THE TEMPLARS IN AMERICA

JACQUES de MAHIEU

BERSERKER

BOOKS

Jacques de Mahieu
Templars in America

Original title of the work: Les Templiers en Amérique.
Translation from the French by: Alda Teodorani.
Copyright 1998
Edizioni Piemme Spa
Casale Monferrato. Piemme.

Seven centuries after the burning at the stake in which James of Molay found his death and the fierce persecution that marked the denouement of their story, the Templars continue to pose a fascinating historical conundrum. Where did the Order's archives disappear after they were loaded in Paris onto wagons bound for the coast? Where did the Atlantic Templar fleet take refuge in 1307, caught in the grip of the pope and the king of France, and never heard from again? Where did the gold and silver with which the Order of the Temple flooded 12th- and 13th-century Europe come from? And what was the purpose of the port of La Rochelle, which apparently led nowhere? The answers, which the Knights of Christ concealed in the inviolable sanctity of their Secretum Templi, are now unveiled in an unpredictable but convincing way and are summed up in one word: America.

Jacques de Mahieu was born in Paris in 1915. A graduate in philosophy, economics and political science, as well as, honoris causa, in medicine, he taught for many years in Buenos Aires at the Instituto de Ciencia del Hombre, which he founded and directed.

He published numerous essays on economic and sociological issues in Argentina, and then devoted himself almost exclusively to the history of pre-Columbian America and the study of early contact between the Old World and the New. He published numerous volumes on these subjects, which have been translated in several countries. He died in Buenos Aires in 1990.

Chapter 1. The Secret of the Temple.

1. Mysticism and politics

We are in the 12th century, in the heart of Christendom. First Romanized, then Germanized, the Church no longer has much to do with the small Jewish sect from which it originated. In all fields, the tradition of the West has imposed itself on the spirit of the desert. For that we are very far from that obscurantism that will be blamed on the Middle Ages during the Enlightenment. The pope is not yet infallible, and his temporal power makes him a head of state like any other, subject to the demands and needs of diplomacy and war. In the small circle of prelates, ideas ferment and express themselves freely, under the mere cover of a more or less sincere orthodoxy. But Aristotelian realism had not yet conquered the university, and would only do so in the following century. Of the Stagirite, only the treatises on logic are known. Platonic idealism, on the other hand, dominates the minds: of course, it is a Platonism that is often observed through the deforming prism of Plotinian and Gnostic esotericism, which finds in the Gospel of St. John a basis of doctrine to which one cannot object and to which St. Augustine offered credentials for the whole world. We witness, thus, a return of mysticism, of which Cîteaux constitutes the primary center

of dissemination. This impetus is not only due to the circumstances of the time: a man brings it to life and directs it with unparalleled talent.

Abbot of Clairvaux, which is the second home of the contemplative order founded in 1098 according to the rule of St. Benedict and in the spirit of St. Augustine, the future St. Bernard dominated the first half of his century. A mystical scribe leading to salvation through ecstasy, a sacred orator capable of delivering one hundred and twenty sermons on King Solomon's Song of Songs, but also preaching to lords and people on the Second Crusade, the uncompromising superior of an order that, in thirty years, spread throughout the West, he was also an adviser to the popes. To one of them, Eugene III, Bernard addresses his Considerations on the Evils of the Church and the Duties of the Supreme Pontiff. The princes fear him, since they are not unaware of his rancor toward feudalism and can see his ascendancy over the people. Bernard is the man of the universal and theocratic Church, in this Middle Ages in which all political activity is dominated by the dispute between clergy and empire, while Rome makes every effort to impose itself on the sovereigns, who are in turn committed to asserting their temporal autonomy against spiritual power.

Thus, Bernard extols the Crusades. That on the one hand they are an effective means of weakening fiefdoms-as he himself acknowledges-and on the other they are intended to curb the Turkish advance. Moreover, they offer the advantage of re-establishing contact between the West and Byzantium, indispensable to the reunification of the world
Christian. They make it possible, again, to trace the sources of the Eastern spirituality from which Christianity sprang: after all, after the taking of Jerusalem, the future saint Stephen, abbot of Cîteaux, with the help of a group of rabbis, had made all his monks study Jewish texts. Bernard himself also had good relations with the Jewish communities of Europe, to the point of rushing across the Rhine to end the pogrom. Finally, the Crusades provided an excellent pretext for the creation of an army, that essential factor of power that the papacy still lacked.

One day in the year 1118, nine French knights arrived in Jerusalem and presented themselves to King Baldwin II. Their leader, Hugh of Payns, a native of Champagne, is related to a family of counts. Three of his men are Flemish, as is the king, who evidently must know them. A fourth, André de Montbard, from Burgundy, is Bernard's uncle. Nothing is known about the other four except their first names and, for one of them, the patronymic.
Baldwin, to whom the men must have been warmly recommended, no doubt by the abbot, welcomes this strange group who come neither to fight nor to join the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, charged with the protection of pilgrims. Hugh sets out his intention to found a community of warrior monks, whose mission seems to be to "guard the public roads." Baldwin grants his permission and sets up the knights in a wing of his palace, on the site of Solomon's Temple, where the al-Aqsa mosque stands today. And, to make room for the new guests, he moved the canons of the Holy Sepulcher. Some time later, the king leaves
them the entire palace. Although they are always laymen, the knights make before the patriarch of Jerusalem the three monastic vows of obedience, chastity and poverty.

For ten years, Hugh of Payns and his companions remain in Palestine.

Without making a fuss. And although they occupy a building where the king, his court and canons live with all comforts, they refuse any recruitment. They are joined only by a tenth knight, in 1125: Hugh, Count of Champagne, a lord almost as powerful as the king of France who, in order to reach Jerusalem, repudiates his wife and abandons his children. But are these men really there to guard the roads? There are good reasons to doubt it, especially since the military strength of such a small group turns out to be insignificant and inadequate for the task. Chroniclers of the time do not report their participation in any combat. So what? So, the imagination can run wild.

Without the shadow of a proof, the nine horsemen were said to have been tasked with searching for the Ark of the Covenant and the Tablets of the Law-even that they had been found by clearing out the Temple's stables-or even to collect, through esoteric initiation, the "Ancient Wisdom."

The truth is that we know nothing about Hugh of Payns' activity in Palestine. And that we can only point out that ten years would seem a long time if it had not been to prepare the ground for the knightly order he would found.

In 1127, Hugh and five of his companions returned to Europe. Baldwin II charged them with a double mission to Pope Honorius II and Bernard: to obtain encouragement for a second crusade, so as to provide the king with urgently needed reinforcements. But this is not the main purpose of the journey. In fact, Bernard entrusts them with the rule he has established, in the spirit of Cîteaux, for the new order of which they are the centerpiece.

Then, in January 1128, he presided over the council in Troyes that ratified it. The Ordo Pauperum Commilitonum Christi Templique Salomonici (Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon) was born. Its members would come to be called Milites Templi (Knights of the Temple), Fratres Militiae Templi (Brothers of the Temple Militia), Commilitones Christi (Brothers in Arms of Christ) or more simply Templarii. It must be acknowledged that this direct reference to Solomon's Temple is strange, since the Old Testament was not at all appreciated in the Middle Ages. And it seems legitimate to think that the name of the Order simply referred to the building in which its founders had settled. Should we instead see in it a consequence of Bernard's special interest in the Song of Songs, a subtly erotic poem that his analysis read as a love song, esoteric and prophetic of the Church, the bride of Christ? Or yet a sign of his intent to return to the Eastern sources of Christianity?

Be that as it may, the Order immediately takes off and expands with surprising rapidity. Enlistment is open: knights arrive and many more volunteers-or should we say novices? - who are not knights. For several hundred years, the Templars will guard the roads of Palestine and Syria, but more importantly, they will provide the Frankish kings of Jerusalem with fierce troops who, until the end, will take part in all the battles. Simultaneously, from its origin, the Order is firmly rooted in Europe, divided into nine provinces: France, Portugal, Castile and Leo, Aragon, Majorca, Germany, Italy, Apulia and Sicily, England and Ireland. Here there are no infidels to fight, but power to be established and a definite plan to be carried out. The commanderies multiply, the dominions grow by the day. The process accelerates after the abandonment of the Middle East, when the grand master settles in

Paris. By the beginning of the 14th century, the Templars had, throughout the West, something like ten thousand commanderies, about a thousand of which were in France.

Ten thousand commanderies, but also bailiwicks (military posts attached to them), and barns or farmsteads, which are usually fortified. Three categories of brothers constitute the order proper (1). First are the knights (milites or equites), all of whom were noble by birth, or more rarely ennobled, and to whom command functions fell. Then the ecclesiastics (clerics), who are attached to the magistri (masters) or who attend to religious services in the churches. Then the sergeants (servientes), who are divided into two classes: the servientes armigeri, who provide the knights with squires, sergeants of arms and accompanying fantaccini, but who are also in charge of the administration of the Temple's property and all its economic activities, and the servientes famuli, which include the rural, or conversi brothers (fratres conventuales) and the resident brothers (fratres residentes), among whom some are called trade brothers (fratres officii). Finally, there are the Temple guests (hospites or mansionarii Templi) who serve in a temporary capacity. Guests (or at least those who are not priests) and - it seems - some residents, may be married. Finally, the Order grants its protection to affiliates of all kinds: lords who offer allegiance, merchants who use its commercial services, artisans who settle on its lands, and many others.

At the base of the ladder, we find the serfs, serf-bound according to feudal customs, and even further down black slaves taken in Palestine. At the top of the hierarchical pyramid towers the grand master, elected
by a chapter of knights representing the nine provinces; he is absolute ruler except for certain tasks reserved to the chapter itself, such as the acceptance of new knights, the sale of the Order's property, and the appointment of the province's grand commanders.

The term "sovereign" must be understood in its broadest sense. The Temple, indeed, accepts no authority other than that of its grand master: it escapes all temporal jurisdiction and its domains everywhere enjoy the right of extraterritoriality. Brothers and affiliates can be referred only to its courts. The Order, and it is the only one besides Cîteaux, is exempt from all taxes, even from the tithe of the clergy. So is it exempt from ordinary ecclesiastical jurisdiction, that of the bishops. Its affiliated clergymen and priests are the only ones to whom members of the Order can go to confession: they have the power of absolution reserved for the archbishop (thanks to an edict of 1162) and depend only on the grand master. And the grand master depends solely on the pope, who fears him. A sovereign state above the temporal states, an independent church within the Church, the Temple has always had its own way. Until that day in 1307, when Philip the Fair took the bull by the horns, seized the commendations manu militari, imprisoned the brothers, sent Jacques de Molay to the stake and got Pope Clement V to dissolve
"provisionally" the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ.

In the course of the trial, charges rain down. And the Templars confess. They confess during the interrogation to which they are subjected by the provostry and the royal inquisition. They confess in Britain, where they are spared torture. They still confess under the ecclesiastical Inquisition, on the specific instructions of the pope, who personally attends and participates in the hearings, hearing

seventy-two knights and sergeants: "an interrogation that was conducted slowly, with much regard and kindness, by high dignitaries of the Church, an archbishop, several bishops, etc. The depositions thus obtained deserve more credit than the confessions - on the other hand very brief and uninstructive - which the inquisitors and the King's men had wrung out by torture, immediately after the arrest" (2).

It is true, however, that the accused were not free and could fear reprisals if they recanted.

Had Templar customs become less strict? One has to believe so, for the monastic rule was surely too harsh for men-at-arms influenced by Eastern customs: is it not still said to "swear like a Templar?" Perhaps the brothers practiced sodomy and, on the day on which they were received, had to kiss the "mouth, navel, buttocks and manly parts" (2) of the officiating master? We cannot rule it out, and the presence of young boys in the commendations of these monk-soldiers, who were forbidden all contact with women, is a bit suspicious. Did they engage in witchcraft and sacrifice children in their ceremonies? Harder to believe, but not impossible: alchemy was fashionable, in the Middle Ages, and from alchemy to witchcraft there was only one step. But it is
also true that unpopular religions have always been accused of witchcraft. Be that as it may, the brothers did not inspire confidence, as evidenced also by an expression in use in those days: custodiatis vobis ab osculo Templariorum, be on your guard against the kiss of the Templars. Who, however, had no problem regarding recruitment, since the rule allowed them to accept excommunicated knights (sacrileges, perjurers, thieves, murderers) who were first absolved, without difficulty, by the Order's clerics.

What seems certain is that the Temple had introduced some unorthodox variations in Catholic doctrine. Let us leave aside the problem of the famous Baphomet, a Luciferian or Gnostic idol that had been worshipped and it is not known for sure what it represented for the Order. But it cannot be doubted that the future knight, before taking his vows, had to step on the crucifix. Certainly not to deny Christ, but, on the contrary, to affirm his unblemished glory: it was not the son of God who had died on the cross, but a political agitator who had been substituted for him. Had the Templars gathered new data in Palestine on this point? Or, rather, were they trying to free the Jews from the charge of having killed God, thus removing an obstacle to the
"reconciliation or [to] the reconciliation of the past with the present and the future, in the great thought of divine unity," as John Charpentier puts it? (3)

The latter explanation cannot be rejected out of hand at all. The Platonism cultivated by Bernard, the Alexandrian Platonism and that of John-somewhat tinged with Gnosticism-had surely been strengthened in the Templars by the contacts woven not only with Byzantium, but also with Jewish Kabbalists and Muslim Sufis, without
speak of the assasi (hashishi), a mystical order of Islam, whose order and even uniform strangely coincided with those of the brothers of the Temple. Michelet (4) does not hesitate to attribute to them an ecumenical intention very foreign to the spirit of medieval Catholicism: "The idea of the Temple, higher and broader than that of the Church, somehow hovered over every religion. The Church dated, the Temple did not date. Contemporary with all ages, it was like a symbol of religious eternity." An ecumenical intention that would explain the Order's benevolent neutrality regarding the Cathars

during the expedition made against them by the northern barons with the blessing of the abbot of Cîteaux, Arnaud-Amaury. On that occasion, the Temple had dissociated itself from Bernard's strictly orthodox successors. But not only that: some thirty years later, the Temple barely concealed its approval of the project of Henry II Plantagenet, King of England: the partitioning of the Holy Land with the Muslims who, in 1180, were preparing to make the final, and victorious, assault on French Jerusalem; something they would do seven years later. A project supported by the Count of Toulouse, Raymond V, protector of the Albigensians and... brother-in-law of Saladin, who married his sister. The Temple, which dreams of a universal monarchy under its control, frowns upon the alliance between Christianity and Islam; that Islam to which, moreover, many brothers will return after the dissolution of the Order (5). Just then, the Temple chapter decides to elect as grand master Robert de Sablé, of Linguadòca, whose sympathies are really no secret to anyone. The king of France becomes alarmed, as does the pope. But pope and king are in deep disagreement, and the problems between Rome and Paris would dominate the entire 13th century, even and especially during the reign of the future Saint Louis. Until the day when, thanks to Philip the Fair, the papal throne would be occupied by Bertrand le Got, archbishop of Bordeaux, with the name Clement V. That will be the end of the Order of the Temple.

2. Templar assets.

The Order's military power is certainly not negligible. Exact figures are unknown due to the disappearance of the archives, which we will have occasion to discuss again, but it is attributed 15,000 knights and 45,000 sergeants, not counting conventuals, residents, guests and vassals. This army, however, is not operational, as it is scattered throughout Western Europe. Thus, it will be unable to offer the slightest resistance to the French king's soldiers. But it is precisely this dispersion that is the strength of the Temple, for only in this way can the Order administer the goods it acquires with incredible rapacity and which it makes fructify using methods that the West no longer knew after the Roman decadence. For while it is true that the Temple is a religious order and militia, it also constitutes a gigantic trust, in the most capitalistic sense of the term.

Of course, at the origin of this fortune are almsgiving and war. Like all religious, the Templars take a vow of individual poverty, but the Order, like all orders, holds the right of acquisition. The rule also confers the obligation to keep all property, and not to be able to sell, "neither a piece of
wall, nor an inch of land," without the chapter's authorization. A greed that prompted them to refuse-against the customs of the time-to pay ransom for the Templars who were taken prisoner, or to pay their dues for King Louis IX, taken by the Saracens at Mansourah. The pilgrims from the Holy Land can be thought of as having voluntarily contributed appreciably to the enrichment of the Temple. The knights and some of the sergeants - wealthy bourgeoisie whom the Order welcomed into its ranks - contributed their dowries. Other crusaders, concerned for the health of their souls or anxious to procure decisive support in the countless feudal conflicts that continually divide the French forces, make gifts "to God, to the benevolent Mary and to the brethren of the militia of the Temple" of the goods or benefits they collect. They assail

and you cut up the infidel, and perhaps you traffic with him a little bit during the long periods of calm between battles.

The Temple, moreover, arms a fleet that first rivals Venice and then tries to secure a monopoly on transport between Europe and the Middle East. In Majorca, Collioure, Saint-Raphaèl and Monaco, he has private ports, which, however, do not seem to be sufficient for him. He also uses that of Marseille, the main commercial city of Provence, a beneficiary of the franchises in the French realm of Jerusalem, to such an extent that the consuls become concerned, and demand a fair division of chartering between the Order's vessels and those of local shipowners (6). He is in charge of troop transportation, which is very well paid for by the sovereigns participating in the crusades and the princes invaded by the Land
Holy, of that of pilgrims (which was not free), but also and especially of the traffic of goods. Weapons, horses and provisions were shipped to Europe, local wines, spices and sugar from the Indies, silks and carpets from Persia, textiles from Damascus, perfumes from Arabia were exported from Palestine. It is a fruitful trade, in which the Templars soon play the lion's share.

However, what the Order accumulates in the Holy Land is nothing compared to the assets it gathers in Europe. Piety and prudence cause kings and great feudal lords to secure the prayers of the knights and the support of their militia by donating fortified lands and castles to the Temple. Lords, great and small, give up or bequeath all or part of their fiefs.
Others, grazing rights, milling rights, rights over levees for the passage of timber, "for each barge, boat or boat loaded with logs, one log, and for each such boat loaded with faggots, one faggot." The Order disdains nothing, least of all the five fiefs given to it at one time in Courbepine, Normandy, in 1205, nor the most valuable possessions of a deceased person (or the five pennies in coin, as it prefers) each time a death occurs in Moulin-Robert, Brittany. He also accepts immense estates "for charity," as is specified in a great many notarial acts (and Philip the Fair tries unsuccessfully to prevent this, before arriving at more hasty measures). He also objects to Alfonso of Aragon's questionable will, to claim all of his kingdom. He does not get it, but acquires "lands and goods and funds and profits."

He also comes, in one way or another, to own entire regions, with castles, villages, forests, farmlands and serfs. He has, in addition, his vassals, who pay in rents
to obtain protection, which is very useful in these perturbed times, and exemption from royal taxes enjoyed by the Temple.

But up to this point the Order is merely following, with some complementary privileges, the example of all the religious communities of the Middle Ages, which lived no doubt on alms, but above all on the exploitation of their lands. It might just be pointed out that the Order's granaries - many thousands in France alone - attached to the commendas and cultivated by "temple laborers," sharecroppers and serfs, are magnificently administered. In grain-producing areas, some also have grain storage. Do templars store wheat to resell it, in times of shortage, at abusive prices? They are accused of it: "The calumny falls by itself," writes Louis Charpentier (7), "since the rule forbade any Templar, even a dignitary, to sell anything belonging to the Order without the decision of the chapter. And the grain purchased

belonged to the Order. And there were no merchants in the Temple."

Indeed, perhaps the accusation of speculating on grain is only a slander, for it cannot be denied that the granaries in question contributed mightily, in the 11th and 12th centuries, to averting the famines that previously ravaged Europe. It is also known that, in times of famine, the Temple arranged free distributions of segalata, that mixture of wheat and rye that constituted the basis of medieval food: the rule compels almsgiving, which, moreover, represents good policy. But this does not detract from the Order's careful attention to the business of trade, and warehouses were added to the innumerable commendia that, moreover, protected the markets. We merely give evidence of this: a
Nantes, the Temple refuses to pay the bishop the royalties that come from the sale of wines (8).

However, granaries, and in general the warehouses attached to the commendas, do not serve solely or primarily for the storage of agricultural products belonging to the Order. They are primarily warehouses where, for a fee, free villagers and merchants shelter their goods from plunder and taxation by the lords. But this is the secondary aspect of one of the Temple's activities: the protection of the roads.

The roads are very unsafe in the Middle Ages. Travelers are often plundered by bands of highwaymen, and in winter, wolves do not hesitate to attack them. The transportation of goods is burdened, on the other hand, by the countless tolls of lords and communes, such as those that still exist today on certain highways and bridges. Now, without a safe route or cheap transportation, trade languishes as prices soar from one region to another. It is not uncommon for a village to suffer the effects of a terrible famine caused by hail or a cattle epidemic, while the neighboring township or fiefdom possesses grain and livestock in abundance. But the cost of transportation makes the price unaffordable for the hungry. The Temple devotes itself, successfully, to solving this problem. Its commanderies are connected by roads that cover the entire West in a dense network, patrolled by knights. These roads offer travelers rest stations-hostels-where they can spend the night with their pack animals and goods. There is no toll on these "Templar roads": the Order demanded their abolition, and no one, lord or municipal magistrate, would dare to object. The fees
perceived by the Temple are minimal, but the increase in traffic makes the income appreciable.

However, it was not only difficulties in transportation that hindered trade. In the Middle Ages, cash is very rare and is generally reserved for the payment of taxes. In villages, exchange is in use. But without currency, exchange, on another scale, is difficult. So the Temple establishes a bank, and each commandery sets up a branch. Merchants deposit their gold there, and in return the Order issues letters of exchange. When they have no monetary values, they leave goods as collateral-the modern-day warrant-and receive the countervalue in letters. All this, of course, against payment of a premium. On the other hand, the Templar bank receives on deposit the treasures of lords and bishops and even that of the king of France for whom, in any case, the Temple takes charge of the collection of certain taxes, thus playing the role that a few centuries later will pass to general contractors.

The Temple does not let rest in the cellars of its

fortifications the metal that is entrusted to him and that which belongs to him, and that increases incessantly. He lends it: to princes, to lords great and small, to bishops, to communes, to any people, sometimes on mortgage. In his commendations he also organizes pawnshops, which practice lending on bail.

Well, usury-and all interest is usurious, according to the norms of the time-is strictly forbidden by the ecclesiastical authorities as well as the secular powers. Only Jews can practice it because they enjoy a special status and are not subject, by their customs and traditions, to either one or the other (although they have to suffer periodically the plundering of their property by the people and the confiscations of the ruler). But, we have already said, the Temple is extraterritorial. Nothing prevents it from competing with the Jews. It takes advantage of it and abuses it. To cite just one example, he lends fifty Tours money to a certain Peronnelle de la Gouberge, of the parish of Ormes, in Normandy, demanding the cession of an annuity of twenty-four Tours money, four capons and a chicken with forty-one eggs (9). More than fifty percent interest per year!

3. The financing of cathedrals.

Among the "beneficiaries" of Templar credits, there is good reason to count the bishops and municipalities who, as early as 1140, under the inspiration of Cistercian monks, began to build Gothic churches.

No documentation of this exists, as the archives of the Order have disappeared. But Louis Charpentier proved it beyond doubt in a work (7) where, unfortunately, the worst (i.e., an esoteric view of the medieval world) is mixed with the best.

"You have to see things as they were," he writes. "Almost all French towns, especially north of the Loire, are just small hamlets of extremely limited means. Money is rare and does not circulate. When a municipality has some means, or can procure it, the constructions it builds first are the walls, which shelter it - relatively - from constant wars and marauding bands that do not respect open cities any more than regular troops do.

"So, cities have only small churches and no possess the means to have large ones built. Only in wealthy cities such as Rouen-the second center of the kingdom-were parishes multiplying and churches being beautified by donations from one or the other.

"So how was it possible that in just a few years, and in all towns at once, from Paris down to the small hamlets, the money needed to undertake these huge constructions could be found? To focus the problem, there is no township of today of the importance that Chartres had in the Middle Ages, that is, about ten thousand inhabitants, that could manage to build a swimming pool, that is, just a walled hole in the ground. And these townships (Amiens and Reims are barely larger than Chartres) can, suddenly, afford the luxury of cathedrals that would contain a stadium!"

And Louis Charpentier concludes, "Only one organization, then, was capable of taking on this role of banker-treasurer, of bringing effective and continuous help and having the work organized: the Order of the Temple. It is clear that the Knights of the Temple could not take on the burden of construction: their wealth, to

How big they were, they would not have been enough. They could only make a loan."

What reinforces this reasoning is the consideration that the Order has under its protection a coven of workshop masters, stone carvers, masons and also painters, sculptors and engravers of religious images. It takes a lot of people, as well as an extraordinary science that, we know, comes from Cîteaux, to build more than eighty immense cathedrals in less than a hundred years, not to mention about seventy minor churches. Well, in the Middle Ages, there were three brotherhoods of builders whose members, hierarchized into four grades (initiates, companions, accepted companions, affiliates) and subjected to strict discipline, jealously guarded the secret of their art, which was transmitted in their schools-residences, the caienne, not to mention that of the
"grand code," associated with ceremonies reserved for initiates (10), about which we know nothing. The Sons of Father Soubise, founded by a legendary Benedictine, depended on the order of St. Benedict and devoted themselves exclusively to the construction of Romanesque churches. The Sons of Master James, whose activity is less known to us, worked only in the south of France, particularly on the road to St. James of Compostella. The Sons of Solomon, as their name indicates, are connected to the Temple. Do they belong to it as brothers by trade, as affiliates, or do they constitute a kind of minor lay order, put under the protection of the Knights from Cîteaux? We do not know, but we do know that it is thanks to the Templars' intervention that Louis IX granted the brotherhoods franchises that Philip the Fair annulled at the same time he suppressed the Order. Far from folding, the Sons of Solomon then went into hiding.
Many choose exile, or take the name Foreign Companions of Solomon's Duty. They reappear in the 1790s, when the guilds are disbanded, and are mysteriously tolerated, while the Le Chapelier law prohibits any artisan association. It is no accident that Freemasonry, which prepared the French Revolution, claims, to this day, the "initiatory legacy" of the Temple...

However, the financing of cathedrals poses a problem. Salaries cannot be paid with letters of exchange. Loans granted to bishops and municipalities, therefore, must be paid in cash. Now, we said it, the currency - exclusively metallic,
of course - is very rare in the Middle Ages. The silver one is practically nonexistent. Pieces dating from Roman times have been used for a long time. Crusaders brought quite a few from Palestine, where they were worth more than gold, but the quantities are always minimal, if one considers that the Temple treasure in the Holy Land at the time it was evacuated was included in ten mule loads, or less than a ton. In Europe, there are no silver mines in operation. Those in Germany are not yet open; those in Russia are still unknown. That leaves gold. We are unable to calculate the cost of building one hundred and fifty Gothic churches, including eighty cathedrals, in one hundred years. But we do not think we are mistaken in saying that all the cash of the commons and all the deposits of their clients would not have been even remotely sufficient to meet it. In the Toulouse area, it is true, the Templars reopened some old mines, already exhausted since the days of Rome: and they had to desist. However, they have brought in miners and smelters from Germany, installed in the coal mines where they live in complete isolation and under close supervision. The smelter continues to work after the mines are closed. In the surrounding area, the

commanderies of the Coume Sourde and the Hermitage struck coin, as did their vassals, the lords of Bézu, an impregnable fortress standing at the edge of the Templar road from Portugal. The other houses of the Order, throughout Europe at the time, do the same. The minted pieces are no longer made of gold, but of silver. They multiply, during the 12th and 13th centuries, to the point that they quickly become a normal means of payment that contributes powerfully to a real economic euphoria. But where did the metal come from? No one knows. Or rather, those who do know are silent.

4. The Secret Harbor of the Temple.

Then again, much is silent among the Templars. The order is sovereign. Its rule is known only to the knights, who do not even have the right to preserve its text, because they fear that it might fall into the hands of the sergeants, although the latter are also brothers. The magistri deliberate in great secrecy. Finally, the temple archives, which no doubt could have helped us understand some things well, have disappeared. Thus we remain puzzled about many obscure, sometimes inexplicable facts. One of these concerns the Order's fleet. It is certainly considerable and, at the time of the Crusades, as we have seen, it ensures a good part of the transportation of troops, pilgrims and merchandise between Europe and the Holy Land from its ports on the Mediterranean coast. The Temple also disposes, for its contacts with Britain, where it has possessions, of the ports of Saint-Valery-en-Caux, a few kilometers south of Dieppe, protected by the commanderies of Blosseville and Drosay, and of Barfleur, covered by the bailiwick of Valcanville (both in Normandy); not to mention others, among which the most important is that of Saint-Valery-sur-Somme, on the coasts of the English Channel and the North Sea. To these maritime bases, posts that seem logical to us, is added, on the Atlantic proper, the port of La Rochelle.

We have only one earlier reference about this small village, which had never been mentioned before: on the island of Aix, a little to the south, Saint Malo took refuge after the death of his patron, Judicael, the duke of Brittany. Well, it is speculated that this monk-bishop, famous in his time, had accompanied St. Brandanus in the navigatio that had brought him to America between 536 and 552. Louis Kervran (11) performed a rigorous analysis on the medieval texts: the resulting report no longer leaves much doubt about the journey in question. It appears to have been false, made up, but the legend enjoyed enormous popularity throughout the Middle Ages, especially, of course, in regions where the memory of the holy man was particularly cherished. The port is located about 150 km south of Nantes, by present-day roads, and about 70 km north of Royan (i.e., from the mouth of the Gironde), at the end of a wide bay, well protected by the islands of Ré and Oléron, defined in a wide channel that still bears the name

Templar of Pertuis d'Antioche [Straits of Antioch].

Here the sea forms a basin that fits deeply into the lands, and whose entrance is particularly easy to defend: Richelieu would later realize this when he had to retake the city from Protestant forces. From this point of view, the choice of the Templars does not surprise us. What escapes us is the usefulness of a port that leads apparently nowhere, because it is too far south of Britain and too far north of Portugal,

with which, however, connections are easier via the Pyrenean hills, guarded by the commanderies, than via the dangerous Bay of Biscay.

Well, La Rochelle for the Temple is by no means a secondary base; far from it. It is the seat of a provincial house that has under its authority all the commanderies and bailiwicks of a vast area. The population quickly takes notice, and by the time of the dissolution of the Order, the city constitutes a center of some importance, according to the parameters of the time. Seven "Templar roads" start from there, covering all of France.

1. La Rochelle-Barfleur, in the Cotentin, with branches to Brittany;
2. La Rochelle-Abbeville (Sum Bay), passing through Le Mans and Evreux;
3. La Rochelle-Sedan, passing through Angers and Paris;
4. La Rochelle-Nancy, passing through Chatellerault and Troyes;
5. La Rochelle-Geneva, via Guéret, Moulins and Mâcon;
6. La Rochelle-Saint Vallier, which passes through Limoges, Issoire and Saint-étienne;
7. La Rochelle-Valence, via Angoulême, Brive and Le Puy, with an extension, as in the previous case, via the Rhone to Marseille.

According to Louis Charpentier (12), from whom we have taken these geographical data, we must certainly add an eighth road that heads toward Bordeaux and, from there, reaches the Atlantic road at Narbonne, establishing the link with the port of Collioure, in Roussillon.

Perhaps the Templars use, for the last time, one of these roads-the one joining Paris to La Rochelle-on October 12, 1307. Indeed, we read in the trial record (13) of the deposition made before the pope in June 1308 by Jean de Chalon, of the Temple of Nemours, diocese of Troyes, that on the eve of the arrest of the brothers by the king's men, he saw three straw-covered wagons in which were hidden chests containing all the treasure of the great inspector of France, Hugo de Poiraud.

The wagons left the Paris Temple at nightfall, under the escort of Gérard de Villers, leading fifty horses, and Hugo de Châlons. They headed for the coast, where their cargo was to be embarked for foreign countries aboard seventeen ships of the Order. A sheet inserted in the letters of Clement V (13) mentions the names of Hugo de Châlons and Gérard de Villers, "who armed 40 brothers," among the Templars who escaped.

These two documents deserve in-depth analysis because they pose more than one problem. The fact that the Order had been warned about the measures the king was about to take against the Templars is perfectly normal: surely it had its own service of informers. What may be surprising is that it was informed so late: evidently the secret of the operation had been well kept.

The composition of the convoy seems correct: forty-two horsemen at the time constituted a solid escort, and fifty horses meet their needs exactly. In contrast, the number of ships is not at all proportionate with the cargo of three chariots. But the figure must be accurate since the Temple of Paris is home to
of a large domain in which one must know everything about the movements of the fleet. There must have been other convoys that, departing from different

commandments, they headed toward the harbor. Or one must think that the vessels were also intended for some other mission, for example, to take the fugitive brothers, or some among them, to a safe place. These are two hypotheses, however, which are not mutually exclusive.

On the other hand, contrary to appearances, we do not know what the wagon load consisted of. The word "treasure" is deceptive. For us today, it means a "load of gold, silver, or other precious objects." It also had this meaning in the Middle Ages, but it was also applied to the archives of a prince or a community: secret archives, of course.

It is in his Tesouraria that the king of Portugal keeps the maps of America that Columbus and Magellan will steal there (14). Well, it is difficult to conceive that the grand inspector of France, i.e., the magister in charge of inspecting the commendas, could dispose, in his personal capacity, of a treasure in the current sense of the term. Perhaps of a "black box." But certainly nothing with which to fill three carts.

Let's not forget: in effect, economically speaking, the Temple is a bank. Outside of money circulation funds, the currency it receives is immediately invested. If Philip the Fair finds so little cash in the Order's coffers that he has to cover his expenses with his real estate (which, however, will be donated to the Hospitallers of St. John) this is not because the Templars hid their cash in some carefully walled crypt. They simply did not treasure it: they "made it work," according to the expression
tragicomic of today's liberal economists. The commendas' coffers contain receipts, promissory notes, letters of exchange, contracts, i.e., securities relating to banking and business transactions, including loans, totaling five hundred thousand lira
?* Old French currency, granted to the king. Needless to say, fugitives have not the slightest interest in exporting abroad-where they would have no value-such cards.

In contrast, the Temple "treasure" contains secret documents that must be secured, at all costs. Undoubtedly, in our opinion, it is these that fill the famous wagons, and perhaps many more. Then again, the Order's archives will never be found: "shrouding its disappearance is a deep and even mysterious darkness, like everything about the Templars" (15). Parchment-because paper, which is imported from Egypt, is used very little at the time-is not so easy to destroy...

It remains to be known to which port the convoy leaving Paris is headed. A Templar port, of course: the others are not safe. Those in the Mediterranean are too far away: the Temple masters do not know what attitude the Count of Provence and the Count of Barcelona, lords of the region, will take. If these followed the French king's example-they would do so a few months later-the fugitives would risk being trapped. The Channel and North Sea ports are much closer, but the king of England, though favorable to the Order, will not dare stand up to the pope, and Jacques de Molay must well know what to expect in
this regard. Only one possibility remains: La Rochelle, a stronghold that the soldiers will be careful not to attack. The port is connected to Paris by a well-guarded "temple road," where fresh horses are sure to be found. At sixty kilometers a day-which at the time was the norm for a convoy-it takes a week to reach the fleet. Do the wagons reach their destination? We have no evidence of that. But we do know that their cargo,

whatever it was, is not mentioned in any seizure inventory drawn up by the royal notaries, and that ships anchored in La Rochelle do not take refuge in Portugal, as those fleeing Mediterranean ports do: they disappear, forever.

5. The American hypothesis

The preceding pages serve mainly to present the facts of the triple problem that this work is intended to solve: where did the silver come from, the metal unobtainable in Europe with which the Templars flooded their nine provinces for two centuries and thanks to which they were able to finance the construction of eighty Gothic cathedrals and seventy minor churches? What was the purpose of the port of La Rochelle? Where did the vessels, likely laden with the Order's "treasure," escape to in 1307? We could not answer these questions without first defining the characteristics of the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon.

First of all, it is a religious order. Knights are monks who have taken the traditional vows
Of obedience, chastity and poverty. The other brothers, religious and lay, who are at different levels of an extremely complex structure, are also churchmen, whether or not they are subject to the conditions of monastic life. All, in fact, owe obedience to the grand master, elected by the knights, who depends only on the pope. Nevertheless, the Temple takes some liberties with respect to dogma. Jesus did not die on the cross. But, if so, redemption through sacrifice did not take place. Man, therefore, remains under the burden of original sin. Only the Word, whose illumination is achieved through love, can free him.

From Augustinian mysticism, one thus easily arrives at John's esotericism. Even more: redemption through the Word implies the salvation of the spirit. The body, which is essentially divided from the spiritual soul, intervenes only to hinder the process: it is inherently evil (16). Thus, we approach the Cathars in a Gnostic worldview, with the temptation to seek Knowledge and Wisdom not only in contemplation, but also in the arcana of alchemy, or witchcraft. We do not know how far the Templars, or some of them, went down this road. But we have several good reasons to think that the "moral relaxation" is to be attributed, at least in part, to this larval Manichaeism. If man can do nothing against sin, the latter is ultimately unimportant. The liberation of the spirit, then, does not exclude the lack of scruples. God has his own territory and Satan - whom we shall later call Baphomet - his.

This is only the latest consequence of the neo-Platonism of Cîteaux, where asceticism was linked to the Egyptian anchorites and mysticism to the Gospel and Revelation of St. John; and perhaps even directly to the Jewish Kabbalah, judging by the interest shown regarding the old Hebrew texts. No doubt this tendency was reinforced in the Templars by their contacts in Palestine with Muslim mystics and Jewish Kabbalists. A tendency that is also imprinted in the style of their churches. Romanesque art, with its triple Roman, Celtic and Germanic roots, was the accomplished architectural expression of the Westernization of Christianity. Despite its beauty, Gothic, "tainted with excess and oriental flourish," as Louis Bertrand described it

(17) marks, on the contrary, a sharp regression. Not only because the "stone books" constituted by Gothic cathedrals depict so many characters and so many scenes from the Old Testament, but also and especially because the very levity of Gothic tends toward mystical exaltation. The Gothic spire is the minaret embedded in a European tradition still too solid to absorb.

The Temple is also a military order. Its knights constitute an elite corps, well-trained and highly disciplined. Well, we are in an age when arms direct politics. Each fiefdom is constantly on the warpath, either to defend its own territories or to conquer those of its neighbors. Each prince has only the power that his troops and those of vassals are worth to him. The Temple is monolithic. It ignores borders. A troop of Christ, it treats rulers from the height of its mission. Like many religious orders, it compensates for the sacrifices the rule imposes on its members with the will to power, ad maiorem Dei gloriam. It fears nothing and no one and, over the course of two hundred years, makes itself feared by all.

If the Temple knows how to exploit the power factors of the era - faith and arms - anticipates the times in the economic field. We have said it, it is, at the risk of using a verbal anachronism, a trust. It owns its model farms and workshops. It practices and encourages trade. It regulates and protects a road network that allows the traffic of goods. It mints money, lends money, issues letters of exchange, and thus carries out more or less all the operations of present-day banks. It speculates, charges interest, makes usury. But it also increases production, stimulates foreign exchange, alleviates famines. An ante litteram capitalism, in a word. The Temple constitutes a gigantic multinational corporation that has, in its game, a number of aces up its sleeve that "our" large trusts do not possess: it is sovereign, so it escapes all taxes and customs duties, it mints its own currency, it has its own police and courts, and it has an army endowed with the same means as those of the countries in which it is established. Moreover, he feels good about his conscience, secure as he is in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and, perhaps, the occult help of Baphomet. He is so powerful that, to bring him down, it will take the unpredictable alliance of the king of France and the pope, with the surprise effect of a magnificently orchestrated military operation.

Certainly, the Temple owes its power to the rigor of its organization, the quality of its recruitment, the faith of its members-even and especially if it is not very orthodox and tends toward hermeticism-and their esprit de corps. It also owes it to its wealth, for no agricultural, "industrial" or financial trust can prosper without capital. The Templars receive, in land and rents, countless assets. In Palestine they accumulate a considerable booty. But it is not with this that they can finance, in less than a hundred years, the construction of a hundred and fifty churches, including eighty cathedrals of impressive size, at least for us.

Most of their funds come from the silver they have. Back to our first question: where do they get it from? Jean de la Varende, a scholar of Normandy history, has the character in one of his tales (18)-and his tales, like the novels, are still history-that the Templars took metal from the mines of Mexico, hence the popular expression "having silver," which we still use ?* In the French language, the name "argent" is used for both money and metal. Argent is

become synonymous with "riches," when it would be-and especially would have been-more natural to speak of gold.

Varende, unfortunately, does not cite his sources. From a historian so thorough and so well informed about the traditions of his province, it is at least a valid indication. But nothing more.

It is an indication that is reinforced by a group of characters found in the central tympanum of the basilica of La Madeleine, the Templar church in Vézelay, Burgundy, which dates back to the mid 12th century. In the gathering of the peoples of the earth surrounding Jesus Christ, a man, a woman, and a child with outsized ears are seen. The man is dressed in feathers, like Mexican warriors, and wears a Viking helmet. The woman, shirtless, is dressed only in a long skirt. These are the Panotii, the "all ears" in Latinized Greek, often reproduced in medieval bestiaries. This depiction is inspired by a text of St. Augustine (19): "Si can believe that certain monstrous races mentioned in secular history are derived from the sons of Noah, or rather from the first man, whose descendants they are? Such as men who, it is said, have only one eye in the middle of their foreheads; those who have the soles of their feet turned behind their legs; those to whom nature has given two sexes, the right breast of a man and the left breast of a woman, and who (from time to time) in the course of reproduction, beget and give birth; others who lack a mouth and live only by breathing through their nostrils; still others whose size is one cubit, and whom the Greeks call pygmies, from the word which, in their language, means cubitus. Elsewhere, according to the same traditions, females conceive at age five and do not survive to their eighth year. It is still said that there is a race of men who have only one leg on two feet, and do not bend the hock, and who have wonderful speed: they are called sciopodes because, it is said, they defend themselves from the heat of the sun in the shadow of their feet; some, without heads, would have eyes in their shoulders. Cynocephalians...."

That's all. The Panotii do not appear on the list. So it must be that medieval sculptors found some indication of this elsewhere, that they heard of people with large ears. It is known that the Incas and no doubt their ancestors-whom they imitated as much as possible-had the strange custom of enlarging their ears by inserting heavy gold, bronze or stone rings called ringrim (from ring, earrings, in Norse) into their lobes. This is a difficult process to imagine here. For those who had not seen Peruvians, the expression of "big ears" could only correspond to the image provided by the sculptor of Vézelay. But the latter knew that these were Vikings, as the man's helmet proves, but of "Indianized" Vikings, confusing the natives of the Andean plateau with those of the Mexican Anàhuac. His reconstruction of the big-eared people, therefore, is logical, though false.

Moreover, this time, the proof that the Templars knew the continent we now call America is conclusive. Recently, in the National Archives, seals of the Order were found that were seized by the men of Philip the Fair in 1307. On one of these, affixed to a document in which an unknown dignitary gives orders to the grand master, is the inscription Secretum Templi (Secret of the Temple). In the center, one sees a figure who can only be an Amerindian. Dressed in a simple loincloth, he wears a feather headdress, like those used by the indigenous people of North America, Mexico, and the

Brazil, or at least some of them, and holds in his right hand a bow whose shape is not exactly what appears in the drawing we reproduce. Moreover, two symbols that are clearly visible to the naked eye on the original are also missing: on the left, above the bow, a swastika with curved arms, the shape of which is exactly that which predominated in Scandinavia at the time of the Vikings, and, on the right, at the same height, an odala or rune of Odin.

Varende, then, was telling the truth, at least on one point: the Templars knew the existence of the "new world." It was their secret. A secret so important that the Order had endowed itself, in order to preserve and cultivate it, with a hierarchy superior, in this field, to that of the grand master. A secret within the secret to which the Rule (secret to the extent that we have only one copy) made it obligatory even before the other brothers, the members of the chapter. A secret whose origin we know (20), (15).

By the 10th century, some German-Danish Vikings had spent twenty-two years in Mexico before founding the empire of Tiahuanaco, Peru. Other Irish had already settled solidly in the eastern part of the present-day United States. By the early 11th century, Norwegian Vikings had already established a number of prosperous colonies in Vinland (in present-day Massachusetts) that maintained contact with the mother country.

Well, in the 11th century, it had not been long since Jarl Hròlf, known as Rollo, had been given Normandy as a fiefdom, whose relations with the northern lands had continued thereafter. The Temple intelligence service had perhaps heard of a distant continent, overseas. On the other hand
it may be that some learned clergyman of the Order had had occasion in Byzantium to consult Ptolemy's Geography, where he tells of the voyage made in the first century of our era, to South America, by the Greek commander Alexander, who set out eastward from the Chersoneso Aureus, that is, Indochina. It would be most strange otherwise.

It remains to be known whether the Templars obtained their silver specifically from American mines.

II. Temple silver

1. Pre-Columbian metallurgy

At the time of the conquest, the various peoples who inhabited Mexico worked gold, silver, copper and even three alloys: tombac (gold, silver and copper), bronze (copper and tin) and a mixture of copper and lead, unknown in Europe. They knew the source of metals, archaeologists tell us, only for about five hundred years, which confirms indigenous traditions that the techniques and art of metallurgy were introduced, in the year 967 of our era, by the white civilizing hero Quetzalcóatl, later deified; that is, by the Viking jarl Ullman (20). Reason being, metallurgy appeared earlier among the Olmecs of the Atlantic coast than in the Anàhuac. Precious metal, and even more so copper, were rare, however. Thus, for jewelry, thin embossed sheets were used, while figurines were hollow because they were cast over wax. In fact, the reduction of metals from ore was ignored. The natural mixture of gold and silver, once the piece was finished, was dissolved with amalgamation of salt and aluminum oxide. If Mexicans in a broad sense used objects made of
metal before the Scandinavians arrived-which is doubtful, because they do not

none have been found dating back to the Teotihuacán culture, nor to the Classic Maya era-these could only have been imported, or cold-made.

Copper, silver, tombac and gold were used for jewelry. It is known that the Mexicans, and more particularly the Toltecs, had become masters in this field. Dürer, who was well versed in it, had witnessed in Brussels (on August 26, 1520) the first exhibition of jewelry recently sent to Charles V by Hernán Cortés, and later wrote in his diary, "In all my life I have never seen anything that has so gladdened my heart." Unfortunately, little remains of these incomparable works of art. The con- quistadores turned what they received from the partition into ingots, and even more inexcusable, the emperor did the same with the royal fifth he was entitled to.

With copper-it was the rarest and most valuable metal-they made, in addition to jewelry, strange coins: bells and T-shaped knives that served as means of payment. And also flat axes, the edges of which were hammer-hardened, lever tools, needles, hooks, even some spades, unique in America. Bronze was used only to make awls, and with the copper-lead alloy rattles were made. Metal weapons were very rare- stone axes were far more widely used than copper ones-and tools were generally made of wood. Regarding this last point, only the Taraschi and Zapotecs of the Pacific coast were exceptions, but there is good reason to believe that they imported several of the metal objects from Peru. Historians report that Bartolomeo Ruiz de Estrada, Pizarro's guide, encountered in
high seas - west of the Equator - a Peruvian raft loaded with silver and gold jewelry, llama woolen blankets and cotton. The boat's owner, when questioned, said he had received orders to go to Panama, to exchange his cargo for red shells (Spondylus princeps), a mollusk found only on the Mexican coast that was used to dye textiles. Certainly some times the rafts reached as far as Mexico. In fact, Peruvian-made metal jewelry has been found in the cenotes of Chichén-Itzà and Copàn in Mayan territory, and also in the states of Oaxaca and Michoacàn on the Pacific coast. In particular, Walter Krickeberg (21) cites an embossed metal disc in the Chavìn style, discovered in a tomb in Zacualpa, Guatemala, and a headdress with gold clasp from Monte Albàn, of Chimaú workmanship. Other objects, such as the gold and silver hair removal tweezers used by Tarasque priests, were made in Mexico on Peruvian models.

Such an influence has nothing to surprise us. In the field of metallurgy, Peru was far more advanced than Central America. Which seems logical. On the one hand, indeed, it had received an important cultural input of Chinese and Indochinese origin, as has been conclusively demonstrated by Heine-Geldern (22): the Chavìn culture was born abruptly, without local precedent, many centuries before our era, with appreciable technical knowledge that included the source of metals. And on the other hand, the Vikings-staying only twenty-two years in Mexico-had ruled the Tiahuanaco empire for about three hundred years, and their descendants, the Incas, had resumed their role for two and a half centuries.

In Peru they worked with gold, champi - an alloy of gold and copper-silver, copper, bronze and even platinum. It was known

casting, rolling, bas-relief work, embossing, molding, welding metals, and casting them on wax. They knew annealing, carving, hollowing and making bimetallic objects. And again, they knew how to gild silver and silver copper, with such perfection that A. Hyat Verrill (23) wrote: "Anyone who examines [these objects] without knowing their origin would say that they were worked by electrolysis. However, since we cannot suppose that the chimus had any notion of electricity, we came up with another theory to explain what technique was used to coat one metal with another. Probably, some chemical procedure was used, although this seemed just as incredible as the system of electrolysis [...]. The only acceptable explanation is that the bath was applied by exhalations and that, by some manipulation with the molten gold or silver, emanations came out of it and were deposited on the other metal. But whatever method was used, it is certain that this art has been lost."

We know more about Peruvian goldsmithing than Mexican goldsmithing. Why - although Charles V (by order of February 13, 1535) gave this incredible order, "All the gold and all the silver of Peru shall be melted down in the royal mints of Seville, Toledo and Segovia," and if officers and soldiers rushed to turn their share of the spoils into ingots-thereafter countless discoveries were made in the huacas (necropolis) that had remained untouched at the time of the conquest. These finds have enabled us to amass admirable collections that give magnificent examples on Inca art. Unfortunately, we can only imagine the garden of the Temple of the Sun in Cuzco, with its trees and their fruits, flowers, animals of all species, cornfield, life-size statues, all in gold, including the temple, with its walls entirely covered with gold leaf. Above the altar was the immense sun occupying the entire width of the building, made of the same metal, which a conquis-
tador, it is said, played dice and lost in one night. But we can see pottery, amphorae, figurines of men and animals, and jewelry of all kinds, in solid gold and silver, worked as only the great goldsmiths of the Renaissance knew how to do later.

Copper, in the time of the Incas, was used to make all the common objects used by the people: saucepans, cauldrons, dishes, etc. Bronze was used to make knives, surgical instruments, pins, clasps, ringrim (although these ear rings generally were made of gold or stone), musical instruments and many other things, right down to Roman scales. And above all, weapons: fighting axes, halberds, and maces in particular. Unfortunately, we only know of Inca metallurgy, that is, that of an era of decadence from the time of the Viking empire of Tiahuanaco. A decadence that is manifest in architecture, the only field in which we have elements of comparison. The Incas were but survivors who, with tenacity and courage, had begun to reconquer the territories of their ancestors-they had not fully succeeded at the time of the Atahuallpa revolt and the arrival of the Spaniards-to reestablish the civilization destroyed by the Auracans in 1290 (20). In other words, they were trying, without fully succeeding, to imitate a past that was fading more and more as they generations succeeded one another. They could not find the runic writing of their ancestors, of which so many inscriptions subsist in Paraguay and Brazil, where we have surveyed them (24), (25), (26). In the field of

metallurgy, according to analyses requested by Eric Boman (27) and carried out by the Morin brothers, assayers at the Bank of France, the Incas extracted copper from silicates, carbonates and oxychloride, while the builders of Tiahuanaco used sulfides that demanded a much more sophisticated technique. They, above all, could no longer restore the use of iron.

2. The iron and steel of Tiahuanaco

Hyat Verrill (23) writes that the various prehistoric civilizations of the American continent, so varied in relation to their conception, motivations and techniques, all had one common feature: stone buildings and carvings. "Not only did their craftsmen carve the hardest rocks, a task that would be difficult for a worker of today equipped with some of the finest and most elaborate tempered steel tools, but-to the extent that we have been able to perform the tests-they did so without the aid of any metal tools. No tool that was definitely made of iron or steel has ever been found among the remains of these prehistoric civilizations. It is true that here we are dealing with a simple test by default, and that iron and steel disappear quickly without leaving a trace. And, as we now know that the ancient Egyptians possessed fine iron tools, although no one had discovered it before the opening of the tomb of the king Tutankhamun, it is still possible that steel tools will be discovered in some tomb or American ruins. Plenty of copper or bronze tools have been found, but none of them offer the ability to split even the most brittle stone, and the old belief that these peoples possessed the art of tempering bronze, now lost, is just a myth."

The great American archaeologist, to whom we owe the discovery of the gigantic ruins of Coclé in Panama, perfectly centers the problem: It is inconceivable that the stone carvers and sculptors of pre-Columbian America-we cannot say "prehistoric"
- were able to make their monumental works, whose workmanship is often of extreme exquisiteness, with simple tools of flint and obsidian, in Mexico, and of bronze, in Peru. The simplest technical analysis shows that they must have had steel tools. E'
true that none have been found. But, as Verrill rightly points out, iron hardly resists the action of time.
Let us add that such tools must have been very rare, and that, on the other hand, they should not have attracted the attention of the conquistadors, for whom they were commonplace and worthless. No doubt, moreover, the Indians had carefully hidden them -
were their most valuable asset-since the "white gods" had turned out to be mere predators.

Let us eliminate a false problem as of now: in America, before the conquest, iron and steel were perfectly known. At least in the territories that had been part of the Tiahuanaco Empire. We have solid linguistic evidence of this. In the official Inca idiom, Quitchua, we actually find the word k'kellay, which
means "iron," but none that defines steel. In the Guarani of Paraguay, "iron" was said kuarepotihü and steel kuarepotiata; in that of Brazil, there are itahùna and itaite, respectively. We will talk more about these terms in the great language of eastern South America later. But the absence, in Quitchua, of the word corresponding to steel and its presence in Guarani must

Be highlighted as of now.

Indeed, there is no way that the Vikings who landed in Mexico in 967 did not possess steel weapons and tools: for them the Bronze Age had been over one thousand five hundred years and more. It is normal that in twenty-two years they did not have time to teach the Toltecs the metallurgy of iron, which, with the means available at the time, was much more complex than that of the more malleable metals. What few tools they might have left behind had had plenty of time to disappear in the five hundred years between their departure and the arrival of the Spaniards. In Tiahuanaco, on the other hand, they had had to make iron work, but, most likely, the corresponding techniques had been lost in the destruction of the Empire. We have at least a clue, if not proof: the Incas possessed, among their weapons, no gladi or swords, while the Mexicans made them of wood, encrusted with obsidian. Well, Inca troops were well-organized and well-armed: the absence of gladi, essential for any infantry, is therefore incomprehensible to us. Unless, prior to that, namely in the Viking era, steel was used to make them, and later, once the procedure for obtaining them was lost, it was accepted to replace steel with bronze, which could only guarantee significantly inferior weapons. When the Spaniards arrived, therefore, both in Peru and in Mexico, only rare steel tools must have remained. Perhaps they had even all disappeared, as the name of the metal had been forgotten. But not that of iron, which continued to be found in the mines, without knowing how to work it. On the contrary, in the regions of Paraguay and Brazil, where some of the fugitives from Tiahuanaco had taken refuge, the use of steel weapons and tools had not stopped even if, as time went on, it was less and less widespread. But it seems certain that that memory was still alive within the Guarani peoples at the time of the conquest.

We can perhaps bring tangible evidence of the use of steel weapons in the Tiahuanaco Empire. In fact, in May 1976, we traveled to La Rioja, a small town in the foothills of the Argentine Andes, to take up a runic inscription that we had been reported to have found in the Talampaya valley. Naturally, we got in touch with the author of the discovery, Mr. Martin Juàrez. For the past twenty years or so, this amateur archaeologist has been spending weekends, when time permits, at the foot of the Precordillera, and he collects everything he finds there, from indigenous pottery shards to the remains of prehistoric animals; he also photographs lithographs, which are not lacking. His interpretations are sometimes very personal, but no one has ever been able to question that he is honest and disinterested.

Juárez showed us his collections. Most of the pieces interested fields other than ours. Until one metal object appeared: a steel blade with an embossed silver handle, without any guard or cross. At first glance, it was a stocco, a weapon that the Spaniards did not know but which, instead,
was in common use among Germanic peoples from the Middle Ages onward. One of our traveling companions, Professor José Triviño, examining the weapon with a lens, noticed what appeared to be an inscription on it. So we cleaned that part of the blade very superficially and four runic characters appeared almost immediately, very clear.

Juàrez told us - and later testified in writing as well - that he found the piece in February 1972 in Cerro Velezco - 14 km

from La Rioja - wedged between the ribs of a skeleton, in a small cave that could be accessed very laboriously, located at an altitude of 2,300 meters. He had been unable to carry the skeleton away because of the rugged terrain. The weapon had suffered only slight blackish oxidation, which was normal in the dry air of the Andes, and it had not been cleaned after the discovery. Juárez willingly agreed to entrust us with the stocco, to examine it. We had it studied in Buenos Aires, by one of our collaborators, a technician in metallurgy, who measured it with the most improved instruments. Unfortunately, we could not perform the metallographic analysis: it was impossible to do so without damaging the piece.

The weapon measures 519 mm, the blade 409 mm long, 10.8 mm average width and 3.5 mm average thickness. The blade is made of untempered steel of excellent quality. The handle, made of embossed silver. - as we have already mentioned-bears a decorative frieze that is certainly Nordic. It is surmounted by a wooden sphere that would appear to be of much more recent manufacture and on which is stamped a motif suggesting a four-petaled flower. At the junction with the blade, there is a copper washer and a leather one. Some steel, elastic slats (one of which has been repaired by serving a yellowish metal, which appears to be bronze) were used to secure the weapon in the non-existent scabbard. The threads of the blade, which are not sharp, bear traces of rounding, erased at the spot we cleaned: this shows that the weapon remained intact after its discovery.

Of the inscription on the blade, only four characters are clearly legible: a fehu-which has a very distinctive shape already encountered in the runic inscriptions on stone from Paraguay and Brazil (24), (25), (26)-an isa, an ansuz, and a thurisaz:
fiath.

Of course, nothing proves that f is the first letter of a word, since it appears to be preceded by erased marks. However, Professor Hermann Munk, runologist at the Institute of Human Sciences that we headed in Buenos Aires, tells us that, in Norse, fia has a sense that does not clash on a weapon: "to hate." If it really is this word, th can only be the beginning of another word; which is permissible because, in runic inscriptions, there are generally no separations between terms, so two or three undefined letters can be guessed.

So, everything seems to indicate that the weapon is a Viking stoccus, what the Germans call a Stab, the first pre-Columbian steel object found in South America. Without a metallographic analysis we cannot be more precise. We point out that the fact, in itself, would not be surprising. One of the Incaic-and preIncaic-royal roads ran through what is now the province of La Rioja, where sections of it still exist. The excellent preservation of the piece would be normal in the Cordillera,
while any iron or steel object many centuries old would have long since disintegrated under the tropics or the equator.

On the other hand, any doubt about the weapon's authenticity can be abandoned: why would one hide a fake in a cave where it was likely that no one would ever discover it? It is impossible to question the honesty of Juárez, who kept the object for years without giving it much importance and refused, before and after our examination, to sell it.

3. The mines of Peru

We can prove that no iron was ever produced in Mexico before the Conquest because the people of Central America were not familiar with mining. Precious metals were also rare for the same reason. Gold was painstakingly extracted--by washing--from the rivers of the present-day states of Oaxaca, Veracruz and Guerrero, along with a small percentage of silver, when today 25 percent of the world's production of the latter metal comes from Mexico and gold, for this country, is little more than a by-product. Copper was found in some surface veins in which the metal was in a pure state. For this reason it was more valued than silver, just as silver was more valued than gold, which certainly did not abound. Montezuma's treasury, built up over several generations, contained only 600,000 piastres of gold (pesos de oro) according to Bernal Dìaz del Castillo's account (28), or an estimated 2,478 or 2,730 kilograms, when the mere amount of the Atahuallpa raid in Peru was 1,326,539 piastres
of gold (5,545 or 6,035 kg), and 51,610 marks of silver, or 10,786 or 11,742 kg. If Peru overflowed with precious metals, not to mention copper or tin, this stemmed from the fact that production was stupendously organized. Gold was obtained by washing the rivers that descended from the Andes, and canals, sometimes several kilometers long, such as those of Vinaque, near Tiahuanaco, and Chungamayo, near La Paz, in which water from the glaciers was passed over gold-bearing lands. But mines were also exploited. At Huabamba (Nusta Hisspana) one can still see, carved into the rock, the structures of a gold smelter, where the ore was processed. And at Machu Picchu there are the ruins of a millstone that was used to grind gold quartz, from which the metal was extracted by amalgamation. Poznansky, an engineer, says it was a process brought by Europeans before the conquest (29). Silver, on the other hand, came almost exclusively from mines: the main ones were in the Porco region on the eastern slope of the Bolivian Andes, which the Spaniards would later call the Sierra de la Plata, sierra of silver. There stood the large village that came to be called Villa de Plata, not far from the Poggio de Potosi, which had not yet been exploited before the conquest and from which incalculable riches would come out in the following centuries.

At the time of the Incas, there were no professional miners. Production was provided by a firm of labor. Every year, recruited indigenous youths would leave for the mountainous metalliferous areas, where, during the four hottest months, they would collect grains and nuggets in rivers or wash boxes; or they would mine the ore in the tunnels. It was an honor for them, as the metals went to the Sun and the emperor, his son. The regulations were very strict. It was forbidden to work in the wash houses and mines the other eight months of the year.

During service the recruit had, obligatorily, to be accompanied by his woman. Supplies, which were plentiful, were secured from the royal warehouses. Feasts were organized, which made the work cheerful. We do not know if this system was already in place at the time of the Tiahuanaco Empire. But we can assume so, since the Incas, as far as possible, always did everything to imitate their ancestors.

To melt grains, nuggets, mixtures or ore, as the case may be, charcoal furnaces in which fire was activated with the help of large torches were used before the Conquest. Often, because

required considerable effort, these were replaced by two particularly ingenious systems. Cieza de Leòn (30) relates that the most primitive of these consisted of making shapes out of earth, the same size and in the same way as Spanish flowerpots, which had holes and openings just about everywhere.

These huayra (the word means "wind") according to Father Barba (31) were about a meter high and 40 centimeters in diameter, wider at the top than at the base. They were filled with coal, on which metal or ore was laid. Then they were placed "on top of hillocks or on the sides of hills, where the wind blew hardest," and this produced metal cones that were refined in tocochemps, small furnaces.

The other method-which was more widespread-also used the wind, which was "caught" by appropriately oriented leather pavilions. In kjory-huayra-china, ("wind furnaces for melting gold," in the Aymara language) and kollke-huayra-china, ("wind furnaces for melting silver"), an extremely pure metal was produced. It was not so long ago that the lights of the Indian "smelters" could still be seen blinking on the flanks of the Cerro de Potosi at night.

4. Paraguay's phantom silver

In February 1516, Juan Dìaz de Solìs, Spain's first pilot-a sort of minister of the navy-was skirting the coast of South America with three caravels, in search of the strait whose existence was known (15) but which had not yet been located, when he reached the huge estuary formed by the junction of Parana and Uruguay, which would later be called Rìo de
la Plata, "river of silver." He sailed up it some 250 km to the confluence, where, during an attempted landing, he and his men were attacked and killed by Indians. Deprived of its leader, the flotilla took the road back.

One of the three vessels wrecked on the coast of Guayrà, the maritime province of Paraguay, but its crew managed to reach, safe and sound, the coastal island we now call Santa Caterina, where they were well received by the natives. The Spaniards noted - rejoicing - that these, although "of a very low cultural level," nevertheless had silver objects. They hastened to christen their refuge Isla de la Plata, "island of silver," a name it retained on some papers for several decades. But they soon had to reconsider.

The Indians, from whom the castaways had quickly learned the language, told them that that metal came neither from the island, nor from the adjacent shore, but from the territories of the White King, whose capital, with stone palaces covered in gold, was located on the mountain by an immense lake.

It was reached by going up a river that ran into the interior of the lands, then crossing a particularly inhospitable region. The Guaraní had tried several times - over the last few centuries - to reach this land of plenty that their ancestors knew well, but each time they had been repelled by the frontier troops of the empire which, it would later be known, was that of the Incas.

One of the castaways, Aleixo García, a Portuguese serving Castile, decided to embark on the adventure himself, with three Spaniards and a small group of natives. He crossed the Guayrà

in 1521, without much trouble thanks to a well-trodden route (24), reached Paragua'y (present-day Asuncion) where he recruited about two thousand Indians, then headed "toward the west, to discover and recognize these lands from where they brought beautiful clothes and metal objects, both for war and peace" (31). The great troop went up the Paraguay River to Cerro San Fernando, a few leagues from the village that still bore the northern name of Weibingo (24), (15), (26); they went into the Chaco, reached the foothills of the Andes and penetrated Inca territory-the Spaniards had not yet occupied Peru-as far as Tomina and Tarabuco. But the Charca, vassals of the Incas, repelled what constituted a veritable invasion army. So García took the road back, with a rich booty of gold and silver, and regained Paraguay. On the banks of the river, enemy tribes massacred the whites and a good number of their auxiliaries. Some Indians from the initial group managed to reach the island of Santa Caterina, where they recounted what had happened and showed the "souvenirs" they had brought with them. When, in 1526, Sebastiano Caboto, who set out from Spain with four ships to follow Magellan's trail, collected the surviving castaways and heard the account he was given of García's expedition, he did not hesitate to override the orders he had received and went into the Rìo de la Plata, intending to sail up the Paraguay and reach the Sierra de la Plata. Repulsed by the natives at the height of Asunciòn, he had to turn back.

We will not discuss again the attempts made by the Spanish during the following decades to conquer, after Paraguay, the fabled lands - but absolutely real - of the White King. Let us simply recall that Ayolas, who set out on the trail of García, suffered the same fate as the Portuguese after he too reached the Andes and collected a heavy haul of precious metal; Irala, too, later reached the Sierra de la Plata, which was already occupied-but he ignored it-by Pizarro's men. Everywhere, even far to the north, in the region of Xarayes, the natives had confirmed to them the existence of the white ruler of incalculable riches, whose capital of golden palaces, inhabited by men with long ears, was located in the island of Paradise, in the middle of a large lake, not far from the village of the women without husbands (32).

The Argentine historian Enrique de Gandìa (33) clearly demonstrated that part of the hearsay collected by the Spaniards referred, in an inaccurate geographical context, to Lake Titicaca and its Sun Island. For us, this is an extremely important point: the Guarani who had attacked the Inca territories throughout the ages, however, knew nothing about their ruler and their capital. For them, it was always the empire of Tiahuanaco. Which is not surprising, since Paraguay was part of it.

We have seen elsewhere (24), (26) that the Vikings who settled on the plateau had laid out "easy routes" (peaviru, in Guarani) that, connected to the royal roads, led to the Atlantic, reaching it at two main points: the Gulf of Santos and the coast opposite the island of Santa Caterina. On the northern road that from Weibingo reached the town whose current name is Pedro Juan Caballero and then reached Santos, was the huge complex of Cerro Corà (26) with the imposing fortress not far from which, at Cerro Guazú, we detected hundreds of inscriptions runic; Professor Hermann Munk was able to translate sixty-one of them.

Well, in 1975, we made a discovery in Cerro Corá that we could not talk about before it made sense to us; and now that time has come.

Very close to Itaguambypé, the fortress in question, runs a stream, the Aquidabán-Nigui, whose course is fragmented by a small waterfall that we described in our work Le Roy vicking du Paraguay. Carved into the bedrock are steps
so wide that they can only have been left by men much larger than the present-day Guarani and Paraguayans. Overhanging, the ruins of a 16.80-meter-long building can be seen. We speculated that it was a guard post, a blockhouse to protect bathers-evidently unarmed-who used, as the soldiers of the Cerro Corà detachment still do, the natural basin carved by the waters; or even a sauna. Today, we have to reconsider these interpretations.

In fact, we found a surprising object amidst the scattered blocks behind one of the side walls of the building, whose base of natural stone-but cut vertically by man-is still perfectly preserved. It is a rectangular brick, 11.5 cm wide and 6 cm thick. Its actual length is 21 cm, but a break does not allow it to be measured exactly. For reasons of symmetry, however, it can be assumed to have been about 24 cm. On one of the faces of the brick is a cavity in the shape of a truncated rectangular pyramid, 2.8 cm deep. The base - the open part - measures 11 cm by 3.5 cm and the top - the bottom - 8.6 cm by 2.1 cm. The center of each small side of the base is connected
to the outer side surface of the brick by a half-pipe-shaped channel, 6.5 cm long by 1.7 cm wide and 1.2 cm deep. At least, these are the dimensions of the intact part.
Approximate dimensions, given the poor state of preservation of a visibly very old piece.

This object can only be a precious metal mold.
In fact, the shape of its cavity corresponds exactly to that of the gold and silver bars that are still used today; a shape that has nothing arbitrary about it, since it is the only one that allows the block of metal to be easily extracted after it has cooled. On the other hand, the channels are unexpected. One could be used for the introduction of the casting and the other for letting air out, but only if the mold was double, which is unlikely.

A goldsmith we consulted who was a student at a specialized technical school in Germany speculated that there might have been difficulties in extracting the ingot, since the walls of the cavity are not (and never were) perfectly smooth, like those of our molds. Perhaps the two channels were used to extend the metal block with two bars, which were easy to "peel off" and would later be cut. However, this is a minor problem, because the nature of the object is undoubted, as is its pre-Columbian origin.

In the interior of Paraguay, since the Conquest, no gold or silver, of whatever origin and for whatever use they were, has ever been smelted. More or less deserted until about thirty years ago, apart from a few small tribes of Indians and a group of nomadic Guayachi, the Amambay, where Cerro Corá is located, is populated only by rare isolated farmers in the forest, with the exception of Pedro Juan Caballero.

So, we need to revise our earlier assumptions about the Aquidabàn-Nigui building, whose size, moreover, seemed to be

excessive for a fort or sauna. It was a foundry for precious metals, and logically it was near the bank of a stream and under the protection of a fortress.

Two problems remain to be solved: where did these metals come from and why was it deemed necessary to smelt them into ingots? Regarding the first point, the answer is easy. The nearest gold and silver streams and mines are in the Andes cordillera. There are none in Paraguay, where, in any case, the indigenous people did not know the use of the metals, but they did know their names, which at first glance seems very strange. In avañe'e, the Guarani language of the south, there are actually the following words:

Metal: kuarepoti, from kuare, cavity; re, which was; tepoti, residue: residue extracted from a cavity, i.e., a mine.

From these words, all metal names are derived: Gold:
kuarepotiju, yellow metal.
Silver: kuarepotiti: white metal.
Copper: kuarepotinè, smelly metal, and kuarepotipyta, red metal.
Lead: kuarepotimembe: malleable metal.
Tin: kuarepotijy, literally cookable metal: fusible metal.
Iron: kuarepotihü, black metal.
Steel: kuarepotiata, hard metal.

As can be seen, these are artificial terms, although composed in accordance with the trend of a language like Guarani, which unifies vocabulary. The question is whether they were coined before or after the Conquest, and the opinions of linguists and ethnologists on this point are conflicting. We point out, first, that these vocabularies were not influenced by Spanish.

This would have been logical if they arose with the importation by the conquistadors of hitherto unknown metals. And then Guarani, a language that is written only by rare specialists, although spoken by millions, became Hispanized over time. Many Spanish words have been introduced into it, sometimes superficially "Guaranized," either to express new concepts or, more rarely, to replace terms that dictionaries today report as archaisms or simply omit.

This is the case with the names of metals. In the Guarani-Spanish dictionary of Jover Peralta and Osuna (34), there are-have we respected the ancient spelling ?* The Guarani orthography was unified, in 1950, by the representatives of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay, meeting in Montevideo. The decisions of the congress, however, are not always implemented, quite the contrary. In any case, they cannot be employed in the field of toponymy: one would have to rectify all the maps, at the risk of often rendering dubious the interpretation of documents and works that refer to four hundred years or more of the history of four countries. Confusion is especially great in the field of accents, which suffer from the contradictory double influence of Spanish and Portuguese. Let us say that for good measure in Guarani words the tonic accent is highlighted with an acute accent only when it is not on the last syllable, as is almost always the case in the southern dialect and, less frequently, in the northern dialect due to the fact that a phonetic suffix is often added. - cuarepotitï, silver, and, as archaisms, cuarepotiyu, gold, and cuarepoti, with the double meaning of metal and iron. Regarding the latter word, doubts are not allowed:

before the Conquest there was a village on the Paraguay River-whose present name is Rosario-which was then called Cuarepoti, facing a road leading into Peru of which there are still about one hundred and fifty kilometers.

All leads one to believe, then, that the names of the metals, simple derivatives of a generic term, were, like this one, prior to the arrival of the Spaniards. If not, one would have to ask how the Guarani defined the White King's gold they spoke of and the silver they possessed, as we have already seen.

Judging from its context (26), the Cerro Corà smelter dates to the Tiahuanaco era, when Vikings and their couriers used the northern peaviru to travel to Santos. Local traditions also add that in those times caravans of Indians regularly transported important loads of metals there, no doubt carried by llamas (35). Of course, this traffic was interrupted around 1290, at the destruction of the empire, and was not resumed in Incan times since the Incas never reconquered the eastern territories and the only contact they had with the Guarani occurred in sporadic conflicts along the frontier.

Silver came to Paraguay, then, via the peaviru, from the Sierra de la Plata. Why was it being made into ingots? There is only one possible answer to that question: because it had to be exported in equal, easy-to-count pieces. What else could it be used for, since the Guarani, who remained in their Neolithic state, did not use metals? Silver-perhaps even gold, but in much smaller quantities-continued on its path, a path that led only to the Atlantic. But later where was it taken, and how?

5. The strange mines of Brazil

To reach the Atlantic-aside from using the roads that coming from Tiahuanaco, via the Sierra de la Plata, crossed Paraguay-the Vikings used the incomparable river route constituted by the Amazon; at least in the dry season, when its waters are less encumbered by submerged logs. Nothing remains of their settlements on the island of Marajó-the river delta-except the rune decorations that adorn many pieces of the famous local pottery: we reproduced some of them in a previous book (25). One has to descend 500 km south to find, in the bay of Säo Marcos, the walled remains of a "great fortress" and, on the lakes that form the Grajau River, coming from the Mearim, those of ports whose "long
lines of petrified plinths above which were the shipyards," (36) as written by Ludwig Schwennhagen who accurately surveyed it around 1925.

Another 300 kilometers in the same direction, and we arrive at the mouth of the Parnaïba, a large navigable river whose delta provides an excellent landing place. There Portuguese colonizers had the surprise of discovering ruins of fortified walls made of cemented stones at the edge of the village of Tutòia (now Luiz Correia), whose cacicco had authority over all the Guarani tribes in the region. 100 km inland from the lands is the Sete Cidades (Seven Cities)-a giant copy of Lower Saxony's Externsteine-with some statues of men with European features and magnificent inscriptions
rune that Professor Munk was able to translate without any problems (25).

It was undoubtedly on the settlement of the city that currently bears the name Parnaïba (formerly, Amarraçäo, "ditching") that was

located the Viking port: a mining port. Piauì, of which Parnaïba was the outlet to the Atlantic, is now, after its occupation by bandeirantes who came from Säo Paulo in the second half of the 17th century, the most desertified region in Brazil. The people of its countryside-blond-haired mestizos-live off goats and a few cassava plantations, in a subsistence economy. But a few centuries ago that was not the case. The Portuguese discovered, on arriving there, many exhausted mines, particularly in the Serra do Sumidoro where many open galleries can be seen in the argentiferous rocks. According to Schwennhagen (35) the bars of the Rìo Longa, a tributary of Parnaïba, are just the vestiges of ancient installations for washing refined gold. But there is even more.

The Säo Francisco is one of Brazil's most important rivers. Its source is in the southwest of the state of Minas Gerais, which it flows through. It then crosses Bahia on its northward course, then traces a curve that leads it to flow into the Atlantic, between the states of Alagoas and Sergipe, to which it serves as a border. It is more than two-thirds navigable, and large boats can still be seen there, which, by their shape, the way they are built and the figure of their prow, unquestionably resemble drakkars. The Vikings had settled a number of Guarani tribes on the banks who were loyal to them: they did this on all the rivers they used as a communication route. Today, however, the tribes are found only at the mouth and headwaters. The explanation for this anomaly is at once the simplest and the most complicated to imagine: the middle course of the Säo Francisco did not exist at that time. In its place, between the present town of Remanso and the falls of Paulo Afonso, over an average width of
200 km, stretched an immense lagoon, made up of swamps and lakes that filled up in winter and from which emerged many hill ranges, some of which reached a height of 300 meters above sea level. Three rivers drained its waters.

Two of them headed eastward: the Opala, which today bears the name Säo Francisco, and the Reala, whose traces have not been found since. Another river followed the valley that cuts through the sierras between Remanso and Säo João do Piauì and flowed into the present-day Rìo Piauì, to which it must have brought a much greater volume of water than that coming to it from Säo Raimundo Nonato. The river, therefore, must have been navigable at least from the junction of the
its two arms and, in winter, from the lagoon. From the Parnaïba, of which it is a tributary, it led to the ocean.

In 1587, historian Gabriel Soares, who mentions Schwennhagen (36), heard from the Guarani of Bahia, Sergipe, and Piauì about the Great Lagoon (Upa-Assu), with its islands that housed huge silver mines. They believed it still existed. The swamps, therefore, had not dried up since time immemorial. But as it was
success? We know because of the report presented by General Ivo Prado at the Geography Congress in Belo Horizonte in 1919. The report was about the Rìo Reala: the waters of the lagoon, at a given moment, found a sufficient outlet in the Paulo Afonso Falls and the middle course of the Säo Francisco River as we know it is what remains of the Upa-Assu. The Reala disappeared and the Piaui lost one of its arms.

Was such a transformation made by nature? In a volcanic region, one might admit that an earthquake abruptly lowered the threshold of the outlet that gave birth to Opala. But here we are not talking about something like that. There are only two explanations

possible: either that it was the result of erosion caused by water flowing through it, or that it was a magnificent work of hydraulic genius. One must immediately discard the first hypothesis, because the wear and tear on the rock would have taken thousands - or millions - of years. That leaves the second. And, in fact, Ludwig Schwennhagen (36), whose luxuriant imagination never damages the results of accurate and fair observation, meticulously examined the falls not yet transformed by the present power plant and discovered there the traces of an extraordinary work of art: "five symmetrical channels pouring their waters separately into the same quadrangular cavity, 50 meters deep and carved into the living rock."

But why had this work been carried out? Basically, to establish a permanent river route-which could not be represented by the Great Lagoon-between an exceptionally rich mining area and the Atlantic. An area that included not only the old silver mines of the Upa-Assu, but also the territory of what is now the State of Minas Gerais, where countless pre-Columbian mines can be seen and where the Portuguese, according to a historian who quotes Fawcett (37) without naming him, allegedly discovered in the 16th century a tribe whose members had beards and light skin: the Molomachi, whose women were "white like the English, with golden, platinum-colored or brown hair" and had "delicate features, small hands and feet, and beautiful, silky hair."

Like those in Paraguay, the Guarani of the region were perfectly familiar with the different metals, although everything seems to show that they were ignorant of their use. Nevertheless, the names they gave to minerals were not the same as those in the South. Instead of using the word kuarepoti as a constant basis of variable suffixes, they used the word ita, whose current sense is "stone" but which relates etymologically to any hard body and particularly to metal. Not to mention the phonetic syllable, deprived of all meaning, that generally follows the accented vowel in the ñe'engatu language, i.e., Northern Guarani ?* In our previous works, we have used like everyone else the expression of "tupiguaranì" to refer to the Guarani of Brazil and the word "tupi" to differentiate the tribes that speak it. Which earned us a timely reprimand from our collaborator and friend, Professor Vincente Pistilli, director of the Paraguayan Institute of Human Sciences and a great guarani scholar. "Tupi," he says, means "rough," "savage." The Guarani applied the term to other indigenous nations of cultures inferior to their own. Those in the South called Tupina, "tupi-like," their northern cousins long ago. It was the missionaries of the 16th and 17th centuries who, through ignorance of the language, unduly reduced to its root, changing its meaning, a word that was a somewhat pejorative nickname. The Guarani of the Amazon basin called their current idiom (and still do) ñe'engatu, "good language," and those of the Rìo de la Plata basin called it avañe'e, "language of men." The dialectal differences between these two forms of Guarani are minimal....

Thus we have:

Gold: itajùba, yellow metal. Silver:

itatìnga, white metal.

Copper: itanéma: smelly metal, and itaiqueza, metal in wire (from ita, metal; i, determinative; que (ke), particular indicating destination and sä, wire).

Lead: itamembéca, malleable metal. Tin:
itayka, fusible metal.
Iron: itaùna, black metal. Steel:
itaùite, upper metal.

Ludwig Schwennhagen gives itaite the sense of "double stone." But this Austrian certainly did not have to master Guarani, which is no longer spoken in Piaui, where he lived. Professor Pistilli told us that ite, a suffix designating the superlative, can mean, by derivation, "true" or "authentic," but nothing else. On the other hand, note in the nga ending of itatinga, which is not guarani, a contraction of inga, the original form of "Inca." Itatinga, thus, would mean "white Inca metal." Thanks to a runic inscription from Sete Cidades (25) we know that the Vikings of Tiahuanaco were already using the term "inca," which in Norse means "descendants." So, we are not surprised that the Indians of Piauí used it to define a metal particularly sought after by their "lords." Finally, we note that all the words we have provided the list above are artificially composed, like those from Paraguay and found in pre-Columbian toponymy. The term itaiqueza, wire metal, to designate copper, shows that metallurgy in Piauí had reached a high degree of technical development.

It remains to be understood why the Vikings exploited mines-primarily silver-in northeastern Brazil and placed such importance on the metals they extracted, to the point that they undertook and brought to fruition the enormous work required by the drying up of the Great Lagoon to gain easier access to the deposits in central Brazil after the depletion of those in Piaui. No doubt they needed, for them and for the indigenous peoples, iron, copper and tin to make weapons and tools. But what could they use the gold and silver for, which they evidently did not send to Peru, since they were regurgitating it? They could only export it from their port of Parnaïba. To where, and how? That is the question we have already asked about the precious metals smelted in Paraguay on the way to the Atlantic.

6. The confirmed hypothesis

We now have the complete panorama of pre-Columbian metallurgy. Copper, silver, and gold were worked in Mexico, and secondarily tombac, bronze, and an alloy of copper and lead. The reduction of metals from ore was ignored. So, one was limited to collecting gold and silver from the rivers by washing and scratching a few superficial strands of copper, tin and lead where the metal was in a pure state. Except for a few weapons and tools, nothing but goldsmithing of an exceptional artistic quality was produced. Silver was rarer than gold, which was a by-product. In Peru, by contrast, where gold, silver, copper and undoubtedly iron were worked, the mines were intensely industrially exploited,
as well as the gold wash houses, which were handled magnificently. Silver came mainly from the Porco area, located in a cordillera mountain range on the eastern flank of today's Bolivian plateau, southeast of Tiahuanaco-a range that the Spanish called Sierra de la Plata, sierra of silver, and where there was a large village they called Villa de Plata, or Villa de la Plata.

The Vikings of Tiahuanaco and their descendants, the Incas, used

the precious metal to decorate their temples and palaces, to make pottery, and to construct works of art of exquisite taste, some of which we can still admire today, although the Spaniards melted down without mercy or brains all those that came into their hands. In the days of the Old Empire, however, not all the silver extracted from the mines was used on site. Some of it-perhaps even gold, but in minimal quantities-was taken to the Atlantic, using the northern stretch of the peaviru, the one that, in Paraguay, passed through Cerro Corá, where the metal was made into ingots. It was not used by the local population, we are certain, since the natives still lived in the age of polished stone and the names they gave to the metals were artificially coined. From the port of Santos, evidently, silver was leaving by sea, to an unknown destination.
This traffic stopped when Tiahuanaco was taken by the Auracans, around 1290. Nevertheless, the Guarani remembered it: they described to the Spanish the lake capital with the White King's golden palace. It was the capital of a destroyed empire, to which they still sent, at the beginning of the 16th century, expeditions that were always repelled, but thanks to which they collected as far as the island of Santa Caterina-the island of silver-the metal of their dreams and traditions. A capital to which led a great river that would soon be called Rìo de la Plata, river of silver.

In the Brazilian Northeast, it was not from Peru that the precious metals came from. Transportation via the Amazon would have been too irregular and haphazard, and access to the river from the mining regions of the Andes would have cost too much effort. Silver came first from the Piauí, then from the deposits of the Great Desiccated Lagoon.
It descended without difficulty down the Rìo Parnaïba to the ocean, with no knowledge of its final destination. Here, too, the indigenous people did not use it and, as in Paraguay, attributed artificial names to metals, the result of linguistic adaptation to a reality that was unknown to them, and which would remain so even after the retreat of the Viking forces, since thereafter they never went beyond the level of a Neolithic culture.

The Vikings of Tiahuanaco, in the 12th and 13th centuries, then sent to Santos and Parnaïba some of the silver extracted from the Sierra de la Plata mines and that which came from the Piauí and Upa-Assu deposits. This metal disappeared on the ocean. It had well to go somewhere, but we don't know where. Well, in Chapter I we saw that at the same time the Templars, who knew of the existence of America-as evidenced by the seal that covered their secret-and who possessed an unexplained port at La Rochelle on the Atlantic, flooded Western Europe with a silver coin whose origin has always remained mysterious, but which, in Normandy, popular tradition located across the ocean. For the sake of logic, one conclusion imposes itself: the Temple imported American silver.

chapter three. 1. the templars of Mexico.

1. The country of the ancestors

"I regard you as relatives, because, from what my father tells me, who had heard it from his own, our predecessors, from whom I am descended, were not natives of this land, but newcomers, who came with a great lord, who, shortly afterward, returned to his own land. After many years had passed, he returned to seek them, but they would not

leave, because they had settled here, they already had children and wives and great authority in the country. He left very disappointed and said he would send his sons to rule them, and he would ensure peace and justice, the ancient laws and religion of their ancestors. That is the reason why we always hoped and believed that those from over there would come to rule and command us, and I think those are you, seeing where you come from."

According to Lòpez de Gomara (38), and the text coincides with those left us by other Conquest-era historians, these were the phrases that Motecuhzoma II Xocoyotzin, whom we call Montezuma, addressed to Hernán Cortés when the Spaniards entered Tenochtitlán, present-day Mexico. The bearded emperor
blond (28) referred to the history of the fifth Toltec ruler, predecessor of the Aztec dynasty in the Anàhuac, from whom he was actually descended, because his recent and direct ancestor, Acamapichtli, first king of his tribe in 1376, was the son of a princess of the earlier ruling house.

Having landed at Pànuco in 967, Quetzalcòatl, "white, blond, bearded and well-mannered (39)" - a Viking jarl who was likely named Ullman-had allied himself with the Toltecs who recognized him as their leader. During a personal reign of 20 years, he had passed on the high culture of medieval Europe to his particularly receptive subjects. In 987, he had absented himself, not to return to his country, but to impose his authority on the Maya of Yucatán. Some difficulties with the natives, evidenced by the frescoes in the Temple of the Warriors at Chichén-Itzà-which show scenes of battles between Indians and whites-had forced him, two years later, to return to the Anàhuac, where the bad news told by Montezuma awaited him. So he had taken to the sea again in the direction of South America, where his descendants would found the empire of Tiahuanaco. We have demonstrated all this in an earlier work (20). What we need to establish now is, first of all, the reason why the Aztec emperor recognized the Spaniards as the "sons" of Quetzalcóatl: "...I think it is you, seeing where you come from." His reasoning manifests one certainty: the civilizer of Mexico had come from across the ocean. We note, therefore, that the migration by sea referred to is only that of a group of conquerors who, of course, found a preexisting population in Central America.

This last remark would be superfluous if it did not allow us to understand the real meaning of the data they provide,
about the people of Mexico, indigenous codes and some traditions noted by historians. One and the other report, indeed, of tribes arriving from the sea and coming from the north or east and born already in America from Chicomòztoc, "the Seven Caves," which other texts speak of, however, only as a place of worship: "All the nations of this land," Sahagùn says, "have the habit of claiming, not without vanity, that they were created in these seven caves and that from there their ancestors were born, which is false, because they were not born there, but went there to make their sacrifices when they were in that valley," before arriving in Tula. Among these tribes, the Codex Vaticanus-whose interpretation Kingsborough provides us with-speaks of the Olmecs, Totonacs and Chichimecs, to name only the best known, and fixes the date of their arrival in 1194, when the former were already settled on the gulf coast in 31 B.C. (stele of the Tres Zapotes), the latter left buildings in Tajìn that date back to the year 400 of our era, while the third invaded

Mexico in the late 12th century, but by land from the south of the present-day United States. In reality, the history of a people begins only the day an event comes to break the monotony of an existence that, until then, dragged on through the generations without notable change. In the midst of that people a chief is born who launches his people into some adventure, or a conqueror imposes himself on them, and this changes customs: events occur that remain engraved in memory and can be recounted. The story that arises is the one created by that man, or by the group to which that transformation is due, good or bad,
first suffered and then accepted. Thus the history of Gaul goes back to Caesar. And, likewise, the history of Mexico goes back to the landing at Pànuco of Ullman and his men. Well, Father Diego Durán (42) fixes the year 902 as the arrival of the "tribes," that is, at a date very close to that of the arrival of the Vikings. On the other hand, this does not prevent that another sizeable group-about which we ignore everything-might have appeared in the year 1194. In any case, if Chicomòztoc is the place of origin of overseas emigrants, these were certainly not indigenous Americans.

Father Bernardino of Sahagùn (40) was the most knowledgeable and unbiased of Mexico's historians and used a method of surveying that was very advanced for his time; he questioned acculturated Indians-often priests-who had had access to the codices later burned in the Spanish autodafés about their customs and habits. He personally gave us another interpretation of the Seven Caves in the introduction to one of his essays, "On the origin of these peoples, the elders tell us that they came from the north by sea. It is certain that some ships came, and it is not known how they were built. There is a tradition among these natives that they started from the seven caves. And that these seven caverns are the seven vessels or galleys with which the first inhabitants of this land arrived [...] who landed in the port of Pànuco, which they call Panco [actually, Panutlàn]; and which means place where those who passed the water arrived." Clearly, these were not indigenous people. First, the Indians of Mexico did not have boats capable of crossing the ocean; and second, all traditions coincide: it was Quetzalcòatl who landed in Pànuco in 967. One wonders, however, from where they could have arrive, via the Atlantic, peoples of the yellow race. Because, outside the
"new continent," Mongolians are found only in Asia and Polynesia.

It is surely this fact that prompted some historians such as the Father of Sahagùn to identify North America as the place of origin of the Indians of Mexico-which is true only for some of them-descended from emigrants who made a very long overland journey. All the more easily because it is in the north that indigenous traditions situate the point of departure of the groups that came from the sea, one of which at least-the Ullman-Quetzalcòatl group-was composed, as we have seen, of white, blond, bearded men. But not in the northern Anáhuac. The texts agree: the Nahua peoples, that is, the conquering white minorities, had come from overseas.

Their homeland is referred to as Tlapallàn, and everyone agrees on the meaning of this toponym: "Country across the sea" (Sahagùn) (40); "Country to the east" (Rendòn) (43); "In the sea of the east" (Beauvois) (44); "Country of the dawn" or "Country of the East" (Krickeberg) (21).

This last opinion is important, especially since its author makes

derive Tlapallàn from tlapalli, red, and this color suggests more the setting Sun than the sunrise. But the explanation Beauvois provides is infinitely more convincing: tlap: east; al: water; lan: in, toward (in the sense of "around"). According to Sahàgun, tlapcopa means "East." Al is a form of atl found in some compounds such as alpichia, to blow water, to spray; altia, to put oneself in water; altépetl, moist mountain. As for lan it would be just the land, that is, land, country, of the Germanic languages.

The exact meaning of Tlapallàn is thus, "Eastern sea country." And doubts are further thinned, since the Indian prince Chimalpàhin (46) specifies, speaking of the immigrants to whom we shall devote our next paragraph, that they "left the country of Tlapallàn and crossed the sea, the ocean." A northern country located to the east of Central America, which can only be Europe.

In the case before us, however, it was Northern Europe.
Nahua accounts actually indicate to us that in Tlapallàn there was a city whose name is spelled differently by historians: Tulàn, Tullàn, Tollàn, Tulla or Tula. Well, in Mexico, the capital of the Toltec empire was named the same way, which created a confusion that even we have not escaped. The explanation comes to us from Lòpez de Gomara (38), when he writes, "Because they came from Tulla, they later settled in Tullàn." Put another way, Ullman, becoming king of the Toltecs, gave his capital city the name of the distant homeland. A name that changed slightly from Norse to Nàhuatl. Because Tullàn is really-we are certainly not the first to have noticed it-very similar to Thulé, a toponym that was used in antiquity and the Middle Ages to define the lands of the North and particularly Iceland.

"The name Thulé," argues Isidore of Seville (46) in the early seventh century, "comes from the sun because it is stationary on the summer solstice" and that is, because it never sets. The explanation goes no further. However, it is "of great importance if it is right," writes Beauvois (47); and nothing proves it to be false. For it was the Gaels, as was natural given the proximity, who were the first occupants of Iceland, and it is in their language that one must look for a sun name analogous to Thulé. One would struggle to find it not knowing that Greek theta often corresponds to s in Gaelic; there are
are numerous examples [...] So it is not unlikely that 56ôoülû [Thoule] is a transcription of Suli, island of the Sun, or Sulia, Sulai, country of the sun (from Gaelic sul, sol: sun; i, innis: island; ua, ai; region). This interpretation, though philologically tenable, is in any case erroneous, although it puts us on the right track: in fact, we already find 56ôoülû in Pythias' accounts of sailing in the far north, in the fourth century B.C., thus long before the Irish had occupied and no doubt discovered Iceland. But s does not correspond to Greek theta only in the Gaelic languages: it is the case in Germanic idioms as well, not to mention the Latins. 56ôoülû could also come from the Norse Soley, Island of the Sun. Which would be fully satisfactory from a historical point of view, since the Hyperboreans, ancestors of the Vikings, were already sailing a thousand years and more before our era and were in relations with Pythias.

If that between Thulé and Tula (Tulla, Tullàn, Tollàn) was merely a simple assonance, it might be due to a fortuitous coincidence. But it happens that the toponym nàhuatl means precisely.

"Land of the Sun." In fact, it derives from tonalli, sun, apocopated according to the tendency of this language, and from lan, land, country. Hence Tonalàn (Tonnallàn), syncopated into Tollàn, Tullàn, Tulla and Tula. There is no doubt about this evolution: Tezozòmoc (48) says, in fact, that the Aztecs, traveling from the north to the Anàhuac,
"they arrived at Coatépec, on the borders of Tonalàn, the place of the sun." Well, the Histoire des Mexicains par leurs peintures (49) specifies that
"they arrived at a hill that is in front of Tula and is called Coatebeque," while Father Duran (43) writes, "toward the region of Tula [...] a hill that is called Coatépec."
This Tula, still called Aztlán, "the Land of the Whites."
(47), was but the first settlement of the Aztecs in Mexico, before Quetzalcóatl. The historian of Cholula, G. de Rojas (50), is very clear about this: "It is said that the founders of this city [Chololllam=Cholula] came from a country called Tullam [Tula], so distant in space and time that it is no longer known, and that, on the way, they founded Tullam, twelve leagues from Mexico, and Tullantzinco, which is equally close. Having settled in this city [Chololllam], they equally called it Tullam. This version is the most plausible of all, because of the custom, widespread among all peoples, of giving the name of the mother country to the colonies; this is what the Spanish especially do in the Indies." Lòpez de Gomara, as we have seen, had made the same observation. Of the primitive Tula, Father Augus-
tìn de Vetancur (51) tells us that it was located six hundred leagues beyond New Mexico. He adds, "Everything proves with evidence, and it is quite rational to believe it, [that the Toltecs] gave the name of Tollán to the first city founded by them, because they had come from the empire of Tollán, located in the northern regions." And across the ocean, for historians-for example, Sahagùn, so worthy of faith-frequently associate Tula with Tlapallàn, the meaning of which we saw earlier, very clear. Which, moreover, does not rule out the historical existence of an intermediate station in North America: it too could have been called Tula. Beauvois places it on the St. Lawrence. To do so, he relies on the toponymic coincidence - Land of the Whites - of Aztlán and the Huitramannaland colonized in Canada, according to the Irish sagas, by the Gaelic papas; as well as on the Vetancur quotation we have just reproduced and the fact that the historians describe the Toltecs, or "people of Tollán,"-that is, members of the ruling minority-as "big, white, and bearded"
(52) and are surprised to find such and such of their descendants "of tall stature and whiter than any Spaniard" (52) or "so white and bearded" (39).

The Indio Ixtlilxochitl (53) says that if individuals with these physical characteristics were no longer many at the time of the Conquest this was due to a law promulgated after the destruction of the Toltec kingdom that "prescribed the immolation, at the age of five, of children who at their birth were very light-skinned and blond, and which remained in force until the arrival of the Spaniards." Be that as it may, the original Tula-Tlapallàn was not located in America but in Europe: on this point, the texts agree.

Our conclusions about the origin of the white civilizers of Mexico are confirmed by an exceptionally important work that surveys not so much the Nahua tradition but that of the Maya. The Manuscript of Chichicastenango (54) was written shortly after the Conquest, in the Quiché dialect but in Latin characters, by a cultured Indian who had recently converted, at least it seems so, to the

Christianity, but who is anxious to preserve the historical heritage of his ancestors. This work describes, according to its anonymous author,
"the Popol Vuh, so called as it was clearly seen to have come from across the sea [...]. The original book, written long ago, existed, but it is hidden from the view of the seeker and the thinker." The title of the work in question, meaning Book of the People, bears witness to the introduction of Latin and Germanic terms into the Quiché dialect, due to the Irish papas who penetrated Central America in the early 10th century, and the Vikings
who settled there in the year 967; in the former case perhaps not only to the papas, as we are about to see. Popol is in fact clearly derived from popolus in Latin and vuh from the German buch, of which it has the sense and pronunciation. We are not surprised that the author of the Manuscript in question is referring to a vanished book: the Maya, like the Nahua, possessed important libraries whose works, written in hieroglyphics that "were understood only by the priests of the idols or by some of the most important Indians" (55), were systematically destroyed by Spanish monks. Only a few remain, which we know under the name codices, hidden by the natives and found again later. Other tales, not much more numerous, were reproduced by historians or reconstituted by Hispanized Indians. The Popol Vuh (54) is the most important of these.

We are not interested here in the first two parts of the work: their content is purely mythological. The third and fourth, on the contrary, are of great importance because they contain the history of the Quiché people. First we find there an account of the creation of man by the progenitor gods and the multiplication of peoples, "over there in the east": "There were then a great number of black men and white men, men of many different kinds and men of many different languages."

The ancestors of the Quichés - and among them the Tecpans, let us remember this name.

- "clothed in skins of beasts, they were poor, but their nature was that of prodigious men" they emigrated and "having heard of a city, they fled there." This city was Tullán. They did not stay there long and continued their journey. "They were freezing to death" because of "Of hail, black rain and fog. It made a
indescribable cold." They followed, however, "the great star which is called Icoquih [Venus] and which rises first before the sun, when the sun is born, the bright Icoquih which was always before them while they were in Tullán-Zuivá." It was then that they crossed the sea: "It is not very clear how they crossed the sea; they passed this way as if the water of the sea were not there: they passed over stones in rows on the sand." The early days in America were difficult, and they often regretted having abandoned their homeland. There were wars, among themselves and with the local people, to which they finally imposed themselves. They took wives.

One day, the sons of those who had come "from the other side of the sea, where the sun is born"-Qocaib, son of Balam-Quitzé; Qoacutec, son of Balam-Abay; and Qozhau, son of Mahucutah-decided to return to the east. "They crossed the sea and arrived there in the east, after at least a year's journey," specifies the Titulo de los señores de Totonicapán (56), an anonymous Quiché text that is dated 1554, "and there they had to receive the investiture of the kingdom. And such was the name of the Lord, King of the East from whence they came. When they stood before Lord Naxcit, he gave them the insignia of the kingdom ... and the paintings of Tullàn, the paintings, as they called what they put their stories in." Back in Guatemala,

organized the region and imposed their authority on their neighbors. When the Spanish arrived, the 12th generation of Quiché kings reigned.

What does this text tell us? First, that nothing happens between the creation of man and the departure of the Quiché "ancestors". This is logical: the Guatemalan Indians lived a savage age. The story begins for them with the departure from Tullán of their civilizers. Then, that the city in question was located in the East-in relation to America-across the ocean. It is extremely curious to note that commentators of the Popol Vuh, including men like Walter Krickeberg (21), whose works are authoritative, persist in identifying this East in the "coastal region of the modern Mexican states of Tabasco, Campeche and Yucatán," as claimed by Adriàn Recinos (54) who is the most recent translator of the work. The latter even goes so far as to write this far-fetched sentence: "The memory of their brothers from Mexico was never erased from the memory of the Guatemalan tribes, whose members mourned the absence of those they had left behind in the northern lands, that is, in the East [highlighted in italics by us], because such was the name they gave to the country from whence they had come and of which, after so many years, they had only extremely vague and imprecise ideas even about its toponymy."

The three states mentioned above are, indeed, in northern Guatemala. And to call the north "East" is really the height of inaccuracy! When we read that this east is the land of the Levant and that one arrives from there by crossing the sea, one must well admit that the interpretation just given is not only abusive but also totally arbitrary. Especially since other Conquest-era texts largely confirm, on this point, the Popol Vuh and thus rule out any error on the part of the author. For example, the one that quotes Fuentes y Guzman (57) and begins thus, "I, Don Francis-co Gòmez, Primo Ahzib quiché, I write on this paper the arrival of our fathers and grandfathers [i.e.: our ancestors] from over there on the other side of the sea, from where the sun rises." Or even the Book of Chilam Balam de Mani, which tells that the ancestors of the Maya, departed from Nonoualc, they went west away from Zuivá, a region or city located in Tulapán: in the country of Tula.

It should be noted again that the arrival of the civilizers who marked the beginning of Quiché history by imposing themselves on the local tribes is extremely recent. Kings Oxib-Queh and Beleheb-Tzi-the Quiché rulers reigned two at a time-who Pedro de Alvarado had hanged in 1524, constituted, we said, the twelfth generation, counting them from Balam-Quizté, the leader of the immigrants who came from the east. Back then, in Mexico, one generation covered a period of sixteen years, if we go by the genealogy of the Aztec emperors. The arrival, therefore, took place around 1332.

The author of Popol Vuh, and no doubt Quiché traditions in general, sometimes superimpose this arrival on that of Quetzalcòatl, as the Aztecs confused the latter with that of the Irish monks who had evangelized Mexico in the early 10th century (20). The indigenous people called these culdei monks the same way they were also known in Europe: papas, from the Irish paba, which comes from the Latin papa, father.

We saw that the sons of Balam-Quitzé and his companions had returned to the old world to seek there "the investiture of the kingdom" and stood before Lord Nacxit. Well, this is the name -

abbreviated and somewhat distorted-which the Quichés gave to Topiltzin Acxitl Quetzalcòatl, whom the northern Maya called Kukulkàn. Such an error does not surprise us because, at the time of the white king of the Toltecs' sojourn in Yucatán, the peoples of Guatemala still had no history and their knowledge of events that had involved the civilized Maya could only have come from very late contacts with the latter. For the 16th-century Quiché, the land of the ancestors was the homeland of Quetzalcóatl-which is quite accurate-and the ruler, who had become a god, was supposed to be immortal. Assuming that their journey really took place, we ignore from whom Qocaib, Qoacutec and Qoahau had obtained confirmation of their authority. But the name of Nacxit - Quetzalcòatl - shows that the arrival of the Quiché civilizers was much later than that of the Vikings.

2. The "people of the Temple"

The data provided to us by the texts we have cited regarding the arrival of groups of European emigrants to Mexico by ocean are confirmed, reinforced and - on a fundamental point of our research - complemented by the chronicle of Francisco de San Antòn Muñon Chimalpàhin Cuauhtlehuanitzin (45).

He wrote the history of his people in the early 17th century. He was descended, Christianized and Hispanized, from the princes of Chalco, a region surrounding the lake of the same name. It was not the story of the Chalca, a Nàhuatl tribe that arrived around the year 1250, but that of a very particular group: "The Nonohualca Téolixca Tlacochcalca, who are now called Tlamanalca Chalca, who will later come to take the name Chalca, as they are called now."

The cradle of this group was Tlapallàn Nonohualco, or Tlapallàn Chicomòtzoc. We have already seen what the meaning of Tlapallàn is, identified by Chimalpàhin in the Seven Mythic Caves following the Codex Tellerian-Remensis (58) and Codex Vaticanus (41), which mention the Nonohualca among the tribes from Chicomòtzoc.

For the historian, as we have seen, there is no doubt that this place of origin was located overseas: "When the Nonohualca Tlacochcalca left the country of Tlapallàn, they crossed the great sea, the ocean." More accurately, teohuatl Ylhuicoatoyatl, "the great divine sea." The French translator of this text, Rémi Siméon (59), author of a Dictionnaire de la langue nàhuatl that is still very authoritative today, adds that they sailed on "shells." "The use of this term for a ship," comments Frenchman Beauvois (44), "should not seem too
strange for us who use in the same sense the term coque (shell) derived from the Latin concha (shell)." A recent Spanish translation gives us an entirely different version (45):
"Bringing with them sea snail shells and turtle shells," adding in parentheses, "as musical instruments." We are not qualified to choose between these two interpretations. We merely point out, from Krickeberg (21), that one codex, dealing with migrations of a group of Toltecs, shows their crossing the ocean on rafts and turtle shells, which seems to support the first interpretation. Then again, this is an unimportant detail.

If the sense of Chicomòtzoc and that of Tlapallàn allow for no doubt, it is not the same for Nonohualco. Krickeberg (21) translates this term as, "Country of the dumb," that is, "Country of those who

speak a foreign language." Brinton (60), adopting the Onohualco spelling we find in Torquemada (39), derives this word from onoc, "to be understood," and compares it with onohuayan, "inhabited place," also referring to nonoyan, "place of residence." In favor of the former interpretation, if we leave aside the philological aspect of the problem, which escapes us, we note how the term Nonohualca is applied, in numerous Nahua texts, to different groups of peoples scattered throughout Mexico, including the Maya countries; in favor of the latter, we note that the whole Nonohualca Téolixca Tlacochcalca, which mentions Chimalpàhin, seems to demand it, as we shall see.

The term Téolixca, Beauvois tells us (44), "decomposes into teotl (god), ixtli, face, and catl in the plural, that is, ca, people. The whole can be rendered into people who stand in t h e face of god, or with people
from the divine face or in the image of god. But since the ambassador or messenger is the image of the one he represents, ixtli also means envoy, missionary, and teotlixcatl corresponds exactly to the Greek terms äggelos, priestly messenger, and apostölos, messenger." Torquemada (39), moreover, calls Teotlixco, the country of the Téotlixca, "the place where the sun rises"-the Sun God-that is, the east. Tlacochcalca is no less easy to translate: the word, again according to Beauvois (44) is "composed of apocopated tlacochtli, meaning tract, arrow, and calli, house, with the suffix ca, to define the people attached to this place. The whole means: People of the house of arms, in Latin milites." Later, in the Aztec empire, the title tlacochcatl would be given to one of the two main military leaders. Soustelle (61) suggests that this was the person in charge of the arsenals. It seems more logical to us - since the high dignitary was referred to as tlacateccatl, "the one who commands the warriors," thus the troops at war - that it was the head of the barracks, thus the troops at rest.

Following the sense we give to Nonohualca, the triple expression of Chimalpàhin thus means both "foreigners, envoys of god, military" and "residents, envoys of god, military." If we have added the commas that are not there in the text, it is because we are not dealing here with a unified designation but with a juxtaposition of categories. On the one hand, indeed, the "agglutinative" language that is nàhuatl would have rendered the concept of "religious and military foreigners" or "religious and military residents" in one word.

On the other hand, these people, taken as a whole, bear another name, that of Tecpantlaca, of which Beauvois (44) gives an indisputable analysis. The word is composed of: tecpan, temple, palace, which comes from tecuhtli, lord; from pantli, pavilion-in the sense of building, wall; and from tlacatl, person, plural tlaca. From this comes "People of the lord's house" or "People of the temple."

Our author says that it is in the latter sense that the name of the Tecpantlaca should be understood, since the tecpan where they served was that of the god Tezcatlipoca. An acception already admitted at the time of the Conquest: historian Muñoz Camargo (62) calls the Mexican priests, templarios. "This temple, or at least one of those that were consecrated to this god," adds Beauvois, "bore the characteristic name of Tlacochcalco (house of arrows, or arsenal). Unlike teopan (from teotl, god, and pantli) which means exclusively House of the Lord of Heaven, tecpan brings together the same sense with that of House of the Lord of Earth." Because, for the distinguished Americanist, there is no doubt: the Tecpantlaca do not

were other than members of the Ordo Pauperorum Commilitonum Christi Templique Salomonici who had emigrated to Mexico.

Thus, he sees in the three juxtaposed terms used by Chimalpàhin the simple translation of the name of the three categories of brothers: the knights (milites, or tlacochcalca), the clerics (clerics, or téolixca), and the sergeants (servientes), here reduced to residents (residentes, or nonohualca). If we replace "residents" with "foreigners," on the other hand, we would get an equally understandable result: this, in fact, would mean that the servientes brought from Europe were not numerous enough for them to continue to be a special category. "Foreigners," then, would apply to knights and clergymen.

This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by Chimalpàhin, according to whom the Nonohualca "had a language that they abandoned. Their elders hid the year in which they changed language," therefore they began to speak nàhuatl. The historian, it is true, traces the fact back to the Tower of Babel, not without innocently adding that the chronology of the Chalca does not correspond to that of the Christians... One thing that remains valid in this information is that the Tecpantlaca spoke, originally, a language of their own-which is not surprising, since they came from Europe-and forgot it in time.

The existence of sergeants (servientes) in the Mexican order, but only of the lowest rank in the Templar organization (residentes), seems, nevertheless, to derive from the hierarchy that, in the 16th century, still survived in the Tlamanalca and the Chalca, that is, among the peoples who had been subject to the direct authority of the Tecpantlaca. In fact, the three chief ministers of the kingdom were called (45) one tetzauhquacuili, the "Reverend Monk" (39), "with tonsure at Tezcatlipoca" (8), (40), the second xochpoyo, the "Preacher" and the third booger, the "Evil Hunted." These titles seem to correspond well to the three categories of brothers in the Temple. Perhaps the emigrants had incorporated native recruits to reconstitute the traditional structure of the order.

Chimalpàhin says that the Tecpantlaca had arrived in Mexico by the end of the 13th century. The two dates he provides - 1272 and 1294 - may reflect, in their discordance, the imprecision surrounding historical facts well before the conquest, for him writing in the early 17th century, but they may also correspond to two successive waves of immigrants. After leaving Tlapallàn, that is, as we have seen, Europe, the Templars crossed "the great divine sea" and reached the "dry land, [the mainland] at a point where a very great river flowed. They followed the
banks to the first branch. Then they left the river and went eastward, walking straight ahead without turning their backs to the sun." After that, they returned to the sea to visit the island of Acihuatlmichintlaco. Then they passed through many places we cannot identify and, following three years of wandering, reached Tullan, which they left twenty years later to settle (in 1299) on the shores of Lake Chalco. Hence a third date of arrival in Mexico, but still in the same period: 1279.

This itinerary is not as vague as it would seem at first glance, and Eugène Beauvois (44) has reconstructed it convincingly. What could have been the "great river" reached in America by sailing ships from Europe? Winds and currents traced routes: one, passing through the Canary Islands, which had not yet been discovered in the 12th century, ended in the Gulf of Mexico, into which a single course flows

important waterway, the Mississippi, whose characteristics do not meet the historian's description.

The other route was direct, leading to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Going up the river of the same name to the first branch and heading by land eastward, one penetrates the Acadia Peninsula (New Brunswick and Nova Scotia), where the Irish papas had settled in the 10th century (20), (63), and finds the ocean again. To the north lies the island of Newfoundland, famous for its fishing grounds. Which corresponds beautifully to the name of the island visited by the immigrants:

Acihuatlmichintlaco. Michin, in nàhuatl, in fact means fish; tla, abundance; and co, place: "place where fish abounds." That leaves acihuatl. Beauvois (44) argues that the term comes from the association of atl, water, apocopate, and cìhuatl, woman, lady. Thus we would have "Lady of the waters," a transposition of the Stella maris of the Catholic litanies and a document issued by a Templar (2): "Maria, Stella maris, perducat nos ad portum salutis: Mary, star of the sea, lead us to the port of salvation."

Sailors in Catholic countries have always had a special devotion to Our Lady, a name frequently given to churches in fishing ports. The Templars, for their part, servi Dei et beatae Mariae (servants of God and the blessed Mary) (2) had placed themselves under the protection of the Virgin, chié de la religion (2), that is, head of the Order, which was founded in honore beatae

gloriosae virginis Mariae (in honor of the blessed and glorious Virgin Mary). Perhaps it is by mere coincidence that the Gaspesie Mountains, south of the first bend of the St. Lawrence, are still called the Mountains of Notre Dame (Our Lady). However, we know from the accounts of the Zeno brothers (20) that, in the late 14th century, there were some descendants of the papas, or at least of their married oblates, in the region who were civilized European-style and possessed Latin books that they no longer understood.

No wonder, then, that on the island of Newfoundland there had been, a hundred years earlier, a monastery or chapel dedicated to Our Lady. Unless the island of Acìhuatl-because in the Middle Ages it was often spelled "island" instead of "peninsula"-had been Nova Scotia, the Escociland (64) of the Zeno: the land of the Scots or Irish.

According to Chimalpàhin, it was therefore in 1299 that the Tecpantlaca reached the region of Chalco, where they settled permanently a few years later, after having received reinforcement from a new group, the Payauhtèca, or people of Panohuayan, that is, of Panutlàn, the port that the Spanish, we said earlier, called Pànuco, the same where Ullman-Quetzalcòatl and his Vikings had already landed in the year 967.

The Tecpantlaca, commanded by a religious and military leader who had the title of teohuatecuhtli (lord who possesses God: the grand master) and who was assisted-as well as by many other dignitaries-by the three ministers we have already mentioned, imposed themselves on the local peoples who had preceded them in the country, including two Toltec tribes of a good cultural standing. They, says the historian, "were not chichimeca (barbarians) but men of the court." Among them were "a large number of knights and nobles of high rank" from whom no one could demand taxes or services, men "of extremely ancient lineage."

For about a hundred years, the newcomers, though weak (45) conquered or won, one after another, twenty-five lordships that

occupied a large part of Morelos, Puebla and Tlaxcala, present-day states of Mexico: "although their extent," writes Beauvois, "was far from comparable to that of the Mexican confederation, into which they were later incorporated, for the time they formed a fairly imposing whole, 100 to 150 km wide. If their submission (to religious influence, it seems to us, rather than to military power) had not been voluntary everywhere, it eventually became so, as [the lordships] took up the defenses of their ousted princes from the Mexicans." The Templars also succeeded in partially civilizing the still savage Chichimecs, who had founded a vast empire on the ruins of that of the Toltecs. They can be credited with "that revival of the pre-Cortés civilization that so aroused the admiration of the Spaniards. It is probable that, without them, the Anàhuac plain would have remained barbaric."

And again, a group on the trail of Quetzalcóatl went to the Mayan countries. So the texts-we have seen this-mark the arrival from the sea of "tecpan" who left from Nonouac or Tulapán, the region of Tullán-Zuivá located somewhere in the north, across the ocean.

By the beginning of the 15th century, there were evidently no authentic Tlacochcalca (horsemen) or Téotlixca (clergymen) left: even the youngest of the last immigrants had long since died, leaving no descendants] except, perhaps, a few sanguemisto. Married residents who came from Europe had certainly not brought their wives on a journey that constituted a military expedition, and their children could only be mestizos. The institutional order, functions and titles had been preserved, but the spirit could no longer be the same.

Moreover, they no longer spoke of Tecpantlaca, but simply of the Chalca, named after their capital. Their religion, as we shall see, so different from the indigenous one, had also changed over time, retaining strange peculiarities as well. Nàhuatl had replaced their forgotten language, not without adopting some of its words. By 1407 (45), the date on which the chiefs had to expatriate to escape the demands of the Ténochi, or Aztecs, their weakening was manifest. The nomadic hunters who came from the north began to conquer the Anàhuac ... and to civilize themselves in contact with their new neighbors. They took over, one after another, the lordships of which the teohuatecuhtli was ruler. In 1459, they unsuccessfully demanded that the heirs of the Tecpantlaca bring stones for the construction of a temple to honor the god Uitzilopochtli (42), (48), (65). The refusal triggered a bloody war that ended in 1465 with the defeat of the Chalca, whose princes were eliminated and, for the time being, replaced by foreign governors.

When the Spaniards arrived, the Templar country had been under the yoke for more than half a century. The people occasionally rose up against their oppressors, allying themselves with Mexico's enemies, particularly the Tlaxcaltecos. In 1519, the Chalca princes went to receive Cortés in Amaquemecán, and called him their teotl, telling him that their ancestors "had said that men with beards would come to rule those lands
of gold, who would come from where the sun rises, and who, by reason of the things they saw, were us." So reports the historian Bernal Dìaz del Castillo (28), whose style and grammar we respect. And one of the conquistadores, Francisco de Aguilar (66), adds that "the Chalca were, from the beginning, subservient to the king

[Charles V] and great friends of the Spanish." In fact, with the Tlaxcaltecos, they contributed greatly to the taking of Mexico. Between them and the Ténochi it was not just a political issue: religion had its fair share, as the temple episode at Uitzilopochtli has shown us.

3. The enemy gods

We must repeat what we wrote in an earlier work (20): a serious danger threatens those who, without deep theological training, apply themselves to study the religious beliefs of the Indigenous peoples. In fact, we know them only through the accounts of Spanish or Hispanized historians, who limited themselves to describing with little discernment and less even benevolence the "idolatries" of the Nahua, Maya and Quitchua as they had heard them told by the natives. There are only a few rare exceptions, most notably that of Father Bernardino of Sahagùn. As a result, we ignore everything about the pre-Columbian theology of the American peoples, which is presented to us disguised behind countless, often contradictory and sometimes inconsistent myths. Well, for us who are accustomed to revealed religions, whose dogmas are rationally deduced from immutable texts, it is not easy to understand the meaning of a mythology and, we might say, its processes. Pagan peoples resorted, in fact, to symbolic representations that served as a framework for interpretations whose degree of depth changed according to each person's intellectual and mystical capacity. What's more, these symbols were not uniform. Not only did each tribe, sometimes each village, express a common belief in its own mode-so that each tale comes down to us in different versions that sometimes contradict each other-but still the mythical characters lacked consistency. From a certain god, at a certain time, there arises a new individuality that is only the symbolic expression of a quality or power of its "father," and two gods may come to "merge" without nevertheless losing the distinct appearances under which they were known. We note this phenomenon especially in the mythology of Central America because of the overlap that occurred in the Anàhuac and Mayan countries with the later arrival of white civilizers and nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes who mingled with and often dominated peoples of ancient culture. They all brought their gods with them, and these were incorporated into the preexisting pantheon, which was enriched and substantially modified as part of what we might call a syncretist pantheism.

For what characterizes Mexican mythology is the anthropomorphic personification of the forces of nature, considered as emanations, hypostases or metamorphoses of a supreme God who, at the same time, creates the world and belongs to it. This is by no means a novel conception: we find it in the Indo-European peoples and particularly in the Germanic countries.

The people of Central America considered this supreme god to be. "invisible and intangible as night and as air," says Sahagùn (40): "The God by whom we live; the All Powerful
who knows our thoughts and the dispenser of all graces: the invisible, incorporeal, perfectly fulfilled and pure God, under whose wings we find rest and safe refuge." No worship was rendered to this Father of Heaven, for he was beyond sacrifice, inaccessible to prayer and could not be represented physically. He was honored in the person of the created gods, diversified expressions of his absolute power. He seems to have a name,

Hunahcu, only among the Maya, and even that is not certain. The Nahua defined him with the help of periphrases, "He who is immediately near," "He by whom we live," and most commonly Tonacatecuhtli, "Lord of our flesh."

In the eyes of believers, the Father of Heaven was more specifically personified by a main god (teotl, in nàhuatl, a similar word because of their common origin - Dyeva - to the Greek theòs) who was regarded as the chief of the created gods, to whom the greatest homage was paid. But this god was not necessarily the same in all ages, nor among all peoples of the same faith. Not only did each group, each social stratum, and each tribe or community have its own patron god, but it also chose the chief god to its liking. Thus, the Aztecs worshipped as such Ollin Tonatiuh, born of the union between Tonacatecuhtli, the Father of the Heaven, and Tonacìhuatl (Lady of our Flesh), Mother Earth. He is the solar god par excellence: this simply means that the Sun is its visible representation.

Elsewhere (20), we have seen that the word Tonatiuh-which has no meaning in nàhuatl-seems to be formed from the names of the Germanic gods Thonar (Thor) and Tiu (Tyr): it is legitimate to wonder whether Ollin, although this term itself means "movement," is not a transformation of Odin's name (Odhinn, in Norse, with a dh which was pronounced like the English sweet th). Perhaps Ollin Tonatiuh was a new trinitarian personification of Huehuetéotl, the "old God," or God of Fire who still occupied an undefined place in the Aztec pantheon and whose name seems to indicate that he had previously been the main God.

According to another myth (40), (49), Ollin Tonatiuh-sometimes confused with Uitzilopochtli-had a brother, Quetzalcòatl, born of the supreme couple. Mother Earth, here called Coatlicue, had conceived them in a very special way, reminiscent of the Christian mystery of the Incarnation: the former after hiding a white feather found in a temple under his underwear and the latter after swallowing a precious stone. But according to other accounts Quetzalcòatl was the son of Iztac Mixcòatl-a civilizing hero who became god of the Milky Way and the Storm-and the Earth Mother, here called Chimalpan or Chimalman. This Mixcòatl is also called by the name of Camaxtli. His blond hair, found by the Spaniards, was kept as a relic in Tlaxcala, "which proves - says Muñoz Camargo (62)-the veracity of what the elders told: that he was a white man with blond hair." A late codex (49) tries to unify these contradictory data: from Tonacatecuhtli and Tonacìhuatl were born four sons: red Tezcatlipoca (Xipé, god of the Earth); black Tezcatlipoca; Quetzalcòatl and Uitzilopochtli. Thus Ollin Tonatiuh would disappear, benefiting the newer gods who oust him. Let us leave aside Uitzilopochtli, solar god of the Aztecs, whom they, after their conquest of the Anàhuac, superimposed now on Ollin Tonatiuh now on Quetzalcòatl. It is the latter that interests us here, and more so Tezcatlipoca.

Main god of the Toltecs, highly regarded even after that Uitzilopochtli took his place or became confused with him, Quetzalcóatl has a dual historical origin. Under his warrior aspect, he is the Viking jarl Ullman, who became fifth king of the Toltecs in the last third of the 10th century. Under the priestly aspect, Quetzalcòatl is the personification of the Irish papas who evangelized the Anàhuac and the Maya country a few decades earlier.

On the one hand, conqueror and organizer to whom the peoples of Mexico owe their laws, calendars, agricultural and metallurgical techniques, and, in part, their high culture and religious beliefs. On the other, a reformer who brings to men a new conception of life and morality, and who seeks to replace the bloody cult of heroism with a religion of penance. With him appear the associated notions of sin, remorse, forgiveness and, as a corollary, redemption. Unified by the Nahua, these two personalities, no less divinized, remain well separated among the Maya: the characteristics of their Itzamnà are similar to those of the ascetic Quetzalcòatl, while Kukulkàn retains the configuration of the warrior Quetzalcòatl who, in the Anàhuac, tends to be confused with Ollin Tonatiuh, god of war, and in his iconography takes the form of Odin (20).

An ascetic or warlike god, Quetzalcóatl manifests constant characteristics through the most contradictory myths; he always personifies ascending light. We see him first acquiring the role of guiding the Sun, with the name Lord of the Dawn: he identifies with the Morning Star, the planet Venus preceding the divine star, and bears its symbols.

In this title, he reigns over the Eastern world. He also approaches Apollo, god of the Hyperboreans brought to Greece by the Achaeans in the first Scandinavian migration to the Mediterranean. He is still only a solar god.

Gradually, he encroaches on the powers of Ollin Tonatiuh, Sun-God, until he merges with him and eventually replaces him as the main god. The Toltecs go so far as to attribute to him the creation of the sky, the Sun and Mother Earth, that is, to make him one God (21), (67).

During his earthly life, the Quetzalcóatl warrior had had serious difficulties with his "brother" Tezcatlipoca, under whose orders he had left the garrison of Tollán on his journey to Yucatán. Some accounts show us the lieutenant rising up against his leader when the latter became indignant, noting that the Vikings, in his absence, had joined indigenous women and had children with them. Other, more legendary accounts see Tezcatlipoca as a magician who accidentally drove the king-priest to get drunk and unite with the beautiful Quetzalpétatl. Discouraged in the first case, humiliated and repentant in the second, Quetzalcòatl abandoned his realm, headed for the coast and embarked with his worshippers. Thus the Toltecs transformed his disloyal companion into the imputrid Sun god, the enemy of man and the earth.

After the disappearance of the kingdom of Tula, Tezcatlipoca gains more and more importance. An enemy brother of Quetzalcóatl, he is the god of the Evening Star, Venus, who precedes the Sun at sunset and, by extension, the god of nighttime darkness, during which he devours the divine star: he is symbolized by a jaguar. A solar god, therefore, erected against the Sun: a powerful, yet evil god. "He was regarded as a true invisible god, who stood everywhere: in the sky, on earth and in hell;" Sahagùn (40) writes, "he stirred up wars, enmities and discords, from which labors and disgust resulted. He was said to agitate one against another so that war would break out. Thus he was called Necociautl, that is, sower of discord on two sides. And it was said that he alone was in charge of ruling the world, that he alone conferred prosperity and riches; and that he alone took them away when he felt like it." Young God forever, who "walked better and came first" (40), he was the warrior

par excellence, or, better yet, the enemy (yàotl), as the Aztec priests of Uitzilopochtli called him. "Although he is a god - writes Laurette Séjourné (67)-his contradictions could not be more human: he stimulates sexual license, at the same time he figures as a confessor; he is the master of the goods of this world, which he can at the same time give and take back; he is the friend of the powerful, who flatter or insult him, and of the slaves, whose protector he is in his own right." They call him Moyocoya, the one who acts according to his will, who does as he pleases. A day will come when, driven by him, the Twilight Monsters will rise from the depths of the West to destroy living beings, while the Earth Monster will crumble the globe between its fangs.

How to explain the fact that, abruptly, in the 14th century and in only one region of the Anàhuac, that of Chalco, Tezcatlipoca loses his "satanic" character, to the point of being given the epithet of Napatecuhtli, "four times Lord," "because he forgave, spread good deeds, was merciful and answered prayers" (39)? And to the point of acceding to the rank of One God, or, in time, losing his name to become only Teotl? "Although some chiefs and lords," writes the Indian Juan Bautis
-ta de Pomar (68)-worshipped idols and offered sacrifices to them, yet they doubted their divinity; they thought it was a mistake to believe that wooden and stone statues, made by men, were gods. Above all, Nezahualcoyotzin [king of Texcoco, ancestor of Juan Bautista of Pomar] was very perplexed looking for light relatively to the true God [...]. This prince returned to what his ancestors worshipped, as evidenced by many ancient songs of which fragments are known (62), for there are many names and
definitions in praise of God: it is said there that there was only one God, creator of heaven and earth, who maintained all that he had made and created; that he stood in a place without equal, in a place situated beyond the nine levels [of heaven]; that he had never shown himself in human form, or bodily, or in any other form." To this supreme and unknown God-the God whom "his ancestors worshipped"- Nezahualcoyotzin erected a nine-story temple, which was called Chililico, place where the chilitli, in medieval Latin schilla, or chilla, bell, stands (45). This was in the 15th century. One hundred years earlier, the god of Nezahualcoyotzin still bore a name: Tezcatlipoca. One hundred years later, by which time Chalco had long been subservient to Aztec power, his image had not entirely faded: "The natives," writes Torquemada (39), "saw him as uncreated and invisible and as the first of all gods. They said of him that he was the soul of the world [...]. They worshiped Tezcatlipoca or Titlacahua [Titlacahuan: "the one of whom we are all slaves"] and acknowledged him as a god or as the image of the deity whose principle and origin they knew neither, not holding him to be mortal but the immortal creator of all things. It was not with the same respect that they worshiped and looked upon another god called Huitzilopochtli, for they held him as the god of battles And their protector in wars."

Let us try to see this clearly. The Quetzalcóatl of the Mexican pantheon draws at the same time from the Scandinavian Odin, warrior solar god, and from the God of Christians. The origin of this double aspect, this confused personality, is known to us: the cultural input of the Vikings and the Papas. The Tezcatlipoca of the Toltecs - at the time
Loki (Scandinavian) himself and Satan - stands before him. But here this god of the Night Sun, this god of evil, becomes

suddenly, with the Tecpantlaca, the unknown supreme god; or, if you prefer, the Tecpantlaca ascribe to their god the name of a pre-existing deity in the Anàhuac, whose characteristics, at first glance, lend themselves poorly to such a syncretist operation. But at first sight only, because in the European Middle Ages the Cathars had already carried out an identical transmutation.

It is known that for the Gnostics of the first centuries of the Christian era, the New Testament does not merely rectify the Old: on the contrary, it marks a break with Jewish tradition. Jehovah is not God, but the Devil, creator of intrinsically evil matter. From the true God, unknown, emanates the perfect creation, but the Spirit, beginning in the fifth heaven, encounters chaos, which restrains and imprisons it. "In the beginning was the Word," says the Gospel of St. John from which the Gnostics - or those inspired by them - were inspired, "and the Word was in God and the Word was God [...]. In him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness [...]." Our world is home to the conflict between the two Powers: between Light, the spiritual projection of the unknown God, and Darkness, the material creation of the Demiurge, Jehovah. Man participates in one and the other. Only Knowledge can free him from his carnal prison. God transmits it through his illumination, but also through his Envoys, the most important being Lucifer and the Christ. These are the fundamental theses taken up by the Cathars. For them salvation can only be achieved by repudiating matter. Asceticism, contemplation, magic, everything is needed to become "perfect." The human love that
excludes carnal union and, consequently, reproduction, is a spiritual exercise: lying naked in the same bed, man and woman dominate their "material" desire and do not touch each other...

In Cathar symbology, the Word is represented by the Sun. For the Albigensians, the divine star is not-as for the pagans-a visible expression of the order of the physical world and the values of the moral world (hierarchy, heroism, strength, beauty, procreating love) but that of the unknown God, the source of spiritual Light. Lucifer, or Lucibel, as they call him, is not the Devil as for orthodox Christians, but Lightbearer, the solar angel provisionally vanquished by Jehovah; a divine being, like the unincarnated Christ although he took the form of a man. Well, Lucifer is not a biblical name, although it has been applied to Satan: it is the name the Latins gave to the planet Venus, to the Morning Star, that of the children of Jupiter and Dawn, whom the poets represent as the conductor of the stars, the messenger heralding the light of the Sun. But "Morning Star" is also, in the New Testament, one of the names given to Christ (Second Letter of Peter, 1:19).

The Cathars, therefore, rehabilitate the satanic Lucifer of the official church and see in him an alter ego of the immaterial Redeemer. There is good reason to believe that the Templars follow them-or precede them-on this path: in particular, their conception of the uncrucified Christ indicates this. It goes too far to say that Baphomet might be the Lightbearer for those who, relegating Christmas and Easter to secondary status, make Pentecost
- the descent of the Holy Spirit - their main holiday?
This is what Le Conteulf de Cantelen stated in the last century. (69): "The great stirrer of magical energy, the living, astral fire, is the serpent of the ancient book of Genesis. Laymen call him Devil, but to the Hermetists he is the god Pan, the god of our contemporary philosophical school, the god of the theurgians of the

school of Alexandria and of modern-day Neoplatonic mystics, the god of the primitive Gnostic schools, the Ahriman of the Persians, the Typhon of the Egyptians, the Python of the Greeks, the serpent of the ancient Hebrews. He is the Baphomet of the Templars [...]."

Be that as it may, the Tecpantlaca, with Tezcatlipoca, perform an even more complete transmutation than that to which the Cathars subject Lucifer. The Evening Star becomes the Morning Star and the Night Sun becomes the Sun of Light. Tezcatlipoca, at first equal to the ascetic Quetzalcòatl, is not slow to displace him from his status as the principal god to eventually identify himself with the unknown God. Thus, in Mexico, the Templars make public the secret worship which, in their communes in Europe, they rendered to the luminous Word. That luminous Word, whose dual personification, for the Cathars to whom so many beliefs brought them close, contempered the aspects of Lightbearer and Christ.

Under these conditions, it is logical that, without repudiating the latter, they gave preeminence to the former: the warrior archangel unjustly slandered and condemned-as they were-by the Catholic Church. Everything leads one to believe, then, that Tezcatlipoca was none other than Lucifer. We shall see in the next chapter that a tangible fact reinforces this interpretation.

4. Whites of yesteryear

It can be assumed that it was not by accident that the Tecpantlacas went to settle in Chalco. Several tribes had preceded them to the area: the first (42), (49) who had abandoned Aztlán, the "Land of the Whites," the mythical American settlement of the civilized migratory peoples of Mexico, and the Aztecs who claimed to reconnect with the latter. There were the Xochimilca, who worshipped Quilaztli, a two-headed deer (Beauvois (44) claims it is a horse with its rider) that they had come to know through Iztac Mixcòatl, the blond and white civilizer we have already mentioned. Then the Cuitlahuaca, whose fishing god, Amimitl (from atl, water and mitl double, arrow) was symbolized by the harpoon given to them by Mixcòatl, not without recommending that they also worship the two-headed deer. Then the Mizquica, with their god Quetzalcòatl, and the Chalca, with Tezcatlipoca. Xochimilca (70) and Mizquica (49) were descended from the Toltecs, from whom they had inherited skills and knowledge in the arts, architecture, carpentry and mechanics (70). The former had a solid reputation as thaumaturges, to the point that their name was later applied in this sense to the Spaniards. The Cuitlahuaca and Chalca were at least related to the Toltecs, were it not for their union with two small tribes, the Tlayllotlas (45) and the Chimalpaneca (52), who came from the Mixtèca, a country located on the Pacific Ocean coast, whose members were, on the other hand, wise and skilled in astrology. All these peoples had one peculiarity in common: they retained traditions related to the Europeans who, in the 10th century, had brought to Mexico knowledge that had contributed to the cultural progress of the Toltecs and Mayas,
and beliefs that, although erased, had remained engraved in the mentality of the Indians.

Of the four main tribes to which the Tecpantlaca imposed themselves before merging with them under the name of Chalca, three were thus connected to the double tradition of the Vikings; that is, on the religious level, to Indo-European paganism, pantheistic in its worldview and solar in its cultural symbolism, and to the

Gaelic papas, Orthodox Christians despite their somewhat Hebraic particularism. The primitive Chalca, by contrast, worshipped the sinister god of Sun and Night, comparable, we have said, to the Scandinavian Loki and the Christians' Satan. There was nothing pagan about the Templars and, finally free to express their beliefs, they would not have known how to return to the worship of Jehovah. The influence of earlier European civilizers on Mizquica, Xochimilca and Cuitlahuaca certainly favored their penetration, and if, as Beauvois (44) writes, "the prophecy of Quetzalcòatl was applied to them, faith in the future domination of the men of the East certainly was not unrelated to the ascendancy they so quickly gained in the new homeland." Paradoxically, it was with the Chalca that they found the theological basis indispensable to the syncretism without which they could not have imposed their religious beliefs. More precisely: by reason of his resemblance to the Lucifer of the Christians, Tezcatlipoca lent itself to a mutation similar to that carried out by the Cathars; and the worshippers of this god could hardly complain, since their tribal deity would thus become supreme god, the unique expression of the unknown God.
Historians' accounts leave no doubt that.
these four peoples had close relations with the different groups of Europeans who settled in Mexico before the Conquest.
When Montezuma received messages from the Atlantic coast informing him of Juan de Grijalba's landing, accompanied, according to custom, by painted canvases on which the ships of the Spaniards and their horsemen were depicted, he turned to the various inhabitants of the Chalco region in order to obtain information that would help him determine what attitude to take in the face of the invaders. The Xochimilcas sent him one of their elders, Quilastli, who carried illuminated manuscripts of their ancestors, and who - according to Father Durán (42) - told the emperor "that he knew men would arrive in the country on horseback on a wooden hill so large that it contained men in great numbers and served as their home, and that in it they ate and slept and that on its back they baked their nourishment and that they marched and played on it as on the firm and fat earth and that these men were white and bearded and dressed in different colors and that they wore round hairstyles on their heads, and that at the same time other men would come, on beasts similar to deer and others on eagles ?* On boats that their sail made to resemble eagles, according to Beauvois' interpretation (see note 44). that flew like the wind. And, taking out a very old painting, she showed him the ship and the men dressed in the way she had said and he [Montezuma] saw there other men on horseback and others on eagles flying and all dressed in different colors, with hairstyles on their heads and the sword on their belts." The Mizquica and Cuitlahuaca mentioned traditions related to Quetzalcòatl and the return o f his sons,
pointing out that these would wear a different costume from the Indians and that they did not understand their language. The old images they exhibited to support their speeches also showed whites-very different from the Spaniards-represented on the painted canvases sent to the emperor from Pànuco (42). No doubt the Cuitlahuacas showed great prudence in illustrating their manuscripts, for it had not been long-it was 1517-since Montezuma had had a descendant of Iztac Mixcòatl, Tzompantecuhtli, lord of Cuitlahuactizico, killed because the latter had treated Uitzilopochtli as a false god, announcing that the kingdom

of the true God, creator of all things, was approaching (42): he was said to know six hundred and sixteen prophecies...

The Chalca no longer possessed manuscripts relating to the men of the East: only some bestiaries (42), (65) from the Middle Ages, which we discussed in Chapter I, on which were depicted the fantastic beings born of the imagination of the Ancients and introduced into the Christian world by St. Augustine. "Those of Malinalco," says Father Durán (42), "brought out a painting depicting men with one eye on their foreheads, like Cyclopes, reporting to him that their ancestors had said they would come to the country and take possession of it, and others that they had only one foot. Those from the Marquisate told him and showed him a painting with men who from below the belt were fish, and told him that those should come to the country. Others showed painted characters, half men and half snakes." Books of this kind-and therein lies the value of the "paintings," according to Father Durán-could not have come to America with Ullman-Quetzalcòatl, since the Vikings,
at the time, they were still pagan. It cannot be absolutely ruled out that the papas had brought them, because there is a Liber Monstrorum dating back to the 9th century. Nonetheless, it is unlikely. Bestiaries, in fact, did not appear publicly until the 12th century, with the one that Philip of Thaon dedicated to Elisa of Lounain, Queen of England from 1121 to 1135, and did not really spread until the 13th century. Nor, much less, had the Chalca suffered any Christian influence before the 12th century. So, everything leads one to believe that the books in question came from the Templars. And the same can be said for the traditions-unwritten, as far as we know-about the return of the Whites that Nezahuapilzintli, king of Texcoco (and son of Nezahualcoyotzin, whose belief in a single, unknown God we have already mentioned), explained to his ally Montezuma: his kingdom,
at one time, Indochina had been subjugated to the Tecp. It would be most strange the
contrary.

It remains to be known whether the Templars obtained their silver specifically from American mines.

II. Temple silver

1. Pre-Columbian metallurgy

At the time of the conquest, the various peoples who inhabited Mexico worked gold, silver, copper and even three alloys: tombac (gold, silver and copper), bronze (copper and tin) and a mixture of copper and lead, unknown in Europe. They knew the source of metals, archaeologists tell us, only for about five hundred years, which confirms indigenous traditions that the techniques and art of metallurgy were introduced, in the year 967 of our era, by the white civilizing hero Quetzalcóatl, later deified; that is, by the Viking jarl Ullman (20). Reason being, metallurgy appeared earlier among the Olmecs of the Atlantic coast than in the Anàhuac. Precious metal, and even more so copper, were rare, however. Thus, for jewelry, thin embossed sheets were used, while figurines were hollow because they were cast over wax. In fact, the reduction of metals from ore was ignored. The natural mixture of gold and silver, once the piece was finished, was dissolved with amalgamation of salt and aluminum oxide. If Mexicans in a broad sense used objects made of

metal before the arrival of the Scandinavians-which is doubtful, because none have been found dating back to the Teotihuacán culture, nor to the Classic Maya era-these could only have been imported, or cold-made.

Copper, silver, tombac and gold were used for jewelry. It is known that the Mexicans, and more particularly the Toltecs, had become masters in this field. Dürer, who was well versed in it, had witnessed in Brussels (on August 26, 1520) the first exhibition of jewelry recently sent to Charles V by Hernán Cortés, and later wrote in his diary, "In all my life I have never seen anything that has so gladdened my heart." Unfortunately, little remains of these incomparable works of art. The con- quistadores turned what they received from the partition into ingots, and, even more unforgivably, the emperor did the same with the royal fifth he was entitled to.

With copper-it was the rarest and most valuable metal-they made, in addition to jewelry, strange coins: bells and T-shaped knives that served as means of payment. And also flat axes, the edges of which were hammer-hardened, lever tools, needles, hooks, even some spades, unique in America. Bronze was used only to make awls, and with the copper-lead alloy rattles were made. Metal weapons were very rare- stone axes were far more widely used than copper ones-and tools were generally made of wood. Regarding this last point, only the Taraschi and Zapotecs of the Pacific coast were exceptions, but there is good reason to believe that they imported several of the metal objects from Peru. Historians report that Bartolomeo Ruiz de Estrada, Pizarro's guide, encountered in
high seas - west of the Equator - a Peruvian raft loaded with silver and gold jewelry, llama woolen blankets and cotton. The boat's owner, when questioned, said he had received orders to go to Panama, to exchange his cargo for red shells (Spondylus princeps), a mollusk that if Gothic cathedrals
came from the America of the
South and that the port of La Rochelle, on the Atlantic, was used to import the metal.

The question remains as to where the vessels, presumably laden with the Order's archives, which had fled France in 1307 and of which no one had ever heard again, were headed. The answer to that question now seems obvious: to Mexico. The traditions from Normandy reported by Jean de la Varende (18), according to which the Templars went in search of the precious metal in America, were only half false.

The facts we have presented, following very closely the compilation and analysis of several chronicles made by Beauvois (except in what concerns paragraph 3), clearly show us that two groups of white men had arrived in Mexico on the trail
Of the Irish papas and the German-Danish Vikings. One in the last years of the 13th century and the other in the first years of the 14th century. Their country of origin, which the natives called Tlapallàn and Tullàn, or Tula, was located to the east of the "great divine sea," the Atlantic Ocean, then in Europe where, indeed, the northern lands, in ancient and medieval times, were known as Thulé. However, the toponyms in question predate the migration we are now interested in: they date, in fact, from the time of Ullman-Quetzalcòatl. The last arrivals had thus come

from Europe, such as the Vikings, but they did not necessarily come from the same region.

Commanded by a grand master, "the Lord Who Owns God," assisted by three chief ministers, the "Reverend Monk," the "Preacher" and the "Evil Hunted"-which seem to correspond to the three categories of knights, clergymen, and residents, although there is some doubt about the latter term-members of the community bore one name that encompassed them all: that of Templars.

They constituted a military and religious order. On the one hand, they had conquered by force of arms a territory of appreciable extent whose populations, hitherto ruled according to the feudal norms of Europe, were subservient to their authority; on the other, they had imposed a new religion whose unknown God was represented by a solar being, an Envoy charged with bringing the light of the Spirit into the material world. The need for syncretism had prompted them to designate as such an evil god of Indian mythology, Tezcatlipoca, duly rehabilitated. The Cathars and, no doubt, the Templars of Europe had acted in the same way by restoring Lucifer-whom orthodox Christians had confused with

Satan-the title and role of Lightbearer; precisely to Lucifer who, in Roman mythology was, like Tezcatlipoca, the god of the planet Venus, the "star" that precedes the Sun in its race. We will see in the following chapter that the similarity does not stop here and also affects worship ceremonies.

Already as of now we can say that the Templars of Mexico were one with the European Templars. "Even when one disputes the value of some of the evidence and arguments set forth above," writes Beauvois (44), "there would remain enough so that it would be impossible to contradict our conclusions by explaining the archaeological remains, beliefs, religious practices, historical evidence and reminiscences in a different way from our own." There is nothing more to add.

It remains to be known why the Templars went to settle in Mexico. We are not surprised that they knew of the existence of Central America. We know that they frequented for about a hundred and fifty years, the coasts of South America where their ships went to load silver bullion. We also know that they were in close contact with the Vikings whose ancestors, around the year 1000, had come from Mexico. It is also not ruled out that around 1194 they made a punt on a voyage of exploration, but without insisting, since the area was not in a condition to supply them with the metal that was then the reason for their overseas expeditions. The situation changed altogether when the alliance of the pope and the king of France endangered the very existence of the Order, which, unlike the Hospitallers, had never been able to obtain a fully autonomous territory where it could be sheltered from the

pressures and threats from the dual spiritual and temporal powers. Things could turn bad at any moment, and the Templars thought of securing a fallback base. Although they traded with them, the Vikings had never given the Templars very warm welcomes. Before 1290, the possibility of settling in South America did not seem attractive at all. Later, it even had to be ruled out: the empire of Tiahuanaco was destroyed, in the grip of plunder and anarchy. That left Mexico.

Everything, including the dates provided to us by Chimalpàhin-inaccurate as they are multiple-leads one to believe that the Order sent in the last years of the

13th century a vanguard in Central America, and that this was

received with open arms because the Indians had not forgotten Queztalcòatl or his prophecy of a return of the white men with beards, whom it would be vain to resist. They stayed in Tullán, the ancient capital of the Toltecs, but perhaps one must see this stop only as a consequence of the fact that indigenous traditions assimilated the newcomers to the Europeans of the 10th century. Thus, the Templars settled in Chalco, where they received a new contingent of brothers who had landed in Panutlàn, today's Pànuco. This, according to Chimalpàhin, was in 1304: it was actually 1307, the date on which the Order was disbanded. Some men embarked in France and it is not known where they went; at the same time, men landed in Mexico who it is not known where they came from. The conclusion imposes itself. If the Temple archives were loaded in La Rochelle-as everything seems to indicate-on the ships of the Order's Atlantic fleet, they were secured in Chalco. In this case, what became of them? They were destroyed
by the Aztecs or discovered by the Spanish and delivered by them to the Holy See? We do not know.

In all likelihood, the brothers, leaving for America, assumed that it was just a matter of getting under cover until
At the end of the storm. If this was their prediction, it proved wrong. The Order disappeared forever. Isolated across the ocean, the Templars had a chance to act in their own way, giving free rein to their thirst for conquest and proclaiming the doctrines they had hitherto always had to carefully conceal. But no new recruits came to fill the gaps that death fulfilled in their ranks. Knights and clergymen were devoted to celibacy. The married residents who came from Europe-that would be just the sailors on the ships-had not brought their wives with them. All disappeared without leaving any descendants other than a few half-breeds.

So, the Temple quickly "Indianized" and, fifty years after the last arrival, was to count no more whites. The end was predictable. By the time of the Conquest, only a few warped beliefs and rituals remained of the Templars. And the memory of an adventure more or less confused with that - much older - of the authentic Sons of the Sun.

IV. Templar symbols in America

1. The cross

From the moment the conquistadors set foot on the mainland of the Continent, a series of surprises began for them. They expected to find, as in the West Indies, "savages of whom it could be doubted-as did popes and councils-that they were men and not talking apes."

And there stood before them cities, more orderly than those of Europe, whose palaces and temples rivaled-often surpassed-those of Seville or Zaragoza. Cities inhabited by a civilized people, whose aristocracy, with refined manners, lived in the midst of incomparable works of art and preserved in their libraries illuminated manuscripts in which the truly knowledgeable found the facts of a multi-secular history, the myths of a complex but profound religion, the data of an astronomy at least as advanced as that taught in Salamanca.

Then Cortés listened to Montezuma, the blond-bearded emperor (28) tell him about his ancestors, white men who long ago had

conquered Mexico and of whom the Spanish could observe the rare descendants with revealing complexions (38).

In Peru, a few years later, Pizarro's men were confronted, manuscripts aside, with an equally bewildering spectacle: even more so, perhaps, since the aristocracy-the Incas proper-was entirely white and blond, though, no doubt, vaguely of mixed blood (75).

But the adventurers, Christians in their own way, even to the point of fanaticism, did not believe their eyes when they found that those worshippers of "monstrous idols," in the north as well as in the south, worshipped in their temples, erected in their cemeteries and imprinted in their walls the quintessential symbol of redemption: the cross.

"In our America," writes Adàn Quiroga (76) - the profusion with which [this] symbol is found is such that surely there is no people who have not employed it as a sacred or at least figurative sign."

In Mexico, early historians (40) report its presence in a temple in Tenochtitlán and one in Popayàn. Cortés, during his expedition to Tabasco, came across a stone cross about a meter high.

In Guatulco, the conquistadores saw another cross: it was imprinted on a rock, next to the image of the "saint" (77) and they attributed it to some apostle who had evangelized the region: its nature was so obvious that the bishop of Oaxaca, Juan de Cervantes, had it transported to his cathedral. Actually, there were them everywhere, and Mexican iconography provides numerous examples. Quetzalcóatl wore a Greek cross on his headdress or cloak. Tezcatlipoca had a St. Andrew's cross on his vestments; Huehueteotl, the "Old God," or "Fire God," on his huge hairstyle had a Tiahuanaco cross, curiously in the Peruvian style. A Latin cross can be seen on the "cape" of a priest reproduced in the Magliabecchi Codex. The tombs of Anàhuac were traced in the shape of a cross, while those on the island of Cozumel in the Maya country were topped with crosses: after all, the inhabitants carried a cross in procession in times of drought.

Everyone knows about the Palenco cross in Yucatán. But is it really a cross? The bird that surmounts it allows one to doubt it, since it is the symbol of the Sun to which warriors fallen in battle and women who died giving birth went to join: this symbol is found on the Trees of Life in Mexico, which resemble-so much so that they can be misleading-the Germanic irminsul and the Scandinavians' Yggdrasil ash tree, in which it represents Walhalla, the eternal home of heroes. In Palenco, however, the Tree, if Tree it is, unquestionably takes (by symbolic syncretism?) the appearance of a Latin cross.

In Peru, as in all regions of the Tiahuanaco Empire, Greek crosses abound, in slightly different forms, on the walls of buildings, on pottery, in stone carvings. But one also finds the Latin cross as an element of architecture and on pieces of pottery.

Also in Tiahuanaco our correspondent Fritz Ferger found two: one on the Ponce monolith, unearthed only a few years ago, and the other on a stone slab at the place called Kantatayita. They were still crosses that served as boundaries to the royal roads. Inca emperors wore the same sign, but in its Greek form, in their litters, sometimes on their robes.

During the festival of Kàpac Raymi (78) in which they celebrated the summer solstice in December, the Incas wore the black and yellow huahuaclla, which had a red cross in the center.
In Cuzco, the rulers kept a jasper cross,
white and pink, in the chapel of their palace. After the conquest, the Spaniards put it in the cathedral sacristy, attached to a nail from which hung a rope that passed through the open hole at the top of one of the arms. "The cross was square," says Garcilaso (78), who saw it again in 1560, before returning to Spain, "as wide as it was tall. It measured about three quarters of a vara [60 cm], perhaps less, three fingers wide and as many fingers thick.
It was made of one piece, very well crafted, with perfect angles." At Carabuco, on the edge of Lake Titicaca, a large Latin cross made from the wood of an oak tree found only east of the Cordillera is still venerated. According to tradition, it was brought around 1250
by the Catholic priest whom the Indians of Paraguay called Pay Zumé (Pa'i, according to the unified Guarani spelling) and whom the Vikings of Tiahuanaco called Thul Gnupa (Father Gnupa, in Norse) and whom we will discuss in the following chapter.

The cross that gave its name to the present Bolivian province of Santa Cruz de la Sierra refers to this figure. It was engraved on a rock, alongside two footprints, the "arrows" with which the Vikings marked their paths (24). In Paraguay, we found two Latin crosses: one in the fragment of the frieze that surmounted the underground shelter of Cerro Tuja Og (26), near the Aquidabàn-Nigui precious metal foundry; the other on a stone found in the excavations of the Viking temple of Tacuati (26), likely Christianized as a result of the preaching of Pa'i Zumé.

We could fill a huge work with such citations, simply by taking up the studies of Quiroga (76) and
Jiménez de la Espada (79). Let us only say that, throughout Central and South America, pre-Columbian crosses are found just about everywhere, in very large numbers. The religious people who accompanied the conquistadors were impressed-not all of them, however-seeing in them evidence of earlier evangelization, and those in good faith were quite shaken to find the symbol of their religion in the midst of execrated idols. Their successors went a step further, identifying Pa'i Zumé with St. Thomas (Saint Tomé, in Spanish) who, according to the Catholic religion, was an apostle to the East Indies. Since the last century, many Americanists have reacted against these improper interpretations. But they have often done so without discernment.

The cross, in itself, is a very simple geometric figure, since it is made with two arms crossing at right angles. With the circle, it forms one of the basic elements of geometry, a science necessarily known to all makers. It is equally related to astronomy, and there is a reason why the most recognizable and most useful constellation in the southern hemisphere bears the name Southern Cross. And finally, the Wind Rose, even and especially reduced to its simplest expression, namely the representation of the four cardinal points, is related to the cross.
Inscribed in a circle, it divides its space into four equal parts and becomes a wheel that tends to turn on its axis. It also becomes a solar symbol, like the swastika, or gammata cross, which is its refinement.

It is not surprising, then, that the cross has been known since the

prehistory by all peoples able to access the concept, thus to the symbol, abstract by definition. But precisely because it expresses more than it is, every symbol arouses veneration among those who know how to interpret it but also among those who do not decipher it and for whom it represents the incomprehensible, hence the divine. Hence its religious significance. Well, the cross, unlike the swastika, is an extremely easy symbol to imagine and to trace. Thus we find it just about everywhere, without needing to seek the slightest explanation as to how widespread it is.

It must be said that the cross is not exclusively related to Christianity, which indeed adopted it rather late as a symbol of redemption. There are also many good reasons to think that the Church, in making it her own, has only taken up - in accordance with her tactics of the early centuries - an old pagan symbol, voluntarily confused with the instrument of torture of Calvary, which, nonetheless, was in the form of a tau. This explains why the figure of the quintessential Christian sign could never be unified. The churches of the East preserved, even embellishing it in various ways, the Greek cross with four equal arms. The Western church has only recently succeeded in imposing the Latin cross, more Judeo-Christian than the other, in what is the form furthest removed from the original pagan symbol. It is no accident that the Protestant sects have all adopted it.

The various pre-Columbian crosses, of which we saw some particularly representative examples earlier, are not necessarily the consequence of preaching Christianity. Some certainly are not; those, for example, which historian Zamorra tells us about (20): His-Kon, who was also called Hukk-Kon (the "king of ships," in Norse, from kukkert, ship and kon, king) sent by Kon-Tiscsi-Huirakocha (white civilizer of Peru) among the northern Indians taught them to paint crosses on their cloaks to "live sanctified in God." But it is not excluded that others are, especially when they adopt the Latin form. Of the latter, two of the examples we have given are questionable. One could very well be a simple motif of architectural decoration and the other the mere result of poor tracing. Palenco's cross is Latin, but we have seen that it is confused with a Tree of Life, which would be sufficient to explain the disproportion of its arms. By contrast, those of Tacuati and Tiahuanaco, not to mention that of Carabuco, to which we will return in the next chapter, are perfect. Nevertheless, we repeat: the geometric cross is too commonly employed for its presence to permit any definite conclusion. But there are some that rule out any possible doubt.

2. Other types of crosses

Let us leave aside the cross inscribed in a circle, what is generally called the "Celtic cross," although it was known millennia before the Celts appeared in history: on the one hand, we have said, it constitutes a very simple figure whose invention may have been spontaneous. On the other hand, we found it on the Viking outpost in Yvytyruzù, Paraguay, amidst runic inscriptions that have been translated. Here, at least, its Scandinavian origin is indisputable. Nor do we insist on the swastika, the symbol par excellence of the Indo-European peoples: it is too elaborate and specific a sign for it to be attributed

an indigenous character, but everything leads one to believe that its introduction to America was due to the Vikings. Let us limit ourselves to the patent crosses (i.e., whose arms widen or curve at the ends).

Since Christianity adopted the Greek cross as its symbol, different churches, sects and - later - religious orders, applied themselves to giving the crosses, for their own use, a different look. However, because of its simplicity, the sign did not lend itself to variation at all. Except for two points: the shape of the arms, which could widen starting from the center until reaching, at the limit, the shape of a triangle, and that of their ends, which allowed many creations. Thus the patent crosses appeared. Thus there was nothing spontaneous in their creation, but, on the contrary, an intentional effort to diversify. A fortuitous chance, a coincidence could account for why the same complex symbol was composed in two different areas without contact with each other. But even chance has its limits. And, besides, in America-where we find many patent crosses-the parallels between Mexico and Peru are too obvious for us not to see them as the result of the same influence.

We will not dwell on the massive crosses with triangular arms-they are too geometric for a definite conclusion to be drawn. Instead, let us consider the one Quetzalcóatl wears on his shield.
No doubt is allowed: this is a cross of
Malta, or St. John's cross. We find it in Tiahuanaco, without the circle, and on a vase on Marajó Island in the Amazon delta.
Four of those are depicted on a breastplate in
bronze, reproduced in Pierre Honoré's volume, La Legenda de los dioses blancos, Barcelona, 1965, have arms that are slightly rounded at the ends.

The fifth is made entirely of straight strokes. One of them has, because of its position, the appearance of a St. Andrew's cross. The differences noticeable between one and the other, and among all those of the same type, are insignificant. The form is essentially the same in all cases.

Evidently, the presence in America of the cross called "of Malta" cannot be due to the Vikings who landed in the 10th century in the Gulf of Mexico (20), since Scandinavia, at that time, was still pagan. Nor can we attribute it to the Irish papas who, earlier, had preached Christianity to the Nahua and Maya (20): we find traces of it only in Mexico,
while the cross in question also appeared in Peru. That leaves the Templars.

Well, the cross of St. John is exactly the one that appears on the seal of the occult grand master of the Order found, along with the one we described in Chapter I, in the National Archives in Paris: the authentic Templar cross, from which the eight-pointed cross we are most familiar with, similar in more massive form to that of the Hospitallers, and then the cross with unequal arms, increasingly resembling a T, which the knights wore on their robes and on the sails of Templar ships, differed over time.
Other patented crosses that are no less European-but linear-are.
add, confirming them, to the earlier symbols. The one, for example, that appeared on the stele of Monte Albán, Mexico, and which we find again, though in different positions among the signs of different origins-.

runes, Latin letters, the figures known as "Arabic"-which, according to Inca historian Phelipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (80) adorned the tunic and belt of the emperor of Cuzco and whose ensemble remains incomprehensible to us.

Another, with two arms branching at the end into two divergent branches, appears in a stone carving in the Cerro Negro, near Tinogasta, in the Argentine province of Catamarca, which was part of the Tiahuanaco and Cuzco empires.

Fritz Berger, a German engineer and advisor to the Paraguayan army between 1940 and 1946, about whom we have discussed in an earlier work (26) and to whom many major discoveries in the Amambay are due, reproduces this same but complete cross in one of his letters to a friend in Munich, but unfortunately without specifying its location.

Well, we already know this sign: it was found on a medallion unearthed in Montségur during excavations in 1965. It is not necessary to mention that Montségur is the fortress that, in the hands of the Cathars, resisted for a year in the 13th century the siege of the syniscal of the Archons and his crusaders.

At the summit of Cerro Tuja Og in Paraguay, in the area where Berger had worked, we found another cross slightly different whose arms branch into three branches. It is identical to the one adorning another Cathar medallion.

Well, we briefly set out in Chapter I the reasons for believing in an ideological coincidence, thus making explicit relations between Albigensians and Templars. These reasons are overwhelmingly reinforced by the presence in South America of Cathar symbols, which can only have been brought there by the Order's ships.

3. Hermetic symbols

There is still a variety of crosses that we detected again in the Paraguayan region of Amambay, a few dozen kilometers from the Viking fortress of Cerro Corá, at the foot of which was located the precious metal foundry we have already mentioned. Three kilometers northeast of the Yvyty Perö, the hillock that indigenous traditions present as the ancient home of the white king Ipir and under which a huge cavity has been found that, for lack of means, has not yet been able to be opened, stands Cerro Kysé. On the surface of the carved stone bench that forms its summit is a series of striking symbols (26).

One of these, which is present twice, at first glance resembles an algiz (R) of the ancient runic futhark or a hagalaz (h) of the new one. We so defined it, by the way, in our previous work (26). But too hastily.

The sign in question consists of a rod passing through the center of a St. Andrew's cross.

Regardless of the context, what makes us doubt today that this is a runic letter is the fact that the rod is "planted" in some kind of pedestal.

In fact, the figure thus takes on the appearance of the chrism simple (the monogram of Christ) of Christian symbolism, formed from the two Greek letters I and X (iota and chi) initials of Iêsous Kristòs. But it also symbolizes the Sun at the top of the World Tree. Under these two conjoined aspects, it is a more schematic representation of the solar Christ, expressing in a

more concrete way the monstrance of the Catholic liturgy.

René Guénon (81) tells us that by eliminating the foot of the "cross" and joining the ends two by two, we obtain "the well-known figure of the hexagram, or Solomon's seal, formed by two equilateral triangles opposed and intertwined [...]. Medieval Christian Hermeticism saw, in the two triangles and the hexagram, among other things, a representation of the two natures, divine and human, personified in Christ; and the number six, with which this symbol is naturally related, has, among its meanings, that of union and mediation [...].

This same number, according to the Hebrew Kabbalah, is also the number of creation (the "work of the six days" of Genesis, in relation to the six directions of space); [...] the attribution of its symbol to the Word is equally well justified: in short, it is a kind of graphic translation of the omnia per ipsum facta sunt of the Gospel of St. John." Let us add that, on the mystical level, the two triangles of Solomon's seal express one the illumination by the Word and the other the contemplation in love, while their balance, in architecture, symbolizes the Royal Art as a whole and, more particularly, the trait of the "affiliates." That is why the Sons of Solomon had adopted the hexagram as their mark: it is found on many of the churches the Templars built.

As can be seen, the seal of Solomon, with its multiple hermetic meanings-pagan, Jewish, and Christian, but all oriental-is an eminently syncretistic symbol that, because of its meaning, its name, and its use by fellow members affiliated with the order, was by no means foreign to the Temple. In contrast, the Germanic peoples of the pagan era in general and the Vikings in particular were not familiar with it. Well, Fritz Berger - as his correspondence testifies - saw it engraved twice on rocks in the Amambay, in the vicinity of Cerro Corá. Unfortunately, he does not indicate its exact location and we have not found these figures. But about their existence there seems to be no doubt.

On the other hand, always at the summit of Cerro Kisé we found another symbol that is always reported by our engineer-archaeologist. Its presence in Paraguay-we said this in our previous work (26)-constitutes "a mystery that perhaps one day we will clarify." It is indeed a pentacle, or pentagram, apparently very close to that of Solomon's seal, but in fact quite different. Berger reproduces an impeccable one, which we have not been able to locate. The one that appears alongside the chrism on the turkey oak in front of the Yvyty Perö is incomplete, poorly drawn but perfectly recognizable. A broken line is detached from it, at the top of which we see a group of small characters. The first three - the others are erased - have a distinct runic appearance, although it is impossible to transcribe them with certainty and therefore doubt is legitimate.

The pentacle, which the Germans call Drudenfuss, sorcerer's hand, is of Pythagorean origin. For members of the sect it expressed the unity of the universe and the eternity of the cosmic cycle. The Neoplatonists and Gnostics took it back as a symbol of the perfection of nature. In the Middle Ages, alchemists saw it as an image of the Great Work, that is, of the microcosmic understanding of universal harmony. Muslim hermeticists also used it, bequeathing it to the Moroccans: in fact, the pentacle appears on the flag Morocco. The Templars certainly knew him, although they did not

have imprinted anywhere. Which is normal if we think of the care with which they concealed their secret doctrine, barely hinted at and publicly manifested in the abacus, the flat-pommed staff of the Pythagoreans-and the Sons of Solomon-which the grand masters carried in the guise of a crosier. The pentagram on the side of the chrism, then, does not surprise us.

There remains the quintessential Templar symbol: that of the triple belt, formed by three concentric square crosses joined together by four perpendicular straight lines. Well (81), one wanted to see in it the "three circles of existence" of the Druidic tradition, or the
"three celestial circles" that, among Hindus, surround Meru, i.e., the Pole Column, axis of the world, and the three degrees of an initiatory society.

The latter explanation is certainly the most satisfactory, because it seems to us really very strange that any people would ever have had the crackpot idea of representing a circle with a square, even if one wanted to invoke, to justify the theory, the squaring of the circle (sic!).

However, at the risk of sounding a bit simplistic, we confess that in our opinion the triple belt is nothing other than Solomon's Temple, the material expression, for Christians, Muslims and Jews, of the Wisdom attributed to its builder and, at the same time, of the Order whose purpose was to restore it in his way. Thus we have a triple symbol: that of the union of three monotheistic denominations, that of three categories of brothers within the Order (knights, clergymen and sergeants) and that of the future society, founded on the triple power of the Spirit,
Of weapons and money.

Like all others-save, of course, the chrism-the symbol of the triple belt predates Christianity, which only modified its meaning. It is found on megalithic monuments in France and Spain and also in the Acropolis.

It is found in the Middle Ages, for example in the cloister of St. Paul's in Rome, which dates from the 13th century, as well as in the Holy Land, Syria and Cyprus. It is engraved on the walls of the Templar castle of Gisors and scrawled on those of the prison of Chinon, covered with graffiti by the brothers who were imprisoned there after the dissolution of the Order. Pierre Carnac (82) shows us the triple belt also in Colombia, on the plain of Cundinamarca (Kondanemarka, Danish royal road, in Norse) and in Bolivia. Evidently, neither the Indians nor the Vikings drew it.

4. The monstrance of Tezcatlipoca

The cross is not the only Christian symbol that the Templars introduced to America. The liturgy of the Tezcatlipoca cult, as early Spanish historians describe it to us, retained many aspects of Roman ritual.

In the temples of the Tecpantlaca the altar had the same shape and occupied the same place as in Catholic churches (42) and a perpetual fire was lit there, as before the Holy Sacrament (42). In the course of ceremonies, the officiant used a censer adorned with a St. Andrew's cross, and held not with a chain but with a handle, which was raised and lowered rhythmically.

These could just be coincidences, since the altar, fire and the use of incense are common to many non-Christian religions. The fact is that connected to all these elements is another

object, much more significant.

The statues of Tezcatlipoca carried, in their right hand, an object called itlachiayàn. Eugène Beauvois-whom we take up here-argues that this word comes from the nàhuatl tlachia, to see, with the prefix i, sound, and the suffix yan expressing destination. Itlachiayàn would thus mean "that which is for seeing." On this basis, some historians have translated the term as "mirror." Two of them (42), (71) describe the utensil in question as a kind of fan that in the center had a gold disk, very shiny, in the middle of which was traced a small circle from which four strokes in the form of a cross started. Father Durán shows it to us in his album, added to his work, whose illustrations are taken from Mexican codices.

He also provides a variation of this: a star surrounded by rays, in the middle of which a semicircle support is seen.

Beauvois argues that in both cases it is an imitation of the monstrance, or sun, which in 13th-century Europe tended to replace the ancient custom of exposition. F. de Mély (83) writes that the feast of the Holy Sacrament, first celebrated in Liège in 1247, "brings several modifications in the monstrance [...]. It is certain that when the feast was not well fixed, at first ancient expositions were used, in which the raised relics were replaced with a crescent of gold or silver that contained the host [...]. With later transformations, when the monstrance becomes a sun with rays, the crescent is replaced by a crystal bezel, in which the host is inserted." Our author adds that "the monstrance proper must therefore have been studied, in reality, only from the end of the 13th century [...]. At most one could accept as a true monstrance the one from 1286, donated by Heildewige to the priory of Herkenrode, currently at the church of St. Quentin in Hasselt." This date is too late, and F. de Mély himself gives evidence of this when he writes that the "monstrance is the symbol of St. Clare, St. Norbert and St. Bernard." The latter, whose role we have seen in the founding of the Order of the Temple, must therefore have been familiar with it as early as the 12th century, even if it was not in its final form.

The purported mirror - or semicircle support - of the Tezcat symbol
-lipoca was thus the equivalent of the lunette in which the host, that is, the transubstantiated solar Christ, stands. In the same way that on the banners of the Catholic Corpus Christi processions, the monstrance, or nauholin (the Creator Sun), appeared on the banner of the Sun Commanders, hanging from the altar of their temple, in the military school where young nobles were trained (42). "It is undoubtedly this God-bearer or Teomama, as he was called in nàhuatl," writes Beauvois (44), "who gave his name to the dignitary in charge of the monstrance in the Tecpantlaca states." The Tlacochcalca carried the monstrance in procession during the great feast of their God, which began on the first day of the month of toxcatl, namely- according to Father Duràn-"May 20, and whose ceremonies equaled those of Corpus Christi, which, almost always, falls at the same time [...]. The purpose of the feast was to invoke water from heaven, in the same manner as our rogations and litanies, which always take place in the month of May; thus it was celebrated in that month, beginning on the ninth day and ending on the nineteenth" (42). Chimalpàhin (45) tells how, in 1332, the Tlacochcalca of Yacapichtlàn Cohuatepec, mistreated by the

population, they retreated with the Teomama carrying Tezcatlipoca.

A four-year drought followed. The Chichimechs had to make honorable amends and put themselves under the protection of the "people of the Temple." Their king left to find the statue of God, which he had placed in a tabernacle and to which he put back the "brilliant curved staff," that is, the crosier, the symbol of the hierarchy episcopal in the Catholic Church, which already bore Quetzalcóatl.

The priests then granted him the title "spiritual lord," Teohuateucli, and abundance returned to the country.

Contrary to what one might think of a military order, the Templars often organized such processions. We have the testimony of Antoine Syci, apostolic and imperial notary, chaplain and chancellor of the Temple, reported by Michelet (2): "I saw many times a cross [...] said to be that of the lake in which Christ was baptized. The Templars kept it in their treasury, and sometimes, when the heat and drought were excessive, the people of Ancon [Acco, or Aca, i.e. Acre, Beauvois specifies, whose translation we quote] begged them to carry it in a procession of the clergy. Sometimes, I saw in this ceremony the patriarch of Jerusalem, accompanied by one of the Temple knights, carrying the cross with appropriate devotion. After these processions, thanks to divine clemency, the water of heaven bathed the earth and tempered the heat of the air."

Sometimes, instead of the monstrance, the Tecpantlacas used a holy book in their rotations. Chimalpàhin (45) uses the word tlacuilolquiauh, which comes from tlacuilolli, painting, and quiauitl, rain, which the Spanish translation renders as "painted rain"; a nonsense. Instead, Beauvois (44) - and everything leads one to believe he is right - reads "rain of writing," rain "obtained by means of books." The Indian historian adds that the Tecpantlaca lost much of their influence when, in 1347, they failed to avert drought by this procedure. The culdei of Scotland used, under the same circumstances, to go in procession with the manuscripts of St. Columba or, in their absence, with missals or litany formularies (84). It is not surprising, then, that the same practice was adopted, in the Anàhuac, by their successors.

The Templars had found peoples in Mexico who had received the imprint of the Gaelic monks, and who, of course, welcomed them. An interpenetration of customs had ensued, the results of which are sometimes surprising.

Thus, for example, the priests of Tezcatlipoca, direct heirs of the brothers of the Temple, wore the typical tonsure of the Irish Chaldean clans: they shaved their hair on their foreheads, up to the height of their ears, and let it grow and fall in a tail down their backs. The Uitzilopochtli priests, on the contrary, purely Aztec, had adopted the crown tonsure of the medieval European clerics from the Order's clerics, whom they had not met, however, since they had arrived in Mexico much time later. Besides, all of them, when they tried to be identified by the Spanish at the time of the conquest, attributed to themselves the name of pope, which, far from being nàhuatl, was that of the culdei. They all wore black "petticoats" and hoods "like those of the Dominicans" (28).

At the beginning of the 16th century, the Mexican church enjoyed a solid structure. It was headed by two great priests, one in charge of the

cult of Uitzilopochtli, the other of that of Tlaloc, who bore the common title of "quequetzalcoa": successor of Quetzalcòatl. In choosing them, Sahagùn writes (40), "no account was taken of origin, but only of customs and religious practice, knowledge of doctrines and purity of life. One chose the one who was virtuous, humble and peaceful, reasonable and serious: not superficial, but shrewd, rigorous and scrupulous, full of love and mercy, compassion and friendship for all, devout and God-fearing."

These two pontiffs, and Soustelle (61) explains it very well, consecrated by their presence "the synthesis of the two fundamental ideologies of Mexico, amalgamated by the Aztecs who became the dominant nation: that of the warlike nomads and that of the peasants, each with its own ideal and paradise." But both placed under the sign of the god-king of the Toltecs, a model priest. Under their direction, a hierarchized clergy like that of the Roman Church - Sahagùn's Father does not hesitate to compare its leaders to bishops - served temples dedicated to countless "national" and local gods, somewhat as Catholic churches are dedicated to various saints. Its members, which is very strange in the context of a pagan religion, had to remain celibate; they were therefore
monks, as the culdees and as the Temple clerics. The Christian tradition, derived from two successive contributions quickly unified, had marked them all.

5. Tangible traces

The data just presented solidly support the conclusions to which our analyses in the previous chapters have led us. At the outset, we posed three problems: where the Temple silver came from, what the port of La Rochelle was used for, and where the Atlantic fleet, likely loaded with the Order's "treasure," had taken refuge. The solution lies in one word: America. From the "New World," officially still unknown, the Vikings of Tiahuanaco exported the metal that the Templars imported in the same era, it was not known from where.

It is logical to establish a relationship between these two complementary facts. Especially since a recently found seal of the Order shows us the indisputable image of an Amerindian. The reason for the existence of La Rochelle thus became obvious, self-evident: traffic with the Atlantic demanded not only ports of embarkation, of which we know the existence in South America, but also a port of disembarkation that had to be located on the ocean and offer all the guarantees to the
"secret of the Temple."

On the other hand, the arrival in Mexico, at a date coinciding with that of the dissolution of the Order, of Christian monk-soldiers whose organization was quite similar to that of the Templars-whose name they bore in nàhuatl-allowed us to situate in the Anàhuac the place of asylum for fugitives, following the
traces provided by Eugène Beauvois.

Under these conditions, it would have been surprising if the Temple people had not left material signs of their presence in South and Central America. No doubt, one must at least attribute to the Templars some of the books and "paintings" of pre-Columbian origin that still existed in Mexico in the 16th century. However, the manuscripts disappeared, as did most of the indigenous codices, systematically burned by the Spaniards who, moreover, for "religious motivations," they were merely following the example of

Itzcòatl, fourth king of the Aztecs: he had ordered the destruction of manuscripts that referred to history prior to his reign because they "contained many lies" (40). It is known that the Incas, for their part, had forbidden the use of writing in order to erase the memory of the defeat suffered by their ancestors around 1290 and to trace their history back to the creation of the new empire by Manko Kàpak. So, it is not surprising that Mexico lacks inscriptions that should, normally, have been left by Papas, Vikings and Templars, whose influence was strong enough to introduce hundreds of words of European origin to the Maya.
This is a point we addressed in a previous essay and will return to in the following chapter.

For the same reason, no runic inscriptions exist in Peru, while we have detected hundreds in Paraguay and Brazil, the ancient Tiahuanaco provinces that the Incas never retook and in which Spanish and Portuguese penetration occurred very late, when the iconoclastic momentum of the conquistadors had already subsided.
Of course, the Aztec rulers could not think of "purge" their religion of the Christian elements that had been introduced into it. Even if their syncretist mentality had not opposed it, they would not have had the power to do so, because they dominated only a part of Central America. Itzcòatl, moreover, had been an exception. Indeed, his successors gladly boasted of their kinship with the vanished whites-we saw this in the case of Montezuma. Thus the Spaniards still found in both the Anàhuac and the Maya countries theological and liturgical traditions whose Christian origin they never questioned, albeit reluctantly, and also crosses. These were undoubtedly linear crosses, which could be simple geometric lines or had naturalistic significance, even if associated with worship. But there were also patent crosses of which at least some-the Maltese cross, or St. John's cross-connect exclusively with the European monastic tradition and, in particular, with that of the Temple.

As for Mexico, one might hesitate to attribute them to the Tecpantlacas rather than the papas. Doubt vanishes by considering the crosses found in South America, where the culdeos never arrived. Especially since we find them in Paraguay, in an area where the Vikings owned a fort that defended the route to the Atlantic and where they established a precious metal foundry. These crosses in particular are associated with other signs that can only come from the brothers of the Temple: not only Cathar crosses, but again the seal of Solomon, the insignia of the companions affiliated with the Order, and the pentacle-the sorcerer's hand-one of the symbols of the alchemists.
The triple walls of Colombia and Peru, found wherever the Templars passed, complete the picture.

The similarity between the Mexican itlachiayàn and the monstrance of Catholic ceremonies could only be a fortuitous coincidence in another context.

But this explanation is rendered implausible by many facts: itlachiayàn was found only in the temples of Tezcatlipoca, served by the Tecpantlaca, whose arrangement was in many respects identical to that of the Roman churches. It was used in May processions, which Father Duràn does not hesitate to compare to those of Corpus Christi. Finally, other liturgical objects-the incense burner, the crozier-complete a picture so evocative that Spanish religious

of the time, albeit with absolute reluctance, had to surrender to the evidence.

V. Irish, Vikings and Templars

1. The three arrivals

The analyses carried out in the previous chapters now allow us to sketch an exact picture of European settlements in Central and South America before the Conquest. We speak in the plural because it is by no means excluded that there were other contacts before, albeit sporadic ones, which left no trace. Although in this regard there is nothing certain.

The first historical arrival was that of Irish monks, the culdei, belonging to the order of St. Columba. It is known that from the 4th to the 12th century the ties that united the Catholic Church and that of the Gaelic countries of Britain and Armorica were very weak. In fact, Christianity had been introduced to these countries by Syrian and Coptic monks. The preachers sent by the pope-German of Auxerre, Loup, Patrick-to combat Pelagianism and impose the Roman rite had great influence but, nevertheless, the peculiarities of a ecclesiastical organization based on the monastery disappeared much later. Over the centuries there were no bishops in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and in Brittany: it was the abbots who replaced them. E when Rome was eventually able to appoint them, their authority was very limited, and they only imposed themselves on the religious as time went on.

Well, and this is the point that interests us, the culdei shunned the world. On the one hand, their fortified monasteries constituted the centers of veritable fiefdoms: each of them, with its monks, who were priests, and its converged brethren, administered the land worked by lay and married oblates. At first, only the former bore the title paba, a Gaelic deformation of the word pope that was used in parallel in Latin. But gradually this privilege extended to all members of the community. On the other hand, the followers of St. Columbanus, faithful to the customs they had inherited from the eastern anchorites, willingly isolated themselves, individually or in small groups, to go to do penance in some withdrawn place, as hostile as possible. More specifically, the northern islands attracted these men, heirs of a seafaring people. Thus, when at the end of the 8th century the monastery of Iona, in the Hebrides, north of Scotland, felt too threatened by the Vikings, its monks did not hesitate to emigrate to Iceland, with their converts and oblates: they had long known of its existence and resources. Other communities followed them. In a few hundred years, thanks to the continued contribution of Irish monks, three monasteries of which we still know the characteristic names, Papeys, Papos and Papyli, were solidly established. Then the Vikings appeared again. A part of the religious preferred to cede the land to them.

In the year 877 about fifty boats left. As far as we know, they were never heard of again.

Less than a hundred years later, in 963, the Viking Ari Marrsón was tossed by a violent storm to an unknown coast, "to the west, near the great Vinland," as the Landnàmabòk relates: it was that of "Huitramannaland [Land of the White Men], which others call Irland it Mikla [Great Ireland] [...]. Ari was not allowed to leave again. He was detained there and baptized. Recounting this was Rafn, a merchant from Limerick [in Ireland], who there

had lived there many years. And, moreover, Thorkill Geltssòn, Earl of Orkney, assured that Ari had been seen in Huitramannaland, and that although he could not be allowed to return, he was highly esteemed there."

This account, which is important because it shows that in the 10th century there was contact between Ireland and its "colony" of America, is complemented by the saga, incorporated in Flatteyjarbòk, in which Ari Marssòn's son, the skalde Ari the Wise, relates that his father, picked up by an Icelandic ship, had returned to his country, where he married. This is not the only mention of Huitramannaland that can be found in sagas. We know from these that in 1007 Thorsfinn Karlsefni was a prisoner of the Indians in Vinland. Later, in Greenland, after learning Norse, they told him that in the north of their country there lived men dressed in white, who, on fixed days, went out in procession with large pieces of cloth attached to poles, "speaking very loudly." In 1209, on a voyage from Dublin to Iceland, the Viking Gudhleif Gudlanssòn was carried southwestward by a violent storm and dragged to an unknown coast, where he was taken prisoner by Irish-speaking men. He was rescued from the
life thanks to the intervention of an old man who arrived on horseback and spoke to him in Norse. This was Bjorn Asbrandssòn, the hero of Breidavik, who was exiled in the year 999 after a love affair gone wrong.

Where was the Great Ireland whose existence was so well known in the Middle Ages that the Arab geographer el-Edrisi mentions it, in the
XII century, calling it Irlandeh el-Kabirah? On this point authors are divided, without, however, their opinions being mutually exclusive. Some place it south of Vinland, others north. In a work without scientific pretensions but well documented, Quebec writer Eugène Achard (63) places it in Acadia (Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) and Gaspesia. No doubt he is right. The name of Huitramannaland appears-in an abbreviated and Latinized form-on a 1515 map due to Jòn Godmindssòn: Albania, the "White." That of Nova Scotia is also very significant, since the Irish, in the Middle Ages, were often called Scotii, like the Scots.

All leads one to believe that the ancient Irish who emigrated from Iceland in 877 went to settle in America, where, however, we find them in 963, the date of the shipwreck of Ari Marssòn. Perhaps other groups had preceded them. In any case, they knew of the existence of the "new world" from the travel accounts of St. Brandan, which spoke of an island with a paradisiacal climate, located across the western sea, and which soon - as early as the 9th century - were transcribed by some monks. And also, even more widely, from the legends that were told, in the evening, throughout Ireland and where they spoke of the Hy Breasail, or Hi Brasil, a ghostly land that sometimes appeared in the mist to the inhabitants of the island of Aran.
Columbans were sailors as well as religious. They were accustomed to navigating the icy waters of the Arctic and combined the spirit of adventure with the desire for mortification and the duty of apostolate. It is ruled out that, once they went to America, they had abruptly changed their mentality and shut themselves in monasteries. They must have soon left for the south, on a voyage of exploration along the coasts, no doubt attracted by the island of San Brandano and that is-if Louis Kervran's analysis [85] is correct as we believe-to Cuba, from which Mexico was only a few hours away

of navigation. Well, we know from indigenous traditions that the first arrival of Whites in Central America was that of religious men dressed in long white robes, who were called popes (20) (papes, plural of papar, the name for Irish pabas in Norse).
In the Anàhuac, their leader (or their personified group) gave birth to the ascetic Quetzalcòatl and, in the Mayan country-in Itzamnà-his alter ego.
Their influence was extraordinary, because they succeeded in not only to preach a Christianity whose memory had not yet faded after five hundred years, but also to transform the customs of the Indians. However, their presence must have been brief.
Most likely, these were just monks who, vowed to celibacy and separated from their base, were no longer replaced. If some oblate families were part of the group, their descendants may only have blended with the indigenous population, becoming mestizos, within a few generations. All leads one to believe that there was nothing left of the culdean monasteries-more likely, mere hermitages-when Jarl Ullman, in 967, touched down at Pànuco, in the Gulf of Mexico.

It is not necessary now to speak at length about this second arrival, the "last" for the Maya: we have devoted four works to the Viking presence in Central and South America. We simply recall that Ullman landed with seven ships and about seven hundred Vikings, men and women, originally from Schleswig, and conquered Anàhuac, where he became the fifth king of the Toltecs (the Quetzalcòatl warrior). After about twenty years, with part of his men, he went to Yucatán, where he was remembered by the name Kukulkán; then, following difficulties with the natives, he resumed his journey overland. When he returned, he found that some of the Vikings he had left there had united with Indian women, from whom were born some small half-breeds. So he left Mexico, resumed the sea, landed on the coast of present-day Venezuela and sailed across South America to the Pacific, where a new chief, Heimlap ("piece of the homeland," in Norse) had boats built of sealskin. The Vikings descended along the coast to the height of Arica,
stopping along the way to establish the kingdom of Quito and impose their authority on the Chimú; then they ascended the plateau. From their capital Tiahuanaco, on the shores of Lake Titicaca, they set out to conquer the subcontinent. Their empire soon extended as far as Bogotá, in present-day Colombia, Valparaiso, and Chile, with two outlets on the Atlantic: the Amazon to the north and the Peaviru to the south, the
"easy route" that, from the Sierra de la Plata, reached Paraguay and the ocean. They numbered about forty thousand (25) when, around 1290, the Auracans of the Kari cacicco, who came from Chile, seized Tiahuanaco. Some of the survivors of the massacre that followed sailed up the coast to the Equator where they embarked, toward Polynesia, on balsa rafts. Others, including the famous Amazons, took refuge in the Amazonian and Paraguayan forests, where we found their descendants. Still others regained their strength
in Apurìmac-in Peru proper-and, a few decades later, descended on Cuzco, where they founded the New Empire, that of the Incas, that is, in Norse, of the "Descendants."

Then the Templars arrived. The date of this "third arrival" is not exactly established, as Chimalpàhin situates the fact first in 1272, then in 1294, even mentioning the immigration of a new group in 1304. This historian, though he was descended from the princes of Chalco, was writing in the 17th century, and one cannot at all

Demanding greater precision.

Let us say that the Templars appeared in Mexico in the last years of the XIII century, that is, at the time when they were encountering increasing resistance in Europe. No doubt they sought to prepare a fallback base or, more simply, to conquer a territory where they were free from any pressure from the church and the king.

Be that as it may, in 1307 (not 1304), the year of their Atlantic fleet's departure from La Rochelle, they must have blessed God-or Baphomet-for inspiring them with an idea that had proved so timely.

We are now able to establish a chronology-imperfect but satisfactory-about the arrival and movements of the various waves of Europeans who reached the "New World" in the Middle Ages.

877. Arrival of the papas in Acadia. Shortly thereafter, movement to Mexico of a group whose members-being priests-became extinct over the course of half a century, since the youngest of them had to be at least 30 years old. The families of their oblates, if they had brought any with them, became confused by interbreeding in two or three generations.

966. Ullman-Jarl's arrival in Mexico.

969. Departure of Ullman and most of his companions.

About 1000. Arrival of the Vikings at Tiahuanaco. In a previous work we had given the date 1050/1100 as probable. We must correct it, because the change of dynasty, at the Chimu, took place around the year 1000.

Between 1272 and 1294. Arrival of the Templars in Mexico. About 1290. Destruction of the Tiahuanaco empire.

Circa 1300. Founding of the Inca empire.

1307. Arrival in Mexico of the Templar fleet that fled France.

We have not considered the Norwegian expeditions in the Vinland, which took place from the year 1000 onward, because they do not, in fact, have any direct relation to our topic.

2. French words among the Maya

Research such as we have been doing for thirty years in an attempt to define the genetic and cultural contribution of Europeans to the pre-Columbian "New World" involves a progression that is not without rectification. In an earlier work (20) we summarized the linguistic study of étienne Brasseur de Bourbourg (86), who had shown that hundreds of Indo-European roots were present in Quiché-maya, covering Germanic, Latin, English, Gaelic and French forms. We did not yet know then that Ullman's Vikings started from Danish possessions in Britain and not from Schleswig, where they originated. This would be revealed to us a few years later by analysis of the Paraguay runic inscriptions (24), (26) whose "alphabet" contains characters belonging to the Anglo-Saxon futhorc. We also knew nothing about the Templar settlement in Mexico. So we had considered only the Germanic and Latin terms. The former could only have come from the Vikings; and we attributed the latter exclusively to Irish monks. We had left aside the Gaelic form words which, although they too could all have been due to the Culdeans, were identical or had strong resemblances to their Germanic equivalent, which cast doubt on their origin. That left the English and French form terms. Actually, lacking a better explanation, we had considered the

former as derived from Old Germanic and the latter from Latin or Old German, which we currently have to rectify. On the contrary, we do not have to change anything about our examination, present in the same work, on the philological analysis of Quitchoa, due to Vicente Fidel Lòpez, because he merely compared the idiom of Peru with Sanskrit, unanimously considered in the 19th century as the mother language of all European idioms, while it is derived - like the latter - from the original Indo-European. We are not linguists and so it had not been possible for us to complete his work. We had just been able to add some Danish or Latin words which, even to us laymen, seemed to constitute the primitive form of one or other of the terms mentioned.

Let us limit ourselves, here again, to the findings of Brasseur de Bourbourg, who in the middle of the last century was curator of Rabinal, a large indigenous village in Guatemala of 6,000 Quiché-speaking Indians, and of San Juan de Sacatepéquez, where a Mayan dialect very close to the earlier one, Cakchikel, was spoken. Let us not forget, then, that Brasseur de Bourbourg could only dispose of modern-language dictionaries in addition to Latin. His philological analysis, in short, could only be done according to the present-day derivatives-Danish, German, Dutch, Dutch, English, Gaelic, and French-of the terms used in the Middle Ages. This results in some errors: a number of English words, referred to as roots of Quiché terms, are actually French and were not incorporated into English ones until after the Norman conquest, then upon the arrival of the Irish and Vikings in Mexico. Here again there is an unfortunate inaccuracy: we do not know how many of the words to which Brasseur de Bourbourg ascribes a genuine English origin come from the corresponding Anglo-Saxon term or from one of their analogues in Norse or Continental Germanic. But the latter problem is less important, since in both cases the introduction of the words in question into Quiché can only be due to the Vikings. Here we are only interested in the French roots. And those that our linguist cites as such are not numerous. Next, we provide the Quiché terms (in bold) with their translation. Then, the French root (in italics) and its meaning in Italian.

BOB, cotton. Spool (reel) BOL,
round. Boule (ball)
BU, to soften the earth. Boue (mud) BUR,
to be inflated. Bourré (full)
BUX, to obstruct, to close. Boucher [the quiché "X" is pronounced like the French "ch"] (plug)
CHER, fattening. Chair (meat)
EN, eM, in. En (in).
GOL, resin, ointment. GOLIH, glue. Glues, coller (glue, paste).
HIG, sobbing, choking, drowning. Hoquet (sob) HUN, one. One
HUR, tear, pull, unsheathe. Hors, dehors (outside, outside)
LACH, to separate, to divorce. Lacher (leave)
LIM, tune, order. Limer (to file)
LUZ, twist. Luxer (twist)
MAX, hard, harsh. Masse, massif (mass, massive)
MU, mUB, wet, dilute. MUD, mud. Mouiller (to wet) OREL, hole.
Oreille (ear)
PAM, belly. Panse (belly)

PARAN, to walk under cover. Parer, parapluie (shelter, umbrella)
PATAH, catch birds with glue. Pâte, empâter (paste, knead)
PAYOH, paying people to work. Payer (pay)
PITZITZ, to melt like a ripe fruit, the pulp of which spreads outside. Pisser (urinate)
POZ, a species of stone used to clean up hard surfaces. Ponce, poncer (pumice, switch to pumice)
HERE, they, them. Here (that, who) [the archaic form of they, them, in French, was Here].
QUIT, to cut, to separate, to take away. Quitter
(leave) RUL, descend. Rouler (to roll)
TANBAL, percussion instrument for calling. Timbale, tambour (kettledrum, drum).
TATON, to walk tentatively. Tâton (groping)
TAZ, order, rank, stage, grade; to order things by putting them on top of each other. Tasser (to arrange)
TI, meat, eating. Titi (ancient word for meat in some provinces of France. But tI may also derive from the Old German thier, animal, origin of the French dialectal titi)
TIR, to adjust, to numb, to stiffen. Tirer (pull) TOPOTA, to
touch with the tips of the fingers. Tapoter (to tap)
TUB, breast of the woman. Tube (tube)
TUTAH, protect. Tutelle
(guardianship)
VOR, to puncture, to sodomize. Forer (to puncture)

To these terms, whose origin seems very clear, although certain resemblances-but not all of them-can be attributed to chance, are added some that Brasseur de Bourbourg traces back to English words and that, in fact, do not come from Anglo-Saxon, nor from Norse, but from Old French.

BOZ, to open, of the flower, of the egg. (English: to butt, hatch). Butter (tamp down)
CHEK, to win. (English: to check, to win). Eschec (checkmate)
QACH, to catch, grasp, reach, bite. (English: to catch, take, grasp, reach). Norman dialect French: cachier (to cage).
RUZ, precipitated. RUZRUT, running anxiously, with precipitation. (English: rush, rushing precipitately). Reusser (rushing with precipitation)
TON, to make noise by clapping one's feet or hands, or like a drum. (English: tone, tone, noise). Ton, Tonnerre (tone, bang).
TUN, trumpet, hollow wooden drum. TUNAH, keyboard of an instrument. (English: To tune, to intone songs or music). Ton (tone)

We also mention some terms that our philologist connects to Latin, forgetting the French form to which, however, they are closer:

AM, year. (Latin: annus). An (year)
BOM, good. Plural, bOMBON. (Latin: bonus). Bon (good) CUR, to make a cross step. (Latin: curvatim). Courbe (curve, curved)
GUZ, savory. (Latin: gustus). Goût (taste)
MUL, vault, particle for counting. (Latin: multus). Moult (much)
PUH, pus and pUZ, that which rots. (Latin: putrefactio), Pus (idem).
RAM, large piece of wood. (Latin: ramus). Copper (branch)

There is another word, cUN, to which Abbot Brasseur de Bourbourg gives meaning in the demure language of his time and his

craft: "secret parts of the female"; without indicating its root, which, in an earlier work (20), we did on our own: connus, in Latin. The use of this term, with such insistence that it could be included in quiché, by the culdean ascetics had not failed to amaze us. But at the time, not
we had no basis for addressing the possibility of any French influence on Central American languages. Today the situation is different. It also seems to us quite normal that the Templars, whose coarseness, we know, is still
now proverbial, have used and abused a French term [this is the word con, meaning female sex, Ed.] that, even in the Middle Ages, did not exactly belong to ecclesiastical language.

The same reasoning can be made for a dozen or so words. Outside the context of our study, we would be allowed to doubt, as we did before, their real origin. But today we know that French-speaking men arrived in early
14th century to settle in Mexico, after they had certainly explored it before. Linguistics confirms to us that one of their groups, following in the footsteps of the two Quetzalcòatl, settled in the Maya country where chronicles (21) do indeed report the presence of the Nonohualca. But it was in the Anàhuac that they occupied a dominant position. So, they must have left there traces of the same kind, much deeper. In spite of all our research, unfortunately, it was not possible for us to view the two studies devoted to the Indo-European roots of Nàhuatl (87), (88). We can just mention the word papalotl, butterfly [papillon, in French, Ed.], which, although foreign to the liturgical language, may, certainly, derive from the Latin papilio, but more probably found its origin in the French term having the same sense.

3. Ships of the Middle Ages

We must respond here to an objection insistently made to us by Dr. O.G. Landverk, a collaborator of Alf Mongé to whom runology owes a fundamental contribution: the discovery, in certain runic inscriptions of Scandinavia and North America (and also in certain medieval Latin texts of the Nordic area), of cryptographic insertions - dates and proper names - founded on the perpetual calendar of the Norwegian church (89). A discovery that made it possible to eliminate the doubt that hovered over the Kensington stone (20) and the Vinland charter (15) to which was added the Tartar Relatio of 1440, still branded as a forgery, in 1974, by Yale University, which had proclaimed its authenticity
in 1965. Dr. Landverk, in fact, argued that the ships of the Middle Ages did not allow a direct crossing from Europe to America-they were only suitable for sailing below the coast. At that time, therefore, it would have been impossible to reach the "New World" by any other route than the northern route-through Iceland and Greenland-very much guarded by the Norwegians who had a "monopoly of navigation." The Vikings of Mexico and Peru, therefore, could only have come from the Greenlandic colonies of Vinland. Although the date of their arrival and especially the fact that they spoke a Schleswig dialect eliminate this interpretation, it is worth dwelling on the "maritime" argument.

We are poorly informed about medieval navigation. Reading some authors, who make an interested claim of the

geographer el-Edrisi (15)-the Arabs, they, went as far as the Indies and beyond! - one might willingly believe that in the days of "obscurantism" Europeans no longer dared to stray far from the coasts, busy as they were scratching the soil with their nails to extract the roots on which they fed. Thus it is at least tacitly admitted that there was a millennial break between the last ships of Rome and the caravels of Columbus. Nothing could be more false. The people of the Atlantic littoral-to stick to the ones we are interested in here-did not at any time give up their maritime activities.

We still owe to Louis Kervran (85) a brief but data-rich study of the ships available to Gaelic peoples in the period in question. The best known vessel was the coracle, already described by Caesar. It consisted of a carcass of tree branches covered with cowhides sewn together. The seams were then waterproofed by covering them with butter. A few large wooden crossbeams ensured lateral rigidity of the whole and served as benches for the rowers.

The smallest model-four to eight rowers-of coracle measured 12 to 18 Celtic feet (3 1/2 to 5 1/2 meters) long by 4 feet wide. It is still found in Ireland, but the skins have been replaced by tarred canvas. The largest model was 36 Celtic feet (11 1/2 meters) long and 8 meters wide.

It carried sixteen oarsmen but, on the high seas, normally resorted to the rectangular, very shallow sail, which, however, allowed sailing only with the wind at the stern or three-quarter astern.

As Kervran very appropriately points out, now that the whalers and lifeboats of commercial and warships have been replaced by dinghies, there is no need to support the "weakness" of such vessels. Then again, it was on large coracle, capable of carrying nearly two tons of cargo, that the Irish culdean monks reached Iceland, then America, surely by the northern route.

The Bretons preferred large wooden ships that Caesar called pontones. They were large, scaffolded boats, as their name implies, measuring roughly 72 Celtic feet (almost 23 meters) by 24 wide. These dimensions, which made them vessels "rounded," made them particularly suitable for deep-sea sailing on the Atlantic: this is still how the Breton tuna boats are. Their mast was rigged with a square sail. They could sail upwind thanks to the dolon mast: very inclined at the bow, it carried a small square sail that, properly oriented, helped steer the ship. Probably, it was on a pontoon that Saint Brandan made his voyage to Cuba. And it is on such ships, apart from the equipment, that Breton fishermen still sail the Atlantic today, going as far as Newfoundland.

It is not necessary to speak at length about Viking drakkars. They were very thin ships (6|1 ratio of length to breadth, while that of the pontons was 3|1) about 80 feet long, with a capacity of about 20 tons. They carried 30 to 60 oarsmen but on the high seas they sailed under sail, always with the wind at their bows, which reduced their ability to maneuver. That they were capable of crossing the Atlantic was conclusively proved in 1893, when an exact copy of Gokstad's ship reached Newfoundland from Norway, in bad weather, in exactly 28 days. We note that these were warships.

Most of the Viking fleet consisted of freighters, of the

which the most common type was the knörr: a "round" ship, long from the 15 to 20 meters and 4.50 to 6 meters wide (ratio 3.3|1), which had an open hold in the middle particularly suitable for transporting livestock. Constructed like the drakkar, but much higher on the water, it was made for sailing on the high seas, whatever the weather; sailing, because there were few ladders in front and behind for maneuvering. For the sake of convenience of language, the term drakkar is too often used - and we have done so too - when talking about the voyages of conquest and colonization conducted by the Scandinavians. Their flotillas, in these cases, consisted of one or more warships, but "civilians" and livestock were embarked on knerrir (plural of knörr) and it was still knerrir that ensured the traffic of men and merchandise with the metropolis.

In the 12th century, throughout Europe, cargo ships-in report to the X - had improved a little. Their tonnage had increased. They did not yet possess a stern rudder-and it would be another century before they had it-but multiple sails had made the boats more maneuverable. A mizzen mast and small driving masts on the stern and bow castles had been added to the traditional mast. Four sails instead of one or two made it possible to sail upwind without great difficulty. It was ships of this type that ensured the transportation of crusaders. Some were also - an extremely modern detail - equipped with tilting panels intended for boarding horses. All the more reason these ships could sail on the Atlantic, far less dangerous than the Mediterranean from the crashing waves.

Neither Gaelic pontones, nor Viking drakkar and knerrir, nor the Templar ships were limited to cabotage navigation. Nothing prevented them from following, across the ocean, a direct route, as Brandanus certainly did after the Canaries and Ullman after the Danes took possession of Britain; and, after them, the Templars and Normans.

And as did, down the centuries, whalers, and, in our day, cod fishermen all along the French coast. Then came the time of the official discovery of America. Of Columbus's three vessels, one was a classic 140-ton ship, very close to those we have so far described, while the other two, 80-ton caravels, had a hull similar to that of the pontons, but carried four masts, the two main ones rigged with lateen sails. Except for the stern rudder, which certainly was an important but not decisive innovation, these vessels differed very little from those used five hundred years earlier. It hardly needs to be added that the Great Admiral's flotilla crossed the Atlantic without the slightest inconvenience by the Canary route, and thus countless ships and caravels followed the same path. When, in 1534, Jacques Cartier - a native of Saint-Malo - left to "discover" Canada, while his fellow citizens had been frequenting its shores for centuries in the greatest secrecy, he did not take the Icelandic route at all. He set sail for Newfoundland where, however, he had already been fishing many times.

It had a 40-ton walnut shell, barely larger than a pontoon boat.

The objection related to the inadequacy of the vessels falls by itself. The vessels of the Middle Ages were perfectly capable of crossing the Atlantic without passing through Greenland, whose waters, let it be said parenthetically, are much more dangerous than those of the open sea. They were no different from ships, nor from the

caravels, from the era of the Conquest, nor by the deep-sea boats that still make their way to the shoals of Newfoundland, nor by the yachts that launch by the hundreds each year on the ocean with amateur crews. Norwegian control of the Arctic route, therefore, could only leave Templars and Danes indifferent.

4. The Blacks of Mexico

Until Columbus' first voyage to the West Indies, the history of navigation as we are taught does not go beyond the framework of the mare nostrum. The Bible gives us a vague idea of the Phoenicians' maritime trade with the very undefined lands of Ophir and Pontus, and from Herodotus and Strabo we hear of expeditions to the coast of Africa. We know from geographers that the Arabs of the early Middle Ages sailed on the Indian Ocean, as far as Indonesia. But we are just now beginning not to doubt the authenticity of Pythias' voyage to Tula in the 4th century B.C. And only recently, thanks to Jürgen Spanuth (90), have we had a serious study of the migrations of "sea peoples" in the 1200s. We know nothing, to date, about the crossings that led the Western European megalith builders to Korea and even to Polynesia.

When it comes to America, everything becomes even more difficult. Conformity is the rule. As Patrick Ferryn (91) points out very well, ethnologists - since, unfortunately, there are almost no real anthropologists left - do not hesitate, and they are right, to admit the migrations across the Pacific of primitives who had only pirogues; however, they close their eyes and smile with a sufficiency veiled in commiseration when material evidence is presented to them of the arrival in the "New World," before the Conquest, of representatives of civilized peoples, whose ships, already in the Bronze Age, were worth as much or almost as much as those of the 16th century. In fact, everyone was going to America before Columbus. Therein including Columbus himself, if it is true that his voyage to Tula took place, as is probable. Everyone, or more precisely the entire Old World, namely the peoples of the Asian, European and North African coasts. This is proven by the extraordinary pre-Columbian figurines collected by Professor von Wuthenau (92) in Mexico. "They do not appear to be," writes Patrick Ferryn, "the representation of gods, demons, or heroes: here is an 'average Mayan,' a 'Toltec man in the street,' a mother with her child, a flute player, a warrior, a small water-carrier, a merchant, what looks like a young woman, a somewhat grotesque man's head. They are true small masterpieces, some of them puzzling [...] because here we are dealing with an aspect of pre-Columbian art with which we are not particularly familiar; here there are no tremendous figures with the incredible headdresses of Zapotec priests or warriors; there are no creepy, macabre heads, collapsing under a multitude of attributes, according to the complicated symbolism of the Maya. No, here are just human beings, of great simplicity, with their joys, sorrows, hopes, regrets and anxieties etched into the clay by a skilled hand."

This overlong quotation is motivated not only by the accuracy of the analysis it contains, but also by our desire to eliminate any suspicion of bias. For the statuettes in question not only present us with Indian characters from common life, but also show us racial types who "officially cannot be there." For there are bearded faces of Europeans, Chinese faces whose presence does not surprise us, Semitic profiles well

characterized-and the beards of some prevent us from confusing them with those, on the other hand very similar, of the Maya-of which no satisfactory explanation has yet been given; and also some heads of negroids or unquestionably blacks.

In 1964, at the International Congress of Americanists in Barcelona, when Professor von Wuthenau expounded on his work, an ethnologist spokesman for the conformists responded unhelpfully that those figures claimed not to be Indians could only be "artistic imaginations." Imagination has its limits. It may be admitted that a sculptor has purely invented such or such of the features foreign to the individuals around him; but the calculation of probability excludes that he could have done so for all the details of a face, including the expression that reveals all the more delicate biopsychic nuances of ethnicity. With regard to the Negroid types we are particularly interested in here, no recourse to imagination can explain the conjunction of characters typical to Homo afer, such as prognathism, big lips, skin color, and frizzy hair so different from that of the Indians. It is necessary that the artists had models before their eyes. And we know they had them.

Columbus himself is credited with the first mention of the blacks of Central America. This is only, it is true, a reference indirect: in fact, the natives of Hispaniola (Haiti) told him on his second voyage that they were occasionally attacked by black people living in the south or southeast. Those men, quite different from the Caribbean people of the Lesser Antilles, were armed with zagas made from an alloy of gold, silver and copper that so interested the Great Admiral that he set the itinerary for his third voyage to discover their origin. "Columbus says that he thought he was verifying, by following this route, what the Indians of Hispaniola were saying about those black-colored men who came with zagales whose tips were made from a metal they called guanìn." (93)

The second testimony is more conclusive. Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, during the expedition that across the Isthmus of Darien enabled him to reach the Pacific, "entered the province of Quareca, where he found not gold, but some black slaves of the master of the place. He asked the lord where he had found those black slaves, and he replied that those black people lived nearby and were constantly at war with them." Historian Lòpez de Gomara (94), to whom we owe this information, adds, "Those black people were identical to those in Guinea, and I think that in the Indies no more were seen." So, there were very few of them.

The comparison with Guinea blacks completely excludes both Asian Dravidians and Melanesians, which is confirmed by the types shown to us by the statuettes collected by Professor von Wuthenau. On some of them we see, in fact, faces that combine Negroid and Semitic features. Judging from the archaeological context-but this factor is known to be doubtful-these may be the oldest, dating from before our era. In contrast, other f i g u r i n e s - whose subjects are black Africans from the West Coast - would belong to the so-called post-classical era (900-1521), that is, to our Middle Ages. It is conceivable that the models of the first - of the mestizos - arrived in America on ships of unknown Semites - impossible not to think of the Phoenicians - who, judging from the other figurines already mentioned, would have reached, two or three millennia ago, the Gulf of

Mexico. Those of the most recent may have come only with the Templars.

Black Africans, in fact, were ill-suited as sailors. None of their tribes ever built ships of any kind. They were limited, at best, to pirogues made from a single piece of wood, intended for coastal fishing. Surely it cannot be ruled out that some of these precarious vessels were swept by the storm all the way to America, nor-as unlikely as it is-that their crew survived the conditions of such a crossing. But even if they did, everything leads one to believe that the Indians would have mistaken them for demons and immediately killed them. Our hypothesis, then, is much more likely. For the Templars, who in Palestine-as we have seen-had adopted Muslim customs, owned black slaves, taken as booty or received as gifts, whom they certainly would not have avoided taking with them.

5. Father Gnupa, cleric of the Temple

We close this parenthesis on medieval navigation across the Atlantic to return to the Order's activities in the "New World." They provide not only the solution to the problems posed in the European framework by the "secret of the Temple," but also data that greatly contruibuiscono to clarify three aspects of the story American. We analyzed one inherent to Mexico. The other two concern the Tiahuanaco empire.

After obtaining evidence that Templar ships loaded silver bars in the Gulf of Santos and the port of Parnaïba that enabled the Order to mint money and finance the construction of Gothic cathedrals, we immediately asked the question: what was the counterpart? In addition to being sailors, warriors, pirates at need, the Vikings were also traders. They would never have cultivated the idea of giving away a metal that certainly was useless to them, but whose value they knew and whose mining and smelting still required labor. Thus, it could only have been a matter of barter. But what could the Templars offer in exchange for silver? Certainly some luxury goods, such as textiles and wines, for example. Perhaps weapons. But everything imaginable in this area is far from balancing the scales. One must look elsewhere.

Let us put ourselves in the shoes of the thousands of Vikings who, in 1150, had settled in the area of an old indigenous township, whose inhabitants, without being savages, had not passed the age of polished stone. Their ancestors, who had landed in Mexico in the year 967, had gone on a conquering expedition, and had brought with them horses, but no beasts of labor (26). In their ranks, one had to count only the few craftsmen for wooden ships: carpenters and blacksmiths. Certainly there were no stone cutters, since in tenth-century Scandinavia people built only with wood. And even fewer architects. Well, there was no forest on the plateau that could provide the material needed for construction traditional. The Indians, on the other hand, judging by the total absence of buildings prior to 1000, were far from mastering the Royal Art. The Vikings, therefore, were forced to live for more than a century in very uncomfortable huts.

This aspect did not matter much in the years when they fought-along with the Aymara troops they recruited-all over the

South America to conquer and organize an empire of their own. Soon, however, the need for a capital city worthy of their power must have made itself felt. In modern parlance, we would say that they lacked the indispensable technology to found it. The Templars provided it: it was their bargaining chip.

This is not just an assumption. Elsewhere (20) we have seen that the main building of Tiahuanaco, which the natives call Kalasasaya and which was unfinished when the city was conquered in 1290 by the Auracans of Kari, was a Christian church. Professor Hector Greslebin has been able to build a model of it, reproducing in small-scale plaster the actual ruins and worked stone blocks a kilometer away at what constituted a construction site. Moreover, the two-meter-tall statue that the Indians call El Fraile, "the Monk," is an exact copy, except in style, of one of the apostles found on the portal of the Gothic cathedral in Amiens: same book with metal clasp in the left hand, same twig with handle in the right, same facial proportions. On the other hand, the opening of the monolithic door known as the Gate of the Sun, which was found, knocked down and broken, in the Kalasasaya enclosure and which was supposed to be one of the entrances, is adorned with a frieze
which reproduces, again in the style of Tiahuanaco, the Adoration of the Lamb, the same as that of the tympanum in Amiens Cathedral.

The central motif echoes in minute detail the apocalyptic description of the Lamb. The forty-eight figures in the upper three bands represent, with their respective attributes, the twelve apostles, the twelve minor prophets, and the twenty-four elders with harps and golden cups, as described by St. John [Revelation, 6-8]. The lower band shows angels who are playing the trumpet, an unknown instrument in pre-Columbian America. On the other hand, the profile of the human-faced figures is distinctly Nordic. Amiens is located in Picardy, on the border of Normandy, and Dieppe, which belongs to this province, constitutes its natural harbor. Its cathedral was built between 1220 and 1288 and its portal between 1225 and 1236. So, it is necessary for an architect and a sculptor (or a architect-sculptor) arrived in Tiahuanaco after the latter date. In fact, the indigenous accounts we quoted at length in an earlier work (24) speak of a Catholic monk who had appeared on the plateau about 1250, after landing in the Gulf of Santos and crossing into Paraguay. He was that Pa'i Zumé whom we mentioned earlier and whom the Indians of Peru remembered by a name somewhere between Norse and Quitchua: Thul Gnupa Vihinkira, Father Gnupa son of the Vikings. He was a thin, tall, white, blue-eyed, red-bearded man who had wavy hair with a crown cut. They depict him dressed in a long white gown with a belt, sometimes with a purple shirt and a dark red mantle. He is holding a breviary and a crosier, or staff. He had brought with him a large cross, made of a wood unknown in Peru
and was later found in Carabuco, where she is still venerated today. Surely her arrival can be linked to the discovery (in the 16th century), in the ashes of the Arequipa volcano, of a "seamless tunic, of an iridescent color" (95), "made of an unknown material" (96), which could only have been chain mail, a piece of equipment that the Vikings of the 10th century did not yet use, and which the Spaniards of the 16th century had been wearing for a short time, but which, in the 13th century, constituted the essentials of the military outfit of the

templars.

Everything, then, leads one to believe that Father Gnupa was a cleric of the Order: a Norman monk, or someone who knew the cathedral of Amiens well; unless he was one of the disciples attributed to him by indigenous traditions. Father Gnupa was charged with evangelizing the pagan Vikings of Tiahuanaco-a mission of which many traces would remain in the religion of the Incas (20). He brought with him the design of a church, or an architect capable of drawing it on the spot. It was not to be a Gothic church: it would have required the arrival of too many companions. It was to be a building in the Norman, that is, Romanesque style-and this is indicated by Greslebin's model-for the construction of which only a few people were needed. This proves that the Whites of Tiahuanaco already had a highly skilled indigenous workforce - stone carvers, masons, sculptors -: the one that had previously built, in the capital and elsewhere, the many carved stone temples and palaces whose ruins we still see, and no doubt many others that have completely disappeared. A workforce that could only be trained by the master craftsmen the Templars had provided.

So, it is not surprising that in 1933, thus long before our research, Edmund Kiss (97) in the conclusion of an article on pre-Inca architecture-in which the illustrations of reconstructed monuments in Tiahuanaco are at least bold but, on the whole, accurate-was able to write; "Men of the Nordic race must have lived in the city of Tiahuanaco. The works of art in the prehistoric capital are probably due to them. It is clear that
It's not about indigenous architecture."

The picture, now, is absolutely clear. Around 1150 the men of Titicaca, once they had conquered their empire and secured communication routes as far as the Atlantic Ocean through their alliance with the Guarani (25), resumed contact with Europe, no doubt at Dieppe, a few kilometers from the Templar port of Saint-Valery-en-Caux. In the greatest secrecy, according to the customs of the time, Vikings and Templars came to an agreement, and soon the Order's ships began to frequent the South American coast. Thanks to Temple artisans, large carved stone buildings sprang up in and around Tiahuanaco, increasingly replacing clay or rough stone huts as the Indians assimilated European techniques. For the same reason, metallurgy gained new momentum. Goldsmithing of Asian origin, which the indigenous people of the Peruvian coast were already familiar with, was joined by more complex processes, such as casting on wax and worked iron. Stone axes and chisels were replaced by bronze and steel tools. Mines were opened, allowing the Order's ships to load silver ingots that regularly left for La Rochelle.

These were solely fruitful exchanges for both sides, without any interference of the Templars in the life of the empire. If traces of their passage have been found only in the Paraguayan Amambay, not far from the precious metal foundry that was installed there, it is by no means by chance. No doubt only artisans "under contract," and some ambassadors, had access to Tiahuanaco. It was not until around 1250 that a group of Temple clergymen followed in the footsteps of the builders, not without their preaching provoking several incidents (24). Under

that influence, the empire began to Christianize, at least superficially. In the capital, the construction of a church was undertaken whose sculptural motifs came from Amiens. But soon, in 1290, the Auracans came to stop the work. Cut off from the abandoned Sierra de la Plata mines, the Cerro Corà smelter had to cease operations. Perhaps the Temple ships were able to continue loading bullion in Parnaïba for a few years.

In any case, the adventure ended in 1307, as a result of the dissolution of the Order. In the midst of anarchy, Peru, which had never really opened its doors to them, was not a satisfactory place of refuge for the brothers fleeing Europe: so they preferred Mexico.

6. Three minor problems

The previous chapters enabled us to resolve the three major problems posed by the history of the Temple and left, until now, without explanation: those that related to the "secret" of the Order. We were able to complete our analysis, this time from America's point of view, by giving two questions-secondary but important-answers that had not been provided by our previous studies, and by further clarifying a third point that had already been satisfactorily treated as a whole.

The third arrival of the Europeans in Mexico, that of the Templars, has, in fact, shown us that Brasseur de Bourbourg did not was wrong in recognizing in Quiché-maya the existence of some French roots amidst other, much more numerous ones of Germanic origin. He had unintentionally downplayed this contribution by tracing back to English some French-Norman words that at the time of Ullman's Vikings' departure from Britain had not yet been introduced there. And again he had attributed to Latin some terms which, on closer analysis, turn out to be much closer to French words than to the Latin word from which they are derived.

The first arrival, that of the Irish monks who were already in Mexico in the first decades of the tenth century, satisfactorily explains the double linguistic input of Latin and Gaelic; and the second, that of the Schleswig Vikings who came from Britain in the year 967, explains the introduction of Norse, German and Anglo-Saxon terms. That left the French words, recognized or not by Brasseur de Bourbourg. We now know from whom they came.

The arrival of the Templars also gives reason for the presence of negroid, or entirely black, characters in the pre-Columbian sculptures of Mexico. Certainly we cannot exclude the possibility that some of the subjects depicted are mestizos, as racial characteristics allow us to think, brought long before by Semites.

But this explanation is less valid for blacks, since the figurines depicting them seem to date from the period called postclassical, that is, the Middle Ages. In northwestern Europe, at the time of the Irish and Viking expeditions, blacks were unknown. The Templars, on the contrary, had brought slaves of the African race from Palestine.

That leaves a third point, which concerns Father Gnupa, the evangelist who arrived in Peru around 1250. We knew that he had come from Normandy and who had introduced to Tiahuanaco not only Christianity but also distinctly European architectural models and some sculptural motifs from the cathedral in Amiens. We can now add that he was likely a cleric of the Temple. This fact would not matter much if we did not

allowed, indirectly, to understand what the counterpart of the silver bars provided by the Vikings consisted of. A counterpart that today we can sum up with one word: technology.

And this was the last of the minor problems that remained to be solved. The considerations that lead us to say that South America was known to the Templars also allow us to explain one last aspect of the issue that our previous research had not fully elucidated.

VI. The Portuguese legacy

1. Templars and Normans

To understand well the concatenation of facts we have just set out, we need to go back to the environment of the European Middle Ages, very different from the image we were given of it after the 18th century. It is a scenario of incredible intellectual effervescence, hardly controlled by the Church within the framework - much less rigid than the existence of the Inquisition would suggest - of an ill-defined doctrine and a hierarchy that is not always different from that of the feudal world. Priests and bishops are married or live in concubinage without being found fault with it. Germanic mythology, tales from the apocryphal gospels and those telling of the Grail quest inspire church sculptors at least as much as the Old Testament. Fairies and gnomes mingle, in the legends on which the popular imagination feeds, with the dragons of a hagiography in which the marvelous triumphs. Theology engages in multiple avenues that have in common only heterodoxy and rivals, in this order of ideas, a philosophy that seeks its way through Greek and Roman texts, rediscovered with fervor.

In the field we are concerned with here, cosmography is reborn From its ashes. Arabic-speaking geographers brought back to the West the knowledge of the ancients that the Crusaders, for their part, found in Byzantium. No one in learned circles is unaware that the Earth is round. Its more or less exact circumference is also known - 40,033,400 meters, instead of 40,007,520 - measured by the Muslims, after Eratosthenes, in the 9th century. We start reading Ptolemy again, who takes from Marinus of Tyre the story of the Greek captain Alexander who, in the first century CE, had reached via the Pacific- after "so many days" that it had "not been possible to count them" - The well-known city of Cattigara (15). From Plutarch, from Theopompus, from Macrobius, it is known that there is an immense dreamland beyond the Tenebrous Sea; or, at least, the paradisiacal island covered with forests furrowed by navigable rivers, whose discovery the pseudo-Aristotle of the Marvelous Tales attributes to the Carthaginians (and Diodorus Siculus to the Phoenicians) (15). The Temple clerics could not ignore all this, since in the 12th century they benefited from the support of the learned monks of Cîteaux, closely linked to the rabbis of Burgundy; in Byzantium they had the opportunity to trace the sources of information.

In the commanderies as well as in the convents and castles one reads the account of Saint Brandanus' navigation to the shores of the West. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly safe to assume that the Order's intelligence service collected all useful data on the subject in both the Middle East and Ireland. So the Viking mercenaries of Byzantium must have heard of Vinland and the culdees of Greater Ireland. Perhaps also, but it is much less certain, of Mexico.

And this explains how the Templars were able to launch their ships over the ocean, discovering a land of whose existence there was no doubt. But, based on this data, they should have headed north or, strictly speaking, to the center of the "New World." Well, they landed in South America, precisely in the place where the precious metal they sought was located. That South America in which the Danish Vikings had already settled for a hundred and fifty years. Fortunately, dragged by the storm? We can immediately discard any such explanation. In such a case, if they had crashed on a deserted coast and saved themselves by a miracle, they would not have been able to gather any information about mines located far in the interior of the lands. Or, they would have fallen into the hands of the Vikings, who were unkind to anyone, and all the more so to intruders. Again, in the latter hypothesis, it was necessary that Tiahuanaco's men had settled on the Atlantic for no reason at all, which was unlikely.

On the contrary, it is hard to imagine that once they had conquered and consolidated their empire, they did not feel like resuming contact with their country of origin. It is logical to assume that the harbors on St. Catherine Island and the Gulf of Santos and the "easy routes" there were built with this intention. So, everything leads one to believe that it was the Vikings who established the link with Europe. Not in 1250, as we assumed (24) holding in reserve, moreover, earlier travels, but a hundred years earlier.

Why and how they went to Dieppe we do not know but it is not hard to imagine, since in the 12th century relations between Normandy and England, from where their ancestors had left, were very close. However, it was the Normans who, around 1250, began to import Amazonian wood into Europe. And they were them who, at the same time - previously cartography was nonexistent - prepared a map on which both Vinland and South America were shown (15): a map based on data that, coming from the Norwegian Vikings and Danish Vikings, respectively, could only be brought together in Dieppe, as we have shown (15). Tiahuanaco's men had no reason to make contact with the Templars whose existence they could not have known anyway. And if they had done so unintentionally, if, for example, one of their ships had been captured by the Order's fleet, one can be sure that the information they would have provided would never have been known to the Dieppeans or anyone else. On the contrary, it is easy to assume that the Templar authorities in the port of Saint-Valery-en-Caux watched the coast very closely - that was their raison d'être - and primarily the port of Dieppe, and that they easily procured - the Temple could not be refused anything - the information received from across the Atlantic.

With its already impressive fleet, the Order was far better equipped than mere fishermen to make it work. It was only a hundred years later that Dieppese shipowners found themselves in a position to go, too, to barter in the "New World." It is symptomatic that they did not venture to compete with the Templars by going in search of precious metals but, rather, merely imported cargoes of wood from the Amazon, which did not interest their neighbors. Of course, they could have done so only by making arrangements with the Vikings who controlled the whole area. What was their currency of exchange? We know (26): draft horses

and cattle they released, perhaps, in Parnaïba-the presence of horses in the Piauí before the conquest allows us to think so-but especially in the Gulf of Santos, from where they sent them to the rich grazing lands of Ivinheima.

It is scarcely necessary to recall what we have already fully demonstrated elsewhere (15): the geographical data that enabled the map of Dieppe to be drawn up could not have been provided by the Normans, nor
- we add now-from the Templars. The one and the other merely sailed to ports and, at best, along the coasts of America. Well, the map in question shows the complete outline of the subcontinent and moreover, as Paul Gallez discovered
(98) from a planisphere by Henricus Martellus dating from 1489, the course of all the major rivers and the location of the major mountain ranges. Such a survey could only be done by sailors, who had deep geographical knowledge, and who had long settled in the region.

2. Templars and Portuguese

After that of France, of which Normandy was a part, although in the 12th century it was still linked to England, the province of Portugal was the most solid base of the Temple. The Order had installed itself there before it was even officially founded. Princess Theresa, the natural daughter of Alfonso IV of Castile, whose son would later become the first king of Portugal,
had brought as dowry to her husband Louis of Burgundy what until then had been only a contado, moreover largely occupied by the Maures. So, in 1126, the princess had offered a castle to Hugh of Payns. For her, evidently, it was a matter of securing the concurrence of the future militia in the war of Reconquest, and Bernard, adviser to the house of Burgundy, had had to guarantee it.

The fact is that the Templars channel some of their forces to the future kingdom, which they help to liberate. Gualdim Païs, who would become provincial prior of the Order, participates in all the battles, up to the taking of Santarém and Lisbon. In gratitude, King Alfonso Henry offered Bernard the land and funds needed to build the Abbey of Alcobaça. In addition, after instructing the Temple to secure the frontier separating Portugal from Andalusia, still in the hands of the infidels, he grants him all the lands located between Santarém and Tomar. In the latter area, Gualdim Païs builds a huge fortress, soon surrounded by a dozen or so commanderies, not to mention the military port of Serra d'El Rei, on the Atlantic, from which cargoes of silver may also have entered. Tomar would remain the seat of the provincial priory until 1320, at which time, without transition, it became the seat of the great lordship of the Order of Christ.

In Portugal, as elsewhere, the Temple is sovereign, but its influence here is much stronger than in other provinces. In France, in England, in Germany, in Castile, he is endured because he is feared. The Burgundian kings of Lisbon, by contrast, not only owe him a great deal for regaining their territory and throne, but
still depend on them militarily because of the ever latent Muslim threat. The Order, however, is more powerful than they are and its commanderies surround the capital, which it could seize very easily. So, from the beginning, a modus vivendi of mutual support is established. We say that the Templars can count on the king as the king can count on them. But it is not an egalitarian alliance. Until 1307 it is the Order that, despite appearances, exploits the monarchy. Thereafter, it is the monarchy that will make

Of the Order an instrument of its own. When Philip the Fair took the measures known to us against the Temple and Clement V decreed its "provisional dissolution," the other sovereigns bowed, most quite willingly, since, like the king of France, they were suffering badly from the invasion of their states by a power that escaped their authority. Only one is an exception, that of Portugal: Dionysius. Out of gratitude? This is an uncommon virtue in politics. More likely, the king calculates that the Templars, deprived of their status, thus of their sovereignty, can no longer pose the slightest danger to him; and that, on the contrary, he is allowed to make use of them. He could seize their wealth; perhaps he prefers to benefit from their secrecy. The fact of the matter is that Dionysius not only takes no measures against the Temple, but also welcomes the brothers who, fleeing, come to his states. The Mediterranean Templar fleet arrives at the port of Serra d'El Rei.

For thirteen years, the Priory of Portugal continued to exist, as if nothing had happened. Then, in 1320, the king founded the Order of Christ, which absorbed it. On the surface, nothing has changed: same rule, same organization, same men, same goods. Except for one detail: the grand master is no longer elected by the knights, but appointed by the ruler. The new Temple is yes a legacy of the previous one, but it loses its autonomy. By now, it is a national order.

It may be thought that what Dionysius is particularly interested in is not guarding the borders, which his own troops, now that the realm was consolidated, could secure by occupying Templar fortresses, but the fleet that fell back on Serra d'El Rei. Portugal is not a maritime power. The ocean that bathes the coast is already exploited in its fishing resources by Basques, Bretons and Normans, with no clear knowledge of where they hunt whale or catch cod. Perhaps, the king also knows that the Temple ships brought from distant countries precious metals, the main factor in the Order's wealth and power.

However, time passes without anything happening. Do the brothers remain silent while waiting for the measures taken against them by Clement V to be reversed? Or is Portugal in no position to exploit the information the Templars provide? Whatever the case, it is only a hundred years later that the infant Henry the Navigator begins to prepare for the country's maritime expansion.

This grand master of the Order of Christ - is this by chance? - creates the Académie de Sagres, where he brings together wise Arabs and, above all, Jews who throw themselves into the mysteriously assembled books and papers. Organizes an intelligence service that interrogates every captain who touches land in Portugal. He founds shipyards from which it is not long before solid ships capable of facing the ocean emerge, for which the Templar ships provide a model only to be perfected. When he died in 1460, the vessels of the realm had reached Madeira and the Azores, as others had done long before them, and they already traffic with Senegal, from which they import ivory and, most importantly, the first black slaves that would in the long run alter the race of the Portuguese. Then the discoveries accelerate. In 1484, Diego Cal reaches the mouth of the Congo. Two years later, Bartholomew Diaz doubles the Cape of Storms, renamed the Cape of Good Hope.

The route to the Indies is open: shortly thereafter, Vasco de Gama will follow.

What is the Templars' part in this tiny country populated by 1.5 million people? We do not know. We only know that the ships launched on the ocean all bear on their sails the cross

of the Order of Christ, namely the red patentee cross of the Temple. Is this simply a testimony of gratitude to the Order, thus proclaimed as the initiator of the sailors who are about to make Portugal the world's first maritime power? Or, in the age of great conquests, are the owners of these vessels compulsorily affiliated with the new Temple, as the Sons of Solomon were affiliated with the old at the time of the construction of the cathedrals? Unanswered question: we know no more about the activities of the Knights of Christ than we do about those of the Templars proper
sayings.

3. Dieppe to Lisbon

There were several Portuguese expeditions that set out before Columbus in search of the lands overseas: those of Diego de Teive (1452); José Vigado (1462); Gonzalo Fernàndez de Tavira (in the same year); Ruy Gonçalves de Cámera (1472); Antonio Leme (1476) and many others. Nothing allows us to affirm or exclude that these expeditions reached South America. No trace of them remains, which the secret of the Temple and the secret of the king might be sufficient to explain.

However, they could only be voyages of exploration, since the destruction of the Tiahuanaco Empire had disrupted the silver route. But, in any case, we cannot doubt that the Portuguese knew of the existence of the "New World." We have, in fact, a clue and proof of it.

On March 4, 1493, Columbus touches Lisbon, returning from his first voyage during which he "discovered" only the Antilles. On the 15th, he enters the port of Palos. On May 3, Spanish Pope Alexander IV promulgates a first bull granting the kingdom of Castile the Indies that had been discovered and those yet to be discovered. The next day, he promulgates a second one that divides the globe into two halves via a line that, from pole to pole, bisects the Atlantic Ocean a hundred leagues from "any of the islands known as the Azores and Cape Verde;" the unassigned lands of the west will belong to Castile, those of the east to Portugal. The court in Lisbon, which at first agreed, was not slow to protest vehemently. Negotiations were entered into, leading to the Treaty of Tordesillas in June 1494: the demarcation line was moved three hundred and fifty leagues from Cape Verde. What is the difference? Simply Brazil, whose huge eastern tip was thus incorporated into Portuguese rule. Well, in 1494 no one had yet officially recognized the coast of the southern subcontinent, and Columbus had not even reached the mainland. Something must have happened in Lisbon to justify such a sudden change of attitude. Evidently, a map of the "New World" was consulted; a map that the Spanish did not possess, since without realizing it they ceded to their competitors half of the lands that the Supreme Pontiff had just assigned to them in South America.

This chart does in fact exist: we have demonstrated this in a previous work (15). It is the chart that Columbus had clandestinely consulted a few years earlier in the Tesouraria where the king of Portugal kept his secret archives; the same one that Magellan would copy a few years later, before going to offer his services to Charles V. Still the same one that Renato II, Duke of Lorraine, will have published in 1507 by the Gymnase vosgieni. It is a map that exactly locates the "unknown" continent, and shows, in addition to Vinland,

to which North America is reduced, the complete layout of South America, with the straits. The chart allows Columbus to state, against the more "solidly established" data of geographers, that the land of the Great Khan, i.e. East Asia, is much more close than we think to Europe and occupies a space that actually - but is careful not to say so - is that of the "New World." The same chart provides Magellan with a decisive argument for convincing the emperor and his ministers, to whom he shows the strait he promises to reach. A strait of which - according to Pigafetta, the papal diplomat who accompanied him on his journey - he knows not only the approximate latitude, but also the smallest topographical details. The same map provides the king of France, eager to oppose the bull that closed the gates of America to him, with proof that America was already well known before its official discovery by the Castilians, and a weapon that would enable him to conquer Canada.

We know very well where this map was compiled: in Dieppe, Normandy. In fact, it was the only place where it was possible to gather, in the Middle Ages, the geographical data provided, on the one hand by the Norwegian Vikings who had colonized Vinland, and on the other by the Danish Vikings who had carved out an empire in South America. It was only at Dieppe, and at other secondary Norman ports, that some ships unloaded Newfoundland cod and others Brazilian wood from the Amazon. And it was normal that a monk from Amiens, about 100 km away, had embarked at Dieppe, determined to go to America to evangelize Vikings and Indians. There the charters were drawn up that-for the first time-showed a "New World" separate from Asia. It was from Dieppe, finally, that Jean Cousin departed, who surely reached the mouth of the Amazon in 1488, and it was from there that Gonneville departed, who, in 1503, spent six months on the coast of Guayrà, that is, Paraguay (24) at the time, south of the Gulf of Santos.

All this we have amply demonstrated in L'imposture de Cristophe Colomb. Only one question remains in play: how had the Dieppe charter ended up in the hands of the Portuguese?

Lacking a better explanation, we had suggested an espionage operation. Lisbon's agents, who were indeed very active in all the major European ports, would have realized that some ships, officially returning from Guinea, were returning loaded with fish of a species unknown on the coasts of Europe or Africa, or a dye wood which could only have come from an unknown island in the Atlantic. Then, they would have procured, in one way or another, the charter that the Norman pilots used for these voyages, the purpose and itinerary of which were surrounded by so many precautions to the point of making the crew members swear an oath on the Gospel to keep it in the strictest secrecy.

This assumption was incorrect. Our analyses showed us that the Templars knew very well what we called "the secret of Dieppe" (15) and that they were already exploiting it on their own, even before the Norman shipowners were in a position to do so.

Well, if there was no relationship between Dieppe and Lisbon, there was one, a very close one, between the Temple and the realm of Portugal, which constituted its most important province after France. And in Portugal the Order survives, even though it is now subservient to the state, when it has now disappeared throughout the rest of Europe. If the Temple

had the prudence to secure a fallback base, it is to be assumed that he sheltered there in the first alert-and it was much that he felt threatened-if not his archives, at least copies of essential documents. Logically, then, the copy of the Dieppe charter had to be deposited in Tomar or Serra d'El Rei. If logic is at fault, if the priory possessed only its provincial archives, the fact remains that some of the Templars who fled France must have belonged to the Secretum Templi administration.

One way or another, the charter of Dieppe thus passes into the king's power. It is too late for him to make use of it: the suppliers of precious metals have disappeared from American shores. Without
doubtful some expeditions have confirmed this from time to time. In the absence of silver, spices constitute the most desirable source of wealth. But it is only possible to obtain them in the East. Portuguese ships, therefore, set out on the route to the Indies. Useless for the time being, the charter of Dieppe lies in the Tesouraria where the king keeps his secret archives. Where, later, Columbus and Magellan arrive to steal it.

4. The end of the mystery

All is clear now. Following in the footsteps of the Irish Chaldean monks, the Schleswig Vikings, departing from the Danish possessions of Great Britain, discovered Mexico, and then South America, where they settled around the year 1000. Once they finish conquering their empire, which stretches, on the Pacific, from the Kundanemarka Plain (Royal Danish Path), in present-day Colombia, to central Chile, they feel the need to resume contact with Europe. To do so, they open two routes to the Atlantic: the Peaviru,
"easy path" that cuts through the Paraguayan forest, and the Amazon. And they entrust the guarding of these routes to their Guarani allies. In the port of St. Catherine Island, they build a ship that, around 1150, sails to the ancient British Danelaw. They find themselves a little bewildered there, for the region is ruled by a Norman dynasty of Danish origin that recaptured it less than a hundred years earlier, when Rouen was ruled by the duke we call Guillaume, but whom the Bayeux painting calls Willelm. England is still only an agricultural country. Normandy, by contrast, has preserved the
seafaring traditions of its Viking population. The two regions have the same ruler. So it is understandable that the American ship eventually diverted to Dieppe, the Norman port closest to the English coast.

The Vikings of Tiahuanaco have no reason to hide what they know about South America from their cousins. On the contrary, they must have boasted about it. They let the Dieppese take a copy of the map they drew up in a hundred and fifty years of sailing along the coasts of the subcontinent and exploring a territory they occupied west of the Andes and controlled, north and east, from the Orinoco to the Rìo de la Plata. A map that will be enriched, on the basis of information received from the Scandinavians, with whom Normandy maintains close contacts, with the layout of Vinland, that is, of the lands colonized or known in North America, by the Norwegian Vikings.

The Dieppese, according to the custom of the time, jealously guard a secret from which they hope, not without reason, to derive commercial advantages later. But they are not the only ones who know it. The Temple is all-powerful, in the region even more than elsewhere. Indeed, it possesses

a vitally important port in Saint-Valery-en-Caux: its communications with Britain depend largely on this port, and the port authorities cannot ignore the sudden arrival of a ship on which men dressed in strange clothes are traveling, no doubt carrying magnificent gold and silver jewelry. The Templars inquire. Their report should not overly surprise the grand master: it confirms information already gathered in Byzantium and elsewhere about the "New World." But it opens up unhoped-for perspectives,
as it assumes a great wealth of precious metals. So, contacts are established with the American Vikings, negotiating an agreement. Soon the Order's ships take the road to America, where its technicians on the one hand organize the exploitation of the deposits in the Sierra de la Plata, and on the other draw up plans for the new Tiahuanaco, quickly put in place thanks to the indigenous labor they instruct.

Metal is not slow to arrive in the port of La Rochelle, destined especially for transatlantic shipping. The Temple's resources are extraordinarily multiplied by it, and it is used to finance the construction of Gothic cathedrals. Especially since the mines of the Andes were soon joined by those of Piaui, and, when the latter were exhausted, those of Minas Gerais, at the cost of the great work of desiccating the Great Lagoon. The Secretum Templi, evidenced by the seals recently found, including one showing an American Indian, covers an operation so important that it justifies the establishment of a new hierarchy that, at least in its field, surpasses that of which the grand master constitutes the apex.

The pagan Vikings, however, would not allow the Templars to establish themselves in their empire. At the cost of great hardship and, eventually, his life, a cleric of the Order-whom the Guarani called Pa'i Zumé and the Danes, in their language, Thul Gnupa, the Father Gnupa-succeeded in penetrating South America and superficially evangelizing its peoples. It is due to him that a Romanesque church-with sculptural motifs from the cathedral in Amiens-was built in Tiahuanaco that is not
was still finished by the time the Viking capital was taken, around 1290, by the revolting Auracans.

When, once the French kingdom of Jerusalem disappeared, the rulers of the West began to show uneasiness about the power of the Order and the pope, about a theological heterodoxy arising from too close contact with Jews and Muslims, the Temple thinks about securing a fallback base overseas and building a sovereign state that would allow it to avoid any constraints. A ship is sent to Central America, and its crew members are enthusiastically welcomed by the natives who have been waiting three centuries for the return of Quetzalcóatl. The Templars are disappointed because they do not find appreciable amounts of precious metals there. Instead, they are pleasantly surprised to encounter peoples who have not entirely forgotten the teachings of the Irish papas. So, the Temple settles in Mexico, on the shores of Lake Chalco. A few years later, in 1307, La Rochelle's team lands in Pànuco: not only the Order's archives, but also a strong contingent of knights, with clergymen, sergeants and converts. Thus reinforced, the community imposes its authority on the entire Chalco region, where it transports, mutatis mutandis, European feudal institutions. It can only do this by adapting to local beliefs and customs: and besides, the vocation

syncretist Temple pushes in the same direction. But, after 1307, all contact with the Old World is severed. The Templars, vowed to celibacy, die one after another without leaving descendants, except for a few half-breeds. The French of daily life and the Latin of liturgy disappear very soon, although some words - equally attributable, in the second case,
to the ancient Irish-introduce themselves into the Maya (we have evidence of this) and probably into the nàhuatl. The Temple becomes Mexicanized at an accelerated rate and at the same rate loses its authority over the indigenous peoples.

When the Spaniards arrived, only a still differentiated ecclesiastical structure remained within the Aztec church and some beliefs, traditions, rites and symbols more or less confused with the legacy left by the Irish Quetzalcóatl and the Viking Quetzalcóatl.

The Normans, for their part, take longer than the Templars-whose capital and fleet they possess neither-to exploit the information they received from Tiahuanaco's emissaries. Their ships do not begin until 1250 to load bales of brazil wood in the Amazon and release, in exchange, perhaps in Parnaïba but certainly in Santos, horses and cattle. They are not affected, of course, by the dissolution of the Order of the Temple, and indeed this allows them to move freely in South America. But, shortly before, the Vikings, whose empire is destroyed, have abandoned the coasts. Trade continues all the same, with the natives being paid by barter, until the arrival of the Portuguese. And even much later, as France-to which Normandy was annexed after the 13th century-in the 17th century still occupied the Great Guyana bounded by the Orinoco, the Amazon and the sea, the present state of Maranhäo, south of the Amazon, and, apart from the city of Pará, the Tocantins Valley. Not to mention the temporary base he established in Rio de Janeiro in the late 16th century, with the support of the Indians.

The Templars, however, did not completely disappear.
Portugal, to which they had rendered great services during the Reconquista and which constituted their most important province after France, respected their people and property and even founded for them, with state control, the Order of Christ. It is likely that in Tomar, its provincial priory, or in Serra d'El Rei, its port of war, the Temple retains copies of its
maritime archives, or that knights privy to the "secret of the Order" took refuge there in 1307. In any case, it is certain that the charter of Dieppe, now useless since the silver mines of South America were abandoned by the Vikings, is in the King's Treasury, in Lisbon, in the 15th century. Columbus copies it and uses that data in order to obtain permission from Isabella of Castile to go and "discover" a land that it is necessary to present as the kingdom of the Great Khan, whereas he knows full well that it is a continent to which everyone has been going for centuries. A few years later, Magellan in turn steals it and uses it to obtain from Charles V permission to "discover" that southern passage that the Vikings knew perfectly well. And which already figures on the globe constructed in 1515 by Johannes Schöner, a complete copy of the Dieppe chart, probably provided by the king of France, and which was had published without the strait eight years earlier by the Duke of Lorraine.

So, from the Irish to the Spanish, via the Vikings, the Templars and the Portuguese, everything connects without the slightest gap. The only point that remained hypothetical in our conclusion.

of L'imposture de Cristophe Colomb (15) is now clarified. We know that the Temple took from South America the metal with which it minted currency, that the port of La Rochelle served its traffic with the
"New World," that its archives, rushed to
away from Paris on the eve of Philip the Fair's coup d'état, they were embarked for Mexico, or that, at least, everything seems to indicate it. We also know that we owe to the Templars the introduction of French words into Maya and perhaps Nàhuatl, that the blacks represented by certain statuettes found in Central America were their slaves, and that Father Gnupa, evangelizer of Paraguay and the highlands in the 12th century, was one of their clerics. But we also know that it was through their meddling that the charter of Dieppe passed from Normandy to Portugal. That charter that allowed Columbus and Magellan to "discover" what so many others had known so well for centuries. Our research is far from over. But its historical scenario is now complete.

Bibliographical notes

(1) Maillard de Chambure: Règle et statuts secrets des templiers, Paris, 1840.
(2) Michelet, Jules: Le Procès des templiers, Paris, 1841-1851.
(3) Charpentier, John: L'Ordre des templiers, Paris, 1945.
(4) Michelet, Jules: Histoire de France, tome I, Paris, 1858.
(5) Paris, Geffroy de: Recueil des histoires des Gaules et de Franc, tome XXII, Paris, 1865.
(6) Boudin, Amédée: Histoire de Marseille, Paris and Marseille, 1852.
(7) Charpentier, Louis: Les Mystères de la cathédrale de Chartres, Paris, 1969.
(8) Guillotin de Corson: Les Commanderies de Nantes, Nantes, 1897.
(9) Guéry, abbot: Les Commanderies dans le département de l'Eure, Evreux, 1903.
(10) Perdiguier, Agricol: Mémoires d'un compagnon, Paris, 1943.
(11) Kervran, Louis: Brandan, le grand navigateur celte du VI siècle, Paris, 1977.
(12) Charpentier, Louis: Les Mystères templiers, Paris, 1970. Tr. it: I misteri dei templari, Rome, 1981.
(13) Secret Archives of the Vatican, part "Register Averr." no. 48 Benedicti XII, tome I, folii 448-451. Quoted by Sède, Gérard, in Les Templiers sont parmi nous, Paris, 1962.
(14) National Library of Paris. Latin manuscript 10919, folio 84, verso, id.
(15) Mahieu, Jacques de: L'imposture de Christophe Colomb, Paris, 1979.
(16) Delaville Le Roulx: Documents concernant les templiers extraits des archives de Malte, Paris, 1882.
(17) Bertrand, Louis: Louis XIV, Paris, 1923.
(18) Varende, Jean de la: Les Gentilshommes, Paris, 1955.
(19) St. Augustine: The City of God, Book XVI, c. VIII.
(20) Mahieu, Jacques de: Le Grand voyage du Dieu-Soleil, Paris, 1971. Tr. it: Il grande voyage du Dieu Soleil, Rome, 1979.
(21) Krickeberg, Walter: Las Antiguas culturas mexicanas, Mexico, 1961. German tr.: Altmexicanische Kulturen, Berlin, 1956.
(22) Heine-Geldern, Robert von, et Ekholm, Gordon F.: Significant parallels in the symbolic art of Southern Asia and Middle America, in Proceedings of the XXIX International Congress of Americanists, vol.

I, Chicago, 1951.
(23) Verrill, Hyat: Old Civilizations of the New World, New York, 1938.
(24) Mahieu, Jacques de: L'Agonie du Dieu-Soleil, Paris, 1974.
(25) Mahieu, Jacques de: Drakkars sur l'Amazone, Paris, 1977.
(26) Mahieu, Jacques de: Le Roi viking du Paraguay, unpublished in France. German tr.: Der Weisse König Ipir, Tübingen, 1978.
Spanish tr.: El Rey vikingo del Paraguay, Buenos Aires, 1979.
(27) Boman, Eric: Antiquités de la région andine de la république Argentine et du désert d'Atacama, Paris, 1908.
(28) Dìaz del Castillo, Bernal: Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España, Mexico, 1960.
(29) Poznanski, Arthur: Tihuanaco, the Cradle of American Man - Tihuanaco, cuna del hombre americano, bilingual edition, tome II, La Paz, 1947.
(30) Cieza de Léon, Pedro: La Crònica del Peru, Seville, 1553.
(31) Alonso, Alvaro: Arte de los metales en que se enseña el verdadero beneficio de los de oro y plata por açogue, Madrid, 1640.
(32) Dìaz de Guzmán, Ruiy:
Historia argentina del descubrimiento, conquista y poblaciòn del rìo de la Plata, Asunciòn, 1845.
(33) Gandìa, Enrique de: Historia crìtica de los mitos de la conquista americana, Buenos Aires, 1929.
(34) Jover Peralta, Anselmo and
Osuna, Tomás: Diccionario guaraní-español y español-guaraní, Buenos Aires, 1950.
(35) Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de: Décadas (IV, L. I, ch. 1), Madrid, 1601.
(36) Schwennhagen, Ludwig: Antiga hìstòria do Brasil, Teresina, 1920.
(37) Fawcett, P.H.: Exploration Fawcett, London, 1953.
(38) Lopez de Gomara, Francisco: Conquista de México, Barcelona, 1887.
(39) Torquemada, Juan de: Monarquìa indiana, Seville, 1615.
(40) Sahagùn, Bernardino de: Historia de las cosas de Nueva España, Madrid, 1829.
(41) Kingsborough, Lord: Antiquities of Mexico, London, 1830.
(42) Durán, Diego: Historia de las Indias de Nueva España y islas de Tierra Firme, Mexico, 1867-1880.
(43) Rendòn, Sonia: Introduction to Chimalpàhin Cuauhtlehuanitzin, Francisco de San Antòn Muñoz, Relaciones originales de Chalco Amaquemecan, VI and VII report, Mexico, 1965 (45).
(44) Beauvois, Eugène: Les Templiers de l'ancien Mexique, in Le Museon, new series, volume 3, Louvain, 1902.
(45) Chimalpàhin Cuauhtlehuanìtzin, Francisco de San Antòn Muñoz: Relaciones originales de Chalco Amaquemecan, VI and VII report, Mexico, 1965.
(46) de Séville, Isidore: Liber etymologiarum, L. XIV.
(47) Beauvois, Eugène: La Tula primitive, berceau des papas du Nouveau Monde, in Le Museon No. 2, Louvain, 1891.
(48) Tezozòmoc, Hernando Alvarado: Arte en lengua mixteca, Mexico, 1593.
(49) Icazbalceta, Joaquìn Garcìa: Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas, in Nueva colecciòn de documentos para la historia de México, Mexico, 1886-1892.
(50) Rojas, G. de: Relaciòn de Cholula, quoted by Beauvois, Eugène in Les Blancs précolombiens figurés et décrits dans les plus anciens

documents du Mexique et de l'Amérique centrale, in Revue des questions scientifiques, second series, tome XVI, Louvain, 1899.
(51) Vetancur, Agustín de: Teatro mexicano, quoted by Beauvois, Eugène: La Tula primitive, berceau des papas du Nouveau Monde, in Le Museon No. 2, Louvain, 1891 (47).
(52) Ixtlilxòchitl, Francisco de Alva: Historia chichimeca, tome IX, in Kingsborough, Lord, Antiquities of Mexico, London, 1830 (41).
(53) Ixtlilxòchitl, Francisco de Alva: Obras Històricas. Cuarta relaciòn: de la vida de los reyes toltecas, Mexico, 1891.
(54) Anonymous: Popol Vuh, Mexico, 1953. Tr. it.: Popol Vuh, Turin and Milan.
(55) Ponce, Alonso: Relaciòn breve y verdadera de algunas de las muchas cosas que sucedieron al Padre Fray Alonso Ponce en las provincias de la Nueva España, in Collecciòn de documentos para la historia de España, tomes LVII and LVIII, Madrid, 1873.
(56) Anonymous: Tìtulo de los Señores de Totonicapàn, quoted in the introduction by Anonymous, Popol Vuh, Mexico, 1953 (54).
(57) Fuentes y Guzmán, Francisco Antonio de: Historia de Guatemala, o Recordaciòn florida, Madrid, 1882.
(58) Codex Telleriano-Remensis, National Library of Paris, reproduced by Hamy, E.T., Paris, 1899.
(59) Chimalpàhin, Cuauhtlehuanìtzin, Francisco de San Antòn Muñoz: Annales, French translation of Relaciones originales de Chalco Amaquemecan (VI and VII report, Mexico, 1965), edited by Siméon, Rémi, Paris, 1889.
(60) Brinton, Daniel G.: Ancient Nahuatl Poetry, in The Library of Aboriginal American Literature, tome VII, Philadelphia, 1887.
(61) Soustelle, Jacques: La vie quotidienne des Aztèques, Paris, 1955.
(62) Muñoz Camargo, Diego: His
-toria de Tlaxcala, Mexico, 1892.
(63) Achard, Eugène: Un Couvent de moines en Nouvelle-Ecosse avant l'an mille, Québec, 1972.
(64) Beauvois, Eugène: Analyse de l'étude de M. Gravier "Les Colonies européennes du Markland et de l'Escociland (Domination canadienne) au XIV siècle et les vestiges qui en subsistèrent jusqu aux XVI et XVII siècles," International Congress of Americanists, Luxembourg, Report, Luxembourg-Paris, 1878.
(65) Tezozòmoc, Hernando Alvarado: Crònica mexicana, Mexico, 1878.
(66) Aguilar, Francisco de: Breve relaciòn de la Conquista de la Nueva España, in Anales del Museo de México, published by Icazbalceta, Joaquìn Garcìa, Mexico, 1885-1892.
(67) Séjourné, Laurette: El Universo de Quetzalcòatl, Mexico, 1962.
(68) Pomar, Juan Bautista: Relaciòn de Tezcuco, Mexico 1886-1892.
(69) Le Conteulf de Cantelen, conte: Les Sectes et les sociétés secrètes politiques et religieuses, quoted by Nilus, Sergei in Antichrist, Moscow, 1911 (translated from Russian).
(70) Ixtlilxòchitl, Fernando de Alva: Relaciòn del origen de los xuchimilcas, in Kingsborough, Antiquities of Mexico, London, 1830 (41).
(71) Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de: Décadas, II, Madrid, 1601.
(72) Mendieta, Gerónimo de: His
-Indian eclesiàstica history, Mexico, 1945.
(73) García, Gregorio: Predicaciòn del Evangelio en el Nuevo Mundo, cited by Kingsborough, Antiquities of Mexico, London, 1830 (41).

(74) Musset, Lucien: Introduction à la runologie, Paris, 1965.
(75) Pizarro, Pedro: Relaciòn del descubrimiento y conquista de los reinos del Peru, in Colecciòn de documentos inéditos para la historia de España, Madrid, 1844.
(76) Quiroga, Adán: La Cruz en América, Buenos Aires, 1901.
(77) Garcìa, Gregorio: Origen de los indios del Nuevo Mundo e Indias Occidentales, Madrid, 1729. Tr. it. tr.: Commentari reali, Milan, 1980.
(78) Garcilaso de la Vega, Inca: Comentarios Reales, Madrid, 1722.
(79) Jiménez de la Espada, Marcos: El Hombre blanco y la cruz precolombina en el Peru, International Congress of Americanists, Brussels. Report, Brussels, 1879.
(80) Ayala, Phelipe Guaman Poma de: Coròn ica y buen gobierno, La Paz, 1944.
(81) Guénon, René: Symboles fondamentaux de la science sacrée, Paris, 1962. Tr. it.: Symbols of sacred science, Milan, 1975.
(82) Carnac, Pierre: Les Conquérants du Pacifique, Paris, 1975.
(83) Mély, F. de: entry "Ostensoir," in La Grande Encyclopédie, tome 25, Paris, 1892.
(84) Brand, J.: Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain, London, 1853.
(85) Kervran, Louis: Brandan, le grand navigateur celte du XI siècle, Paris, 1977.
(86) Brasseur de Bourbourg, étienne: Grammaire de la langue quichée, Paris, 1862.
(87) Denison, T.S.: The Primitive Aryans of America, Chicago, 1908.
(88) Mendoza, Gumersindo, director of the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico. Without reference.
(89) Mongé, Alf, and Landsverk, O.G.: Norse Medieval Cryptography in Runic Carvings, Glendale, California, 1967.
(90) Spanuth, Jürgen: Le Secret de l'Atlantide, Paris, 1978.
(91) Ferryn, Patrick: Races extracontinentales en Mésoamérique, in Kadath, Brussels, May-June 1975.
(92) Wuthenau, Alexander von: Terres cuites précolombiennes, l'image humaine du Nouveau Monde, Paris, 1969.
(93) Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de: Décadas, I, Madrid, 1601.
(94) Lòpez de Gomara, Francisco: Historia general de las Indias, Madrid, 1858.
(95) Ramos, Alonso: Historia del célebre y milagroso Santuario de la insigne imagen de Nuestra Señora de Copacabana y sus milagros y invenciòn de la Cruz de Carabuco, Lima, 1621.
(96) Techo, Nicolas del: Historia provinciae paraquariae, Lille, 1673.
(97) Kiss, Edmund: Nordische Baukunst in Bolivien, in Germanien, Berlin, 1933.
(98) Gallez, Paul: Les Grands fleuves de l'Amérique du Sud sur le Ptolémée londonien d'Henri Hammer (1489), in Erdkunde, Bonn, 1975.

A rigorous heterodox historian

Certainly Jacques de Mahieu (Paris 1915 - Buenos Aires 1990) was a heterodox historian. He was, in other words, a researcher who was convinced that the history of humanity did not necessarily and at all costs have to coincide with what, from middle school to university, we have been told by textbooks and

from school aids, which are too often conformist and lazy.

But unlike the too many essayists who since the 1960s have been content to present their revolutionary arguments by collecting second- or third-hand material, de Mahieu has always and strictly been a historian: a scholar who has agreed to defer any of his theories to the test of facts, to respect the very unreviewable judgment of data. That is why his bold theses can in no way be branded as flights of fancy or extravagant fantasies.

A life, his, that seems divided in half, with 1968, the year he founded the Instituto de Ciencia del Hombre in Buenos Aires, serving as a watershed. Until that time de Mahieu had been a scholar of sociology, economics, political science and the history of ideas, author of several publications. Influenced as a young man by the theories of Alexis Carrel and Georges Sorel, he had majored in political science and philosophy, as well as, honoris causa, in medicine.

Having moved to Argentina, he had taught at universities of Cuyo (1948-55) and Buenos Aires (1953-55), then in El Salvador (1964-65) and again in Buenos Aires (1972-76). He had been a member of the Argentine Academy of Sociology (1952-55), vice-rector of the University of Social Sciences (1963-68) and director of the Department of Anthropology in the Argentine capital. Over the course of two decades he had published a dozen essays, including, Philosophy de la estética (1950), Evolucion y porvenir del sindacalismo (1954), El Estado comunitario (1962), Diecionario de ciencia politica (1966), Tratado de sociologia general (1969). And he had continued, in the meantime, to maintain contact with France, where many of his books have been translated, contributing to journals such as Nouvelle Ecole, which counted him on its scientific committee.

But here it is the last twenty years of his life that interest us most, those in which de Mahieu devoted himself primarily, indeed exclusively, to the analysis of pre-Columbian America and the question of the first contacts between the Old World and the New, tracing with his works a history very different from the one still told by most people today. A story that, from work to work, he delineated with increasing precision as he proceeded in further discoveries that allowed for more in-depth analysis and even more pointed deductions. For, unlike so many heterodox essayists and historians, Jacques de Mahieu was by no means content to base his work on texts published by others: he chose to verify everything in the field, carrying out explorations and excavation campaigns, including through the Institute of the Science of Man.

An operation - that of the historian de Mahieu - permeated by a single underlying thesis: in Latin America, from Mexico to Mesoamerica, all the way down to Chile, well before the "official" discovery attributed to Columbus and dated 1492, various waves of Europeans arrived and left traces of their passage, of their civilizing work. Traces of all kinds, which de Mahieu will proposed to document in his books: archaeological, scriptural, architectural, linguistic, mythological, religious, even in customs and traditions. To this end he undertook expeditions to very little-explored areas of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, obtaining documentation of all kinds, including puzzling "runic inscriptions."

In summary-if one is to make an overall assessment of his historical work, in which I have been interested since the early years

Seventy, when he himself sent me the first book in which he expounded these theses - de Mahieu believes that, before the Italian navigator and the conquistadores, the New World had already hosted the settlements of groups of Irish monks (the culdei) in the 9th century, of German-Danish Vikings in the 10th century (and the Incas would be their descendants), of Norwegian Vikings in the 11th century. Then it was the turn of the Templars, who first reached Mexico in the late 1200s, then settled there after 1307. And this is precisely the volume, devoted to this last pre-Columbian European wave, in which de Mahieu seems to summarize all the research he has done, clarifying the final contours of his picture, expanding his theses and even, honestly, rectifying them in part.

Templars and America. The most enigmatic and mysterious Order and the continent of wonders. A combination that at first glance appears to us fascinating and fanciful, nothing more. But de Mahieu provides such a mass of documentary material (starting with the examination of ancient texts in Spanish, the work of missionaries and Inca converts), of verisimilar deductions, of punctilious analysis, that having finished reading it does not seem quite possible to relegate this work tout-court to the shelf of reverie.

From Le grand voyage du Dieu-Soleil (1971) to El Imperio vikingo de Tiahuanacu (1983), via L'agonie du Dieu-Soleil (1974), Drakkars sur l'Amazone (1977), L'imposture de Christophe Colomb (1979), El rey vikingo del Paraguay (1980), up to this Les Templiers en Amérique, with his twenty years of countercultural, but certainly not a-scientific nor a-philological work, in defiance of the accusations commonly hurled at heterodox scholars, Jacques de Mahieu has practically rewritten an entire section of the history of the West between 800 and 1500. A rewriting, his, which has innumerable implications and which, on the other hand, logically, if unpredictably, resolves many inexplicable aspects of the Conquest.

It is those same aspects that, by the way, had been rigorously recorded by chroniclers of the time and that instead so many contemporary historians forget, minimize, even hide.

Gianfranco de Turris

Table of Names.
person and place (Place names in italics)

BERSERKER

BOOKS