

*América profunda*. By RODOLFO KUSCH. Buenos Aires, 1962. Librería Hatchette S.A. Colección Nuevo Mirador. Illustrations. Charts. Index. Pp. 223. Paper.

The underlying philosophy of early America has not been explored in most countries of this continent except possibly in Mexico. The present book is an attempt to analyze Incan thought along this line, although its point of view is somewhat less ambitious than its title would suggest. Despite one glance at the Puritans in New England and a comparison of Reformation Christianity with Indian religion, it is not a broad treatment; as with Rodó, Kusch is completely South American.

*América profunda* begins with a discussion of barbarism, following a title from a previous book called *La seducción de la barbarie*. He begins his "intuición del paisaje" at the ancient capital of Cuzco, where he analyzes the "political dimension of stench." Then he goes on to discuss the five signs of the supreme deity, Viracocha, and the world outlook of the Amautas or Incan sages. He sums this up in the statement that "all native action and feeling seem to follow this immersion of seminal force in an antagonistic whole . . . so that the seminal may bear fruit." (p. 88). The wisdom of America involves merely existing in order to bear fruit, or to "be somebody." Face to face with chaos, we need to find a balance within the world, and yet become reconciled to change. The two sexes, hero twins, sky and earth, coast and hill country, the sharp edge separating life and death, all give this thought a dualistic aspect. "Fagotación" or organic decay is the eternal return of other systems.

Despite the disappointing aspects of this work, we need more books like this so as to achieve a cultural dialogue with the other parts of our continent. Amauta philosophy was no doubt deep, but it was esoteric and little has survived for serious consideration, so this book does not offer a total picture of American thought before the European intrusion. We need to explore Mayan wisdom, for instance, since it was more profound than Aztec or Incan, and concerning which we possess more documents, while in the United States we might study our own native systems.

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