

THE JESUIT EMPIRE



LEOPOLDO LUGONES

BERSERKER

BOOKS



THE JESUITIC EMPIRE

A man of convictions and elemental passions, Lugones forged a complex style that had a beneficial influence on López Velarde and Ezequiel Martínez Estrada. In 1903, the Argentine government commissioned him to write this memoir, which is now this book. Lugones spent a year in the territory where the Society of Jesus carried out its strange experiment in theocratic communism. In these pages, there is a natural affinity between the exuberance of his prose and that of the regions he reveals to us.

The Jesuit Empire of Lugones is an impressive study. And I mean that. The first 30 pages masterfully summarise the history of South America and Spain, from the conquest of the New World to the reign of Charles III. And it does so at breakneck speed, but with overwhelming clarity. Then, once we get into the subject matter, it narrates the vicissitudes of the history of the Jesuit fathers' passage through the Guaraní territories.

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THE JESUIT EMPIRE

HISTORICAL ESSAY

BY

L. LUGONES SECOND

EDITION

REVISED AND EXPANDED

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF

The warm reception given to the first edition of this book, now completely sold out, has encouraged my publishers, Arnaldo Moen y Hermano, to launch this second edition, whose success they anticipate with greater confidence than I, and undoubtedly with better judgement.

I wanted to reciprocate your efforts by scrupulously correcting my pages, enriching them with new information and writing another chapter, in which I discuss the policies that the Fathers developed in Paraguay.

I recognise that this omission disadvantaged my first work; but since it is so rare in literature to be disadvantaged by excessive conciseness, it so happens that in the interval between the two editions, a document as important as the "Histeria de las Revoluciones de la provincia del Paraguay" (Hysteria of the Revolutions in the Province of Paraguay) by Father Lozan o¹ has come to light, providing me with a new and valuable source, from which I naturally drew heavily. It has also helped me to form my opinion about Antequera and the nature of the revolution he led; thus, there have been nothing but advantages in that silence, which was determined, after all, by a deep hesitation on my part.

It will be said that this confession is not befitting of a historian; but I do not consider myself to be one, professionally speaking, and since Socrates it has become easy to confess one's own ignorance...

I wanted to write only what I knew well, always bearing in my conscience, like a heavy burden, the remorse of not having known better.

It is, moreover, what I offer my readers with the greatest confidence, because of my faith in such a fundamental virtue as sincerity. The sweetness of the fruit is a sign of its ripeness; and the delay in ripening, far from being detrimental, rather enhances the merit of its flavour.

April 1907.

FOREWORD

In a decree issued in June of last year, the Government commissioned me to write this book, which, at its request and on my own recommendation, was to be a memoir.

The data collected in the field, as well as the bibliography consulted, expanded the original project, forming the work that I now present for the reader's consideration. I could have saved myself the effort by strictly adhering to the official plan, compensating for it with abundant photographs and statistical data; but I believed I was interpreting the wishes of His Excellency the Minister of the Interior, to whom I owe this distinction, by exhausting the subject.

Thus, the original "Memoir" has become a historical essay, combining geographical and archaeological descriptions, without excluding—and this is my own contribution—a critical assessment of the phenomenon under study.

As for the illustrations, I have chosen to focus on what is relevant, even if it appears less impressive than that vague profusion, the abuse of which constitutes a public disease; but this is neither a travel book nor an entertaining dissertation.

The drawings and plans I present—among which there are only two photographs—are really intended to 'illustrate' the text, without expecting the reader to be entertained; moreover, the information included

is more than enough to guide "tourists" if their intrepid curiosity leads them to wander through those ruins...

I have titled this work *The Jesuit Empire* because, as the reader will see, this classification fits the organisation under study better than any other. The Jesuits had classified it as a Christian Republic, which is also correct; but the word 'republic' now carries a democratic connotation, entirely different from that which corresponds to that society.

Its imperial character was already noted, and also applied to a title, among others by the Jesuit Bernardo Ibáñez, who wrote in 1770, under the name of "*Jesuit Kingdom of Paraguay*", a work against the order from which he had been expelled.

I need not warn the reader that, apart from this, there is no other coincidence between my book and the diatribe of the rebellious priest; for I have neither affection nor animosity for the Jesuits, and certainly not for those who no longer exist in Paraguay. Historical hatreds, like enmity against God, are a folly that fights against infinity or against nothingness.

I think it is pointless to talk about my journey through the territory of Misiones, suffice it to say that it was not limited to the Argentine part, for I fear that the reader will see me as one of those travellers who make the hero easy, for the same reason that 'the lying of the stars' owes its prestige.

I will take advantage of this opportunity, however, to express my gratitude and that of my fellow explorers for the kindness shown to us by those who helped us during our journey.

First place goes to Mr. Juan J. Lanusse, Governor of Misiones and a distinguished gentleman who helped me with great determination. Dr. Garmendia, Judge of the Territory, is also deserving of my gratitude; and this extends to Mr. Rafael Garmendia, administrator of Customs; to engineer Mr. F. Fouilland; to the Chief of Police, Mr. Olmedo; to the commissioners of

San José, Apóstoles and Concepción, Messrs Silva, Rodríguez and Verón; Mr Gallardo, Justice of the Peace of San Carlos; Mr Gastelli, administrator of the Apóstoles colony; Mr Augusto Gorordo, resident of Concepción; Messrs Noriega and García, merchants of Saracura; Mr Caldeira, of Santa María; Mr Baumeister, Argentine consul in Villa Encarnación (Paraguay); Mr Zarza, political chief of Trinidad in the same country; Miss Báez, schoolteacher in the same place; Mr Chamorro, resident of Jesús (Paraguay); Mr Mariano Macaya, merchant from Santo Tomás; and Mr and Mrs Frédéric Villemagne, caretakers of the ruins of San Ignacio, hospitable neighbours whose generosity is unforgettable.

As for the territory of Misiones, it is, as is well known, a national treasure that needs no recommendation from me.

June 1903 - May 1904.

□ I - THE COUNTRY WITH A CUSTOMARY RULER.

Before describing the situation and conditions of the spiritual conquest carried out by the Jesuits over the Guaraní tribes, it is worth summarising at a glance the state of the country where they originated and under whose flag they carried out their enterprise, so that we do not suddenly find ourselves in their presence without the necessary background information for any investigation.

This is all the more necessary given that, until now, the issue has been debated amid the praise of supporters and the diatribes of opponents—both sides without restraint—since for both, the truth was a consequence of their enthusiasm, not the main objective.

As scholastic as the clericals and the Jacobins, both adopted an absolute position and an inflexible logic to resolve the problem, diminishing their own judgement by entrenching themselves in such rigid principles: but it is fair to agree that Jacobinism suffered the most complete defeat, inflicted by its own weapons, namely humanitarianism and freedom.

A product of the same trend that it fought against as metaphysical and fanatical, the scholastic instrument failed in its power, just as it triumphed in that of its adversary for whom it was customary, since for centuries it had constituted its organ of

relationship par excellence, if not their perfect defensive weapon.

Both, however, neglected the main antecedent—the affiliation of the order in question and the enterprise it carried out. Assuming that the Jesuits were either entirely good or entirely evil, the study of their work was no longer an investigation but an argument; thus, for some, the Missions represent a model of social perfection and political wisdom, while for others they are equivalent to the darkest despotism and the harshest exploitation of human effort.

I do not intend to place myself in the much-praised middle ground, which the metaphysicians of history consider to be the guarantor of impartiality, assuming that both exaggerations are equally certain, as this would constitute a new form of scholasticism, being also an absolute position; there must be something more true in one or the other, without belonging totally to either, but it is my intention that the reader, and not I, draw the conclusions from the phenomenon described, and I will be well served if there is agreement.

Nor do I believe that the preliminary examination mentioned above causes harm to anyone, and even if it did, I am completely sure that it would not cause harm to the truth. The study of the conquest requires this preliminary chapter, which all our histories have neglected, and which, in synthesis, like the seed to the future tree, gives rise to the subsequent problem of Independence. The most important thing in history is the origin of events, if one wishes to explain them by human means and classify them in any order, depending on this scientific concept, the correctness of the relationship between the author and the reader. Thus, logic becomes a fertile organism, not a mere dialectical construction.

Knowledge of the state of Spain when it undertook and carried out the conquest is therefore essential

in order to appreciate this phenomenon clearly, since it was naturally a consequence of that state of affairs.

When the New World was discovered, Spain was wavering between declining feudalism and nascent nationality, like the rest of Europe, but this crisis was exacerbated by a special phenomenon of the utmost importance. I am referring to the Moorish influence that eight centuries of Saracen domination had had on its people.

It is unnecessary to demonstrate that no people can endure twenty generations of conquest without becoming little less than mestizos of the conqueror. However much resistance there may be, however much the conqueror may be hated, in the long run he establishes inevitable relations with the vanquished. These relations are all the more rapid when the conqueror's civilisation is superior, for then he combines the *fait accompli* achieved by force with the seduction exerted by the arts of peace. This is precisely what happened with the Muslim conquest.

It is well known that from the manufacture and use of weapons, which were so important at the time, to the principles of natural sciences and mathematics introduced by them in Europe, the Arabs decisively surpassed the subjugated people, establishing their dominance over them with such a decisive advantage. Feudalism facilitated this permeation, as lords frequently formed alliances with their common enemy to vent their grudges or settle neighbourhood disputes; and just as the chain mail armour, which the Gothic warriors wove from rough strips of leather, fell before the blades of Damascus, so did the native roughness yield to contact with a superior culture.

Ethnic traits that still endure, more abundant where the conquest was most intense and where the environment is more conducive to their preservation, without ceasing to revive in other regions with sufficiently revealing intervals; language, that is, the last thing conquered peoples give up,

As demonstrated by Poles and Albanians, invaded to such an extent that neither the implicit reaction in the adoption of the Aragonese and Castilian dialect as the national language, nor the Latin transformation of the humanists, could abolish endings, characteristic prefixes, and even such genuinely national elements as interjections, since our deprecatory Ojalá is textually the "*In xa Alá*" (God willing!) of the Saracens. The same nobility with Jewish blood, according to a contemporary libel, *El Tizón de la nobleza ele Castilla* (The Scourge of the Nobility of Castile), attributed to Archbishop Fonseca, who, even if exaggerating, would have had good reason to do so, had he been induced, as is claimed, by aristocratic resentment: all these are sufficient elements to demonstrate the impregnation.

Independence was a logical detachment from the Semitic trunk, the eternal phenomenon of coming of age that occurs in all peoples, much more than a conflict of races.

I understand that it is more dramatic and more likely to inflame patriotism, that handful of Asturian mountain dwellers who began the heroic reconquest; but the Aragonese have, for equal reasons, the cave of San Juan de la Peña to oppose that of Covadonga and Garci Ximénez to Don Pelayo...

There was undoubtedly some of that, but wars of independence are never the work of adventurers; and in that conflict, the same Semitic element, the Spanish Arabs, who fought against their own race out of love for their homeland, played a decisive role. Three centuries were enough to produce the same phenomenon with the Spanish in America: how much more would eight centuries achieve in the Peninsula, with the religious factor also precipitating the separation!

The patriotic movement is therefore easily explainable, without resorting to racial warfare, to elucidate how Spain achieved its independence from the Arabs, despite being substantially Arab; but without delving deeper into the thesis, it can be argued

that the two peoples, in their long contact (war is also contact, even in specific terms), mutually influenced each other, giving rise to a type that, without being entirely Semitic, was also not the pure Aryan type found in other European countries.

Naturally, the common traits of their ancestors were reinforced when they joined forces, strongly characterising the new type. Military religious proselytism, which had given rise to the Crusades in the West and the immense Islamic expansion in the East; the unpredictable spirit and haughty idleness characteristic of the adventurer; the warlike inclination that synthesised all the virtues of chivalrous honour, formed that legacy. More peculiar Semitic traits were fatalism, the tendency to fantasise that gave rise to chivalric novels, so closely related to the *Thousand and One Nights*³; and patriotism, which is rather a pure hatred of foreigners, as characteristic of Spain then as now.

I think it is worth remembering that Spanish Semitism was not purely Arabic. Jews played a significant role in it, and their tendencies are evident in certain characteristics, such as fierce patriotism.

They and the Arabs resisted exile as much as they could, clear proof that they were quite content on the Peninsula. Defeated, persecuted, humiliated, without even the hope of material wealth, only the attraction of race can explain their perseverance. They considered Spain their homeland and endured everything in order to live there—not for years, but for centuries after their defeat—without the slightest idea of reconquest, leaving traces of this invincible affection throughout contemporary literature.

The Moors never completely abandoned their customs, not only in the Alpujarras, where they enjoyed almost complete autonomy, but also in the rest of the Peninsula and under their forced Christian exterior. The same was true of the Jews, who continued to practise their religion in secret, deeply ingrained beneath the surface that the war had abolished.

continuing, deeply, the impregnation that the war had abolished on the surface.

Furthermore, Spain, completely militarised by that long war of independence, found itself stalled in its social progress; and this semi-barbaric state, which I will discuss in detail later, combined with the predominance of the aforementioned medieval Arab spirit, gave it an extraordinary capacity for any undertaking in which blind impetus, that is to say, essentially military, was a condition for victory.

Carlos And so he dreams of universal monarchy, which was nothing more than a transposition into the political sphere of the dream of universal Church, or, if you will, its consecutive realisation; but the Church also upheld a Semitic ideal, since Christianity, originally Hebrew, was an extension of Mosaic law, and sought to fulfil on its own behalf the promises of universal domination contained therein for the children of Israel.

The absurd project was not without its coincidences, which at certain moments in history seem to accumulate with miraculous timing around any given event, although this only demonstrates a convergence of causes, some hidden, others not, with the effect that characterises them. Thus, the morbid imbalance necessary to conceive of such a sick dream as achievable also had two august representatives in Charles V and Philip II.

The hereditary hypochondria to- , which produced in one the mystical delirium of abdication, and in the other the grim indifference that overshadowed all his hours, engendered in both the same misguided ambition, perhaps as an outlet for atavistic torments: and so, with the Emperor's plan having failed amid the ruins of a crumbling world, Philip II conceived the idea of a Christian Empire. It was a scaled-down version of the same dream, which was nonetheless grandiose, as it sought to rule over half the world. Spain and its possessions formed the basis of that

plan, which, although it failed internationally, had the most disastrous influence on the people.

Those absolutists, like our democrats today, sought to conform human events to metaphysical principles, taking the Catholic ideal as their norm, just as the latter proclaim their universal republic based on the concept of an abstruse fraternity. Both paths inevitably lead to despotism, as the imperialist end of the Revolution so clearly demonstrated, disrupting in the minds of the people any notion of righteous progress and gradually misleading any idea of freedom, replacing it with the rigidity of a unitarian principle, when their rational desideratum is constant variety within order.

The more ignorant the people are, the more deeply they feel the influence of the upper classes, for they are more deprived of means of defence and appreciation, and they soon conform their lives to the dominant principle that is suggested to them as an ideal; hence the importance in their lives of the fundamental ideas that have been instilled in them. False concepts in the mind almost always correspond to false behaviour, for ideas and feelings are like communicating vessels in which the level cannot be altered partially.

The Universal Empire, and its substitute, the Christian Empire, had disastrous consequences for the people, as they sought the survival of an artificial state; and in this way, all the virtues that constitute the common middle ground of normal societies soon disappeared in their shadow, to be replaced by the heroic, that is, exceptional conditions necessary for the maintenance of an unnatural state.

Moreover, the [danta soon took root, finding fertile ground in the dominant tendencies of the people, for those

Two political monstrosities were, above all, adventures of champions.

In this state of crisis, with nationality still poorly established; the law in full conflict between customary privileges and monarchical unification; the absolutist ideal at odds with federal sentiment; feudalism falling, still powerful, and the people rising up respectably; in this crisis, the Discovery produced a flood of riches. It could not have come at a worse time for the fate of the Peninsula, as it was a treasure in the hands of a teenager.

The balance that those antagonisms tended towards, and which would have been established after the natural fluctuations, was broken forever, ensuring the triumph of absolutist politics. The pernicious theme of universal monarchy flourished; and since success was not proportional to effort, the people, lacking the sensible repose that work gives to enjoy its fruits, blindly gave themselves over to squandering their lottery winnings.

Thus, racial tendencies, religious sentiment, political ideology, the very work of independence with its exclusively militaristic character, general ignorance and, finally, self-interest, shaped the Spanish people into a heroic model, replacing honesty with pride and duty with enthusiasm. An admirable war machine, conquest naturally formed their ideal, and destiny provided them, with the Discovery, with an entire world in which to realise it.

The sixteenth century was the century of the Conquistador. At the dawn of the Modern Age, he continued the spirit of the Middle Ages. Forced to be courageous above all else, as he was the defender of society, which worked in the shadow of his arms, and exempt from all other efforts and contributions, since he gave his blood for farmers and craftsmen who gladly paid for their freedom, everything came together to make him a privileged being. The ins-

The adventurous spirit that the Crusades had sharpened to the point of madness completely dominated him. Bravery, which was, after all, the only condition for his undertakings and the guarantee of his success, was a source of concern for him; and being only brave, he easily degenerated into cruelty. The very courtesy that was the amiable trait of his romantic nature was considered worthless as long as it did not pay tribute to the life of a man in the presence of his favourite lady. Little by little, the trophies of honour became his only reward, and since war justified everything, pillage was a lawful occupation for him; he plundered by force of arms the most illegitimate rights, such as the right of franchise, which enriched so many riverside fiefdoms, consecrated their excesses, and the protection of bandits, the flower of his armies, was so jealously preserved that only under Philip II. The Courts of Tarazona granted royal officials the power to enter estates in pursuit of criminals.

Ambition was accompanied by two related passions—superstition and gambling, the latter being, in the end, a state of war in which, as in warfare, audacity, opportunity, and cunning are decisive elements of victory. I will say nothing about superstition, which was the characteristic spiritual disease of the Middle Ages and perhaps the most gloomy form of restlessness. It is well known, on the other hand, that the born gambler is, above all, superstitious. The anxiety of the Middle Ages, fuelled by heavenly wrath exploited by the ambition of monks and conflicts between worlds, such as the eternal and never-resolved threat from Asia, was exacerbated to the point of anguish in the simple soul of the paladin.

Dark magic, imported by orders such as the Templars, whose extermination was greatly influenced by fear; atrocious plagues, also of Eastern origin; alchemy, whose prestige bordered on witchcraft; the enormous danger posed by the domination of Spain and the Mediterranean by Asian forces; legends of sinister lepers who "crossed Europe with

messages of intelligence between the Saracens of Asia and those of Spain, for a joint action of which Jewish trade was a shrewd advance; astronomy turned into terrifying symbolism—all these circumstances gave superstition immense wings.

It is now a proven fact that the Crusaders suffered from their Eastern contagion, which was much more pronounced in Spain, where contact was not occasional and purely military, but habitual for eight centuries: another circumstance that accentuates the characteristics of the Spanish adventurer. That contagion only served to heighten the fundamental traits in the spirit of the champion, since it also came from an adventurous civilisation. He did not have civilised weapons with which to fight the terror that tortured his spirit. All his knowledge was reduced to heraldry, falconry and weapons; philosophy was a speciality of the monastery; art was a task for villains and vagabonds. He had no other spiritual refuge than faith. In it, his bravery was exalted and his superstition strengthened, since it was an ignorant faith; and from it resulted another salient feature of his character: tenacity.

Intrepid, his ignorance played no small part in this, for the truth is that, believing the world to be small, the discoverers risked themselves in the enterprise that enlarged it.

Racial pride, aroused by victories over the infidel, added another motive to their bravery; and this combination of qualities and defects, among which courage and superstition stood out, gave equal impetus to their character and their ideals. This was, in the near term, fame and, in the distant term, religion, that is to say, two passions. Hence the domineering intolerance and the complete absence of practical spirit.

Idealistic, he is not interested in the undertaking itself, but rather because it can bring him honours; superstitious, his soul is attuned

to the fantasy of enchanted lands; brave, the most difficult undertaking seems little enough to illustrate his renown; ignorant, he lacks the points of comparison that might deter him, demonstrating the excessiveness of the effort.

The great expeditions, which have had no consequences to date, not even in terms of geographical data, such as those of the reckless adventurers who crossed America from Ççuito to the mouth of the Amazon; the chimerical explorations in search of the classic Eldorado, or the unfindable cities of the Caesars⁵, reveal in the conqueror, in a conclusive manner, the medieval paladin. They were the Hircanias and Guirafontainas of Amadis and Gaiferos⁶.

That adventure of conquest was, on the other hand, an extension of the military state in which the war with the Moors had left Spain, serving at the same time as a stimulus, in contrast to civil interest and progress, which were affected by exclusive militarism. After all, the Discovery had been a consequence of that situation.

With access to the Mediterranean closed, or at least obstructed, by the Turkish threat, piracy shifted its field of action to the Atlantic, becoming familiar with the high seas; and in searching for a crossing route to avoid the obstructed route to the Indies, it stumbled upon the New World. Thus, the figure of the champion and the act of discovery were a natural consequence of a social and political state of affairs, not a racial excellence or a stroke of genius. The prestige of the adventurer lies in the picturesque, which is all the more accentuated the more it is at odds with its time; and the merit of the enterprise lies purely in its audacity; but both the man and the action are two historical accidents, without any exceptional intrinsic importance.

She is, for my purposes, in the expansion that gave rise to religious-military proselytism and the desire for unexpected wealth, peculiar

of the adventurous enterprise, making Spain the conquering country par excellence.

Double proof of his expertise in this regard is his success and the failure of the other nations. The temptation was too strong for them not to attempt a similar venture. The result was adverse for them, and it cannot be said that this was due to a lack of sailors. England had Drake and Frobisher among the best; Italy, not counting the Discoverer, had Vespucci, Corsali, Verrazzano, and Marco Polo; France had Cartier, Roberval, and Ribaut; not to mention those brave Portuguese, whose fame enveloped the globe in a web of exploits, from the famous Cathay to the barbarous sea of Africa, and— . They did not come close to operating on the same scale as the Spaniards, and both Cortés and Pizarro remain the model of the Conquistador.—

The fact is that the conquest of ⁸ , with all its chimerical, colossal and problematic aspects, was a medieval undertaking, the fulfilment of which required medieval spirits and tendencies. Other nations were already beginning their modern evolution, rapidly modifying the old structure; they found themselves at a disadvantage in the face of the special case, which required the abandonment of their peculiarities. More calculating and utilitarian, they failed in this because they progressed in a modern sense; and if they did not increase honour, they increased profit, while the others realised the old ideal, reaching misery in the fullness of their glory estéri l— . ⁹

To open up the New World, conquerors were needed, that is, men of adventure who could accomplish in a year what the colonist, sedentary by nature, would have accomplished in a century. And only Spain had conquerors. The other countries, becoming industrious and commercial, turned to colonisation, with the colony and representative institutions being political consequences of the industrial period. This explains how, although Spain had opened up the continent, it was others who

— . The gold of America did not

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enriched Spain itself, since it was not transformed into permanent branches of production for the country. It passed through Spain like a sieve that was too fine, leaving behind only an insignificant residue. On the contrary, through the violent selection carried out jointly by adventurers and dreamers, it took away its most virile population, and the gold that bought their blood proved disastrous.

The consequence is much more terrible when one considers that, along with the best elements, it lost hope of reacting, which is analogous to the chain of destructive processes that undermines organisms in decline.

A product of the Middle Ages that was dying out at the beginning of the conquest, the adventurer initially had the upper hand, although for the medieval concept of the paladin, that is, the exclusive warrior whom he succeeded, it was already a type of decadence; but as the years passed, the colonist slowly prevailed until he defeated him, due to his greater conformity with the dominant trends: and the results of both types, with their respective methods of occupation, are evident in both Americas. The North, upon its liberation, produced mainly men of government; if freedom is in danger there, it is due to a shortage of military personnel. Here, it is quite the opposite; there is a surplus of warriors and a shortage of statesmen. Such are the consequences of the respective predominance of the settler and the conqueror. Both were logical at the time of the conquest, because it was a time of transition, but one based its prestige on the past, while the other counted on the future.

Meanwhile, feudal privileges passed to the people, who had fought alongside the King against the lords, in the form of jobs in the administration, the Church and the army. But this alliance did not remove anything from the odious nature of privilege, and even aggravated its harm by spreading it, determining an aggressive individualism in the national character, which made every Spaniard a petty tyrant, even more so when this was combined with enormous

racial pride, in which Eastern fatalism and the selfishness of the fortunate conqueror collaborated.

Along with feudal powers, the warrior ideal passed to the people, all the more easily since the former had just been enlisted by the King. The clergy increasingly distanced itself from Rome to side with the monarch, following the inclinations and conveniences that emanated from its popular origins. Finally, civil servants outgrew their exclusive status as clerks when the purely military era ended, becoming an essential springboard for government as the importance of administration in the unified nation grew. The Church, the administration, and the army thus provided the most lucrative professions, particularly the latter. The most talented and educated men enlisted as privates, such was the esteem in which the military career was held; but such professional limitation brought with it a disdain for agriculture and commerce. In these branches of activity there was no nobility, that is to say, no privilege, and they were therefore of no importance to the nobleman—and the nobleman was legion. In certain parts, nobility was a birthright.

The Semites, excluded from these three honourable professions, sought fruitful compensation in working the land and in trade, which were their only remaining resources; and necessity overcame their oriental indolence. The Jews bought the collection of royal rents and taxes, becoming doubly odious by assuming this fiscal role, which was most abhorred by a people burdened by exactions; and to make matters worse, their daughters, at the cost of large dowries, married noblemen, as reported by the well-known *Tizón de la nobleza de Castilla*, initiating that commercial conquest of titles, so detested throughout history and so effective in all cases.

The contrast soon alarmed the invaders. The pride of their race could not tolerate such fortunes. Religion fuelled the

discontented with its traditional hatred, and expulsion, another consequence of absolutism, gave Spain the unity of misery, which it had certainly not sought. Spain disappeared as a productive country, and on the wasteland that grew daily in that struggle for sterility, a consequence of a sterile ideal, the lazy and arrogant nobleman reigned as natural lord, for whom time was sand that he let slip carelessly through his fingers, while he muttered, whispering songs, the toothpick simulating afternoon tea; floating in the haughtiness of his Arab eye a dream of squandered Americas; his blood boiling with a thirst for cruel feasts; his heart harpooned by dark loves; a great spinner of shields, a magnificent fool, as capable of heroism as of swindling; a mystic beneath his coat of mail, a warrior beneath his helmet, and always quick to cover the sky with the harrow of his family cloak.

No one felt the devastation while the military campaigns and the intoxication of victory they produced lasted. Everything seemed to conspire to realise the dream of magical wealth in the picturesque regions where the nakedness of the sword clothed its owner in gold. But when the counter-conquest began at the start of Philip II's reign, failure set in. Conquest was no longer enough to satisfy the national ideal. Covered in inglorious wounds from anonymous barbarian arrows; with such a cult of courage that the Castilian militias considered it cowardly to entrench themselves; hardened by their solar deprivation of shelter, having lacked even their own shadow; even more fierce, if possible, in contact with the virgin wilderness; proud of having endured dangers that resembled legendary fantasies, they returned to drag their boredom across their narrow native soil.

The poor had become too hardened to bow to the yoke of labour, in their intimacy with the weapons of war; the rich hastened to empty their purses into the treasury. The contempt for gold obtained in war, which was nothing more than an indi-

Overt displays of courage engendered disdain for all productive endeavours. For nothing in the world would the hero have degenerated into a merchant or a labourer. Once his fortune was gone, which happened in a very short time, if he was still vigorous he returned to the theatre of his exploits; if he was old, he died quietly of hunger in his nostalgia for overseas adventures, or he became an ascetic, to settle his accounts of blood and plunder through attrition, but without ever turning to the labour and hardship of servants and farmhands.

The torrent of pure blood that crossed the ocean became tainted by germs of dissolution, made much more active by the transplant; and that dissemination of adventurers, corrupted by the atrocious freedom of instincts that was the conquest of the New World, caused as much damage to the Peninsula as the Gypsy invasion and the scourge of the filthy plagues with which it was synonymous.

The industrial decline of Spain took on the characteristics of a collapse, as sudden as the abandonment of the ideal of conquest. Exports of woollen fabrics ceased and...

— , and other items, which during the Arab period¹² They began trading with Sicily and Sardinia, gaining greater importance in the Flemish and German markets. Industrial chemistry, applied to operations such as oleum magistrale and potash, which supplied England, disappeared along with the remains of Moorish culture. The desert and the forest advanced on orchards and fields, and it seems as if, with symbolic intent, the classic monument of the monarchy was christened with the name El Escorial.

Religious fanaticism, which precipitated depopulation, and excessive taxes contributed to stifling Spanish progress, presenting themselves as consequences of absolutism. Spain's commercial importance had been so great that nations had adopted the Libre as their international maritime code.

of the Consulate of the Sea, promulgated in Catalonia, also accepting the Azores meridian as the prime meridian. The military absorption of these partial centres of culture nullified the progress that would have ensued, as they were all incorporated into the common nationality, with unity becoming a scourge for the Peninsula; on the other hand, the conquest, employing the most select of the population, drew the best industrialists to America, and consequently its industry, explaining how Mexico had sugar cane two centuries before England, and silk looms in 1543; and how at the time of Humboldt's voyage, pianos were being manufactured in Durango, while in Spain there was no one left to make them.

The concentration of raw products coming from America in immense quantities limited commercial speculation to an exchange of raw materials and foreign manufactured goods, prolonging the medieval system of transactions in kind, while the rest of Europe was completely moving away from it.

Balsams, woods, precious foods such as sugar, feathers, gemstones, precious pastes, and fancy items that foreign wealth paid for without haggling brought the world's gold to Spain; colossal fortunes were improvised, and prices rose to fabulous heights. The adventurous remnants of the Middle Ages, which was coming to an end, sought out this natural meeting place, adding to the conquest their murky glory, mercenaries from all over Europe, from the lansquenets with their famous tactics to the Greek insulars with their classic piracy s¹³.

Fuels in a bonfire increased the fleeting splendour; but their ashes contributed greatly to obscuring the picture of decline, to whose dark background the gypsy smuggler added the slag from his clandestine forge.

The easy give-and-take transaction killed the industry, causing, with its retrospective magnificence, a voice after the whirlwind, the continuation of the system that produced the decline.

Spanish ships abandoned European ports to set sail for new shores, leaving the field open to English trade. The latter dominated the Iberian Peninsula so completely and so quickly that in 1564, in retaliation for certain acts of British piracy, the Spanish government detained thirty English ships with more than a thousand sailors in its ports. Spanish industry, which could have supplied the New World, succumbed in the person of its artisans, infected by the fever of adventure, being su-

—, and making the awakening from¹⁴ that dream of greatness. This dominated everything. Temptation succeeded, its prestige remained in the minds it had disrupted, and if one takes into account the native predispositions, it is easy to understand the impossibility of a reaction. Fantasy replaced lost splendour with its creations; pride bequeathed glory to the nation; characteristic tenacity forever embedded in its spirit that cult of the past, which imposes no responsibility on the debtor, as it is essentially decorative.

The government, despite its power, deferred to national inclinations with perhaps even greater force, following a general trend. Indeed, "governing" in its political sense is the metaphorical expansion of a nautical term—in reality, steering the ship—and the metaphor can be continued in a psychological sense if applied to the situation of the helmsman. Both the helmsman and the governor are actually at the stern of the ship, and are therefore not called upon to discover new lands; and this is why asking governments for revolutionary initiatives is tantamount to removing them from their task.

That peninsular monarchy, which could hardly be described as progressive, given its absolute ideal and purely military concept of command, also had public ignorance as a guarantee of impunity for all abuses. It therefore exceeded itself in a retrograde sense, and the driving force, which is common to all, was decidedly counterproductive in this case.

Fortunes, fleeting as is natural in an environment of pure speculation, and with such rapid decline, declassed, both in their rise and in their fall, another large part of the population, and the freedom to make wills, acquired through successive deviations from regional law during the 16th century, aggravated the disturbance; as the lords took advantage of it to bequeath their concubines and bastards. Chance then became an economic arbitrage, diminishing, until it was lost, any notion of normal prosperity. The employee was the only one who continued to profit, in an administration that was increasingly complicated by the need to find resources in taxation, that is, increasingly artificial. The forum, the clergy, and the army were its fields of exploitation, and each had its own peculiar inhabitant.

In their marches across Europe and Asia, soldiers had become transients of the world. The haphazard collection of those militias, which were such a shapeless prelude to our regular armies; the nature of those wars, with the nomadic banditry of the mercenaries who flocked to them as if to a hunt; the division into retinues, completely analogous to the bands of outlaws with whom their lords confederated, made vagrancy a military custom, to which the soldier's misery contributed with its specific lightness. Piste accepted it without great repugnance. He travelled the globe cheating, as looting was his daily wage; his wandering life detached him from family and homeland; adventurous idleness atrophied his productive capacity; helplessness in such an environment led to the rise of his trickery and cunning; and adaptation to such conditions, as well as the abandonment of all peaceful virtues, gave absolute predominance in his character to ingenuity and courage.

With equal abandon, they fought for the Pope and mixed communion wafers into their horses' feed; chalices and ciboria served as their canteen tableware; the virgins of the Lord were the pigeons of their Lent; if they had matched the bet, they would have overturned the ball of

world in their cups. Locusts of war, far more fearsome than winged swarms, the earth was the stubble they devoured. For years and years they had been seen passing under banners and pikes, as if through sparse vegetation, the drums made of human skin reverberating in their gaunt stomachs; provoking the moustache with their petulant antennae; covered with international patches, their woollen breeches and cordovan doublets; clean only from sabre and pocket; the breastplate bitten by rust, the iron cap pointed by the matchlock of the arquebus z¹⁵ .

As a truly epic example that fittingly preludes the Conquest in its military aspect, we must always mention the never sufficiently celebrated expeditions of the Almogavars, or Catalan veterans, who, under the command of Roger de Flor, led their contingent to the Byzantine Empire of the Palaiologos, threatened with ruin by the warring principalities into which the vast empire of the Seljuk sultans had been divided. ruin by the warring principalities into which the vast empire of the Seljuk sultans had been divided.

Arriving in Constantinople in 1302 as saviours of the empire, replacing the famous Scandinavian guard of the Vaerings, which was in decline at the time, the emperor appointed their leader megaduke of the fleet, granting him the fourth rank in the empire, and married him to his granddaughter. Thus assured, the Almogavars set off for Cyzica, which they took as their base of operations, beginning their campaigns in Anatolia and Mysia. It was a triumphal march, which, given the region and its resources, proved truly marvellous for those six thousand adventurers, a drop in the shifting ocean of the Saracen tribes, giving them dominion over Lydia and the Lydian valley, while their galleys sailed parallel to them around the Aegean. Nymphaea, Magnesia, Ephesus, all the cities of great Roman and Christian history, fell into their hands. They ventured even further into the almost legendary regions of Pisidia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Caria and Cappadocia, to the famous gorge of the

Puertas do Hierro, which provides access through the Taurus Mountains to maritime Cilicia. After imposing respect for the Byzantine name throughout such a vast country with their fame, and betrayed by the emperor, whom they now seemed formidable to with such a victory, they entrenched themselves on the Gallipoli peninsula, thus closing the western entrance to the Sea of Marmara.

After a brief truce, during which Roger de Flor was awarded the title of Caesar—the second highest rank in the empire ever granted to a foreigner—and was killed in a treacherous ambush arranged by the emperor, the war between the latter and the adventurers reignited. They fought for two years in their fortifications in Gallipoli. Having ravaged the surrounding countryside to the very gates of Constantinople, this military republic marched towards Greece, after pillaging the entire coastline of the Sea of Marmara and its islands, and even reaching the very foothills of the feared Balkans in a daring raid. It crashed into a fruitless attack on the monasteries of Mount Athos; it crossed the sea in two branches, one of which conquered Thessaly and forced Thermopylae, as if to ensure that nothing was lacking in its glory, while the other took Negropont, and both reached the border of the Frankish Duchy of Athens, which they made their own in the bloody battle of Copais, to keep it for more than three quarters of a century and celebrate his exploits under the same august roof of the Parthenon. All this in just nine years, from 1302 to 1311, filled with the greatest feats and the most superb pillages in history. The Greek Anabasis pales in comparison to this colossal undertaking, which could only be matched by the most daring fictions of chivalric novels.

The man of law was distinguished by his venality and clumsiness. As a judge, crime always escaped him; as a bailiff, his investigations only led to some helpless innocent, who paid for both the righteous and the sinners. It had been an ingrained custom for two centuries that

The squad leaders of the Holy Brotherhood would skim off the top of the robberies they uncovered. Gangs of thieves had come to set aside a fifth of their loot, in the weekly counts they carried out, as bribe money; this provided the employee with a source of income that, if not lawful, was at least tolerated; and with such customs, the ideal of justice was replaced by procedural perfection. The question was to have a victim, and for this any neighbour would do, with torture taking care of the rest. Law and judges were at loggerheads. The written work was admirable, and the Laws of the Indies alone form a monument; but the fact that they were uniform for a continent of such diverse regions reveals their artificial nature. The conflict always lay in the fact that the Crown legislated but had no way of enforcing its legislation. The man of law was a bureaucrat, and this was the source of all his faults. Arrogant towards the people, he became a tool of his subordinates in the office, who won him over with their venality, turning him into their accomplice; and similarly, the people responded with the deepest contempt for the man of law.

That was the golden age of the pettifogger. Jurisprudence, sister to theology, which rapidly degenerated into casuistry, became a skill of sophists, in the wielding of restrictions and subterfuges. Argumentation became more important than evidence, and that forensic literature, presenting the most fertile tangle of suspicion ever seen, embroidered with Byzantine subtlety from the judge's ruling to the historiographical rubric of the cartulary, against the backdrop of unshakeable barbarism that made the trial a hunt for men.

On the other hand, the university itself was beginning to wreak havoc. Future judges, lawyers and notaries were already emerging as scoundrels from those classrooms, whose mental torture, deforming their spirits, resulted in equally distorted morals. Nothing compares to the Spanish bachelor in terms of scams, petty theft and mischief

. Not even the people of Salamanca escaped the general contagion. William Lithgow, a contemporary traveller, said in 1620, referring to the famous university, that it was there that were born "those swarms of students whose mischief, theft and begging populated the earth."

Exploited by their tutors and janitors; with no resources other than insufficient pensions or meagre scholarships; crammed with indigestible erudition, constrained by monastic discipline, the reaction of Nature thus violated led them to liberating fraud. Those young people, oppressed under the iron harness of judgements and prejudices that formed the science of the time, slipped away into playful mischief. Their roguish vivacity was, after all, the only joy in those wastelands of scholasticism, the only protest against that science of syllogisms, which had failed to understand Columbus's elementary logic—the good, frank joviality that opened a window onto rationalism with satire, composing epigrams at the bottom of their caps.

The breakdown of character was no less profound, however. Disbelief in anything that was not cunning became the rule; pedantry, elevated to the clouds by insufficient teaching, grafted itself onto the soldierly stock of the braggart, doubling its strength: and this step backwards was taken when Florence, London and Paris were founding academies of science three and nine years apart ¹⁶; when journalism was born in Venice and Antwerp; when positive philosophy dawned with Bacon. But if Spain could defend itself with common ignorance, still great, even if it did not attempt to emerge from such a state, arguing that Dr Sangredo, for example, reigned supreme in the lecture halls of the whole world, the law, which is the basis of my argument in this part, was thwarted by obstacles inherent in the environment.

The larval state that implied their existence in the fueros was perpetuated by the inability of the monarchical government to achieve unity in the only way that would have made it lasting.

For the regional spirit, a bitter enemy of Romanism, remained violent despite the distortions. It had undergone, without changing in substance, the clumsy adaptation carried out by the lawyers of the 14th century, and attempted since the previous century, through what could be described as intimate contact with the Byzantines¹⁷, as the mother of James the Conqueror, for example, was the granddaughter of Manuel Comnenus¹⁸. The feudal barbarity of these privileges clashed rudely with the Latin absolutism of the monarchy, but without the intervention of the people, except as cannon fodder.

Attempts to suppress such pockets of separatism in the incorporated sovereignties were more successful militarily than politically, since those who were abolished were not compensated with anything better, given that the replacement law was only an instrument of fiscal exploitation. Those that remained, logical in feudal times, became archaic, complicating legislation without any fruitful result; and the state, as will be seen shortly, was nothing more than an inconvenient police force, devoted entirely to tax extortion.

Legalistic skill then prevailed over the principle of equity; all notion of righteousness was suppressed by bribery, justice was a privilege in turn in that general subversion, and the people were in fact constituted in the form of a primitive society, where each person took justice in their own way, without achieving the balance of civilised groups, in which the law, which is the convenience of the majority, founded and established on mutual interest, replaces the force and barbaric individualism of the feudal era.

Meanwhile, the people were moving away from the ideal of glory bequeathed to them by the mystical and chivalrous Middle Ages, entering fully into the ideal of justice brought about by democratic aspirations; and nothing could be further from this than Spanish law, all chicanery beneath its theological and curial guise.

The clergy underwent a similar evolution. Their schisms and transgressions provided abundant fodder for popular satire. Already during the Middle Ages, the story of Ramiro II had become classic. A professed Benedictine and bishop of Pamplona, he was authorised by the antipope Anacletus to marry the daughter of the Duke of Aquitaine, with whom he had Queen Petronila. During the 15th century, which accentuated these vices even more, there were cases such as that of Don Alonso de Aragón, the illegitimate son of Ferdinand the Catholic and Archbishop of Zaragoza, who was himself the father of a natural and sacrilegious offspring who succeeded him in his sacred office; not to mention the much more conclusive exaltation of the eldest son of Pope Alexander VI, whom the aforementioned monarch made Duke of Gandía.

Such excesses diminished his prestige. Despite the respect he inspired, his dissolute lifestyle did not escape the satirical pen of the picaresque novel. This genre reissued, enriching it with new details, the type of the *bon vivant* clergyman, whom Novélanos and Decamerones had paraded in loose breeches throughout gallant Italy. Prebendaries with triple chins and sensual aubergine lips; abbots with bulging bellies; cavernous novices of flaccidity—they are the same ones who entertain the Peninsula, partying with girls in sandals and loose sleeves, faithful to the kiss of the boot and both arms occupied, one by the guitar of the revelry, the other by Justina or Flora, the salty great-granddaughters of the spicy Caterinas.

The Inquisition turned a blind eye to such impertinence, which, on the other hand, denounced real harm. It tolerated the greed and incontinence of the clergy, undoubtedly because it did not see them as a threat to the integrity of the Church; but picaresque tales never interfered with dogma. Respect for dogma was always great. It was the letter, that is, the intangible form, that the Holy Tribunal zealously guarded. It mattered little that virtues were displaced from theological constructs. Religion was also carried away by the aberration of dominant ideas.

nantes. His programme of eternal stability was satisfied with the permanence of the building.

This materialism perverted their primitive fervour, limiting their persecutions to wealthy heretics. Their disdain for gypsies, who introduced dangerous forms of witchcraft such as playing cards, which were originally fortune-telling books, is proof of this. Gypsies were poor and presented no incentive for confiscation; as a result of this tolerance, the Asian element, whose productivity was demonstrated by their work, was expelled; while the low-class vagabond remained, influencing the general disorganisation and adding, with his characteristic fertility, elements of the worst kind to the already accentuated orientalism of the race.

A rogue by nature, a horse doctor by circumstance, a smuggler by vocation, a sorcerer at times, and always a trickster, the gypsy found himself a fish in those murky waters. The environment was so favourable to him, and he got on so well with the people, that the royal orders issued against him with increasing frequency from the 15th to the 18th century never had any effect. He enjoyed public indifference because of his unenviable condition, something that had not happened with the Jews and the Moors. After all, the gypsy was simply a *charamí* (thief) to the latter and a gypsy (Egyptian) to the Spanish. The difference seems significant to me.

He infested the countryside, which still retained its core of workers, becoming an innkeeper whose backyard was a refuge for bandits, where trained *Maritornes* served as bait for travellers.

The lack of safe roads and navigable rivers killed domestic trade, to the point that some provinces abandoned their crops in the stubble because they had no way of transporting them, while others obtained their grain from abroad. The barbaric privilege of the *Mesta*, which ruined agriculture in order to make sheep prosper, increased the general misery. The peasant became

In turn deceitful, insolvency spread its dark concerns throughout the countryside: disgraced lawyers fell promptly with their Latin apparatus; the rural nobleman exchanged sowing for litigation and went down to the city in search of courts; the labourer, without work on the abandoned lands, and crushed by heavy services, such as baggage transport (acembla, corruption of acémila) that he provided to the King and the nobles, followed in his footsteps; producing that enormous urban concentration, which is a racial tendency to this day, that is, increasing the already innumerable phalanx of the debauched and incapable proletariat.

Only the nobility, who by virtue of their wealth were able to maintain themselves properly, preserved the tradition of honour, although they exaggerated it, directly reflecting the pride of the adventurer. Their example, which could have been effective on the people, was nullified by the distance between them and the people, as well as by their effective impotence as a minority. The spectacle of their pomp, on the other hand, exacerbated the thirst for wealth at any price, with new incentives for fraud; and as an element of government, it suffered from the defects already mentioned in this regard.

It cannot be denied that she encouraged, in agreement with the monarch, the arts and especially literature; but these, confined to the study, declined in popular influence. Scholasticism had also affected them, with the sole exception of picaresque novels, which perpetuated the popularity of chivalric episodes among the people, in combination with which they would give Spain the most beautiful jewel of its literature.

These novels, intended to entertain by extolling cheating, theft and farce in national prototypes, were the most vigorous manifestation of Spanish ingenuity, and the most original in terms of *ve z*¹⁹, as evidenced by the influence they enjoyed for two centuries on European literature, both through the abundance of their translations s²⁰, (2) and through the fondness for imitating them. The Spanish picaresque became an international type, owing his success both to the effect of

contrast he caused with the champion of chivalric fiction, as well as the realistic elements that made up his character. Cut from the living flesh of the people—himself a champion of mischief and deceit—he was the true origin of the novel of manners, even in his perfectly modern indifference to the moral consequences of his attitude. In Spanish literature, he is the only genuine one, although what is scarce here is compensated for in excess by what is excellent.

The other literary forms, confined as I have said to the cabinet, were more the work of humanists, as their heyday was preceded by the adaptation of the *fueros* (local laws) to Roman law, coinciding with the Latin reaction that was specifically called *Gongorisino*. The Renaissance in art and unity in politics converged in the same artificial channel. The dominant theology and jurisprudence had a great influence on Spanish literature. The forensic style, the immediate predecessor of Gerundianism, left its mark on serious prose, including sermons, which were strongly curial in nature. The parthenics of university examinations provided the model for discourse; the legal tone was *de rigueur*; dramatic intrigues were mere *alibis*; in the highest effusions of mysticism—another almost original vein of Spanish genius

—there is something about the lawyer... Nothing strange about this, considering the close relationship between law and theology at that time: even the devil had a lawyer to argue canonisation cases.

The lyrical forms, imported from Italy to—²¹which was the granary Western intellectuals when Moorish power ended—influencing, as I said, even the picaresque novel, the most Spanish literary creation—were not very accessible to the people either. They lacked any connection with the romance, a popular form that did not progress; and being products of the study, they soon fell into the cult of rhetoric.

This calamity infected all literature. Wordplay became the most delicate feature of style, influencing even philosophical thought. It was even used in religious effusions; and nothing proves the emptiness of such devotion, the intrinsic falseness of such literature, the inner coldness of that people on the very edge of the inquisitorial brazier—like that style that imposes on sublime verbs the contortions of an acrobat to vent oneself with Dio s²².

However, this literature, which was ultimately beneficial and maintained intellectual dignity in the face of collapse, soon drowned under the profusion of rhetoric and withered away due to its isolation among common ignorance. The stately emphasis of its dramas was replaced by the garrulous chatter of swordsmen; its critical nobility by the grammaticalism of tutors; its somewhat weak lyricism by miserable rhymes in the vocative. The two most notable writers of that era provide an even more eloquent lesson, if possible. In effect, the Cervantes family multiplies profusely, but in only one direction—the style of the master. Now, style is precisely Cervantes' weakness, and the damage caused by his influence has been severe. Poverty of colour, uncertainty of structure, gasping paragraphs that never quite reach their conclusion, unfolding in endless convolutions; repetitions, lack of proportion—such was the legacy of those who, seeing only the form as the supreme realisation of the immortal work, remained gnawing at the shell whose roughness hid its strength and flavour.

ÇÇuevedo, on the other hand, much more authentic, much more artistic, a true paragon, the fruit of meditation and anthology, died without succession, standing like a monolith in the armour of his prose. They shrugged their shoulders at his depth, branded as "conceptism"; they gathered from his prodigious barn only the edges that the wind blew away, and the noblest Spanish stylist was transformed into a prototype of a joke-teller.

A little further afield, and more significantly, this sterile

— . When Italy flourished with artists, at the same time that the Borgias ruled Rome, they, despite their lavish splendour, had no initiative in favour of beauty. That century of the Renaissance, which in a single year (1564) saw Borgias ruled Rome, they, despite their lavish splendour, took no initiative in favour of beauty. That Renaissance century, which in a single year (1564) saw the death of Michelangelo and the birth of Shakespeare, had nothing to thank the Spanish pontifical family for, succeeded, for greater contrast, by Julius II and Leo X.

Another detail that reveals the artificial nature of this literature, in all its breadth, is that women hardly affected poetry. Spain does not have a single "poet of love " ²⁴.

Nothing, however, is more conducive to inspiration than Spanish women.

The high-born lady, who is the same in all latitudes, is of little interest. The middle class and the common people, less levelled by conventional artifice, more sensitive to their surroundings, purer in race, provide a decidedly admirable type.

Fervent brunettes, who, like honey, have their substantive quality in their sweetness. Springy in their oriental laziness, they reveal low calves, a slow, rhythmic gait, very short feet, and a gaze that languidly anticipates the sadness of love. Passionate to the point of madness, her affection was one of incorruptible fidelity, which naturally manifested itself in haughtiness. Accidental love and gallantry were almost unknown to her. The whole life of a lover seemed little to her, but that is because she loved until death. Doña Juana la Loca is a case study of Spain. Her life, consistent with these traits, is overshadowed by the home. As a mother, she ruled; as a wife, she reigned. But the pressure of male cells, the eternity of that renunciation of the world, which signified the end of her love, instilled in her a gravity whose foundation was sadness; and religion added its element of terror to that shadow, imposing a reality of pain on a remote hope of

adventure. Her exaltation does not diminish, however, but rather grows in melancholy. Devotion, which is her second love, equally fascinates her. Saint Teresa has become proverbial. Divine fire and infernal flame, both burn her. Carnal or celestial, her love lives in rapture. The monarchy, collaborating in this devotion, had further sublimated it. Examples included the venerable Doña María de Montpellier, Doña Leonor, Queen of Cyprus, Saint Isabel of Portugal, and that adorable little nun, the Infanta of Aragon, Doña Dulce, who became a nun at the age of ten. The Spanish home, so fiercely inviolable that it immediately brings to mind the harem, deepens this mystical tendency with its isolation. Children could not sit at the table with their parents until they were knights, and the latter were authorised by law (Partida 4, Title XVII, Law VIII) to eat them if necessary. Such was the rigidity of that home, where even the sun entered furtively. Its stronghold status prolonged the domestic forms of the Middle Ages. The lady was the centre of a small world. From the kitchen to the chapel, her whole life, with its small industries and common needs, was confined within those walls. What the feudal castle had isolated for reasons of war was preserved by oriental jealousy. But because of monogamous equality, it proved favourable to the dignity of women. The street was forbidden territory for her, which she did not venture into without her mistress and her chaperone; writing was a Gallic art; her room resembled a nun's cell; she saw no men other than her confessor, apart from her father and brothers, who treated her with rigid courtesy.

The blood, maddened by the sun, exasperated as if by an infusion of spices, by the unnerving breath of the African breezes, could overcome all those misgivings; and the discreetness of the "tapadas", which made the comedy of the same genre classic, avenged so many affronts to freedom and beauty. A friendly group of lackeys slipped notes and madrigals through the joints of the imposing gates. La Celes-

Tina became a classic character; the misfortune of gallants surprised by the police, or killed in anonymous duels at the foot of complicit railings, was a popular theme; but it is fair to say that such a reaction, although quite natural, never led to a corruption of morals. Spanish ladies remained completely chaste in the sanctuary of their fidelity. The assault on overly secretive homes was not exactly a frivolous feat, and the conquered maidens usually loved only their owners. Middle-class women maintained their honesty, and adultery was almost always a sin of the court.

The people did not resist the general corruption so well. The rogue soon split into the rogue, a specific subject like him. In concert with thugs and bandits, this was an active ferment of corruption. A mixture of Jew, Moor, and Gypsy, prey to pimping or misery, she had brought about the fusion of races, as those of higher caste descended into her tempting and easy arms. Her fortuitous bed in the mangers of inns and wild groves, sometimes raised to the royal bedchamber, brought about a mixture that was disastrous for the Aryan elements, which the war had kept free from Semitic contact. Now an agent of dissolution, she spread with doubly pernicious fertility the plagues of the body and the evils of the spirit. But always disinterested and instinctive, her prostitution was never sordid; her fidelity continued to stand out as a characteristic feature in the slums of the underworld. Her native haughtiness always accentuated her grace, constituting a kind of lustre that stood out equally among lace and rags; and no one trod the earth with equal gallantry when, escorted by her pale lover, she spilled the delight of her loving flesh throughout the wild neighbourhoods, the popular carnation purple in her hair, arousing with those eyes, which evoked the melancholy of Moorish moons, flashes of knives and cadences of compliments.

That inspiring impulse, stimulated by the improvisational verbiage of the gypsies, gave that woman her poetry. The plebeian muse accomplished in her honour what the rhetoricians' inspiration could not. A thousand verses were born to the sound of her flat-heeled shoes on the pavements that scorned the duchess's embroidered shoes; and the only erotic poetry in Spain, which still lives on with its original grace, when no one mentions the dapper frills of academia anymore, is the fruit of her body.

The Moorish sadness, well cultivated in that oppressive environment, permeated both the poetry and the woman from whom it emanated, this being another generic trait of Spanish women. Jealousy, also more vivid in the uneducated soul, gave such effusions their desperate eloquence. The lover in his verses, if he offers his life, threatens death in return. Arabic melodies, whose complaints and sighs barely cease to alternate, translating the howls of the desert into cries of pain, gave rise to popular music; and this formed, as it were, the commentary on despotism, in consortium with that poetry where the grievances and disappointments of a race are lamented, which in its literature possesses entire stories "of Arabs who have died of love; " ²⁵ the chimeras of this, the only paradise for the slave, whose jealousy guards him like bloodthirsty mastiffs; the undefined protest of a people chained in the theological dungeon, of which the monarch is the sentinel, when nationality, upon integration, broadened their horizons, which would be further expanded with the Discovery to the infinity of the sea, turning the deep contrast into bitterness.

Sparkle and good humour also perished in the shipwreck. The picaresque novel itself was above all a brutal release, a cynical laugh—in which there was more defiance than true humour—and deep down, in its innermost core, a revenge, less trivial than it seems at first glance, against the oppression of conscience.

This was exacerbated by political absolutism. Theology itself, which was the philosophy of the time, experienced a mystical reaction. The vast internal and international influence of Vives and Osorio, with their imperturbable serenity and polemical agility, respectively, declined, replaced by the exaltation of Fr. Luis de Granada. Papists rather than Christians, what the mystics lost in breadth, they gained in depth. It is also true that hard times were coming.

The political and philosophical unrest that filled the fifteenth century had a powerful impact on the Iberian Peninsula, not only among the general population but also among academics, as evidenced by the attitude of Pedro de Osma, a professor from Salamanca who was reputed to be the wisest man of his time and was condemned at the Council of Alcalá; in the same way as the decisive support given by Alfonso V of Aragon to the schism of Basel.

The depravity and simony of the clergy contributed to further unrest, and thus, despite the keen insight of Charles V, the Reformation had penetrated through commercial contact with heretical countries. Prohibited books of German and Genoese origin circulated relatively freely, some of them clandestinely reprinted in Castile itself. The union with England, then close due to the dual relationship of trade and unalterable alliance—which lasted from the first of the Plantagenets and Alfonso VII of Castile to Mary Stuart and Philip II—fostered heretical propaganda. Thus, once his wars in Italy and France were over, this monarch devoted himself enthusiastically to the repression of heresy, beginning his campaign in 1558.

The spirit of the Middle Ages returned to dominate imperiously. During that period, under the exclusive influence of the Church, immobility had reigned. On condition that nothing was changed, everything could be discussed, and it would be a mistake to believe that there was no freedom of discussion. It was, however, a purely dialectical freedom, since it demanded, above all, conformity with the established order.

. Hence, heretic strictly means "dissenting". Having one's own opinion was the real crime.

From this fundamental immobility, which limited philosophical operations to drawing conclusions from unchanging principles, the predominance of syllogism arose. Science and religion were one and the same in this regard, as the Bible and Aristotle were reconciled in the same concept of authority. Corporally and spiritually, unity was the goal. Thus, the only opposition came from the fact that both the pope and the emperor claimed to represent that unity, their supporters arguing over a mere question of investiture. In Spain, the emperor had prevailed.

Protestantism broke this mould, causing considerable turmoil. This was undoubtedly unintentional, since the Reformation, a "quarrel among friars" at the outset, wanted the same thing, since it questioned everything except the Bible; but as a revolution, it exceeded its objective, benefiting the world with its success.

Absolute monarchy, whose privileges were mortally wounded by this upheaval, reacted powerfully, and its triumph in the Peninsula robbed it of its last hope of leaving behind the Middle Ages in which it remained. Under Philip II, the Cortes of Tarazona prohibited shouting "Long live freedom" as a crime.

Just as the New World took away the best of its race, England took advantage of its freest talents, though perhaps not the best; but the question was not one of individual quality, but of general ideas.

From 1559 onwards, Spanish reformers persecuted by the Inquisition began to arrive in that country. Sectarianism and political rivalry, which were increasingly expressed in offences, welcomed them with singular predilection, recognising their merits to the point of giving them chairs at Oxford itself.

Arias Montano and Pérez de Pineda earned British admiration: Del Corro and Valora printed their works in Inglate-

rra: And the Spaniards living there, almost all of whom were merchants, that is to say, more open to the modern spirit, embraced the Reformation.

Thus, by rejecting the three interrelated manifestations of the emerging modern civilisation – trade and, consequently, colonisation; the Reformation, the direct source of rationalism; and the civil concept of authority, the basis of democratic institutions – Spain effectively renounced progress.

The intellectual backwardness that followed the expulsion of the Moors deprived their universities of their English clientele, contributing as much as religion, that is to say, in large part, to the loss of that British alliance, the rupture of which marked the beginning of the era of great misfortunes on the peninsula. The natural sciences disappeared altogether, and medicine, which was all that remained, soon gave way to the most ridiculous empiricism. The Greek school prevailed over the Arabic school, dominating the field from the beginning of the 16th century, and Spain was no longer its seat. Spanish medicine was reduced to the treatises of Monardes, whose titles alone are enough to denounce their character: Treatise on the Bezoar Stone and the Scorzonera Herb; Treatise on Snow and Cold Drinking, etc. At the Academy of Medicine in Granada, the nonsensical Spanish Medicine contained in vulgar proverbs of our language, by Dr. Juan Soropán de Rieros, served as a textbook. Salamanca itself lacked a chair of mathematics. In Alcalá, national law was not taught. The historical basis was provided by apocryphal works as crude as the Chronicle of Avila, the first part of which established "which of the 43 Hercules was the greatest, and how, as king of Spain, he had an affair with an African woman with whom he had a son who founded Avila". All idea of practical science disappeared, and alchemy, which centuries earlier had produced such noble scholars as Raimundo Lulio, extinguished its scientific furnace before the inquisitorial stake.

That desert of ideas absorbed in its sterility the entire life of the country, whose irremediable decline, despite its bravery and

genius, demonstrated that the progress of nations does not lie in race or in the richness of the soil, but in ideas, whose essence is...

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Only the Church, with its gloomy machinery of torment and its theology, and the insatiable Treasury, whose taxes and duties were like the Danaids' sandbags, remained standing, ever more enormous, ever more oppressive.

Unprecedented greed plagued national labour. From then on, hunger became "the devil of Spain". Beggars formed guilds that exploited cities by neighbourhood, like thieves, with whom they shared more than a passing resemblance in their heartlessness and villainy. Even nature seemed to be complicit in their charades, as the herb used by beggars (*clematis vitalba* L.) to produce their artificial sores has always been prodigiously abundant in Spain...

Public charity encouraged them, however, as intermediaries with the divine; and the clergy, as unproductive as they were, and like them beggars by profession, aggravated the damage by advocating it. Royal decrees could do nothing to stop its spread; religion protected it, and by exaggerating the principles of evangelical charity with sectarian fervour, it ended up in the eulogy of misery.

Added to this was another scourge from the same source: vagrancy, which recruited its hordes from the lowest strata of society, where illegitimate births were on the rise, as were infanticide²⁷ and abandonment on a prodigious scale. The latter became such a great social danger that the Cortes of 1553 requested the creation of special officials whose mission was to protect and provide work for abandoned children, as old rogues formed gangs of bandits with them that ravaged the suburbs and countryside.

The plundering took on all the characteristics of a regular industry. A contemporary book, *The Disorderly Greed for Others' Property*, lists, imitating the *Líber vagatorum* of medieval Germany, the most select classes of thieves. In reality, there were more than thirty, but it only classifies the following, which I will transcribe as a matter of curiosity:

They were the highwaymen, swindlers, capeadores, that is, specialists in capes; grumetes, because they stole with rope ladders; apostles, because like Saint Peter, they carried keys; cigarreros, or dress cutters; devotos, because they operated in temples; satyrs, or country thieves; Dacians, or baby snatchers; butlers or inn thieves; pickpockets, goblins, suitcase thieves and liberals.

Admirably organised, with their signs and passwords, they had branches in all social strata. Monks, students, porters, pretty damsels, innkeepers, pious ladies, venerable elders, all cooperated as spies: fraud being a speciality, which gave its name in all languages to the famous "cuento del tío o" (the old man's tale).

The areas of exploitation in the urban belts were so well defined, as were the different specialities, that no rogue could marry outside his own, on pain of a fine as a dispensation. And such was their power that bands of gypsy beggars, the most dangerous of all, had come to raid the city of Logroño, to plunder it, while its inhabitants were under attack from the plague.

Everything revealed, then, a society in decay, whose earthly ideal was to live without working, even at the cost of misery. The same as in the Middle Ages, without the religious fervour that explained and magnified it.

The annexation of Portugal completed the absolutist dream on the Peninsula, contributing even more, if possible, to increasing the ma-

leificio with its fleeting glory, But the situation abroad was becoming increasingly alarming. We have already seen how the friendship of England, a natural ally and commercial tributary, was lost. I . The union, cemented by two celebrated marriages s , had been cultivated with all kinds of sacrifices, thanks to the astute politics of Ferdinand and the genius of the Emperor. The dream of absolute unity brought down that monument. British neutrality in the Netherlands question was imposed by force, and the result was the loss of both.

The action against France also failed, breaking another ancient and fruitful union. In fact, since the end of the 11th century and the beginning of the 12th, this union had been sustained by dual political and religious influence. The most respected magnates at the court of Alfonso VI of Castile were Burgundians; the three women whom the monarch married were French, and he had two lords of Burgundy as sons-in-law³⁰ . An archbishop of Toledo, and bishops of Sigüenza, Salamanca, Zamora³¹ , and Osma also came from France. The Popes of Avignon had such close ties with Spain that three nephews of Clement V held the cathedrals of Zaragoza and Tarazona, and the deanery of Tudela. The Mozarabic rite was replaced by the liturgy of the Cistercians, an entirely French order, as is well known, and these friars came to possess their own jurisdiction, with the right to God's justice in the monastery of San Facundo. Don Jerónimo, a Cluniac monk, that is to say French by order as well as by birth, was chaplain to El Cid himself and teacher to the elegant and frivolous Doña Urraca, who was to cause so much marital grief to the Aragonese honour of Alfonso the Battler. The famous Union of Aragonese Nobles had been in agreement with the first of the Valois for the greater success of their rebellion against the regional laws ...³²

All this was lost in the adventure, as Turkish piracy became increasingly successful. Spain was then isolated

by the Pyrenees and the ocean. France, under Henry IV and Louis XIV, would reduce the colossal Austria of Charles V to the first two vowels of its motto: A.E. I. O.U. (Austria— Est Imperare Orbi Univer-³³so); England closed off access to the West and to European ports; Holland, upon gaining its freedom, had prohibited trade with Spain; it was in fact allied with the English, since in 1598 the British ambassador in Paris had supported his compatriots in their efforts to obtain the neutrality of Henry IV, and their rivalry in the spice trade had begun almost at that time; and it is perhaps not impertinent to recall that the failure of the Spanish Armada coincided with the freedom of the seas, advocated by Grotius in his memorable *Mare Liberum*, against the *mare clausum* (to use a phrase of the time, which was the title of the most famous refutation of the distinguished Dutchman) the closed sea.

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The formidable tetrarchy, formed by the houses of Castile and Aragon, Valois, Tudor and Habsburg, which had ruled Europe in concert during the 15th century, broke up entirely to the detriment of Spain. The second Germanic renewal was achieved with equal effect, and that greatness, whose rise had been sanctioned by the Treaty of Blois, entered into decline with that of Château Cambresis.

On the economic side, as well as on the spiritual side, failure was also inevitable. Florentine banking, which had dominated European change for two centuries, established branches in the leading centres, expanding its activities at the expense of Spain, despite the Republic's nominal dependence on Spain, which was forced upon it rather than a matter of affect³⁶, and Rome itself turned its back on it with Sixtus V, denying the Christian Empire the spiritual collaboration that was its strength and its pretext.

So many disasters in such a short period of time led to disillusionment with national glories and pessimism about the future. The rogue,

who, due to his role as a popular messenger, was privy to all the secrets of the Spanish soul, had no qualms about expounding on "the vanities of honour". *Va ni tas vanitatum*, which only superficially resembles Guzmán de Alfarache and the Psalmist, since for one it is a consequence of the high disdain that life inspires in those who know how to dominate it from the heights of their virtue or genius, while for the other it was a reason to justify his mischief.

The triumphant march of discoveries was also suspended. The reader will recall the superior number of Spanish discoverers from 1492 to 1610, the year in which the Jesuits established themselves in Paraguay. From then until 1700, and maintaining the same proportions as in the aforementioned note, the result is no less eloquent, with the terms reversed; for every 87 foreign captains, among whom the Dutch now predominate, we find only five Spaniards. The same number of Englishmen as in the first 90 years of discovery!³⁷

At the same time, the shortage worsened. The high prices of the period of abundance were sustained even more by the general poverty. Taxes increased in proportion to the discredit and unproductivity, despite which the State was sinking deeper and deeper into insolvency. In 1574, 37,000,000 *empres-tado s*³⁸ were owed at 32%, and the Crown repudiated this debt on the grounds that the lenders had acted "against charity and the law of God." However, it had just confiscated all the gold from the Indies for its own benefit for five years; and this veritable trap, further enhanced by this extortion, is the best proof of common immorality. The government did not fear scandal, because the people were carried away by similar currents, thus demonstrating the limited resonance of iniquity. Fiscal voracity corresponded to the providentialism of the state, which was the people's favourite *moclus vicendi*; and this consummated hostility towards all individualism, cementing the monarchy in the concept of an omnipotent state.

Carlos had been the champion tyrant; Felipe was the bureaucratic tyrant. The only thing that survived him, that is, his most perfect work, was the administration, an ingenious instrument of economic torture in which the Inquisition itself collaborated, despite the diversity of its destiny.



Founded in effect to defend political unity under the monarchy that replaced feudalism, and incorporated into the people for this purpose through religious prestige, its system re-

It proved highly effective for unity, and Philip modelled his administrative regime on it. This dual religious and fiscal character gave it immense importance, strengthening its ties and guaranteeing its permanence as a normal institution. His work, then, proved more disastrous. The mass executions, which the ladies went to see, flirting with their fans when the smoke from the pyre reached them, or sipping sorbets, accustomed them to cruelty, accentuating the sinister aspect of the conqueror's character. The Duke of Alba's executioners attached a whistle to the tongues of the Flemish heretics so that their moans during torture would be pleasantly modulated...

In this way, absolute unity, evolving over time and dominating various tendencies, from military to religious in the individual and from glorious to economic in the government, completely distorted the national character, infested in all its parts by virtue of the aforementioned transpositions; and so it was that Philip, when the Emperor's inheritance was divided, making the universal dream of monarchy impossible, dreamed of the Christian Empire as an appropriate compensation.

The major uprisings had clearly demonstrated the intrinsically federal structure of the country; once defeated, they imposed compromises that ran counter to the dream of unity. The government truly lacked the military and economic strength to impose it; interests were different and even adverse in the different regions; race and language were in the same situation. They had nothing in common except religion, and the monarch decided to appeal to it to carry out his plans. With this, the Inquisition would reach the height of its power as a fiscal instrument.

But the universalist dream did not reside uselessly in the mind of the sinister Ilabsburgo, so that his purpose was complemented by the "Christian" unification of Italy, France and Portugal.

It was a grandiose but anachronistic political idea, and thus had no consequences except in the internal order and under the guise of religion, since religion was its inspiration.

Spiritual conquest was the result, as political conquest, which had been a secondary goal, had become impossible, and the government ultimately adopted its theocratic ideal.

Such an outcome had been in the making for a long time, since Alfonso the Battler had already founded more than five hundred churches and endowed more than a thousand monasteries during his reign, eventually bequeathing his own kingdom to the military orders of the Holy Land. It was, therefore, a tradition of the monarchy.

Nearly ten thousand religious houses populated the peninsula a³⁹; the clergy, a valuable instrument of the enterprise, doubled its power, which, after all, only served to reinforce the bad example of unproductivity; and since the religious conquest derived so directly from the military one, the spirit of the order that embodied that ideal was military.

The Society of Jesus was created with the ostensible aim of combating Protestantism—and it may even be believed that its founder had no other aim; but popular institutions are always a reduced copy of the environment in which they are born, their success depending on their conformity with the prevailing trends in that environment. The rapid growth of the Society demonstrates the extent of this conformity.

Saint Ignatius, who had been a soldier, and even an extremely zealous one, due to the natural expansion of his rich nature, recast in his creation the dying tendency with which he came to replace it, in pursuit of the same dominant ideal, but adapting, in his religious character, to the new times.

The mystical revival was the last flicker of a dying flame, for, after all, Protestant rationalism worked hand in hand with the needs of the nascent

civilisation. The political character predominated in the order, within the military organisation (the "Company" and the "militia of Jesus" are its common names); and unlike contemplative communities, it did not shy away from contact with the world as it took on new directions. The joint evolution of law and theology towards respect for forms alone became a reality. Possibilism replaced intransigence, that is to say, reason replaced sentiment, for, as has been said, the rationalist atmosphere also insinuated itself into the Church, modifying its *modus operandi*; and the Church, in the person of the Jesuits, bowed to its demands, preserving in its external structure that traditional rigidity that so well simulated infallibility, the basis of its prestige, but at the heart of which was utilitarian scepticism, which, in order to achieve its ends, did not pay much attention to the means.

This way of seeing things was not, as anti-clerical fanaticism has claimed, a Jesuit speciality. Its essence lies in the very form of commercial civilisation that was beginning, initiating new moral concepts at the same time. Respectability, or purely external conformity to established principles, replaced the devotion of the mystical period as the norm of social adaptation, pointing to new positions for the human conscience and making possible, among other things, freedom of thought or, in more general terms, a more radical individualism. Saint Ignatius and Machiavelli were contemporaries.

The time was ripe for the evolution I mention, since modern ideas, which were the progressive degeneration of their predecessors, had not yet distanced themselves from the latter enough to enter into opposition, another favourable circumstance being the lack of definition of their correlations. No one could have suspected then that rationalism and commercial freedom would bring with them representative institutions;

for, as I noted when commenting on its specific verb, government being the last thing to change, monarchies continued to flourish.⁴⁰

Whether intentionally or not, the Jesuits adapted to the new mould, and this explains their surprising success. They came to terms with the times, representing a modern trend within the Church, even though on the outside they appear to be the most intransigent, and are the champions of dogmas such as the Immaculate Conception and Infallibility; for no one exaggerates their convictions more than those who need to artificially stimulate them.

Unlike all others, they prospered above the rest of their contemporaries, as clearly evidenced by the orders of the Theatines, the Oratory Fathers, and the Augustinians of Somasca or the clergy of San Mayol, founded at almost the same time with such diverse success. Thus, the Jesuit's actions bear only a vague resemblance to those of other priests. His very piety is different. Saint Ignatius replaced the exalted fervour of mysticism with the approach of his Exercises, a veritable treatise on psychology in which examination, which could no longer be dispensed with even in conversions, replaced inspirational ecstasy. It suffices to compare the contemplative sadness that fills the meditations of the Imitation with the shrewd analysis of the Jesuit book. Realising that the days of enthusiasm were over, contrition, that is, the pain of having sinned, was replaced by attrition, or the fear of Hell, so that the utilitarian criterion still prevailed even in the rules of conscience.

Accommodating morality and affable piety made up that spiritual policy, as if the Renaissance that Hellenised Europe had also imposed a Greek benevolence on religion.

Sixtus V had preferred to ally himself with Henry of Navarre, William of Orange and Elizabeth of England, that is to say, the representatives

crowned representatives of heresy, against Catholic Spain, in order to prevent its disruptive expansion, thus placing the temporal interests of papal sovereignty above the Catholic expansion project that the gloomy Philip intended to carry out.

Increasingly distant from Calvary, whose memory inflamed heroism and aroused the most painful meditations of mysticism, the devotees felt their intolerance diminish along with their exaltation. The Jesuits emerged at that moment; and their modern influence, suffered without being noticed, is demonstrated by their possibilism, which brings them closer in politics to the scientific concept of adaptation, and their practical—or rather experimental—psychology, which gives them a point of contact with rationalism. With them, sentimental devotion came to an end; sadness ceased to be the necessary state for entering the paths of perfection. The "illuminative" and the

The "unitive" path, which leads to holiness through contemplation and ecstasy, became increasingly narrow; and the "purgative" path, that is, exclusively penitential, required all the skill of casuists to smooth it out and reduce it with a thousand compromises. Mental reservations constituted the springs of that "moral theology," opening up a wide margin for accommodating explanations in the catalogue of sins. The Jesuit Sánchez stood out among these, until he became a model, and his famous "disputes" on marriage constitute the most ingenious bedroom dispensary that can be conceived, if they are not simply a case of erotomania, in which his virginity, attested to with praise by Renaud and Sotuel, may have played a part.

However, he was never condemned for this; rather, he was praised for it. Among his eulogists, who included such notable figures as Rivadeneyra and Clement VIII himself, there was one (Cambrecio) who went so far as to describe his entry into the Society as a happy miracle, proof that his doctrine admirably interpreted the morality of the community.

This predominance of reason and examination over sentiment was evident in all aspects of Jesuit life; and, what makes it even more remarkable is that while other orders abound in poets, this one is home above all to men of

— . Art interests him little, except as an attractive sen-⁴¹

Hence the decorative overload so peculiar to Jesuit temples. Gold and bright colours, Churrigueresque altarpieces, garish splendour in which the striking predominates over the aesthetic, are, so to speak, the labels of mystical merchandise, highlighting its commercial nature in direct proportion to its excess. This has nothing to do with art, its purpose being to proclaim, and therefore destined to be noticed above all else.

While ecstasy and fervour gave rise to sentiment in religious manifestations, art, which is always an expression of love, manifested itself in acts of faith. Artistic work became a prayer to the divine, either directly in mystical poetry or in symbolic forms in other arts, resulting in its selfless and therefore almost always anonymous character.

The rationalist influence dried up those springs of prayer, and the rhetorical abuse that I have already noted in the secular poetry of the Spanish people is equally evident in their mystical art. It was almost unnecessary to note this, since it is, after all, the same thing, especially considering that in those days, art was less distant from religion, but this serves to better illustrate the reason for its decline under the Jesuits.

Nothing could be further from my mind than reproaching them for this, for they were merely adapting in order to survive, losing and gaining in the process everything that this entailed, both good and bad.

The mystical reaction that suppressed them, carried out by Clement XIV, a Franciscan, that is, a member of an order which, being the

most fervent and artistic, was naturally a rival,⁴² demonstrated with its failure which had the best conditions for vitality, that is, for adaptation to the already hostile environment in which both developed; conclusive proof, in my view, in favour of the Company.

Jacobinism has hated the Jesuits because it has seen them as the most vigorous champions of the Catholic ideal, without understanding the reason for their strength; but the impartial spirit, for whom the only thing of interest is the progress of ideas, in substance and not in form, cannot help but consider them as the representatives of that progress within the Church. This is naturally relative, and far from deserving praise for those who cause it, for no one is unaware that it is done in spite of them; but this very fact demonstrates more clearly the superiority of modern ideas, from which their adversaries themselves had to take what was most fruitful and humane in order to survive.

The Jesuit thus turns out to be a modern type, more logical in our state than the monk of medieval tradition; above all, a man of action, for whom it seems to have been made to pray and strike with the mallet.

Uncompromising in dogma, for the reason of permanence stated above, but flexible in conduct; adaptable, because he is utilitarian and only interested in achieving his purpose; skilful rather than inspired, and observant rather than fervent; saving as much as possible from divine contemplation, in order to apply himself preferably to action in human struggle; abandoning the sadness so characteristic of the Middle Ages, to devote himself to the science that creates well-being, reacting against hatred of the rich, which is the basis of pure Christianity, because philosophy, which predominates over mysticism, has taught him that it is much more humane and effective to welcome everyone without distinction into the same hope of salvation, and because, wealth being the social ideal in vogue, it is not possible to go against it without renouncing victory; kind to women, whom he does not detest as instruments of sin, according to

Medieval theology, but rather exploits it as a valuable element of domination; gentle with temporal power, to whose growing might it yields; deferential to popular aspirations, which, synthesised in cheap or free education, it cultivates today in order to direct them tomorrow, effectively becoming a teacher; Finally, trusting little or nothing in miracles, and everything in intelligent effort, perseverance, and skill, nothing can be objected to it from the point of view of human logic. Its two masterpieces—the "Exercises" and the "Monita"—are a political primer and a treatise on experimental psychology.

His philosophical deficiency lay in the theocratic ideal, which he pursued by other means, but without modifying it in the slightest. Its moral failure and social inferiority, consecutive to the previous defect, consisted in the cunning with which it took possession of minds by any means, to make them serve its purpose, and in the conquering character, common to all Spanish institutions, which its order took on. This was the national trait of the latter, even though, as the reader has seen, the factors mentioned above influenced its emergence and development.

Just as the remnants of medieval adventurers found their natural environment in Spain, bringing with them as tribute the most formidable soldiers in Europe, religious adventurers, who were a variant of the same type, stubbornly swelled the ranks of the new institution, whose character promised the permanence of the old ideal in the new forms to which it adapted. The religious conqueror replaced the military one so faithfully that even the new discoveries in the lands where his zeal spread were his; and since his character combined the military spirit with religious prestige, in which lay the success of the Christian Empire, which was then the supreme ideal of the Spanish monarchy, the latter made him its favourite. As a theocracy, it found in him its element of action par excellence.

In the bull *Unani Sanctam*, which absolutists naturally considered dogmatic, Boniface VIII had maintained that the two swords, the temporal and the spiritual, belonged to the Church: one in the hands of the Pope, and the other in those of the soldier, but subject to the priest: *in manu mi litis, vcrura ad nulum sacerdotis*. And the Jesuits nurtured this ideal.

Then, the disillusionment caused by the decline of the nation's glory and by corruption that took such repugnant forms led the best minds to the religious movement, increasing, if it needed any further enhancement, the lustre of the new institution, whose dominance ensured the Peninsula's permanence in the Middle Ages.

This had effectively ended with the last regional challenge, presided over by Carlos V in Valladolid, but its spirit would remain unbroken among the people to this day. The nation's close contact with the sovereign, with the extinction of feudal power, resulting in an exaggeration of militarism, established relations between subject and monarch on the basis of patriotic loyalty. The monarchy made this its strength, erecting loyalty as a supreme virtue and cultivating it deeply, since in its shadow privilege was perpetuated, and institutions assumed, without hope of change, absolute and longed-for immobility.

Religion, the only intimate influence on the popular soul, fostered that virtue in the form of mystical respect that brought it closer to worship, also immovable in its affirmation of eternity; and this happened precisely when the whole world was beginning the industrial evolution that would produce democracy in politics and positivism in philosophy, flexible forms par excellence, that is, constantly adapting to their surroundings.

The Spanish ideal proceeded in the opposite direction, since for it, absolute perfection resided in religion and the monarchy, which assured them of eternity, and it was the means that had to

adapt to them. The existence of that people was established on that transgression of a natural law, and all their efforts were henceforth devoted to maintaining that situation.

Nothing would intimidate them, not even the spectacle of that dizzying collapse, which a century after the gigantic Charles V was to unfold, preserving the atavistic stigma, in the elegant degeneration of Philip IV—that dandy of catastrophe, who saw his empire ruined amid comedies, backstage love affairs, and theological disputes over the Immaculate Conception.

The abnormal state was enshrined in eternal law; and that absurd ideal, which the people embraced with naive pride, made all progress impossible forever, despite any material success.

II - THE FUTURE EMPIRE AND ITS IN .

The territory that, eighty-four years after its discovery, would form the centre of the Jesuit Empire, seemed to embody with its beauty the legends circulating in conquered Spain about that New World so gentle and so profitable.

If Columbus had believed himself to be in the vicinity of Paradise when he reached the mainland, his merchant's imagination captivated by the tropical wonder, the conquistadors who entered the centre of the continent via the Plata and southern Brazil could have assumed the same.

Less grandiose in terms of landscape, but more poetic; adding the charms of the climate and easy access to its original grace, and alternating in discreet proportion the virgin forest with the plain, the enormous river with the picturesque stream, its beauty was much better suited to those southern temperaments.

However crude it may have been, enthusiasm must have been immense, considering the mystical nature of the undertaking and its epic contours. Geography, which had recently escaped medieval inventions that for years had borrowed from Pliny everything that was most fanciful, added to the legendary impression with the uncertainty of its data.

The prevailing ideas about the New World were in fact so vague that in 1526, when Gaboto's expedition definitively began the conquest of the Río de la Plata and Paraguay, François de Moyne, in his treatise *De Orbis situ ac descriptione*, considered Asia, Europe and Mexico to be a single continent, attributing an uninterrupted and common coastline to Sweden, Russia, Tartary, Newfoundland and Florida. It is true that in 1550, Pierre Desceliers protested against such confusion in his world map, clearly alluding to Moyne; but the perplexity continued for many years, giving rise to the most senseless plans.

However, the new country that the conquest had taken over did not favour purely military enterprises very much; and so, its occupants had to limit themselves almost entirely to the task of exploration. The natives offered little resistance, the great rivers facilitated excursions from the outset, and it can be said that, outside the forest, the arduousness of the enterprise was not extreme.

At first glance, the region seemed ideal for the foundation of a vast empire. From its geology to its inhabitants, everything was uniform.

On top of the red sandstone, which appears to be synchronous with the Cretaceous period and is in any case very ancient, a vast basaltic flow gave the terrain its current appearance. Two other products of this phenomenon completed it in the entirely peculiar form it has today. The first is a ferruginous ochre, which in the deep layers appears compact and blackish, pulverising and oxidising on contact with the air, to form the coloured clay that makes up the soil of the region; the other is a conglomerate of gravel, also in ferruginous cement, true slag that filled the cracks in the basalt, and whose cleavage vaguely denotes a prismatic arrangement, which facilitates its detachment into almost regular blocks. The nomenclature po-

The local population calls this rock "tacurú stone" because of its resemblance to the internal structure of the anthills of the same name. Its deposits, which were often Jesuit quarries, allow it to be studied well, as those works exposed it over large areas; and the regularity of its blocks, generally seventy to eighty centimetres per side, is surprising for its resemblance to the basalt crystallisation with which it accompanied.

New tremors shook the ground, throwing primitive rock formations through the cracks, whose current horizon clearly reveals this phenomenon. On the Paraguayan coast, opposite San Ignacio, there is a cave that reveals the uplift in question; and the hills of Teyú Guare, on the Argentinean shore, perhaps confirm it even better with their vivid stratifications. If the Alto Paraná riverbed is, as is believed, a volcanic fissure, at least up to that point—and this seems evident to me—those sandstone banks on its banks would demonstrate the supposed projection.

There are also abundant beds of crystalline quartz and even agate, although the latter is less common, with the same rock predominating in river pebbles. The carnelian and chalcedony often found among these must come from the Brazilian mountains, as their small size indicates the long journey they have had to travel; but these are geological details.

Basalt and ferruginous compounds predominate, from the ochre and conglomerate mentioned above to the native mineral, easily found on the coast of Uruguay, and the titanates, which look like blue powder and are profusely scattered throughout the sand.

This exclusivity corresponds to a no less singular absence of salt and limestone; for apart from calcium carbonate, an element of the melaphyres mixed with basalt in certain places, and

some tuffs, stratified from the same substance, which appear in free nodules, but very sparingly in the transport soils, there are no traces of it. The waters, which are extraordinarily fresh, also demonstrate this scarcity.

A red ochre colour dominates almost entirely in the terrain, contributing to its general hue, along with the heavily rusted ta-curú stone deposits, the basalt and melaphyre with their molten brick appearance, and the varied pink of the asperones; but these are minor features, as the red earth covers everything.

The geological character is uniform, then, and even more so when one considers its immense area; for both the red clays and the trachyte of which they are considered to be synchronous extend in an almost straight line to the Caribbean Sea, forming the seat of the great American jungle, which extends over the same area, with the same surprising character of unity. It could be said that the extraordinary permeability of this ochre, facilitating the penetration of rainwater into its depths and, in the event of drought, imbibition through contact with deep deposits, maintains the enormous humidity that such vegetation requires, while at the same time causing powerful evaporation s⁴³, which then condenses into those constant rains, whose rainfall reaches an annual average of 2 metres in Misiones, and 3 metres in northern Paraguay, with downpours of 800 millimetres. This would explain, I think, the relationship between the forest and its soil.

The absence of salt and limestone, which in Córdoba coexist with the red sandstones of the northern end of its mountain range, and in the Andes with the basalts of Neuquén, may have been due in part—since it was certainly never abundant—to levigation, easily carried out by the rains in such permeable soil. It seems equally clear to me that its fossil poverty is also due to this cause.

Except for a few impressions in the sandstone, fossils themselves are so scarce that they can be considered absent. The lack of limestone and salt explains this to a large extent, but as this in turn results from the permeability of the soil and excessive rainfall, these causes cover everything.

Added to this immense fertility was the beauty of the landscape in the centre of the future Jesuit Empire. The basaltic spill gave the soil a generally undulating appearance with hills and ridges rising to mountains, but never imposing or enormous, since their highest altitude reaches 750 metres at what was the north-eastern limit of the empire.

The triangle formed by the Iberá lagoon and the Uruguay, Miriñay and Paraná rivers, that is, the current territory of Misiones, up to the 26th parallel, was the centre of the Empire, and its appearance as a whole gives the region its characteristic features.

Crossed by the Sierra del Imán, almost parallel to the two great rivers whose waters it divides, it formed a middle ground between the great forest and the prairies, also boasting mountains and the vast lake area of the mysterious Iberá, that is to say, all the necessary conditions for multiple industrial exploitation.

Just as in the regions of Brazil and Paraguay, located at the same latitude, the forest is not continuous in the missionary region. The great forest begins with round patches, which are already at full thickness; however, some more peculiar plants are still missing, such as pines and grass, whose appearance signals the beginning of continuous forests. These, as in the two aforementioned countries, are made up of the same individuals; but in the Argentine region, which has been more affected by industrial exploitation, they are not now so lush.

Generally circular, outside the groves, where naturally they meander with the riverbed, their density is the same

from the entrance. There are no bushes or isolated plants that indicate a progressive dispersion. From the edge to the back, the same profusion of seedlings; the same almost insurmountable obstacle to access; the same morbid serenity of a greenhouse.

Its silence is certainly impressive, as is its lack of inhabitants; even birds flee from its centre, where there is no room for sight or wings. The wind, which is very scarce in the region, never stirs its thickets. Herbivores rarely venture into it, and felines do not frequent it either. Some needy scavengers or adventurous marsupials, such as coatis and weasels, climb the trees in search of rats or sleeping bats, but even this happens rarely. The trees need to stretch a long way to reach the light among such density, resulting in a slender disproportion between their height and thickness.

The few clearings, rounded by the helical expansion of the cyclones, or the paths that cross the forest, allow their details to be distinguished. Admirable parasites, they display garden elegance and vegetable freshness at the fork of the trunks, as if seeking contrast with their rough wood. Orchids surprise here and there, with the entirely artificial whimsy of their colours; the precious 'quiver' is abundant, for example. Profuse lichens envelop the trunks in their greenish wool. The vines hang in disorder like the cables of a dismasted ship, forming hammocks and trapezes for the agile versatility of the monkeys; for everything is to allow the sun to enter freely into the tangle and populate it with wild inhabitants.

Fruit abounds, and in search of it, the peccary, the watchful paca, the agouti, with its black and tasty meat, and the armadillo with its invulnerable shell, come to roam at the foot of the trees. And since they are prey themselves, the puma, the elegant and picturesque mountain goat, the wolf-like aguará, and sometimes even the jaguar, which drives everyone away with its bloody tyranny, follow in their trail.

, the elegant and picturesque wild cat, the wolf-like maned wolf, and even the jaguar, which scares them all away with its bloody tyranny.

Flocks of colourful, strident parrots swoop down on the odd orange tree lost among the uncultivated grove; proud hummingbirds buzz over the orange blossoms, which compete fiercely with the ripe fruit; goldfinches and cardinals sing nearby; a toucan plunges down in a slanting flight, its enormous beak raised high, gleaming with the most beautiful orange colour; the black jacutoro moos, inflating its throat adorned with a red guirindola, and in the beloved thicket of the turtledoves, the bellbird launches its sonorous ringing.

If there is a stream nearby, there will be capybaras, otters, and tapirs that, at the slightest sign of danger, shoot like cannonballs through the bushes until they reach the safety of the water; deer, slender swimmers. The chuña, herald of storms, will cluck with a metallic laugh; partridges will whistle in the open fields, and more than one sleepy, gluttonous yacaré will set up camp in the nearby marsh.

Ferns will sprout from the muddy soil, their elegant fronds reaching a metre and a half in height, sometimes rising from the ground, sometimes curving at the end of their tree-like trunks, with the symmetry of a parasol. Huge clovers will multiply their delicate lilac flowers; and the giant nettle, whose leaves yield silk, will raise its thorny stem up to five metres, which releases a jet of fresh water when pricked.

On the slopes and peaks, the tree vegetation reaches its full potential in the form of giant cedars, urundayes and timbós. The foliage is delightfully fresh, especially on the riverbanks, where it forms a veritable wall of uniform height and sombre greenery, accentuating its appearance as a garden hedge, above which the tacuara reeds stand out, with their tufts of yellowish fluff reaching eight metres in height, standing out for their elegance among the surrounding vegetation.

All those trees, already so beautiful, the most peculiar in the region—the herb plant, resembling a proud jasmine tree.

Eternal greenery reigns in these groves, and the only sign of the changing seasons is when, at the onset of spring, the most prominent of the lapacho trees, a rugged giant that does not disdain to bloom in pink like a peach tree, rises above the canopy, casting that tender note over the dark emerald of the foliage.

Nothing is more pleasant than these patches of forest, standing out with decorative singularity against the red ochre of the soil. Their meanders seem like whimsical gardening, enclosing real palonees between gazebos. The hard grasses of the region resemble manicured lawns in the distance, and the landscape stubbornly suggests horticultural corrections.

The palm trees—especially the beautiful pindó, with leaves as sugary as corn—add an exotic touch to the ensemble, if anything, as they gallantly, I dare say Ionically, throw their whitish trunks like swaying poles; but they add nothing wild, nothing even overwhelming to the surrounding grandeur. This grandeur remains above all elegant, and the palm groves that mark the beginning of each of these forests, with their colonnades, give the impression of a pronaos before the forest canopy.

Serrezuelas, among which clear streams run, swollen by the rains, appear in the landscape like a veritable adornment formed by enormous bouquets. The marshes are not filthy at all, but rather resemble gardens in their excessive marshy greenery. The orange trees, which have become wild in the ruins, lavish their balsamic tribute of fruit and flowers, all in one. The most insignificant spring has its frame of bamboo; and the fauna, even with its wild animals, true miniatures of the fearsome beasts of the old world, contributes to the

impression of paradisiacal innocence that this privileged country inspires.

Numerous but docile reptiles cause little harm; insects are not a nuisance, except in the heart of the forest; even bees have no stings and pose no obstacle to the man who strips them or to the shaggy anteater that devours them with their honey.

The bamboo stalks themselves offer a gift to the man of the forest in their knots, with the fat larvae of the tambú, similar, if not identical in my opinion, to those of the stag beetle, which Lucullus greedily tasted.

The climate, healthy despite its extraordinary humidity, has as its only drawback a little malaria in the very lowlands. The frost on some winter nights does not cause cold until the sun rises, and the average temperature results in a somewhat hot spring. There is hardly any wind, except for the squalls in the jungle. Mists that are daily during the winter envelop the lazy mornings in their warm cotton. They drown out noises, diminish activity, delay the day, and their enervating action must have no small influence on the characteristic indolence of those subtropical people.

Around midday, that fleece-like blanket breaks. The sky glows deeply; the hills turn green; partridges whistle in the ravines; and in the atmosphere, perhaps excessively mild, as a true symbol of that unpredictable splendour, the morpho Menelaus, the giant blue butterfly, hovers slowly and erratically, its cerulean wings sparkling in the familiar sunlight.

In the evening, the solar spectacle is magnificent, especially over the great rivers, for within the forest night falls abruptly as soon as the light diminishes. On the waters, whose course clears the horizon, the subtropical twilight unfolds all its wonder.

First, there is a yellow band in the west, corresponding to a low area of intense electric blue on the opposite side, which fades towards the zenith into old lilac and then pink, finally turning purple over a vast expanse where the moon floats.

Then this hue fades away, while a horizontal glow of fiery orange emerges at sunset, rising to light gold and light green, neutralised in a faintness of dazzling whiteness.

Like a subtle mist, it imbues that hue with a blush of skin, quickly cooling into lilac where it is born like a star; but everything is so clear that its reflection acquires the brilliance of a colossal rainbow over the immense distance of the river. The river, black on the opposite side, black as rusted lead between the deep forests that form a border of Indian ink, rolls in front of the viewer in dense strips of gloomy pink.

A magnificent silence deepens the heavenly ecstasy. ÇÇuizá arrives from the impending ruin, in an imperceptible breath, the scent of orange blossoms. Perhaps a canoe stands out from the rather gloomy shore, creating a new pink wave and whitening, like a heron on the water, the shirt of its rower...

The twilight, radiant as dawn, is slow to fade; and when night finally begins to set in, a new spectacle embellishes the firmament. On the horizon, a star the size of a grapefruit has appeared, pulsating between blue and red reflections, like a two-coloured lantern swaying in the wind. Its radiance projects real flames, which describe a bright trail on the water, despite the moon, and the first impression is almost one of fear in the presence of such an enormous diamond.

I have already said that those lands lend themselves to all types of production. There are, however, some peculiarities due to the cons-

Geological composition. There is, of course, a lack of topsoil, humus, which is only found in strips of sixty metres, on average, on the banks of streams and in limited areas under the forests, as if its formation were difficult, either because of the laborious evolution of the clay or because the land is very new. Thus, the Misiones themselves are not very suitable for cattle breeding. During the winter, the meadows produce only very tough grasses—almost entirely esparto grass—and the forest is even scarcer. The cattle become horribly emaciated and succumb in large numbers, for the recourse of feeding them certain palms and bamboos is too costly for somewhat overgrown pastures. During the summer, things are little better, as there is really no other natural fodder than the grass of the marshy lands, with its precarious yield. Only corn, which almost always yields two harvests, and sometimes three per year, could compensate for such scarcity as a fattening element; but there is another even more serious drawback: the lack of salt, which exists only in small patches of vaguely salty soil, preferred by forest animals, but completely insufficient for large herds. Scabies, tuberculosis and intestinal diseases wreak havoc in the absence of this element, almost completely preventing large-scale breeding.

I understand that in the marshes of the Corrientes River, attempts to obtain it have been successful on occasion by evaporating the marsh waters; and it is well known that these are grazing lands; but I do not know if this has been done on a regular basis, far from it.

Apart from this drawback, nothing stands in the way of vast prosperity.

Rich woods abound, so much so that cedar replaces pine in ordinary carpentry. The Jesuits had successfully cultivated rice, and traces of their stubble can still be seen in certain low-lying areas during droughts. Wheat, which

Although it is not currently listed among the branches of production, it was sufficient for flour consumption at that time. Cotton, cocoa, and indigo produced good yields, and the vineyards yielded regular harvests of wine.

Sugar cane grows solid stalks up to five metres long and extraordinarily thick; tobacco sprouts profusely, and I have already mentioned corn. Orange trees have been transported from the old settlements to the forest, and wherever the Indians took provisions of their fruit: the quarries, grazing posts and yerba mate fields. Finally, the latter constitute a peculiar wealth, which will be enormous when horticultural cultivation returns, the success of which was demonstrated by the Jesuits⁴⁴.

The mineral kingdom abounds in building stone, represented by tacurú and asperones. Iron is abundant, and there is some copper that the Jesuits worked. With regard to lead, I have no other information than that I found a falconet bullet in the town of Concepción, now in the Historical Museum; but it may have belonged to the Portuguese-Spanish army that suppressed the insurrection of 1751. The precious metal mines, whose secret is attributed to the Jesuits, have remained a dream, as have the diamond deposits. The odd topaz, carnelian and amethyst are all there is. The very interesting crystalline quartz may have inspired the Adamantine legend.

The aforementioned lack of lime also gave rise to much conjecture. As the Jesuit temples were whitewashed, the field of speculation remained open when the quarries failed entirely.

It was then claimed that the priests had used tabatin-ga, a whitish ochre that is abundant in Brazil, but this is inadmissible because the traces of plaster and mortar still holding some walls together reveal the existence of lime. What there was,

perhaps, was some ranch in the reductions whitewashed with this unusual product.

Based on Doblas' famous "Memoir," some have repeated his claim that lime was extracted from white snails, which are not very numerous in the territory and, after all, insufficient s⁴⁵; but there may be some truth in this seemingly trivial explanation, considering that on the Brazilian coast of Uruguay, opposite Garruchos, there is a bank of fossil shells that shows signs of exploitation. It was located in Jesuit territory, a short distance from the reduction of San Nicolás.

Others have claimed that the article in question would have come from Buenos Aires as a decorative element, and I believe that this may have been the case to some extent; however, its profusion, especially in more recent temples, has led me to believe that it was quarried locally. There is one piece of information that reveals its probability. In the "Diary" of the reconnaissance that the Viceroy ordered to be carried out in 1790 on the western coast of the Paraguay River, its author, the pilot Ignacio Pasos, states that on the aforementioned bank, near the place called Presidio de Coimbra, there was "a lot of limestone". The similarity between this region and the missionary region reinforces the evidence; and since no one has explored all the sites occupied by the Jesuits, the supposed quarry may remain hidden. The fact that the forest has covered the areas where the soil was removed would explain its concealment.

But I will elaborate on these details in the chapter describing the ruins.

The uniform soil and jungle, combined with a climate that is even more uniform due to its tropical nature, engendered racial unity among the inhabitants.

Whatever the opinion of certain fanciful ethnologists, I believe that the most sensible thing to do is to group the tribes, scattered throughout the great jungle, under the generic name of "Guaraní race".

Among them, customs as peculiar as that of the bezote were common, which from the Plata to the Caribbean Sea was used by Indian warriors, who inserted small pieces of wood or quartz crystals into their lower lip for this purpose. The ceremony of cutting off a phalanx of the fingers for each relative who died was equally widespread, as was the infanticide of illegitimate children, which the mother carried out immediately after giving birth. The same character predominated in their tattoos, pottery and weapons. The burial of the dead, with their heads protruding from the ground and covered by a clay bowl, is another equally widespread peculiarity, as is the original cosmogonic circumstance of considering the moon to be male and the sun to be female ¹⁴⁶. The highly vocalised language, with its predominance of sharp words, like a vast jungle onomatopoeia, completes the resemblance; and this is all the more remarkable in that all Indians, whatever their tribe, easily understand each other.

They probably comprised the remnants of a great warrior race in dissolution, scattered throughout the jungle towards the East; there are traces of an emigration shortly before the conquest, which would have moved northwards in two branches, coming from the subtropical jungle, branching off along the Atlantic coast and through the centre of the continent.

That movement, one of many that these nomadic tribes would carry out periodically and with the greatest of ease, due to plagues, extraordinary droughts that caused famine, or out of habit resulting from their social status, brought the second of the supposed branches into contact with the Inca vanguard that was descending in the opposite direction, sending out its conquering phalanxes on both sides of the original mountain range.

Despite the divergence between the decadent civilisation of the forest dwellers and the colonising boom of the Qui-chua empire, contact led to the sharing of certain traditions and customs, which were presumably imposed by the superior element—such as the decoration of pottery and mummification; although among the Guaraní, this took the form of simple drying over a low heat. The proof is that jungle barbarism diminished greatly in the north, in the regions of present-day Venezuela and Ecuador, where relations with the Incas of ÇÇuito were almost regular, given that they were located there in their most civilised centre and therefore had the greatest influence.

The forest population became wilder as it descended towards the centre and south of the continent, where it only had occasional contact with the civilising Quechua people in the Chaco region; however, both races retained their migratory characteristics. The former always remained within the familiar forest; the latter never strayed far from the mountains, which naturally guided them on their southern journey through the chain of valleys.

That is all that remains of that great Procolombian event, which could have clarified so many things, had it been known in detail; but Spanish chroniclers, with the possible exception of Sahagún, and he only in relation to the Aztecs, brought the manners of the courtly instrument to their narratives. Logic prevailed over truth in them. Too rhetorical to be sincere, they had to adjust everything to their classical mould, which, to make matters worse, usually came from contraband, and so the typical detail is rare among their indigestible jumble. After much searching, one finds that one has made almost no progress.

One example among many is Father Guevara, who has been followed by almost everyone who has studied the Guaraní Indians and their customs. They failed to notice, when it was so easy to do so, that his so-called history is in that part a rhapsody of Barco Centenera's poem (and what a poem!), not only because of the identical plan, but also because of the

details that he pours into his prose, as unbearable as the octaves of the original. The fact that he accepts as truth such innocent legends as the metamorphosis of the tears of the guayacán tree, a transparent adaptation of the Phoenix to American butterflies; as well as attributing the fossilised bones discovered by the floods to the remains of human giants, should have put those who drank from him on notice, as they were doing nothing more than copying second-hand.

Only the belonging of the Guaraní tribes to a great nation, dissolved by barbarism, remained standing. Traces, certainly vague but no less significant, seemed to denounce that superior unity in the centrifugal groups. The zodiac was common to them all, and Alvear cites in his "Relación" some astronomical ideas of the Mococíes that are certainly remarkable.

These Indians considered the Pleiades to be their creator and deity, and the star Sirius to be the cause of eclipses, as demonstrated by detailed observations and the mythical specification of certain stars, which, curiously enough, have had similar applications in very different peoples. The cosmogenetic nature of the Pleiades is quite unique, considering that some modern astronomers believe that these stars are the centre of our universe; but this may be nothing more than a coincidence.

The hot climate allowed them to be almost completely naked, interrupted only by a small poncho draped over the shoulder and a cap, woven, like the previous garment, from palm fibres. They sometimes adorned themselves with feathers, and wore anklets and bracelets braided from their wives' hair. I have already mentioned the bezote, usually made of quartz crystal. The women added to the "costume" described above a small apron, sometimes doubled as a loincloth, and pendants made of seeds or shells. The present-day Cainhuá Indians of Paraguay retain many of these peculiarities.

The war attire was a little more complicated. A leather crown adorned with colourful feathers replaced the helmet described above; paintings made with tabntinga and red ochre covered the warrior's body, imitating the skins of anta or jaguar; and loud necklaces made of claws or wild teeth surrounded his throat. The paintings were, so to speak, the parade uniform, but tattoos existed in both sexes as a national distinctive feature.

Their weapons consisted of bows and arrows; clubs, sometimes encrusted with sharp quartz; some carried slingshots, and a few carried spears. Bolas, ineffective in the jungle, were used exclusively by those who inhabited the plains.

Loyal to their chief, who was usually chosen only in times of war, their tribal groups never formed armies as such. Individually, they were brave, and even more resilient, as the cruel rites with which they celebrated their entry into puberty and their funeral rites accustomed them to pain.

As for their other customs, they were those of all savages, except for minor differences; thus, their festivals, drunken binges, weddings, etc., do not merit description.

Most of them wandered through the forest at random, hunting, gathering the abundant fresh produce, or raiding beehives, whose openings they enlarged by clumsily chopping at them with their stone axes until they could insert their hands, which had been softened for this purpose since childhood by continuous massage, absorbing the honeycomb residue with spongy lichens. These were naturally the most unsociable, and they never accepted civilisation.

Some formed sedentary groups, which did not last long, settling in the vicinity of rivers. They burned a piece of land and, using a pointed stick as a plough, they dug holes shortly after it rained, where they sowed seeds.

corn, potatoes, squash, and cassava—a system still used in Paraguay. Notable swimmers and rowers, they manned canoes carved from guabiroba tree trunks, which gave them their generic name, and thus embarked, sometimes for days on end, they fished and hunted. Their most civilised stratagem consisted of using domesticated parrots as decoys for their hunts. The Jesuits enjoyed their greatest influence over the latter, but both groups were reluctant to leave the forest unless driven by hunger and for as short a time as possible.

The misery in which they found themselves made the polygamy to which they tended difficult; they were generally monogamous, except for sorcerers and chiefs.

Dominated by the most basic idolatry, this did not concern them greatly. Some sacred tree or monstrous serpent formed their fetishes for conjuring against storms, which they feared because of their tropical violence.

Their intelligence manifested itself almost exclusively in skilful theft and unscrupulous lies; their nomadic lifestyle had robbed them of any love for property and land, and they consequently lacked patriotism and economic sense. All their trade consisted of bartering objects, which further diminished their love for organised property. Drunkards and gluttons, the insecurity of food, inherent in their condition as exclusive hunters, unleashed their appetite; and lacking stable society, they lacked the necessary control to restrain themselves. Music, or rather noise, and colourful decorations flattered their childish nature. This dominated them to such an extent that, according to the Jesuits, they understood things better by sight than by hearing: a valuable piece of information for determining their psychology. Voluptuous and lazy, due to the influence of the climate and the jungle with its enervating atmosphere, they were not suited to great endurance. Their angry outbursts, very lively as in all indecisive natures, were followed by a proportional depression. Patience and good treatment,

were enough to dominate them; but that softness harboured inconstancy, considerably favoured by the habit of wandering.

A child of that jungle, so rich that, according to Reclus, its products would be enough to feed all of humanity, he was the quintessential tropical man, that is to say, indolent and improvident in his comfortable well-being. His common type accentuated his unity of origin; and that forest, in whose uniformity the aforementioned author saw the suggestion of an immense future brotherhood for the peoples of South America, had imprinted on his docile primitive constitution, which had neither atavistic reactions, nor traditions, nor social strength with which to resist the morbidity of its perennial greenery.

Much has been said about their cannibalism, to portray them as ferocious; but it is necessary to observe who spoke and how they spoke.

There is, of course, not a single testimony that they were seen eating human flesh. The closest to this is that of Solís' companions who "thought they saw" it in the confusion of the retreat.

The first conquistadors and missionaries spread the rumour, but both groups were keen to glorify their enterprise and would not have overlooked such a shocking detail. The ferocity of the natives enhanced the success of the conquest.

Some modern authors have claimed that the Indians were not exactly cannibals, even though they were anthropophagous, since their anthropophagy was a religious ritual, a true "communion" with the victim.

Despite the visibly clerical nature of the assertion, and what could have served to demonstrate the universality of this reverse Christianity, with which, according to Catholic writers, Satan unwittingly anticipated Revelation, it is curious that it escaped the attention of all contemporary missionaries. In no chronicle or document of the time is there even a reference to the much-used "co-

communion"; and yet the P. P. found evangelical and biblical traces in almost all aboriginal myths.

ÇÇueda only accepts cannibalism, considered a sign of ferocity; but there is abundant evidence to the contrary.

Thus, Father Cardiel, in his famous "Declaration," paints the Guaraní as innocent and harmless beings, adding to demonstrate this point that an army of 28,000 Indians, for example, is worth as much or less than one of children, considering that their wars cannot even be classified as a nuisance. Despite this, Father Lozano considers them to be fearsome warriors whose sole occupation was fighting, and presents them as cannibals. Both opinions are clearly exaggerated, the first for the reasons that Chapter IV will give the reader, and the second to emphasise the merits of his brothers. But be that as it may, the fact is that eyewitness testimony is still lacking.

Nobody 'saw'.

It is equally strange that none of the subjugated Indians attempted to return to a custom of extirpation that is very difficult to abandon when it is ingrained, since it involves the cannibal's very passion for gluttony. The murders of Jesuits, which I will discuss in due course, apart from being extremely rare and in no case showing refined malice, do not present any example of the Indians eating any priest. On the contrary, it is recorded in the eulogies of Dr. Xarque that Indian sorcerers opposed the religious activities of the Jesuits, presenting them to their compatriots as eaters of human flesh; and if they attributed to the Jesuits the cannibalism that was attributed to them, it is obvious to assume that they were exempt from it.

The conquerors, keen to spread their own message in order to increase their military glory and at the same time justify their cruelty, did not fail to assert this; but among them there was no one who could confirm specific events with their personal testimony.

It is true, however, that Gaboto arrived in Los Patos in 1526, almost eleven years after Solís' death, with his deserters: the Charrúas should be considered members of the Guaraní nation. The following year, the sailor Puerto, a survivor of that disaster, was found on the coast of Uruguay by Gaboto himself; nevertheless, in legend 7 of his 1544 planisphere, Gaboto states that the Charrúas devoured Solís...

Diego García also attributed cannibalism to the Tupies of San Vicente. Pedro Ramírez's letter, in reference to Gaboto's diary on the Upper Paraná, also mentions Guaraní anthropophagy. Schmídel attributes the same custom to the Carí people, but they must have been so unferocious that they did not hesitate to swear allegiance to Irala, settling in the colony and being the only ones among all the Indians subjugated by the conquistador to do so without resistance.

Finally, Barco Centenera, not to mention rhapsodists, also affirms this in his tedious rhyming chronicle (10,752 verses!); but it is nothing more than a web of pedantic legends and ridiculous tall tales, taken as history for lack of anything else, and because the author was an eyewitness. This has often been enough to validate the accounts of the conquest, quoting them en masse, without a hint of criticism. This is the case with this author, among others.

The honest archdeacon saw mermaids in the marshes (canto XI-II), his Indian women were called Liropeyas; he also believed the legend of the terrifying curiyú serpent (canto III) to be true; and if the cruelties of the savages inspired him (canto XV) to write horrendous details about impalements and burials alive, in the following two stanzas (36 and 37) he narrates how a Franciscan monk escaped from their clutches with such cheap miracles that it is enough to discredit his supposed veracity. But it suffices to transcribe the stanza in which he explains the cannibalism pre-

Precisely, (song I) to see to what extent that innocent pedantry falsified every natural detail:

ÇÇue if we want to look at this well,
Caribe says, and it sounds like burial
Of flesh: that in Latin caro we know ÇÇue
flesh means in reading.
And in the Guaraní language we can
say Ibi, which means composture
Of earth, where human flesh is enclosed. Caribe
is this tyrannical people.

The logograph, as we can see, is priceless; and this hybrid of Latin and Guaraní is simply invaluable. For eighty years, our historians and writers have been recommending this barbaric monstrosity to us, without even reading it!

Despite everything, the same people who treated the Guaraní as cannibals and savages maintained relations with them without any major inconveniences. Gaboto, who describes him as bloodthirsty and cruel, had little to complain about during the navigation of the Paraná; for the disaster that befell the crew of the Bermejo explorer brig must be attributed to their own greed, since they were persuaded to descend among the Indians with bait of silver and gold. This shows that they knew his weak side, at the cost of extortion and abuse, to be sure. The romantic episode of Lucía Miranda is an exception, which, on the other hand, could happen in any race.

The catastrophe of Mendoza's expedition can also be attributed to the cruelty of the conquerors. The Indians got along well with the founders of Buenos Aires from the outset, selling them the provisions they needed. The mistreatment they were later subjected to led to war. Suffice it to say that many of these conquerors had belonged, as

like his boss, to the hordes of the Constable of Bourbon; and if for a matter of salary or⁴⁷ they assaulted the Eternal City, raping nuns on the altars of churches with appalling sadism and pillaging with such abandon that it horrified even iron-willed Europe—one can infer their behaviour among helpless savages, with all the exasperation of appetites that a long voyage would bring to such wolves.

The Indians showed no less kindness to the land-based expeditions, which was even more remarkable given their direct contact with the expeditionaries. Alvar Núñez, on his long journey from La Cananea to Asunción, found them to be a great help, as they willingly provided him with food and canoes. They did the same during the expedition to find the route to Peru, with the sole exception of the Guararapes.

In the previous expedition, and in those he undertook later with the same objective, Irala had less to complain about: and the truth is that, throughout the conquest, the Spanish crossed those regions at will, with almost no obstacles other than the natives.

Nor was there anything to regret in the expedition of the Caesars—whose brief details the reader can see in the following chapter—despite their immense march; nor in the various attempts to connect Paraguay with Tueumán across the Chaco, since Diego Pacheco crossed it twice with only forty men, without losing a single one.

In all of Chaves' major incursions, they also proved to be amenable, and an eloquent event occurred in this regard: When he was sent to found the city of Santa Cruz, he set out with only sixty men, while his discontented companions returned to Asunción, without the small number of forces inciting any disorder; and those who, after founding the city, sailed the Mamoré and Marañón rivers until they reached

to the Atlantic, an enormous expedition that can be compared to the famous expedition of Pizarro and Orellana through the Amazon—nor did they encounter any military mishaps.

Finally, Felipe Cáceres, on his round trip to Peru, travelled for nearly a year through such vast jungles without encountering any hostility.

If Ortiz de Vergara was forced to brutally suppress the general rebellion of the Guaraní people, which broke out at the beginning of his rule, this must be attributed to the extraordinary harshness with which his predecessor Mendoza treated them. Moreover, the defence of native soil is a natural movement, which does not denounce those who carry it out as inherently evil; and as for the Guaraní nation, the facts cited are sufficient, it seems to me, to demonstrate their good nature.

Thus, the inhabitants and the land offered only passive resistance to the conquest. Both required only organised enterprises to yield rich profits, in proportion, of course, to the ingenuity with which their conditions were exploited.

The wide variety of products guaranteed a system of rotational work, which encompassed all phases of life. The tribes scattered throughout the jungle could do nothing, for they did not have such variety, their lives being limited to narrow and adventitious pursuits. The small number of their members, as well as their permanent state of war, made any idea of sedentary exploitation completely impossible; but they had also kept the land virgin, preparing a more abundant yield for the conqueror who would subjugate it with a view to aggrandising himself, and with the unity of action required by any effective enterprise.

III - THE TWO CONQUERORS .

The comparative study of the two conquering forces that dominated ancient Paraguay requires a broad historical overview, from 1526, the year of Gaboto's exploration that opened the country to conquest, to 161Ü, when the Jesuits began their work, so that the reader may understand the general situation. This will be brief, and upon its conclusion, we will find ourselves fully immersed in the subject.

I will use the generic name "Paraguay" to refer to the country that is now divided between Argentina, Brazil, modern Paraguay, and Bolivia, as this was the name given by the Jesuits to the spiritual province they established in these regions. It encompassed Tucumán, Río de la Plata and Paraguay, whose eastern borders at that time reached very close to the Atlantic coast, and as we shall see later, such a division was not purely a geographical expression. Thus, the name adopted, apart from simplifying the matter, corresponds to the very plan of the work.

As I will be referring indiscriminately to Spanish and Portuguese possessions throughout this work, I believe it appropriate to note that in cases of doubt or contradiction between writers of both nationalities, I have generally adopted the criteria corresponding to each, as a rule of prudence and impartiality.

corresponding to each one, as a rule of prudence and impartiality.

The conquest of La Plata had been interrupted by the catastrophe of Solís until 1526-27, when Gaboto and García entered the estuary, the former reaching Salto de Apípe and, on his return, exploring the Paraguay River as far as the point where Asunción would later be founded, as well as part of the Bermejo.

Certain Portuguese historians have taken it for granted that four of their compatriots, sent by Martín Alfonso de Souza from San Vicente in 1526, crossed Paraguay to Peru on an exploratory journey. I believe this to be a slip of the pen, attributing to the Portuguese an expedition that was entirely Spanish.

Even in terms of dates and itinerary, it is indeed similar to that of Gaboto's companions, who left the fort of Sancti-Spiritus in a straight line to the west, explored the region of Cuyo, skirted the Cordillera and reached Tucumán, travelling up through it to Cuzco. They were under the command of an officer named César, and having been called the Cesares by extension, they gave rise to the fable of the chimerical cities of this name ⁴⁸.

The Portuguese expedition, it seems, is therefore a fantastic adaptation. There is, in fact, no other information about it except that provided by Ruy Díaz de Guzmán, who is mistaken from the outset, as he attributes to the aforementioned Portuguese captain the dispatch of an impossible expedition, given that he did not arrive in Brazil until 1530. A writer who made such a mistake eighty-two years after the events he narrated (he wrote his "Argentina" in 1612) certainly deserves little credence. On the other hand, the form and number of the figures do not support the assumption of a calligraphic error, especially when the following chapter contains another one.

Even more serious, given the notoriety of the event, considering Gaboto's voyage to have taken place in 1530.

This new error would prove that the Brazilian expedition I mentioned above was the same as that of the Caesars, as it attributes the date of Souza's voyage to Gaboto, thus constituting two errors serving the same purpose.

It would be perfectly natural, however, to assume a transposition of the number (1526 for 1530), given that the usual carelessness of Spanish chroniclers, especially with regard to dates and geographical locations, was followed by the peculiar cross-outs of the copyist a⁴⁹ ; but there are other more glaring lapses for which there is no explanation.

Thus, for example, our carefree historian attributes the discovery of Brazil to Amerigo Vespucci and asserts that Solís returned to Spain instead of having been killed by the Charrúas...

Let this case serve as an example to the reader, so that they may learn to be wary of old documents—which are often considered to be the best—and to appreciate the mortal tedium inherent in such comparisons. Reading and quoting is easy; the hard part is checking ⁵⁰ what is quoted.

Be that as it may, the fact is that Brazil progressed much earlier than Paraguay, which is the basis of their historical rivalry.

Sixty years after its discovery, the Portuguese possession was already exporting cotton and sugar so successfully that the latter product was worth 32,000,000 francs at the beginning of the 18th century. The nine captaincies into which it was divided soon flourished, with houses of the Society of Jesus existing in all of them.

This progress, which was an indirect threat, given the vagueness of the geographical terms used by Pope Alexander to

drafting his well-known papal bull ⁵¹, and knowing that Brazil had been under regular administration since 1530, they prompted Mendoza's expedition, amid the enthusiasm caused by Gaboto's.

It can be said that with Ayolas, sent by him on a reconnaissance mission, the true conquest began. He sailed up the Paraná and Paraguay rivers, easily overcoming the scant resistance of the riverside tribes; he founded Asunción and continued his journey to Candelaria. Ordering Irala to wait for him there with the squadron for six months, he crossed the Chaco and reached the borders of Peru, from where he returned with some pieces of silver, being killed by the Mbayás and Serigués among whom he had settled when he did not find his companions.

The tenacious opposition of the Indians of Buenos Aires, who threatened to ruin any settlement unless it had a solid base of operations over them, led to the definitive abandonment of the new city and the consequent reconcentration of all its elements in Paraguay, where the natives were more docile. From then on, despite its landlocked nature, Paraguay enjoyed the political superiority that it would retain for so long.

During the rule of Ayolas and the early days of Irala, war was not the only task undertaken by the conquistadors, for they, with truly admirable activity given their expenses, founded thirteen towns in those territories.

Irala had been popularly elected governor, but the arrival of Alvar Núñez, the royal governor, stripped him of his command. To reach his headquarters, Núñez had just completed the second great expedition by land across the region, an eight-month journey from the Itabucú River opposite Santa Catalina to Asunción, a distance of three hundred leagues.

On his orders, Irala carried out the third expedition, with the aim of opening up a route to Peru and unifying the conquest, joining forces with those expeditionaries. With no clear idea yet of the immense territory in between, the Paraguayan conquerors sought access to the land of gold; and the Crown, which saw it as a political centre, sought to give it, with a view to economy and administration, the greatest possible area of influence, encouraging those explorations.

Irala returned with reports, having reached 17° latitude, and then the Adelantado attempted the ascent on his own; but the flooding of the land forced him to turn back.

Deposed by the discontent of his soldiers, on whom he had tried to impose rules of discipline, preaching by the example of his honesty and culture, which only exasperated them further, his intrepid lieutenant set out once again on the road to Peru.

This expedition highlights the important fact that the Indians began to appear as allies of the Spanish in their civil wars, demonstrating that a beginning of fusion had already taken place between the two races.

Irala finally managed to reach Chuquisaca, deciding not to go any further due to the political situation in Peru, in order to avoid becoming involved with the warring factions.

From there, he sent Nuño de Chaves with a request to La Gasea to confirm him in office, returning to Paraguay where he promptly defeated Abreu's usurpation. Shortly afterwards, Chaves arrived, having just completed the most remarkable expedition ever to leave Paraguay with that double journey.

The Guayra Indians, harshly exploited by the Portuguese who enslaved them, sought the protection of Irala, whose renown had already spread throughout the jungle as a symbol of prestige and justice. The conquistador responded to their request

, travelled throughout the region, establishing Spanish rule over whites and Indians, and thus opening a line of communication between his headquarters and such distant barbarism.

Until then, the conquest had been carried out without any religious intervention, so that it was not until the year after this last expedition (1555) that Paraguay received its first bishop. The territory later occupied by the Jesuit Empire was already completely open, despite its size, with other regions where missionary expansion never reached.

Two new expeditions to La Guayra cemented Spanish prestige there: one led by Chaves, who sought access to the Atlantic via the coast of Brazil, and another led by Ruy Díaz Melgarejo, who founded Ciudad Real in that province.

The idea of seeking direct communication with Peru had not been abandoned, and he sent Chaves back again for that purpose. He would never see him again, for he died before his return, but that tireless conqueror had carried out his orders with extraordinary success. He travelled throughout the entire province of Chiquitos and Mato Grosso, truly legendary regions whose access required perseverance bordering on obstinacy and fearlessness bordering on heroism. In what is now Bolivia, he met Manso, who was coming from Peru. They disputed the possession of those lands, which were awarded to him by the Viceroy, and on his return he founded the city of Santa Cruz.

Gonzalo de Mendoza, Irala's heir, died a year after his appointment to the government, and Ortiz de Vergara was named as his replacement, with whom a series of mutinies and coups began, in which the political interference of the clergy manifested itself for the first time.

Meanwhile, the foundations had continued, reaching a total of twenty-eight in seventy-four years, including the thirteen mentioned above.

Azara, in his list of towns, includes the first thirteen reductions of La Guayra as secular; but I do not believe that this error should be attributed to sectarian malice with the aim of discrediting the Jesuit work, since he reproduced it from Moussy, who cannot be suspected of the same. It is plausible to assume that there was confusion with the thirteen foundations established in 1536-38 by Ayolas and Irala, given that the coincidence in numbers, both in the Jesuit and lay settlements, could have led to the mix-up; and without this explanation seeking to dispute Azara's sectarianism, which is undeniable.

The secular conquest found its paragon in Irala. A man of government above all else, his administration set the standard for future organisations, which were never able to surpass it. His intrepidity and rectitude, combined in admirable balance, won him the affection of both the Indians and the whites. As a legislator, his regulations governed Paraguay for many years and, given the society they organised, are still a model of political wisdom. Tireless in his endeavours, he extended the boundaries of his territory to points that were not reached until two hundred and fifty years later, and his expeditions to Peru have never been repeated.

More political than Alvar Núñez, whose rigidity made him unpopular with his comrades, he knew how to balance severity with kindness, to the point that he was idolised by the soldiers, who revered him like a father, and loved by the Indians as a righteous protector.

Spanish influence reached its peak of effectiveness. It established the large-scale grass industry, which remains, to this day, the country's main resource, with the Mbaracayú plantation in Guayra being particularly noteworthy among other operations. The livestock, both large and small, was scattered throughout the forests and meadows like fertile seed, which in a few years yielded an astonishing harvest.

In short, to appreciate the overall importance of the secular conquest, it suffices to know that from 1526 to 1610, the conquistadors founded almost as many towns as the Jesuits did in a century and a half, even though the latter had the path cleared for them.

The secular populations reached twenty-eight, as I said before, to which ten cities of relatively considerable importance should be added, and⁵³; while the Jesuits, who founded nineteen towns in the first five years of their apostolate, only reached fourteen during the intervening 133 years from 1634 to 1767, including six created with Indians from existing reductions.

The route to Peru was also clear; an outlet to the ocean, that is to say Europe, had been opened up via the Marañón; the possibility of communicating with Tucumán via the Chaco had been demonstrated, as Diego Pacheco had proven on his round trip from Santiago del Estero to Asunción; contact between the Peruvian and La Plata conquests had been established since 1573, with the simultaneous founding of Córdoba and Santa Fe, and all this with almost no priests, or at least without their special assistance.

The first Spaniards had only one. Twenty years after the conquest, in the midst of expeditionary and founding activities, there were barely seventeen, including the bishop and canons, and thirty years later, twenty in all.

That purely secular expansion was facilitated by the regalist tendencies of the Crown, for whom the Church was at first a subordinate, often humiliated and always restrained; but the rise of the Jesuits, with all the complications and rivalries already mentioned, engendered a reaction, incorporating them into the country, in Hernandarias' time, as a conquering element.

His intervention was certainly justified by the increasing mistreatment of the natives. As early as 1496, Peralonso

Niño had brought the first shipment of Indian slaves to Spain; and it is known that thirty years later, Diego García sent another shipment to a merchant in São Vicente (Brazil) with whom he had a contract for eight hundred, to be sent to Europe; which demonstrates the regularity of the trade. When this was suspended, the encomienda replaced it as an internal measure. Hernandarias was right to say to some Indians captured in 1593 with a shipment of herbs that he was ordering them to be burned in his presence, sensing that they would be the cause of his ruin. Since the exploitation of the herb fields of present-day Paraguay began at that time, the extinction of the race was a foregone conclusion.

The conquest was not a colonisation, and it brought with it all the consequences of war for the vanquished. There was little to plunder, given the poverty of the natives; but the need for women, which causes such irritating excesses in such cases, and even more so with such men, as well as the cruelty exacerbated by the eternal disappointment of gold, caused horrific abuses.

After the battle of Guarnipitó, which led to the founding of the future Paraguayan capital, seven girls for Ayolas and two for each of his companions were included in the war tribute imposed on the Indians, this being the general rule.

Schmídel, a key player in the drama, and who cannot be suspected of exaggeration, given the lack of boasting in his narratives, recounts that during the expedition against the Agaces, all of their villages were burned. The conqueror's lust is evident in his description of the Jaray women as "beautiful and lascivious," which shows that he frequented them, even if their beauty was greatly exaggerated, as is likely, given the narrator's enforced celibacy. During a year and a half of expedition, he says, twelve thousand Indians were captured in the lands of the Guapás, with a private soldier having fifty for his

service. Even with exaggeration, the reality of slavery would be no less evident.

The spirit of adventure was incredibly heightened in those regions, whose decorative appearance produced, especially in predisposed minds, a delirium of theatrical grandeur. The solemn thicket inspired with its mystery; every bush could hide fame or fortune; obstacles were nothing but a greater incentive to perseverance, exaggerated by heroic rivalry. Lost in the virgin forest, on the trail of some fable that they derived from a whimsical etymology of an indigenous word or myth, they would not return until they had found certainty as their reward.

Gullible people embraced the legend of the pearls in a certain lagoon in the Chaco; the reference to that silver rock that glistened in the middle of the Paraná, on the way to La Guayra; the tales of dragons and pygmies; the existence of mythological Amazons. .

Their path was marked by devastation. They set fire to villages as if lighting fireworks, leaving behind a trail of rape and adultery, discussing the orgies of the night. Suffering so much in their daily lives, they cared little for the pain of others, especially when it came to those they considered inferior, whose humanity was disputed. A fierce individualism reigned in those armies, barely bound together by their own insecurity. The spoils, almost always precarious, caused disputes whose immediate consequence was murder. Around the campfire that formed the heart of the bivouac, drinking cups took precedence over cooking pots. Neither the fatigue of terrible days nor the wounds of savage darts extinguished that passion in their iron natures. And late at night, under the shadow of those silent forests, sometimes frightened by the roar of a jaguar on the prowl, they left the atrocious clearing to improvise their brutal thrones among the flock of captives, or to settle

In anonymous murder, an unfortunate wager, a trick, a joke perhaps.

Like dogs fighting over a bone, they stabbed and shot each other to death over the meagre prize that luck had placed within their reach in the hair of some opulent Indian woman, their greed being directly proportional to the scarcity of the prize. Accomplices, not companions, those expeditions united them as a crime; and only because they were defenceless did the Indians prefer their ferocity. There, courage and interest reigned supreme.

Such were the tremendous hardships they endured. Nature offered more than enough resistance that the natives were unable to organise, and if that unbridled instinct, so characteristic of war, brought with it, as it seems, the obstinacy shown by the conquerors, in a true apogee of brute force, it is fair to admit that it was due to this that the conquest was achieved.

Schmidel has left us, in his narrative, a most interesting picture of those explorations of the tropical jungle. He refers to the one led by Hernando de Rivera, sent by Al-var Núñez to discover the empire of the Amazons.

A vague account by the Indians, to which they would naturally add their practical lies, further confusing it with their habit of adhering to any conjecture proposed to them, decided the expedition.

According to its inventors, the fantastic empire lay two months' journey away through the flooded jungle, but this did not deter the explorers. Tribes, terrain, groves, animals, the region's weather patterns—everything was unknown to them. They walked for fifteen days through an endless swamp, with water up to their knees and waists, heated by the tropical sun to a morbid warmth in which pestilential ferments bubbled. With it they quenched their thirst, exacerbated by the fever they drank from it. The branches of the trees were their beds. To co-

mer, they lit their fires on intertwined poles, like giant tripods. Everything sometimes fell into the mud, and during the last days of that journey, there was no food left except the hearts of palm trees.

Meanwhile, it rained terribly, flooding the jungle more and more, without a breath of fresh air to relieve the stifling heat of that gloomy sweat. All the vermin of the forest, excited by the germinating humidity, descended on the expeditionaries in ferocious swarms. But no one tried to retreat. Paler than ghosts, splashing heavily through the eternal swamp with their own dysentery, devoured by maddening hunger pangs, delirious with hunger, furious at being trapped in that canopy with its basement-like atmosphere, whipped by deadly chills under the downpours, deepening their gloomy silence amid the relentless water—none, nevertheless, did falter; and there is something Dantesque about that fierce gang, dragging their muddy rags under that forest, half-engulfed in a liquid tomb by the warm and dead puddle like a footbath.

This lasted thirty days, for they went and returned at their own pace; and if there were mutinies, they were due to the discipline that the Adelantado tried to impose to curb the depredations. Plunder and lust were the food of these tigers, which even the Pope himself had been unable to take away from them.

Such were the rulers of the savage.

In accordance with the royal decree, Irala had registered and distributed with perfect fairness the first Indians, numbering twenty-six thousand.

To this end, they were divided into two classes. The yanaconas, or those defeated in war, who made up the perpetual encomiendas; and the mitayos, who submitted voluntarily or by capitulation, in whose encomiendas only men between the ages of eighteen and fifty worked.

fifty years of age worked in their encomiendas. Their annual labour was not to exceed two months, leaving them free the rest of the time, and it is difficult to conceive of anything more humane; but as the government, in an attempt to open up the country as quickly as possible, allowed private expeditions against the Indians and the consequent establishment of yanacona encomiendas, which were naturally the most sought after, the mitayas were effectively abolished.

His institution was something of a moral alibi for those in power; but given the prevailing customs and legal concept, the exception became the rule, further emphasising the conquering nature of the occupation.

The obligations imposed by the Crown on the encomenderos regarding the treatment of their Indians were also abolished. In both types of encomienda, the owner could not sell or abandon them, even for reasons of illness; he was also obliged to care for them, feed them, teach them, and give them work; and there was another provision that provided a real guarantee for the future: both the yanaconas and the mitayos were freed after two generations, with the sole obligation of paying a modest tribute.

Everything concerning relations between the Indian and the encomendero was a sentimentalism that was impossible to apply; but that manumission was a wise measure of government, as it radically prevented the harm of perpetual slavery. Had it been persisted with, nothing would have been lacking for the secular conquest to be completely successful; but the tendency to improvise arbitrary and entirely formal legislation caused the experiment to fail in a crisis of impatience. An unfortunate expedition ⁵⁴ was enough to kill the fruit that might have been achieved, placing its cultivation in other hands.

Meanwhile, the provinces of Vera and Guayra had already been under the encomienda system for fifty years, so that their Indians were

They were about to be released when they were handed over to the Jesuits.

I do not believe that this would have been very successful, but the experiment was not carried out, and the question remains, with one circumstance tending to reinforce it.

As the Spaniards did not bring women with them, their polygamous unions with the indigenous women produced numerous mestizos, who were free according to royal will, and it can be inferred that their contact with the Indians could have been beneficial to the latter; but I insist that these are only conjectures.

The established fact is that the encomiendas constituted, in spite of the laws, effective slavery, considerably aggravated by the increased exploitation of the herb fields. That unbridled speculation, which even today is a hateful tyranny, abolished all notion of pity and even respect for human life.

The semi-slavery of the Indian worked against him, for since no capital had been invested in him, his owner had no interest in keeping him. He worked with brutal excess and was so hungry that he sometimes succumbed to starvation while carrying his load. At the same time, the cruelty of the conquerors continued to take its toll on their ranks, and their decline was so rapid that in some places they were reduced to one in a thousand.

He was barely granted the status of a man, with philosophy and theology combined to declare him, moreover, a slave by birth. The encomienda, a feudal institution that flourished throughout most of the Middle Ages, took root like an indigenous plant, with nothing to contain its abuses against the servile and defenceless race and against the spirit of the conqueror, who was even more regressive, if possible, reviving his qualities as a champion in an environment that imperiously encouraged them.

His inability to produce and his disdain for work made the oppression even heavier, since he limited himself to commanding sier-

you, without collaborating in their tasks, residing here their substantial difference with the colonist.

Perhaps spiritual patronage of the Indians would have been enough to contain their excesses, but the Crown did not know how to reconcile, intolerance being its characteristic, and the Jesuits were too absorbing to resign themselves to sharing power. The experiment in theocracy was therefore to be carried out in all its breadth.

The first religious figures to preach the Gospel to the Guaraní people of Paraguay proper were the Franciscans Armenta and Lebrón, whom Alvar Núñez found in Santa Catalina in 1541; but I have already said that priests had no significant influence during the secular conquest.

Strictly speaking, the 'spiritual conquest', as I will call it, adopting the term used by one of its most famous authors (Father Montoya), began at the end of the exploratory expansion of the other, merging with it in its essential concept.

The first Jesuits known to the Guaraní people arrived in Brazil in 1549. From 1554 onwards, this country formed a spiritual province, and the Jesuits began their foundations, rapidly moving inland from the Atlantic coast to the headwaters of the Paraná River, increasing their number to thirty. One of these, Manizoba, was located in Guayra itself.

The reader already knows that Brazil's rapid prosperity put the Spanish government on alert, prompting the Mendoza expedition. Those settlements, which were beginning to be established on Spanish territory itself, were not the least source of suspicion, for the Jesuits, consistent with their policy, obeyed the governments under whose jurisdiction they found themselves, thus serving the general interests of the order. The order knew no homeland and therefore had immense superiority over

those, in terms of the unity of their action and the multiplicity of their means.

The evangelisation of the Guaraní tribes, which provided the experimental basis for the future empire project, had begun with admirable methods. The captaincies of Brazil were centres of operations that naturally aspired to establish relations with those established in Tucumán, but they needed an intermediary due to the inaccessible distance between them, and Paraguay presented itself as the obvious choice. What the conquest sought to achieve on its part, adapting to the circumstances created by unplanned discoveries, the Jesuits conceived by adopting it in the territory already possessed.

They surpassed others in their prior knowledge, which for her had been a fortuitous consequence, and they had a much greater capacity to organise an enterprise, due to their iron discipline, the simplification of method that came with their renunciation of all earthly incentives for the good of their order, and the contribution, to this end, of the great intellects they possessed.

In 1588, the first missionaries arrived in Paraguay, sent from Brazil. They were experienced missionaries and knew Guaraní. Their mission was to seek, in reverse, the contact that had been initiated thirty years earlier by Guaira, that reduction of Manizoba, which had failed in its attempt because of its Portuguese origin, which naturally made it suspicious to the Spanish expeditionaries in that territory.

By settling in Asunción, those Jesuits placed themselves under Spanish influence, thus avoiding patriotic jealousy, while their companions in Brazil continued to work together on the planned project. But as Spain was the stronger power, and as its dominions extended to the very coast of that country, the latter limited themselves to remaining there. Paraguay was chosen as the centre of influence, and the unity of action that was sought was soon established

shortly thereafter by the constitution of the spiritual province, which, as will be recalled, embraced such diverse regions.

This revealed a future action, as communication between these regions did not exist. If this province was merely a subdivision detached from Peru to facilitate its spiritual administration, another should have been created in Tucumán. For while the secular conquest would continue to seek contact with Peru, from that centre and from Paraguay, the spiritual conquest, more audacious, more logical, and unhindered by territorial boundaries, would direct all its aspirations towards achieving maritime relief along the coast of Brazil.

The first, directed from Spain on the basis of reports that were not always impartial and accurate, was guided by the mirage of gold; more than the Portuguese possessions would have always opposed it, if it had wanted to take the course of the second.

This, conceived by a power that was not distracted by political complications and free from economic hardship, benefited from the outset from the experience of seasoned and intelligent men who perceived without hesitation its future greatness, while at the same time appreciating the real importance of that gold that had so many heads spinning. Patriotic interests did not distrust it, since its influence was equal in rival nations, and the Gospel gave it an admirable banner to guarantee the consideration of both.

The relationship with Peru, which could not be entirely abandoned, remained secondary, however, especially in the early days and while a powerful centre of operations was being established; but it was never abandoned altogether. It was also a possession of the order, whose border it was advisable to frequent.

The first mission to Paraguay was composed of Fathers Soloni, Ortega, and Fildi. The first was a veteran of the missions. Already in 1576, accompanying his teacher, Father Gaspar Tulio Brasiliense,

He had founded the Santo Tomé reduction among the Imayaras. Added to these foundations, until 1577, were that of San Ignacio among the Surtáís, and that of San Pablo on the coast, near the Sergipe River. The aforementioned priest had been preaching for fourteen years in Brazil, where he was ordained. His companions travelled as far as Guayra, where, together with Fathers Barzana, Lorenzana and Aquila, who arrived from Tucumán shortly afterwards, they formed the first group of Paraguayan reductions.

Organising missions, which were more like reconnaissance expeditions, expansion remained paralysed until 1599, when Soloni died and Lorenzana was appointed superior.

Shortly afterwards, Father Esteban Páez, Visitor of the region, taking into account the distance between those priests and their headquarters in Peru, which prevented them from being effectively assisted, decided that they should withdraw to Tucumán, entrusting the evangelisation to those from Brazil, who were closer and knew the language of the natives. Lorenzana and Ortega left, but Fildi fell ill in Asunción.

There is no doubt that those priests reported in detail to their superiors on the conditions of the territory they had explored, its location between Tucumán and Brazil, the possibility of a sea outlet through this country once contact had been made, the ease of communication with Peru and Buenos Aires, the favourable nature of the race and the consequent ease of dominating it, favoured even more by the military influence of the Spanish. If we add to this the knowledge of the extraordinary fertility and excellent climate, which promised great rewards for intelligent work, it is not too far-fetched to suppose that the idea of the Empire was conceived from that moment on.

The Jesuits were too experienced not to understand that theocratic restoration would no longer prosper in Europe; but

At the same time, they were determined enough to take advantage of the experimental situation that presented itself. Their missions in Asia could not aspire to influence the politics of established empires, which were able to effectively oppose them with the prestige of organised religions; but the order was eminently political, because of its modern procedures, and did not resign itself to proceeding like so many others. It therefore gladly welcomed the opportunity presented to it in that peaceful country, with the rudimentary social structure of its tribes, as a malleable mass sensitive to any pressure, and immediately set about implementing its vast plan.

The first step was the establishment of the spiritual province of Paraguay, which the fifth General of the Society, Father Claudio Aquaviva, carried out in 1604. The previous year, Hernandarias had led an expedition against the tribes of Uruguay, but fortune was not on his side, as they managed to wipe out his infantry. This led him to request the Crown to establish missions, considering any further action against the Indians to be fruitless.

Such pessimism, clearly surprising in such an intrepid character, and when the memory of Irala was still fresh, makes me suspect that the Jesuit influence, always great on him, was not unrelated to his determination.

In any case, in its royal order of 30 January 1609, the Crown commissioned the reduction of the Indians or the Jesuits.

The organisation was set up with such timing that it reveals at first glance an understanding between the Jesuit generalate and the government, for the latter was too jealous of its prerogatives not to protest effectively if the former had proceeded without its consent.

Indeed, the Jesuit general had entrusted the superior of the company in Peru, Fr. Romero, with the establishment of the

province of Paraguay, which in 1607 had its first Provincial in the person of Fr Diego de Torres Bollo, who began his tasks accompanied by fifteen priests.

Everything was well disposed in favour of the new missionaries, revealing the certainty of their calculations. It could be said that America was predestined for that influence. In 1508, Ruysch's map called the southern part Terra Sancta Cruds, a name that was apparently in common use, since the Lenox globe repeated it as ⁵⁵ ; and focusing specifically on Paraguay, we find that shortly before the period I am referring to, its bishop was Fray Martín Ignacio de Loyola, none other than the nephew of the founder of the Society of Jesus.

Seventeen years of active work in the yerba mate industry had made the cruelty of the encomenderos intolerable, so when Alfaro, the Crown Visitor, carried out the investigation entrusted to him by the Crown on the situation of the Paraguayan Indians, he did not hesitate to take their side, in agreement with the Jesuits, whose action he decisively supported with his famous ordinances. Hernandarias' second government, in 1615, further strengthened his nation's power.

The government, whose theocratic ideal was so well suited to that essay, regarded the authors as its favourite vassals, facilitating their actions with all manner of privileges.

They thus made a successful entry into the country, which had already been opened up in its entirety by the conquests of the conquistadors, demonstrating their secondary role in this regard, with only one consideration:

While his discoveries were remarkable in North America and Asia during the same period, during the century and a half that his empire lasted in Paraguay, only three expeditions of this kind are recorded. Those of Fathers Castañares and Patino along the Pilcomayo, and that of Father Ramón along the Negro and Orinoco rivers o⁵⁶.

Religion played no part in the six major expeditions that explored the territory between 1515 and 1610. The secular conquest unfolded on its own, and with such success that only eight of its twenty-eight settlements were destroyed, while thirteen of the Jesuits' settlements in La Guayra, plus many others, totalling forty, disappeared for the same reason.

From here to judging, along with Azara and other liberals, that the first undertaking was superior to the second, there is a great distance; and if I have insisted once again on the comparison, it is so that we may see how the historical law, by virtue of which military conquest precedes religious conquest, was fulfilled here once again.

At the same time, foundations continued in Tucumán and Peru, with two powerful centres in Córdoba and Santa Fe, which, together with Paraguay and Brazil, already gave a glimpse of future domination. The settlements of La Guayra and the Tape district had such a clear objective of joining forces with the coastal regions of Brazil that they left the territory between them and Asunción almost abandoned, even though there were plenty of infidels there. The simultaneous attack by the Mamluks on both points shows that they too were aware of the plan pursued by their powerful rivals.

The Jesuits reacted to the idea that considered the Indians to be semi-rational beasts, but rather to regard them as children, which was equivalent to prolonging their tutelage indefinitely. The Jesuits, in relation to their protégés, were in the same situation as the encomenderos, and they should be praised for not having abused it; but the fact is that, except for the good treatment, the conquering tendency remained intact.

As the most select spirits had adopted, as I said, the ecclesiastical career when Spanish decline was pronounced, their greater delicacy of feelings and moral elevation led to more humane treatment of the Indians in the missions. Pe-

Hollow theology and accommodating piety influenced the spiritual conquest, turning conversions into a mechanical affair. The aim was to baptise at all costs; and sometimes a tribe, defeated in the afternoon, was Christianised en masse the following day, with no evangelical communication other than the very precarious one between the victors and the vanquished.

Given the stark contrast between their moral situations and the fact that they operated in such opposing psychological spheres, it is clear that preaching yielded only insignificant results. In the early days, it was sometimes carried out with the help of interpreters, and it is easy to imagine how the theological concepts of Catholicism would have been conveyed to savage minds, translated by a talkative Guaraní speaker.

Although the missionaries certainly had the Franciscan catechism in the indigenous language, and even though some already knew it, the difficulties were almost insurmountable in communicating such subtle and complicated matters as theology, without the aboriginal fetishism presenting a single opportunity in its crude simplicity. The erratic consciousness of the Indian produced an obstacle that was perhaps even greater, leaving no other recourse than direct and authoritarian imposition.

That was what was done, imprinting on that indolent plasticity, further heightened by her defeated state, the mark of theocracy, and attracting her with the only means of communication possible, given her psychological impenetrability: sensual temptation, through sweets, music, paintings, etc.—an art in which, yesterday as today, those religious figures were masters.

The Indians only adopted the outward appearance of the new religion, without this detracting from the missionaries' intentions, as they had to start somewhere; but there is no evidence that they left there. It was a replacement of their miserable and rudimentary idolatry with another, full of ostentatious ceremonies, in which

They were allowed to participate in costumes and titles that flattered the Indian's passion for pomp and ceremony. The charro style, characteristic of Jesuit ornaments and temples, was closer to their mentality than the severe beauty of the classical types, with their excessive decoration, which the Jesuits exaggerated even further.

Patron saint festivals in the villages and the King's name days have left a memory of barbaric luxury in the chronicles, which reveals the method with significant eloquence.

Everything was, naturally, religious. The embroidered ornaments sparkled in the sun; perfumed waters were served at the ceremonies. There was an abundance of incense and bell ringing; and above all, this supreme connection between primitive gratitude and religion gave rise to the celebrations: it was a day for feasting and dressing up. Entire families took pride in the rochet and shoes of an altar boy. The people enthusiastically applauded the groups of children, who, dressed in ceremonial attire, recited praises or danced, composing mystical figures with their movements to the beat of boisterous orchestras. Firecrackers, boxes, bugles and bells spread their sonorous thrill through the trembling of the gualdrapas, rising to the delirium of the clamorous fanfare. Military drills ignited the warlike atavism of the still wild blood; bullfights, autos in Guaraní, crude comedies filled the programme, all topped off by a general feast in the open air, under the galleries surrounding the square.

The Corpus Christi procession was particularly sumptuous. The officiant walked around the square, stopping at numerous seats, beneath whose foliage birds of the most brilliant colours fluttered, also serving as colourful decorations with fish preserved in tiny canoes. The acolytes scattered roasted corn kernels on the ground, imitating white flowers, and the sweetness of the air, perfumed by the nearby orange grove, gave the festival a tender, solemn atmosphere.

But the childish nature of this devotion was evident in everything, even in the churches, which were more sumptuous than solid, generally built of mud but lavishly decorated with bells, images, gilding and candles. Suffice it to say that only in the last churches built after a century and a half of rule was mortar used to lay the stones.

The conquest was not, however, entirely peaceful, although it certainly presented a notable contrast to the excesses of the secular authorities. The Fathers also subjugated some tribes by force, but their preferred method was seduction. They began by demanding only baptism, knowing that once the Indians gave in to something, they would end up giving in to everything.

Despite their gentleness, most of the tribes remained unconquered, although this cannot be attributed to a lack of time, since at the time of the expulsion, the population had decreased.

The social system in place in the reductions was the same as that of the Company, although the cream of society, with their limited tasks, and the communist organisation of some tribes undoubtedly facilitated its implementation.

Each reduction had its own chief and Spanish-style authorities, but all of this was nominal. In fact, there was no other authority than the priests, and all those mayors, magistrates, and lieutenants were never more than political decorations, without the slightest effective authority.

The privileged position that the government created for the Jesuits in the reductions was evident from the outset in the collection of taxes. The *encomienda* tax was replaced by an annual tax of one peso ⁵⁷on every man between the ages of eighteen and fifty. This single tax still exempted the chiefs and their firstborn sons, the magistrates, and twelve individuals assigned to the service of the temples. With the tithe, set at one hundred pesos per year, all fiscal obligations were concluded.

However, as labour was compulsory for everyone in the reductions from the age of five, the work done by women and children, however little it was, remained as liquid capital, thus creating extremely advantageous competition with secular employers.

The encomenderos had to pay a monthly wage of forty reales⁵⁸ to their Indians, and five pesos for each one to the Crown, or buy slaves for farms such as sugar plantations, which only blacks could endure; this created a situation of commercial animosity between the two conquests. The Crown was unable to maintain the balance, proceeding more on gut feeling than on calculation between those interests: and the result of its measures, naturally inspired by the Jesuits, ultimately proved detrimental to the natives.

These were either servants of the Fathers who were thrown into commercial speculation, with the privilege that made it lucrative, or victims of the hatred aroused by the rivalry between lay people and religious. Their servile condition remained unshakeable in both cases.

IV - THE CONQUISTA ESPIRITUAL

Not all Indians accepted Jesuit domination. It was chosen almost exclusively by those most oppressed by the encomenderos, who sought relief, since they were unable to provide it for themselves, in a less cruel form of servitude. The reduced were therefore a minority, with the most rebellious, that is, the most interesting, absent from the work.

The reductions of Quilmes and Baradero, so close to Buenos Aires, were a failure; the same can be said of those that attempted to evangelise Patagonia; the Calchaquies were entirely destroyed and plundered during the Bohórquez rebellion, despite appearing to be assured of great industrial success.

Leaving aside the small tribes that were not reduced, such as the savage Nalimegas, Guatás, Ninaquiguilás, etc., and counting only the nations that contained many factions, we have the following result of survivors:

The Guayanás, a nation so numerous that it was believed to be made up of all the non-Guaraní tribes, it being noteworthy that this designation then included only the reduced Indians. They were very docile people, however; they never caused harm to the reductions, with which they lived in continuous contact, helping the

converts in the work of the herb gardens through some bartering.

Next in order of numerical or military importance were the Charrúas; the Tupies, who were so unsociable that they let themselves starve to death when they were taken prisoner; the Bugres; the Mbayás; the Payaguás,⁵⁹ the warlike Toba; the ferocious Mocovies and many others, especially those from the Chaco.

The defection of the guanas and the jarás proves how weak the ties that bound them to that rudimentary civilisation really were.

With immense effort, the missionaries had managed to subdue them, when one day they appeared before their director, informing him that they had decided to return to their former way of life, for the God who was preached to them was a very troublesome deity, because, being everywhere, there was no way to escape his scrutiny.

The intellectual state of those Indians is revealed with great clarity in that argument.

Another mission that also failed was that of the Guaycurúes, a warlike tribe whose reduction would have been advisable; but the missionaries had to abandon them after seventeen years of fruitless efforts.

The isolation of the tribes, their misery and rivalries; the established secular rule; and the skilfully exploited religious identities were circumstances favourable to reduction. The priests had found that Pay Zumé, a vague deity worshipped by the Guaraní, could have been none other than the apostle Saint Thomas (Father Torné) adapting to the region one of the many religious legends that the dominant fanaticism believed to be scattered throughout the American jungles, in favour of capricious euphonic similarities between languages, or mythological coincidences — such as the discovery of the two Hebrew tribes, lost since the schism of Rehoboam, the evangelical trail that was believed to be de-

end in the indigenous use of the cross as a religious symbol, and that supposed preaching of Saint Thomas.

The legend was successful, and the P.P. applied it to their liking and perhaps in good faith, taking advantage of the inevitably confused traditionalism of tribes without literature. The veneration of the cross (which was equally Quichua and Calchaquina) had been taught to them by the apostle; his footprints were engraved in the sandstone, and it was he who had given them possession of those lands. The latter would later be used as an argument by the Indians before the commissioners executing the treaty of 1750.

Their childish cosmogony, as well as their belief in the immortality of the soul and their fear of ghosts, lent themselves to any adaptation by the most cunning; their lack of patriotism, in the elevated sense that makes this feeling a force, and the ease with which everyone understood Guaraní, the root of their dialects, added new facilities to the work of evangelisation. Even polygamy, which is the most difficult obstacle for the missions, was, for most, nothing more than an aspiration that was almost never realised.

When the priests became convinced that seduction was not enough to attract the most savage Guaraní, despite their proximity, they resorted, as I said, to more expeditious means.

One of these was the purchase of prisoners of war taken by the tribes, even though this meant fostering discord; for the essential thing, as can easily be seen, was the establishment of the Empire. Another consisted of employing cunning neophytes, who sought to infiltrate the tribes to induce them to convert to the new state. The Indians who managed to attract them to their cult provided the pretext for more decisive intervention.

The priests would then arrive at the tribe, claiming to have been attracted by the fame of the chief, whom they flattered and showered with gifts, causing agitation among the people.

Any subsequent incident—the protest of the sorcerer who, of course, rose up against the intruders, the refusal of the requested chieftain, his coercion of the converted lovers—was interpreted aggressively, justifying the use of arms.

The P.P. combined the divine with the human in their work, with a fine practical spirit, and never undertook it without the corresponding military support. Those who entered La Guayra in 1609 already had their escort of musketeers.⁶⁰

There remained, moreover, other means of supporting the war effort. Impressive events, such as storms, images representing the torments of hell or the bliss of the saints, applied appropriately to the matter at hand and easily competing with miserable sorcerers, soon gave them the advantage. These were, above all, doctors; and one can imagine how that science, the basis of their prestige, would fare in competition with civilised and astute men whose actions were miraculous in comparison.

The acts of war produced nothing but victories; and the battles fought by the brave Guaraní Maracaná, led by the P.P., against the chiefs Taubici and Atiguajé were famous in those days. The former, who was also a sorcerer, was thrown into a river with a stone around his neck.

Three others, Yagua-Pitá, Guirá-Verá and Chimboi, the first two killed in battle and the other seriously wounded, cemented the prestige of the P.P., even under military rule. They came to hold true sieges, in entrenched camps and with good tactics, as Father Fildi demonstrated in his fight against Guirá-Verá.

Reprisals were few, with a total of five missionaries killed: Fathers González, Mendoza, Castañares, Castillo and Rodríguez.⁶¹ Miraculous legends abounded in

around these events. It was said that Father González's heart had spoken from his grave, and that the fire refused to consume his body. The zeal of the missionaries was rekindled by this, with some lamenting on their deathbeds that they had not received martyrdom.

But the masses yielded everywhere with remarkable docility, although I do not believe, as clerical writers maintain, that it was organised by the Jesuits in the only way possible, given their moral conditions.

It has been claimed, in effect, that communism was required because of its idle and unpredictable nature; isolation, because of its variability, which constantly exposed it to adventures outside Jesuit patronage; and the exclusive adoption of its language, because it did not tolerate Spanish. This may be so, but the fact is that there is no evidence of a single contradictory attempt, which would have been useful if the aim was not to make the indigenous people incapable of self-government.

My opinion is that the Jesuits, taking as their basis for social organisation that of their own institute, which logically seemed to them to be the best, turned the reductions into a great Company, in which neither regimented communism nor characteristic silence were lacking. In the villages, singing was only permitted on holy days, and even children's games lacked spontaneity. Everything was regulated by the ringing of bells and the exclusive will of the religious.

Evangelisation came to a halt as soon as the success guaranteed by the privileges granted by the Crown and the fertility of the country determined the profitability of the enterprise. The mystical ideal then gave way to the economic one, even though it continued to influence the success of the latter with its proven prestige. At that point, all the activity of those religious factories was devoted to seeking a maritime outlet, which the secular conquest had attempted with the expedition of Chaves, through the Moré and the Marañón.

Moré and Marañón. It was in this endeavour that it was to suffer its first setback.

Some Portuguese deportees and Dutch pirates had founded a kind of libertarian colony in the Brazilian province of São Paulo, which they maintained by exploiting the labour of the Indians as they saw fit. A clash was inevitable between these two forces, which were pursuing the same goal but using completely opposite means. They were self-made men of one type against another antagonistic type, and they fought fiercely for supremacy.

Humanity and civilisation must stand with the Jesuits in this struggle, for they represented the defence of the weak against such hordes of lawless criminals; but the problem this implies is not merely sentimental. It lies above all in the unequal condition created for the "Paulistas" by the Jesuit privilege, with its tax exemptions, and the intervention of the government to bring the Indians under such influence⁶².

Their invasion of La Guayra was tremendous. They entered with blood and fire, intent on destroying their rivals' stronghold forever, and they exterminated them almost without opposition. Those soldiers suggested savage horrors with their ragged masses, their irregular and monstrous weaponry, their raw leather morions and their al-godó armour⁶³.

They swept away all resistance, mistreating the Jesuits who tried to stop them, and even murdering them, as in the case of Father Arias. Not even the sacred vestments they wore were powerful enough to restrain them. They looted and desecrated homes and churches alike. At one point, they destroyed the settlements of Guayra and Tape, but like all marauders, they lacked perseverance, and once they had had their fill of booty, they thought only of enjoying it. To this, the priests owed the relative success of their retreat.

Nevertheless, the blow was terrible. The mountains were filled with children and dying people, who had fallen behind the herd of slaves led away in insolent triumph. Contemporary Jesuits put the number at sixty thousand. Father Maceta travelled to Brazil in vain in search of justice. There was none to be had against the enriched montoneros, who were already beginning to talk of a new attack. He had no choice but to return, to avoid it by fleeing, and consequently decided to abandon the thirteen Guayrana reductions.

Under the command of Father Montoya, twelve thousand people, with seven hundred boats, travelled down the Paraná River towards what is now the territory of Misiones. Those days were memorable for their tragic events, such as the destruction of the canoes in the rapids of the great waterfall and the plague that struck the expeditionaries. They even had to suspend their journey for an entire season while they sowed and harvested what they needed to sustain themselves. If anything stands out with admirable character in this colossal exodus, it is the figure of Father Montoya, an apostle worthy of the epic for his heroism and genius.

The banks of the Yababirí, where the emigrants finally arrived, had supported ten settlements since 1611. There they were welcomed, and with their establishment began the firm existence of the central nucleus of the Empire and the definitive foundations that, over time, would become the thirty-three famous towns. The first thirteen were given the same names as those abandoned in La Guayra, which undoubtedly explains the chronological errors made by Azara and his followers.

Thus, the centre of the Empire had shifted, but those men, with a determination worthy of triumph, did not abandon their project.

Thirty years later, the spiritual conquest was already flourishing vigorously in the new territory, through which, dominating both

banks of the Uruguay, it penetrated Brazil once again, seeking its coast at Porto Alegre without losing sight of its objective. Once reorganised, its performance was more than satisfactory. river, as will be seen: although it would be as exaggerated to attribute an exclusively commercial character to it as to deny it altogether. In reality, the P.P. had no reason to refuse a fair profit, especially when it was not for their personal enrichment.

Clerical writers have striven to demonstrate, exaggerating their point, that the Indians were very light on work under that regime, enjoying, rather, a disguised idleness. This is not indicated by the rapid progress of the Missions, where the priests were also very few (usually two in each) for their personal work to have an influence. If the difficulty lies in conjecturing the whereabouts of their favourable balances, I do not see it. In the end, it was a human endeavour, and I do not think it should be overshadowed by another success, such as industrial success. Its monetary product would naturally go to the generalate, being invested for the good of the order and religion, because as far as usefulness is concerned, it is evident e ⁶⁴.

A strict economy prevailed in the reductions. All products were stored, providing the P.P. with the maintenance of each one, with the administration of the warehouses, and sending the rest to Buenos Aires, from where they returned with consumer goods and ornaments, after deduction of ecclesiastical and civil taxes.

But the needs of the population were not great. As for fabrics, they used exclusively cotton, produced and woven there, and they went barefoot. Their food was also produced locally, with the sole exception of salt, which was imported; their dwellings required no foreign materials; weapons and gunpowder were manufactured there; luxury did not exist, as life was regulated and equal for all, and as for objects of worship, these, by their very nature, required few replacements.

objects of worship, these, by their very nature, require few replacements.

However, only the herb fields of the seven villages located on the left bank of the Uruguay River were estimated to be worth one million pesos; the cotton fields were vast; the pastures were densely populated; and industry provided enough to export textiles and artefacts to neighbouring regions. The reductions therefore produced much more than they spent.

Doblas, who knew them when they were already in decline, calculated the average expenditure and resources attributable to each town, and this will be my basis for estimating total production, not only because these are official data that cannot be assumed to be exaggerated, since that would in any case have worked against his *auto r*⁶⁵, but also because he was more of a friend to the Jesuits.

The aforementioned official calculated the expenditure of a village of 1,200 inhabitants *s*⁶⁶ at 8,000 pesos per annum, including administrative and parish salaries, which did not exist in Jesuit times; and the product at 40 to 50 pesos per inhabitant, plus 3,000 from livestock.

Assuming a thousand working people, discounting two hundred who were sick or disabled, since everyone was employed from the age of five, this leaves a production surplus of 30,000 pesos in round figures.

During Jesuit rule, the population of the reductions reached 150,000 inhabitants (in 1743), but I do not want to count it as more than 100,000—although in 1715 it had already risen to 117,488—attributing the rest to children under five and the sick, who were very few in number, given the healthy climate.

Including in the 40 *pesos*⁶⁷ per inhabitant, which Doblas indicates as the lowest term of his estimate, the product of the earnings as well, the result is 4,000,000 per annum.

Let us estimate one million pesos in expenses. In reality, it would be exactly 668,000 pesos; but to this sum must be added the expenses incurred by the patron saint festivals, which I will calculate at 1,000 pesos each so as not to haggle, since Doblas allocated 300 to 400 to the most modest ones. At one per town, that is 33,000 pesos, leaving more than 300,000 as a favourable surplus, to which imported goods and ornaments can be added.

Well, even with all these concessions, the result is still excellent; counting only from 1700, even though production was already very strong before that date, the net result is more than two hundred million.

Doblas was a merchant and would know how to appreciate it well; but even if we reduce his production estimate by half and exclude the fact that it was verified during the decline of the Empire, we still have one hundred million in sixty-seven years, which, given the value of the currency at that time, represents a solid exploitation n⁶⁸.

It is not true, then, that the proceeds of the reductions were all invested for his benefit. Even if we assign them exaggerated expenses, as we have just seen, these do not come close to equalling it.

Livestock farming became remarkably important in these areas. The fields of Corrientes and Río Grande were populated with ranches, each with twenty to thirty thousand head of cattle; but since all the towns had to be supplied for consumption, those in the current territory of Misiones had to import the necessary salt. I believe that the evaporation system mentioned in Chapter II must have supplied it for the cattle, as it was very economical, as was the transport by carts along the excellent roads of the time.

Some reductions favoured livestock farming, while others favoured agriculture in the general production of the territory.

The most important crops were yerba and cotton. There were sugar cane fields, but I do not know if the mills supplied this product; in any case, their almost exclusive yield was molasses, as is the case today. The forest also provided yerba, albeit of inferior quality to that grown in gardens, but in much greater quantities; it was transported by river to Buenos Aires on enormous rafts that carried up to 100,000 kilograms and sailed almost at the mercy of the current.

The Jesuit monopoly was absolute, as no currency circulated in the reductions.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Furthermore, as it was almost impossible for merchants to enter the reductions, since only six of the thirty-three on the right bank of the Paraná could trade freely, the Jesuits were the sole exporters. This gave rise to their interest in dominating both rivers and controlling access to the ocean.

It has been said that communism constituted happiness itself, as it did not allow for poor or rich people; and this would have been debatable, had the Indians been their own administrators. But under the absolute tutelage of the P.P., who had unlimited control over profits, it was nothing more than a theocratic empire, in which everyone was truly poor, except for the masters.

They did not even have their own food, as this was not granted to them; their clothing was a very light uniform: breeches, a shirt and a cotton cap for the men; for the women, a skirt of the same material—and, as I have already mentioned, they all went barefoot. Their diet, almost entirely vegetarian, consisted of a simple but tasty and plentiful mixture of beans and cassava.

Monastic discipline was evident in everything, effectively aided by isolation. From the territory, as archaic as it was, to the indigenous language, preserved with the strict exclusion of Spanish, circumstances converged towards the same end.

The maritime outlet, so eagerly sought after, had, apart from its commercial importance, an identical purpose.

Buenos Aires was a constant obstacle to the theocratic project, due to the liberal spirit that came from its relations with heretical trade and the smuggling of banned books; moreover, the Jesuits were the smallest of the communities there. Avoiding it was part of the overall plan, as this would allow them to escape the control of the civil authorities.⁷⁰

That power in that isolation gave the Empire an indisputable existence in fact, even though politically it was part of the Spanish monarchy. The only obstacle to autonomy would have been that government; but as the Jesuits were realising their ideal of the Christian Empire here, far from hindering them, it encouraged them more and more. And so close was this relationship that the rise of the Missions began to coincide with a dominant idea of the monarch, perfectly clear as a synchronous indication: the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, the theological ideal of the Jesuits.

The Superior of the reductions was appointed directly from Rome by the General of the Society, with complete independence from the local church. He resided in Yapeyú, with all the powers of a bishop, as he was even authorised to administer confirmation. Bishops Cárdenas and Antequera, to mention only the most famous conflicts, experienced the power of the P.P., the former being expelled from the reductions despite his aim of supervising them, while the latter lost his head in the lawsuit. However, it should be added that the order did not lose its characteristic discipline in its discretionary isolation. Chaste and sober, its members preached by example. Their studious tendency did not relax in the enervating contact with the jungle, their prestige residing above all in talent and virtue.

One of them, Father Suárez, a distinguished cosmographer, built the most necessary instruments for his science with his own hands: telescopes up to five feet long and an astronomical clock, which Alvear, a skilled navigator, considered a remarkable achievement.⁷¹

There are still remains of sundials in Jesuit villages. Among others, I can mention one that has been restored in San Javier; another that is quite destroyed in Concepción, as the cube on which it is drawn was chiselled in search of treasures; and one in the church of Jesús (Paraguay) that the Jesuits left unfinished. It was undoubtedly intended to regulate the work of the builders, as a section of wall had been temporarily plastered over to mark it out, where it would serve until the vault was closed.

Several printing presses published religious books, with reports of five that were set up in San Miguel, Santa María, San Javier, Loreto, and Corpus, unless they were all part of the same travelling workshop, as others believe and I find more likely. The nature of their prints, as the reader will see, did not reflect the dominant style of the time. My illustrations come from *Historia y Bibliografía de la Imprenta en la América Española* (History and Bibliography of Printing in Spanish America) by José T. Medina, a work that the director of our National Library, Mr. P. Groussuc, recommended to me as the best for my purpose, for which I am grateful; both reproduce facsimiles of the famous mystical book by Father Juan Eusebio Nieremberg, *De la diferencia entre lo Temporal y Eterno*, etc. (On the Difference between the Temporal and the Eternal, etc.), translated into Guaraní by S. J. José Serrano. The text belongs to the first page,⁽⁷²⁾ and the plate, one of the forty-four that illustrated it, to page 96. I preferred these because they are the most significant typographical work produced by the printing presses of the reductions during their short period of operation. In fact, it barely lasted twenty-two years (from 1705 to 1727), and it is not known for certain why publications were suspended; but the aforementioned *Semanario de un Siglo*, which Father Suárez published in Barcelona in 1752, shows that by this time there were no longer any printing presses.

in the Missions. Not given to pointless novelties, I have preferred a modest reproduction of those works, provided that it presents the reader with the best possible copy.

There were also schools in all the villages, but both these and the printing presses used only Guaraní. The books of the Fathers were naturally in Latin and came mostly from Europe.

The topographical uniformity of the villages showed only slight exceptions.

A square measuring 125 metres on each side, with the church, convent and cemetery on one side. On the other three sides, there were houses, generally made of stone, with continuous galleries that allowed people to walk under cover.

Streets formed by two rows of houses led to the square. Each row was isolated, and the width of the streets between them, shaded by orange trees, was variable and even irregular, which was all the more necessary given that cooking took place in front of the doors. These rows formed blocks, giving the whole area an entirely rectangular appearance. The streets had no pavements s⁷³.

The houses, with a door at the front and a window next to it, consisted of a single room that did not communicate with the neighbouring ones. These doors also opened onto the rear wall of the houses in the next row, apparently with the aim of preventing gossip. However, in the Paraguayan ruins of Jesús and Trinidad, some had windows and even doors at the back.

LIBRO I

YBİPEGVA YBAPEGVARA A.
G VIR E CO E H A B E T E M B O I E Q V A A N I.

Quatia yaoca yyipibae teco aguiyetei quaanabeĩ, hac
na teco apireĩ reheguara rugāy, ybipegua yepe
quaahabeĩ mombeuni rae.



M Bae amo potu ca-
tupirihaguamari y
mo aruzngatapira-
mbeteramo heconi
tāngē, hae ymoĩ-
ruāngatuhaguāma-
ri y quapirāmbete-
rāmo abe oico rangē oicobo rānone.
Quie ybipetenāngā ndipoti yquasa-
tuhaba acoi teco be apireĩ ybapegua
Tūpā nānde yara nānde mōnāngague
rupiruhaguāmari. Nā mbae poromo-
ñemondirabamo heconi, teco apireĩ
nāndembae āndupa pabēngātu agui
mombiriete hecorāmo, ndiyabupitĩ
moĩ, quie ybipe nānderēca pitepe-
guara yepe, hae nānde pope nānde
rembiabiquitĩ ndiyabecoupitĩ mōĩ,
bibe betenāngā ybapegua teco ašere-
mbiēchaēriac. Quarepotiyu coērā
mbae āmboae ašerecaupe ypoĩbae,
teco ñemboete, hae teco ybipegua po-
romōānga pibitibae aše remi porānge-
recoeteramo heconi, heco ybĩ quā-
cēramo. Ayporche S. Pedro guemĩ-
mboēcur S. Clemente mbocho ybipo
mēmē teco mbae yoabieĩmbipe om-
būye quaa anmbae: ndoyosbimoĩ co
ybipo cotĩ amoratati rebe tĩnibēngā-
tubae aše reša cōōhati agui. Aše egui
cotipe hināngārāmo, ocapegua quĩ-
riete

riete ndohechaicheamo, mābīte tenā-
ngā cotipo mēmē ari ndomāriche-
amo ranō, tatati tubicha bicha hecha-
cabāngue mōrāngue nūngārāmō, e-
guirāmi tenāngā ybipe tequati ndo-
bupitĩ moĩ ocapegua teco, cone, te-
cobe pucā amboae nānde rēmbie-
charāmbete, Emonaabe aše ndoiqua-
a: ybipo mēmēngāta teco, ybapo re-
co apireĩ rapitēĩmo ranō. Cobae
rebe tenāngā oaraguāētracāgui ybī-
pegua mbae tetitō hui bupirētrāngue
omoārurāuau, ybapeguara hecorā-
mbiētrāngue moĩruacimo coite, S.
Gregorio ñecēnguerupi, Coĩbĩ tešcaĩ-
po nānde ye pca hatĩ guōrĩ pape catu
guētāmbeteramo hereco tecoāũbo.
Hae ybĩ pitiū mĩmbiporāmo guēco
ara cēāngātuēimo herecobo ranō.
Mabītetēnāngā oguatābā. cāñēō-
ngatu opituhābamo herecobo ranō.
Cobae teco porābubĩ ou bupigua
quācēbaque rebe. Eguirāmi abe aše
teco māra mārāũ teco porāngeterā-
mo oguereco tecoau, hae teco catu-
pitĩ teco aibīeteramo oguereco teco-
au ranō. Aypobae rebe cobae nānde
mbae quāpabau oiquasārāmo, ſantō
Profeta Dauid Tūpā nānde yara upe
oñembocho, teco porāngete oyeupe
ymboichubarāmbete ari oyereteramo
nabeĩ

Fac-simile de la primera página del libro del P. Nieremberg.

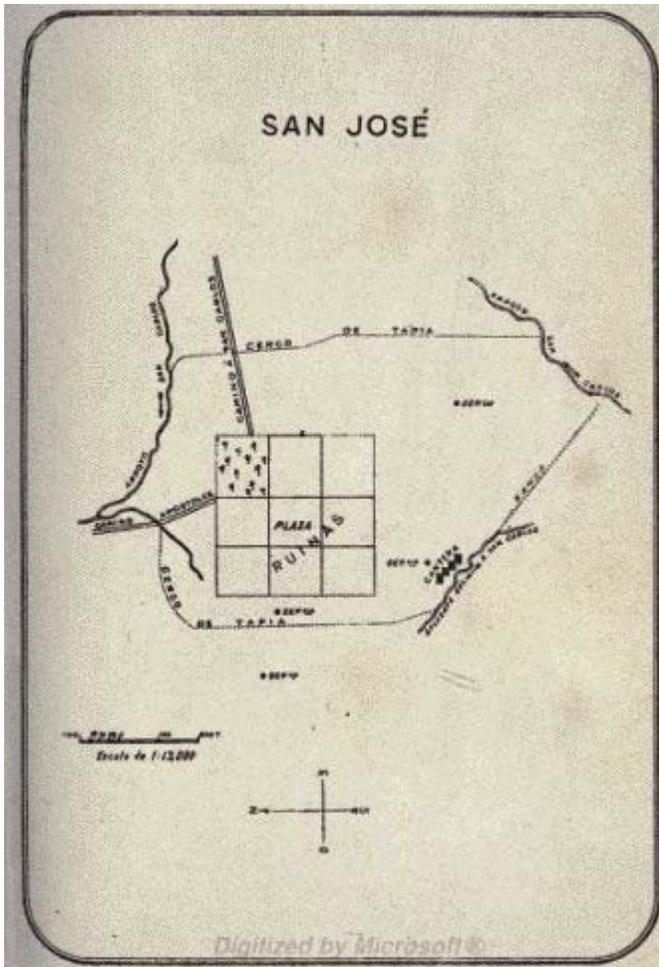
(REDUCIDO)

Built with thick blocks of tacurú stone, whose prismatic shape was exploited, finishing them in this form, their most common mortar was mud. Nor was it necessary to use mortar, as the stones were so well cut that they fitted together perfectly.

They were very heavy, given the broad base of those ashlar, and were generally used only to form the joints s⁷⁴.

Others were made of stone, but only up to half the height of the walls, with the rest forming a thick mud wall; very few were made of sandstone, and these were only found in the more recently founded villages; quite a few were made of mud and adobe. The roofs, made of very solid tiles, thousands of which are still preserved in certain villages, were gabled, very steep due to the continuous rains, which exaggerated their hood-like appearance; and the facades of some houses in the squares featured cresting formed by stone crescents. The floors were usually earthen, but the main rooms, as well as the cells of the priests, were paved with hexagonal tiles, many of which are still intact, as are their corresponding mortars. Almost none of them were plastered, with the exception of those surrounding the square, which also had a high relief weeping figure on the tympanum as decoration. The average size was five metres by five, and each one was large enough for a family. Heavy urunday doors completed the building. The interior was very cool, both because of the thickness of the walls and the reed ceiling, but it was truly filthy. Digging through the ruins to find the old floor, one finds, upon reaching its level, pieces of tile still covered with soot and grease. The exterior must have been very picturesque, due to the contrast between the red roofs and the metallic green of the orange grove. This impression would have been accentuated by the roughness of the walls, with their shade of old cement, if not the soft pink of the stoneware, giving a certain grandeur to the sturdy construction of those buildings. The walls, reinforced with strong urunday pillars, have withstood all the ravages of time, their stones bound together without coming apart by the roots of trees that came to seek the black earth of the mortar in their joints. They are now robust specimens—wild fig trees, orange trees and even cedars, swaying in the wild...

trusion on that ravaged salmer or that unbalanced impost.



A powerful wall or a deep moat defended the enclosures, especially those located on the coast of Uruguay and therefore more exposed to Mamluk incursions.⁽⁷⁵⁾Sometimes the two defences were combined, the moat usually being a continuation of the streams between which the town was almost always located, and whose impregnable groves formed a natural trench.

The reader can see a map of the old San José reduction, whose lines of defence I have reconstructed, considering them a typical example of a combination of wall and moat, served and completed by very narrow ford streams.

The ruins are a shapeless mound of earth, as walls predominated in that village; thus, the plan is limited to calculating their distribution given the area they cover and the capacity of certain rooms, vaguely determined by the location of some standing pillars, without attempting to establish anything other than the trench.

At varying distances between five hundred and two thousand metres from the village itself, there were posts that guarded the immediate pastureland; watchtowers strategically located; the hermitages where penitents would retreat for their practices, or where certain processions such as the Via Crucis would go; the asperon or slag quarries and one or two springs for bathing and washing.

These fountains were formed by springs captured with the greatest solidity in small stone cisterns, whose paved floor can be found shortly after probing, as well as their carved stone edges. Further on, the reader will find a description of one.

A plateau was preferred as a location for the population, for reasons of health and surveillance; and both this position and the defences, and the distribution of the buildings that the Jesuits strictly adjusted to the law ⁷⁶, gave the towns that perfect equality noted by travellers in Chinese cities; for ideas govern the world in such a way that the quietist spirit produces the same material effects across time and space.

The convent, attached to the church, was divided into two sections corresponding to two large courtyards. In the first, a vast rectangle measuring 60 metres by 40, there were cells measuring 6 metres by 6, all whitewashed and with rings fixed to the walls for hanging hammocks. The cloister was

heavy and sumptuous; and its pillars, measuring 0.20 to 0.40 metres in diameter, were up to 4 metres high.

Also located in this courtyard were the village's communal storehouse, the armoury, and the school. The refectory had a spacious cellar, much needed due to the hot climate. Underground passages also connected the convent to the village, undoubtedly for reasons of surveillance over the Indians; another led to the crypt, which was located under the steps of the high altar, and in which only the remains of the Fathers were deposited. These tombs were intended to last a long time, as the one in Trinidad (Paraguay) had fifteen, and it is known that there were only two priests per reduction.

In the second courtyard were workshops for various trades, including painters, gilders, sculptors, makers of horn and wood utensils, and even watchmakers. The layout was completed by a truly magnificent fifth courtyard, whose orange groves remain to this day.

The splendour of those towns was evident in their churches, which were sumptuous and spacious, with three to five naves, varying in size from 70 metres long by 20 metres wide (San Luis in Brazil) to 74 by 27 (Trinidad in Paraguay) ^{and77}.

They were so rich that when General Chagas plundered the ten towns on the left bank of the Uruguay River in 1717, despite the churches having already been pillaged by sacristans and commissioners of the Crown, he was able to send 579 silver ornaments weighing a total of 750 kilograms to Porto Alegre as spoils of war. ⁷⁸

Its decoration was sumptuous, as was the clothing of its images, all in velvet and brocade. The ornaments, even the bells, were made of silver. The walls, adorned with vivid paintings and profusely gilded altarpieces, made the interior shine like a jewel box under the candlelight of the festivities. Some had wooden organs, built there.

under the direction of the Fathers. The pulpits and confessionals were truly bristling with decorations ranging from the bows and lambrequins of an extremely ornate Plateresque style to the most profane caryatids, among which were fauns and sirens; the profusion of saints and candelabra completed that impression of pomp; and a richly decorated coffered ceiling covered the vault with its golden cedar.

Outside, the stone was left bare, with the exception of the dome and sometimes the frontispiece. The walls were adorned with a profusion of niches containing fairly well-sculpted images. The bell tower, made of wood or stone, square or round, had many bells—never fewer than six—some cast with copper from the region. A courtyard, paved with sandstone slabs, gave access to the temple. The portico was supported by urunday pillars, which give an idea of the trees from whose trunks they were carved. In Mártires, one measuring 7.50 metres remains standing, and in Trinidad there are two measuring 9 x 0.60 metres. A barbican reinforced by balustrade columns surrounded the entire building. The walls were made of rammed earth in the oldest churches, such as San Carlos; dry masonry in tacurú stone, such as Apóstoles; slabs and ashlar of asperón laid in mud, such as San Ignacio; ashlar blocks with lime joints, as in Trinidad; and the same material laid in mortar, as in the unfinished church of Jesús. It should be noted that only in these last two types are the walls supported by powerful buttresses. Adjacent to them was the cemetery, with its tombs covered by sandstone tombstones bearing inscriptions in Latin or Guaraní. A stone cross usually crowned it. Above it were the dungeons, of overwhelming solidity and walls up to 2.50 metres thick, which completely isolated the prisoner from the rumours of the outside world. In a kind of hermitage, located under the forest surrounding the ruins of San Ignacio, a bar of

riveted shackles, believed to be a presidio ⁷⁹.

I think it appropriate to say a few words about the Jesuit underground passages. Together with the mines and hidden treasures, they have fuelled the imagination of the region ⁸⁰. I have already mentioned what I believe their purpose was, although many terrifying things are said about them. They may have once served as a prison, but I do not believe that much will be found when they are explored. I know of two: Santa María and San Javier. The former follows the line of a ruin that must have been a hall in the convent. It is 12 metres long, blocked by a collapse, and 4 metres deep. It is a narrow underground passageway, lined with tacurú stone. The San Javier cave looks like a cellar. Its entrance has been reduced by collapses to a hole measuring 30 metres. It has a very sturdy vault, also made of tacurú stone, and measures 6 metres long by 2 metres wide. There are several niches in its walls, perhaps occupied in its day by small images, as given its location I am inclined to believe that it was a kind of underground sacristy. It is very damp, but it is easy to breathe in it, and the half-dozen bats that inhabit it are not a hindrance. It even has a macabre detail that romantic spirits may appreciate with discreet horror...

Perhaps the P.P., always careful to preserve the idea of power in the indigenous people, impressing them at the same time with moving spectacles, would on certain occasions take advantage of those passageways to suddenly appear in an unexpected place, or to surprise with their presence a bad deed that was believed to be committed in secret, coming out, for example, from the mortuary crypt in the middle of the dark church, like a vengeful spectre. It is therefore plausible that they kept the entrance to those works secret, which may explain the mysterious air they have retained to this day.

The Jesuits were great builders of underground passages everywhere, and in Córdoba they have been credited with some that are ten leagues long ;⁸¹ but if this was to hide themselves, as seems obvious, in the Missions where they ruled absolutely, they certainly did not need it. On the other hand, many supposed catacombs are old aqueducts, whose communication is cut off, but whose restoration is easy to devise, both because of their typical character and because of their inclination towards the supposed spring, which is soon found.

The public buildings of the reductions were completed by the hospital and a house called the "recogidas" (the sheltered), where women of easy virtue, married women whose husbands were absent for long periods of time, and widows who asked to be secluded were confined. This type of secular monastery was a precaution against the marked frivolity of Guaraní women, whom a purely formal religion did not restrain in any way.

I have already mentioned that livestock farming and crop cultivation progressed greatly in the reductions.

The road network corresponded to this progress. A direct road linked two extreme points of the country. As other settlements sprang up along the way, that artery branched out, and thus the topography resulted naturally from the occupation. One need only compare the vestiges left by that system with the grid-like layout of our official surveys. Excellent for the pampas, where it provided a spontaneous solution, it proves counterproductive when transported to the forest and the mountains, where streams and hills stubbornly break up its regularity.

The Jesuits followed the natural method that has given Europe its excellent network. There, the road first established direct communication between castle and castle; the immediate towns were linked to it by means of paths, which

also linked them together, until the system was completed without the drawbacks of geometric rigidity.

When farmers burn their fields in winter, it revives like a colossal blueprint in invisible ink on the missionary land. The royal roads, which were deeply rutted due to the softness of the soil, required new tracks, which were quickly made by the passage of carts. Four or five of them run parallel to the ground, and as the old wheel tracks have been a kind of natural gutter for rainwater, the water has deepened the roads until they have become ditches, giving the strips of land in between the perfect illusion of embankments. In Santa María, a busy traffic point at the time, there are so many tracks leading to the ruins that they look like lines of trenches; but it can be said, without much exaggeration, that the wheel tracks are still visible there.

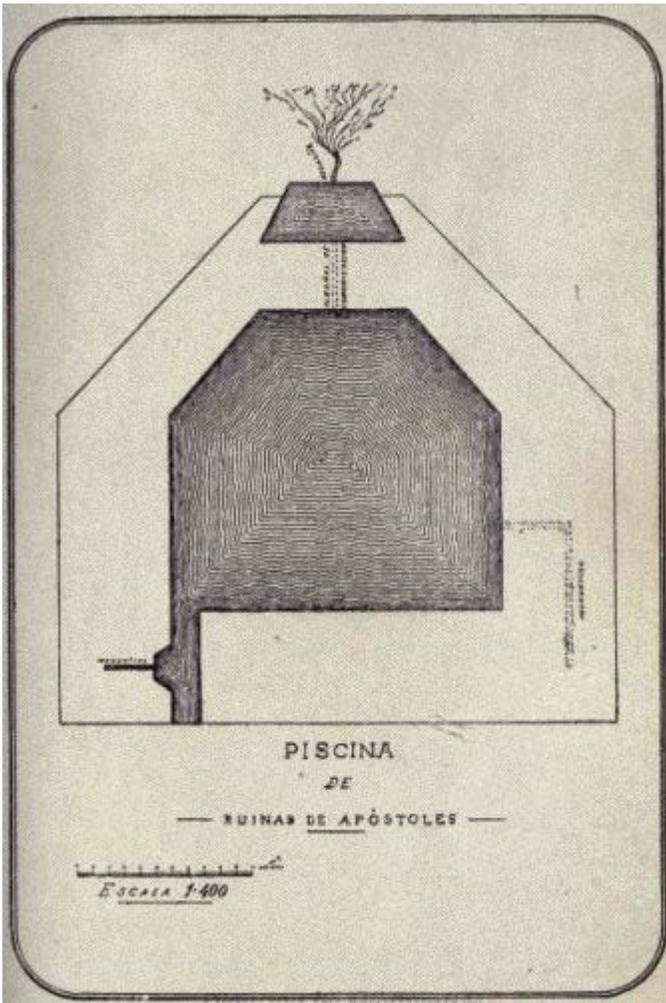
From these central roads, bridle paths branch off in all directions, invariably leading to a small circular grove that conceals a ruin: a ranch or farmstead, connected in turn by trails to a nearby spring.

This pattern is repeated throughout the former empire, with a relative abundance that indicates a fairly well-developed road network. Although the inhabitants concentrated in towns to better resist the fierce Indians and Mamluks, industrial development had scattered them widely when the expulsion took place.

Among those roads, such as those opened up in the thick jungle, known locally as *picadas*, there were some notable ones. The road connecting Santa María with Martí-res, and from there to Candelaria on the coast of Paraná, was one of them.⁸²

Mártires, located on a hilltop in the central mountain range, was truly a village on a circle. Towards the coast of Uruguay, the slope is extremely steep and covered with dense forest, making it very difficult to access. On the opposite side, that height is linked to the mountains, forming a fertile plateau, which even has a charming little stream running through it. It was clearly a midway point between the two rivers, easy to defend and therefore a safe place for communication. From there, the "picada" (trail) crossed the forest for a distance of 60 km, soon becoming passable for vehicles. Those roads through the forest required constant maintenance due to the traffic. The jungle tends to reclaim its dominion over the open road, which, if neglected, soon degenerates into an impassable trail. The trees join together at the tops, forming a canopy, and cyclones, knocking some down, completely obstruct access; the rains pool for months in that shade; then the equidistant stride of the riders or draught animals in caravans forms ruts that disappear under the water, predisposing dangerous stumbles; and only constant maintenance could prevent such a serious inconvenience. One can imagine what that would be like over 60 km of road.

Earlier, I mentioned the captured springs. Many remains of pools, basins, and ponds can be found in the ruins, some of which may have been used in tanneries. Those in Santa Ana, which have already been described several times, are quite notable in this regard, but I will use the pool in Apóstoles as an example, as it is the best preserved.



It is located about 500 metres north of the ruins, forming an irregular hexagon as shown in the figure. Its base measures 21.20 metres; 12 on the north-east and south-west sides, and 9 on the remaining sides; its depth is 1.35 metres. Sandstone prisms, measuring 1.20 by 0.48 metres, form its walls, which are paved with the same material. It was surrounded by a path also made of sandstone in rectangular slabs, with a width of 7 metres. Two underground stone channels, on the west and east sides, carried water collected from two nearby springs. The first flowed into a reservoir.

7 metres long by 2.40 metres wide, adjoining the main building, with which it was connected by a hollow stone prism, from which water poured into the pool through three holes. These were the mouths of three angels, sculpted among profuse mouldings on the inner wall. The reservoir was crowned by a stone cross, the base of which was also carved with rich mouldings. The spring on the east side flowed directly into the pool, and all the water flowed out through a rectangular drain measuring 0.30×0.25 , perforated in a block of stone on the north side, which provided a continuous level and constant renewal. A trapezoidal pool, with bases measuring 9.20 and 4.70 metres, located 4.10 metres from the reservoir, received the surplus, draining it a short distance away into a marsh on the Cuñá-Manó stream. It may have served as a washing place. The half-pipes, carved from thick blocks of sandstone to form the drains, had a diameter of 0.28 metres. Three steps descended from the base of the hexagon formed by the pool, which was surrounded by palm trees that gave it a pleasant appearance. It must have been a beautiful place to stroll and a delightful place to bathe.

The bridges were also remarkable. Seven kilometres west-southwest of the ruins, there are the remains of one over the Chimiray stream. It begins with a stone causeway 9 metres wide and 30 metres long on the east bank, and 58 metres on the opposite bank. This stream, which runs from north-west to south-east, has a normal width of 15 metres and a depth of 1.50 metres, but during rapid floods, it often overflows by up to 1,000 metres and reaches depths of 8 metres when it has nowhere to spread. Anticipating this, the bridge was built on marshy ground, which prevented the waters from covering it. Its remains consist of 12 urunday posts in six rows oblique to the current. There must have been 15 in five rows of three, with a distance of 3.80 metres between them and two piles each. The width of the bridge would then be 4 metres; its length 19 metres and

its height above the water, 3 metres. It was the common type of this kind of construction, which was quite rare after all.

As the main obstacle to fords is the swamp that usually precedes them, the Jesuits preferred to build stone causeways to eliminate it, without the cost of a bridge. Traffic at that time, and even today, was not very heavy, being carried out in cash in carts; so that in the event of flooding, they could wait a day or two without inconvenience. The streams are very narrow and their flow decreases rapidly, so that the delay rarely exceeded forty-eight hours.

Apart from these works, there are traces of other special projects to drain the marshes; and it seems that in the vicinity of the Iberá lagoon there are remains of a vast drainage system, intended to convert an area of waterlogged land into pasture, but I am inclined to believe that this is nothing more than conjecture.

The population was almost evenly distributed among the towns of the Empire, with an average of 3,500 inhabitants in each, but Yapeyú, its capital, had 7,000, and Santa Ana had nearly 5,000. This average only covers the two extremes of the 18th century, when the Missions had reached their definitive stability, that is, the 117,488 inhabitants they had in 1715, with the 104,483, down from 1758, ten years before the expulsion, because, as I said elsewhere, the last period marked a decline in this regard. The maximum was reached in 1743, with 150,000. The reductions had a complete military organisation, authorised by the Crown so that they could defend themselves against the mamelukes. Tactics and weaponry were a compromise between civilised procedures and savage customs. The forces were divided into infantry and cavalry. The former used bows and arrows, 'bolas',⁸³ macanas and slings, but some were equipped with muskets, sabres and bucklers. The cavalry used carbines and lances. Each village had its fortifications and a weaponry

with its fixed allocation, and orders were given for each one to manufacture as much gunpowder as possible. There was no shortage of iron and bronze artillery, and P. P. was brought in from Chile, who, having been a soldier, trained the Indians in tactics. They were considered the best soldiers in the Viceroyalty and were sought after by governors and viceroys as elite troops in difficult times. There were authorities expressly appointed for the event of war, and a special surveillance service on the eastern bank of the Uruguay River. They even produced indigenous generals, such as José Tiarayu, better known as Sope, and Nicolás Languiru, whom the enemies of the Jesuits called Nicolás I, King of Paraguay. Both Indians fought and died in the rebellion of 1751, which the reader will learn about later. All males performed military exercises on Sundays from the age of seven, with failure to do so punishable by a fine and imprisonment. Once a month, target practice was held in all the reductions.

The summons were carried out with admirable precision; sentries were posted permanently in the villages, and a reserve of two hundred horses selected each year completed this military organisation. Mamelukes and savages soon experienced its effects, and it was not long before the King's own troops had to fight bloody battles with the Guaraní warriors ⁸⁴.

The life led by the P. P., as well as their moral standing with regard to the Indians, maintained a truly immense distance between them. More than masters, they were in a relationship of demigods with their subordinates. The latter had no relationship with the world except through them. Not even the chiefs knew how to read or speak any language other than Guaraní. They worked, but they owned nothing; and everything, from food to clothing, from justice to love, was determined for them by the P. P. They had no rights whatsoever, since the will of the P. P. governed their entire lives; but in return, duties were imposed on them: a situation of slavery.

A real tude that differed from encomiendas only in that, being more intelligent, it was much more temperate.

Resigned to it, the Indians accepted it as more tolerable, but the moral situation remained the same; and this explains why, in a century and a half of apparent well-being, he failed to bind them to civilisation. The Father Director was the living embodiment of the God who was preached to them, and this undoubtedly alleviated their situation of servitude to a large extent; but whether priest or layman, the master never brought about the fusion of races, and remained master despite everything. The most enviable situation for the reduced Indian was to be part of the servitude that the Fathers maintained in their convent, which gives, better than anything else, an idea of that society. The visitors, treated royally, saw only what their hosts wanted them to see, judging the Indians by their apparent situation; and the Crown, whose theocratic ideals were realised by the Jesuits in that miniature Christian Empire, found in them its most loyal vassals.

Communism was rigorous. At the age of five, children already belonged to the community, under the patronage of special mayors⁸⁵ who supervised their daily work. At dawn, they were taken to church every day, from where they went to work in the fields and workshops until three in the afternoon. At this hour, they would return, always led by their foremen, and after further prayers, they would return home. Fatherhood was effectively suppressed by this procedure, which closely foreshadowed the abolition of personality. When the time came for the young people to take turns at a trade, the P. P. would indicate this. They did the same with marriages, which thus became true pairings. Nothing was based on free initiative or love, which those celibates could only understand as mechanical fatherhood. Passive obedience led to a fictitious state of production, and since no one owned anything, everyone worked as little as possible. With the incentive of personal independence destroyed

Through work, which, by producing the maximum effort in each individual, benefits the community, selfishness, exalted by positive force in this way in civilised groups, took on the character of pessimistic apathy there. Those Indians did not go to work except by force, stealing as much as they could with a thousand ingenious tricks, just like children at school: they did not see the fruits of their labour, they did not understand its purpose, and it naturally became abhorrent to them. Apart from spinning and working the land, the women knew nothing, and it was very rare for any of them to sew. This peculiarity is due to the extraordinary simplicity of their clothing, which required little sewing, and gives an idea of their general poverty.

Despotism is so barren that even in matters of religion, which was almost the sole purpose of spiritual conquest during its early days, the Indians showed complete indifference. Certainly, as the work degenerated into commerce, this factor took a back seat; but as it was the pretext, its formal importance remained great, and in any case the same for the natives. As soon as the P. P. were expelled, customs became depraved, quickly returning to savage instability; and it was not uncommon to find, living together in the same house, several incestuous and adulterous couples. In confession, which they only made when obliged to do so, they got out of the way by accusing themselves of sins they had not committed and then taking communion immediately, without the slightest qualms about the sacrilege. They had no clear notion of the sins they had to confess and often forgot even the days of precept. This is all the more significant in that everything was done through prayer. Prayers, religious songs accompanied by images and ceremonies, for the beginning and end of work, for holidays, for meals. The conventual character was exaggerated to the point of incredibility. The teaching of doctrine and prayers took up more time than that of useful trades. One might have believed that the extraordinary pomp of the festivals,

made a lasting impression on the savage's mind. Nothing could counteract the gloomy disappointment of slavery that overwhelmed his spirit, and he became the great melancholic of a misunderstood oppression.

There was no written law, and conduct was regulated by the will of the P. P., who punished justly almost always, but in a discretionary manner. They administered justice, without the common courts being able to summon the Indians to trial, and they even had the power to apply the death penalty. Flogging was the most common punishment, and so that nothing would detract from the absolute divine authority they wielded, it was the obligation of the flogged to go afterwards to thank them on their knees as if it were a blessing, kissing their hands as a sign of submission...

I have already said that from the age of five, the community took control of the Indians; but the worst thing is that this collective tyranny never ended. Once married, that is, in a situation that all social conventions consider synonymous with independence, except for servants, they came under the authority of other mayors, who in turn ruled them by delegation, thus concentrating in the hands of the PP a sum of power that no government in the world has ever had.

V - THE POLICY OF THE HOLY FATHERS.

Eternal enemies of the Jesuits, as a result of the economic rivalry caused by the differences in conquest and civilisation adopted by each side, the former encomenderos of Paraguay lived in constant hostility with the Jesuits. The wealthiest and most respected civil elements had differences of all kinds with the Jesuits, but these were always maintained by the aforementioned rivalry in which the former had borne the brunt.

The privileges with which the Crown had favoured the first conquest, entirely secular as will be recalled, gave the civil element an effective force, considerably increased by distance. The fait accompli always favoured them for this reason; and thus, their consultations with the Crown took place regularly, after the event that motivated them had taken place. All this had greatly strengthened municipal law and its consequent freedoms, just as the selection of courage, audacity and willpower produced by the conquest gave a singular determination to the beneficiaries of such freedoms.

During his administration, Irala's political genius took the extension of citizens' privileges and the supremacy of civil power very far.

of civil power. He himself had been elected governor by popular vote, in accordance with the right granted to the colonists by the King in 1537. Being from Guipúzcoa, his spirit instilled in the colony the cult of total freedom, so deeply ingrained in the Basque people; and this only served to strengthen it to the point of exaggeration and disorder.

Thus, the deposition of Alvar Núñez in 1544 was a true popular revolution crowned by the re-election of Irala, but although the Crown, in accordance with the Emperor's discreet policy, accepted the *fait accompli*, it modified the privilege of 1537, entrusting the bishop with the appointment of the governor, *ad referendum*.

The Jesuits, on the other hand, represented monarchical authority, exercising it in practice in their missions and therefore being more in tune with the absolutist evolution that the central government was progressively emphasising. Thus, the government's preferences increasingly favoured them, not to mention the advantage that their impersonal dissemination through courts and tribunals gave them over adversaries whose influence was purely local.

For this reason, in the disputes and clashes that took place within Paraguayan jurisdiction, they were always defeated, due to their unpopularity; while their victory was assured in appeals to the court, the viceroyalty and the audiences.

The rivalry with the civil elements of Asunción only increased when the missionary centre was relocated to Yaba-birí, following the emigration from Guayra; and as soon as the P. P. considered themselves secure in the new territory, their influence began to be exerted on local politics.

As early as 1644, Bishop Cárdenas found them strong enough to have them declared intruders s⁸⁶ by Governor Hínestrosa, who banished them from the territory; but in this conflict, which

really represents the first political triumph of the Jesuits in Paraguay, it is necessary to point out the presence of an ally of the civil elements whose constancy would never fail them: the Franciscans,⁸⁷ an order traditionally hostile to the Society. The rivalry was thus pronounced in the most important areas of contemporary life: government, religion and commerce. It had to be, and indeed was, a war without quarter.

Bishop Cárdenas, who returned upon Hínestrosa's death, restored the electoral power of the conquistadors, and was himself elected governor, which proves a manifest and general sympathy between his order and democratic principles. The bishop expelled the Jesuits and confiscated their property, to popular acclaim; but the court of Charcas annulled his election, restoring their property and domicile. This episode really sets the tone for all those that followed until 1735, punctuating the prolonged struggle.

The P. P. had reached the height of their power in the first twenty years of the 16th century, and in the time that had passed since their conflicts with Bishop Cárdenas, the wrath of the people had not ceased to rumble against them.

Privileged by the Crown with all manner of franchises, the only resistance to their internal domination remained that of the civilian Para-guay, whose resistance prevented them from devoting themselves entirely to their dream of reaching the Atlantic. But in the meantime, they needed commercial control of the rivers that form the Plata, which at that time provided the only alternative outlet. They already had one of them, the Uruguay, as well as a large part of the upper Paraná; all that was missing for this purpose was Paraguay, and they needed to take control of the civil government that possessed it.

In this state, they managed to appoint a governor of their own choosing, Don Diego de los Reyes, a man who was easily manipulated due to his limited abilities, his lack of background, and the

unexpected exaltation that compelled his gratitude,⁸⁸ but the Paraguayan nobility, mostly encomenderos and forales, understood that this was a decisive step.

From the murmurs with which the appointment was received, which the Crown had to legalise with special exceptions, thus making the machination more visible (since the law prohibited the appointment of governors from the towns they were to govern); from the comments, perhaps malicious, of passive resistance, although concealed at first, it soon turned to open disobedience.

Reyes, for his part, had done everything possible to provoke her. He began by abusing his power, demanding homage from the most notable people of Asunción and antagonising them because they did not yield to him. He was the typical upstart, and even his defenders, Fathers Lozano and Charlevoix, cannot hide this fact.

Things reached such an extreme that the governor, under the pretext of a conspiracy, never proven but plausible, at least as a verbal project, ordered the imprisonment of two councillors, Urrúnaga and Abalos, both prestigious members of the Asunción aristocracy.

The latter's son-in-law, also threatened with imprisonment, managed to flee to Charcas, where he filed a complaint with the Court, which initially rejected his claims but eventually agreed to hear him, ordering Governor Reyes to send the case to its chambers. The governor had committed all kinds of abuses to substantiate the case. From intimidation to false witnesses, he put everything at the service of his passions; and when he received notification of the order, through Judge García Miranda, commissioner of the Court, he not only evaded handing over the case, saying that he had already sent it to a solicitor in Charcas, but also refused to release the detainees on bail.

two, as she ordered, even increasing the severity of their imprisonment.

The Jesuits were so biased in the matter that their two historians, Fathers Lozano and Charlevoix, remain silent about these episodes, without which the conduct of Antequera, later sent by the Audiencia as an investigating judge, appears suspicious and ambiguous. However, the first of the aforementioned fathers begins his history by saying:

"Although my main intention is to bring the truth to light with modesty, I will not be able to tell it all, conforming to the opinion of those who said that, although the historian must tell the truth in everything he reports, he should not report everything that is true;" adding further down: "I shall say what is sufficient to make the truth clear, concealing many things which, although not necessary, could cause offence."

With this historical criterion, added to the miraculous events that he mentions in various places as ominous precursors of events to come, the passionate nature of Jesuit histories becomes apparent.

Another example of Reyes' Jesuitism, and one of the points in his indictment before the Court, was the fierce attack he launched without prior declaration of war against the Paya-Guás Indians, whom the Jesuits had failed to subdue,⁸⁹ but who were at peace with the Asunción neighbourhood, only half a league from the city.

The senseless slaughter led to painful reprisals, which cost the lives of, among others, the Jesuits Blas de Silva and José Mazo, for the Indians understood perfectly well the origin of the war that Reyes had declared on them.

Meanwhile, Judge Miranda, convinced that it was useless to persuade Reyes to obey the order of the Audiencia, resigned his commission; however, that court had already ruled on the case, sentencing the governor to a fine of four thousand pe-

sos, to re-establish the communications that he had intercepted in order to prevent any accusations or complaints between Charcas and Paraguay, and to present his "dispensa de naturaleza "⁹⁰to the Cabildo of Asunción within one hour, without which he would be deposed.

The governor harshly defied the Cabildo and the Audiencia, which proves that he felt protected by forces greater than his own; for he would never have dared to take such a step on his own, knowing in advance that he was doomed to failure. Then the Audiencia, in which the Jesuits were nevertheless very influential, realised that something serious was happening in Paraguay and appointed its own prosecutor, Don José de Antequera, as investigating judge.

He had been educated by the Jesuits and was a very important person, extremely energetic and intelligent, well reputed for his character and integrity, although Father Lozano accuses him of various acts of embezzlement in the exercise of his duties, branding him at the same time as extremely boastful. Overall, he was a rich character, perhaps combative due to his excessive vitality. Such characters are always given to a passion for justice.

Once he arrived in Asunción, Antequera did not take long to see the charges against Reyes proven; and then, complying with the instructions of the Court, whose document he opened before the Cabildo, he assumed the interim position of chief justice of the province.

Immediately afterwards, Reyes' trial began, which he prolonged with all sorts of obstacles, until it reached the enormous volume of fourteen thousand pages; but when, at the request of the prosecution, Antequera closed the trial, summoning the parties for a final hearing, it turned out that Reyes had fled, taking refuge in Buenos Aires.

Antequera had sent the proceedings to Charcas, along with the account of Reyes' escape; but in the meantime, the viceroy of Peru

sent a dispatch of replacement. Everything points to Jesuit intervention in this matter.

The Court understood that the viceroy had been misinformed and decided to hold the document while informing him of what was happening; but it was impossible to intercept the communication, which was passing from person to person like a juggling act, until it reached the hands of the lieutenant of Santiago del Estero. Nevertheless, the viceroy, ignoring the report sent to him by the Audiencia, sent Reyes a duplicate of the request, which demonstrates the power of the influences exerted on him.

With this document, Reyes travelled from Buenos Aires to the Missions, where he was warmly welcomed. The priests could now, without hesitation, raise the question of legitimacy. The reductions recognised and swore allegiance to the reinstated governor, who ignored his judge's orders to return to prison. He invoked the order of the viceroy, who was the higher authority, but the Cabildo then produced an act of the utmost importance, which was in fact the beginning of the future comunero revolution.

Based on the legal authorisation, which allowed him to appeal the King's orders up to three times, postponing them in the meantime, he judged that he could more naturally do so with the viceregal provisions, and appointed Antequera as governor.

The two sides, as can be seen, were taking shape. On one side, Antequera and the local oligarchy that formed the Cabildo were working profusely to restore the old popular privileges, tending to increase them in a revolutionary sense; on the other, the Jesuits, faithful to their system, advocated absolute obedience to authority, judging even doubt to be a crime. The former placed justice above the principle of authority; the latter placed obedience above all other considerations; and it is clear that the powers that be would always look upon them with greater favour.

Meanwhile, the entire region was in turmoil, confusing the decisive nature of the conflict. The Audiencia continued to support Antequera, that is, the predominance of civil power and the law over absolute authority, steeped in clericalism; but the Jesuits knew or understood that in the long run, central power would be on their side.

Reyes acted in the Missions as the legitimate governor, his most significant actions, and those that most alienated him from civil sympathies, being measures to hinder Paraguayan trade; thus, the fundamental causes continued to fuel the conflict.

The Cabildo rejected Reyes' reinstatement for the second time, which he had sent from the Missions, certified by the priests. Knowing that he had passed through Corrientes, whose authorities, like those of Buenos Aires, were influenced by the Jesuits, they had him arrested by surprise at that point and imprisoned him again in Asunción.

The viceroy archbishop of Peru, whose dual role certainly did not favour the secular element, had already reprimanded the Audiencia, demanding compliance with the orders relating to Reyes. Thus, when the latter complained about his imprisonment, he reproduced with greater energy the order for his reinstatement, the appearance of Antequera in court before his sole authority, and the commission to the lieutenant of Buenos Aires, García Ros, to enforce his orders.

He advanced on Paraguay at the head of a small army, whose main force was composed of Indians from the Missions; but the population was so willing to resist, based on the postponement of orders, to which they were entitled while they begged for them, that García Ros decided to withdraw.

Although based on the law, the revolution was now a fact. The people had prevailed over absolutism. But the PP realised that it could not prosper. If it sought to remain within the monarchical concept, it was doomed by the latter's fatal reaction to its pretensions. If it renounced it, it had to resort to separatism, and separatism was not possible without the sea, that is, without Buenos Aires. That is why the P.P. cultivated the governmental friendships of this city so assiduously. By preventing trade with the separated colony, they were literally strangling the revolution. Thus, that embryonic democracy had more impetus than thought, more instinct than a defined plan. It cherished rights; it had learned to value them by practising them, and the old rivalry with the victorious Jesuits exacerbated its desire. But topographical fate was to prevail over everything. Without the sea, which ensures freedom of trade, autonomous life was impossible. The only salvation was the sympathy of Buenos Aires.

But the revolution did not see this. It became too complacent with its local triumph; it believed that its isolated freedoms could sustain themselves.

However, the danger was more serious than it seemed. Successive incidents showed that Antequera had determined friends, from Tucumán to Cuyo and from Corrientes to Charcas: the entire future revolutionary region of 1810.

García Ros's withdrawal was also caused by the outbreak of war with the Portuguese and the consequent attention paid to Buenos Aires, which was under imminent threat. The Jesuits were so prepared to fight with Antequera that when Governor Zavala asked them for troops for the war with Portugal, they were able to send him three thousand men, while still retaining sufficient forces. Antequera did the same, undoubtedly to dispel the accusations of separatism that the priests were beginning to spread against him, and because his obvious objective was none other than that.

than to maintain the superiority of civil power based on relative popular sovereignty.

But the viceroy did not give up in his attempt to extinguish that rebel stronghold; and urged by him, Zavala sent García Ros back to Paraguay. Reinforced by two thousand Guaraní from the missions, who joined him under the orders of Fathers Dufo and Rivera, he camped in Paraguayan territory on the banks of the Tebiquarí, a strategic point as a base for invasion.

Meanwhile, the bishop of Paraguay had decided in favour of the Jesuits, without this making his cause any more popular; for the enraged people attacked the convent with the intention of razing it to the ground, had it not been for the intervention of Antequera himself. The Cabildo decreed their expulsion and, forgetting all political wisdom, declared war on the government of Buenos Aires. That was, in reality, a decree of suicide.

The people flocked en masse to take up arms. Antequera defeated García Ros by means of a clever surprise attack and invaded the Missions, which were limited to abandoning the villages, waging an overwhelming war of resources against him.

The economic issue, always a lively one, was evident in the re-establishment of the encomiendas that Antequera carried out against the Indians of the reductions; a serious mistake, as the war thus took on a patriotic character for them.

Frustrated by the war over resources and threatened by García Ros, who had returned reinvigorated at the head of six thousand Guaraní, Antequera decided to return to Asunción; but the revolutionary movement was beginning to languish, lacking purpose, while absolutism was regaining its power.

The viceroy of Peru, now the Marquis of Gastel Fuertes, a fanatical and inflexible spirit, ordered Zavala himself to immediately pacify Paraguay and capture Antequera. The bishop declared himself hostile at the head of his priests, who represented...

They were a force to be reckoned with, and the Town Council itself began negotiations with Zavala.

Antequera had left to recruit militias in the countryside, leaving Ramón de las Llanas as interim governor; but the latter surrendered the city to Zavala without resistance. The leader, betrayed, had no choice but to flee to Córdoba.

Zavala appointed Martín de Barúa as governor of Paraguay, releasing Reyes, who was so unpopular with the people that, on the advice of the Jesuits themselves, he remained confined to his home.

But Barúa proved to be a friend of the revolutionaries, and disobeyed, always with the pleading postponement we already know, an order from the viceroy to reinstate the Jesuits. The Cabildo did the same with another order from the Audiencia, which was already beginning to react in an absolutist manner. Barúa had counted on the acquiescence of his successor, Aldunate, who was also opposed to the Jesuits; but the latter were so powerful that they had the latter's appointment annulled, and were finally reinstated with great pomp and ceremony, by express order of the viceroy.

From the Franciscan convent in Córdoba, where he had taken refuge, Antequera, whose head had been put at a price of four thousand pesos by the viceroy, fled again to Charcas, where he hoped to find support in the Audiencia; but this court treated him instead as a criminal and sent him in chains to Potosí, which was only his penultimate stop before the prison in Lima, where he finally ended up in 1726. His dramatic undertaking had lasted five years.

The revolutionary spirit remained alive, however, in Paraguay.

Antequera had become acquainted in prison with Don Fernando Momp ⁹¹, who became so excited by his principles and misfortunes that he escaped from prison and moved to Paraguay on a revolutionary mission.

His eloquence stirred up the crowd once again; his thinking, bolder and more mature than that of Antequera, resolutely proclaimed the priority of the municipality over all other sovereignties, giving for the first time a definite meaning to the name "Comuneros" by which the revolutionaries distinguished themselves; but he suffered from the same error as all of them; he failed to see the futility of a revolution whose fatal consequence was separatism, which was impossible in local isolation. What constituted the success of the emancipatory revolution of 1810, what its leaders saw so clearly, perhaps taught by this Comunero failure, that is, immediate expansion, was entirely lacking in Paraguay.

But the uprising was extremely serious. The new governor, Sor-deta, a relative of the viceroy, was rejected by the Cabildo and the people, not in the name of the right of appeal, but in the name of communal sovereignty. They ordered him to leave the province immediately, which he did, and the people then elected a governing junta, whose president was given the title of president of the province of Paraguay.

The revolution was unlucky in its appointments. Don José Luis Barreyro, who was chosen, thought only of betraying it. He cunningly seized Mompó, sending him to Buenos Aires, where he was imprisoned and tried by Zavala. Sent back to Peru, he escaped in Mendoza, managing to cross over to Brazil from there.

Barreyro soon experienced the consequences of his treachery. Pursued by the people, who rose up against him when they learned of Mompó's fate, he was forced to flee, taking refuge in the Misiones, which had always been hostile to the peasant revolution.

Despite its popularity, the support given to it by the Franciscans from the pulpit, and the loyalty to the Crown that

was still evident, it was already virtually dead.

The torture of Antequera, who was executed in Lima by order of the viceroy after the latter received Sordeta's personal report, completed the reactionary work.

The death of the leader was unusually and tragically grand. The people of Lima, moved by the words of forgiveness spoken by the Franciscan, the prisoner's assistant, rioted to save him. Only the armed intervention of the troops managed to quell the turmoil; and Antequera, shot dead in anticipation of a possible triumph of the uprising, did not escape, even as a corpse, the decapitation of his sentence.

Paraguay rose up again with the news of his death, expelling the Jesuits, the true cause of everything, for the third time, looting their college and carrying out several executions. The bishop excommunicated the perpetrators of these excesses, and bloody anarchy replaced all government action in the region.

The Missions, which had been added by royal decree to the government of Buenos Aires, had to maintain troops on their borders with Paraguay; such was the hatred that Paraguay professed towards them.

Two Jesuit historians, Fathers Lozano and Charlevoix, have written about this revolution with the positive intention of demonstrating that the Society was nothing more than a victim of the comuneros due to its loyalty to the Crown; but their own books reveal a different opinion. What they conceal raises suspicion about what they say. By exaggerating the innocence of their order, they only serve to demonstrate its involvement in the episode.

Zavala's triumph over that anarchy in his new pacification venture put an end to the comunero movement. The battle of Tabatí, actually won by the Guaraní, was the last act of the drama. The successive executions and the reinstatement of the Jesuits were now mere details, and the vigorous government of Rafael de la Moneda ended with the last supporters of the premature revolution on the scaffold.

gloomy government of Rafael de la Moneda ended on the scaffold with the last supporters of the premature revolution.

However, this was fruitful in its own failure. The people lived a free, albeit turbulent, life. Tribunes such as de la Sota emerged from their midst, who, without having the eloquence or reach of Mompó, replaced him for a time with their popularity as leaders. Jesuit cities such as Corrientes came to carry out solidarity movements;⁹² even women, a characteristic sign of any effective revolution, were ignited by the heroic flame. The unexpected solidarity, as well as the revolutionary enthusiasm, prove that monarchical loyalty was waning in these countries and that democratic ideas were finding fertile ground here.⁹³ The central government lacked the prestige of the apparatus that so greatly helped the monarchy and which, naturally, it could not transfer to the colonies. The conquest, on the other hand, had been a success due to the personal qualities of each conqueror, not the work of the nobility or the King; and the revolutionary Comuneros of Castile, who emigrated after their defeat, brought with them such lively seeds of democracy that their memory endured, as we have seen, even in the specific name given to the Paraguayan revolutionaries.⁹⁴ These remained so strong, even after their defeat, that when, taking advantage of the still unquelled unrest, the Guaycurúes Indians threatened Asunción, most of the soldiers found themselves excommunicated for the assault on the Jesuit college; they decided not to defend the city until the bishop lifted the interdict, which he did, given the imminence of the danger. This excuse was certainly very typical of the time and also very peculiar, in essence, to the new era.

The revolution degenerated into anarchy due to a lack of atmosphere and defined political reasoning, since as an exclusively communal movement, it was an anachronism. The monarchy evolved towards absolutism on the ruins of popular freedom

could not be stopped by the restoration of the latter. The popular spirit now demanded more radical measures compatible with the evolution that was leading the peoples towards democracy or representative institutions: the revolutionary separatism of the year 10.

Like all premature social movements, that of the co-muneros was suicidal out of desperation when it realised the impossibility of victory; but it has gone down in history as a generous attempt at freedom, whose failure perhaps increases the appeal of its efforts. More than a revolution, it was actually a regional case.

Certainly, he had no other achievements, nor do I believe he can be seen without exaggeration in Antequera as an early martyr of American freedom. His character is likeable, without being in any way brilliant; and his figure, always dominated by events, is certainly not that of an extraordinary leader. His execution was, therefore, a useless crime, or rather a stupid act of revenge, which exacerbated the reaction to the detriment of its own perpetrators, as always happens. The P.P. were soon to experience the backlash of the absolutism they so ardently defended.

VI - EXPULSION , AND DECLINE.

The Treaty of Exchange between the Portuguese and Spanish governments, which transferred Colonia del Sacramento to the former in exchange for the towns that the latter possessed on the eastern bank of the Uruguay River, interrupted that peaceful domination.

These towns were, in fact, the seven Jesuit reductions of Brazil, which sought the dreamt-of outlet to the ocean through the district of Tape and Porto Alegre.

The Crown had been generous in its compensation to the inhabitants. Not only could they withdraw with all their possessions to the settlements on the west coast (Article 16 of the treaty), but each village was given 4,000 pesos for moving expenses and was also exempted from tribute for ten years in the new location. But this was nothing compared to what was lost. Driven out of La Guayra by the Mamelucoes, and consequently unable to communicate with the Atlantic, the Spanish had postponed the realisation of this dominant goal until they could rethink the core of their empire on a more solid basis. This began to be achieved after more than a hundred years of effort, with their dominion already advancing to the Sierra del Tape, where they had vast estates dependent on the reductions of San Juan and San Miguel.

when the treaty of 1750 dashed their aspirations for the second time. It was undoubtedly too much for them to bear quietly, and the Guaraní uprising of 1751 proved this beyond doubt.

I do not believe that the Jesuits had any separatist ideas in mind. Such an accusation was slander, which the Crown picked up when it suited them, to explain the expulsion, along with the ridiculous legend circulated by anti-clerical publicists in Amsterdam, according to which the Jesuits had proclaimed a chieftain king of Paraguay with the intention of separating from Spain;⁽⁹⁵⁾ but it seems no less evident to me that the insurrection had Jesuit origins.□ It was undoubtedly intended to prevent the demarcation commissions from doing their work while the denunciation of the treaty was being negotiated before the Court; which was, after all, feasible in such a time of instability, and when the Treaty of Utrecht itself had not remedied anything. Meanwhile, the war showed both Crowns how ruinous the occupation would be in areas completely ravaged by the montoneras, with inhabitants setting fire to their villages as they retreated. This assumption is the natural middle ground between those who asserted without proof the separatism of the P.P. and the absolute neutrality that the latter claimed to have observed in the conflict. The Indians clearly lacked the initiative to embark on such a serious undertaking on their own, and what is worse, in disobedience to their leaders. The reader may judge whether this was possible, given the moral and social situation of the reductions. The P.P. maintained that the movement had been a natural reaction of patriotism, as the Indians saw themselves exiled from the towns where they were born; and those who spoke to the royal commissioners on behalf of their countrymen argued effectively with this, adding that those lands were given to their race by the apostle Saint Thomas; but others, taken prisoner during the insurrection, declared that they had been instigated by the priests. Afterwards, patriotism was to prove

something trivial for those people who possessed nothing, that feeling being consecutive to property. They had had nothing either in their savage state, since they were nomads; so their indifference in this regard was both atavistic and immediate. I therefore consider that the PP were the covert promoters of the insurrection. One does not fail twice in a century and a half of gigantic efforts without trying the second time whatever means come to hand to ward off adversity. As for being able to do so, the PP had sufficiently demonstrated their energy and constancy, with more than enough purpose to merit any sacrifices, it being well known, moreover, that their means did not concern them greatly. Furthermore, they were on solid ground with regard to the well-understood interests of the Crown, for the truth is that the latter made a disastrous exchange, in which it only managed to lose its dominion over the eastern bank of the Uruguay;⁹⁶ so they had good reasons to be heard. The insurrection was, therefore, a heroic means, but one of certain effectiveness, if the pride of the Spanish army had not been involved in the matter, as it would not have been possible to allow it to be dominated by the Guaraní in front of their Portuguese ally. The intrigues of the Court did the rest.

Those who support the thesis of Jesuit separatism argue, to prove their point, that the Empire enjoyed increasing autonomy thanks to successive concessions from the Crown, as well as its economic success. This, they say, suggested separatist ideas, as always happens. They added as a concurrent and significant fact the fact that most of the P.P. were foreigners, and this is quite strong at first glance; but it soon becomes apparent that their aim was to isolate the Empire from all Spanish contact, with the double barrier of language and blood.

Such isolation, which guaranteed unshakeable dominance in absolute unity, was a constant concern to which the Government collaborated with unwavering determination. The Indians had

It was forbidden to move from one village to another. Spaniards, mestizos, and mulattos were not allowed to live in the reductions. Passers-by were not tolerated in the enclosure for more than two days, or three at most if they were carrying goods with them.⁹⁷ If there was a shop or inn in the village, no one was allowed to stay at an Indian's house. It is well known, on the other hand, that the civil, military and judicial administration was entirely entrusted to the P.P.; and in the special case that concerns me, there is nothing extraordinary about their nationality, considering that among the first envoys to Paraguay, when there could not yet have been any hint of separatism, there were Italians, Portuguese, a Flemish man and an Irishman; but what is beyond doubt is their active campaign to prevent the execution of the treaty. There is a conclusive fact about this. At the end of a banquet held at a country house in the suburbs of Asunción in honour of the governor of Paraguay, together with various members of the two Cabildos, they attempted to get the guests to sign a letter already prepared for the King, in which they demonstrated the harmfulness of the exchange; and this document also pointed to the possibility of a new agreement between the two courts. The

P.P. attempted not only to have it signed by the governor and prebendary, but also that the two Cabildos endorse it; but the former, referring the matter to his office, perhaps because he did not feel very sure of himself, found "things so improper that he opposed its referral, causing it to fail before the two aforementioned institutions as well.

The entirely harmless character that was attributed to the rebellion, presenting the Indians as big children, with no dangerous aggressiveness, when they had just shown themselves to be respectable warriors in three years of fighting, proves the opposite with excess;⁹⁸ Furthermore, the decisive argument, albeit conjectural, is the resistance to the operation that destroyed the Jesuit plan.

As for separatism, it is difficult to see how it could have benefited the Jesuits. If it was for autonomy, they already enjoyed absolute autonomy; if it was for trade, no one controlled it; if it was for external security, the nation founded with the Guaraní tribes as its base would never have achieved the respect of the immense Spanish kingdom, being, on the contrary, a prey surrendered to the voracity of the colonising nations. The status of vassals gave the Jesuits all the guarantees that a powerful nation gives to its own people, without the duties imposed on them in return, as they were autonomous and privileged; whereas independence, beginning with making them enemies of the mother country, gave them no prospect other than ruin. As subjects, they were protected; as independents, they remained confined to a Mediterranean region surrounded by enemies: these were matters too serious to sacrifice to sentimental patriotism. There is no other hypothesis, in fact, and it is well known that the Jesuits had no true homeland, which was the source of their power of expansion, superior to that of governments. Scattered throughout all nations, they could hardly make a patriotic issue in any of them, since the influence they sought respected external forms. It was the restoration of Rome's moral dominion over the temporal powers that it would control as agents, in a definitive return to the situation of the Middle Ages; and as for that attempt at theocracy, the Crown continued to encourage it with increasing enthusiasm, the Treaty of Permuta being nothing more than a political incident whose consequences were harmful to it; but whose purpose tended towards something quite different from its detriment. To believe that the social state of the reductions gave rise to ideas of independence would be absurd, as there was then no reason to suppose the disputed separatism.⁹⁹

The Crown acted fairly in its compensation payments, as the P. P. had already received 52,000 pesos when the rebellion broke out; but I have already said that the rebellion was defending something much more important.

The first uprising broke out in 1751, interrupting the demarcation work; but the war did not escalate into violence until 1753 when the demarcators, supported by powerful escorts, arrived in the jurisdiction of San Miguel. The occupation of this extreme point of the reductions towards the coast meant that all hope was lost, leading to the use of military force as a last resort. Chief Sepé went out to meet the commissions, blocking their path with a series of battles that lasted almost a year. Taken prisoner while attacking the fort at Río Pardo, the Portuguese commissioner released him, hoping to see if he would submit to white rule and good treatment; but at the beginning of 1750, he reappeared more threatening than ever, leading numerous forces, with considerable artillery from Herró and some bastard sacres made of tacuara reinforced with torzales.

A Portuguese-Spanish army had entered the region to suppress the guerrilla forces that had been waging war for four years, and the insurgents dared to challenge them. Sepé was killed in a fierce encounter, and the Indians regrouped under the command of Languirú, who also lost his life in the bloody battle of Caybate, the true final act of the war. The occupation of the towns of San Miguel and San Lorenzo by the allied troops in May and August 1756 brought the war to an end. In the latter town, three Jesuits were taken prisoner, one of whom was Father Henis, considered the leader of the insurrection. The insurrection had lasted five years, almost without interruption, as it was greatly aided by the terrain with its peculiar topographical features, costing the Government of Portugal twenty million cruzados s¹⁰⁰.

It is unbelievable that for so long, and given the influence of the Portuguese priests on the Indians, they would have been unable to contain them: Portuguese opinion was unanimous on this point, and a deep-seated resentment was declared from that moment on.

P. their influence over the Indians, it would have been ineffective in restraining them: Portuguese opinion was unanimous in this regard, and a deep-seated animosity was declared from then on between the Portuguese Crown and the powerful Company.

The liberal ideas that prevailed in the Spanish government at the time facilitated joint action against the Jesuits, resulting in the expulsion of the order by both Crowns and its abolition by the Roman Curia.

A study of this obscure issue, in which both political reasons and internal rivalries within the Church played a part, would exceed the scope of my purpose ¹⁰¹; for I must confine myself strictly to its consequences for the Jesuit Empire.

Once the expulsion had taken place, the Spanish government retained communism in the reductions, appointing civil servants to administer them and entrusting religious matters to the communities of San Francisco, Santo Domingo and La Merced; but these new apostles were ignorant of the spirit of the enterprise. The economic disaster that resulted from the expulsion, as the royal commissioners found no treasures or anything similar in the convents, as had been believed, was socially greater in the hands of the Spanish agents.

Whether civil or religious, they did not know the customs of the Indians, did not understand their language, had no concept of their peculiar organisation, and their first mistake was to want to civilise a semi-savage environment in the European way. But that was already hereditary, and changing it would take time, at the very least. A perfect theocracy gave way to a normal society, with the sole result of engendering perfect rivalry among the disunited powers. The civil authorities took the new state of affairs as their own; the ecclesiastical authorities sought to preserve all their privileges; and their contradictions, which soon degenerated into scandalous quarrels, made the Indians their victims. The servant, destined to pay for all the faults of his masters, also suffered the consequences of that disorder. The vast industrial scope of the enterprise was diminished, declining to a sordid exploitation divided grudgingly between missionaries and administrators. Embezzlement, the eternal scourge of the Spanish administration, contaminated everything without consideration.

Since it belonged to the Crown, it was alien to both sides. No one had any interest in caring for something that was not theirs. Livestock and pastures, exploited without consideration, were depleted because they were not replenished; and the Indians, having no love for something they did not own, allowed themselves to be carried away by their characteristic passivity, impassive in the face of squandering.

Indifferent to the flattery of property, due to their status as eternal proletarians, and lacking the incentive that their relative well-being under the previous regime had provided, they dispersed and became agents of destruction themselves, since, returning to their nomadic lifestyle, they became robbers of the Jesuit estates themselves. Some zealous administrators were unable to contain the ruin, for it was based on something much more serious than a defect in administration. It was the change in lifestyle that had disrupted the foundations of the work, and it was crumbling without any possible remedy. The Jesuit system consisted of a relative culture of form, against a backdrop of real savagery, the only possible situation given that the Indian, his psycho-physiological unity broken by civilisation, perishes in it. The Jesuits themselves were already experiencing the effect when the expulsion took place, for, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the population of the reductions had declined; and this was so rapid that in only thirteen years (1743-56) the decline reached 46,000 inhabitants.

The fact is that sedentary life and the division of labour inevitably led to progress, despite the skilful balance of the Jesuit organisation and the isolation in which it was kept; and this disturbed the savage organism, which evolved unevenly in its dual physical and moral aspects, the former changed by the new conditions, while the latter remained immobile in its new idolatry, the only condition required of it.

Unbalanced in this way, the being cannot resist civilisation, for in peoples as in individuals, the physical depends substantially on the moral. The reader who has already noticed

Given the predominance of this concept throughout my historical assessment, it will come as no surprise that I single it out to explain a phenomenon from which I will draw conclusions later on.

Remnants of a race in decline, the servitude in which those savages found themselves only accelerated their decay, and everyone knows that the most significant fact in a declining race is sterility. Furthermore, they were unable to adapt, through ideas, which is the only fruitful accommodation, to a civilisation whose fundamental concept they could not understand, for the truth is that without many centuries of evolution, one cannot progress from tribal life to urban life.

—they lacked the conditions necessary to prosper. The following phenomenon was then observed: the population increased when they left the enclosures, as a reaction to a much worse state of affairs, and while the new living conditions coincided with the essential characteristics of the situation prior to the conquest; but when those conditions began to improve, slowly leading to civilisation, the decline began. The Indian demonstrated once again that, in ethnic and social matters, adaptation to the environment is an invariable rule.

For their part, civil administrators attributed the disorganisation they witnessed to communism, taking, as their contemporaries always did, the part for the whole; and it is clear that the more the institutions changed, the more they precipitated that society into ruin. Ten years after the expulsion, the population had decreased by one-eighth; thirty years later, it had halved (from 100,000 to 50,000) due to emigration to other places or a return to a life of savagery, where, in agreement with those who had not been subjugated, they became bandits, as I mentioned earlier. Four years after the expulsion, the livestock, which exceeded one million head at the time of the expulsion, was reduced to a quarter, with the new administrators being an active agent in this depopulation. The legend of hidden treasures and mine routes led to disturbances that affected...

several buildings, and which continue to this day with marvellous stupidity. I said earlier that no currency circulated in the reductions, so that such wealth never existed. The proceeds from the exploitations had to go directly from Buenos Aires to Rome, without ever returning in coin to their point of departure; and as for the ornaments, since the P.P. had received reliable news of their expulsion a year before it took place, it is to be assumed that they would have saved the most valuable ones in time. The excavations, therefore, produced no other result than to accelerate the ruin that had already begun.

The 19th century saw the beginning of a series of events that led to total destruction.

In 1763, Ceballos had reconquered for the Spanish Crown the towns ceded to Portugal by the Treaty of Permuta; but Portugal had invested too much money in them to waste an opportunity to reconquer them. That opportunity arose thirty-eight years later. The adventurer Santos Pedroso made a successful raid on the old reduction of San Miguel, seizing it, and this act marked the beginning of the reconquest, with a long trail of murders and depredations, returning to Portuguese rule the eastern bank of the Uruguay River, which Brazil still retains.

In 1803, Governor Velazco abolished communism in the reductions, effectively ending them with this measure; so that when the May Revolution broke out, they were nothing more than degenerate Indian tribes living in extreme poverty. Belgrano's ill-fated expedition to Paraguay momentarily stirred them from their slumber, but it only had the unfortunate result of handing over to that country the settlements on the left bank of the Paraná, thus recognising its total dominion over the river.

They remained quiet for another five years, until Artigas, in order to harass the Portuguese, organised in Uruguay a

A band of rebels led by the Indian Andrés Tacuari, known in history by his nickname Andresito. These forces crossed the Uruguay River and, after several successful encounters, laid siege to San Borja, capital of the Brazilian Missions.

Defeated and forced to lift the siege, the reprisals were terrible.

The Marquis of Alegrete and General Chagas, both of fierce memory, invaded the seven Argentine towns where Artigas had organised the montonera and ravaged them barbarously, leaving nothing standing within fifty leagues.

The fire devastated the towns; the looting wiped out the last of the livestock and the last remnants of Jesuit opulence.

Elsewhere I mentioned the booty, consisting of religious ornaments, to which must be added bells and even wooden images.

Such misfortune had repercussions on the coast of Paraná; for, so as not to upset the Portuguese, whose neutrality suited his plans, Dr. Francia ordered the destruction of all the reductions that Belgrano's defeat had handed over to the Paraguayan government, thus eliminating the main nucleus of the Jesuit Empire.

Andresito had meanwhile regrouped, organising another guerrilla force on the same ruins, so to speak, and Chagas once again crossed the Uruguay to punish him; but he was defeated at Apóstoles and forced to cross the river again. The montonera grew with this success, becoming so fearsome that the Brazilian general crossed the Uruguay for the third time, besieging it in San Carlos, where it had entrenched itself. Terrible battles ensued until, having blown up the church, which the Guaraní had turned into a powder magazine, Chagas took the town. It was completely razed to the ground, and

itself, as well as Apóstoles and San José, which had already been plundered during the previous year's expedition.

The ruins of San Javier were home to a few scattered inhabitants of Andresito who, driven by hunger, stole cattle from the Paraguayan settlers on the coast of the Paraná. The latter launched an expedition against this hotbed of banditry, exterminated its inhabitants and razed the few walls that remained standing.



Those towns, already the poorest during Jesuit rule, with the exception of Santo Tomé, which was Uruguay's most commercial port, were also the hardest hit by the war, so that not even the remnants of their former opulence would favour them in a possible reaction.

Meanwhile, Andresito, who had escaped from San Carlos through a daring feat, fighting his way through the besieging forces with his sabre in hand, once again gathered a group of scattered soldiers and wild Indians, agreeing with Artigas and the Entre Ríos leader Ramírez to launch a joint attack on Porto Alegre. Fulfilling his part, he attacked and took the town of San Nicolás; but a delay by Artigas frustrated the plan, and the brave Guaraní was taken prisoner, dying shortly afterwards in a prison in Rio de Janeiro.

Their Indians scattered throughout Brazil and Paraguay, or definitively adopted a life of savagery, moving northwards and heading for the Chaco in search of denser forests. The latest news we have of them is the unsuccessful attempt made by the Unitarian Government in 1826 to restore civilisation in those Missions—always claimed as theirs by Paraguay—by turning them into a province of the Union; and the part they played the following year in the war against Brazil, under the command of the chiefs Ramoncito and Caraypí.

The missions located in eastern Uruguay lasted a few more years, but in 1828, during the aforementioned war, the eastern leader Rivera destroyed them so completely that he even took the women and children captive.

The Jesuit regime continued in Paraguay until 1823, after which the Indians began to work for the government but retained their communist organisation. This was

abolished by General López in 1848, with the aim of confiscating the community's assets, declared fiscal property, for his own benefit, and this measure consummated the ruin of the Jesuit Empire in the last of its historical vestiges.

VII - THE RUINS OF THE .

The forest has spread its luxuriance over that ancient desolation, and the ruins are now one of the charms of the region.

I have already mentioned that the most common mortar used in Jesuit constructions was mud. Naturally, it was not the red clay that the reader is familiar with, but rather humus collected from nearby springs and used profusely because of its low cost. Once the villages were abandoned, weeds took root in that fertile soil, rushing over it with the ferocity of an assault. The filth from the rooms and the custom of sweeping into the street fertilised the ground for more than a century with all kinds of detritus, which was another cause of the forest invasion that has covered the ruins. Those remains of roofless rooms look like enormous pots swarming with inextricable weeds. Some are overflowing with ferns; in others, veritable orange tree nurseries grow; one is filled with the monstrous roots of an ombú tree, from another, an ancient timbó tree leans out of a window whose lintel has been dislodged; moss spreads vast carpets over the stones, and there is no joint or hole through which a root does not burst.

The jungle literally buries it, to such an extent that its density could be said to foreshadow ruin. Once inside, travellers must hack their way through with machetes to reach some ancient wall or isolated post, which tell them nothing; to get their bearings—

It is essential to find the square that still forms a clearing in the middle of the undergrowth. It is, however, diminished because the forest tends to advance towards its centre; but its relative bareness proves that the vegetation has indeed sought out the black clay of the walls and the soil fertilised by the rubbish in the streets. That square gives the location of the village. It faces directly south, with a slight slope that does not lead to error, and each of its sides is the base of a block of equal area. The greater profusion of orange trees indicates the orchard of the old convent.

Of the Argentine reductions, so badly damaged by war, little remains but walls; and as an ornamental remnant, the portico of San Ignacio, popularised by photographs and descriptions of various travellers. If one wishes to find something less shapeless, it is necessary to venture into Brazil and Paraguay, undertaking tedious journeys in which even food is often scarce. The closest points are San Nicolás and Trinidad, respectively.

To reach the first, it is necessary to cross Uruguay opposite the town of Concepción, then travel seventy kilometres on horseback. The second has two points of access: by land, from Tilla Encarnación, a Paraguayan city located opposite the capital of Misiones, travelling sixty kilometres on a very poor road; and by water from the aforementioned capital to the port of Trinidad, located fifteen kilometres from the ruins. The distances are short, but the scarcity of horses and the natural reticence of a semi-savage population, for whom Argentine origin is not a recommendation, make these excursions a real campaign. Moreover, it is necessary to carry provisions with you at all times, as even manioc, which is indigenous to the region, is often lacking, and meat is poor and expensive.

Both ruins are, however, worth seeing. The spirit revives upon contact with a highly original history; one experiences

a somewhat higher impression than that inspired by the bourgeoisie's easy ecstasy before the rockeries of municipal grottos, and that wild sadness makes one understand that not everything is rhetoric in the much-vaunted "poetry of ruins".

Those crumbling walls that stubbornly remain, their age forming such a stark contrast with the eternal freshness of the greenery; the seemingly melancholic course of the captured spring that resisted so many upheavals in the furtive enclosure of its cistern; the traces of a fire on the rotten jambs of a cell; the truncated vault of a cellar that is now a clandestine hole; the victorious youth of the orange trees that survive, bearing fruit for the birds of the air— give, perhaps through romantic suggestion, but no less evident nonetheless, an impression of mystical nostalgia.

The serenity is immense, the silence vast as the sea, the solitude eternal. However, there is nothing austere there. The climate and the forest have imbued the whole place with a peculiar sweetness. The hydroponic vegetation of clover, ferns and nettles produces a kind of emollient humidity. The rough stone blocks exude the copious dew of the nights, which the midday sun barely dissipates, providing a foothold for hygrosopic lichen and the tendrils of pellitory; the ground is a network of weeds, which compete with small thickets of tarragon and fierce agave fences; and above that, the tall forest spreads its immense canopy.

The stifling warmth of the air rises to the point of discomfort during the sun-drenched siestas, creating exquisite gazebos in those dilapidated rooms that offer the coolness of clay jars. Overripe oranges fall here and there in lazy detachment; clouds of parrots croak among the trees, enjoying such a lavish feast, and burst into strident chatter from time to time; a rabbit, whose white or spotted coat is reminiscent of its ancestors from the reduction, jumps cautiously among the ferns

; and the silence, so characteristic that it is noticeable as a presence, completes the impression of peace.

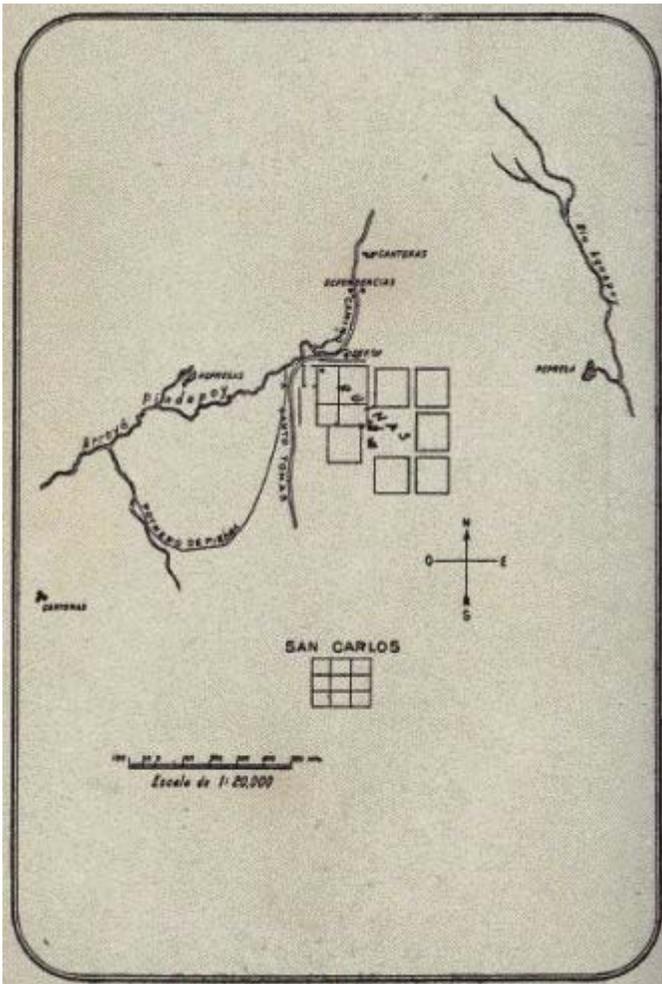
Piles of stone delineate ancient streets, fences, and enclosures. On the abacus of a pillar, barely distinguishable from the nearby tree trunks due to its rectangular structure, a guaembó (*phi-lodendron micans*) spreads its leaves as if in a vast vestibule pot; it adorns the adarajaque that was uncovered by a landslide, just like a cactus; elegant shrubs stand tall on the parapets, and wasps hang their cardboard honeycombs in every corner.

Where the buildings were made of adobe, the profusion is much greater, of course. The wild fig tree and the ombú tree have grown eagerly in those piles of earth, their flimsy trunks reaching excessive proportions. These masses of sapwood, into which the machete sinks like into pear flesh, have created the most curious plastic whimsies as they took over the ruins. Here, one keeps embedded among its roots a piece of wall, on which one would say thick streams of lead have run; elsewhere, others have taken advantage of the old urunday trunks, almost completely covered by their spongy wood, as supports; and some that found beams or braces in their development embraced them, dislodged them from their joints, and, raising them as they grew, now form immense crosses or colossal gallows of the strangest effect.

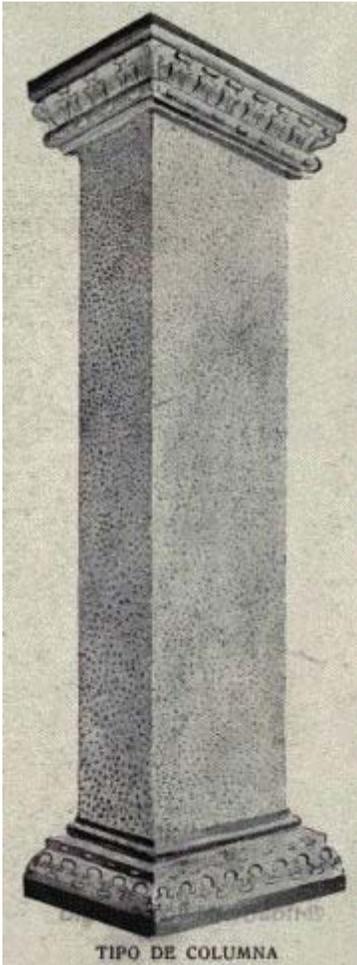
Ferns and giant clovers form the tapestry of the ancient dwellings; roots and shoots adorn their ruins like a veritable decoration, as if they wanted to restore them with savage artistry. One soon notices a vine that is, for that trunk, a perfect astragalus; or a clump of irises that form natural caulicles on that decapitated column. And the silence is increasingly profound, increasingly pleasant. A stray blade of grass brings to mind a vague memory of past history, and this poetic circumstance: that every ruin has its thrush—increases the

impression of melancholic sweetness with the flute-like notes of the solitary singer.

There, as it were in miniature, is a complete history. That fleeting empire, perhaps dreamed of by its creators as an ancient theocracy, with its David and Solomon, went through all the crises from conquest to failure; it gave rise to a policy that entangled two nations in its web; it organised civil life in a way that the world had not seen since the most remote Asian civilisations; it realised theocracy, in admirable rebellion against the progress of the times and ideas; it conglomerated into a society, with an imposing effort, that hotbed of tribes whose inorganic dispersion seemed to disqualify them from any hierarchy—erring greatly but also getting it right: an attempt, if you will, but a very brave one; a sketch, to be sure, but of an enormous project, where it was not the effort that faltered but the ideal in conflict with life; and not even the ravages of war prevented its remains from preserving the seal of all human greatness, communicating a kind of epic tenderness to those ruins veiled by the compassionate jungle, whose rumours are the last commentary on an imperial catastrophe.



Treading on broken tiles and flagstones, one walks among them. They were strong pieces, revealing once again the powerful structure of the complex. The first ones measure 0.45 m long by 0.35 m wide and 0.1 ½ thick; the second ones measure 0.30 m if octagonal, 0.40 m and 0.45 if six-sided. Over time, they have served the current inhabitants once again, being of superior quality.

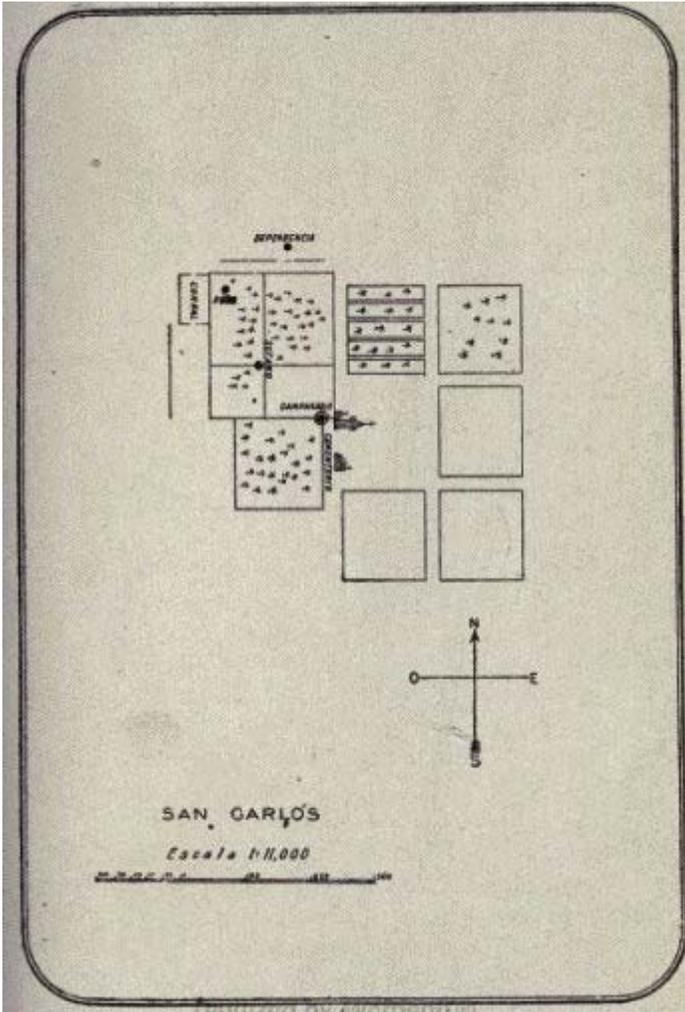


I have already mentioned the similarity between all Jesuit towns, which is evident in their ruins. Once a type had been adopted, it had to be preserved, as required by law. It is worth mentioning the name of its inventor, Father González de Santa Cruz. There is not much originality to speak of, as the aforementioned priest was not an architect and strictly adhered to the grid, taking as his basis the Spanish block with its well-known dimensions (125 m x 125 m); but the historical data has obvious value in archaeology.

I will describe two of these ruins, the most accessible from the capital of Misiones: San Carlos and Apóstoles; I will not describe San Ignacio, which is the most visited, because there is already a description and a map of it by Mr. Juan Queirel, and it also has a state guardian. My description would be redundant, not to mention that the recent clearing of the land makes access completely easy.

San Carlos, as can be seen from its respective map, was located between the headwaters of the Pindapoy or San Carlos and Aguapey rivers, and the Mojón stream that flows into the latter. Its position was at the highest point, on a plateau 250 metres above sea level, which divides the waters of the aforementioned rivers, towards the Paraná and Uruguay respectively. On clear days, it was possible to see the Santa Tomás ranch, located twenty kilometres to the north-west, and the San Juan ranch, thirty-five kilometres to the east-north-east. The suitability of its location, in terms of health and topography, can be deduced by contrast with the current village, whose ten or twelve huts, scattered at the bottom of a flooded canyon to the south of the ruins, are often ravaged by diphtheria and malaria. A series of mounds, almost all crowned by the circular grove that often indicates an ancient settlement, surrounds the ruins, which are completely covered by the forest interspersed with scattered orange groves.

The reader should keep in mind the two plans of this reduction, as the overall plan provides an example of the topography common to Jesuit settlements, and the detailed plan shows only the urban layout.



The ruins consist of two sections, now separated by a 20-metre-wide street running from north to south and by the square. The first consists of the convent with its outbuildings and a block of houses to the west. The second is the town itself.

That building was surrounded by a stone wall made of blocks measuring 0.20 metres in diameter on average, with a height of 3 metres; its width at the base was 1.25 metres and at the top 0.95 metres. These dimensions are common to the other dividing walls.

The convent was divided into two parts. The fifth, located to the north, was 145 metres wide to the south and 190 metres wide from east to west. It was completely filled by the orange grove, which had lost its original layout due to careless renovation, and at its north-western corner there was a well surrounded by a basin or trough. A strip of wasteland occupying the entire western side was probably used as a vegetable garden.

Eighty-four metres from that side runs a parallel wall, almost entirely in ruins, for which I have been unable to find an explanation other than that it was the trench where Andresito resisted the Brazilians. My conjecture is reinforced by the fact that this wall leads to the side of the church, located on the west side of the square, as that building was the powder magazine, as you will recall.

The space occupied by the convent rooms measures 84 metres from east to west and 82 metres from north to south, counting the first distance to the wall; as for the general stone fence, it measures 190 metres, as in the rest. On the wall surrounding this enclosure to the south, up to the outer wall, i.e. over a length of 84 metres, there were 14 rooms completely independent of each other; and from the outer wall to the church, 19 in the same condition. Their capacity is 10.90 metres by 5.85 metres; they were built in stone up to 2.70 metres from the foundation, the rest being a wall that now measures 2.30 metres, but which must have exceeded 5 metres. The urunday buttresses that reinforced those walls are still visible in some places; the ashlar that formed them are prisms measuring 0.75 x 0.45 metres. No remains of the tie beams and rafters are left in the destroyed rooms that were twice devoured by fire. The entire building was shaded by a 3.50 m wide gallery, supported every 4 m by pilasters whose pedestals measured 0.85 x 0.80 m. The shaft, fixed to the base by a wooden tenon, was 2 metres high and 0.46 metres wide on each side; some reached 1.06 x 1 metres at the base and 0.77 metres on the sides. All these pilasters were octagonal. Part of the gallery must have been supported on posts.

wooden structures that were destroyed by fire, which is why no traces remain. At the western end of the rooms in question, and 20 metres behind the church, are the remains of a round stone building, which must have been the bell tower connected to the convent. On the opposite side, there were five stone rooms measuring 15 metres by 9.75 metres, up to the wall; and if the same building continued from there to the stone wall, there would be seven rooms, or 19 if it was like the one at the front. There are no traces of a gallery, and I infer from their size that they would have been workshops or offices. At their intersection with the wall, a section of basement is visible, which may have been the refectory. Behind the wall surrounding the convent to the west and forming part of it, there was a 72 m² courtyard x 44 metres, next to which ran the road to the Santo Tomás ranch, which can still be used. From this same courtyard, a stone pasture extended, widening to the south-west and then turning north until it reached a spring on the Pindapoy; it was 700 metres long. Thirty metres behind the side

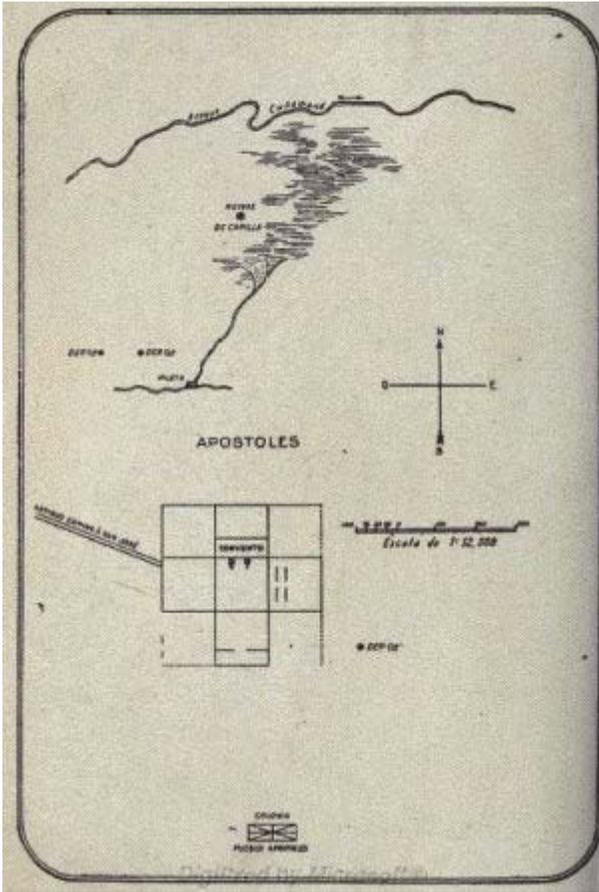
N. dé la quinta, there is a ruin located on another spring of the same stream, with a grove of orange trees between it and the corral, but no remains of dwellings.

The square measures 125 metres by 125 metres, and on its western side stood the church, of which only two shapeless walls and traces of steps belonging to the parapet remain. At the end of this side, that is, at the south-western corner of the square, is the current cemetery—a small enclosure where there are some pieces of old gravestones.

Blocks of the established dimensions are located on the north, south, and east sides of the square; two more complete the square, and one begins on the south side of the convent. The rooms measure 0 m x 6 m and are arranged in rows, separated by 18 m streets, as shown in the plan. I am only providing one block with this layout, but the others are the same. The rooms surrounding the square were made of stone, as were those forming the W block. The rest are almost entirely made of adobe, no-

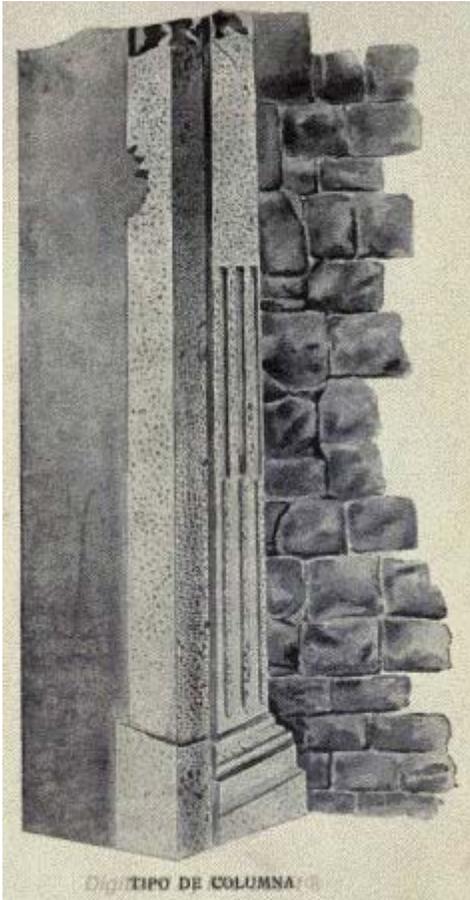
facing all traces of galleries. Its stone walls reach a height of 3 metres from the foundation, including the corners; the superimposed wall is only 0.50 metres high. Each block had 6 rows of rooms, with 19 of these forming a row, which gives a total of 684 houses for the town alone. Calculating 5 inhabitants per house, an average that seems reasonable to me, this comes to 3,420; which, together with the servants of the convent and the foremen and labourers of the estates, makes a total of 3,500 established for the reductions in general.

The fortifications are completely destroyed, but it is easy to imagine their location based on the village's layout. The streams that almost surround it formed natural moats.



Apóstoles was also located on a plateau between the Cuñá-Manó and Chimiray streams, the former 7 kilometres to the south-southwest and the latter 1,100 metres to the north. The map shows the number of blocks and buildings, which are quite destroyed, but the rooms are better preserved than in San Carlos. In them, we can see that the doors measured 3.05 metres high by 1.10 metres wide. The window sills, clearly carved into the stone, are 0.07 metres wide. The size of the rooms varies slightly, as they are 5.75 metres long by 5.15 metres wide, with the walls that remain standing reaching 3.15 metres. The prismatic ashlar that form them measure 0.58 x 0.33; however, in the corners they measure 0.87 x

0.40. In the south-east corner of the square, there are remains of others measuring 7.50 x 5.70, but these are exceptional.



Behind the row of rooms forming the eastern side of that building, and separated by a 15.70-metre-wide street, there were two rooms, each 36.70 metres long and 5.80 metres wide, isolated from each other by a 17.15-metre space in which some orange trees thrive. Behind these, and at the aforementioned distance of 15.70 metres, there are two more rooms of the same dimensions, followed by the common building. Their walls are 0.75 metres thick. Each

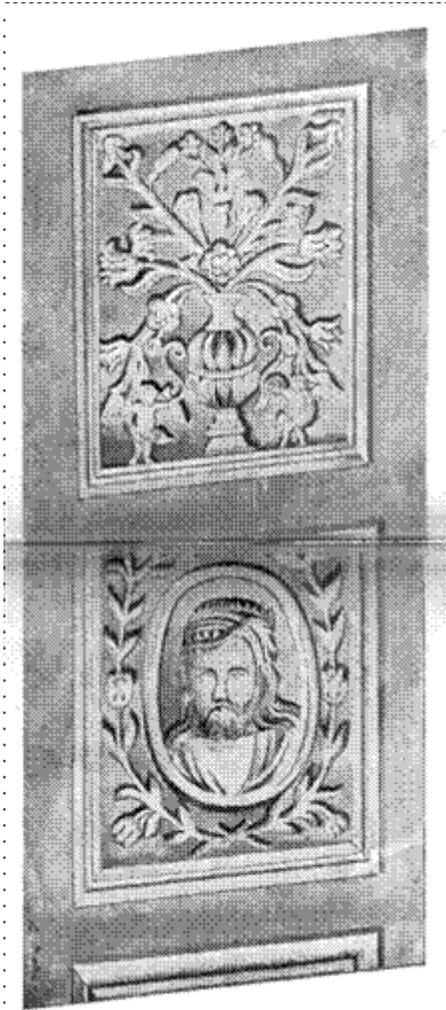
room had six doors, corresponding, it seems, to the same number of partitions.

On the north side of the square, there are remains of two buildings separated by a space of 25 metres, which measure 6.40 metres wide each. A door measuring 2.30 metres high by 1.95 metres wide still remains standing. From the ends of the beam, made of a huge urunday plank, two pieces of wood protruded, which, embedded in the stones cut for this purpose, formed a kind of linteled arch. Half-eaten by the fire, it nevertheless remains standing, supporting the enormous weight of the lintel with almost no sagging; and it is likely that it would have retained its horizontal position if it were still counterbalanced by the jambs. This is not surprising, given that urunday wood has a bending strength of 1257 kg per cm². Each section of the building is 5.60 metres wide, with a depth of 12.80 metres for the one furthest to the east and 6 metres for the other. The walls are 0.69 metres thick and 5.80 metres high, but it is easy to calculate an additional 1.50 metres for the collapses and the filling of the floor, resulting in a height of 7.30 metres for the building.

The other side of the square, that is, the south side, measures 55.50 metres and is occupied by a stone wall of varying height, ranging from a maximum of 3 metres to a minimum of 1.70 metres. I am inclined to believe that this wall corresponded to the side of a large room, similar to those already described on the eastern side. The 13.62 metres missing to complete the side in question were apparently formed by mud-brick houses.

68 metres south of this side, there are remains of a building measuring 26 metres wide by 16 metres deep, with a dividing wall at 7.50 metres. It was divided into four equal rooms with four doors to the north. There are remains of a 2.35-metre-wide gallery on the north, east and west sides of the square, consisting of badly deteriorated urunday posts and 2.09-metre-high pilasters

and 0.45 m wide; some octagonal, others with a rough moulding that decorated them crudely.

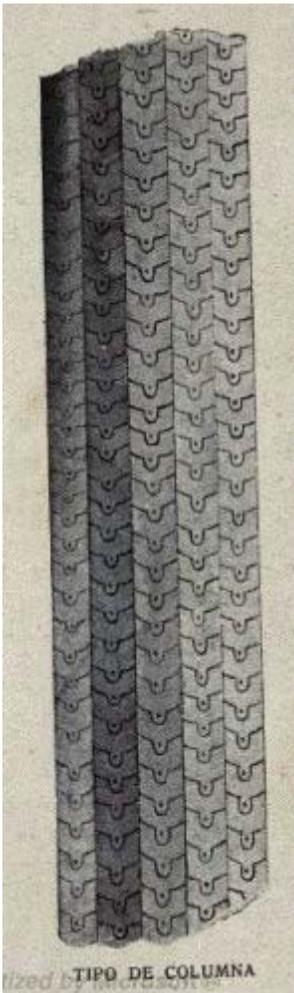


UNA PUERTA DECORADA

In front of the long wall described above, there is the trunk of a stone statue, which, judging by the way its hands are crossed over its chest, must have belonged to the Immaculate Conception. Erosion has left barely a foot visible, but what little remains of it

He appears beneath the tunic, reinforcing the previous indication. Near this point, two clear pedestals, on whose plinths you can still see the holes for the pins that secured their respective statues, indicate that there were two; and indeed, it is not difficult to find pieces of another. These statues, which decorated the exterior of the churches, lead us to discuss the ruins belonging to them.

There has been talk of the "Guaraní style," but this is clearly a misnomer. Everyone knows that it is not even appropriate to speak of a "Jesuit style," since the only distinctive feature of the Society's architecture is its excessive use of decoration, which was a universal fashion at the time.⁽¹⁰²⁾ The forest, with its lush profusion, may have influenced that architecture, but there was no time for such an evolution, which was always very slow, and the Indians lacked the culture required to be artists, much less innovative artists. I must point out, however, to be fair, that the ornamentation and bright colours, to which I will return shortly, were greatly attenuated and even explained by the action of very bright light and a very clear atmosphere, which would have devoured, to use the term of rigour, the half-tones. All the external decoration was painted, precisely to avoid this, as in medieval temples, whose effect must have been beautiful, judging by some narthexes that can still be appreciated, and it is clear that there was a design in this, given the width of the abacuses, the depth of the grooves and the fact that all the decorative columns had fluted shafts; for although such features may seem surprising at first glance due to their exaggeration, their purpose soon becomes clear: to attenuate the excess of ambient light.

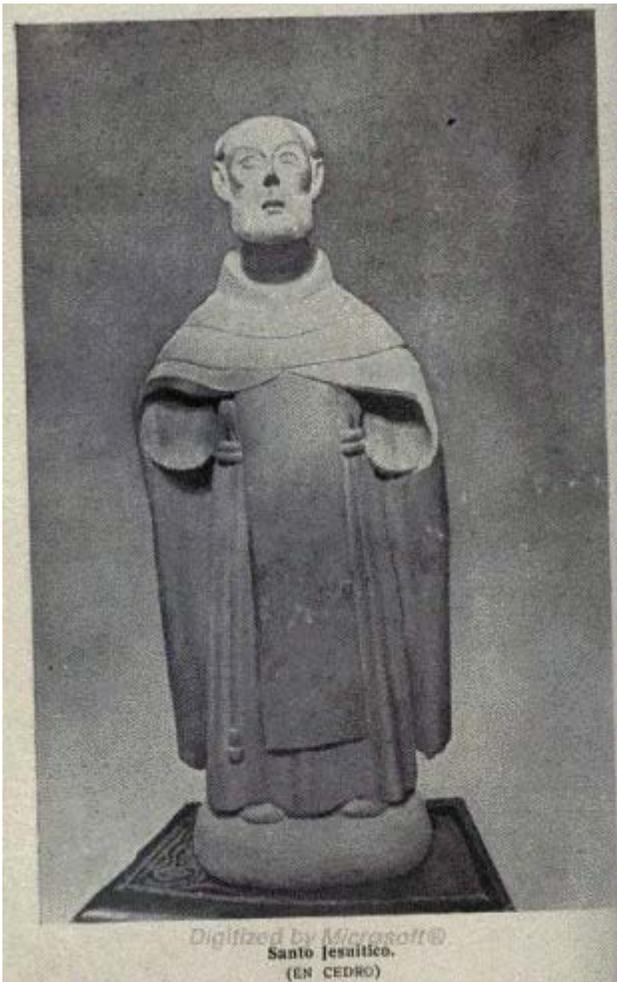


The ruins of Jesuit temples therefore leave no impression of novelty. All reveal the cruciform shape that predominated in the Middle Ages and which the Jesuits restored out of special devotion to Jesus Christ ¹⁰³. There is nothing original in the overall design or in the decorations. The portico of a sacristy in Trinidad, which the reader has seen copied in its current state, gives a sufficient idea of the ornamentation. The church to which it belongs was built at the height of Jesuit power and is perhaps the largest of all. That of San Ignacio, in the Argentine Missions, reveals something

Very similar: Gothic columns, on which rests a heavily ornamented lintel, as the softness of the sandstone predisposed it to abundant decoration. These were very varied: the mixed foliage of the composite capitals, the clusters of the evangelical vine; quarter and half mouldings, gables, chevrons, cartouche shields and cherubs. On either side of the portico, two slabs with the symbols of the Virgin and the Society, on the right and left respectively. I present to the reader three types of Jesuit columns, which, together with the porticos and altars, form the entire architectural provision of the ruins; from them, it can be seen that there was, in fact, nothing new. The embedded ones are naturally of the same style, and in the mud-brick temples they were carved in wood. In Trinidad, a cornice has been preserved that surrounds the entire presbytery and completes the idea of the decorations used. It depicts various domestic scenes from the life of Mary, treated with considerable skill. In one, the Virgin prays while her child sleeps in the cradle and four angels play music so that he does not wake up; in another, she tucks her child in, still lulled by the angelic music, whose instruments are harps, panpipes and trumpets; in another, she operates her spinning wheel to the same accompaniment; in yet another, it is an angel who performs the task so that she can pray.

These figures, as well as the portico of the sacristy mentioned above, are carved on the building blocks, which were gigantic tiles that, when fitted together, formed a veritable mosaic in high relief. Almost all of the arches were linteled, and quite a few were imitations made of wood, as I recalled when describing the ruins of Apóstoles. Only in the unfinished church of Jesús are there some pointed arches that reveal the ogival character of the future building; and outside of it, there is a ruined semicircular arch, which was perhaps going to be located at the intersection of two cloisters.

By climbing roofs and walls, trees have precipitated the collapse of those buildings. Nothing resists their disruptive action. They dislodge the voussoirs, lever the architraves, and the wind, bending them, communicates its jolts to the vault or wall embraced by their roots. The aforementioned church of Trinidad, which I focus on because it is the most easily accessible to travellers, shows clear signs of what I have described. At first glance, one would say it had been destroyed by an earthquake, such is the extent of its ruin. Then one realises that this is only due to the friability of the material. Falling pillars or collapsing walls reduced everything around them to rubble. Moisture actively contributed to their decay n¹⁰⁴ and the forest immediately invaded the breach.



Nothing remains of the naves. The transept remains, as does a section of the vault above the chancel and one of the transverse arches, which will soon collapse. The sacristy also retains its vault and a niche decorated with a rich archivolt. The door, a reproduction of which the reader will have already seen, belonged to the sacristy: a heavy cedar door adorned with profuse carvings.

The side walls were solid partitions, with internal staircases, one of which leads to the dungeons overlooking the cemetery.

All the external plaster has fallen off o¹⁰⁵ , restoring the wall's pink hue, which makes it stand out beautifully against the encroaching forest. From the site where the portico once stood, the view overlooks a splendid picture of green hills and forests, transformed into a kind of winding avenue on the somewhat distant banks of the Capivarí stream. The old square lies at the viewer's feet, as that temple occupied a veritable plateau, and almost in front of it stand some six rooms where the Magistrate's Court and the current church are located; but their roofs were recently rebuilt in the modern Paraguayan style.

Twenty kilometres from this point is the unfinished church of Jesús, where the Jesuits were going to try out Gothic o¹⁰⁶ , building it more solidly than the others, as it was entirely set in lime. Its buttressed walls, truncated pillars, joints still overflowing with mortar, and half-hewn ashlar, from which it seems as if the chisels have just been removed, seem to indicate that workers were nearby. Almost a century and a half has passed since it was left as it is, but the construction was so solid that it could be continued without any renovation. Its baptistery was already vaulted, and it is now home to a Paraguayan peasant couple. Adjacent to it are the cells, also unfinished, although a little taller. Its architecture was to be very sumptuous, with ogival rose windows and decorated lintels, which serve as rafters, as can also be seen in San Ignacio, pieces of asperón.

Inside the church, there is nothing but the pillars of the triple nave, and on them two pulpit platforms. Behind the presbytery is a sacristy in which a font had already been installed. The drain, which was never used, is clearly visible, and a lizard has made its home there...

The paleography, which must have been profuse, if not rich, has been reduced to very little due to neglect and looting. Pieces

Gravestones in cemeteries, the occasional medal—anepigraphic remains, and therefore useless for examination—make up the meagre spoils, already well exploited by the local industry, which exploits them with clumsy forgeries, whose success lies precisely in the extinction of any tell-tale mark or sign.

In the old settlements of Brazil and Paraguay, some images have been saved from destruction, although not without flaws. The average type is that of the two wooden saints that the reader has been able to see, which I consider to be Creole because they are carved from cedar. The images on the façade of the churches and sometimes inside them, in niches carved at different heights, were of the same character. Almost all of them are decapitated, because when they fell, the overly soft sandstone gave way at the weakest points, causing the characteristic deterioration. It is also very difficult to find an entire head, for the same reason, as humidity has contributed to the detachment of large flakes, which the friable structure of this rock presents as a peculiar fracture. Their dimensions averaged 1.50 metres in height for the same length for the thickness of the torso, and 2 metres for the circumference of the seat, with their pedestals generally being clean.

The sculpture is correct, but trivial and entirely in keeping with the types of current iconography. Decorative sculpture, which died with the Gothic style, was the only type that suited the building of which it formed part. The individualism of the Renaissance disrupted this harmony, and the decorative statues of the temples became mere additions. This was also the case in Jesuit churches, and with even greater reason, given that they were the decadents par excellence in religious architecture.

There are also a few tabernacles whose interior gold leaf still retains its shine, and some hinged Christs, suitable for the ceremonies of the Descent, in their glass sarcophagi. The incarnations of these sculptures are badly deteriorated, but it is clear that they were of good style¹⁰⁷, although their stigmata are very

exaggerated. Mould assails them in that perennial dampness, their canvas joints come apart, the plaster of their joints regurgitates - in sordid paste, the colours chip away, and their expression of majesty or pain, immobilised amid such decay, and sometimes profaned to the point of bestiality by the destruction that demolished that nose or shaved off that moustache, produces an afflicted and grotesque impression. Time, enemy of the gods whom it begets and devours according to immortal fable, turns them into puppets by destroying them, without erasing, to add to their misery, their remaining divinity.

Very rare examples of pottery can also be found, ranging from common tiles to rough white majolica, as well as pieces of iron locks and bolts.



Some stones, which are impossible to restore, still bear traces of inscriptions. On one of them, for example, the beginning of a word is engraved in tortis script, which reads: ECC... with the beginning of a curved line visible just above the first c. Assuming that this is the accent mark of an abbreviation, and making a deduction based on the character of the letter, the word in question may have been ecclesiarum, abbreviated to ec-cliar in the early 16th century, derived from a form that had remained almost intact since the 14th century. On another stone, in capi-

Quite rough, I saw the initials L. D. O. and a vertical stick that would belong to an M, engraved on the now destroyed part, if those letters corresponded, as I believe, to the phrase *Laus Deo Optimo Maximo*, used in that form at the end of the 17th century. The only thing I have found complete, but equally inexplicable due to its isolation, is the Roman numeral CCMCC (one hundred thousand) used in this way at the end of the 15th century; in the same way as the Arabic numerals 801 on an irregular block of stone, and the word *cuñá*—woman in Guaraní—on a piece of sandstone; it is possible that this comes from a tombstone.

The reader will have noticed that I attribute religious significance to all these remains, as this seems to me to be closest to the truth, given their authors: and so, when I found some letters that did not have this significance, I chose to disregard them. To conclude, take, for example, the following number—h9—at the end of a piece of sandstone. I have been unable to find any other explanation for it than a rather legal term—*hujusmodi*—in whose abbreviation these signs were used for nearly two centuries: but I repeat that this epigraphy is entirely conjectural.¹⁰⁸

Returning, to conclude, to the art of Jesuit works, I have already said that it did not particularly exist. It followed the evolution of the era without dissent, except to lean towards the *mamarracho*.

The decorative art of the Middle Ages ended with her, and modern art was inaugurated by the decorations called "grotesques"¹⁰⁹ popularised by Raphael and his school, which were nothing more than themes from nature fantasised by the artist. The most striking difference is that medieval decoration was primarily symbolic, in accordance with scientific and literary canons, such as Vincent de Beaubais's 'Mirrors', Boethius's books, and the Golden Legend, while modern decoration gave free rein to the imagination.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ This gave rise to the art of the 16th and 17th centuries (the Jesuit era), art whose characteristics are the movement of the

line, the predominance of decoration, and correlatively the accentuation of personality, which marked the progressive departure from the Middle Ages.

Such a predilection for decoration soon degenerated into excesses that effeminated art, resulting in buildings constructed in the style of Japanese furniture, as this fashion was originally Eastern. Facades full of small columns, volutes and niches multiplied with more taste than vigour, and Jesuit decorators found themselves at ease in that environment. They certainly exaggerated the trend, since their aim was to overstimulate attention through striking embellishment, and it even seems that there was, albeit only in terms of sumptuousness, a vague attempt at Byzantine restoration in this area.

Success failed entirely. The Jesuits came much closer to Arabic art, which was of the highest purity in Spain, where Byzantine imitation had no influence on it, and they did not know how to take advantage of it. The profusion of their ornaments, in which some have believed they see something medieval, has nothing to do with this, considering their deplorable crudeness, when the Middle Ages was the era of goldsmithing; and as for the decoration, it has nothing to do with the Byzantine or Arabic styles, except for the predominance of primitive colours (blue, red and yellow represented by gold), which closely accompanies the best periods of art in all styles ¹¹¹, especially in the Arabic style, but this is not enough when other correlative qualities are lacking. Furthermore, I mentioned a moment ago the influence that the environment may have had on the charra's load, without this fully explaining the exaggeration.

Only in some altarpiece caryatids, representing seraphim finished with a polychrome volute, did I notice the indigenous type, certainly very bizarre under the profusely golden hair of the

angelic hierarchs. And this is the only truly "Guarani" in all the remains I have examined...

Earlier I mentioned gnomons or sundials, which are usually found broken into pieces among the ruins. They are almost all polygonal, with four sides of the cube on which they are drawn occupied by one horizontal line, whose hourly lines at unequal distances indicate the position of the armillary sphere, and three vertical lines: one southern, one northern and one declining. The fifth face of the cube was occupied by a psalm or evangelical verse, and the sixth was the seat. The flat gnomon of San Javier, which is solar and lunar, that is, diurnal and nocturnal, has its sphere divided into forty-eight parts, which indicates that it marked the half-hours; and the polygonal one in Concepción was meridian, a circumstance that is noticeable at first glance because its hourly surfaces are rectangular.

The aforementioned ruins of San Javier hold the remains of another that I consider very remarkable, if it was, as I believe, one of the so-called universal ones, because they serve for any latitude or meridian. Its pieces were scattered over a fairly large area, and once they were gathered together, although many were missing, they were measured.

I believe I have partially restored the sundial, although I was unable to restore the hour lines because the pieces were too fragmented; however, three of them had numbers that helped me to guess the shape of the gnomon. They were V, IX and X. After several attempts to infer the length of the missing style, I decided on 15 centimetres, which, omitting calculations that are of no interest to the reader, gave a module of 15 millimetres to fix the distance of the hour lines to the sundial. That distance was 505 millimetres for Y, 140 for IX and 87 for X. Now, the exact distance of the first should be equivalent to 34.10 modules, that of the second to 10 and that of the third to 5.77. The error is, respectively, 6 ½, 10 and ½ millimetres, which I believe to be impu-

tables to the deterioration of the pieces and the inadequacy of my resources; but while in one case the distance of two-thirds of a module is already noticeable, in another case the approximation of half a millimetre is, in my opinion, a conclusive argument.

This is all that remains of the old settlements, constantly ravaged by the inhabitants of the nearby villages, who use the ruined stone blocks to build less comfortable dwellings. The State would do well to allow their extraction, which is currently clandestine, reserving the most accessible ruins as a field of study: San Carlos, Apóstoles and San Ignacio, for example. There are thousands of cubic metres of cut stone there, which could provide cheap material for many buildings.

Be that as it may, the forest and men will soon consummate destruction. The indigenous stones now shelter foreign dwellers, who are Russian and Polish immigrants; they echo with harsh languages, whose barbarity is even more striking in contrast to the Guaraní vocalisations, which, in their onomatopoeia, make the waters and foliage murmur; they reverberate strangely with the chants of Orthodox and Ruthenian rites; the tipoy of the extinct aboriginal is replaced by the red skirt and green bodice of the Slavic peasant woman, who comes to give birth to her golden babies right where the copper puppies crawled; they go from being eminent frontiers to cordoning off paths or flower beds; from trunks to benches, from statues to boundary stones. Many remain in their old places, shaded by the contemporary orange grove, in the peace of the forest, whose vigour is nourished by the detritus of the absent population. A few more years, and to recall the old phrase, the rumas will also have perished. The uncultivated wilderness will reign once more under those foliageages, and the missionary thrush will evoke the last memory of the Jesuit Empire in the ramblings of its wild song.

EPILOGUE

This work might have ended with the chapter on the ruins, but the study carried out imposed, in my view, some kind of conclusion on the results of the Jesuit order in its Guaraní empire. Nothing would have been easier than to limit myself to the description entrusted to me, omitting any judgement that would inevitably be open to discussion; this is what I could have done, without detracting from my work, had I not understood that in matters of this kind it is necessary to go as far as one's conscience dictates. I therefore believe it is my duty to add a few words.

In the course of this essay, I believe the reader has been able to see that the Jesuits enhanced a perfect theocracy with their reductions. This being the political ideal of the Spanish monarchy, it is not surprising that it protected its authors as much as it could, dedicating special militias to their defence, favouring them with all sorts of special exemptions and granting them privileged legislation, the spirit of which was contrasted with the humiliating character that the peninsular Church assumed. From exclusive commercial franchises to the permission to arm themselves without control, they obtained everything; moreover, they themselves suggested ordinances in their favour. With them, there were no patronages or privileges, and the Crown always gave them much more than they gave back.

Thus, there is no question of interests in the expulsion, which was consented to and carried out by nations where confiscation could not be an incentive. Focusing specifically on Spain, it resolved a question of ideas with such a measure. Charles III was not a man to conceive of a theocratic empire based on quietism and the backwardness of his subjects. His modern and practical tendencies sought to extract, in this double sense, as much as possible from the crude instrument that in the hands

of the Habsburgs was merely a genius of destruction; and although he did not turn out to be the Louis XIV of Spain, lacking the genius of the Great King to match him, it is clear that he resembled him in some ways.

The Peninsula received from his hand the healthiest shake-up it had experienced since the reconquest against the Moors. Excellent administration, which was perhaps that monarch's speciality, replaced the customary fiscal disorder. The Crown established factories throughout the kingdom, linking them to regional production, including cloth, silk and cotton fabrics, steel, glass, porcelain, etc. He endowed industrial schools; he created the Bank of San Carlos in order to revive credit; he protected trade by regularising the deplorable state of the peninsular road network, establishing the postal service, opening ports and guaranteeing public safety. and as for the overseas possessions, which are now independent nations, and even more so our own, they owe him the abolition of the commercial privilege of Cadiz, the establishment of the first regular line of packet boats serving Cuba and the Plata, and the political decentralisation that, by turning us into a viceroyalty, paved the way for independence.

The theocratic ideal, based on the abolition of individualism that public wealth develops as it increases, and unitary in essence, could not have a devotee in such a monarch, just as the latter certainly did not conceive of his country's progress in purely material terms; thus, his conflict with the Jesuits was above all a philosophical question. Once the bond that had linked the monarchy to that ideal for centuries was broken, the anachronism of that system became unquestionably clear. In a form different from military conquest, but substantially identical to it, it prolonged the social forms of the golden age of the Church, perpetuating the medieval organisation. This was all the more remarkable given that the rest of the nations had already embraced modern practices, which, by spreading wealth among the people through the death of privilege, by virtue of which it was only accessible to the nobles, founded the current capitalist society and put the monarchies in favour of the people, fostering individualism and heralding the Revolution. There was, therefore, no possible compromise, and the rupture that delayed evolution made violent; and it is clear that the Jesuits, champions of the abolished system, had to experiment with ma-

and liveliness of the mishap. With regard to the social consequences of his missionary system, I believe they are implicit in a dilemma motivated by the missionary study of the question:

Either the Indians were incapable of civilisation, which was being achieved step by step by the white settlements, and this was the opinion of the Jesuits; or they had the aptitude to adopt it. In this case, theocracy had lost its way, failing to understand that communism perpetuated the social ideal of the Middle Ages; in the other, the extermination of the savage was a fatality that could not be opposed without prejudice to the superior race.

The liberal humanitarianism that defenders of the Jesuit system have exploited to their advantage has been appalled by this outcome, consistent with the metaphysical principles that constitute their creed; and such logic has put them in the predicament of either confessing that the work of the Jesuits was plausible, or renouncing their own concept in order to yield to sectarian passion. Similarly, it has been countered with the argument of freedom, claiming that the Indian was free under that system of everything for everyone, similar in appearance to the ideal of modern communists; but this argument, excellent as a dialectical resource, constitutes an anomaly for those who organised communism in such a way that all economic progress was impossible for the individual. That state socialism, more despotic than an Eastern empire, allowed equality, but the equality of misery, as everything existed by the providence of the Father director: the renunciation of earthly goods, which is for Catholic Christianity the surest means of salvation. As for humanitarian considerations, they are equally unacceptable to the priests of a religion whose original law authorised the extermination of races when the chosen people saw others as an obstacle to their development, thus enshrining, in the religious form that synthesised the prestige of the time, that eternal law of the struggle for life to which the secret of history also belongs.

The Indians were incapable of living in a civilised state, as amply demonstrated by the failure of the reductions when they came into contact with the world, for their organisation was essentially savage and atheistic.

whose effects still linger in Brazil and Paraguay. These descendants of the subjugated Guaraní people still have no clear concept of property, and any ambition to enrich themselves is unknown to them. If necessity drives them, they steal or plunder; and the typically savage trait of entrusting all work to women proves how little influence the Jesuit conquest actually had. It could be said that the climate is to blame, but climate is not a fatality; and a work that failed to correct its effects even in the slightest degree failed in its essential purpose. Civilisation, in its moral aspect, is a set of artificially developed qualities, hence the difference between the civilised individual and the savage. The latter depends entirely on the environment in which he was born; the former is its intelligent collaborator.

Those men, who are only occasionally stirred by their nomadic instinct to engage in raids that often turn into looting, have the savage alive beneath their semi-cultured structure, and this is evident in the atrocious barbarity that characterises their revolutions and mutinies: after all, military prowess was the only individual quality they had developed.

The wars that ravaged the Argentine Missions to the point of depopulation have been a true purge, the results of which we can congratulate ourselves on in comparison with neighbouring states.

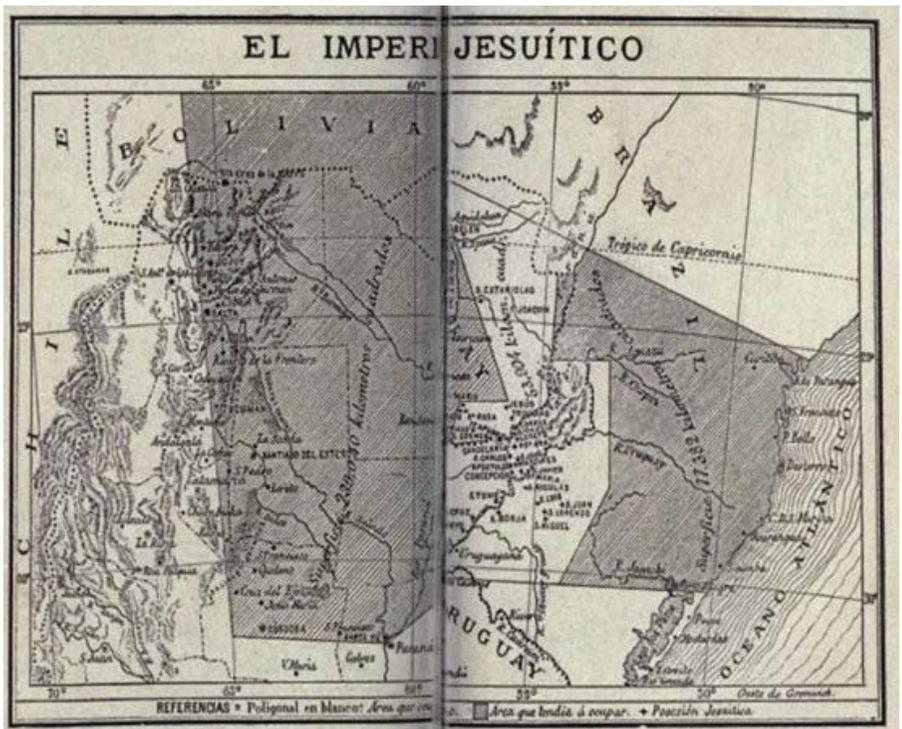
To fully appreciate it, one must have seen that poor Paraguay, sick with laziness under the canopy of its magnificent jungle—king of marble legs whose misery increases the splendour of its useless pomp;—or that Brazilian border whose countrymen, much more cultured than ours, live caressing the bandit dream as the only balm for their passions and their misery. More than by the valley of the border rivers, and on the land, which is of course identical, the dividing line is drawn there in the spirit.

The Jesuits took their own institute as a model for social organisation, based on a triple foundation, which already provides the blueprint for the building, on three fundamental principles: communism, absolute authority and the renunciation of personality; but the results soon made it clear that such a structure, effective for

small, militant groups, was not applicable to peoples. Peoples have other needs, and although similar to those of small groups, they are not identical. Thus, the qualities developed in the Guaraní were useless or harmful to modern civilisation.

Religious and submissive, they lacked individual initiative, perpetually delegating their free will to the P.P. or to the divinity. They showed bravery in the insurrection of 1751 and in their encounters with the Mamluks, but bravery without energy. The fact is that religion, allied with the soldier in the struggle to maintain the old supremacy in the modern world, which is increasingly sceptical and peaceful, that is to say, increasingly adverse, develops only military patriotism, on which the persistence of the alliance depends, bringing together in this form the two tendencies least compatible with our civilisation. The aggrandisement through wealth, which is the modern ideal, requires the predominance of calculating ability—and of pa ¹¹², the antithesis of religious sentimentality and military glory; and since the concepts of honour and virtue have become confused with the dominant ideal, as happens in all civilisations, these tendencies have lost their substantive qualities, expressed by those concepts, gradually becoming mere decorative elements.

Thus, the Indian from the reductions was a regressive type due to his education, apart from his ethnic deficiencies; but such is the power of ideas that anything can be expected of their effectiveness. Unfortunately, this proved to be detrimental and null when the enterprise degenerated from religious to commercial. The conversion of the tribes was no longer the dominant purpose, as the political tendency of the order prevailed over all other considerations. Then the geographical plan of the Empire began to be realised.



The reader has before him a map, drawn up with the aim of showing him the situation that prevailed after the emigration from La Guayra. With this act, the first attempt failed, which was more profitable, as it sought the Atlantic at points close to the richest Brazilian captaincies, where the Jesuit establishments were also of greater importance. Once that outlet had been achieved, the one they sought through Porto Alegre and perhaps a third through Marañón, the plan was carried out in that part. Contact with Peru and Tucumán remained, which they sought through successive foundations on the Paraguay River and through the Chaco, respectively. The first objective was the reductions of San Joaquín, San Estanislao and Belén, whose considerable distances from each other, relative to those of the other towns, demonstrate their character as outposts. The other line of communication was a constant religious and military concern. Its accessibility had been demonstrated since Diego Pacheco's expedition, and in the early years of the 18th century, Jesuits sent from Paraguay as a result of Urizar's repressive expedition had brought their mi-

missions to Chalo, establishing them among the Lules, Ojotas and Abipones. This was the first serious attempt at Jesuit communication.

Eight years before the expulsion, Espinosa y Davalos, governor of Tucumán, attempted to establish it between his headquarters and Paraguay; he reached Bermejo and returned without success, but discovered the route that the Chaco Indians kept open to invade the Tucumán settlements. The problem was solved, as Tucumán in turn opened another route to Peru, from where the Jesuits who settled there had come; and if one travelled north from here along the Paraguay River, the Peruvian reductions approached in the opposite direction, placing themselves, with that of Buena Vista, 85 kilometres from Santa Cruz. Only 300 kilometres separated the Jesuits from the Atlantic, through the district of Tape and Porto Alegre, so that their expulsion cut short the enterprise at the moment of its definitive achievement.

The map included is not topographical, of course, but rather aims to give the reader a graphic impression of the extent of the Empire's territory. This explains its lack of detail, which would have been distracting and detrimental to clarity.

I have also limited the areas by means of a double polygon, which makes them much more perceptible, although the boundaries are not entirely accurate; but these have never been precisely determined, and one is obliged to calculate them by the extreme points of Jesuit occupation, the information on which is satisfactory.

accurate ¹¹⁵ —, which further mitigates the licence, especially in favour of the facility it aims to provide. Nor are all the locations where there were Jesuit possessions marked with the corresponding conventional symbol, except for those that were in the effective area of the Empire; in the rest, only the main ones are listed, by way of supporting notes.

The map represents a portion of South America, between parallels 20 and 32, from the Atlantic coast to the Andes mountain range only; as I mentioned earlier, I have omitted any details that could cause confusion. Two backgrounds differentiate the divisions between the actual area of the Empire and the area it tended to occupy. White highlights the former, in a polygon whose southern base extends to

A short distance from the 30th parallel to Porto Alegre, this polygon circumscribes the extent of the former Empire from Belén to the Miriñay River and from there to the Sierra de los Tapes; from that mountain range to the Iguazu River and finally to Belén, skirting the Paraná and the Sierra de Maracayú, which separated Guayra from the territory. These were the Misiones proper, with an area of approximately 53,901 square kilometres.

The other two sections, in grey, with areas of 239,040 and 77,382 respectively, do not yet constitute what could be called a Jesuit "zone of influence"; many possessions on the Brazilian coast and in southern Argentina remain outside it, not to mention those in Peru; But what does exist is the Empire, as it tended to be constituted in that vast area of 370,000 kilometres whose boundaries encompassed the most varied and richest regions of South America.

It is difficult to speculate on what would have happened had such an organisation continued, but it can be inferred that it would have been detrimental to America li-br e¹¹⁶. That economic system based on communism was antagonistic to the individualistic independence that the 18th century was ushering in. Capitalism, developed as a result of the wealth accumulated by the colonial bourgeoisie through the exploitation of the proletariat and smuggling, accentuated this phenomenon among us, which coincided, by its peculiar characterisation, with the conditions inherited from the conquerors.

He had brought them here, adapting them to a less favourable environment that did not present the same climatic obstacles as their native land, so that their new situation did not hinder their peninsular tendencies. His almost exclusive occupation, livestock farming, was a conquering expedition that was not lacking in a warlike character, in conflict with wild livestock and with the savages who periodically invaded to steal it; and this fostered the predominance of exclusive courage, as well as disdain for agriculture and trade, which were further accentuated by the difficulties posed by the topography and by the law on the circulation of wealth.

The fiscal fields were teeming with ownerless cattle, which were preyed upon every year, with government authorisation, by groups of workers who enriched the estates.

They had a specific name, which gives the phenomenon the characteristics of an organised industry.

: they were called *gauderios*, a word whose cheerful etymology¹¹⁷—denounces the nature of such enterprises. They were a free-spirited equestrian revelry that exalted the love of adventure to delirium.

Privilege had also been transferred to the nobility, exaggerated by contact with a race of slaves who were mercilessly exploited; although the forced intimacy caused by rural labour had established a certain camaraderie between the lord and the proletarian. The latter found ample incentive for his nomadic mestizo instinct in the vastness of the pampas and his dispossession, becoming a bandit and cattle rustler; to all this was added laziness, which easy sustenance, provided by wild cattle, ensured as a sinecure.

With the land monopolised at the very moment of conquest, public employment became the only hope for those who did not receive a share, as they had no other options. Trade languished miserably, caught between the constraints of the monopoly and the vagaries of smuggling, which, persisting as an escape valve, produced some income but also engendered an increasingly capricious treasury, that is, involved in all the accidents of private and public life, until they became dependent on its providential omnipotence. The sale of public office, which began as a tolerated practice, soon became legal, exacerbating the abuses of the treasury and the protests of the people, which were condensed into their lack of respect for authority. The Spanish-American riots are a legacy of the Spanish treasury, whose entirely formal legislation made the people pessimistic with its inefficiency, highlighting corruption even more.

The peninsular tendencies had little need to change, as they were in no way opposed by the environment, whose inorganic plasticity bent to all the demands of the invading civilisation. Only colonisation, which engenders the desire for personal aggrandisement through work, could have influenced the conqueror type to the point of modifying it; but the conquest was above all an operation of force and domination, which sought only to exploit the native population. If this is-

Had the dominant spirit not led to the exclusion of Creoles from public office, independence might have been delayed by a century, as the local mentality lacked the elements necessary for such developments. Exclusion made Creoles patriotic, but without naturally improving their conscience; thus, the only virtue they possessed upon emancipation was military patriotism.

Except for a few external details that made the conquest odious, the spiritual conquest was essentially identical, as we have seen; and the phrase with which Buckle presents the Spanish people, so nullified in their initiatives and so corrupted by the providentialism of the State that their ruin depends exclusively on the weakness of their leaders, seems to have been written for them.

Both conquerors ruled over the Indians, considering themselves their immutable superiors in terms of civilisation and race; and the latter, whether harshly or gently, were declared, of course, incapable.

Herein lies the illogicality of spiritual conquest, for this incapacity inevitably led to extermination. Secular conquest would have achieved this, populating the country with superior elements and mestizos, who were free by law, to the benefit of current generations.

To humanitarianism, this may seem appalling; but the right to life is a result of the conditions of living beings, not a sentimental issue that can be resolved according to eternal principles.

In these clashes between races, there are cruel fatalities, but they are beyond human control; and if every man must have as his norm the ideal of a higher civilisation, where these conflicts no longer exist, historical criteria oblige him to consider them in relation to the interests of his people and his race, fields of action where these same misfortunes hasten the advent of a higher situation.

Today, humanity does not exist before justice except as an abstract entity whose effectiveness in practice is prepared, among other things, by the predominance of the superior races to which such an ideal belongs; having then agreed to realise it, the same apparent transgressions that are justified by their results before history. It is not possible to apply the principles of justice a priori, nor is there

absolute evil in any action—If the extermination of the Indians is beneficial to the white race, then it is good for them; and if humanity benefits from their triumph, then the act is also justified on the basis of justice, which is founded on the predominance of the collective interest over the partial interest.

The Jesuit conquest, on the other hand, benefited only its authors. The conquered were victims of the Spanish system, in which the Jesuit enterprise was already an exaggeration.

Spain, an exclusive conqueror, did not know how to rule without oppressing, because it attacked the moral unity of the conquered people, imposing a religion and civil status different from their own, instead of using, in imitation of the Romans and the English, a discreet tolerance to gradually incorporate them into their own being. But tolerance is the modern virtue, and Spanish fanaticism is medieval.

Their policy served only to nullify conscience, because absolutism, which was their ideal, was based on the oppression of the spirit and the annihilation of the individual for the benefit of the all-powerful State. Representative forms of government could not exist at that time, and the town councils were not representative bodies, as a superficial examination might lead one to believe, because they did not represent the people, but rather the authorities; not by right, but by force.

The political ideal of the Middle Ages had been unity in everything: one religion in an empire ruled by a single head. From this arose the false concept that freedom is an artificial creation dependent on the law; and it became so deeply rooted, during centuries of oppression under the dual prestige of the monarchy and the Church, that even our democratic constitutions, albeit in much attenuated forms, continue to uphold it, with few people still understanding, despite free inquiry and criticism, that all law is originally an act of oppression.

Equality, which was the aspiration of the people to enjoy noble privileges, was confused with the much higher concept of freedom, especially for Jacobin logic, which the Jesuits defeated as much as they could by demonstrating that there was equality in the Empire.

There was equality, in fact, but we have already seen under what conditions of subjection; and so narrow that even the building was equal. The Government

The Spanish imposed it, certainly not in homage to freedom, but rather for the opposite reason; and the spiritual conquest transported the system of that China of the West to the New World with much greater perfection than the military conquest.

The expulsion was therefore a favourable precedent for the individualistic and federal revolution that was brewing. Under its rule, the Guaraní people of the reductions, who had never known any law protecting their rights, nor had any concept of freedom other than leisure, easily exchanged it for the licence of banditry. For them, there was no other relationship with power than submission or mutiny.

The triumph of the Jesuit system would have meant the perpetuation of the Middle Ages, whose disastrous outcome is evident in absolutist Spain, with all the more devastating consequences given that it was a question of ideas, and therein lies the secret of progress.

Correlative to the industrial period in which we find ourselves, representative institutions are today indispensable to the survival of peoples; but they were impossible under that regime, which lacked the three great drivers of industry: currency, commercial freedom and freedom of conscience.

Maintained by Spain in the Middle Ages, the current nations of America fell suddenly into the contemporary era when they gained their independence, and this abrupt shift led to internal upheavals. In just a few years, they had to go through everything that normally evolving peoples had endured for centuries, thus purging themselves of their historical vices: and anything that opposed their separation from the metropolis would constitute a grave evil for them.

The Jesuit Empire would have been this obstacle. Liberated along with the rest of America, it is certain that it did not accept independence in its fundamental concept, that is to say, as an emancipation of the spirit. A formidable theocracy, calm in its inertia as a bloc, while the others experienced their liberating crisis, it would have imposed the law of force on them by taking advantage of their weakness due to this phenomenon, and the triumph of its policy, based on communism and isolation, which years later was demonstrated by Paraguay under France, a failure of...
revolutionary work in its most beautiful form ¹¹⁸ —.

Loyal to the throne, their counter-revolutionary action may triumph; and this was already foreseen by such astute Jesuits as Falkner, who, in his Description of Patagonia, noted a few years after the expulsion the first signs of independence among the rural populations¹¹⁹.

There is no doubt that, at the beginning of the struggle, such a phenomenon occurred; but perceiving the success of independence, adaptation would have taken place, all the more so because such practical men never fight for forms of government, establishing in the centre of South America one of those theocratic republics exemplified by García Moreno's Ecuador, whose influence would have dominated the continent in a veritable counter-coup of indigenous barbarism.

It is certain that civilisation and savagery, natural enemies and in open conflict today in many parts of the continent, are inversely proportional, the strict effect of which would be to determine the success of the former by the failure of the latter; but without entering into a discussion of this, it is highly significant that the most advanced nations are those in which the indigenous population is declining.

The Jesuit Empire, replaced by the independence of the Christian Republic that its authors spoke of, would have found itself in that situation from the outset, and without the opportunity to consolidate it through a laborious adaptation to institutions, as others are doing; so that, at least on its part, independence would have solved nothing.

However, independence without spiritual freedom was a subordinate political evolution, with the certain result of a reconquest or a new subordination. The newly founded nationalities would have done nothing more than subdivide the general decline, but not remedy it, adopting instead of democratic institutions, which are the only progressive ones in the modern world, the theocracy or monarchy whose advent was dreamed of by the short-sighted conservatism of the Revolution.

America therefore owes a debt of gratitude to the monarch, who, by removing obstacles to progress, guaranteed its stability under the political forms later assumed by the emancipated peoples.

First, the "Paulists" with their horrific incursion into La Guayra, which ruined the Jesuit enterprise for many years and forever diminished its magnitude; then Carlos III, with his radical measure, freed future America from the most serious setback it would have suffered upon gaining independence. This was already proven when the comuneros, who were mainly accused of separatist ideas, which were an unforgivable crime for the Crown.

This is how the fabric of history is woven through the ages, and how, when viewed in their unconscious fatality, both praise and condemnation are equally unjust. There are therefore no innocent or guilty parties before the spectator, but only organisms struggling to survive in the field of life. Jesuits who strive to maintain an ideal, retrograde for the new state of affairs, are entirely identical to the democrats of tomorrow, who will do the same in the face of other social forms, suffering the same defeats.

Consciousness expands by adopting this critical concept, in which there is no room for intolerance peculiar to absolute principles: and it replaces the classical severity of the ancient historian with a simpler and more human kindness.

A society that has suffered and fallen with its world of pain in tow does not deserve the disdain of future societies for its delay, when if the latter fare better, finding thorns in their path, it is because the former, upon leaving, left them stuck to their feet.

When one thinks about what they suffered, what they worked for, what they believed in, and what purpose those now anachronistic communities served, one sees humanity repeated in an eternal regeneration. They fought for life as we do; their ideal was a moment of prosperity, with which they dominated the immense latent hostility that the Universe opposes to the dominion of its rational animal; their passions, like ours, sought pleasure without ever enjoying it, like herds dying of thirst before reaching the watering hole; their virtues, drops of water in the shade, were digging, tear after tear, into the hard rock of human selfishness, where progress carves stalactites so beautiful and so cold...

Everything is the same, everything is equal, everything is eternal, adds the pessimist for whom tradition is a prisoner's shackle. But no; those fallen multitudes are so many miners of the shadows, who are digging up the new earth whose volume they occupy; and so history can discern nothing else but forgiveness for the disappeared workers, when their work failed in error, reserving its sympathy for those who, even in this case, fought for an ideal, without hope of worldly satisfaction.

The fiasco lies in the monopoly of eternity, which institutions attribute to themselves with a vehemence equivalent to the mutability of their condition. Nothing is eternal, except for the incessant conversion of things and beings towards states that may coincide with the ideal of human happiness, in union with which certain things develop by a higher agreement; and the fatality of autumn, the same in ideals as in the year, is not lamentable when the leaves, stripping the branch whose lushness smiled in spring, reveal fruits that are apples of happiness for the innumerable wretched in whom the primordial mud pulsates, and golden apples for the dreamer of Hesperides.

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