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## Ecological Ethics in Two Andean Songs<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

In this article, I illustrate how two Andean songs serve as lessons for ethical behaviour. This ethics does not constitute an abstraction away from daily concerns; rather, its rationale is pragmatic, based on the kind of behaviour that is most conducive to individual and social survival. The ethical vision portrayed in the songs is therefore profoundly ecological. It is grounded on the notion of 'reciprocity', where 'reciprocity' can be broadly defined as a 'mutually open predisposition for engagement'. I collected the songs during doctoral fieldwork in indigenous communities in Pomabamba province, Ancash department, Peru, in 2011. The first song is in the indigenous language, Central Peruvian Quechua, while the second is in Spanish. Both Quechua and Spanish are used interchangeably in the region, to the extent that Spanish can, nowadays, also be considered a native language. Indeed, each song displays influences from both languages. The *Wayta Muruy* stanzas present a positive enactment of reciprocal cooperation, whereas those of the *Negritos* have a more sinister edge, foretelling the negative consequences of discrimination but with the hope of transformation.

The theoretical framework that I deploy in this article derives from Andean philosophical tendencies. Thus, by deploying this framework, I illustrate that indigenous worldviews (or lifeways) can be just as intellectually robust as theories that derive from academic scholarship in an institutional setting. This framework has been termed 'ecosofia' by Estermann (<http://www.mabs.com.ar/rfaia/?p=687>, accessed 01/08/08) and *Sumaq Kawsay* in its politicized variant (having formed part of the Ecuadorian and Bolivian constitutions). Estermann has coined the term 'ecosofia' in order to convey the sense that 'Andean philosophy' is 'not a philosophy that is centered on the substantiality of entities and of the universe, rather on relationality as an irreducible fact of the all-encompassing structure of the cosmos' (op. cit., my translation). Thus, Andean lifeways stress the mutual constitution of entities, so that relation, not the 'entity', is the ontological prime.

*Sumaq Kawsay* is a Southern Quechua word, reflecting its currency in Bolivia and Ecuador (Ecuadorian Quechua is closely related to Southern Quechua). However, translated into Central Peruvian Quechua as *Shumaq Kaway*, it provides a congruent theoretical framework for understanding the philosophical orientations of the songs in this article. It is generally translated into Spanish as *El Buen Vivir* ('The Good Life'). This translation, however, reduces much of its philosophical meaning (Estermann, op. cit.). First, as with most Quechua words, *kaway* is both noun and verb. This conflation of the 'nominal' and 'verbal' conveys the relationality and dynamism that is implicit in any kind of entity. As a consequence, *shumaq* is both adjective and adverb, so that the translation could equally be 'to live well'. A second difference is that *shumaq* is not only ethical and aesthetic, but also affective. This fact anticipates the songs where ethical, aesthetic and affective domains are fused. Third, the concept of *kaway* is not reducible to 'life' in a purely biological sense, but also includes those entities that, in Western understandings, are classed as inanimate. Thus, relationality is extended to all domains of the cosmos. As a whole, the concept of *Shumaq Kaway* communicates how 'humans realize their potential (or should do so) as part of a community; with and in function of other human beings, without claiming to dominate Nature' (Acosta, p.38, my translation).

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The notion of *Sumaq Kawsay* (*Shumaq Kaway*) became part of the Ecuadorian constitution in 2008 and the Bolivian in 2009 (Gudynas, p.3). The concept is thus deployed in a primarily political context, and is not in wide circulation among indigenous communities as a means of defining Andean Philosophy (Gudynas, p.8). It is not my intention in this article to reify ‘Andean Philosophy’ as a homogeneous block that can be unproblematically labelled *Shumaq Kaway*, given that there is considerable diversity among Andean communities. Instead, I deploy the concept as a means of identifying general philosophical *tendencias* across the Andes which inform the messages of the two songs that we shall examine. Another caveat is that I do not aim to generalize about daily life in the Andes on the basis of just two songs. Envy and individualism exist just as much in the Andes as they do elsewhere, and denying this because it contradicts *Shumaq Kaway* is just as fallacious as arguing that all church-goers automatically follow every tenet of the Bible. Indeed, the very fact that songs serve to remind people of the value of *Shumaq Kaway* shows that adherence to this principle is not a foregone conclusion. The Incas, while they generally accepted cultural diversity within their empire, were imperialists nonetheless, and, like all imperialists, defined themselves as the pinnacle of a rigid hierarchy that had little to do with *Shumaq Kaway* (Bauer, 1996).

Neither is it my intention in this article to engage in the political debate about the contexts in which, and extent to which, *Shumaq Kaway* should be applied to spheres of life beyond the Andes. I do not aim to use *Shumaq Kaway* as a tool of critique against Western lifeways, nor do I exclude the possibility that it can contribute in important ways. To engage productively in these debates really requires extensive training in politics and economics, and the focus of this article is, instead, literary, linguistic and anthropological. Having introduced the objectives of this article, and the indigenous theoretical framework that informs them, it is now time to engage in detailed exegesis of the texts themselves.

### Wayta Muruy

*Wayta Muruy*, literally ‘sowing of flowers’, is a genre where people ‘dance out’ certain agricultural activities. It is performed in festivals between April and June across the province. This version was sung to me by Doña Catalina Salvador Salinas, from the village of Pajash. The main performance is the spreading of cut flowers by the dancers (hence the genre’s name). The flowers constitute a gift to a religious figure (in this case, Christ), and also symbolize the sowing of seeds. Thus, already we see the intertwining of the religious/ethical with a pragmatic preoccupation with survival. The whole festival takes place in front of the church, in the main square of Pajash. The principal dancers are: *warmi willka* (granddaughter); *ollqu willka* (grandson); *chakwas* (old woman); *awkis* (old man). A fifth character is the *capitán yunka*, who helps the other four characters in the sowing of the flowers. The stanzas are as follows:

Tayta Cristi Asunción  
 Ima shumaqmi shuyaamun  
 Caña dulce mallkintsikta entregashunmi  
 Caña dulce plantantsikta entregashunmi  
 Naranjada plantata entregadanaaqmi

Father Christ of the Ascension  
 How beautifully he awaits us  
 We will give him our plant of sugar cane  
 We will give him our crop of sugar cane  
 I am about to give you the orange plant

Tsaqullay, tsaqullay, awkin runa, tsatsa runa

Tayta Cristu Asunción  
Warmi willka, ollqu willka, awkis, chakwas  
Alli shumaq tsaquyamunki  
Naranjada mallkintsikmi

Sindi waqra tuuruntsik  
Abrillakunqaman  
Mana shumaq troncuta  
Hipimuptiyki

Alli shumaqlla sindiylla sindiy  
Capitán yunka, awkis, chakwas  
Alli shumaq sindimunki  
Mana pantar  
Mana cricinqatsu

Ayway toruntsikta ashimunki  
Yapyaykunapaq  
Wawra kachita aparkur  
Mikutsipar  
Ayway rogapar, shoqapar  
Apamunki, achkumunki, laasumunki

Señorllay capitán yunka  
Qarapaay yachanqanpita,  
Allimunki.  
Envernadushqa tsay toruntsik, yunka señorllay  
Waqrashuptiyki tsay chukaru toruqa  
Kachita uchutsinki  
Kachiwan rogapanki  
Shoqapanki

Kurpata mashashun  
Kurpantsikta wiruyaamuy  
Alli shumaq, alli shumaq wiruyallaamunki  
Caña dulcintsikta planta  
Caña dulcintsikta planta malograykanman

Awkin runa, tsatsay runa  
Alli shumaq parqulla, parqulla  
Alli yaku parqullay  
Plantanta mama sequiaqa parqunampaq

Cut, cut, old man, elder man

Father Christ of the Ascension  
Granddaughter, grandson, old man, old woman  
Clear the vegetation well  
Our orange plant

Our horned bull that ploughs  
Might open up  
If you do not remove the trunk  
Carefully

Sow, sow well,  
Captain *yunka*, old man, old woman,  
Sow well  
Erring not  
It will not grow

Go and look for our bull  
In order to plough  
Bringing shining salt  
Feeding it  
Go and beg it, comforting it  
Bring it here, escort it, transport it

Honourable *capitán yunka*,  
Treat it in the way to which it is accustomed, persuade it.  
It has been hibernating, this, our, bull, honourable *yunka*  
If this stubborn bull should butt you  
Give it salt to suck,  
Beg it with salt,  
Comfort it

We will heat the balls of earth in the sun  
Make our balls of earth grow stalks  
Make them grow stalks well  
Our plant of sweet cane  
Our plant of sweet cane could get damaged

Old man, elder man  
Irrigate, irrigate well  
With good water, irrigate well  
So that mother stream can irrigate her plant

Naranjada plantantsikta suwayanqa	They will steal our orange plant
Caña dulcintsikta, caña dulcintsikta	Our sweet cane, our sweet cane
Mishi makin apanqa plantantsikta	Thieving hands will carry off our plant
Alli shumaq cirkuykamunki	Enclose it well
Mishi maki, lluta siki	Thieving hands, useless bottom
Tsay waytata apaskin	Are carrying off this plant
Tsay waytata ushaskin	Are destroying this plant
Misalla blanca, mesalla	White table, table
Awkin runa, tsatsay runa	Old man, elder man
Hamaykuy, mikuyay, almorzay	Rest, eat, have lunch

The first stanza relates to Christ, *Cristi*. The word *Cristi* is an affectionate term which indicates that Christ is not presented as a remote figure, rather as a close friend or relative; *tayta*, literally ‘father’ but a term of affection and respect for any male, can also be interpreted in this way. In the second line, *Ima shumaqmi shuyaamun* (‘How beautifully he awaits us’), the beauty originates from the relation, namely Christ’s openness to receiving the devotees (the aesthetic dimension in *shumaq* (‘beautiful’) is emphasized by the evidential suffix *-mi*, which serves an emphatic function). For Stobart, affective language in Quechua communities serves ‘as a means to appeal to the generative power or spirit (*animu*) of the object, being or place, and to set it into “communicative mode”’, where ‘well being and (re)productive potential are largely understood in terms of the quality of relations with the various personified places, objects or beings’ (p.9). In our song, the intertwining of affective, aesthetic and cognitive dimensions likewise serves to strengthen a relationship with Christ that will be conducive to survival. The importance of relation is also conveyed by the directional *-mu* (in *shuyaa-mu-n*, ‘waits for us’) which normally indicates movement towards the speaker. In this case, however, it is the speaker who is moving towards Christ. Thus, the suffix can be interpreted metaphorically to indicate an emotional, relational, approximation, whereby Christ disposes himself to receiving the devotees. The reciprocal basis of this relation is suggested by the fact that, with this suffix, ‘there is the suggestion of a circular movement, as the effects of the action referred to are expected somehow to revert to the speaker’ (Adelaar, 141-142). As Condori et al. note, ‘The festival is, for the Andean, a sacred space where one enters into communion with one’s gods and one’s ancestors; the relation that is generated requires reciprocity with beings of other spheres’ (p.52, my translation).

The remaining two lines exemplify this reciprocity: *Caña dulce mallkintsikta entregashunmi / Caña dulce plantantsikta entregashunmi* (‘We will give him our plant of sugar cane / We will give him our crop of sugar cane’). According to Doña Catalina, by receiving the fruits of harvest, Christ will ensure a bountiful harvest next year. Thus, the more valuable the product that is given (and little is more valuable than food for survival), the more auspicious the result will be. Pragmatism does not contradict, but is reinforced by, reciprocal ethics. The parallelism of the lines, with Quechua *mallki* (‘plant’) followed by its Spanish cognate *planta*, arguably heightens the sense of reciprocity, while the evidential *-mi* grounds this relation on an epistemic basis of certainty. The group possessive *-ntsik* (‘our’) conveys the sense of group-unity by defining the plant as ‘belonging to everyone’. Quechua has two different categories for ‘we’: an inclusive (*noqantsik*), whereby the addressee is included in the group (‘all of us including you’), and an exclusive (*noqakuna*), whereby the addressee is excluded (‘all of us but not you’). Here, the inclusive category is deployed, conveying the

fact that the group can be considered a single unit for the purposes of agriculture. By handing the plant over to Christ, moreover, the community incorporates Christ into the same web of relations. But the motivation for this inclusion is because Christ is not like everyone else – he has certain powers over the natural world which the community does not have, and this is the reason for relating to him in the first place. Thus, community is built as much through difference as through similarity. The final line confirms the inclusion of Christ as part of the group, with the object changing from third person (grammatically unmarked category) (‘he’) to second-person *-q* (‘you’), coinciding with the suffix *-naa* which indicates imminent action (‘about to’). Thus, Christ becomes a direct interlocutor. The *naranjada* ‘orange’ refers to the colour of sugar cane; it is also tempting to see an allusion to the sun, a fundamental element of Andean religion and mythology.

The second stanza refers to the four characters, representing two genders and two generations, who act out fundamental agricultural processes. The elder man is induced to *tsaqu-*, or fell shrubs to create fields for sowing. There is semantic parallelism with *awkin* and *tsatsa*, both denoting an ‘elderly man’. The second line shows that the action is performed with a view to Christ (here *Cristu* – from Spanish *Cristo*, ‘Christ’). The third line lists all of the performers in turn: the young girl; the young boy; the old man; the old woman. As well as illustrating the productive synthesis of complementary opposites (two genders uniting to create two generations, and thereby temporal progression), the foursome also symbolizes the whole community, and arguably reinforces the fact that everyone has their own role and is expected to cooperate for everyone’s benefit. In the line, *Alli shumaq tsaquyamunki* (‘Clear the vegetation well’), we see again the intertwining of the aesthetic and pragmatic, where a job well done is *alli shumaq* (‘very beautiful’) (recall that *shumaq* is at once affective, ethical and aesthetic). Here, the directional *-mu* serves to soften the imperative, which thereby acts more as a suggestion than a command; thus, the implication is that unity is built through cooperation rather than coercion. In the fifth line, the group possessive *-ntsik* reinforces the creation of unity through common relation to the plant, and thereby the role of agriculture in perpetuating the survival of the community. Indeed, agriculture is both the cause and effect of communal cooperation: a successful harvest allows the community to survive, while the success of agriculture depends on cooperation within that community. Already, then, we can see how the formation of relations, on the basis of emotional and aesthetic engagement, is oriented towards survival, and how, in these stanzas, an ecological ethics emanates from entirely practical concerns.

The third stanza explains the importance of the actions described in the previous stanza. The first line describes a *tuuru* (‘bull’), again appropriated by *-ntsik*. In the festival, the bull is enacted by three men. This does not mean that the bull is, from an emic (local) point of view, ‘unreal’: ‘In certain feasts one observes *runas* that wear the skin of a bear or the flower of a plant...It is not...that they represent this or that plant or animal, but that in those circumstances they *are* that plant or animal’ (Vásquez, 114, my translation). Reference is made to the bull’s *waqru* (‘horn’), conveying the animal’s strength and vitality. The word *sindi* probably originates from Spanish *sendero* (‘path’); here, it refers to the furrows ploughed by the bull and into which seeds are placed. The subsequent lines state that the bull *abrillakunqaman* (‘might open up’), *Mana shumaq troncuta / Hipimuptiyki* (‘If you do not remove the trunk / Carefully’). Any broken trunks left in the field might pierce the bull’s skin (cause it to ‘open’). The affective *-lla* conveys empathy, showing that the welfare of the bull is not simply a practical necessity but also a moral obligation. As Bendezú states of Andean poetry generally, ‘The meaning of the poem depends to a great extent on the function

of certain morphemes with emotional connotations...The morpheme *lla* indicates a softened affirmation, not categorical' (p.111, my translation).

The fourth stanza conveys the same ethical/pragmatic obligation for the seeds. The first three lines induce the *yunka*, old man and old woman to *Alli shumaqlla sindiylla sindiy* ('Sow, sow well'). The affective *-lla*, use of *shumaq* ('beautiful', 'good') and cooperative *-mu* again convey a caring, advisory tone, where the actors are encouraged, rather than coerced, to perform the activity. The fourth and fifth lines illustrate the importance of sowing 'beautifully': *Mana pantar / Mana cricinqatsu* ('Erring not / It will not grow'). Only if the seeds are treated with care will the plant grow and reciprocate by producing the food necessary for survival. The parallel repetition of the negative *mana* 'not' reinforces the warning, and also the two-way exchange: if negativity exists at one side, it will be reproduced at the other. This is conveyed by the Quechua concept of *ayni*, as described by Allen (1997, p.77):

'At the most abstract level, *ayni* is the basic give-and-take that governs the universal circulation of vitality. It can be positive...or...negative...This circulation...is driven by a system of continuous reciprocal interchanges, a kind of dialectical pumping mechanism. Every category of being, at every level, participates in this cosmic circulation. Humans maintain interactive reciprocity relationships, not only with each other but also with their animals, their houses, their potato fields, the earth, and the sacred places in their landscape'.

We are reminded of Estermann's insight (<http://www.mabs.com.ar/rfaia/?p=687>, accessed 01/08/08) that 'ecosofía' in the Andes entails conceptualization of life that is not hierarchically ordered (progressing from 'inanimate' through 'vegetable' and 'animal' to 'human'), rather locates each being within an egalitarian system of mutual dependence.

The fifth stanza begins by persuading the actors to fetch the bull, so that the field may be ploughed: *Ayway toruntsikta ashimunki / Yapyaykunapaq* ('Go and look for our bull / In order to plough'). The third to fifth lines again stress cooperation over coercion: *Rawra kachita aparkur / Mikutsipar / Ayway rogapar, shoqapar* ('Bringing it shining salt / Feeding it / Go and beg it, comforting it'). By enticing the bull with salt, the actors are entering into reciprocal relations with the bull, recalling Bolin's comment on treatment of camelids in southern Peru: 'Alpacas and llamas are not to be dominated and looked upon as mere resources. They must be respected in their own right, and the relationship is built on perfect reciprocity' (p.66). Likewise, Montoya et al. argue that, in the Andes, 'Animals are treated like humans (with love, rage, insults)' (p.29, my translation). Here, we see this in the verbs *roga-* ('beg') and *shoqa-* ('console'). The suffix *-pa* denotes a short period of time; here, its diminutive role is probably affective. The treatment of Christ, the plants and the bull all reinforce the pragmatic basis of ethics as conveyed in the stanzas, where survival depends on productive reciprocal agreements.

The sixth stanza also describes the treatment of the bull: *Señorllay capitán yunka / Qarapaay yachanqanpita / Allimunki* ('Honourable *capitán yunka* / Treat it in the way to which it is accustomed / Tame it'). The *yunka* is addressed respectfully as *Señorllay*, shown by the Spanish honorific *Señor* ('Sir'), affective *-lla* and affective/semi-possessive *-y*. *Qarapay* contains the verbal root *qara-* ('gift, bestow'), again demonstrating the cooperative, rather than coercive, relation towards the bull. The intertwining of reason and emotion throughout

the stanzas, as part of a strategy of ecological ethics, recalls the close interdependence of the nervous (cognitive) and endocrine (emotional) systems. To quote Trask (pp.137-138),

‘The hypothalamus, which is the switchboard of the brain, receives both nerve and chemical messages. It sends out messages in two ways, by impulses through the nerve networks and by hormones to the pituitary gland. These hormones travel along the inside of the nerve axons, so that there is a close association between the two systems. When information enters the brain as nerve impulses and the response is hormone secretion the cycle is a neuroendocrine reflex’.

The phrase *yachanqanpita* comprises: *yacha-* (‘know, become accustomed to’); nominalizer *-nqa*; third person present *-n*; *-pita* (‘from’). The phrase can therefore be translated as ‘in the way to which it is accustomed’. This implies that auspicious relationships are gradually built up over time, through repeated reciprocal actions. What is stressed, then, is an abidingness in the relationship between bull and *yunka*, which does not mean that the relationship is always empirically in force, rather that every new agreement is projected from a history of past agreements (this projection is conveyed by the directionality of *-pita* ‘from’). The cumulative result is a latent mutual understanding which facilitates the process of making new cooperative endeavours in the future. At the emotional level, this could be tantamount to ‘trust’. The verb *allimunki* comprises: adjective *alli* (‘good’); directional *-mu* (‘towards’); second person *-nki*. It therefore reads roughly as ‘you make good’, though here its most plausible interpretation is ‘you persuade’, since the aim is to tame the bull so that it wishes to cooperate. The wide semantic orbit of *alli* (‘good’), together with *-mu* (towards the speaker), indicates the grounding of ethics on self-interest, which is also communal interest. The remaining lines tell the *yunka* what to do if the bull is aggressive: *Waqrashuptiyki tsay chukaru toruqa / Kachita uchutsinki / Kachiwan rogapaniki / Shoqapaniki* (‘If this stubborn bull should butt you / Give it salt to suck / Beg it with salt / Comfort it’). The *yunka* is encouraged to entice, rather than force, the bull to cooperate not because of disinterested altruism, but because this is the most productive strategy: the bull will work better if it does so willingly, and aggression is a waste of energy, particularly in the high Andes where the air is thin, the temperature low, and the soils poor. Empathy is therefore a particularly useful means of securing what one requires in order to survive.

The seventh stanza refers to the *kurpa*, or balls of earth, which are made around the seeds to maximize their chances of survival: *Kurpata mashashun / Kurpantsikta wiruyaaamuy / Alli shumaq, alli shumaq wiruyallaamunki* (‘We will heat the balls of earth in the sun / Make our balls of earth grow stalks / Make them grow stalks well’). The group possessive *-ntsik* is not strictly necessary here: it is already obvious that the *kurpa* belong to the group. Thus, the function of this suffix here is, arguably, enactive more than descriptive, encouraging people to work together as a community through reinforcing their latent potential to do so. If reciprocal unity is maintained, the *kurpa* will *wiru-* (‘grow stalks’). Arnold & Yapita note a similar tendency to engage personally with nature among the Bolivian Aymara: ‘it is believed that it is precisely the general intimacy of this personal communication between the human *mamalas* [mothers] and their spiritual counterparts, the *mamalas* of food-products, which results in the success of future harvests’ (1998, p.164, my translation). Thus, as in *Wayta Muruy*, nature is related to on a profoundly empathetic basis whose premise is the ultimate unity of all things.

The fourth line is a warning of what will happen if reciprocity is not respected: *Caña dulcintsikta planta malograykanman* (‘Our plant of sweet cane could get damaged’). The

group possessive *-ntsik* reinforces that the welfare of the plant is the welfare of the group. The eighth stanza induces the elder man to *parqu-* ('irrigate') the seeds with *alli yaku* ('good water'). This is *Plantanata mama sequiaqa parqunampaq* ('So that mother stream can irrigate her plant'), whereby a physical process is also described in terms of reciprocity, just as a mother gives milk to her child. This recalls a stanza recorded in southern Peru by Carrillo (p.79): 'Dilated stream with a smooth surface, Step on it! / It will carry its waters to our seeds, Step on it! / Step on it with strength, Step on it! / Step on it again with strength, step on it! / Thanks to you, our plants have their flower, Step on it! / Their beautiful fruits their propagation, Step on it!' (my translation). In both this stanza and the *Wayta Muruy*, the stream is addressed as an animate being. In *Wayta Muruy*, the stream is an agent, since the elderly man only provides the necessary conditions under which the stream can follow her natural tendency of nurture and, in the extract from Carrillo, because the stream is given thanks and addressed in the second person. This reflects Andean philosophical tendencies whereby 'the land is an animated being and, consequently, the relation which is established between the *runa* ('human being') and the land is not that which obtains between a subject and object, but an interaction between animated entities which are ultimately mutually dependent' (Godenzzi, p.53, my translation). Water is particularly important because of its role as a basis of Andean communality. Urton, for example, notes how, in his southern Peruvian fieldsite, 'reservoirs and irrigation canals – and probably water in general – are crucial to the definition of social versus non-social space' (Urton, p.53). The importance of water for defining social relations can be traced to pre-Hispanic times, when 'Different peoples or *ayllus* [communities] could link themselves to others on the ideological basis of the connections between bodies of water and thus form local regions' (Sherbondy, p.57). Ultimately, the role of water as an agent and principle of socialization is probably bound up with its biological function as sustaining life, particularly if we see communities as formed on a pragmatic basis of survival. The circulation of water is also a physical manifestation of the principle of reciprocal circulation of resources (*ayni*): 'Rivers and streams provide a tangible manifestation of the *samis*' [spirits'] flow and they are conceptualized in terms of a vast circulatory system that distributes water throughout the cosmos' (Allen, p.36). Thus, the presentation of *mama sequia* serves to reinforce *ayni* both at a practical and conceptual level.

The ninth stanza shifts to what happens when proper relations are not observed: *Naranjada plantantsikta suwayanqa / Caña dulcintsikta, caña dulcintsikta* ('They will steal our orange plant / Our sweet cane, our sweet cane'). This refers to the performance of the Turks, who arrive on the scene in mock Turkish costumes after the five cultivators have left, and destroy the newly sown plants. The phrase *mishi makin*, ('cat hands'), refers to the fact that cats are opportunistic scavengers which often steal the fruits of people's labour. The cultivators are therefore urged to *circuykamuy* ('circle around') the crops to protect them. This stanza illustrates the destruction caused when reciprocity is not observed, and when adequate care is not taken to protect that which is important to one's welfare. Thus, it serves as a lesson to take care of the relationships that one cultivates. The reference to the Turks is an allusion to Medieval dramatizations that circulated widely in Spain and were subsequently introduced to Latin America during the colonial period (Millones, p.26). They depicted the victories of Christians over Muslims at the time of the Crusades. In *Wayta Muruy*, however, the Turks are devoid of any ethnic association and are simply a symbol of the non-adherence to *ayni* ('reciprocity'). The tenth stanza marks a change of tense, from future to present, illustrating the fulfilment of the warning: *Mishi maki, lluta siki / Tsay waytata apaskin / Tsay waytata ushaskin* ('Cat hands, useless bottom / Are carrying off this plant / Are destroying this plant'). The Turks are again described as 'cat hands', and this time also as *lluta siki* ('useless bottom')! The suffix *-ski* (in *apa-ski-n* ('take') and *usha-ski-n* ('finish, destroy')) denotes

sudden and resisted action (Julca-Guerrero, p.408), thus emphasizing the rapidity of the destruction in a moment of carelessness.

The final stanza conveys reciprocity in a different context. Here, the *mayordomo* (organizer of the festival) invites the grandfather to have lunch (Doña Catalina told me that all five dancers are in fact invited): *Misalla blanca, mesalla / Awkin runa, tsatsay runa / Hamaykuy, mikuyay, almorzay* ('White table, table / Old man, elder man / Rest, eat, have lunch'). The participants are thus rewarded for their efforts by being offered food. This sharing of food serves to confirm the message of 'reciprocity' that the song is designed to convey: 'Because Andean relationships of reciprocity are initiated, sacralized, and sustained through the ritual sharing of food..., food is essential not only to sustain each physical life, but also to sustain the human and spiritual relationships that allows life to go on' (Paulson, pp.251-252). The Turks then return in order to rob the food. According to Doña Catalina, the Turks rob because *tienen envidia* ('they are jealous'). Jealousy, more than egoism, can be seen as the opposite of reciprocity. Whilst reciprocity is beneficial both for Self and Other, jealousy is the complete denial of the Other, the severing of any meaningful social ties, and, while it may lead to short-term benefit, is ultimately self-destructive as it removes the communal support-basis on which life depends. As Estermann states for the Andes in general, 'an isolated person, with no relations, is a dead entity' (1998, p.98, my translation). Thus, 'Reciprocal rituals (despatch, pay) are an essential condition for the *Pachamama* [nature] to continue to be generous and for life to be maintained' (p.235). Transgression of 'this system of communal "justice" are severely punished, because they risk the economic process of cultivating land and the coexistence of the population' (p.237).

The above exegesis of *Wayta Muruy* has shown how the stanzas do not represent literary abstractions from daily life, but serve a function of enhancing survival by presenting a blueprint of proper relations with the social and natural environment. Just as empathy unites the cognitive and affective and serves as the basis of reciprocity, so the ethical and the pragmatic are two sides of the same coin. We saw this in the following examples: the affective and reciprocal treatment of Christ in order to secure a good harvest; the fourfold nature of the participants, where the complementary unity of two genders results in the production of two generations and thus allows life to continue; the sense that the participation of both genders and all ages represents the whole *ayllu* ('community'), the members of which must take an equal share of the work, and all of whom are rewarded for their efforts with food; the treatment of the bull, who must be safeguarded from split tree-trunks because this is both a practical necessity and a moral requirement that is felt empathetically; likewise, the sense that nature should be related to as a person, in the encouragement of the seedlings to sprout, in the gifting of salt to the bull in exchange for its ploughing, and in the engagement with the stream as a *mama* ('mother') who nurtures her offspring, the seedlings; finally, the mention of the Turks who are the alter that serve to reinforce the practical validity of reciprocity.

All of these examples dialogue with the concept of *Shumaq Kaway* which communicates the sense that, 'everything has to do with everything else (holistic principle), [so that] life...is...a characteristic of every entity' (Estermann, (<http://www.mabs.com.ar/rfaia/?p=687>, accessed 01/08/08, my translation). The Turks, in contrast to the participants, illustrate how an 'economy of unmeasured exploitation of natural resources...does not correspond with the logic of cosmic justice and significantly harms the balance of life' (Estermann, my translation). The 'logic of cosmic justice' can be defined as *ayni*, the principle of reciprocity. In the next song, we shall witness the presentation of another alter that seems reluctant to

follow the principle of *ayni*. Unlike *Wayta Muruy*, however, the voice of the following song does not simply reject this alter, but aims to bring her back into the fold of reciprocity, of *Shumaq Kaway*.

### Negritos

The dance of *Negritos* is widespread in Pomabamba province, and is performed by a small group of men who depict slaves of African descent (the *negritos*) working under a *capitán*, literally ‘captain’. The songs specific to the *Negritos* were in Spanish, but were interspersed with more well known folksongs in either language. The dance is often burlesque and has sexual connotations. This song is one of the sixteen sung by the *negritos* in the village of Huanchabamba. It was recited to me by Don Marianito, a local singer and folklorist who has performed the songs. The song describes the *negritos*’ encounter with the *Antis*, a group of female performers who enact the dance of the same name. In Pomabamba, rumour has it that this dance originated from the rainforest, also suggested by the following: ‘Anti (pluralized by the Spanish to Antis), the word from which Andes is derived, originally meant not the mountains, but people: the forest dwellers at the eastern margin of the Inca empire’ (Gade, 31). Don Marianito explained that the *negritos* and *antis* would exchange stanzas, in a ‘call-and-response’ manner. The *Antis*’ text seems to have been lost (in memory as well as in writing), but the overall theme of the exchange, and its importance for our discussion of a pragmatic ethics based on *ayni* (reciprocity), is clear from just the *negritos*’ half:

Acércate bella noble guidora  
Venir pues guidora valiente  
¿Por qué eres tan orgullosa  
Contra negretos africanos?

Come closer, noble *guidora*  
Come, then, brave *guidora*  
Why are you so proud  
Against black Africans?

Te deré lo que pretendo decerte  
Y luego comunicaré de corazón  
Al fin te pido bella guidora  
Que serás bien recibida

I’ll tell you what I hope to tell you  
And then I’ll say it with my heart  
Ultimately, beautiful *guidora*,  
I ask that you be well received

No procures afligerte  
A voz de cajón y clarenes  
Porque ese van diciendo  
Que hemos de tener mal fin

Do not try to be disdainful  
With the voice of drums and bugles  
Because these only tell us  
That we will finish badly

Flor de rima rima  
Regadita de aguas puras  
¿Por qué quieres despreciarme?  
Confiado en los blancos  
Siempre guidar marchitada

Flower of *rima rima*  
Showered with pure waters  
Why do you wish to despise me?  
Trusting in the white people  
Always to lead withered

Brindemos cristal de licores  
Con estos dulces *majores*  
Desfrutar todas las prencesas  
Matezado con altura

Let us drink crystals of liquor  
With these sweet *majores*  
So that every princess may be joyous  
Adorned with elegance

El amor que te tengo  
En mi corazón se queda  
Viene un fuerte remolino  
Mi bella prensesa se la lleva

The love which I have for you  
Remains in my heart  
If a strong eddy should come  
My beautiful princess will be carried off

Qué hermosura eres prensesa  
Con tres plumajes de colores  
Qué bella te veo con tus velos  
Y tus collares de oro y plata

What beauty you are, princess  
With three colourful feathers  
How beautiful I see you with your veils  
And your necklaces of gold and silver

Por estas bellas prensesas  
El negreto se encuentra rendido  
Mi corazón lleno de alegría  
Desfrutemos nuestra danza

Because of these beautiful princesses  
The black man finds himself overcome  
My heart filled with happiness  
Let us enjoy our dance

The first stanza introduces the *negrito's* desire to reduce the (physical and emotional/cognitive) distance between the *antis* and himself: *Acércate bella noble guiadora / Venir pues guiadora valiente* ('Come closer, noble *guiadora* / Come, then, brave *guiadora*'). The *guiadora* is the leader or 'spokesperson' of the *antis*. She is described as *bella* ('beautiful') and *noble* ('noble'). This, whilst stressing the attraction of the singer to the *guiadora*, also emphasizes the gulf between them, for the term *noble* conveys a sense of hierarchy which, combined with *bella* ('beautiful'), suggests that she is removed in the way that a goddess is haughty and distanced from the more mundane world of her worshippers. The placing of *noble* ('noble') before the noun is an honorific style in Spanish where (apart from a handful of adjectives such as *bella*) the noun otherwise precedes the adjective. The word *valiente* ('brave') conveys a sense of fierce independence, for this is a term strongly associated with warfare. The distance of the *guiadora* from the singer is explicitly mentioned in the third and fourth lines: *¿Por qué eres tan orgullosa / Contra negretos africanos?* ('Why are you so proud / Against black Africans?'). The term *orgullosa* ('proud') generally has negative connotations in the Andes, suggesting egoism, hierarchy and the denial of reciprocity. These lines allude to the long history of racial discrimination in Peru, against both indigenous Andeans and Africans on the coast. Both groups were severely exploited by the Hispanic-descended elite in plantations and ranches. Racial discrimination still exists today, as indicated by many of my informants who spoke of discrimination against use of Quechua, Andean style of dress, and other cultural traits. Indeed, this line of the song contains one linguistic element which commonly incites discrimination, namely the conflation of [i] with [e], on the one hand, and of [u] with [o], on the other hand, in *negreto* (as opposed to the standard Spanish *negrito*). This results from the fact that, in Quechua and unlike Spanish, these sounds are not separate phonemes (i.e. they do not carry different meanings). The communicative gap between *Negrito* and *Anti* is highlighted by the word *contra* ('against'), which has no direct translation in Quechua. Whilst the *Wayta Muruy* stanzas reinforce differences between groups, the rationale for these differences is the potential for productive complementarity; by contrast, the term *contra* in this stanza suggests an egoistic aim of self-gratification *at the expense of* the Other. The use of the interrogative form encourages the opening of dialogue, in that a response is clearly expected. It also prompts listeners to reflect on their situation, as to why discrimination occurs. This may be a way of creating unity out of a common sense of injustice, and of encouraging people to consider how the discrimination can be reduced.

The first two lines of the second stanza are notable in their emphasis on dialogue: *Te deré lo que pretendo decerte / Y luego comunicaré de corazón* ('I'll tell you what I hope to tell you / And then I'll say it with my heart'). The lines comprise four verbs all relating to communication: *deré*, from *diré* (first-person future tense 'say'); *pretendo* (first-person present tense 'claim, hope'); *decerte* (from *decir*, infinitive 'say'); *comunicaré* (first-person future 'communicate'). This implies that, through dialogue, the gap between the *negrito* and the *guiadora* can become narrower, for a communicative field will have been set up between them, with mutual understandings. Given the obvious reproductive connotations of the song (in that the opposing pairs are male and female), we can see this discussion of communication as a kind of copulation, where understanding is the fruit of symbiosis between the two interlocutors. Once this communicative copulation has been achieved at one level, it can progress to a more fundamental level where, from being purely linguistic (evident in the two uses of the verb *deci-* 'say'), it becomes *de corazón* ('with the heart'). Thus, these two lines imply the beginnings of the historical process that originates in the first communicative encounter, where layers of meaning build on layers of meaning, just as trust and affect grow with time. We also saw this in *Wayta Muruy*, where the bull is treated *yachanqanpita* ('in the way to which it has become accustomed'). The 'heart' in Andean communities has a wider meaning than in European cultures. The seventeenth-century chronicler Holguín defines the Quechua near-cognate, *shonqu*, as 'heart and entrails, the stomach and consciousness, judgement and reason, memory, the core of wood, wilfulness and understanding' (Holguín, in Husson, 111, my translation). Mannheim (p.51, ft 14) suggests that 'essence' might be a better translation. For Montes, *chuyma*, the cognate of *shonqu* in Aymara (another major Andean language), denotes 'heart and everything that pertains to the inner state of the soul, emotion, sensibility, effort, judgement, understanding, knowledge, intelligence, memory, wisdom, disposition and attitude' (Montes, paraphrased in by Condori et al., 40, my translation). The Andean notion of the 'heart', then, combines the emotional and the rational, incorporating the pragmatic and affective nature of community whose basis is physical and psychological security. This dialogues with the ethos of the *Negritos* stanzas, which aim to build a solid reciprocal relation (*ayni*), grounded on reason and affect, that is conducive to survival and reproduction for both interlocutors. The fact that there is a distinction between what is said through words and what is said by the heart implies a mistrust of the use of language, recalling the widespread linguistic discrimination of Quechua-speakers. The verb *pretendo* (first-person 'claim, hope') is also ambiguous in implying uncertainty about how genuine the communication is. Quechua grammatically distinguishes between degrees of certainty, in the use of three 'evidential' suffixes: *-mi* indexes certainty (we saw this suffix in *Wayta Muruy*); *-chi* is dubitative; *-shi* indicates reported speech. It is possible that this evidential system is maintained in the Spanish stanzas of the *Negritos*, so that the verb *pretend-* would correspond here to the Quechua dubitative *-chi*.

The final two lines, *Al fin te pido bella guiadora / Que serás bien recibida* ('Ultimately, beautiful *guiadora* / I ask that you be well received'), at first appear somewhat ambiguous. The informal second-person singular object *te* ('you') makes it clear that the request is directed towards the *guiadora* herself. But how is it possible to request to an individual that (s)he be well received? Surely this depends on the people who receive her, not on the person who is received. In the reciprocal cosmology of the Andes, however, this request makes perfect sense. Being well received depends on how willing the *guiadora* is to engage with the *negrito* (communicatively, cognitively and emotionally). The fact that this is conveyed in implicit, rather than explicit, form suggests caution, where the speaker is hedging his bets, testing the water, so that he does not give too much if the *guiadora* is unwilling to give in turn. This recalls the ambivalence around the verb *pretend-* ('claim'), where the

communication cannot be entirely genuine if it is not based on the trust that develops after several encounters. The phrase *al fin* ('in the end, ultimately') conveys precisely this sense of bonds being made through time. If, as the *negrito* hopes, the *guiadora* is well received, then the *fin* 'ending' is also a new beginning. The expression *al fin* is also used in a colloquial sense to introduce the conclusion of one's previous utterances; thus, the ambiguity again allows the speaker to hedge his bets, in that the *guiadora* can interpret a variety of possible messages but will grasp the intended one if she is willing to attune herself to the same wavelength. The word *bella* ('beautiful') conveys distance as much as attraction, being deployed in an honorific rather than affective sense. All in all, the ambiguity of the words allows the speaker to convey willingness to open relations with the opposite party, whilst also being a get-out strategy which allows him to state that the meaning has been misinterpreted should the *guiadora* not be willing to accept. Thus, the *negrito* avoids the risk of giving more than he receives. This can be understood in terms of the Quechua concept of *tinku*:

'through *tinkuy*, social unity is created dialectically and expressed in terms of complementary opposition. Although *tinkuy* refers to ritual dance-battles, the word has wider applications...When streams converge in foaming eddies to produce a single, larger stream they are said to *tinkuy*, and their convergence is called *tinku* (or *tingu*). *Tinkus* are powerful, dangerous places full of liberated and uncontrollable forces' (Allen 1988, 205).

Likewise, there is a danger inherent in the *negrito*'s encounter with the *guiadora*, where there is no history of prior actions to enhance the probability of an auspicious result for both, and where the inherent 'beauty and violence' (Stobart, 144) of *tinku* – the approximation and the antagonism – have not yet been harnessed towards productive ends. In *Wayta Muruy*, by contrast, difference is oriented strategically so that complementarity, rather than destruction, results. In the *Negritos* song, the *tinku* is still in flux, negotiation, so ambiguity and ambivalence are necessary if the *negrito* is not to lose control completely.

The first two lines of the third stanza, *No procures afligerte / A voz de cajón y clarenes* ('Do not try to be disdainful / With the voice of drums and bugles'), are a warning not to stand aloof and maintain distance. The verb *afligerse* (*afligirse*) literally means 'to get upset', but, according to Don Marianito, the line means *no te pongas sobrada* ('do not become disdainful, haughty'). This suggests that the *guiadora* is only feigning to be upset, perhaps to avoid her interlocutor because of his low social status. The fact that this melodrama would be *A voz de cajón y clarenes* ('With the voice of drums and bugles') (instruments that are commonly played in Andean festivals) probably alludes to the volume of the *guiadora*'s voice as she complains! The third and fourth lines return to the theme of communication: *Porque ese van diciendo / Que hemos de tener mal fin* ('Because these only tell us / That we will finish badly'). The use of the continuous aspect in the form *diciendo* (from *diciendo* 'saying') conveys an underlying and preoccupying uncertainty. The notion of *mal fin* 'bad ending' is ambiguous from a non-Andean perspective. Is the ending bad for each as individuals, or for the possibility of them joining together? In an Andean worldview of mutual attunement, both interpretations are correct given the predication of individual survival on communal cooperation.

Indeed, several scholars have cited the specific importance of gender-complementarity in Andean cosmology. Silverblatt (p.154) notes how, in Incan society, 'male and female occupations – defined as interdependent and complementary activities – were conceptualized as forming the basic unit of labor required for the reproduction of Andean society'. Further,

‘A dialectical view of oppositions, often phrased in terms of sexual parallelism, was a fundamental cosmological principle shared by Andean peoples’, whereby the principal deity, Wiraqocha, combined ‘both male and female sexual elements’ and thereby contained ‘all the forces that these elements symbolize: “the sun, the moon, day, night, winter, summer” (Pachacuti Yamqui 1950:220)’ (p.159). Silverblatt concludes that ‘These forces stemming from the interplay between the model’s male and female constituent parts were conceptualized as creating the driving energies of the universe. Thus, a fundamental cosmological structure which conditioned the Andean conception of the universe was in large part based on a dialectical view of the relations between the sexes’ (p.159). This complementary dualism can be understood in terms of *tinku*, the productive orientation of which is *ayni*. Harris notes how this practical philosophy continues to the present day: ‘It is the fruitful cooperation between woman and man as a unity, which produces culture, and which is opposed to the single person as a-cultural; culture is based on duality’ (p.25, my translation). The dependence of each individual on gender-complementarity is also emphasized by Allen: ‘While each man and woman is a complete individual with both male and female qualities, the two unite to form another individual of a higher order: a *warmi-qari*, the nucleus of the household’ (1988, 85). What all of these quotes suggest is that the *mal fin* ‘bad ending’ is much more profound than the end of a possible relationship. It is the denial of the possibility of survival, the unbalancing of the natural order where incompleteness means isolation and extreme vulnerability. The phrase *mal fin* links with *al fin* in the previous stanza, stressing the notion of an ‘ending’. This serves to highlight the nature of the encounter as a progression from one state to another, unknown, state, demonstrating how interaction perpetuates the historical dynamic. Either the ending could be productive unity (*bien recibida*) or alienation and destruction (*mal fin*).

The fourth stanza begins by comparing the *guiadora* to a flower: *Flor de rima rima / Regadita de aguas puras* (‘Flower of *rima rima* / Showered with pure waters’). This kind of comparison is very common in Andean songs, and reflects the association between reproduction, agriculture and survival. The name of the flower, *rima rima* (*Krapfia weberauerii*), continues the theme of communication: *rima-* is the original Quechua verb for ‘speak’. In the modern Quechua of central Peru, however, it now usually denotes negative gossip (the Old Spanish loan *parla-* is now the commonest verb for ‘speak’). Thus, we see a contrast between the *negrito*, who, in the second stanza, states that he will communicate first with words and then with his heart, and the *guiadora*, who communicates only with words, but negatively; this again reflects a mistrust of language. The second line *Regadita de aguas puras* (‘Showered with clear waters’) probably refers to the privileges that the *guiadora* enjoys, particularly on analysis of the fourth line (discussed below). The third line, *¿Por qué quieres despreciarme?* (‘Why do you wish to despise me?’) alludes once more to life-denying discrimination, while the fourth and fifth lines, *Confiado en los blancos / Siempre guidar marchitada* (‘Trusting in the white people / Always to lead withered’), depict the racial inequalities that have existed in Peruvian society for centuries. The absence of gender agreement in *confiado* (which would normally take the feminine ending *-a*) is characteristic of Andean Spanish. Here, the text implies that the *guiadora* has received privileges, been *regadita de aguas puras* (‘showered with clear waters’), as a result of her association with the exploiters. However, this is not conducive to a healthy existence because it rests on a state of inequality: the elite are always her superiors and she likewise exploits those in a less favourable position. This is why, if she follows this path, and continues to despise the *negrito*, she is destined to *Siempre guidar marchitada* (‘Always to lead withered’). She may indeed lead, but this won’t lead to flourishing and fulfilment because it is a denial of reciprocity. This dialogues with Estermann’s concept of *ecosofia* which stresses relationality:

‘For Andean philosophy, the individual as such isn’t just “nothing” (a “non-entity”); it is something completely lost if it isn’t located in a network of multiple relations. If a person doesn’t belong to the local community (*ayllu*), because (s)he has been expelled or because (s)he has excluded him/herself through his/her own actions, it’s as if (s)he didn’t exist anymore’ (Estermann, pp.97-98, my translation). Therefore, ‘To disconnect oneself from natural and cosmic links...would, for the *runa* [people] of the Andes, mean signing one’s own death warrant’ (p.98). In this song, then, *ayni* (‘reciprocity’) is not just advised but inevitable: positive reciprocity results in a fruitful outcome for all concerned; negative reciprocity is the process whereby ill effects boomerang back on those who conduct negative actions. Again we see how, in these songs, ethics has a practical rationale in the social ecosystem.

With the fifth stanza comes a change of tone: *Brindemos cristal de licores / Con estos dulces majores* (‘Let us drink crystals of liquor / With these sweet *majores*’). From the previous stanzas, which discuss the possibility of the *guiadora* entering into a relation with the *negrito*, comes an inducement to imbibe in food and drink, the sharing of which would indicate a greater unity (recall the reciprocal sharing of food at the end of *Wayta Muruy*). The phrase *cristal de licores* ‘liquors of crystal’ refers to a brand of beer, *Cristal*, ubiquitous at Andean festivals. The second line, *Con estos dulces majores* (‘With these sweet *majores*’) refers to an Andean sweet dish. However, *cristal* (‘crystal’) and *dulce* (‘sweet’) also seem to refer to the *guiadora*, particularly with the mention of *aguas puras* (‘pure water’) in stanza four, and the fact that *dulce* is often used in amorous contexts; again, this possible play on words reflects the ambivalence and thereby the hedging. The third line, *Desfrutar todas las prencesas*, is also ambiguous, due to the use of the infinitive which renders the verb *disfrutar* (‘enjoy’) devoid of a subject. One possible meaning is that it is the *prencesas* (‘princesses’) (i.e. the *antis*) who enjoy themselves. This is the interpretation I have chosen in my translation, (‘So that every princess may be joyous’). Another possibility is that the phrase refers to the *negritos*, who ‘enjoy the princesses’ in a sexual sense (the preposition *de*, which follows *disfrutar* and precedes its object in standard Spanish, is usually absent in Andean Spanish). This is an equally plausible interpretation, given the sexual overtones of the song. The *negrito* allows the *guiadora* to interpret the true meaning if she wishes to attune herself, but doesn’t give too much away in case she remains aloof. The word *prencesa* (from Spanish *princesa*) is a term of endearment for young women, but here it also links with the theme of hierarchy and exploitation. Thus, the use of this term is also ambivalent: it could convey either a strong attachment or an opposite sense of remoteness. I have translated the last line, *Matezado con altura*, as ‘Adorned with elegance’, as this is more natural in English. However, *altura* means ‘height’, and therefore conveys a sense of remoteness and aloofness as well as being, on the surface, a term of praise and respect. Thus, this line, too, is ambivalent.

The sixth stanza begins with a frank declaration of love: *El amor que te tengo* (‘The love which I have for you’). The ambiguity returns, however, in the second line, which states that the love *En mi corazón se queda* (‘In my heart will stay’). One possible interpretation is that the love exists in the person’s heart (the verb *quedarse* can sometimes just denote physical location). Another interpretation, however, is that the love will go nowhere outside of his heart, will not touch the heart of the *guiadora* (*quedarse* can also mean ‘to remain’). This second meaning is congruent with the rest of the stanza: *Viene un fuerte remolino / Mi bella prencesa se la lleva* (‘If a strong eddy should come / My beautiful princess will be carried off’). The notion of the ‘eddy’ relates to the theme of *aguas puras* (‘pure waters’) and *cristal de licores* (‘crystals of liquor’), and endows the natural elements with agency, as we saw with

the discussion of the ‘stream’ in *Wayta Muruy*. In the Andes, rivers are both a source of life and an agent of destruction, particularly in the rainy season where floods and strong currents frequently cause loss of life. In this stanza, the ‘eddy’ may be anything – the allure of wealth, another man, or even just its literal meaning. Nonetheless, the obvious association with raging torrents foregrounds the vulnerability of life in the Andes, which requires strong reciprocal bonds in order to survive; thus, the lines are as much a warning against individualism as a regret at the possibility of losing the *guiadora*’s affection. There is an interesting deictic transformation within this stanza. In the first line, the *guiadora* is directly addressed as *te* (‘you’), whereas, in the last line, she is addressed in the third person, ‘my beautiful princess’. While this may be honorific use of the third person, it also suggests distancing in that, grammatically at least, she is no longer a direct interlocutor.

The seventh stanza describes the beauty of the *guiadora*: *Qué hermosura eres prensesa / Con tres plumajes de colores / Qué bella te veo con tus velos / Y tus collares de oro y plata* (‘What beauty you are, princess / With three colourful feathers / How beautiful I see you with your veils / And your necklaces of gold and silver’). Again, the word *prensesa* (‘princess’) can be interpreted affectively or critically. The remaining lines describe the *guiadora*’s beauty in terms of her dress, specifically her *tres plumajes de colores* (‘three colourful feathers’), her *velos* ‘veils’ and her *collares de oro y plata* (‘necklaces of gold and silver’). This mention of wealth can be interpreted as a veiled criticism of the material success of those who exploit others by being *confiado en los blancos* (‘trusting in the white people’) (i.e. in the elite), negating reciprocity and thereby isolating themselves in the long-term. The eighth stanza concludes the song with characteristic ambiguity: *Por estas bellas prensesas / El negrito se encuentra rendido* (‘Because of these beautiful princesses / The black man finds himself overcome’). The most obvious reading is that the *negrito* is overcome by his attraction towards the *guiadora*. However, a more sinister interpretation is that the *negrito* has been ‘defeated’ in the same way that Africans and indigenous Andeans have been exploited by the European-descended elite. This interpretation is highly plausible given the superior wealth of the *guiadora*, her association with the exploitative group, and the indications of her unwillingness to relate to the *negrito*. Moreover, Huanchabamba, where this text was performed, is on the site of a former hacienda, where residents were exploited by the landowners. The ambivalence dissipates for the concluding two lines: *Mi corazón lleno de alegría / Desfrutemos nuestra danza* (‘My heart filled with happiness / Let us enjoy our dance’). The tone is that of *carpe diem*, despite the underlying uncertainty. The *alegría* (‘happiness’) is nonetheless non-committal, since it could result more from the music than love for the *guiadora*. Overall, then, this song illustrates a desire to form a unit through communicative reciprocity, but part of this reciprocity is in meeting the *guiadora* only halfway, not giving her too much of oneself should she reject the *negrito*’s advances. There is also a strong but tacit criticism of the adverse effects of socially negating pride. A link is formed through the very act of communication, but it depends on the *guiadora* whether to convert it into a productive unity through mutual attunement. This dialogues with Stobart’s findings in Bolivia that, ‘For young women, singing *takis* [songs] is a powerful expression of independence, freedom and sexuality whilst at the same time a critical force in shaping and defining their identity, as well as potentially securing a marriage partner’ (p.129).

The *Negrito*’s song continues the theme of *Wayta Muruy* in conveying the life-enhancing nature of productive *ayni* (‘reciprocity’) in contrast to the self-denial that results from egoism. The *negrito* aims to overcome the *guiadora*’s individualism by projecting his own positive disposition in the hope that she will, in turn, look more favourably on his advances. He thus recognizes a latent potentiality in the *guiadora* that can only be actualized through careful

attunement on the part of the *negrito* (though whether the *guiadora* ultimately accepts the *negrito* is not known). The care that this process necessitates is demonstrated by the hedging, which can be viewed both as a means of self-preservation (should the *guiadora* use the *negrito*'s openness as a means to harm him) and as a mode of attunement to the *guiadora*'s reserve (finding a productive 'middle ground' whence the relation can build). The hedging was revealed in examples such as the following: the numerous honorific phrases which suggest both respect and veiled criticism; the progression from merely 'saying' to 'saying with the heart'; the request that the *guiadora* be well received, which conveys both hospitality (on the part of the *negrito*) and responsibility to reciprocate (on the part of the *guiadora*); the likening of the *guiadora* to the *rima rima* flower, which conveys both beauty and negative gossip; the suggestion that the love will 'remain in his heart', which can be interpreted both positively (the love exists) and negatively (it is not reciprocated). This song can, then, be interpreted within the frameworks of 'ecosofia' and *Shumaq Kaway*, insofar as the individual is presented as a profoundly relational entity whose survival ultimately depends on forging productive reciprocal relations with other social beings.

### Conclusion

In this article, I have shown how both *Wayta Muruy* and *Negritos* can be interpreted under the indigenous philosophical framework of 'ecosofia' and its practical manifestation as *Shumaq Kaway*. This is not a disinterested ethics that advocates the preferential treatment of Other over the Self, but a life-affirming one for all involved, since both disinterested altruism and egoism deny the sociality of any individual. In each, there is a sense of intrinsic incompatibility between the interests of Self and Other. The difference between the 'ethical' and the 'unethical' is, in this worldview, only a question of who suffers. In the philosophical orientation of *Shumaq Kaway*, by contrast, the ethics is both altruistic and self-interested. This is because the individual is not seen as a discrete and atomized entity, but as a form that emerges and transforms in relation with the environment. In this worldview, the 'ethical' and the 'pragmatic' are not diametrically opposed but mutually reinforcing, and attunement towards the Other enhances one's own existential possibilities. Thus, Andean communities share a tendency to 'reproduce themselves...by appropriating the strength of the Other, and then in revivifying the Other, but now as a part of the Self' (Arnold & Yapita, 2006, pp.161-162).

This means that, according to *Shumaq Kaway*, 'social advancement – its development? – is a category in permanent construction and reproduction. Life depends on it' (Acosta, p.35, my translation). This practical, pragmatic, orientation of Andean ethics undermines many of the traditional dualisms of Western scholarship, such as 'spiritual verses material', 'personal verses social', 'nature verses culture', 'mind versus body' and even 'Self verses Other'. The dualisms do not simply dissolve, however, since this would imply absolute negation which is contrary to the life-enhancing orientation of ecosofia. Instead, they are re-oriented, to be conceived not as an ontological basis of reality, but instead as contrasts that may be relevant in some situations and irrelevant in others. It may sometimes be useful to distinguish between 'humans' as opposed to 'non-humans', but this is not to imply that the circumstantial validity of such a distinction can be generalized as a fundamental ontological separation. Likewise, the categories of 'Self' and 'Other' may at times constitute points of reference for our engagement with the world, but this is not to negate the fact that, ultimately, everything is reducible to everything else. Categories are acknowledged as contingently valid in relation to particular purposes and orientations, but no category has validity in and of itself. In this respect, Andean philosophical orientations are redolent of Derrida's (1967) notion of the

‘trace’, whereby ‘meaning’ (including any ‘concept’ or ‘entity’) is constructed through a pre-ontological condition of discourse. However, rather than this contingency being a reason for skepticism, in *Shumaq Kawsay* it is a reason for proactive optimism, an acknowledgement that our relational nature opens us to new existential potentialities in each dialectic encounter.

This was revealed in the notions of *ayni* (‘reciprocity’) and *tinku* (‘mutual constitution through engagement’), where the strategic attunement between Self and Other – itself an acknowledgement of our fundamental sameness and reactivity – results in the attainment of optimum conditions for survival. Moreover, this ‘relationality manifests itself through the principles of correspondence, complementarity, reciprocity and cyclicity, at cosmic, anthropological, economic, political and religious levels’ (Estermann). The cyclical, temporal, nature of *ayni* and *tinku* stresses the emergence of entities through ever-deepening mutual attunement, as we saw in the annual rotation of *Wayta Muruy*, the treatment of the bull *yachanqanpita* (‘in the way to which it is accustomed’), and, in *Negritos*, in the progression from mere communication to communication *de corazón* ‘from the heart’.

In this view of ecosofia, difference is not a gap to be overcome but a possibility to be harnessed: ‘the zones of transition between one level and another, between one period and another, between one entity and another, are of vital importance for the genesis, the fostering and conservation of life. These zones of transition...[are] indispensable for the balance and harmony of the entire universe’ (Estermann). Such relationality, moreover, is only possible given the multiple, contingent nature of the Self, since this multiplicity allows the individual to be ‘like’ other dimensions of its environment, paving the way for mutual adaptation in the instant of congruence. The concept of *ch’ixi* – from the southern Andean Aymara language – expresses this notion well: ‘it refers to a color that results from the juxtaposition of two opposite colors, whereby something is and is not at the same time’ (Gudynas, p.12). It is possible to ‘be’ and ‘not be’ something because the idea expressed by *ch’ixi* goes beyond the *bona fide* entity, rendering ‘either/or’ categorizations ontologically meaningless. In some situations, it will be useful to group ‘orange’ with ‘red’, and, in other situations, ‘orange’ with ‘yellow’. What makes ‘orange’ different from both ‘red’ and ‘yellow’ is not a lack of something but an ability to relate in ways that neither of its progenitors can, a dynamism that cannot be reduced to any single property. This is the relational cosmology of ‘ecosofia’, which manifests in the practical rubric of life that is *Shumaq Kaway*. And, by examining the literary, linguistic and anthropological dimensions of *Wayta Muruy* and *Negritos*, we have seen how these notions, whilst not explicitly defined under such labels, continue to play a functional role in the communities whence the songs emanate.

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