IN THE DEVIL'S DEEP DUNGEON; IN SEARCH OF THE SPIRIT OF EVIL IN THE MINES OF THE ANDES

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Introduction

In this paper I shall discuss the cult of the devil in the Bolivian Mine of Oruro. The miners of Oruro worship the spirit owner of the mine in the shape of the devil, whom they call Tio. This issue has been previously analyzed by different writers; and the symbol of the devil referred to in it has been subject to a great semantic confusion. I attempt to find the thread of continuity in the historical and religious transformation of this symbol.

The analysis will be conduced at the historical and religious level; both will be strongly connected.

The ritual of Tio is one of the ways in which the miners of Oruro became aware of their state and explain the relationship with the world in which they live.

My aim in this paper is to show that Tio in its meaning bears the signs of the symbols of the dead as these are conceived in South American highland culture. In Andean Indian societies the dead are symbols of both fertility and danger. The attempt is to demonstrate that the miners conceive Tio, even when figured as a christian devil, as patterned on the ancient Inca and pre-Inca gods and spirits of nature. Moreover Tio bears the mark of the dead, which throughout the Andes is one of the keys for understanding the relationship between the living, the gods, the devils and the surrounding world.

This continuity, within the symbolic transformation, shows the sign of Andean dualism, and moreover is alien to western moral values. This continuity is also reflected in the symbolic transformation at the diachronic level by the historical change in the passage from pre-Hispanic to post-Hispanic social conditions,

and by the transformation from "campesinos" to "proletariado minero".

Through the cult of Tio the miners have been able to understand themselves and their relations of production, and contrary to what orthodox analysis suggests, in this ritual «the miners have been able to forge the organizational structure required for their class struggles, without abandoning the cultural structure that links them ethnically – by means of a shared vision of cosmic justice – with a much wider Andean univers» (Platt 1983: 49; my translation).

This paper is based on the ethnographic report of J. Nash (1979) and its critical analysis by T. Platt (1983) and M. Taussig (1980).

Critical context

Taussig's argument concerns the fact that the Bolivian tin miners in Oruro fetishize what he defines as the spirit of evil, in the cult of Tio. Tio is a divinity and anthropomorphic image of the spirit of the mine, who demands sacrifices for the mineral, tin, that is extracted from its depths. Usually the llama or another animal is the price of the sacrifice, but occasionally he demands other sacrifices; he demands the blood and the life of the miners.

Tio (uncle in Spanish) is more generally the manifestation of the old spirit of the mountain Huari, who nowadays is represented in the form of the Western image of the devil. Huari is the god. Tio is his fetish.

Taussig contrasted the cult of Tio, the evil god of the mine, focused upon the constant need for blood sacrifice, sometimes human, with the relatively benign cult of Pachamama (mother earth, or earth in general) (1), which characterizes peasant production in the Andes.

His problem is why Tio is so evil, so opposed to the more benign, benevolent, nature spirits associated with peasant agricolture and husbandry.

His answer is that mining, because it is an expression of the capitalist mode of production, is sustained by and focuses upon a constant denial of reciprocity which bears the presence and the curse of evil.

«So long as the principle of reciprocity» – says Taussig (1980: 197) – «was a living force in the mind of the Indians it meant trouble. To recapitulate Mauss, to deny reciprocity is to invoke

war and the wrath of the God. This led me to suggest that the malice of the spirit owner of nature, from the conquest to the present day, correspond to this denial of reciprocity as it had to be denied by the overarching system of commodity exchange».

Thus in the Oruro mine, both the level of work organization and relations of production are elements of a precise mode of production which embodies this evil spirit. This negative element is opposed to the traditional way of production, namely peasant agricultural production in the Andes, where the mountain spirits are not perceived as evil, because the relation between them and the peasants are relations based upon reciprocal exchange and therefore better and more benevolent. This pattern of relations was and still is, as Taussig suggested, expressed in the Andean societies use-value relation of exchange.

The constant denial of reciprocity at the economic level is reproduced at the level of nature spirits in the Andean cosmology, and finds its expression through the presence of the fetish of the devil in the mining ritual. With the appearance of the Spaniards, the cycle of reciprocity with the nature spirit was threatened and mostly destroyed.

The introduction of Catholic religious principles and iconography added a touch of ideological justification and legitimacy to Spanish domination and exploitation of Indians. The rise of the image of the devil in the form it has in Christian iconography bears the sign of this historical change in South America. Moreover it is evidence of the Spanish imposition of European beliefs upon the local traditional religious system. «In short» – says Taussig (1980: 183) «the argument I wish to advance is that the spirit owners of nature have come to reflect a new system of ownership, which was superimposed on an earlier model in which ownership corresponded to non market principles of reciprocity and distribution».

Taussig attempts to explain the differences between the cult of the gods/spirits of nature and the cult of Tio in terms of an opposition between capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production. The miners stand at the interface of two worlds; like the peasants, they have to offer gifts to Tio for him to give them his mineral wealth in return. But unlike the peasants, these gifts and the mineral wealth pass out of the sphere of reciprocity and are converted into commodities. The miners' labour in itself is commoditised because it is compensated for in money. In this sense Tio is not fully integrated in the two worlds; not fully

integrated in the capitalist system, whose ideology is not made fully mystified; not fully integrated in the peasant world ultimately because of the absence of the use-value exchange relation.

For Taussig capitalist ideology has not yet been made complete in the Andes, so that the miners are unable to perceive all its inequities, and try to explain the nature of capitalism itself. Since this process has not yet reached completion for the miners, they still perceive some productive relations in terms of pre-capitalist modes of production. The miners are able to perceive the evil of capitalism in the unnatural commoditization of labour and the products of labour, but they express this evil in the idiom of pre-capitalist production. The fetish of the devil in the mine becomes the expression of an evil which properly pertains to the capitalists world.

All the arguments in Taussig's analysis of the cult of Tio stand upon a double opposition. At one level the opposition is in terms of economic structure, more precisely between market and non market systems, or capitalist and non capitalist economic systems. At another level this opposition is repeated in the domain of religious ideology, between the traditional Andean beliefs and the religious corpus imposed by Spanish domination over the Indians. The peculiar fact of this case is that we have an image, the devil in his precise iconography, which pertains to the Christian religious world and in that world belongs to the symbology of evil; but which it rises to the level of a central figure in an important ritual that pertains to the Andean religious system.

The ritual with Tio in the mine reproduces the pattern of the fertility rituals in the Andes, which is mainly a pattern of exchange with the gods. Offerings are sacrificed or given to the spirit, either in hope of what was asked for during the ritual, or in gratitude for what has already been received.

In order to understand all the relations in play, a clear distinction is needed between the widespread presence of devils as understood in Andean cosmology and the introduction of the evil-devil of Christian symbology in this context.

«Yet, insofar as Spanish Catholicism and Andean nature worship blended» – Taussig (1980: 169) says – «the spirit of evil could emerge in Andean symbolic life as the sum of the contradictions that consumed the Spaniards' and the Indians' understanding of one another. This fetishization of evil in the

form of devil is born from the structure of the caste and class oppression that was created by European conquest».

Moreover, analysing the problem of the introduction of Christian beliefs in those societes «the Jesuit Father Avila captured their powerful paradoxes concisely. According to him, the chief problem was that the devil had taught the Indians that they could worship both the Christian religion and their own and that on no account should they forget their *huacas* (2), for fear of punishment by death. [Gilmer 1952: 121]. Thus insofar as the Indians assimilated Christianity they assimilated the spirit of evil, the devil, who ratified the nature spirits whom they persistently worshipped as their "owners" and as their source of identity» (Taussig 1980: 171).

Bearing in mind that one of the important justifications for the conquest that the Spanish gave themselves was religious, it is clear that they had to stress Christianity upon and against the local religion. Moreover the need to impose the Christian cult became an important element of political and ideological legitimation. The *Conquistadores* had to legitimize their newly imposed political and economic system through a new set of beliefs which clearly stated their superior moral position vis-à-vis the Indians.

But if it is quite clear how and why the Spanish had to introduce the evil/devil belief in Andean cosmology, which is Taussig's historical argument, it is not clear how this symbol achieved its status in the ritual of the miners of Oruro. Moreover it is not clear how the pre-existing belief system and history linked to mining, both during the Tawantinsuyu (3) and the Spanish empire, contributed to the elaboration of this ritual or its symbolical meaning; the ritual is seen by Taussig mainly as the result of the confrontation between capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production.

It is not clear how the denial of reciprocity expressed at the economic level – as loss of control and ownership over the means of production and distribution – came to be phrased in terms of Tio-devil-evil in the ritual. Even if the Maussian model applied by Taussig can show the source of evil in the denial of reciprocity, it does not account for the specificity of the link with this symbol, nor does it easily account for the problems of synchretized symbols.

If the historical argument can partially justify the link at the diachronic level, because of the contemporaneity of the appearance of the Spaniards and the Christian iconography of the devil,

this is clearly not the case, in Taussig's argument, at the synchronic level.

As J. Earl (1969) suggests, in the articulation between two systems, while the stronger one is able, through different strategies to impose its symbolism, the weaker one is able to modify and adjust the meaning of these new symbols to fit them in a pre-existing homogeneous set of beliefs.

In the Quechua case that J. Earl analysed, he found that the dominant alien political form achieved a certain degree of political stability by being incorporated into the older structure. But this stability carried the seed of its own destruction in the element of contradiction in the interface between the historical external reality, imposed by the Spanish, and the conceptual systems of Andean Indians (Earls 1968: 80, 81).

The presence of a Christian symbol, the devil, in the Andean cosmology does not imply that once assimilated, the same symbol is able to maintain its cognitive content unchanged. It is not clear, in Taussig, how the devil, on becoming linked with the Andean sphere of value, was able to keep the meaning he had in the Christian world.

In Taussig, this implies a moral judgment on the capitalist system. This system bears the mark of evil, which through conquest has been transmitted to the Andean Indians. It appears from this argument that the presence of evil in the mine is necessarily represented in the bloody figure of Tio, which inevitably shows all its negative content when seen through Western eyes.

The partial destruction of the use-value exchange system implies, for Taussig, that the miners will discover the total inadequacy of their old belief system in explaining the new world relations, and moreover that they will unsuccessfully try to adjust the system to these new conditions.

My argument is that the meaning of the devil in the context of the mine is related to other elements and can be explained mainly through:

– a set of historical data concerning the role and the meaning of the mine and mining under the Inca and Spanish empires; and
– recourse to Andean dualism, as the way in which the iconography of the Christian devil is introduced into and related to pre-existing religious beliefs.

The devil in the miners' ritual is not the same image it is in Western society, and it does not have the same moral meaning. In

the ritual of the miners Tio belongs to a precise cultural domain in which Andean beliefs are operating. The Western image of the devil does not necessarily assume or express all its negative characteristics when it is transferred to another domain. So the fact that Huari can appear as a representation which belongs to Christian cosmology does not necessarily mean that the representation has the same meaning. The signified aspect of a sign is essentially relational and can change when the context in which it is merged changes.

Thus is the Tio/devil sign in the Andean ritual language may represent the evil, that is not necessarily all that it signifies. The point is that there is no simple equation evil = devil in the miners' ritual representation; the picture seem to be more problematic. The image of the devil can be detached from its final absolute negative content.

Most of Taussig's argument is based upon a manichean distinction between good and evil, the same manichean distinction which marked the Spanish attitude towards the Indians of South America, although Taussig reverses it and considers the Spanish as representing evil. T. Platt (1983: 66) has made one of the strongest criticisms of Taussig's model. «The manichean dualism of this model requires, to preserve its coherence, that the cult of the Devil be exclusively associated with the "nuevos proletarios" ..., and not with the rural population which continues to own its means of production».

Historical and mythological data about metals, mining and mineral production in Andeans societies

Mining, mineral extraction, and metal crafts were, in the Andes, subject to particular attention both under the Tawantinsuyu, and during the Spanish empire. Under the Incas mining was a well-known activity. Different kinds of minerals were extracted and produced. «The Andes provided an abundant supply of gold, silver and copper, and a small amount of platinum and tin» (Root 1949: 205).

The extraction of precious metals, gold and silver was particulary important. Precious metals were symbols of prestige. The Inca had the privilege of wearing, using and displaying gold and silver. The use and the possession of these metals by the *curacas* (4) have been seen as a direct grant from the Inca: «Santillan says they could be enjoyed only if given by the Inca» (Moore 1958).

Gold and silver in their circulation and in their display were symbols of power. For the Tawantinsuyu, they encoded and embodied political, religious and divine power. The Inca displayed all these source of power on his person, being simultaneously emperor, head of the religious caste, and son of the Sun, the most important divinity after Viracocha, the god-creator. Precious metal mines were controlled by the *curacas* and were considered the property of the Inca and the local caciques.

The minerals extracted were channelled up in the social hierarchy through the *curaca* as tribute for the Inca. These minerals were denied to commoners. Precious metals were offered by the *curacas* to the Inca as a particular kind of tribute, which was included in a circle of tribute extraction – concession of political privilege and power between the Inca and the *curacas*. More precisely «Cobo designates mining, the crafts – including metalwork, ceramics and weaving, and other skilled occupation – as a substitute for the tribute». (Moore 1958: 54).

Rowe (1946: 268) concludes that the craftsmen manufactured only for the Inca, who distributed the surplus as a gift to the nobility.

Wachtel (1977) tends to emphasize that under the Tawantinsuyu gold and silver were precious objects merged into the system of gift and counter-gift between the Inca and the nobility.

In the Inca economic system these riches did not have a monetary function. Under the Tawantinsuyu mining was a limited and irregular activity. Miners were recruited mainly through the *mita* which was a form of tribute by labour. The Incas required all taxpayers to do a certain amount of work for the State calculated on an annual basis. From this form of labour control miners were mainly drafted from peasant and agricultural activities.

J. Murra (1980*a*: 108) reported two important pieces of data about the relation between mine, *mitayos* (those who were working under the *mita*) and peasants. Analysing Sancho Pizarro and Cieza de León, two reporters of the 16th century, he said (Murra 1980*a*: 109): «Sancho was told the miners worked only for four months of the year "because of the cold". It is more likely that being "from one chief or another" they were peasants who had to return to their village and agricultural responsabilities, although Cieza told us that when people were away in the mines their lands were worked for them»; and he reports also that under

the Tawantinsuyu mining acquired a negative aura of exclusion from the community, which was then intensified during the Spanish empire: «The anonymous Jesuit suggests that the mines were used as a place of exile and punishment. Falcon gives him some independent support, when he says that nobody was forced to work in the mines unless he had been [sentenced] justly for cause; when they sentenced him to [mining] he became a serf».

The Spanish conquest dramatically changed the picture of the Andean world. The voracious appetite of the Conquistadores for precious metals was reflected in their interest in the Inca mines and in the transformation of the tribute system. The Spanish kept the *Mita* and introduced tribute in money, and this element forced the peasants to diversify their economic activity with the partial introduction of money into their economic system.

Wachtel (1977: 181, 182) mentions that «the Aymaras of Chicuito went to Potosí in order to earn their money». Further recourse to the *mita* was then «introduced by the Viceroy of Toledo as a solution to the crisis of production in the silver mines of Potosí. ... *mita* service was assigned primarily to the silver mines of Potosí and the mercury mines of Huancavelica; these were arduous and deadly tasks for which few would volunteer on their own initiative» (Spalding 1982: 331).

This forced extraction of minerals reveals the true character of the conqueror and the unbearable life of the mitayos sent to the mine. «Hay Potosí porque hay mita de Indios» (Buechler 1981: 42). This clearly states the nature of the relations between the Indians and the Spaniards at that period. For Friar Domingo de Santo Tomás «Potosí was a mouth of hell (*una boca de infierno*)» which annually consumed thousands of innocent and peaceful natives. He charged that greedy Spaniards considered the Indians as "animals without masters" and dragged them mercilessly to the mines, where many perished.

Another Indian defender was to describe the situation in the seventeenth century succinctly: «What is carried to Spain from Peru is not silver but the blood and sweat of the Indians» (Halke 1956: 25). The religious metaphor of Friar Domingo de Santo Tomás, champion of the Indians, definitively links the Christian idea of hell to the extractive activity in the mine. Needless to say, this definition belongs to the conquerors' culture.

A twofold consideration can be made.

Mining under the Inca was conceived as a form of

punishment and exile from the community, and this unhappy aspect was intensified by the deadly character the Spaniards gave the mine. At that time miners were mostly migrant peasants workers (see Albo 1973), and to a lesser degree they still are today. Nowadays thousands of people who operate within the framework of Andean logic are forced into this kind of marginal existence and they became estranged from that logic. The cult of Tio is evidence of this estrangement, but it is also evidence of how the miners, in spite of some unionists, mobilize their ancient beliefs in order to re-define themselves in this new light. Mining, minerals and metal production occupied a special place in Andean belief systems. Gold and silver were always associated with the gods and the spirits of nature as sources of material and spiritual power.

H. Favre (1967) refers to a double set of associations that characterize the Wamani of the village of Moya, in the north of the Huancavelica province.

The Wamani, the spirit of the Mountain, is conceived of as a dispenser of human and animal life, visualized as the Mountain, and characterized by a double set of associations. One of these is expressed by the Wamani, and the other is expressed by its counter part, the Qocha. The Qocha is conceived of as the feminine element of the Wamani, in which is contained, and is represented by a lake in the mountains, which is thought to be the blood of the Wamani. The double set of association has the following scheme:

	WAMANI	QOCHA
animal	: savage bull	serpent
natural phenomenon	: lighting	rainbow
metal	: gold	silver
color	: yellow	white
gender	: male	female

O. Harris (1980) also notes that are precise associations, among the Laymis, between the silver, the mine and a devil called Tiu.

Moreover telluric and extractive activities are associated with particular religious beliefs; the open earth and penetrating the earth are associated with danger.

J.M. Arguedas (1975) refers to a pre-Hispanic myth about the relations between Andean gods, gold, and mountain spirits: the mith of Wachoq, the "legendary heroic drillers of the mountains".

The story says that it was the Wachoq who penetrated to the heart of the powerful and dangerous Wamani and found water. In order to do so they had to wear gold and silver cloth and a *tynya* made of gold over their head. It is mainly because of this protection that they were able to enter the depths of the Wamani (Arguedas 1975: 60, 61, 62).

Moreover: Andean Indian people regard huacas as natural sources of ore as well as sources of sacred power. J.H. Rowe, quoting Cobo, says: «The hills where ore deposits were found and the mines themselves where both regarded as *huacas* (shrines), and the Indians prayed them to give up their metal. Festivals were held in their honor at which the miners danced and dranked chicha all night [Cobo, 1890-95, bk. 13, ch. 11]» (Rowe 1946: 246).

In the ritual, held in honor of the *huacas*, regular offerings of stylized human and animal figures were made to the spirits of the shrine as sacrificial objects.

Production

Interestingly enough, J. Earls (1969) in analysing power organization in the modern mythology of the community of San Miguel, shows that the links between the extraction and production of precious metals, their ownership, and political power are still clearly phrased in terms of pre-Hispanic beliefs. As already noted, these Indians have introduced into their cosmology the emergent figures of local and national political power.

The food, vegetable and animal that the peasants of San Miguel sacrifice to the local Apus/Wamani, in return for the fertility of the soil, are transformed by the mountains. The Wamani (mountains) have underground machines for transforming the ritual offering into gold and silver. And in August, the month when the earth is regarded as open, alive, and dangerous throughout the Andes, the mountains open their doors and – in the words of the peasant –: «they consult amongst themselves in order to send their riches (gold and silver) to the government, and this they do by using as beasts of burden vicuñas and viscachas which they change into burros and mules. I don't know to whom they hand it over, but it is to the government» (Earls 1969: 69-70).

Here contemporary patterns of Andean Mountain worship are used to comprehend to reality of modern power, but this reality is phrased in the idiom of the Inca political structure, in

which precious metals were channelled up in the social hierarchy toward the Inca.

It is extremely interesting to see how plant, mineral, and animal production is conceived throughout the Andes; the notion is that the mountains receive offerings from the people and in turn give back fertility, food, minerals, etc.

In most of the rituals, the Wamani, the nature spirit, receive fat and blood as sacrificial offerings. These are the two key components of the llama and human body alike. Clearly there is the notion of sacrifice. The sacrificial victim is a surrogate for a person. This is quite explicit in the association of death, especially human death, and fertility.

H. Favre says that in the community he analysed (Moya – Northern Huancavelica province – Peru), he clearly found the notion of human sacrifice in relation to the Wamani. He says: «This is a simple hypothesis draw from convergent facts. Human sacrifices in honour of the Wamani are still practiced today throughout the area. On certain occasions and in particular when earth works (drilling tunnels, clearing roads, and large-scale rural improvements, etc.) are undertaken that «upset the Wamani he demands one or more victims in compensation. If these sacrifices are not carried out, the mountain will exact payment, by causing fatal accidents among the workers» (Favre 1967: 131) [my translation].

The sacrificial victim is always someone who does not belong to the community. Often it is a foreign traveller. The victim is buried alive in a pit dug in the earth; this is an essential condition if the sacrifice is to be considered valid.

Needless to say, the relation between this community and the Wamani is similar to the relation between Tio and the community of miners; J. Nash (1979) points out that the miners who made a contract with Tio, and are therefore destined to die, are always individual workers perceived as separate from the communal work organization and consciousness.

What emerges here, as in the mine, is the dangerous aspect of the communication with the Wamani. On the one hand the danger is determined by the individual, as distinct from communal, quality of the relation; on the other, the danger is the direct result of a failure of the ritual sacrifice.

The life cycle of the Kaatans (an Aymara community in the North of Bolivia) is probably one of the clearest existing evidence of the persistence of pre-Hispanic Indian beliefs in the

representation of the relations between nature spirits, telluric gods, mountain spirits, and humans.

In the Kaatan community, people are thought to be born on top of the mountain, and their life is a journey down the mountain. They die in the lowlands, and once dead they travel inside the mountain «where they undergo a regenerative cycle» (Bastien 1978: 86). So the beliefs shared by this community embody the notion that the fertility of the mountain is somehow associated with the passage of the dead through it.

The sacrifice of llamas in the "New Earth" ritual is a surrogate for human death. Offerings must be made periodically, but ultimately it is the death of a peasant inside the mountain that is the force which can mobilize the fertility of the mountain on behalf of humanity. And this is made explicit, again, in the way in which the dead are thought to be present in human society; they are believed to be present and fertile during the rainy season, the period of the maturation of crops.

Bastien also reports on the use of mock battle –Tinku – between the elders of the community and the clowns of Carnival in the "Chosen field" rite. In these performances the elders symbolically put the clown to death, and Bastien considers the whole event a fight between pairs.

T. Platt and O. Harris (1982) and M. Shallnow (personal comunication) give a more complex interpretation of the matter: these battles between kin probably had their source in conflicts for the division of land and had a sacrificial meaning too. The object was to kill a maximum of the adversary party in the bloodiest way possible, thus guaranteeing fertility and a good harvest for the coming year. The association is clear between human death, blood, fertility, and sacrifice. And none of the reporters remarks any evil quality in these sacrifices.

To sum up then, there is a broad set of relations in Andean societies between mining and the way it has been conceived and perceived in history an myth.

Mining, metal production etc. have been and still are associated with the source of sacred and religious as well as political power. So there arises a dangerous aspect to mining, and more generally to telluric activity. This relates both to the denial of the ritual offering to the Wamani, and to Indian suffering under Spanish rule the exploitative and miserable life conducted in the mine.

The cycle of mineral production, like the cycle of production of goods which belong to the natural world, is generally conceived of as a physiological transformation of the sacrificial offering operated through the mountain body. It is this body, perceived as human in function and form, which transforms the ritual offering into riches and valuable products for the living.

T. Platt (1983) clearly stresses this when he suggests that the sentence «we eat the mines and the mines eats us» is correctly interpreted in accordance with Andean beliefs, as «we feed the mines and the mines feed us». The feeding act nature of the relationship between the elements in play could not be more clearly expressed in the underground ritual offering in the mine for the Huari and the aboveground ritual of the Pachamama. This relationship reflects the concept of what Andean societies think to be the natural environment that is totally different from the Western way to think relating to nature. The Western way is clearly defined through the Spanish and subsequently capitalist exploitative attitude toward natural, including human resources. For the *conquistadores*, the *gringos*, etc., there have never been any problems about dragging out resources from what is conceived to be the natural environment, the only limit being technical or economic.

The Indians of the Andes highland see themselves, even today, as part of the natural environment and therefore subject to a balanced set of relationship which never imply unilateral and exploitative attitudes in relation to the surrounding natural environment.

The Wamani, the spirit of the nature, etc., are the idiom in which the elements of this relation are made manifest..

For Taussig these relations, because fulfil a reciprocity circle based on use-value exchange between gods and humans and among humans, are invested with the moral quality of goodness. In my view they are part of a complex system of local religious beliefs and to the mind of the Andean Indians they do not connote any kind of moral value as such.

The evil in the devil

An evaluation of the concept and the image of the devil in Andean society is closely linked with the meaning of term *Supay* (or *Zupay*). The meaning of this Quechua word was first modified because of the early Spanish reporters after the conquest. These

reporters identified one group of ambivalent evil spirits under the term Supay, a term which then took on the status of the Andean homologue of the Christian devil.

The original ambiguity of the term is emphasised by P. Duviol, who says: «Between the zupay, hapununu, viscocho, humapurick, and some others, the Spanish had to retain only the Zupay, and consecrate it as the Devil. This choice was clearly arbitrary, if we believe that the oldest meaning of Zupay is the one given by F. Domingo de Santo Tomás in his Lexicon (1560):
'1) angel bueno o malo
2) demonio o trasgo de casa'.

Now this very important: it is clear that Zupay was not an exclusively evil spirit. It became that thanks to the evangelizers» (Duviol 1971: 38) [my translation]. Under the pressure of the conquering church the term became the equivalent of the Christian devil. Although *Supay* was not considered an absolute image of evil, it was chosen on the grounds that this feature, as defined by the chronicler was the most important.

G. Taylor (1980) rejects this equivalence in the interpretation of Supay, and through philological analysis he defines a completely different set of meanings linked to the term.

In the lexicon of the first period of the conquest *Supay* had these different meanings:
- the official one of devil
- fantom
- shade.

The term *Supa* or *Supay* was identified in Andean culture with the soul of men, with the shade that after death and burial will join the common ancestors; the same shade that during the rainy season brings fertility to the earth.

In the Tawantinsuyu, the cult of the dead was an important religious element and this cult still occupies an important place in traditional Andean ritual. The dead buried in the *huacas, waka*, or *pacarinas* (5) were and still are considered a source of danger and fertility; they are objects of particular rituals and are treated with particular devotion.

At the first council of Lima in 1551 the Spanish Church, in its fervor to eradicate Indian idolatry, equated the soul of the unbaptized and hence hell-bound dead with the devil himself, who according to Cieza de León would take on the form of a dead man an reappear on the earth to testify the goodness and beauty of the unknown world of the dead (Duviol 1971: 48).

The twelfth council of Lima in 1567 gave more precise indications and ordered the destruction of the *huacas* in order to eradicate idolatry and the cult of the dead. The council denounced the Andean custom of hiding corpses with the purpose of burying them outside the Christian cemetery. The council also stressed the importance of banning the cult of the dead throughout the Andes, a cult that the Indians persisted in associating with Christian feasts.

Taylor says (1980: 59): «The soul-shade of the ancestor, neglected by his Christian descendant but feared because of the worship he had previously enjoyed, he was condemned to perpetual fire by the church, for with his knowledge of the secrets of ancient power, of rites and traditions, of the location of mines and the nature of medicinal herbs, he was identified with the devil» [my translation].

A contrasting image rises from this brief analysis of the evil-devil-*Supay*, an image that does not easily equate all the elements. The devil that the Spanish discovered in South America did not and does not correspond to the Western concept of evil-devil. In the Andean tradition *Supay* was synonymous with the soul of the dead, therefore inspiring fear as well as respect.

There is a dual distinction. For the Spanish Christian, devil = evil = soul of the unbaptized dead. For the Andean the devil = soul-shade of the dead = fertility, fear, and respect. The Christian image of the devil seems to have been syncretized with Andean cosmology in the association devil = evil = soul of the dead, albeit with a different meaning. The symbol of the devil here seems to have what Turner (1967) calls a "polysemic property", that is the «quality of an impositional symbol to take on the meaning of an indigenous symbol, as well as the reverse» (Bastien 1978: 69).

Given the development of this meaning, the place and the relation death – soul of the dead – devil in Andean societies are crucial in order to understand the role played by the devil in these societies, and the role of the devil and human death in the mine of Oruro in relation to the cult of Tio.

O. Harris (1980, 1982), J.H. Bastien (1978) and J. Nash (1979), all stress, once more, the theme of fertility and exchange in the relationship between the living and the dead. In the Kaatan case (J.H. Bastien), the dead travel up in the mountains to Uma-Pacha. They become part of the land that they cultivate. The burial of the perishable body in the mountain increases the fertility of the soil. This relationship is evident on November 2,

All Souls, the day the «living invite the dead, when the harvest and festive time have ended and planting and agricultural rituals begin» (Bastien 1978: 178). The feast of the dead underlines the passage from the dry season to the fertile wet season.

In the Bastien account of the Kaatan case, there is no manifest presence of evil-devil-danger elements associated with the symbol of the dead. What appears is a steady relation: death for fertility, which is also clearly stated in the interpretation of the Tinku battle. These rituals, even though not particularly associated with any of the sacred Andean figures in the reports, bear the mark and the logic of the ritual relations with Pachamama. It is evident that these ritual relations cover a set of multifarious aspects, including human sacrifice, but they are neither good nor bad in the way in which they are perceived. The fundamental condition is that they obey to a precise relation of exchange and reciprocity.

In the Laymi case the relation devil-dead passes through association with other elements. The symbology dead-soul of dead is linked with the figure of the devil; in Aymara the term *saxra* defines the general category of evil spirits, whereas the term which stands for devil, a neologism of direct Spanish influence, is *yawlu* (from the Spanish *diablo*). «In Laymi terms all these supernatural beings belong to the evil sphere (Saxra Parti, which is defined in contrast to 'our sphere' (*jiwas parti*)» (Harris 1980: 81).

The souls of the dead come to earth at All Saints, November 1, at the beginning of the rainy season. They are believed to wander among the living until February or March, when this season ends.

At Carnival, at the end of the rainy season, the souls of the dead are finally despatched to their mythical place, Tacna.

The association dead-devil is not manifest, but it is clearly expressed through the association with the quality of danger. The danger is manifested through the threat that the souls of the dead-devil offer to the living during the rainy period; they are good for the crops, but they are dangerous to the living. And this danger is generalized after Carnival, when the dead-devil fertility function is thought to be finished. After that period, their presence becomes potentially dangerous for the ripening harvest as well. Nonetheless the element of regeneration remains the main connotation of the symbol. The introduction of the concept of evil in relation to the dangerous element present in the figure of the dead is explained by O. Harris through the association of the dead, the mountain spirits, and Christian beliefs.

Among the Laymi: «The mountain spirits are classified as part of the evil sphere (*saxra parti*); this is opposed to God's sphere to which belong the sun, moon, and Catholic saints. The evil sphere is that of the devils (in Aymara the word *saxra* means both bad/evil, and evil spirit/devil), or at least of indigenous deities who became evil as Christian doctrine was imposed and the Andean structure of power dismantled. The placing of the dead in the evil sphere is finally, evoked by the fact that one of the common names for the mountain spirits is precisely the term for ancestors, or grandparents (*achachawila*)» (Harris 1982: 66). Even though the symbol dead-spirit of the dead-devil achieves an additional meaning which is linked to the evil sphere the realm in which the symbolic element finds its expression and application is in fertility rituals. it concerns once again the reproduction of life amongst the Laymi.

In both cases examined, the dead-devil symbol is associated with a circle of exchange with the living. During Carnival the dead are offered food, drink, etc. They are fed so that they can bring fertility to the earth and then feed the living. J.H. Bastien (1978: 186) is quite explicit in this respect: «The living feeding the dead and the dead feeding the living are two halves of one reciprocal cycle».

In this respect, in Andean ontology the cycle of life and death is equated with the cycle of the production of goods, minerals, plants, etc. It is only through the fertility obtained from the gods, that crops and herds for human life can be assured. The danger that the dead bring to earth before Carnival is never represented as a threat which can deny the concession of the gift of the regeneration of the crops. This element becomes evident after Carnival, when they are supposed to have left the earth.

The danger with which these devils are associated concerns anxiety for the crops if they remain on the earth, and fear for personal safety. In no case is there an explicit link between the denial of offering at Carnival and the threat of danger as an attribute of the devil. What seems to emerge is that the dead-devil danger is expressed at a double level.

At a general community level, the danger to people is not direct but is mediated through worry for the fate of the harvest. The always-present eventuality of crop failure is a threat to the community. At the level of the peasant community the crops are the element to be protected and whose fertility has to be asked for to the devil. The case of the mine is similar.

The continued presence of the mineral is a guarantee of life for the miners. The threat at the community level is represented and materialized in the ever-present concern for the possible depletion of the mineral in the mine and the prospect of consequent unemployment. Loss of work is equated with the loss of life. In both cases the sense of danger expressed at the community level concerns the loss of what guarantees the continuation of life.

At individual level, the single human being who meets the devil has to worry for his personal health. He will soon be reached by misfortune and illness. In a certain way this emphasizes the opposition of individual vs. community, the distinction between the community, in the form of *ayullu* (6), and its individual members. This is also reflected in mining, where, as J. Nash points out, all Tio-linked deaths were individual single miners who made personal contracts with the devil.

No such agreement is responsible for collective accident, which the miners attribute to the absence of a ritual sacrifice. In this case the devil exacts his own payment for the lost offering by causing a dangerous accident with loss of life among the miners. The single miner's concern for his own life is also linked to individual-group dynamics.

Fertility, human death, and *ayullu* survival find historical evidence in the feast at San Bartolomé, north of Potosí. Here T. Platt (1983: 50) says that the local *ayullu* annually commemorate the dead who in 1812 went to work in the *mita* destined for the mine of Cerro and Ribera of Potosí: «An analysis of the feast shows that the mitayos were effectively, in the walking for the death, ...» [my translation].

The central feature here is that the authonomy of the *ayullu* was paid for with the life of the mitayos sent to the mine. These mitayos were the most expensive obligation that the *ayullu* had to pay to the Spanish. But in the meantime their death was the guarantee of the life of the community; their death in the mine made it possible for the community to continue.

Tio of the miners

J. Nash says in her book *We eat the mine and the mine eat us* that the relationship between Tio-*Supay*-devil and the miners is expressed in particular way. *Supay* is conceived of only as a devil

and is clearly represented with the features of the Western devil. Sometimes he can assume different forms, e.g., gringo, depending on who is considered the real owner of the miner at any given moment.

Supay in this case has lost his direct or indirect reference to the souls of the dead and the dead in general. The devil here becomes a symbol mainly referable to Huari, the god of the mountain. Tio-*Supay* is considered an aspect of Huari, an ancient god who opposed Pachacamac.

The miners associate *Supay* with the underground as opposed to Pachamama, who is the divinity associated with the agricultural cycle and the open surface of the earth. In the life cyle of the miners of Oruro, the dead are still evoked and fed on "Todos los Santos". Fertility and regeneration are still linked with the symbolic victory over the dead and through the ritual baptism and the collective eating of the baby-bread.

Tio appears in relation to the mine; it is not clear in the accounts of J. Nash if Tio would be in any way related to the miners' above-ground ontology. In the mine the relation between the miners and the mine is mediated by ritual offered to Tio. «A live white llama is sacrified and its heart interred in the mines to gain his (Tio) good will twice yearly. It is both an offering to satisfy his voracious appetite so that he will not eat the men who work the mine, and request that they yeld to the workers some of the riches of the mine» (Nash 1979: 123). Moreover, the miners consider Tio the real owner of the mine at the underground level. One of them says: «He is the owner of the mine. We walk with him. He takes care of us and we arrive with him» (Nash 1979: 158).

Tio can be an element of wealth and a generator of riches as well as an element of danger. As a generator of riches he shows the miners the rich veins of ore in the mine. The fetish of Tio was supposed to have stimulated the miners to make individual contracts with him in order to increase their productivity and so amass personal wealth.

These contracts were common in the pre-nationalized period, when the miners' wage was based on the amount of tin content extracted rather than on the amount of ore. During that period work was organised on the miners' production unit, which was supposed to exploit one area of the pit. The mineral was extracted on behalf of the group, and the wage was divided in accordance with the role that each miner played in the team. So it was more

common for individuals who wanted to gain more wealth to foster a contract with Tio to obtain more pure tin. The inevitable price that the miners had to pay for this was life, sometimes their physical extinction in the mine.

This dangerous aspect of Tio, expressed at the individual level, is associated with and seems to be also a direct expression of the work organization in the mine.

In pre-nationalized days, the betrayal of the spirit of the work unit, betrayal of the communal *ayullu* spirit, the attempt of individuals to accumulate wealth at the expense of the group, was punished by Tio with the life of the betrayer.

At one level, the miners' explanation for individual death as a case of personal contract with Tio can be read a metaphor by which they expressed the conflict of individual vs. work team during the prenationalized period.

J. Nash (1979: 162) points out that after all the changes that affected work organization in the mine and mine ownership, the cult is now more important in terms of accidents in the mine «that as generator of riches». Now that teamwork has been abolished and each miner works for himself in the mine, wages are based on individual productivity and safety is the preeminent concern of the cult. The emergence of the individual as an expression of lost group solidarity also bears witness to the rise in the consciousness of the miners of a more complex form of solidarity embodied in the miners' union.

The passage from one form of work organization to another (using the Durkheimian & Marxian model) is paralleled by the rise of consciousness and class solidarity.

The banning of the cult of Tio in 1964 by the military authority led to Tio being seen as a symbol of the miners' class consciousness and resistance to the military dictatorship.

Conclusion

With the interpretation of the cult of Tio in the mine of Oruro, and in light of the relation between the image of the devil – Tio – *Supay* and the dead, the following features appear:
– at both the individual and the communal level Tio is a source of wealth;
– at both the individual and the communal level Tio is a source of danger.

This dual feature is a constant character of the gods in the

Andean cosmology, they are attributes which are common to devil spirits as well as others.

Historically, mining has connoted seclusion from the community of origin and consciousness of a deadly task. The symbol of the devil in the Tio ritual is a more complex figure than Taussig thought. The syncretized figure of the Western devil is, in Andean societies, included in a broad category of gods, spirits of nature and a descendant pre-existing devil. In this respect Tio has become the direct representative of those Andean gods, and in the context of the mine of Oruro he has been invested with a particular kind of ambivalence.

This ambivalence arises from the particular way in which mines and minerals have been fitted into the Andean cultural logic and in the way in which capitalist mining has distorted this logic.

For Taussig there is no evidence of this ambivalence in the cult of mining fetishism in the pre-capitalist era, and the explanation has to be sought in the interface between the capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production. Platt in his parallel analysis of a peasant and mining community produces evidence against this point: peasants in a subsistence economic system worship the devil alongside their good god.

Moreover Platt (1983: 67) says: «The devil's ubiquity in high-Peruvian and Bolivian society cannot be mechanically attributed to those who take part in a limited set of relations, nor it is possible to maintain the hypothesis that attributes this ubiquity exclusively to the reaction against the expansion of the market. Both explanations show the shortcomings of economic reductionism, when the real mechanism seems to be the result of cultural antagonism at a much wider level».

There is no ground on which it is possible to make a solely economic distinction between the peasant and non-peasant models of explaining this matter in Andean societies. In all the systems there is coexistence several possible non-contradictory explanatory systems, e.g., in the mine underground – aboveground.

The correct reason for the cult of Tio seem to be more a problem for the researcher than for the miners. The explanation should be sought in Andean cultural logic.

The symbolic content of the sources of sacred power in Andean beliefs may vary but the relations which link them to humans are, as conceived in Andean logic, always the same. The sets of meaning to which these symbols are related do not change.

The dead, Tio, *Supay*, *saxra*, Huari, Pachamama, etc. are divinities which mediated, ordained, and adjusted the relation between people and the natural world and, as defined by this people, within the ecosystem.

The significance of these divinities, the duality that characterizes the sacred figure in Andean cosmology is essentially morally neutral. The quality of danger is not morally equivalent to the category of evil.

The figure of the devil and the fact of death suggest regeneration of life; the mitayos of San Bartolomé who died in the mine fostered the life of that community. The death of the miners in the mine of Oruro, though seen as payment in arrears to Tio, calls for the solidarity of the mourners and shapes the miners consciousness.

There is more than one resemblance in these two cases: they are deeply linked within the same *Weltanschauung*. The dead are the ideal and real element of the regeneration of life; they produce ore and solidarity.

On the other hand, death at Oruro still finds its meaning in an exchange circuit with Tio. Within the dephts of the pit the relation between miners and Tio is a balanced one. The miners feed Tio in the conviction that they will be fed by him. The shift in the emphasis in the ritual from riches to danger reflects the formation of class consciousness. This evolution does not in itself imply the attribution of evil to Tio.

Tio is not the fetish of capitalism in the mine; on the contrary, it should be seen as a symbol of the resistance of the miners awareness. Tio does not conflict with the miners' will to resist but metaphorically feeds it. So capitalism is one element of the analysis but not the determinant one.

Last but not least, the fact that the miners acquire class consciousness is not in itself in contradiction with their belief in nature spirits.

Only within an evolutionary model does the rise of class consciousness imply alienation from old beliefs.

Note

1. Glosses are drawn extensively from Murra (1980*a*) and Bastien (1978).
2. Pre-Columbian term for Andean earth shrine.
3. Andean name for the Inca empire, which means «four parts and only these, insomuch as they constitute a whole».

4. Chief or official during the Inca and Spanish empires.

5. Sacred place, place of origin of the lineage ancestor, usually a natural element in the landscape, e.g., a stone, rock, etc.

6. Distinguishable groups whose solidarity is formed by religious and territorial ties, by permanent claim to land and lineage, by affinal ties, and by work.

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Summary

The miners of Oruro, Bolivia, worship Tio as the spirit of the mines they work in, depicting him in the form of the devil of Western iconography.

In exchange for goods and sacrifice, Tio gives the miners the ore; usually a llama or other animal is the price of the sacrifice, but occasionally he demands even the blood and life of the miners.

Fatal accidents are interpretated by the miners as Tio's price for more ore. This last sacrifice demonstrates the evil nature of the spirit of the mine.

The author compares a former interpretation of M. Taussig with historical data concerning mines and mining in Andean societies since the Inca empire and with a detailed analysis of the symbolism of the devil in relation to the traditional Andean system of belief and the superimposed Christian religious doctrine. The author's central thesis is that Tio does not bear the morally negative character that Taussig reads into him; his significance is deeply rooted in traditional Andean dualism, and we need to distinguish between the Western symbolism of evil and the meaning that this iconography may assume in different societies.

The image of Tio in Andean societies is closely linked to the symbolism of the spirit of nature and to the dead and they all carry the characteristic of danger as well as of goodness and fertility. The author also argues that Tio worship is not an expression of the miners's past heritage in the face of their inability to free themselves from the peasant world view, but that this ritual is very much perceived and lived as a shared experience which can shape the miners' class consciousness against the disgregating pressure of capitalist relations of production.

Sommario

I minatori di Oruro – Bolivia – venerano in Tio lo spirito possessore delle miniere in cui essi lavorano, rappresentato sotto

le forme del diavolo nell'iconografia occidentale. In scambio di beni e sacrifici Tio concede l'estrazione del minerale; generalmente un lama o un altro animale è il prezzo del sacrificio ma occasionalmente Tio chiede di più: domanda il sangue e la vita dei minatori stessi.

Gli incidenti mortali sul lavoro sono interpretati dai minatori come il prezzo che Tio esige per una maggiore quantità di minerale estratto; quest'ultimo sacrificio mette in luce la natura malvagia dello spirito della miniera.

L'autore confronta una precedente interpretazione di M. Taussig sia con un nucleo di dati storici relativi all'attività mineraria nella società andina a partire dal periodo Inca, che con un'analisi della simbologia legata alla figura del diavolo nel sistema culturale andino e in relazione alla dottrina cristiana successivamente imposta su quest'ultimo. Tesi centrale dell'articolo è che in Tio non si può ravvisare il carattere moralmente negativo che M. Taussig vuole leggere in questa figura. Il significato che assume Tio è profondamente radicato nel tradizionale dualismo andino ed è necessario distinguere tra la simbologia con cui l'occidente esprime l'idea del male e il significato che questa iconografia può assumere in differenti società.

L'immagine di Tio nella società andina è legata sia alla simbologia propria degli spiriti/dei del mondo naturale che dei morti, entrambi questi elementi sono portatori sia dei caratteri di pericolosità che di bontà e fertilità. Attraverso l'analisi si evince inoltre che la venerazione di Tio non è semplicemente un'espressione dell'eredità culturale dei minatori di fronte alla loro inabilità di svincolarsi da una visione della realtà caratteristica del mondo contadino; bensì che questo rituale è percepito e vissuto come un momento in grado di formare la coscienza di classe dei minatori contro la disgregante pressione imposta dalle relazioni di produzione del mondo capitalista.

Pervenuto il 25-3-1986