Article XIX. — ON THE RELATIVE ANTIQUITY OF ANCIENT PERUVIAN BURIALS.

By Ad. F. Bandelier.

In his Pastoral letter of “Exhortation and Instruction against Indian Idolatry” in the Archbishopric of Lima (then embracing, not merely the Peru of to-day but also Bolivia, Ecuador, and, according to the papal Bull dated January 31, 1545, also “Castilla del Oro in the province of Tierra firme, the city of León, in the province of Nicaragua and that of Popayan”) Archbishop Don Pedro de Villagomez embodied an Edict dated November 25, 1647, commanding the “Visitors” of Indian settlements to diligently investigate: “If they (the Indians) have carried, or carry (transfer) the bodies of deceased Christian Indians to the burial places which they call Machais, where are their Malquis and (whether for that purpose) they have unearthed them from the church robbing (stealing) the said bodies of Christian Indians.” 1

The Synodal Constitutions of the Archbishopric of Lima from the Year 1636 declare: “Since we have understood that some Indians, chiefly Caciques and principals, from the Churches and parishes and from the Cemeteries where their fathers and relatives were buried disinter (in the absence of the Curates and sometimes at night—) the bodies, entombed in the said places according to the ceremonies of our Holy Mother the church and (thus) disinterred carry them to their ancient burial places in the mountains or to other remote sites;

1 Carta pastoral de Exhortacion e instruccion contra las Idolatrias de los Indios del Arzobispado de Lima. (Lima, 1649, folio 57.) "Si an llevado, ó leuan los cuerpos de los Indios difuntos christianos á las sepulturas, que llaman Machais, donde estan sus Malquis, y para ello los an desenterrado de la Iglesia hurtando los dichos cuerpos de los Indios christianos."—J. J. von Tschudi, Die Kechua Sprache, Wörterbuch (Vienna, 1853, page 366.) Malqui "mit diesem Namen werden gewisse menschliche Mumien, Skelette oder auch bloße Knochen bezeichnet, denen die alten Peruaner göttliche Verehrung zollten. In einigen Gegenden hiess überhaupt jeder Cadaver Mallki."—F: Diego de Torres Rubio, Arte, y Vocabulario de la Lengua Quichua (Lima edition of 1754, folio 75.) has: "cuerpo muerto.—Aya," and the term "Malqui" is not in his vocabulary. But Machay (fol. 119.) is given as "cueva para dormir."—Tschudi, Wörterbuch (p. 360) has for "Machay" “das Grab.” — The terms are explained in Exhortacion e instruccion (fol. 39.): "Después de estas Huacas de piedra, la mayor veneracion, y adoracion es la de sus Malquis, que en los llanos llaman Munaos, que son los huesos, ó cuerpos de sus progenitores gentiles, que ellos dicen, que son los hijos de las Huacas. Los quales tienen en los campos en lugares muy apartados, en los Machais, que son sus sepulturas antiguas." — Both words are Quichua, although I could not, now, state to which one of the mountain dialects they may belong.
and since the aforesaid Vicars and Curates should take care that such abuses and offenses be not committed but punished, We Ordain that the said Vicars and Curates take particular pains in that the said excesses be remedied through preaching, and that they punish those who commit them."

The "Exhortation and Instruction" contains the further statement:

"But the chief abuse committed in this is that of disinterring and taking away the dead from the church and carrying them to the Machais or burial places which they have in the fields of their ancestors, and (which) in some parts they call Zamay signifying sepulchre of rest, and (the act of) dying they call Zamárcan, (or) Requievit. And when asked why they do it they say, that it is Cuyaspa, for the love they have (to them) for they say, that the dead are with much pain in church, loaded with earth, while in the fields, being in the open air and not buried, they are more at rest.

"It should be noted (as important) that in no manner they be allowed to bury in vaults." ²

These decrees of the ecclesiastic authorities establish the fact that, as late as one-hundred and sixteen years after the first landing of Spaniards on the Peruvian coast and one-hundred and eleven years after the foundation of the city of Lima, not only did the indians still bury their dead according to primitive customs as often as possible, but took out those whom they had been obliged to inhume after christian rites, to rebury them at such places and with such ceremonies as their original creed and beliefs taught them to perform.

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² Constituciones Synodales del Arceobispado de los Reyes en el Pivv. (Lima, 1722, the Concile was held under the auspices of Archbishop Fernando Arias de Vgarte, — Título de Sepulturas, Cap. IV, pag: 20:): "Para que los Curas, y Vicarios pongan mucho cuidado en que los Indios no desentierran de las Iglesias los cuerpos de sus difuntos, para llevarlos á sus Malquis, y sepulturas antiguas."

³ Exortacion (folio 47): "Pero el mayor abuso que en esto ay es el desenterrar, y sacar los muertos de las Iglesias, y llevarlos á los Machais, que son las sepulturas que tienen en los campos de sus antepasados, y en algunas partes llaman Zamay, que quiere decir sepulcro del descanso, y al mismo morir llaman Zamárcan, requeuitt. Y pregunta-dos porque lo hacen? dicen, que en Cuyaspa, por el amor que les tienen, porque dicen, que los muertos están en la Iglesia con mucha pena apretados có tierra, y que en el capo, como están en el ayre, y no en terrados, están có mas descanso. A se de adüentar (como cosa que importa) que de ninguna manera se consienta que se entierren en bouedas. The term "bóveda," or vault, is to-day applied on the coast to subterraneous indian sepultures. But it must not be taken literally, for the underground chambers are not arched. They are merely cells, or rooms, below the surface in the sand, covered sometimes with reeds, supported by sticks or rough timber in general, and the sides protected against caving-in either by a lining of Adobe or a thin stone-wall. Zamani (also written Çamani) means "rest." Torres Rubio, Ar Process and Vocabulary, to die is: Huanuni (f. 134.)—The terms are not the same in every Quichua speaking community.
The second provincial council of Lima (March 2d to December 8th, 1567) had already issued strict orders against this custom, and the first Archbishop of Lima, Don Fray Gerónimo de Loayza (1548 to 1575) instructed the Licentiate Pedro Mexia as follows: "Item:—You shall inform Yourself, of the Curates, whether they (the indians) have omitted to show the priests any corpse of their ancestors and (whether they) have some that were christians from the churches, and these bodies, and the bodies of the infidels that may come to light, you will cause to be buried on the sites destined (reserved) for infidels. And in case it were (the body of) a principal, You will take proper care that they may not take it up again, and You will also cause their sepulchres which You may find they worship from the time of their infidelity, to be sufficiently torn asunder, so that the memory (of) and respect for them be lost." 

In compliance with these ordinances (confirmed by the third Concile in 1583), a diligent search for primitive rites and customs had been instituted all over Peru. It revealed an astounding survival of ancient practices of all kinds, and led to the discovery of a large number of ceremonial objects. The Jesuits were chiefly entrusted with the task, and the names of Father Pablo Josef Arriaga, Father Luis Terhuel, F: Pablo de Prado, and others remain forever identified with the "Extirpation of Idolatry in Peru."

In this crusade many objects of ancient worship were destroyed. But we must not forget that the original ceremonials of the indians entailed performances of the most reprehensible nature, including human sacrifice, and that the preservation of such remains for study was not, at that time,
thought of anywhere. Besides, as one of the foremost bibliographers and biographers of America, Don Joaquin Garcia Ycazbalceta of Mexico, justly observed: "Those who are simple enough to claim, like Clavigero, that such figúres (Fetiches or Idols) might have been preserved in a Museum, do not understand the times. Neither do they wish to identify themselves with them for the sake of forming an opinion. What would the indians have thought, at seeing the missionaries preserve these idols with every care, placing them in halls and appointing persons for their attendance? Doubtless they would have interpreted such marks of attention as a kind of worship." The "Extirpation of Idolatry in Perú" has brought about results compensating for this loss in material, and without which that material alone would only have been (as it largely is at present unless accompanied by laborious documentary investigations) an accumulation of subjects for ingenious conjecture. The Jesuits who persecuted Idolatry in Peru have left circumstantial descriptions of most of the objects destroyed, and, what is more important, of how they were used and for what purpose. To them we owe most of our knowledge about creed and worship of the Peruvian natives and a vast amount of information, which eyewitnesses of the conquest could not secure.

Already in the middle of the sixteenth century the Augustin monks gathered valuable data in one or two districts of Peru. They preceeded the Jesuits in the collecting and destroying of Idols and fetiches, and were careful to record traditions. Still, disinterment and reburial after ancient customs is not mentioned in the Report on rites of the province of Huamachuco.

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1 Don Fray Juan de Zumárraga primer Obispo y Arzobispo de Mexico. (Mexico, 1881, page 347.) Los que tienen la candidez de pretender como Clavigero, que tales figuras se hubieran conservado en un Museo, no comprenden la época, ni quieren trasladarse á ella para juzgarla? Que habrían pensado los indios, si vieran que los misioneros conservaban con todo cuidado aquellos ídolos, los colocaban en salas, y destinaban personas á su custodia? De seguro que habrían tomado por especie de culto esas muestras de estimacion."

2 Several of the participants in the conquest have left valuable descriptions of customs of the indians at the time of their first contact with the Spaniards. But they had not leisure to penetrate deeply into matters that, to the indian, are most sacred, and which, therefore, he keeps most secret.

3 Relacion de la Religión y Ritos del Perú, hecha por los primeros Religiosos Agustinos que allí pasaron para la conversión de los Naturales. (In Documentos indígenas de Indias, Volume III.) The date of this document is uncertain, but it cannot be posterior to 1561. It is translated into French and was published by Ternaux-Compans in his
Aside from the work of Arriaga and of what Father Terhuel recorded in his (as yet but imperfectly known) MSS., entitled Contra Idolatriam, the Litterae Annuae of the Jesuits convey important information. The Annuae Litterae Anni 1613 describes a “Mission” among the indians of central Peru, in the course of which was discovered that “one of their principal Gods were the bodies of their deceased ancestors which they disinterred from the churches on All Souls’ day and other days, in the absence of the Father their Curate, with great secrecy, and carried them to the clefts and heights where they placed them sitting and made great festivals for three days and nights without sleep (of which they were very particular) and among other ceremonies there were dances with much drunkenness, and finally they would depart, leaving them food and drink.”

The Report on the Missions of the Huachos and Yauyos from the same year is still more explicit. The eighth commandment which the medicine-men are said to have given the indians was: “That they should bury their dead in the

Recueil de documents et Mémoires originaux sur l'Histoire des possessions espagnoles dans l'Amérique. (1840.) Work in Huamachuco began in 1555 about; Relacion (page 11.). The missionaries sent there and who secured most of the information conveyed by the document above, were Fray Juan de San Pedro and Fray Juan del Canto.

"Annuae Litterae Anni 1613 Collegii Guamangani. (MSS. from the National Library of Lima.) “pero vno de sus mas principales diasos eran los cuerpos muertos de sus antepasados de los que se desentieran de las Iglesias el dia de todos Santos y otros dias en ausencia del Pá cura, con gran secreto y los llebaban á las quebradas y cerros donde los ponian sentados y allí hasian grandes fiestas por tres dias con sus noches, sin dormir (Pá lo qual hasian gran dilüg) y entre otras fiestas una bailie y dansas con muchas vorracheras y al fin se despedian dellos dezándolos de comer y beber.” — The Jesuit College of Guamanga was founded after 1586.

"Misiones de las Provincias de los Huachos y Yauyos (MSS. of the Nat. Library of Lima, fol. 2.) “El 8° qe entiennent á sus difuntos en los sepulcros de sus antepasados que era en los cerros principalmente los curis de Santiago y qe los Adoren y hagan los mismos sacrificios qe á los huacos, ofreciendoles coca sauco quepo mulla y paria y qe cada ano les muden las ropas qe era el dia de los finados y este dia les llenen comida y de beber, y qe saquen y desentiernen de las iglesias los cuerpos de los difuntos y qe sino pudieren en la yglesia les hagan las ceremonias posibles.” It may not be devoid of interest to state, as far as possible, what the ceremonial objects above enumerated were. In this respect the Exortacion furnishes data, (folio 45.)

Coca: the leaves, in general use among mountain indians, especially for witchcraft. I do not translate the spanish text.

Sauco: Parra or Saucu is a ball they make of cornmeal and keep it for sacrifices. Such balls of meal are used to-day among the Aymarã. Coca leaves, in the shape of a trefoil, are put inside of the paste.”


Mulla. — Should be Mullu (fol. 45). “Is a conch-shell of the sea, thick, and all have pieces of these shells; also they make beads out of this Mullu and put them on the Huacas, and of these beads they also use in their confessions.” The Mullu is in general use to-day among the Aymarã indians. Only, as they are far from the ocean, white stones replace the shells. Alabaster is the material mostly employed for the confection of the various images that serve for their innumerable sorceries.

Paria. — Powder of a red color, like vermillion, which they bring from the mines of Guancaueltica, which is the metal from which they draw the quicksilver, although it rather resembles minium.” Ground cinaber ore.
sepalchres of their ancestors which are in the hills (mountains or cliffs), especially the Curis of Santiago, and should worship them making the same sacrifices as to the huacas, offering them Coca, Sanco, Quepo, Mulla, and Paria, and that each year they should put new clothing on them, on All Souls' day, on which day they should fetch them food and drink. And that they should unbury and remove from the churches the bodies of their dead, and in case this were impracticable, perform in church the ceremonies to them that would be possible."

The fact of idolatrous ceremonies being performed during mass is well established.¹

Father Pablo del Prado and the lay-brother, Gonzalo Ruiz, then went "To search for and disinter the bodies of the dead that had been taken from the church to tall and abrupt heights and clefts which it was barely possible to reach by crawling on all fours, and we found an infinite number of them in some caves, all squatting and dressed and with much food, the walls and entrances sprinkled with the blood of animals. We took out all, selecting some thirty of those that had been governors, curacas, and prominent people. Of the others we made a great conflagration, burning them all. The 30, we had brought to the village, and in the center of the square, gathering all the people, we had them placed on striped sheep (Llamas) called moromoros, which is looked upon as the worst affront, and to the sound of trumpets and the voice of the public crier, who declared the reason why they were taken from the church and buried in the heights we had them burnt, and I preached to them afterwards against these evil rites and ceremonies. . . ."

"In this manner we discovered in the other villages many dead bodies and had them all burnt, as the greater part of them had, at the hour of death, asked to be removed from church. Others had asked to be carried to the place of burials, when they felt their end approach, in order to die there and gain indulgences and so, in various parts, we burnt more than four hundred bodies of these defunct people."²

¹ The documents above quoted relate several cases. At this day the indians of Bolivia still attempt to perform primitive rites in church.
² Misiones de las Provincias de las Huachos y Yauco (MSS: F. 3): "Luego fuimos a buscar y desenterrar los cuerpos de los difuntos que auian sacado de la iglesia á vnos
To the testimony of ecclesiastic authorities and of the Jesuits, I add that of a well-known chronicler of the Augustines in Peru, Fray Antonio de la Calancha, born in Bolivia, 1584, and who lived in those countries to his death in 1654. He says:

"In the first years of their conversion they disinterred the deceased from the churches and cemeteries, to bury them in their Huacas, or on heights or levels, or in their own dwellings, and then drink, dance and sing, relatives and connections gathering, and they put, as before, gold and silver in their mouths, and new clothes under the shroud, that it might serve them in the other life. This superstition the Concile at Lima of the year 1567 ordered to eradicate in Chapter 103, and at this day there are still vestiges of the evil and they are caught in the (act of) body-snatching. . . ."

"Even after they had been baptized they offered to their dead every year or every month jugs of chicha and eatables, singing dismal tunes, and this they are very particular to do on AllSouls’ day, the commemorative day of the Faithful dead."

altos cerros empinados y vocas quebradas que apenas se podia ir á ellas arrastrando y gateando y hallamos vna infinidad de ellos en vnas cuebas todos sentados en cucillias con sus vestidos y mucha comida rociadas las paredes y portadas de sangre de animales sacamos los todos escojiendo como 30 de los que auian sido gobernadores curacas y gente principal hicimos vna grande candelada de todos los demas y los quemamos alis mismo. Los 30 hizimos llevar al pueblo y en medio de la plaça auindo comocuado toda la gente los hisimos poner encima de vnos carneros listados que llaman moromoros y son de muy afrenta y con trompeta y voz de pregonero que declaraua la causa porque se auían mandado sacar de la iglesia y enterrar en los cerros en medio de la plaça los hizimos quemar y luego luego les predique contra este mal rito y ceremonia con que quedaron todos muy auergongados corridos y creo muy enmendados de hacer tal maldad. . . ."

Moromoro is a name applied to Llamas of more than one color, spotted, striped, or speckled. Murumuru signifies: "many colored." Torres Rubio, Arte etc. (fol. 92.)

"Aunque pueden llevar una persona, nunca sirvieron de cavalleria á los indios. . . . Solo sirven hoy para este menester, quando los Corregidores y Justicias mandan azotar ó sacar á la verguenza algun indio, que para ellos es muy grande afrenta, y que la sienten mas que los Azotes, el sacarlos caballeros en un Carnero destos . . . mas si es Moromoro, como ellos llaman, que es lo mismo que manchado de colores;"

1. *Coronica Moralizada del orden de San Agustin en el Peru.* (1638, Volume I, Lib. II, Cap. XII, page 376.) "En los primeros años de su conversión desenterravan los difuntos de las iglesias 6 cementerios, para enterrar los en sus quacas, ó cerros é llanadas ó en su mesma casa i; entoces bevé, haylía i cistá estádose sus deudos i allegados, i les ponian como antes oro i plata en la boca, y ropa nueva tras la mortaja, para que les sirva en la otra vida. Esta supersticion mandó arrancar el Còcilio segundo Limense del año de 1567 en el capítulo 103, i asta oy ay reliquias deste daño, i les coyen con el urto." The statement that they put new cloth under the mortuary dress accounts for the presence, in most so-called "Mummy-bundles," of folded pieces of cloth that appear new, or at least unused. But the fact that they dressed the bodies anew is also established.

2. *(Ibidem, page 377.)* "A sus difuntos, aun despues de bautizados les ofrecen ó cada año ó cada mes cantaros de chicha i comidas cátando tonadas lametosas, i asi son tan puntuales en azer el todos Sàtos en el dia de la còmemoracion de los fieles difuntos."
Reburial after primitive rites was, as already stated, accompanied by other rites of a primitive character. Pedro de Cieza states that on the Peruvian coast, "in times past they used to open the sepulchres and renew the cloth and food they had placed there." ¹

A writer from the seventeenth century, the Jesuit Cobo, asserts:

"They celebrated their anniversaries by going at certain times to the sepulchres, and, opening them, renewed the cloth and food they had placed in them and offered some sacrifices." ²

"This custom has been continued to this day, and only a few years ago I saw a corpse which they had taken away from certain idolaters, so well prepared and arranged, that he seemed to be alive; for the face was so full and with such good color and skin that he did not seem to be dead, although he had died very many years previous." ³

Not only was the ancient mode of burial extensively practiced until more than a hundred years after the first arrival of the Spaniards, but the cloth with which all the corpses (ancient and modern) were covered, was periodically renewed, as late as the middle of the seventeenth century. The fact, that food and drink also were replaced from time to time implies, that the vessels found along with the bodies are no longer those originally buried with them.

While the documentary evidence above presented covers, in fact, the whole of the former viceroyalty of Peru, it may not be superfluous to add some further testimony from what is now the Republic of Bolivia.

Calancha asserts, that while the Indians who inhabited the

¹ Primera Parte de la Crónica del Peru (In Volume I of the Historiadores de Indias by Enrique de Veitia, Cap: LXIII, page 416). "Y usaron en los tiempos pasados de abrir las sepulturas y renovar la ropa y comida que en ellas habían puesto."
² Father Bernabé Cobo, S. I.—terminated his Historia del Nuevo Mundo in 1653. He came to Lima from Spain in 1599, remaining in South America until 1630, when the order sent him to Mexico, whence he returned to Peru twenty years later. Enrique Torres Saldamando, Los antiguos Jesuítas del Peru, (Lima 1885, pp. 99-100. I quote from the Historia, (Vol. IV, page 338): "Celebraban sus aniversarios acudiendo á ciertos tiempos á las sepulturas, y abriendolas, renovaban la ropa y comida que en ellas habían puesto, y ofrecían algunos sacrificios.
³ Cobo, Historia del Nuevo Mundo (Vol. III, page 342). "Allegábasi así esto, que tenían por opinion (y es la segunda razón porque los veneraban) que con estar conservados y respetados se multiplicaba la generación; y así, se había continuado esta costumbre hasta nuestro tiempo, y bien pocas años há que vi yo un cuerpo destos que
Island of Titicaca abandoned that island after the first appearance of the Spaniards, they still continued, during the sixteenth century and part of the seventeenth, to practice their ancient rites on it from time to time in secret.\(^1\) Elsewhere I have called attention to this, stating that many of the burials there are not pre-conquistorial. This applies, naturally, not merely to corpses, but to all the objects in the graves. While investigating the ancient dwellings called Chullpas in northern central Bolivia, we were repeatedly informed of very recent burials in them, to which the Indians resorted in order to avoid exorbitant (and illegal) burial charges. Cave burials on the eastern slope of the Bolivian Cordillera, around Pelechuco and Charassani for instance, in fact, any burial in caves or cliffs in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador (also probably in Chile), appears chronologically doubtful in the face of the documentary evidence presented. It becomes difficult, hereafter, to distinguish pre-Columbian sepultures in those countries from post-Columbian. This does not affect the manner of burial, since it was always performed according to primitive custom, but its relative Antiquity. Art and industry of the Indians did not change at once upon contact with Europeans. Their textiles and, especially, the Pottery, was but slowly and gradually modified, and many specimens from graves (on the coast, for instance) may be, while after primitive types, still of comparatively recent date. It will demand careful scrutiny in many cases, assisted by documentary research, to ascertain if a burial is pre-Columbian or not. The deformation of skulls, common formerly in the Highlands of Peru and Bolivia, and (although different) also on the coast, is absolutely no criterion. The Ordinances of the Viceroy Don Francisco de Toledo,

\(^1\) *Coronica moralizada* (Vol. II, folio 31.) "En las Islas Ñ con el rostro tan lleno, con tan buen color y tez, que nó parecia estar muerto, con haber muchos años que lo estaba." Even in the case of Mummies of undoubted pre-Columbian date, the cloth found on and along with them (especially the latter) is probably more recent than the original burial.
framed between 1572 and 1575, embody a stringent prohibition of skull-flattening. Ordiance VIII, Tit. IX, Lib. II, directs:

"Item, I command, that no Indian or Indian woman squeeze the heads of newly born infants, as they are wont to do in order to make them longer, since from it there has resulted and results, great damage to them; and ecclesiastic Judges, Alcaldes and Caciques, shall take particular care that they do not do it any more." 1 This establishes that artificial deformation of skulls was extensively practiced as late as the close of the sixteenth century, and there is every likelihood that it was continued in the first half of the seventeenth; hence that many deformed skulls from so-called ancient graves date from years after the beginning of Spanish colonization, and are no evidence of pre-Columbian burial.

1 Tomo primero de las Ordenanzas del Perú. (1752, Lib. II, Tit. IX, folio 146.) "Iten, mando, que ningun Indio, ni India apriete las cabezas de las criaturas recien nacidas, como lo suelen hacer para hazerlas mas largas, porque de averlo hecho se les a recrecido, y recree daño, y vienen á morir dellos; y deste tengan gran cuidado las Justicias Sacerdotes, y Alcaldes, y Caziques en que no le haga."