich and fertile kingdom.

CHAPTER V

Authorities in confirmation of the name Peru.

~~THIS WAS THE origin and beginning of the name *Peru*, so famous in the world, and rightly famous, since it has filled the whole world with gold and silver, pearls and precious stones. But because it was imposed by accident and is not one they have themselves given, the native Indians of Peru, though it is seventy-two years since it was conquered, have not taken this word into their mouths. Through their dealings with the Spaniards they now know of course what it means, but they do not use it because they had no generic name in their language to cover collectively the kingdoms and provinces that their native kings ruled over, such as Spain, Italy, or France, which include many provinces. They could call each province by its proper name, as will be amply shown in the course of this history, but they had no word that signified the whole kingdom together. They used to call it *Tabuantsuyu*, meaning "the four quarters of the world." The name *Berú*, as has been seen, was the proper name of an Indian and is one used by the Yunca Indians of the plains and sea-coast, but not by those of the mountains or in the general language. As there are in Spain names and surnames that show which province they come from, so there were among the Indians of Peru. That *Peru* was a name imposed by the Spaniards and that it did not occur in the general speech of the Indians, we are given to understand by Pedro de Cieza de León in his Part III, ch. iii, speaking of the isle called Gorgona, he says: "The Marquis Don Francisco Pizarro was there with thirteen Spanish Christians, his shipmates, who were the discoverers of this land we call Peru," etc. In ch. xiii he says: "Therefore from Quito, where what we call Peru really begins, it will be necessary" etc. In ch. xviii he says: "From the accounts the Indians of Cuzco give us, we gather that there was formerly great disorder in all the provinces of the kingdom we call Peru," etc. So many repetitions of "we call" shows that the Spaniards called it so, for he only uses it when referring to them, and that the Indians had not the word in their language, to which I, as an Inca, can testify. Padre Acosta says the same and much more in Book I of his *Natural History of the Indies* (ch. xiii), where, speaking on this subject, he tells us:~~

three causes concurred to give it that name," etc. This is from López de Gómara.

In the same way all the other names of famous ports, great rivers, provinces, and kingdoms discovered in the New World received their names from those of the saints on whose day they were discovered or from the captain, soldier, pilot, or mariner who discovered them. We have said something about this in the history of Florida in dealing with the description of the place and visitors to it; and in Book VI, after ch. xv, with reference to the subject in hand, derivations were included there together with that of Peru, for I feared I might not live long enough to reach this point. But as God in his mercy has prolonged my life, it seemed best to remove them and put them in their proper place. All I now fear is lest another historian may have robbed me, because that book, owing to my other occupations, was sent off in my absence for his opinion on it and I know it passed through many hands. Moreover, many have asked me if I knew the derivation of the name *Peru*, and though I wished to keep it to myself, I have not been able to refuse it to some of my friends.

CHAPTER VIII

The description of Peru.

THE FOUR BOUNDARIES of the empire of the Incas when the Spaniards arrived were as follows. To the north it stretched to the Ancasmayu River, which runs between the limits of Quito [Quito] and Pastu [Pasto]. In the general speech of Peru it means "Blue River." It is almost exactly on the equator. To the south the limit was the river called Mauli [Maule], running east and west beyond to the kingdom of Chile, before the land of the Araucanians. It is more than forty degrees south of the equator. Between these two rivers there are just under 1,300 leagues of land. The part called Peru is 750 leagues long north to south by land from the Ancasmayu River to the Chichas, which is the last province of the Charcas. What is called the kingdom of Chile is about 550 leagues from north to south, counting from the province of the Chichas to the river Maule.

To the east it is bounded by the inaccessible chain of snowy peaks, untrodden by man, animal, or bird, and extending from Santa Marta to the

Straits of Magellan. The Indians call it "Ritisuyu," "the land of snows." To the west it is limited by the Southern Sea which extends along the whole length of its coast. The boundary of the empire begins at Cape Passau on the coast and runs beyond the equinoctial line as far as the Maule River, which also flows into the Southern Sea. From east to west the whole kingdom is narrow. At its broadest, crossing from the Muyupampa province over the Chachapoyas to the town of Trujillo on the sea-coast, it is 120 leagues wide, and at the narrowest, from the port of Arica to the province called Llaricassa it is 70 leagues long. These are the four boundaries of the realms of the Inca kings, whose history we propose to write, with divine aid.

Before going further, it would be as well to tell here the story of Pedro Serrano mentioned above, so that it is not too far from its place, and in order that this chapter may not be too short. Pedro Serrano swam to the hitherto unnamed desert island, which, as he said, would be about two leagues in circumference. The chart shows this to be so: it gives three small islets with a great many banks round about, and the same appearance is given to the one called Serranilla, which is five islets with more shoals than Serrana: there are many banks in all these parts, and ships avoid them so as not to fall into danger.

It was Pedro Serrano's fate to be wrecked among them and to reach the island swimming. He was in a state of despair, for he found no water nor fuel nor even grass he could graze on, nor anything else to maintain life till some ship might pass to rescue him before he perished from hunger and thirst; this seemed to him a harder fate than death by drowning, which is quicker. So he spent the first night bewailing his misfortune, and was as cast down as one would suppose a man to be in such a plight. As soon as dawn came, he again walked round the island, and found some shellfish from the sea, crabs, shrimps, and other creatures. He caught what he could and ate them raw, having no flame to roast or boil them with. Thus he kept himself going until he saw turtles come forth. Seeing them some distance from the sea, he seized one and turned it over, and did the same to as many as he could, for they are clumsy in righting themselves when on their backs. Drawing a knife he used to wear in his belt, and which saved his life, he beheaded one and drank its blood instead of water. He did the same with the rest, and laid out their flesh in the sun to make dried meat and cleaned out the shells to catch rainwater, for the whole region is, of course, very rainy. Thus he sustained himself during the first days by killing all the turtles he could. Some were as big as and bigger than the biggest shields, and others like smaller shields and targes. They

were in fact of all sizes. The largest of them he could not contrive to turn over on their backs, because they were stronger than he, and though he climbed on them to subdue them by tiring them, it was no use because they could make their way to the sea with him astraddle. So experience taught him which turtles he could attack and which to abandon. In their shells he collected a great deal of water, for some could hold two arrobas, and others less. Finding himself adequately supplied with food and drink, Pedro Serrano thought that if he could make fire so as to be able to roast his food and produce smoke in case a ship should pass, he could lack nothing. With this idea, being a man with long experience of the sea (and they certainly have a great advantage over other men in any sort of task), he looked for a pair of pebbles that he could use as flint, hoping to use his knife to strike fire from them. But not finding any such stones on the island, which was covered with bare sand, he swam into the sea and dived, carefully searching the sea bottom in all directions, and persisting in his labors until he found pebbles and collected what he could, picking out the best and breaking them on one another so as to make edges to strike the knife on. He then tried out his idea, and seeing that he could strike fire, made shreds of a piece of his shirt, torn very small like carded cotton. This served as tinder, and by dint of industry and skill, after great perseverance, he made himself a fire. Having got it, he counted himself fortunate and sustained it by collecting the jetsam thrown up by the sea. He spent hours collecting weeds called sea-pods, timber from ships lost at sea, shells, fish bones, and other material to feed his fire. So that the showers should not extinguish it, he made a hut with the biggest shells from the turtles he had killed, and tended the fire with great diligence lest it should slip from his hands. Within two months or less, he was as naked as when he was born, for the great rain, the heat, and the humidity of the region rotted the few clothes he had. The sun wearied him with its great heat; for he had no clothes to protect himself nor any shade. When he was very extenuated, he entered the water and submerged himself. He lived three years amidst these hardships and cares, and though he saw several ships pass in that time, and made smoke (the usual signal for people lost at sea), they did not see him, or else feared the shoals and did not dare to approach, but passed well out to sea, all of which left Pedro Serrano so discouraged that he had resigned himself to dying and ending his misery. Owing to the harshness of the climate hair grew all over his body till it was like an animal's pelt, and not just any animal's, but a wild boar's. His hair and beard fell below his waist.

After three years, one afternoon when he was not expecting anything,

experience of sea

of sea

he saw a man on the island. This man had been wrecked on the shoals the night before and had saved himself on a ship's plank. As soon as dawn appeared, he saw the smoke of Pedro Serrano's fire, and guessing what it was, made for it, aided by the plank and his good swimming. When they saw one another, it would be hard to say which was the more surprised. Serrano thought it was the Devil come in human form to tempt him to some desperate act. His guest thought Serrano was the Devil in his true form, he was so coated with hair, beard, and hide. Each fled from the other, and Pedro Serrano went off crying: "Jesus! Jesus! Oh Lord, deliver me from the demon!"

Hearing this, the other was reassured, and turned towards him saying: "Flee me not, brother, for I am a Christian too," and to prove it, as he still ran away, shouted the Credo. Pedro Serrano heard it, turned back, and they advanced with the greatest tenderness and many tears and groans, seeing that they were both in the same plight with no hope of escape. Each briefly told the other the story of his past life. Pedro Serrano, realizing his guest's need, gave him some of his food and drink, which comforted him a little, and they again discussed their plight. They arranged their life as best they could, dividing the hours of the day and night between the duties of collecting shellfish to eat and sea-pods and wood and fish bones and anything else thrown up by the sea to sustain the fire, and especially the perpetual vigil they had to keep on it, hour by hour, lest it go out. They lived in this way for some days, but it was not long before they quarrelled, and so violently that they lived apart and nearly came to blows (which shows how great is the misery of human passions). The cause of the strife was that one accused the other of not doing the necessary duties properly. This accusation and the words they exchanged were enough to destroy their harmony and divide them. But they themselves soon realized their folly, asked one another's forgiveness, made friends, and lived together again. Thus they continued for four years. During this time they saw some ships pass and made their smoke signals, but in vain, and this so depressed them that they all but died.

At the end of this long-time, a ship chanced to pass so near that their smoke was sighted and a boat put out to pick them up. Pedro Serrano and his companion, who had grown a similar pelt, seeing the boat approach, fell to saying the Credo and calling on the name of our Redeemer aloud, so that the sailors should not think they were demons and flee from them. This availed them, for otherwise the mariners would doubtless have fled: they no longer looked like human beings. So they were carried to the ship, where they astounded all who saw them and heard about their labors. The

discovery that Serrano

no longer looked like human beings

companion died at sea returning to Spain. Pedro Serrano reached here and went on to Germany where the emperor then was. He kept his pelt as it was, as a proof of his wreck and all he had gone through. In every village he passed through on the way he earned much money whenever he chose to exhibit himself. Some of the lords and principal knights who liked to see his figure contributed toward the cost of the journey, and his imperial majesty, having seen and heard him, gave him a reward of 4,000 pesos in income, or 4,800 ducats, in Peru. On the way to enjoy this, he died at Panama, and never saw it. All this story, as I have repeated it, is told by a gentleman called Sánchez de Figueroa, from whom I heard it. He knew Pedro Serrano and warrants that he had heard it from him, and that after seeing the emperor, Pedro Serrano cut his hair and beard to just above the waist; and to enable him to sleep at night, he plaited it; for otherwise it spread out over the bed and disturbed his rest.

CHAPTER IX

*The idolatry of the Indians and the gods
they worshipped before the Incas.*

2. stages
 FOR THE better understanding of the idolatry, way of life, and customs of the Indians of Peru, it will be necessary for us to divide those times into two periods. First we shall say how they lived before the Incas, and then how the Inca kings governed, so as not to confuse the one thing with the other, and so that the customs and gods of one period are not attributed to the other. It must therefore be realized that in the first age of primitive heathendom there were Indians who were little better than tame beasts and others much worse than wild beasts. To begin with their gods, we may say that they were of a piece with the simplicity and stupidity of the times, as regards the multiplicity of gods and the vileness and crudity of the things the people worshipped. Each province, each tribe, each village, each quarter, each clan, each house had gods different from the rest, for they considered that other people's gods, being busy with other people's affairs, could not help them, but they must have their own. Thus they came to have so great a variety of gods, which were too numerous to

count. They did not understand, as the gentile Romans did, how to create abstract gods such as Hope, Victory, Peace, and so on, for their thoughts did not rise to invisible things, and they worshipped what they saw, some in one way and others in another. They did not consider whether the things they worshipped were worthy of their worship and they had no self-respect, in the sense of refraining from worshipping things inferior to themselves. They only thought of distinguishing themselves from one another, and each from all the rest. Thus they worshipped grasses, plants, flowers, trees of all kinds, high hills, great rocks and nooks in them, deep caves, pebbles, and little pieces of stone of various colors found in rivers and streams, such as jasper. They worshipped the emerald, especially in the province now called Puerto Viejo. They did not worship diamonds or rubies because these stones did not exist there. Instead they worshipped various animals, some for their ferocity, such as the tiger, lion, and bear; and consequently, regarding them as gods, if they chanced to meet them, they did not flee but fell down and worshipped them and let themselves be killed and eaten without escaping or making any defence at all. They also worshipped other animals for their cunning; such as the fox and monkeys. They worshipped the dog for its faithfulness and nobility, the wild cat for its quickness, and the bird they call *cuntur* for its size; and some natives worshipped eagles, because they boast of descending from them and also from the *cuntur*. Other peoples adored hawks for their quickness and ability in winning their food. They adored the owl for the beauty of its eyes and head; the bat for the keenness of its sight—it caused them much wonder that it could see at night. They also adored many other birds according to their whims. They adored great snakes for their monstrous size and fierceness (some of those in the Antis are about twenty-five or thirty feet long and as thick round as a man's thigh). They also considered other smaller snakes—where there were none so big as in the Antis—to be gods, and they adored lizards, toads, and frogs. In a word, there was no beast too vile and filthy for them to worship as a god, merely in order to differ from one another in their choice of gods, without adoring any real god or being able to expect any benefit from them. They were very simple in everything, like sheep without a shepherd. But we need not be surprised that such unlettered and untaught people should have fallen into these follies, for it is well known that the Greeks and Romans, who prided themselves so greatly on their learning, had thirty thousand gods when their empire was at its height.

CHAPTER X

The great variety of other gods they had.

THERE WERE many other Indians of various nations in this first period who chose their gods with rather more discrimination than these. They worshipped certain objects that were beneficial, such as streaming fountains and great rivers, which they argued gave them water to irrigate their crops.

Others adored the earth and called it "mother," because it gave them its fruits. Others the air they breathed, saying that men lived by it; others fire, because it warmed them and they cooked their food with it. Others worshipped a ram, because of the great flocks reared in their region; others the great chain of the Sierra Nevada, because of its height and wonderful grandeur and because many rivers used for irrigation flow from it; others maize or *sara*, as they call it, because it was their usual bread; others other cereals or legumes, according to what grew most abundantly in their provinces.

The coastal Indians, in addition to an infinity of other gods they had, even including those already mentioned, generally worshipped the sea, which they called *Mamacocha*, or "Mother Sea," implying that it was like a mother to them in sustaining them with its fish. They also worshipped the whale on account of its monstrous greatness. Besides these cults, which were common to the whole coast, various provinces and regions worshipped the fish most commonly caught there, holding that the first fish that was in the upper world (their word for heaven) was the origin of all other fish of the kind they ate and that it took care to send them plenty of its children to sustain their tribe. Thus in some provinces they worshipped the sardine, which they killed in greater quantity than any other fish, in others the skate, in others the dogfish, in others the goldfish for its beauty, in others the crab and other shellfish for lack of anything better in their waters or because they could not catch or kill anything else. In short, they worshipped and considered gods any fish that was more beneficial to them than the rest. So they had for gods not only the four elements, each separately, but also the compounds and forms of them, however vile and squalid. Other tribes, such as the Chirihuanas and

the people of Cape Passau (that is, the southernmost and northernmost provinces of Peru) felt no inclination to worship anything, high or low, either from interest or fear, but lived and still live exactly like beasts, because the doctrine and teaching of the Inca kings did not reach them.

CHAPTER XI

The kinds of sacrifices they made.

THE CRUELTY and barbarity of the sacrifices of that ancient idolatry were of a piece with the vileness and crudity of its gods. For in addition to ordinary things such as animals and the fruits of the earth, they sacrificed men and women of all ages taken captive in the wars they waged on one another. Among some tribes their inhuman cruelty exceeded that of wild beasts. Not satisfied with sacrificing their captured foes, in case of need they offered up their own children. They performed these sacrifices of men and women, lads and children by opening their breasts while they were still alive and plucking out their hearts and lungs. The idol that had bidden the sacrifice was then sprinkled with still-warm blood, after which the same heart and lungs were examined for omens to show if the sacrifice had been acceptable or not. In either case the heart and lungs were burnt as an offering before the idol until they were consumed, and the victim of the sacrifice was eaten with the greatest pleasure and relish, and not the less merrymaking and rejoicing, even though it might have been their own child.

Padre Blas Valera, as appears from many parts of his torn papers, had the same design as we have in much of what he wrote. He divided the periods, ages, and provinces so as to show clearly the customs of each tribe. Thus in one of his mutilated notebooks he writes as follows, using the present tense, for the people he speaks of still practice these inhumanities:

Those who live in the Antis eat human flesh: they are fiercer than tigers, have neither god nor law, nor know what virtue is. They have no idols nor likenesses of them. They worship the Devil when he represents himself in the form of some animal or serpent and speaks to them. If they make a prisoner in war or

being flattened out like stairs in a staircase, and all the cultivable and irrigable land being put to use. If there were rocky places, the rocks were removed and replaced by earth brought from elsewhere to form the terraces, so that the space should not be wasted. The first platforms were large, according to the configuration of the place: they might be one or two or three hundred measures¹ broad and long. The second were smaller and they diminished progressively as they were higher up, until the last might contain only two or three rows of maize plants. This shows how industrious the Incas were in extending the area which could be planted with maize. A water channel was commonly brought fifteen or twenty leagues to water a few measures of soil, so that it should not be wasted.

Having thus extended the cultivable land, each settlement in each province measured all the land assigned to it and divided it into three parts, one for the Sun, one for the king, and one for the inhabitants. In the division care was taken that the inhabitants should have enough to sow for themselves, and rather too much than too little. When the population of a town or province increased, part of the area assigned to the Sun or the Inca was transferred to their subjects, so that the only lands reserved by the king for himself or for the Sun were those which would otherwise have remained ownerless and untilled. The terraces were usually assigned to the Sun and the Inca, since the latter had been responsible for constructing them. In addition to the irrigated maize fields, other land without a supply of water was divided among them for dry farming and sown with crops of great importance, such as three they call *papa*, *oca*, and *añus*. This land was also divided in due proportion between the Sun, the Inca, and a third part for their subjects, but as it was waterless and of low productivity, it was sown only for a year or two and then rested while another part was sown. In this way the poor soil was kept under control, and there was always an abundance of it for use.

The maize fields were sown every year, and as they were always supplied with water and manure like gardens, they always bore fruit. With the maize they planted a seed rather like rice which they call *quinua*: it also grows in a cold climate.

¹ *fanegas de sembradura*: usually the ground needed to sow a *fanega* (1.6 bushels).

CHAPTER II

*Their system of agriculture; the festival of tilling
the land assigned to the Inca and the Sun.*

THEY ALSO had an established system in cultivating the soil. They first tilled the part assigned to the Sun and then that of the widows and orphans and those who were unable to work owing to age or ill health. The latter were regarded as the poor, and the Inca therefore bade that their land be tilled for them. In each village, or in each quarter, if it were a large village, there were men appointed exclusively to attend to the cultivation of what we shall call the poor. These men were called *llactacamayus*, "aldermen or councillors of a town." When the time came to plough, or sow, or bring in the harvest, it was their duty to go out at night and climb a sort of watch tower or beacon they had for the purpose and sound a trumpet or horn to attract attention, and then announce: "On such and such a day the lands of the disabled are to be tilled: let each attend to the task assigned him." The inhabitants of each quarter knew from traditional practice which land was assigned to them, since it was that of their relatives or nearest neighbors. Each was obliged to take his own food from his home so that the poor should not have the trouble of feeding them. They used to say that the aged, the sick, and widows and orphans had enough troubles of their own, without attending to others. If the poor had no seed, this was supplied from the storehouses, of which we shall speak later. Land belonging to soldiers on campaign was also tilled by the community, like that of the widows, orphans, and poor, for when their husbands were away on military service, wives were reckoned as widows, and received this service as being in need of charity. The children of those killed in war were very carefully brought up until they married.

After the cultivation of the land of the poor, they tilled their own, taking turn and turn about, as the saying is. They then tilled the *curaca's* land, which was always the last to be attended to in each town or province. Once in the time of Huaina Cápac, an Indian *regidor* in a village of the Chachapoyas was hanged for having the land belong to the *curaca*, who was a relative of his, tilled before that of a widow: this was because he had broken the order established by the Inca for tilling the soil, and the

gallows were erected on the *curaca's* own land. The Inca ordered that his subjects' land should be given priority over his own, because it was said that prosperity of the subjects redounded to the king's service: if they were poor and needy, they would be of little use in peace or war.

The last land to be cultivated was that assigned to the king. It was tilled communally. All the Indians went out together to the fields of the Inca and of the Sun with great rejoicing and satisfaction. They wore the clothes and adornments they kept for their greatest festivities, covered with gold and silver plates and with feather headdresses. As they ploughed (which was the work that gave them most pleasure) they sang many songs composed in praise of the Incas: their labor thus became a matter for festivity and joy because it was performed in the service of their god and their kings.

Inside the city of Cuzco, on the skirts of the hill where the fortress is, there used to be a large terrace of many *fanegas* of soil: it may still be there today unless it has been built over. It is called Collcampata. The quarter in which it is takes its name from the name of the terrace, which was the special and chief jewel of the Sun, for it was the first to be dedicated by the Incas to him in the whole empire. This terrace was tilled and cared for by those of the royal blood, and none but Incas and Pallas could work in it. The work was done amidst the greatest celebrations, especially at ploughing time, when the Incas came dressed in all their insignia and finery. The songs they recited in praise of the Sun and their kings were all based on the meaning of the word *bailli*, which means triumph over the soil, which they ploughed and disembowelled so that it should give fruit. The songs included elegant phrases by noble lovers and brave soldiers on the subject of their triumph over the earth they were ploughing. The refrain of each verse was the word "*bailli*," repeated as often as was necessary to mark the beats of a certain rhythm, corresponding to the movements made by the Indians in raising their implements and dropping them, the more easily to break the soil.

As a plough they use a stick two yards long: its front is flat and its back rounded, and it is about four fingers thick. It has a point to pierce the ground and, half a vara above it, a footrest made of two sticks tightly lashed to the main shaft. On this the Indian sets his foot and forcibly drives the plough in up to the footrest. They work in bands of seven or eight, more or less, according to family or neighborhood groups. By all lowering their ploughs at once they can raise clods of earth so large that anyone who has not seen it could hardly credit it. It is remarkable to see them perform such a considerable task with such weak implements, and

they work with great speed and ease and never lose the rhythm of the song. The women work opposite the men and help to lift the clods with their hands, turning the grass roots upwards so that they dry and die, and the harrowing requires less effort. They also join with their husbands in the singing, especially in the *bailli* chorus.

The choirmaster of the cathedral in Cuzco, taking a liking to the Indian songs and music, composed a part-song in the year '51 or '52 for the feast of Corpus Christi, in perfect imitation of the Inca singing. Eight mestizo boys, schoolfellows of mine, appeared in Indian dress, each with a plough in his hand, and acted the song and *bailli* of the Indians in the procession, the whole choir joining in the chorus. It greatly pleased the Spaniards, and the Indians were delighted to see the Spaniards solemnize the festivity of our God, whom they call Pachacámac (or "him who gives life to the universe"), with their own songs and dances.

I have mentioned the special festivity of the Incas when the terrace dedicated to the Sun was harrowed since I saw it done two or three times as a child, and it will give an idea of the festivities that took place throughout Peru when the land of the Sun and of the Inca was hoed. However, what I saw was said by the Indians to be only a shadow of what used to be done in the days of the Incas.

CHAPTER III

The quantity of soil given to each Indian, and how it was manured.

EACH Indian was given a *tupu*, which is a *fanega*, of land for growing maize: however, this is a *fanega* and a half in Spain. *Tupu* is also applied to a league's distance, and as a verb it means "to measure." Any measure of water, wine, or other liquid is called *tupu*, and so are the long pins the women use to fasten their garments with. A measure of seed has another name, *poccha*, meaning "*fanega*."

A *tupu* of land was enough to maintain a peasant and his wife without family. As soon as they had children, each boy was given a *tupu* and each girl half a *tupu*. When the male children married, the father gave them the measure of land he had received for their support, and if he turned them out of his house, he could not keep the land.