
THE MOSCA (CHIBCHA)

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This paper is a reconstruction of the societal and material culture of the Mosca Indians as it was prior to the Spanish conquest. Mosca is the word for man in their language and was used by the first Spaniards to designate the subjects of Bogota and Tunja (Aguado, 1916). This group is especially interesting because it appears to have been in the process of forming a State as this term can be defined in modern times. According to Steward's recent definition (1949), it had attained all the prerequisites for a high civilization. These include intense agriculture, stratified social classes, and a priest-temple-idol cult. As we shall see the Moscas had, in many ways, advanced much farther on the road to statehood.

Mosca civilization is quite noticeably lacking in artifacts or constructions of durable material that leave important archaeological remains. It is, therefore, necessary to reconstruct as far as possible from the writings of some of the Spaniards who were eyewitnesses or who had access to eyewitness accounts, either written or verbal. Most of these accounts were not written on the spot but took the form of memoirs written by soldiers after retirement from active duty, or compilations by priests who wrote 1 to 3 generations after the conquest.

Aguado's account is fairly extensive and seems to be reliable though a little difficult to read. Castellanos (1886) writes in verse but gives quite detailed knowledge, probably the best of the available primary sources. The account of San Martin and Lebrija (1916) is short but gives a little additional knowledge and is valuable for the part devoted to the Panche Indians. The anonymous *Epitome* (1920) is apparently reliable and contains much new material. Piedrahita (1942), while a secondary source, worked from primary material and transcribed accurately and fairly completely. Piedrahita had access to the accounts of Gonzale Jimenez de Quesada who led the expedition to Bogota. This account has been lost but if Piedrahita covered it as well as he appears to have covered the work of Castellanos, then we have most of the contents of Quesada's writing.

Mosca territory is located on the plateau of Cundinamarca in Colombia. The exact location of boundaries and tribal divisions and a description of the climate is covered by Kroeber (1946) in volume 2 of the *Handbook of South American Indians*.

Subsistence

One of the main sources of food supply was maize. Plantings were made during eight months of the year assuring an almost continuous harvest (San Martin and Lebrija, 1916). Several kinds of potatoes were grown, among them white, yellow, and purple varieties (Piedrahita, 1942). Some manioc was raised (Aguado, 1916). Another root crop mentioned is turnips, another tuber, perhaps arracacha or *tropaeolum* (Aguado, 1916). Several varieties of beans were cultivated. Gourds provided vessels and utensils. There were some other unnamed seed crops. Agave and esparto grass provided fibers (Aguado, 1916). Peppers were grown extensively for flavoring. Chicha beer was made from ground grain (Castellanos, 1886). Coca was cultivated and entered heavily into their ceremonial and religious life. The leaves were prepared by roasting in clay vessels. Lime from burned ground shells was carried in a gourd provided with a paddle (Castellanos, 1886). This lime was mixed with coca leaves and chewed. Coca was burned as incense to idols (Piedrahita, 1942; Castellanos, 1886). *Datura* was used as a stupefying drug (Piedrahita, 1942; Castellanos, 1886). The Moscas gathered wax, honey and wild fruits (Piedrahita, 1942). Salt was extracted from salt water springs and pools. The salt water was placed over a fire in rough pottery vessels of various sizes and evaporated. It was necessary to break the vessels in order to extract the salt (Castellanos, 1886; Piedrahita, 1942). Hunting was a diversion as well as a source of food supply. Deer were plentiful in the mountains and furnished one of their fresh meats. Rabbits were hunted in the open country with slings. The Mosca also utilized bear, puma, jaguar, and guinea pigs for meat or hides. Fish and some birds were also eaten.

Shelter

Houses and palaces were round or oval shaped in floor plan. The roof had four rafters giving the top the effect of a pyramid. The roofs were thatched with grass. The house walls were formed of posts placed on end with a facing and a lining of canes tied with agave cord fibers. Spaces were filled with a mixture of clay and grass. Floors were sometimes covered with a layer of dried esparto grass as a carpet. Windows and doors were small. Openings could be closed by doors of canes tied with agave fibers in either solid or lattice work effects. Doors were provided with locks or latches made of wood. Wind screens of reed grass were placed back of the entrance (Piedrahita, 1942). Ordinary dwellings had at least two rooms, one for the man and another for his wives (Epitome, 1920). Temples were very large constructions but built of wood with thatched roofs. The palace of the Cacique at Bogota had fourteen doors (Piedrahita, 1942). The temple at Sogamoso burned for five years according to Castellanos (Castellanos, 1886; Piedrahita, 1942). It was the custom to bury a live slave under the temple posts (Piedrahita, 1942). The interiors of the temples were so divided into passages and rooms as to resemble a conch shell (Piedrahita, 1942; Epitome, 1920), or a labyrinth (Epitome, 1920).

Some of the towns in the valleys were very large. Bogota had more than twenty thousand houses or families. Some other cities were almost as large (Piedrahita, 1942). They were surrounded by a stockade of large timbers, stood on end, and partly sunk into the ground. These were placed about eighteen inches apart, with the spaces tightly packed with canes held together by strong cords or ropes of agave or esparto fiber. Large red banners that looked like sails were hung from these masts (Castellanos, 1886). What looked like sentry boxes hung on some of these poles. These boxes served a different purpose during some of the Mosca ceremonies. Slaves or captives were placed in the boxes and killed with long lances (Castellanos, 1886). These large towns with their walls and masts reminded the Spaniards of castles. Some of the smaller villages in the northern part of Mosca territory were built among the rocks for protection.

Dress and Ornament

The early Spaniards were impressed by the richness of the clothing and ornaments of the Moscas. Clothing styles were uniform, being in imitation of the clothing said to have been worn by their God Bohica when he first appeared in their territory. The Moscas had no wool (Aguado, 1916). Their clothing was of woven cotton or of animal skins. Designs were painted on the cloth with a brush in black or red. The red color came from bija (*Bixa orellana*) and black color came from jagua (*Genipa americana*). Designs denoted the rank or position of the wearer. Men wore a square or rectangular piece of cotton cloth wrapped around their waist forming a tubular skirt or tunic reaching to their knees. The upper part of the body was covered by another square of cloth that was knotted on the shoulder. Women wore a tubular skirt formed from a square of cotton cloth fastened at the waist with a sash. Over their shoulders they wore a square mantle. This was fastened above the breasts with a large gold or silver pin, often so as to leave the breasts visible. This pin was sharp and had a large knob for a head. The pin point was used to extract niguas, little vermin that buried themselves under the skin of the feet of the Moscas who always went barefoot. They went barefoot, not because they did not know of sandals from neighboring tribes, but because the legendary Bohica never wore anything on his feet. Usually the Moscas wore either a cotton head band or a cotton hair net (Epitome, 1920). The head band often had a rosette of feathers in the center that fell over their eyebrows. For certain occasions or ceremonies they wore caps or helmets of wild animal skins such as bear, puma, or jaguar (Piedrahita, 1942). Priests and chiefs wore golden crowns or mitres for certain ceremonial occasions. Mourning cloaks were dyed red with bija (Castellanos, 1886). Shoulder bags of cotton and gourds were usually added as containers in which to carry various articles (Piedrahita, 1942). Both sexes wore their hair long as Bohica had worn his. Hair was always kept well groomed and often dyed to make it black and lustrous. Cropped or disheveled hair was a disgrace and used as a punishment (Epitome, 1920; Piedrahita, 1942). Clothes formed the greatest wealth of the Moscas and tearing or disfiguring of clothes was a most effective form of punishment.

The Moscas had a great wealth of personal ornaments (Piedrahita, 1942). Each purchased as much as he could afford within what his rank would allow him to exhibit. Breast ornaments were made from gold and silver. Circlets of gold studded with jewels were worn on the head. On the forehead a half moon of gold was placed with the points turned upwards. Small gold tubes were strung and worn at temples, wrists and neck. Bead bracelets were made from jewels, stone, and bone. Head dress was ornamented with bright feathers of many colors. Ears and the septum of the nose were pierced and pendants or plugs were placed in the holes. Designs were painted on the face and body with bija and jagua. Emeralds were the most striking of their ornaments and had a religious significance to the Moscas. They were burned or ground into powder as sacrifices (San Martin and Lebrija, 1916).

Technology and Trade

The Moscas used gold, silver, copper, and lead but gold was of greater value and religious significance (Castellanos, 1886). Metal work for idols and animal figures was considered by the Spaniards to have been rather badly done (Piedrahita, 1942). Some gourds full of little discs of gold were found which might have been used as we use coins. Probably this was only a convenient method of storage and transportation. Metal was used almost exclusively for ornamentation. The best emerald mines were said to have been in the area under the control of the city of Tunja Mines of Somondoco. Emerald mining was carried out in the rainy season when waters were high. The miners were looked upon as wizards or

sorcerers (Epitome, 1920). Ditches were dug to lead the water to the veins of clay that contained the jewels. The clay was loosened by prodding with wooden tools and the emeralds were washed out. White cotton textiles were woven (Epitome, 1920). Decoration was by brush painting with no dyeing of cotton before weaving. Pottery was coarse with little decoration. It was used for cooking, roasting coca and evaporating salt water from salt water springs. Large pottery jars were placed at temples and sanctuaries to receive offerings.

Trade formed an important part of the life of the Moscas. Certain days were set aside for markets and fairs (Castellanos, 1886). Some villages along the borders of Mosca territory were maintained as trading places (Piedrahita, 1942). Cargocarriers or bearers were trained from childhood (Piedrahita, 1942). The region of the Moscas furnished the finest and largest supply of salt for the whole surrounding country. Special salt roads or trails were developed with shelters constructed at intervals. Prepared coca formed one of the important trade items. Raw cotton came into, and finished cloth was traded out of Mosca territory. While the Moscas mined gold in their own territory, their insatiable Gods forced them to seek to acquire more from the outside. Having one of the main sources of emerald supply, the Moscas traded some of these with other groups (Castellanos, 1886).

Marriage and Burial Customs

Because the Mosca marriage customs differed so greatly from European customs, the Spaniards maintained that they had no marriage ceremony at all (Piedrahita, 1942; Epitome, 1920). The Moscas really had a system of bride purchase. A suitor approached the father or person who stood in the place of the father of a prospective bride and made an offer of a certain amount of valuables. If this were refused, he returned with a second and higher offer. On this being refused he returned with a third and final offer. If this third offer were refused, the whole affair was ended. If the offer were accepted, the bride was placed at the disposal of the suitor for a certain length of time. At the end of this time he could either keep the bride as his permanent wife or return her to her father. In this way some men kept up a kind of successive polygyny only limited by the extent of their resources (Castellanos, 1886; Piedrahita, 1942). One ceremony of the Moscas could be called a marriage ceremony but in many ways it is more like a change of status ceremony. As shown in some of the laws and religious ceremonies a rather clear distinction was made between married men and those men who had never participated in sexual intercourse. The following ceremony was performed only on the occasion of a man's first marriage. During the ceremony the couple stood before the priest with arms on each other's shoulders. The priest raised his hands above them. Most of the questions were addressed to the woman: "Will you love Bohica more than your husband?" "Yes." "Will you care more for your husband than for any children that you might have?" "Yes." "Will you care more for your children than for yourself?" "Yes." "If your husband dies will you cease to eat?" "Yes." "Will you promise not to go to the bed of your husband unless he first calls you?" "Yes." Then the priest turned to the man and told him that if he wished the woman he was embracing he should so proclaim in a loud voice. The groom then shouted his desire in a loud voice three or four times and the ceremony was ended. After this ceremony a man was permitted to have as many wives as he could obtain and sustain (Piedrahita, 1942). Several wives appear to have been usual, with the chiefs having two to four hundred. Women maintained a close relationship with their own ancestral family. The husband was responsible to the wife's family for injury to her. Incest rules for the common people extended to sisters, cousins and nieces. Rulers were excepted from incest rules, marrying full sisters and other very close relatives.

Burial customs varied, apparently both with rank and location. Interment

was sometimes practiced. The sign of the cross was placed on the graves of those who died from snake bite (Piedrahita, 1942; Castellanos, 1886). In some places special sanctuaries were erected. In the sanctuaries bodies were placed on platforms. The dead were wrapped in their finest clothes. Precious ornaments and offerings were placed with them. Another form of burial was in sacred lakes; jewels, ornaments and other offerings were placed in specially constructed containers along with the body and this was conveyed by raft into deep water and there sunk beneath the surface (Epitome, 1920). In some places the dead were taken to certain high places in the mountains and left there (Aguado, 1916). The burial of a deceased ruler of Bogota was quite an elaborate affair. A very good description of this rite has been left by Castellanos (1886). At death the body of the chief was turned over to the priests. In a secret place the priests had already, while the chief was still alive, prepared a deep excavation; in fact the preparation had been started as soon as the chief had been chosen. In the very bottom the chief's body was placed on a low golden stool. Around him were placed jewels, gold ornaments and all that was considered to be necessary to his maintainance in his proper sphere. This layer was filled in and covered with earth. In the next layer three or four of his favorite wives were buried alive, usually by their own choice. This layer was filled in with earth. Over this a group of slaves who had best served their master were placed alive and covered with earth. The whole excavation was then filled and all signs of disturbance were as far as possible removed. Before being buried alive the wives and slaves were given a drink made from an infusion of *Datura* and chicha beer in order to stupefy them. All layers were plentifully supplied with gold and jewels.

The Moscas believed in life after death. All the necessities for life, the planting and cultivation of crops, and the performance of ceremonies were buried with them. In the land of the dead, far away, people had to cultivate the land and raise crops just as they had to in the land they had left. The Moscas also believed in a universal judgment and a resurrection at which the dead were to return in the same being and beauty they had had when they died (Piedrahita, 1942). Red was the mourning color (Castellanos, 1886). Blankets, clothes, hair and body were dyed and painted red with bija.

Political Institutions

Political government differed between Tunja to the north and Bogota to the south. At the time of the coming of the Spanish invaders the Moscas seem to have been divided in allegiance between these two (Epitome, 1920). Bogota was a feudal state under an absolute monarchy; Tunja controlled an alliance of free "cities" (Piedrahita, 1942). Bogota rulers married many wives while in the free cities rulers were often celibate with succession going to sisters' sons, or to brother, preferably the older. In Bogota succession was also to sisters' sons or to brother. Sons could only inherit personal property (Castellanos, 1886). In Iraca to the north succession was by some sort of an election, not by the people, but by representative members of the ruling class of the various cities concerned (Piedrahita, 1942). The presumptive heirs to power, both male and female, were put through a rigorous training period lasting about six years (Castellanos, 1886; Epitome, 1920). During the six years they were never permitted to see the sun. They underwent long fasts and many foods were taboo to them. The training was under the charge of the priests and the rulers-to-be were put through many hard tasks under their tutelage. All relations between the sexes were prohibited during the training period. At the end of the training the graduate was equipped with all the gorgeous trappings he was entitled to as a future ruler. He was ceremoniously married to his first wife; afterwards he might take as many wives as he wished but the first wife always remained the most important. If a ruler's first wife died before him, she was permitted to impose a limited period of continence upon him. This

apparently assured her proper treatment (Castellanos, 1886; Epitome, 1920). The ruler of Bogota was an absolute monarch. He had the right to claim any or all of the daughters of all of the local chiefs under his control. Life and property were subject to his orders and no local chief could be confirmed without the approval of the ruler of Bogota (Castellanos, 1886).

One of the main diversions of the ruling class was traveling to special bathing spots. At one of these bathing places a hot and a cold spring were very close together. Specially constructed roads, as wide as a double carriage road, led to the bathing spots. The chief traveled to the bathing places carried in litters that were covered with gold, jewels and ornaments; slaves went in front clearing the road and covering it with grass and flowers.

Lust for women was considered by the Moscas to be a source of great danger in a ruler. Control of sexual manifestations was a great virtue. In the event that a ruler or lesser chief died without leaving a legal heir a significant test was used to determine the succession. Two possible rulers were chosen. They were stripped and brought before the judges or some higher chief. Beautiful maidens completely unclothed were brought in. The contestant who exhibited no signs of sexual excitement was declared the winner. If both failed, a new pair was chosen and put through the same test. This was continued until someone passed the test (Castellanos, 1886).

The activities of the common man were regulated by custom. Time was divided into a month of about 28 days. The first ten days were spent in ceremonial observations in which coca chewing played an important part. The next ten days were used to cultivate crops. The rest of the month a man spent at home with his wife or wives (Epitome, 1920). Land seems to have been held as private property by the men. Inheritance was usually to sisters' sons or to brothers. Type of clothing, painted designs and ornaments permitted were regulated by rank. Only the very powerful could be carried in litters.

Laws

A code of laws proclaimed by Nemequene, one of the last rulers of Bogota, has been passed on to us by (Castellanos 1886; Piedrahita, 1942). 1. Murder carried the death penalty. Wife, father or other close relatives of the murdered one could not pardon the murderer. The supreme being gave life and man did not have the power to forgive one who took life away. 2. Rape, if committed by a man who had never been married, should be punished by the death penalty. If rape were committed by a married man, two bachelors who had never been married were permitted to sleep with the offender's wife (probably his official or first wife). This was considered to be a punishment worse than death. 3. Incest with a mother, daughter, sister or niece was punished by putting the guilty parties into a narrow pit filled with water. Snakes and obnoxious insects were placed in the water with the victims. A lattice-like cage was placed over the top and the criminal was left to perish miserably. The woman was given the same punishment because she was supposed to have awakened the desires that caused the breaking of the incest taboo. 4. Homosexuality carried the death penalty. The manner and degree of punishment was left to the judgment of the chief. Punishment was usually very drastic and the practice of homosexuality which flourished in some of the surrounding areas was almost absent among the Moscas. 5. It was ordered that if a married woman died in childbirth, her husband should lose one half of his land. This went to the parents of the wife, her brothers and sisters, or to relatives that stood in the place of parents. The husband was not considered to be guilty of any offense but the loss was supposed to be to the woman's family. If the child lived and the mother died, the father was only accessed the cost of raising the child. 6. The eyes of a thief were put out by fire. If the offense was very grave or was repeated, the eyeballs were punctured with the

point of a thorn. The criminal was allowed to remain alive. 7. No one except the ruler of Bogota or those to whom he gave express permission could be carried in litters. This permission was often given for exceptional service to the central government. 8. Type of clothing, painted designs, and jewels that could be worn were limited by law, forming observable ranks or grades of importance. The upper ranks, the most illustrious and therefore nobles, were permitted by law to pierce their ears and nose and to wear whatever jewels they wished as nose and ear pendants. 9. The estates of those who died without legitimate heirs were to be applied to the royal treasury. Legitimate heirs, according to the code, were nephews, brothers, and sons. 10. Those who showed cowardice when called to war or when engaged in battle were ordered to wear the clothes of women and to do the work of women for a period of time to be set by the judgment of the chief. Anyone who fled the battle before his captain gave the signal to retreat was to be given an ignominious death on the spot.

Ruin and tearing of clothing and shearing of their long hair were considered to be most disgraceful punishments by the Moscas. Other punishments are shown by the many gallows placed along the roads by the Moscas. Criminals were sometimes placed in the so-called sentry boxes erected on the tall masts. These criminals were pierced by long lances with fire hardened points. The blood dripping down was caught in clay vessels for ceremonial use (Epitome, 1920).

Weapons and Warfare

Warfare, both internal and external, held a large place in the culture of the Moscas. Armies were formed into groups or companies according to type of weapon used such as slings, atlatls and darts, bows, lances and others. Each division carried a banner (Piedrahita, 1942). Distinctive head dress denoted the side a warrior was fighting on. Leaders were carried into battle on special fighting litters. The preserved bodies of former great warriors were carried in front of an attacking force, sometimes on litters, much as the story of the Cid in the history of Spain (Castellanos, 1886). In one great battle Bogota is said to have had a force of sixty thousand warriors; Tunja, a force of forty thousand warriors.

Slings were used for hunting in open country and slingers were organized into groups in warfare. The bow and arrow was also used for fighting from a distance. Swords or macanas were made from hard chonta wood. These double edged swords were larger than a fencing broad sword and were polished and sharpened almost like steel. Lances or spears were made of wood with fire hardened points. The main weapon of the Mosca fighting forces was the atlatl or spear thrower dart of various weights. The spear thrower was used for close contact fighting. The Moscas' armor of padded cotton could not resist these darts.

Darts and arrows were made from three different pieces. The points were made from the same extremely hard wood as the swords with the tip hardened in the fire. A section of a different wood (jaculillo?), about two palms long, was fastened next to the point as a foreshaft. The rest of the shaft was of cane. The atlatl was of the so-called male type with a peg projecting from each end at right angles and in the same direction. One peg engaged a notch in the end of the dart and the index finger was hooked around the other peg (Aguado, 1916; Castellanos, 1886; Epitome, 1920; Piedrahita, 1942).

The Moscas were engaged in almost constant combat with the Panches, a savage cannibalistic tribe to the southwest. Crack troops were posted along the frontier as border guards (Castellanos, 1886; Piedrahita, 1942). For each Panche that he killed, a "Quecha" or border guard was permitted to hang a pendant from a hole pierced in his ear, the septum of his nose, or around his mouth. Many had the rim of the ear completely circled by small golden ornaments. The heads of the Panche warriors slain in combat were removed by the Moscas and carried

back to be placed in sanctuaries in Mosca territory. Youths young enough to appear to have never had sexual intercourse were captured alive and taken to the mountains to be sacrificed to the sun because the sun is a cannibal and likes tender meat (San Martin, 1916).

For twenty days before attempting an expedition into enemy territory, the Moscas held a ceremony in front of one of their sanctuaries. They sang and danced, relating their grievances and asking for victory. Upon return another twenty days were spent before the sanctuary, either in rejoicing for a victory or in lamentation of a defeat (Epitome, 1920).

Religion

The Moscas had a highly organized and complex religion which was common to the whole group. All warring factions acknowledged a high priest or "Pontifex Maximus" at Sugamuxi (Piedrahita, 1942). Religious and governmental control were in separate hands, especially in Bogota. The Moscas believed in a creator who had created all of nature, in the immortality of the soul, in the resurrection of the body, and in a universal judgment. Men who died in battle and women who died in childbirth were exempt from judgment for their sins (Epitome, 1920). The sun which was male and the moon, a female, were objects of worship. The sun and the moon had sexual intercourse when the nights were dark (Epitome, 1920). Some mountains, rivers, lakes, and groves of trees were thought to be sacred (Piedrahita, 1942).

Enormous temples of wood, thatched with grass were erected, the greatest of which were at Bogota, Guatavita, and Sogomoso. Large timbers brought up from the llanos were used in construction. A living slave was buried under each of the temple posts. A road one hundred leagues long was built leading from the llanos to Sogomoso for this was their most sacred temple (Piedrahita, 1942).

The Moscas greatest worship was reserved for Bohica, a stranger who came into Mosca territory from without. He lived among them for two thousand years doing and teaching good, then ascended to the sky. There is some argument as to whether the legends of Bohica represented one man or three men. The greatest agreement is that there was only one man who had been given three different names at three different places. Bohica wore his hair long. His beard reached to his waist. He wore a braided head band with a rosette of bright feathers in the front falling over his eyebrows. Bohica wore a mantle tied with a knot on the shoulder; he always traveled with his feet bare. Before he ascended to the sky, Bohica left many prophecies and chose a successor. Bohica spent his last days on earth at Sogomoso. The priest at Sogomoso was his successor and as such high priest of all the Moscas (Piedrahita, 1942).

The Moscas have a tale of the flood (Piedrahita, 1942; Castellanos, 1886). At one time an evil supernatural being caused the plains of Bogota to be flooded forcing the people to flee to the mountains. Bohica appeared and cleft the mountain range, forming the river Funza which drained off the water. This was the origin of the famous falls of Tequendama.

The Moscas were idol worshippers. In addition to the great temples many smaller oratorios or sanctuaries were erected to house these idols which were made of metal, string, wax, wood or clay. They were ornamented with jewels. Idols were made in figures of the sun and the moon and of human beings. The figures were usually poorly carved. Human figures were made in various sizes, large and small. They were placed in pairs, always a male and a female figure together. These figures had long hair and were clothed in cotton cloth decorated with designs painted on with a brush (Piedrahita, 1942; Castellanos, 1886). Each Mosca had an individual idol of his own that was always with him. These personal idols were thought to be especially effective as protection in battle. Personal idols were of gold if this could be afforded. They always contained an emerald or other

jewel. A poor man made his personal idol of wood and ornamented it with such jewels as he could obtain (Epitome, 1920).

The priests of the temples were called "chuques" by the Moscas. These priests lived in the temples. They were not allowed to marry but had to lead a celibate life. If even suspected of a transgression of the rules of celibacy, they were deprived of their office. The priests who were consulted on the gravest matters, received the offerings to the Gods, and performed the ceremonial rites of sacrifice should have clean, not polluted hands. The priests ate, talked, and slept very little. They lived a life withdrawn from worldly affairs. Most of their nights were spent chewing coca which they themselves gathered and prepared (Piedrahita, 1942). The priests were all diviners, making the offerings to the Gods and giving the people answers to their questions. Offerings to the idols were of gold, powered or nugget, emeralds, either whole or pounded into powder, and golden figures of animals such as snakes, toads, lizards, ants, caterpillars, monkeys, and foxes. Jewels were sometimes thrown into the fire as an offering to the gods. Golden helmets, bracelets, diadems, and vessels were offered. Of less importance were offerings of animals such as pumas, jaguars, bears, deer and of pottery vessels. Some of the pottery vessels were empty, some filled with food. A large pottery vessel was usually placed in front of the sanctuary to receive the offerings.

The priests made human sacrifices. Only a very powerful and wealthy chief could afford to offer a human sacrifice. Most of the chiefs made only one sacrifice during their reign, a few made two. The youths to be sacrificed were purchased from a village distant from Mosca territory. This village either captured the youths or traded for them from other tribes. The youths were taken to the temples when they were under ten years old and very carefully cared for. They were sacrificed when they were fifteen or sixteen years old. If they by any chance were suspected of having had sexual intercourse with any woman either inside or outside of the temple, they were not considered to be fit to be sacrificed to the gods but were reserved for another fate. In the sacrifice to the sun the victims were cut open while still alive and their hearts and entrails torn out (Aguado, 1916; Castellanos, 1886; Epitome, 1920; Piedrahita, 1942).

Men and women had to observe certain rites and ceremonies before they went to the temples with their offerings and sacrifices. They had to fast many days, some days without eating anything at all, other days without meat or fish, only certain herbs or plants, without salt or peppers. They withdrew from all affairs; men and women had to stay apart. To break their fast in any way would be to risk death. During the fast they could not wash their bodies. At the end of the fasting which they called the "zaga" they went to the temple and handed over their offerings to the temple priests. The priests then offered the presents to the Gods at the same time asking the questions that had been passed to them by the people. The priests then came back to the people and gave them their answers, the priests having performed the ceremonies in seclusion (Castellanos, 1886; Piedrahita, 1942). When the supplicants had received their replies they went home happy and consoled. There they bathed using a special soap made from the fruit of the guava tree. They dressed in new clothes and called in their relatives and friends for a feast. At these feasts great quantities of chicha beer were consumed. There was dancing, men and women together. Music was played on shells and flutes. The people sang verses or songs together with a certain measure of consonance, much like a carol or sea chanty (Castellanos, 1886; Piedrahita, 1942). Working parties used this same measured chanting as a rhythm for concerted action. The priests were also the physicians, using herbs as well as magic. They had charge of the training of the rulers and took care of the dead. To ward off frost, a priest would perform a ceremony under a white cotton blanket (Castellanos, 1886).

The most imposing ceremony of the Moscas took place at the time of planting and of harvesting (Piedrahita, 1942; Castellanos, 1886). This took the form of a procession along a road that was constructed for this purpose alone. This road was a half a league long and very wide. Sometimes ten or twelve thousand persons participated in these parades and multitudes of spectators lined both sides of the roadway. The chiefs took part in these processions and played a more important role in them than the priests.

The priests led the way with gold crowns shaped like mitres on their heads. Then came a group without clothes or ornaments, their bodies painted with bija and jagua. This naked group was weeping and crying, calling on the sun and the Gods to save them. The next group was shouting and laughing, their clothes disarranged, happy because the prayers of the group in front of them had been answered. Then came groups in various costumes, some in the skins of pumas, bears, jaguars, and other animals. Some groups were masked. At the rear came the chief and all his nobles and court retainers, each dressed in a manner so as to show his exact rank. There was a great display of wealth in gold and jewels and all other valuables that the Moscas possessed. After the parade an all night celebration with beer and dancing was held.

CONCLUSION

The Moscas formed a large assemblage of peoples sufficiently organized to be assigned the designation of statehood. Their common religion held them together even during the vicissitudes of internal strife. Government was organized in such a way so as to be partially outside of religion. There was a recognition of a duty to and a power of the state above and beyond the allegiance owed to a hereditary ruler. There was little indication of true democracy. The principles of both a sovereign ruler and federation of free cities can be recognized. While Mosca technology was far below that of Meso-America and the Andean region of Peru, their cohesive organization into the semblance of a modern state was well advanced.

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