

The Gods and an Ancient Andean Calendrical System

Within the “Bolivia 2020” Pre-Expedition developed in February 2020 by the *Akakor Geographical Exploring* team under the direction of Lorenzo Epis, the imposing salar of Uyuni and surrounding areas was covered, in the Department of Potosí, in Bolivia, elaborating the preliminary study of some archaeological sites.

The present article addresses one of these fascinating places.

The Salar of Uyuni

The Salar of Uyuni in the Andean highlands is located around 3650 meters above sea level. It is the largest continuous salt desert and in height of the globe, with a surface that includes 10,582 km².

In the past, the Salar of Uyuni salt was known as the *Salar of Tunupa*. This toponymy is very significant because to the south of the Department of Oruro, in the Municipality of Salinas de Garci Mendoza and bordering precisely with the Salar of Uyuni, the volcano of Tunupa (5432 masl) is located, which is the residence and altar of the deity of Thunder and the Lightning, Tunupa.

Other phonemes of Tunupa are *Tuapaca* or *Taguapaca*. Its Castilianization is *Tarapacá*. These are evocations of **Taupácac Ticci Viracocha**, the *God of the Staffs*.

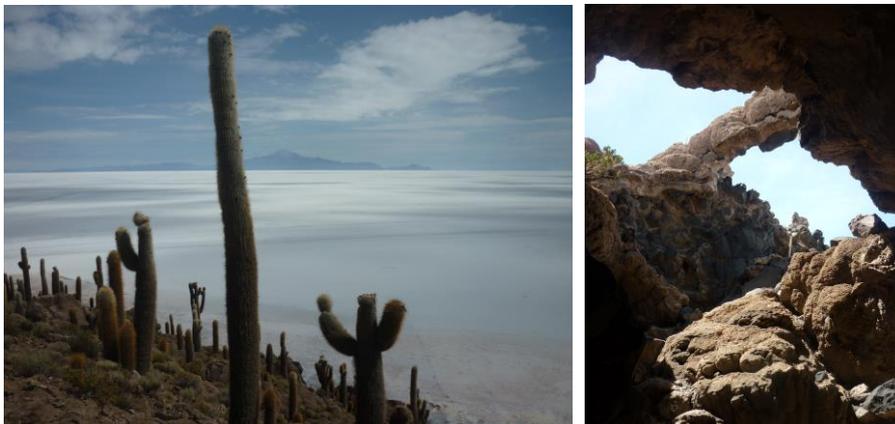
Now, from a geological perspective, around 40,000 years ago this area sheltered Lake Minchinnota and, later, 11,000 years ago, Lake Tauca. It is during this period that a humid climatic phase allowed these lakes to reach a height of around 100 m above the current level. However, a dry and warm period generated a significant reduction in the surface and volume of these lakes, consequently forming the salars of Uyuni and Coipasa and the current lagoons.

The Poopó and Uru-Uru lakes are also residues of these large lakes.

The vision of the Uyuni salt flat is simply impressive.

In the central part of the salar the Island of Incahuasi –the *Casa del Inca* or “House of the Inca” in Quechua– is located, with an area of 0.2434 km², home to numerous giant cactuses (*Echinopsis atacamensis*) that even reach 10 m in height.

The highest point of Incahuasi is 3822 masl.



Left: View of the Salar of Uyuni salt from the Island of Incahuasi. *Right:* A natural bridge in Incahuasi (Photographs by Rafael Videla Eissmann, 2020).

Silent Vestiges

In the Tanilvinto area, located in the geographical region of the Salar of Uyuni there are vestiges in a grotto of the remote culture of the Chullpas whose closest descendants today are the Chipayas.

The vestiges correspond to “mummies” –they are four individuals: Three adults and one infant– and some magical-religious objects.

The “mummies” are not such but correspond to skeletons.

The trousseau of these individuals is minimal: It is limited to the first two “mummies” and consists of two vessels in each.

In the grotto, originally there were two adults and the infant –the first from left to right depending on the direction of entry–, while the third “mummy” was about 200 m “to the right”, outside the grotto.

These “mummies”, revealingly, have elongated skulls –commonly called “deformed skulls”–, standing out, in this sense, the female that shelters the infant next to herself.

It is worth mentioning that the contemporary rituality of the inhabitants of the area has meant the deposit in the grotto of propitiatory vessels –with offerings such as coca leaves (*Erythroxylum coca*), cigarettes and alcohol– along with *Aguayos* –textiles with Andean ritual symbolism–.

Likewise, the ancestral *Ko’a* rite –in honor of the earth goddess, *Pachamama*–, a kind of propitiatory offering/sacrifice, is celebrated on August 1.



The vestiges. a. Overview of the grotto where the “mummies” are located. *b, c, d.* Vases, plates and *Aguayos* that accompany the “mummies” (Photographs by Rafael Videla Eissmann, 2020).

A fundamental element of ancestral rituality and its projection in the contemporary community is the preservation of an **astronomical calendrical system of sowing and harvesting**, an object that was kept by Mrs. Eleuteria Quispe Barco and inherited by her descendants. Unfortunately, the origin of this calendrical system has been lost and its function and the reason for its peculiar design are also unknown: It is a spiral symbol that has 316 pieces carved from bones and ceramics –some of which were detached and they were replaced by ceramic or glass fragments of European and colonial origin–.

The calendrical system was made of fired clay and has a diameter of 54.5 cm. Its thickness is 7.5 cm.

The fragmentary information that we have known was communicated to us by Mr. Iván Quispe –grandson of Mrs. Quispe Barco, who died in 2013–.

Mr. Quispe himself has stated the existence of other “mummies” in the surrounding mountains –these are ancient sacred mountains–. In addition, there are some petroglyphs and “small hands” stamped in the area.

Near this site there is another grotto called the *Cueva del Infierno* (“Grotto of Hell”) –a beautiful and surprising coral formation– inhabited by “spirits” and by the “Devil” as the *grandparents* –*los abuelos*– of the area expressed due to the “underground noises” that were heard inside.

The Ancestors

Who were the individuals with elongated skulls that today rest in the grotto? What culture do they belong to? What is their age? Where did they come from? What were the characteristics of their society? What were their cosmogonic, religious, and political views? What was their language? Was there some kind of relationship with the indigenous populations (brachycephalic)? What was their destiny?

The questions, actually, are many.

For now it is only possible to verify the existence of this extraordinary site and an approximation to the remains that are found there, especially the “mummies” of long skulls¹. In this respect, in relation to the nature of these individuals, an approximation to that remote past is granted by the manifestations of art.

Art as a source of history.

To this regard, it can be seen that many of the representations of the **Hówen** or “spirits” that descended from the stars in the initiatory tradition of the *Háin* of the Selk’nam of Tierra del Fuego, present conical headdresses. Something similar occurs in the Mesoamerican cultures with the **Kukulkanes** –the “Mighty Ones of Heaven”–, of **Quetzalcóatl** or the “Feathered Serpent” –the god of Venus–, as well as the four **B’ah kab**, those who “hold the pillars of the heaven” –all of them arrived from the sky–.

Likewise, this characteristic is observed in Olmec, Colima, Chupicuaro, Jama-Coaque sculptural representations and also in some magical-religious representations of the Arikara-Tanish, Hopis and Tlingit –among others–.

¹ On the origin of man in America and the irradiation of civilization from America, see the fundamental work of the scholar from La Paz, Emeterio Villamil de Rada, *La lengua de Adán y el hombre de Tiaguanaco* (“The Language of Adam and the Man from Tiahuanaco”, 1888).

The phenomenon is certainly not exclusive to the Americas as the German-Scandinavian folklore also has references to celestial beings such as **Wotan** (Odin), **Týr** (Tiwaz) and **Thor** (Þunraz). Meanwhile, Egyptian myths refer to **Horus**, **Nut**, and **Hathor** as *deities of heaven*. The Indus Valley civilization accounts for **Dyaus Pita**, **Indra**, and **Aditi**.

Undoubtedly, the list of Heaven Gods worldwide is extensive. Now, suggestive enough in all the mentioned cultures is the fact that the representation of the *gods* has a common factor: They are anthropomorphic figures with the particular characteristic of a conical headdress, bonnet or cap. Why? What was its meaning? How to explain and understand the undeniable similarity in all these cultures and civilizations that did not have contact with each other? This is when the information from a Mesoamerican source that was able to evade the fire of the implacable Inquisition in Mexico provides the fundamental key to understand the meaning of this symbolic outfit: It is the *Códice Ramírez. Relación del origen de los indios que habitan en la Nueva España según sus historias* (“Codex Ramírez. A Relation of the Origin of the Indians That Live in New Spain According to Their Accounts (Ca. 1585) –known too as the «Manuscript Tovar»– which was written by the Jesuit Juan de Tovar (Ca. 1546 - Ca. 1626) –son of the conqueror Juan de Tovar and a mestizo woman, descendant of the conqueror Diego de Colio–. For these reasons, De Tovar spoke the Nahuatl, Otomi and Mazahua languages and was knowledgeable not only of the general cultural fields of the natives but also of their magical-religious and esoteric traditions.

In this way, about one of the most important Mesoamerican deities, the Kukulcán Quetzalcóatl –“Quetzalcóatl, particular god of the Chulula” who had his main temple in the Cholula pyramid –, Juan de Tovar described him with *a shield, a cap, a curved knife and the Ocelocopilli*².

The *Ocelocopilli* is a conical headdress made of jaguar skin and decorated with jewels and corresponds to a symbol of the star of Venus^{3, 4}.

In Venus inhabit the gods **Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli** and **Xólotl** –a region called *Ilhuicatl-Huitztlán* (“Place of the Path of the Sun”) –, one of the Thirteen Heavens or *Ilhuicatl Iohltlatoquiliz* of the Aztec cosmogony.

The association, thus, of the conical headdress as an emblem of the *gods of the firmament* and the elongated skulls, is decisive. And these skulls are precisely the evidence that shows the *reality* of the iconographic representations of the *gods*.



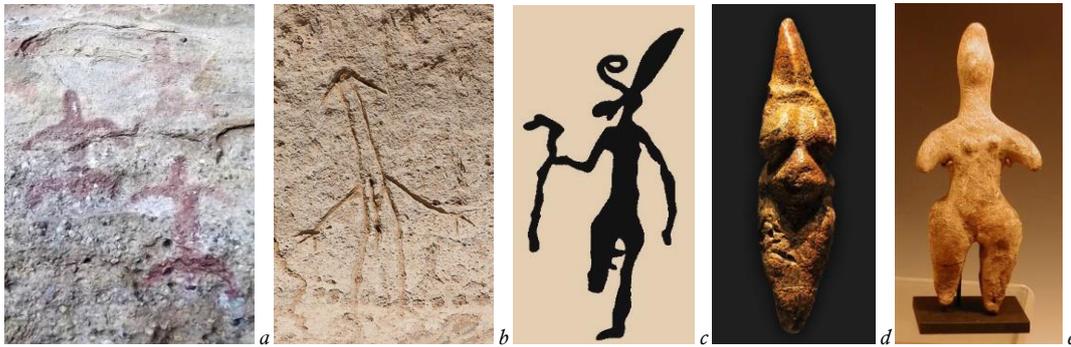
Quetzalcóatl with the *Ocelocopilli* conical headdress, symbol of Venus. He is a winged god! Watercolor on 21 x 15.2 cm paper. It is the illustration of the verse from page 132 of the *Codex Ramírez* (John Carter Brown Library).

² See also the *Códice Vaticano Latino 3738* where Quetzalcóatl appears on a pyramid. He is painted in black as a priest and wears the *Ocelocopilli*, a cap with red crosses and also carried a curved scepter.

³ Fernández, A. *Dioses prehispánicos de México*. Pages 82 and 153.

⁴ An approximation to the word *Ocelocopilli* is “conical cap of jaguar fur”: *Ocelotl* “jaguar” and *copilli* “conical head piece”.

It is the iconographic-symbolic key –not arbitrary or interpretable but the expression of an idea (ἰδέα, idea = “form”)– that is practically verified on a global scale about the *gods* and their primordial civilization.



Paleolithic representations of the gods. Note the “elongated” heads as a common feature. a. A group of petroglyphs in Tierra del Fuego, in Chile, with the representation of the Hówen or “spirits” that descended from the stars of the Selk’nam tradition. b. Anthropomorphic petroglyph in Lava Beds, California, in the United States. c. Petroglyph at Wādi el Qash in Egypt. d. The Venus de Savignano, found in the homonymous place in Emilia-Romagna, Italy. e. A “goddess” of the Amlash culture, in Iran.



The conical headdress known as Ocelocopilli in Mesoamerica is a symbol of the star of Venus. a. The Hówen K'ternnen, the «Man of Light» of the esoteric tradition of the selk’nam Háin of Tierra del Fuego, in Chile (Photograph by Martin Gusinde, 1923). b. A Huasteca-Aztec representation of Quetzalcóatl as Lord of Venus, with the Ocelocopilli (Museo Nacional de Antropología de Ciudad de México). c. Effigy of Brahma from Tamil Nadu, India (British Museum). d. The god Aton in his temple at Karnak (Egyptian Museum of Cairo). e. Representation of Wotan/Odin with a conical helmet (Statens Historika Museum in Stockholm).

In the Unknown Past

An aspect to consider in order glimpse the fascinating past of this area, it is necessary to know what its environmental condition was. What were the bioclimatic characteristics? What were the rainfall rates? What have been the climatic variations in the area? What flora and fauna were there? In relation to the occupational factors of the area: When did the first inhabitants arrive in this area? What are the oldest vestiges? Has there been cultural overlap? What characteristics did this place have to have become the habitat of this cultural substrate?

The “mummies” have the characteristic elongated cranial feature. This

particularity, as we have outlined in a previous study, is a direct relationship with the *gods*, practically from Tierra del Fuego to Alaska⁵.

This cultural substratum is remote and, by the way, predates the indigenous population.



The “mummies” in the grotto. Its location, from left to right, in the first, second and third columns, respectively. *a.* The first “mummy”, in a fetal position. *b.* A woman and her infant. Notice the braid that still preserves. *c.* The third “mummy”, also with braids. All have been accompanied with contemporary propitiatory elements such as coca leaves, cigarettes, and alcohol (Photographs by Rafael Videla Eissmann, 2020).

⁵ See my article *The Extraterrestrial Gods* (In: *Nexus. The alternative news magazine*. Volume 25. Number 5. August-September 2018).



Cosmic symbology. Even when it comes to contemporary objects in the grotto, the powerful aboriginal symbolism is preserved in them: It is the eight-pointed star, emblem of Venus or *Ch'aska Quyllur –Paqari Quyllur–*, one of the tutelary cosmic bodies next to the Sun and Moon in Andean cosmogonic tradition. *Left:* Vase with the design of an eight-petal flower-star, from the vertical plane. *Right:* Detail of an *Aguayo*, with the symbol of Venus (Photographs by Rafael Videla Eissmann, 2020).

The Gods and the Calendrical System

It is a unique piece. Enigmatically fascinating.

As it has been expressed, its origin, function and the reason for its design is unknown. The only information about this extraordinary object is its calendrical nature of sowing and harvesting, a fact that implies seasonal and astronomical observation and the knowledge of approximate and recommended dates for planting, transplanting and harvesting horticultural species and other plants in the annual cycle that we seek to cultivate.

The direction of the spiral is left-handed, that is to say, *sinistroversa*, its direction is oriented counterclockwise ☹ .



Tanilvinto's fantastic calendrical system. It is a fired clay disc that reaches a diameter of 54.5 cm and that presents a spiral symbol whose design is made up of numerous pieces, some of them with *runic* symbols and others of unknown meaning. Where was its origin? What was its function? How was its knowledge transmitted? (Photographs by Rafael Videla Eissmann, 2020).



The relationship of the spiral symbol with the gods in a set of blocks with petroglyphs near Monte Patria, in the Coquimbo Region, in Chile. Left: A spiral symbol. Right: A Viracocha, with a great headdress (Photographs by Rafael Videla Eissmann, 2020).



Representations of spirals in temples of Babylon, India and Cuzco, respectively.
The spiral symbol is associated with the forces of light in motion.



The *Phaistos Disc*, made of fired clay with inscriptions on both sides and dated to the late Bronze Age. It was discovered on July 15, 1908 by archaeologist Luigi Pernier in the excavation of the Minoan Palace of Festos, near Hagia Triada, in Crete.



The Puquios. The fascinating spiral constructions known as *Puquios* of the ancient Nazcas, in southern Peru. These constructions formed a sophisticated wind-powered irrigation system. What was the origin of this pre-Hispanic technology?



Left: Messier 94 spiral galaxy in the *Canes Venatici* constellation –at a distance of 16 million light years– (Image: ESA/NASA). *Right:* Tanilvinto's calendrical system. Is it a very distant memory of the *gods*?

What was the origin of the knowledge embodied in the calendrical system? What is its age? What was the original model? What was its primary function and meaning? Was it a solar, lunar, or a lunisolar calendar? What was the meaning and function of the pieces that make up the design? How was the knowledge of the calendrical system transmitted? Is there another similar piece? Is this calendar an inheritance from the ancient *gods*?

Along with the elongated skulls, the fundamental key is provided by the presence of **runic symbols** –and rune-like– in some of the pieces that make up the spiral design.

Against all historiographical premises, the runic symbols of America are observed in the cultural substrates of Araucanos, Tiahuanacotas, Guayakies, Quimbayas, Incas, Kunas, Chupicuaros, Chumash, Anazasis, Navajos, Sinagua, Sac, Cherokees and Pima, among other groups⁶.

Do these ideographies correspond to the ancient alphabet of the *gods*?

The spiral symbol, from its earliest known representations in megalithism –a worldwide cultural phenomenon– is associated with the Sun as an expression of the birth-death-rebirth cycle and, therefore, with the forces of life.

It can be inferred, based on the calendrical function and its cyclical dimension expressed as a symbol of the spiral together with the objects that make it up, that this system has a magical-religious nature of great importance since it itself shelters and projects the cycle of life –expressed precisely by the symbol of the spiral–.

A vast horizon extends into the remotest past of South America in which the presence of a civilizing substratum –the *gods*– burst forth to start the foundations of culture, that is, the development of mankind.

Rafael Videla Eissmann
La Paz,
February 2020

⁶ See my book *Símbolos rúnicos en América. El regreso a la tierra ancestral* (“Runic Symbols in America. The Return to the Ancestral Land”, 2011).

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